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**Board Takes Steps to Support Transportation, Preschool**

Through the diligent and prudent work of the Fresno Unified Board of Education, Fresno Unified is allocating resources in two specific areas that will directly benefit students and their families: preschool fees and additional bus routes.

Several months ago, the California Department of Education announced that a provision in this year’s state budget required Fresno Unified and many school districts to charge a $1 to $8.88 per day “family fee” for participation in state-funded preschool programs. However, Fresno Unified made the decision late last year not to charge the fee this year, recognizing that this could be a hardship on many families.

“We have committed to a greater focus on our youngest learners so that we can better prepare them for success in school, and covering this state-mandated fee is one more way of affirming that pledge,” said Superintendent Michael Hanson.

The board has also taken steps to improve student transportation. Last month, as students returned to school following the winter break, the district added six new bus routes that will reduce walking distances for middle and high school students from 2 miles to 1 ½ miles.

The routes provide another layer of safety for students to and from school each day. About 450 additional students are expected to ride the bus because of the reduced walking radius. The routes serve Fort Miller, Kings Canyon, Scandinavian and Tioga middle schools and Roosevelt and Sunnyside high schools.

“The six new routes will make it easier for hundreds of students to get to school every day,” said Karin Temple, assistant superintendent for operational services. “It’s another way for our district to support the goal of preparing career ready graduates.”

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**McLane Students Reaching New Heights**

The challenge seemed impossible: raise $20,000 over winter break.

But if McLane High School English teacher Will Haskins and aspiring student rock climbers were successful, they would have money to cover membership and equipment costs to launch Fresno Unified’s first rock climbing club.

**McLane Student Kody York, 10th grade, is a member of the school’s fledgling rock-climbing club.**

**See McLANE, Page 4**
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**www.FresnoUnified.org**
As Fresno Unified moves further into the second half of the school year, I’m feeling more confident than ever for the future of our school district.

Over the past year, our staff has worked tremendously hard to continue the process of improving student programs and the systems to support them. We still have a great deal of work ahead of us, but it is always good to note progress and I want to thank the Fresno Unified staff and the larger Fresno community, because our progress would not be possible without your continued support.

At the start of the second semester, we were able to introduce new bus routes for our middle and high school students, reducing their walking distance to and from bus stops by a half mile. This will add another layer of safety for students, thanks to the efforts of our forward-thinking Board of Education. Currently, we are also considering making changes to our boundaries and feeder progression patterns. The proposed changes will further execute the facilities master plan and create more clear and concise feeder patterns, improve alignment of academics, arts and athletic programs within high school regions, promote continuity of learning communities, strengthen neighborhood cohesion and community spirit and provide guidance for future project development. It will allow Fresno Unified to make better use of school facilities and identify facility needs. It just makes sense. However, we did not want to make any changes until we had received your feedback and I hope that you were able to attend one of the series of community meetings that were held for that purpose. If you did attend, thank you for being an active voice in the community. We hope to bring the final recommendations before the Board of Education in the very near future.

Message From The Mayor

We are so excited to report that we currently have 30 GED graduates from our Learn2Earn program, and an additional 150 that are currently in the testing process! This is a great success for our students and the Fresno Community.

Basic education is a tremendous need in Fresno with 70,000 people who do not have a GED or high school diploma. Preparing people for the work world, increasing the opportunity for jobs, and earning a living wage are so important for the future of Fresno and its economy. It is our goal to help as many people as possible get involved in basic education and training, in addition to getting the higher education and training needed to fill current available jobs right here in Fresno.

It is heartwarming to hear that parents and children, sisters and brothers, and neighborhood friends are urging each other to go back to school, to get their education, to increase their chances of preparing for jobs and careers in the future.

Learn2Earn is excited to be part of this city wide effort and our staff and volunteers are lucky enough to be inspired daily by stories of hope, encouragement, and success.

Learn2Earn is currently working with over 1200 participants, and we have met so many extraordinary people along the way, we want to help each one of them to find their own success story.

The Learn2Earn team is working hard to bring information about and access to education programs in Fresno, and we are looking for our next 1200 participants!

Many participants have said that the individual attention they received made a difference to them and was the encouragement and support they needed to get started on an education plan. We are so proud of our Learn2Earn team, and we look forward to continued success for our participants.

If you are interested in helping Learn2Earn with outreach in the community, or would like a presentation at your neighborhood center, local church, or association, please contact Linda Davidson-Gafford at 559-248-7076.

If you are interested in getting started with Learn2Earn today please submit an interest form at www.learn2earnfresno.org and meet with an Advisor today.
“If we pulled it off, we could offer 40 McLane students a life-changing experience,” said Haskins, a new teacher at McLane. “Imagine taking poverty-stricken students and placing them in the most challenging environment. They would have to raise a lot of money, trust another student with their life, focus, think, be 100% present, be mature, problem-solve, teach other students what they have learned, and experience pain all at the same time.

“Oh yeah, and they would have the time of their life.”

Rock climbing is an expensive and dangerous sport. It takes volunteers, money, as well as district approval. But Haskins and Principal Scott Lamm knew they could make it a reality. With Lamm navigating the district approval process, Haskins began seeking donations from the rock climbing community.

Money and gear donations arrived from all over the United States within a few days. Volunteers stepped forward, and the local climbing gym, MetalMark Climbing and Fitness, offered extremely generous discounts on gear and monthly memberships. McLane’s Project Reach climbing club was a go.

With donations and discounts, McLane was able to purchase 40 student monthly memberships, good until the end of the school year. The idea is catching on with other schools: Duncan Polytechnical High School has joined McLane’s Project Reach and other schools are looking into starting their own programs.

Why does Project Reach matter? It is best explained through examples. Most of the climbers failed their classes last semester. They are now completing their schoolwork because they want to remain eligible to climb. Some of the climbers were bullied on a daily basis last semester. Now they have friends. Now they are rock climbers. Within a few weeks they developed self-confidence, focus, and purpose.

Excellence in Education is one of Fresno Unified’s finest traditions, a chance to recognize and celebrate employees from across the district that have impressed their colleagues with their skills and dedication.

“This is one of my favorite events of the year,” said Superintendent Michael Hanson. “It’s a wonderful opportunity to gather with your colleagues to celebrate not only those who have gone above and beyond in their roles serving the students and families of Fresno Unified, but to celebrate our entire district.”

From among the finalists, five top employees will be announced at the dinner from the categories of classified, administrator/psychologist, school counselor and teacher/nurse/library media teacher. Three teachers are selected to represent elementary, middle and high schools.

One teacher as well as the classified and administrator winners will move forward to compete in the Fresno County Employee of the Year awards.

More than 90 employees from schools and departments across the district are finalists for this year’s Excellence in Education, Fresno Unified’s annual tradition of honoring exemplary employees nominated by their peers.

The awards dinner will be held Tuesday, March 5 at TorNino’s. Tickets are $25 and are available at www.fresnounified.org. Finalists and a guest do not need to purchase tickets but do need to reserve tickets.

Excellence in Education Celebrates Outstanding Employees

From left, teachers Ben Arnold, Malena Rodriguez-Lurig and Jesus Rodriguez were among the Excellence in Education finalists at last year’s event.
Schools Review Safety

In light of recent events across the nation involving school-site shootings, many families are understandably nervous and worried about the safety of their children.

Schools have always been considered a safe haven for children and recent events have shaken communities’ faith in that belief. However, schools remain one of the safest places for children to be despite the high profile events in the media. In addition, Fresno Unified has the following safety measures in place:

- Each site has a safety coordinator who reviews the board-approved safety plan with staff on a regular basis.
- Teachers, students and administrators are trained on lockdown drills and fire drills that are practiced regularly.
- All visitors must check in through the front gate and sign in at the office.
- Teachers and administrators are vigilant in knowing their parents, students and staff. They ask questions when they do not recognize someone.
- All gates, excluding the front gate, are locked during school hours and are only opened when a delivery truck arrives.
- Fresno Unified works closely with the Fresno Police Department and the Fresno County Sheriff’s Department.
- The district’s Safety Office provides safety updates and support.
- Each high school has a school resource officer supervised by a sergeant from the Safety Office.
- Security cameras are strategically placed at all campuses.

Parents and members of the community also share a responsibility to ensure that schools remain safe. Parents should talk to their children and encourage them to share any concerns with a responsible adult. School staff is prepared to respond to the needs of students and committed to providing a safe, positive and nurturing environment.

Students Learn About the Dangers of Texting While Driving

Students at Sunnyside and Roosevelt high schools got a first-hand look at the dangers of texting while driving on January 23 and 24. AT&T's It Can Wait campaign urges teen drivers to resist sending text messages while driving because the risks are too great. Texting causes more than 100,000 car crashes each year, many involving teen drivers. AT&T set up a texting-while-driving simulator for students to demonstrate the dangers. Students were urged to take a pledge not to text when behind the wheel and to encourage friends and family to do the same.
Addams Teacher Named as “Educator of the Week”

Molly Fang, who teaches second and third graders at Addams Elementary School, was recognized in December by NBC24 as “Educator of the Week.” Fang said she was inspired to go into the teaching profession by her own teachers growing up and her family, who placed a great emphasis on a good education.

AN EMPLOYEE YOU SHOULD KNOW

Raiders Fan Keeps Athletics Office Running Smoothly

Name: Tina Gonzales
Position: District Athletics Office secretary
Years with the district: 23 years

I know I am successful in my job when: I see huge smiles on the faces of student athletes, parents and coaches.

Best work-related advice I ever received: The world of athletics is made up of constant changes. Without that knowledge I would have gone crazy here.

Best advice I like to give: The world of athletics is made up of constant changes.

What most people don’t know about the Athletics Office is: We have an athletics website for student athlete pictures, schedules, forms and air quality at http://www.fresnounified.org/dept/athletics

It really frustrates me when: People don’t realize I am only one secretary supporting athletics for 63 elementary, 17 middle and seven high schools.

Adult School Principal Wins Haak Award

Sally Fowler, principal at Fresno Adult School, has been selected for the 2013 Dr. Harold Haak Award, given each year to recognize excellence in building business and education partnerships.

The award, from the Fresno Compact, is named for the late Dr. Haak, retired president at California State University, Fresno and the first executive director of the Compact.

Students’ Triumphs Inspire Vinland Teacher

Name: Judith Dalton
School: Vinland
Grade: Fourth

Teaching experiences: I’ve been teaching for 25 years. The last 13 years I’ve been with Fresno Unified. Before that, I taught in inner-city L.A. and then a one-school school district in the mountains.

I’ve been fortunate to have had many different kinds of teaching opportunities.

Favorite teacher tip: Reteach small groups of kids with “like confusion” and marry a great guy who’ll come in and do all your copying.

I know I am successful with students when: They are able to make connections between past and new learning, can set their own goals based on their strengths and needs, and can celebrate the successes of the other students in class.

My favorite lesson to teach is: Almost anything to do with math. It’s a joy to “watch the lights come on” and hear kids who struggle say that they love math.

Fourth-graders crack me up because: I’m getting close to retirement, and it cracks me up that fourth-graders think of me as ancient. During a memoir writing lesson, I brought in my wedding picture. A very sympathetic, concerned student looked at me, then back at the picture, and asked, “What happened, Mrs. Dalton?” Another student just shook his head and responded, “I guess she just got really old!” They keep you laughing AND humble!

I like to learn about: New places and cultures.

First job: Cleaning houses. It’s honest work, but that job definitely encouraged me to go on to college.

Most people don’t know that I: Back in the day, I spent a summer teaching preschool in a teepee in a commune in Taos, New Mexico.

In my down time I like to: Travel, read, and spend time with family and friends.

It really frustrates me when: It’s time to go on to another topic and I’d like to teach much deeper.

If I couldn’t be a teacher I would: I can’t think of what other profession I’d choose. It’s what I’ve always wanted to do. As a little girl, I mostly wanted to play teacher and convinced the neighborhood kids to all be my students.

Dream vacation: Revisit Barcelona, Spain. But instead of a brief visit, I’d like to spend about a month there… maybe in retirement.

Computech Teacher Featured in Video

Fresno County Office of Education’s Technology Services has featured Computer Middle School computer applications teacher Will Kimbley in the first in a series of videos showcasing innovative teaching. The video can be viewed at http://tinyurl.com/kimbley.

Judith Dalton’s wedding photo.
REGINALD “REGGIE” RUBEN

New director of transportation for Fresno Unified

Age: 38

Family: Married with two children, 10 and 2

Hobbies: Harley Davidsons; art

Reggie Ruben is Fresno Unified’s new director of transportation, overseeing more than 100 employees charged with ensuring the safety of the 9,500 students who ride Fresno Unified buses to school every day.

Ruben succeeds Ralph Meza, who retired late last year after 22 years with the department and 5 1/2 as director.

“I believe transportation is a major part of a child’s education,” Ruben said. “With the number of low income areas throughout Fresno, our buses are the only means of transportation for thousands of families on a daily basis. Without us providing this service, where will those students be?”

Ruben also acknowledged the Transportation Department’s role in expanding students’ horizons: “Many of our students have never been beyond the city limits. Our buses have provided these students an outlet to see the other parts of our valley, and throughout the state.”

Ruben’s goals are to continue providing safe transportation to students, whether its home-to-school or activity trips, and to continue with the district’s clean-air program, with a focus on replacing the fleet’s remaining diesel buses with compressed natural gas (CNG) buses using grants from the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control Board and Measure C. By this spring, 59 of the district’s 95 buses will be CNG.

“We’re helping to change the quality of air for our citizens, students and the entire valley,” Ruben said.

Ruben said he relishes the challenges of working in transportation, whether it’s traffic, weather conditions or the scheduling logistics of busing nearly 1,000 students every morning.

“Transportation is something you never master. You must constantly adapt to changes,” he said.

He praised the behind-the-scenes transportation staff who “put in countless hours to make sure the transportation needs of our students are met,” along with the district’s drivers. The drivers gave Ruben a standing ovation as he entered the drivers’ room on his first day leading the department, an emotional moment for Ruben because of the respect he has for his staff.

“They are in the trenches on a daily basis to provide a service needed for our community,” Ruben said.

Ruben began driving buses in Los Angeles when he was 19 years old. While working for Laidlaw Transit, he had the opportunity to transfer to the company’s Fresno office and in 1996, Fresno Unified hired him for his first job with Fresno Unified, as a six-hour, 10-month driver.

Ruben later continued his training at the State Instructors Academy and became a bus driver instructor with Fresno Adult School and then the supervisor of bus driver instruction for the district, with a direct role ensuring Fresno Unified students are transported by highly trained drivers. He was selected to replace Meza as director in November.

Ruben, who grew up in South Central Los Angeles among gang violence, said he could have easily “taken another path.”

“I would tell any student, never let someone choose your destination in life,” Ruben said. “Anyone can achieve success, but it takes hard work and determination.”

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A dramatic new academic building – built with Measure Q funds – is nearing completion at Edison High School and will be ready for students and staff when they return from the spring break in early April, creating a new visual identity for the school.

The two-story, 42,647-square foot building includes 20 standard classrooms, a special education classroom, four career technical education labs, a computer lab and presentation space with theater seating for 100. The new building will allow the school to eliminate 16 portable classrooms and eight antiquated labs.

“We are extremely excited about our new building not only for the high-quality learning environment it will provide our students and staff, but for the distinctive new look that will create for our campus,” said Principal Lindsay Sanders.

The building is under construction toward the front of the campus and faces the central core of the school and grassy quad area. With its energy-efficient design, it has been approved as a “high performing” building.

“The building creates an amazing new look for the school and the quad,” said Rick Andreasen, project manager for the district.

Features include:

• Solar panels producing 540,156 kilowatt hours annually
• Two-story atrium with skylight
• Two faculty workrooms strategically placed to maximize supervision of the quad and academic central core
• Free-flowing planter walls outside the building for outdoor gathering and seating

Edison’s black and yellow school colors are used on the exterior and interior and the design establishes a new architectural vernacular for the campus and a dramatic and memorable visual identity that Edison High did not have before. Fresno Unified Board of Education in 2009 to guide the district’s facilities needs over the next 15 years.

Other key Measure Q projects underway or in the design phase include:

• Buildings to house classrooms, the library, career center and administration at Fresno High School; the buildings’ classical architecture will complement historic Royce Hall and allow for the removal of 22 portables as well as the existing buildings at the front of the school to make way for green space
• Modernization of Hamilton K-8 School
• Classroom buildings at Roosevelt and Hoover high schools
• Remodel/upgrade of Roosevelt’s girls locker room
• Classroom buildings at Winchell, Aynesworth, Easterby and Centennial elementary schools to replace portables
• Planning for new classroom and administration buildings at Bullard High School
• Planning for a new classroom building and locker room remodel for McLane High School

Completed Measure Q projects include Hoover baseball and softball fields, classroom buildings at Mayfair, Rowell and Wilson elementary schools, and upgrades throughout the district.

Edison High School’s new academic building includes classrooms, a special education classroom, four career technical education labs, a computer lab, and presentation space with seating for 100.

Measure Q Creating New Look for Edison High and Across District

One of Fresno High School’s two new buildings continues to take shape. The buildings will house classrooms, the library, career center and administration.

Roosevelt High School’s new academic building opened its doors to students when they returned for classes following the winter break.

Progress continues on Rutherford B. Gaston Sr. Middle School, which will open in 2014 in southwest Fresno.
Fresno Unified Employees Raise Money for Babies

Following a highly successful inaugural fund drive for the March of Dimes last year, Fresno Unified employees have again launched a March for Babies campaign with a goal of raising $60,000.

The three-mile March for Babies walk starts at 9 a.m. Saturday, April 20 at Woodward Park, a festive event with food, music and camaraderie as thousands of Fresno-area walkers join together in raising money for March of Dimes. Since March for Babies began in 1970, walkers have raised an incredible $2.6 billion.

March of Dimes supports research to understand and help prevent premature births and other serious problems that threaten babies, and to foster programs in communities that help mothers have full-term pregnancies and help babies begin healthy lives. The organization works to reduce the number of babies born too soon – a half a million every year.

Leading up to the walk, Fresno Unified employees will raise money at their school sites or through the Education Center team, the top fundraiser in the district last year. The district surpassed its goal last year and raised $52,000.

“I was so proud of our district last year and our employees’ tremendous effort on behalf of babies,” said Public Information Officer Susan Bedi. “I know that we are going to be even more successful this year.”

The district is off to a great start. On January 24, team captains and representatives from schools across the district gathered at Hoover High School for an inspirational kickoff meeting, featuring Lynn Hogue from the March of Dimes.

Bullard’s Theater Gets a Makeover

The remodeled Bullard High School theater features a formal entrance with the ticket booth moved to the side; updated foyer and restrooms; and new walls, ceiling treatments and upgrades to acoustics, lighting, sound and seating for 298 in the actual theater. Accessibility was also improved.
**Students Benefit From Common Core Standards**

Fresno Unified is in the first year of a three-year plan to implement the Common Core State Standards, a new set of expectations of what students should know and be able to do. The new standards are rigorous, research-based and designed to prepare every student for success in college and the workforce.

Implementation in Fresno Unified follows the California State Board of Education unanimous vote in 2010 to adopt the new standards for mathematics and English language arts. These standards will replace the current California Content Standards.

For the first time, students in California will learn the same standards as students across the nation. With this change, parents will understand what students need to know at each step in their education. Parents will be assured that students have access to the same high-quality education others students receive throughout the United States. Benefits for students include:

- Students moving from different communities or states will have a smoother transition because the standards are consistent across the nation.
- Students will be prepared with the knowledge and skills to succeed in college and careers.
- Students will be able to apply their learning to real life.

Benefits for educators include:

- Educators will be able to narrow and deepen their focus because there are fewer standards.
- Educators will be able to teach for greater understanding in each unit of study.
- Educators will have clear goals for student learning and achievement in math and English language arts in each grade.

The Common Core State Standards for language arts will balance reading literature with reading informational text; balance narrative writing with informational, expository writing; focus on critical analyses of both fiction and non-fiction; emphasize vocabulary acquisition; and foster oral communication, collaboration and listening skills.

**Wawona Holds MLK Blood and Food Drive**

Wawona Middle School students held a blood and food drive as part of its seventh annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service activities on Jan. 21. Students also tied blankets for the Fresno County Sheriff’s Department and worked on school beautification projects.

**SUPT’S MESSAGE**

Continued from Page 3

I’m pleased to announce that we are now seeking applicants for our new teacher resident program. We’ve teamed with California State University, Fresno to bring a unique program to the Central Valley for those interested in entering the teaching profession. The program is geared towards those interested in teaching the grades 4-8 and I urge you to tell anyone who you think may be interested to apply. Participants will be prepared for the classroom with an emphasis on math and science instruction. It will combine Masters-level coursework, teacher credentialing coursework and a year-long apprenticeship in a classroom with a mentor teacher. The program lasts 13 months and residents will receive a $12,500 stipend during the training period. More information about the program can be found on the Fresno Unified website, along with a step-by-step guide through the application process. So, good luck and I hope that some of you will take advantage of this opportunity. What better way to change a system than from the inside?

The school year is racing by, but we have a lot of work left to do. Last year, we had more students graduate and go off to colleges and universities than ever before. Our staff works every day to create options for our students and this is a marker of the progress. This is a great community, filled with hard-working individuals helping to grow young adults who will become truly productive members of our society. I’m proud to be your superintendent and I thank you for your support and your continued encouragement.

**Dates to Know**

- Feb. 11 Lincoln’s Birthday
- Feb. 18 Presidents’ Day
- Mar. 25-Apr. 1 Spring Break
- May 27 Memorial Day
- June 13 Last Day of School
Fresno Unified’s Parent University continues to expand opportunities for parents to learn so that they can support their students academically, with spring cohort classes beginning the week of Feb. 25 at various school and community sites.

For the first time this spring, Parent University will pilot courses targeting parents with students in high school. Parents will delve into the nuts and bolts of high school and learn about the academic, career and elective courses their students need to be a career ready graduate. The curriculum will include an opportunity to tour career technical education programs as well as college campuses outside of the Central San Joaquin Valley.

Participants in courses from the first half of the school year recently visited Fresno Pacific University and California State University, Fresno with their students, providing an opportunity to learn first-hand about admissions requirements and get a feel for college life.

Parent University courses are available to Fresno Unified parents, guardians, and families, community members, and are taught in English, Spanish, Hmong and other languages as needed. A full listing is available at www.fresnounified.org/dept/parentuniversity. The Parent University team can be contacted at Parent.University@fresnounified.org or by calling (559)457-6006.

Parent University, in its third year, offers free classes to help parents better understand public education, how Fresno Unified operates and what it offers, and how to be involved, supportive parents.

Parent University has served approximately 8,465 parents, with 72% were Spanish-speaking parents, 13% English-speaking and 6% Hmong-speaking.

The Fresno, McLane, Roosevelt, and Sunnyside regions had more than 270 participants in each region.

Parent University leaders are encouraged by parents’ increased knowledge in a variety of areas, based on assessments that parents take as they begin and end courses. The biggest growth in knowledge during the fall came from parents of English learners, with a 29% increase. Classes for the parents of English learners focus on how students are identified as English learners and how they can help encourage English language proficiency.

Parent University tailors classes for other groups of parents as well:

• Classes for the parents of elementary students focus on the classroom learning environment; instructional strategies; the accountability systems in the district, such as state testing, instructional strategies, and academic opportunities.

• Classes for the parents of middle school students focus on the learning environment; how students in middle school develop, both physically and cognitively; the social and emotional changes parents can expect in their middle-school students and the difference between core and elective classes as well as the organizational skills necessary to succeed academically.

Parents who have gone through Parent University are becoming more involved in the district, serving as volunteers, recruiters and facilitators for Parent University, while others have stepped up to volunteer at schools and serve on district and school site committees.
When Teen Dating Turns Dangerous

The statistics can be startling: One in five high-school girls and one in 10 high-school boys has experienced violence or abuse in a teen dating relationship. Chances are your teen or someone they know may be a victim at the hands of someone they love.

It can be physical, emotional, verbal or sexual abuse. Teen dating abuse is not about someone being mad or two people having an argument – it’s about one person using power to control another person through fear, intimidation or physical force.

Like domestic violence, anyone is susceptible to teen dating violence. Violence can occur in any type of relationship, regardless of ethnicity, socio-economic class or gender.

Teen dating violence and abuse are bad for teens not just because of the immediate physical and emotional damage. They can lead to more serious health problems including eating disorders, depression and low self-esteem. Teens in abusive relationships are more likely to take sexual risks, do poorly in school, or experiment with drugs and alcohol.

February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month and a good time to have a discussion with your teen about what makes a relationship healthy— and, just as important, what makes for an unhealthy relationship. Knowing the difference, and the signs, can help break the cycle of violence.

As a physician at Kaiser Permanente Fresno, I try to educate my patients about domestic abuse and the growing problem of teen-dating violence. Many teens who are dating for the first time don’t even know they are in an abusive relationship. Sometimes it’s hard for them to recognize the abuse, especially when it doesn’t involve physical confrontation.

But even something as simple as having a boyfriend or girlfriend who calls, texts, e-mails or checks in all the time is potentially a warning sign. Although it may seem like all of the constant contact is a sign of affection, it can be a sign of someone who is trying to control the relationship.

Does your boyfriend or girlfriend:
• Act bossy and make all the decisions?
• Put you down in front of friends?
• Threaten to hurt or kill himself or herself?
• Blame you for “making” him or her treat you badly?
• Pressure you -- or force you -- to have unprotected sex?
• Stalk you? This can include constantly texting or calling you to find out where you are and who you’re with.

If your teen answered “yes” to any of these questions, he or she may be involved in an abusive relationship.

If you have concerns about your own teen’s relationship or if your teen knows someone who may be in an abusive relationship, there are many resources for help.

Kaiser Permanente addresses family violence by working with our partners in health care and the community to develop programs that work. We have free, online resources to deal with teen dating violence available at http://xnet.kp.org/domesticviolence/index.html

Sunnyside High Will Host Community-Wide Health Fair

A two-day community health fair – the first of its kind in Fresno – will be held March 16-17 at Sunnyside High School, providing basic medical health screening, vision screening and dental care to the public.

Healthy Fresno 2013, organized by the Tzu Chi Medical Foundation and community partners, will focus on medical screenings for the uninsured and low income, but no one will be turned away. More than 1,500 participants are expected to attend the event, which will be held from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. on March 16 and from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on March 17. Patient registration will start at 7 a.m.

Kaiser Permanente Fresno physicians and nurses and others will volunteer at the event to help administer the medical exams. A variety of health-related booths will be hosted by community groups emphasizing nutrition, medical, vision and alternative medicine. Dental care will include cleaning, fillings and extractions.

“We want to have a place for the community to go, where all of the community partners can be a part of it,” said Steven Voon, medical outreach and mobile administrator of the Tzu Chi Medical Foundation.

“Our goal is to try to help members of our community maintain their health in this tough economy, to continue to be healthy even if they have lost their insurance.”

Voon also noted that it’s important to stay on top of health issues so they don’t reach a crisis point in the emergency room and escalate into a more serious health problem due to lack of early detection and care.

The Tzu Chi Medical Foundation holds monthly small health events in Fresno but this is the first two-day community-wide health fair that the group has helped to organize for Fresno. The Tzu Chi Medical Foundation and partners have organized large health events in Los Angeles, Long Beach, Sacramento and Oakland since 2009.

Volunteers are needed to help with registration, triage and exams. To help, go to www.fresnomedicalteam.org or call (559) 291-8800.
District Weighs in on Healthy Eating

Fresno Unified’s Nutrition Center is constantly working on new ways to improve the health of students and combat the alarming number of children and young people who are unhealthy because of what they eat.

Efforts include grab-and-go breakfasts, appealing new menu items and serving items with less sugar and fat and more fiber. The Food Services Department is also working hand-in-hand with the Health Services Department on health issues.

“Nutritious meals lead to better attendance and behavior, support academic performance and contribute to a healthy lifestyle through development of life-long healthy eating habits,” said Jose Alvarado, director of Food Services for Fresno Unified.

Researchers and health officials are finding that an increasing number of children and young people are battling health problems traditionally found only in adults, such as Type 2 diabetes, asthma, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and joint issues. Valley doctors are diagnosing these types of ailments in kids – and it’s linked to childhood obesity.

Although the Valley is the food basket of the world, with an incredible array of fruits and vegetables, too many young people are not eating right and may have limited access to nutritional food.

Many Fresno Unified students are showing signs of obesity at an early age. In 2011-12, in assessing 13,276 students in the fifth, seventh and ninth grades, the district found that 10 percent – 1,431 students -- were considered obese, based on their body mass index (BMI) range. Seventeen percent – 2,285 students -- fell in the BMI range that is considered overweight.

Not only are too few students taking advantage of healthy meals on campus, many are bringing extremely unhealthy food to eat at school.

To increase meal participation, the district:

• Launched a “What’s for Breakfast?” campaign, offering incentives for breakfast participation. For example, a random sticker system selects elementary students who eat a school breakfast and rewards them with a yellow rubber bracelet. Classes with the most bracelets are rewarded with T-shirts.

• Increased “grab and go” breakfast carts at high schools this year. Instead of having to go to the cafeteria for breakfast, students can grab healthy items like yogurt from carts in high-traffic areas as they arrive in the morning.

• Are constantly monitoring schools’ participation rates and setting individual targets, as well as collecting information about what works at sites with higher than average participation so the district can replicate at other campuses.

• Added appealing new items this year, including chile verde, chicken pot pie, whole grain breakfast biscuits, whole grain pasta and a variety of locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables.

Alvarado said the district is committed to developing and preparing new menu items that appeal to Fresno Unified’s diverse students: “Student acceptance of menu items is integral to attaining our program’s goals.”

The district has a number of other initiatives to improve the health of students, including participating in the grant-funded Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program at 45 elementary campuses, which provides daily individual packages of kid-sized local fresh produce during recess.

The district also eliminated strawberry-flavored milk from menus, reformulated the non-fat chocolate flavored to have fructose corn syrup, and promotes 1% fat unflavored milk as a first-choice in all cafeterias.

The district is tackling the problem of childhood obesity in other ways as well every day in schools. For example, school nurses address the issue directly with families as they assess students who are possibly overweight or obese by discussing nutrition and exercise with parents and guardians. School nurses also may refer a student to their health-care provider for lab tests.

The purpose of a medical referral is to begin intervention early to avoid potential health risks. Families can contact the school nurse with concerns.

The district has a joint-use agreement at Burroughs Elementary to open up playing fields and recreational space during non-school hours, providing a way for neighborhood families to exercise. Nurses are beginning to coordinate efforts with P.E. teachers to track student growth records, information critical in helping to combat obesity in students. The district has expanded after-school programs so that more students can take part in the games and physical education component.

What’s Your BMI?
Calculating body mass index (BMI) is a reliable measure of health and body fatness and is calculated based on height and weight. The Centers for Disease Control, www.cdc.gov/healthyweight has an easy-to-use BMI calculator.

• A BMI less than 18.5 falls within the underweight range

• A BMI from 18.5 to 24.9 falls within the normal or healthy weight range

• A BMI from 25.0 to 29.9 falls within the overweight range

• A BMI of 30.0 and higher falls within the obese range

Health Committee Meeting Info
Parents, students and employees are invited to attend the Coordinated School Health Committee meeting at 3:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 28 at the California Health Collaborative, 1680 W. Shaw Ave.

In many Valley cities, more than 40 percent of children are overweight or obese, according to the Center for Health Policy Research at UCLA.

Fresno Unified is addressing the problem on several fronts, including increasing the number of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch and breakfast who participates. Although 82 percent of Fresno Unified students are eligible for free or reduced-price meals, 32 percent participate in free breakfast and 74 percent participate in free lunch.

What's Your BMI?
Plan Now for Tdap Immunization

California law requires all students currently in 6th grade to have proof of having received a pertussis (whooping cough) booster vaccine to start 7th grade. To meet this requirement a child will need to have one dose of a pertussis containing vaccine on or after their 7th birthday. The law allows parents to choose exemptions to immunization requirements based on their personal beliefs or for medical reasons verified by the child’s health care provider.

Check your child’s immunization record with the chart below or call your health care provider to determine if your child has met the requirement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vaccine Name</th>
<th>Age Requirement</th>
<th>Meets 7th Grade Requirement?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tdap Adacel</td>
<td>Must be given on or after 7th birthday</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boostrix DTaP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DTP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Td</td>
<td>DTaP or DTP given before 7th birthday</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DECAV</td>
<td>History of whooping cough (pertussis) disease</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TENIVAC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DT</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ineligible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What You Can Do Now

Send a copy of your child’s immunization record to the school office as soon as possible so the school nurse can update your child’s immunization status. If our records indicate that your child has NOT met this new vaccine requirement, a note will be included on your child’s report card. Adults are also advised to get a pertussis (Tdap) booster to protect themselves and their families.

If your child needs this vaccine, a pertussis (Tdap) booster may be obtained from:

- Your private health care provider
- Clinica Sierra Vista (visit www.clinicasierravista.org for clinic locations)
- Fresno Unified School District (visit website for Tdap Clinic locations)
- Fresno County Health Department, 1221 Fulton Mall 1st Floor, Immunization, (559) 445-3550

If you need a copy of your child’s immunization record or have questions, please contact your child’s school nurse.

Fresno Unified Seeking Applicants to Pursue Math and Science Teaching

Fresno Unified is inviting aspiring teachers to apply for a new program that emphasizes math and science instruction in grades four through eight, providing cutting-edge strategies to teach subjects that many students struggle with.

The middle grades teacher residency program will also address a possible shortage in math and science teachers due to expected retirements over the next five years. More information is available at http://tinyurl.com/teachatfusd.

A grant from the S.D. Bechtel Jr. Foundation will help fund the teacher residency program, a partnership with California State University, Fresno. The two-year grant will train approximately 20 teacher-residents a year for a total of 40 new teachers.

The 13-month long program will feature university coursework developed and co-taught by Fresno Unified teachers, district leadership and Fresno State faculty. Residents will be placed in Fresno Unified classrooms full-time with a trained master teacher who will serve as the teacher of record.

Residents will receive a $12,500 stipend during the training period and be required to commit to teach in the Fresno Unified School District for a minimum of five years after completing the program.

Superintendent Michael Hanson has said the program is a “tremendous opportunity” not only for aspiring teachers but to provide the district an opportunity to have a hand in training teachers to address the specific needs of English learners and better understand child and adolescent development.
CART Students Showcase Work

Bullard High School student Phil Vanderville shows off his work to peers at the Center for Advanced Research & Technology (CART) Showcase, an annual celebration of learning that highlights the school’s programs and features demonstrations by students.

Gallo Donates Laptops to Fresno Unified

Students at several Fresno Unified campuses returned from the winter break to find new laptops.

Thanks to the suggestion of former Fresno Unified school psychologist Patrick Hanks, the E. & J. Gallo Winery donated nearly 800 gently used laptops to the district, many of which will be used by special education students.

This marks the second time that Gallo has made such a generous donation to Fresno Unified in three years. During the 2009-2010 academic year the business donated 250 desktop computers to the district for special education students to use.

“We are very grateful to Mr. Hanks and Gallo for this generous donation. Access to technology is an important part of today’s educational landscape, but in these tough economic times it’s not always easy to ensure that students are granted that access. Donations like this by local businesses make a tremendous difference in the academic success of our students,” said Superintendent Michael Hanson.

Some of the school sites receiving the laptops included Hoover and Bullard high schools, Fort Miller, Lawless and Tioga middle schools and Hidalgo, Pyle, Holland and Birney elementary schools.

Fresno Unified Will Limit Full Contact

The Fresno Unified School District has adopted a new practice aimed at reducing football injuries, especially concussions.

High schools will no longer allow full contact football practice outside of the official high school football season. Instead of full-contact football camp for the seven high schools, the district will hold standard seven-on-seven non-contact passing leagues and standard lineman training.

Fresno Unified athletic directors felt it was imperative to protect the safety of student athletes playing football, just as the National Football League has done based on their medical research and CIF is recommending, said Doug Semmen, district athletics manager.

“We want to be proactive in protecting our student athletes playing football by reducing the amount of full contact throughout a high school playing career, thereby preventing as many injuries as possible and helping to prevent any long-term effects from cumulative hits,” Semmen said. “We are doing what is right for our kids and their future, and for the sport of football.”

McLane Girls Wrestling Makes School History

Dr. Bruce Lippman explained that, “Wrestling is the one sport where you compete both individually and as a team. Many life skills are learned in this sport. To quote one of the greatest collegiate wrestlers and coaches of this sport. To quote one of the greatest

McLane High school wrestler Yesenia Betancourt is among a growing number of girls competing in wrestling. Her campus is hosting the Central Section tournament.

On Valentine’s Day, when many high school girls are wondering who their Valentine is, the girls on the McLane High Schools girls wrestling team will be trying to win wrestling matches.

On Feb. 14, for the first time in McLane’s history, the girls wrestling program will host the CIF Central Section Girls Wrestling Championship.

Girls’ wrestling is a rapidly growing sport not only in the Central San Joaquin Valley but throughout California. More than 120 high school girls are participating in wrestling throughout the Central Section this year. McLane has one of the most successful programs, with several girls placing at the state meet last year.

Weigh-in begins at 10 a.m. on Feb. 14. Actual wrestling starts at noon with the championship finals beginning at approximately 6 p.m. The tournament is open to the public as spectators. CIF Championship Admission price is $10 for adults, $8 for students with ID and Seniors (age 65+), $7 for children (free under age 6).

Rowell Students Meet With Poet Gary Soto

Rowell Elementary School welcomed award-winning poet and author Gary Soto on Jan. 16 to speak with fourth-, fifth- and sixth-grade students about his life as a writer. Soto, a graduate of Roosevelt High School and Fresno State College, has been generous with his time in encouraging local students.

Lawless K-8 School students from (front to back) Davion Woods, Jermiah Jackson, Sebastian Sandoval and Antonio Sanchez work on computers donated by E. & J. Gallo Winery with teacher Cheryl Montgomery.
Parent Spotlight: Rene Logan

Rene Logan is a proud parent of three Fresno Unified students at Baird Middle School and Edison High School.

About Rene Logan:
- King Elementary PTA member for many years, served as president and vice president for the School Site Council
- Noon-time assistant at King and Baird
- Assisted the district in selecting new curriculum
- Member of district panel for hiring principals and vice principals
- Received the Parent Volunteer Award from the district in September
- Mentor for the Young Men’s Alliance at Baird

Co-founder of Dad’s Day at King Elementary and Baird

The Dad’s Day event is an opportunity for dads to come to school and spend an hour with their child, followed by a luncheon and guest speaker. The event at Baird has expanded from 75 participants to 150. Dad’s Day at Baird is Feb. 27.

Q and A with Rene Logan

How has Parent University helped you to become more engaged in your children’s education?

“I understand the importance of education. I took a class at King and learned a lot from other parents. Also, I participated in nutrition classes and learned that being healthy and eating right is part of a good education. A-Z, anything you need help with, the district offers a program for it.”

What’s the most important thing you’ve learned from Parent University courses?

“To never give up!”

What are your hopes and dreams for your children?

“To be well educated and to go to college. I hope I have pushed them in the right direction to make the best choices for their education.”

What’s your favorite tip for other parents?

“Come to school meetings and get well informed.”

Do You Have Sleep Apnea? Snore? Do You Dislike Your CPAP?

Treatment options for sleep apnea and snoring have been limited to the CPAP for many years, but times have changed, now there is an alternative. The modern treatment for these problems is a medical oral appliance that is comfortable, convenient, and more dignified than the CPAP. Most people no longer need to wear the dreaded CPAP mask.

If you want to feel better, be happier and have more energy, call Dr. Schapansky today for a consultation appointment.

559-57SNORE (559-577-6673)

Dr. Weldon Schapansky
Graduate of California State University, Fresno
University of the Pacific, School of Dentistry

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