Preschool Jump-Starts Student Learning

Enrollment in Fresno Unified preschool has more than doubled in the past four years, with the number of preschoolers learning in district classrooms expected to top 3,200 in the coming school year.

The jump in enrollment reflects the district’s additional investment of $10 million to hire more teachers and staff and add preschools to eight additional sites and add additional preschool classes at 10 other schools. The district is currently serving 3,121 preschoolers compared to 1,293 in 2011.

Including programs for infants and toddlers, the district is serving 3,266 children from birth to 4 years old this year.

This means that more students are entering kindergarten better prepared, academically and socially. In addition, district staff is able to intervene earlier to help young learners who may struggle.

“I am incredibly pleased with the growth that we have made as a system in supporting our amazing preschoolers throughout the community,” said Superintendent Michael Hansen.

A large body of research connects student achievement with participation in preschool, also known as prekindergarten. For example, a study published by Arthur Reynolds and a team of researchers at the University of Wisconsin in 2007 found that children who attended a high quality preschool were more likely to graduate from high school and less likely to need special education.

District Collaborates with Colleges to Improve Transition to Higher Education

- Goal is to Increase Bachelor’s Degree Completion

Fresno Unified is embarking on a groundbreaking new project to increase the number of low-income students who complete their bachelor’s degrees.

Using a $500,000 grant from the College Futures Foundation, the district is partnering with Fresno City College, Fresno State and University of California at Merced to share data to increase students’ successful transition from high school to college, and from community college to a four-year college or university.

“I see this new partnership as a critical step to making sure even more of our students achieve their dreams of...”
# 2016 High School Graduation Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAY</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>GRAD TIME</th>
<th>PRACTICE</th>
<th>SCHOOL</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
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<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
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<td>Saroyan Theatre</td>
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<td>7 a.m.</td>
<td>DeWolf</td>
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<td>5:30 p.m.</td>
<td>8 a.m.</td>
<td>J.E. Young</td>
<td>Saroyan Theatre</td>
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<td>Save Mart Center</td>
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<td>Saroyan Theatre</td>
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<td>9 a.m.</td>
<td></td>
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## Parent Dates to Know

April 4-May 27: Standardized testing window for elementary and middle school students

April 11-May 20: Standardized testing window for high school students

May 10: Fresno Unified Scholarship Banquet (see story Page 14)

May 11: Board of Education meeting

May 10: Fresno Unified Scholarship Banquet (see story Page 14)

May 25: Board of Education meeting

Nearly 1,000 parents participated in the Parent University Parent Recognition Ceremony on April 14 at Roosevelt High School, which also highlighted Parent University’s fifth anniversary. Parent University and its community partners offer classes to empower parents to help educate their children by providing them with information about the resources and opportunities the district offers, and connecting them to the school community and resources in the community at large.
SUPERINTENDENT’S Message

District Focuses on Early Learning, Expands Preschool Sites

We have all heard the adage, “You’re never too old to learn,” but have you ever stopped to consider the other side of that coin? “You’re never too young to begin learning.”

Our children are our most important asset. As our future citizens, they will be responsible for shaping our community and our country’s future -- ensuring growth and prosperity for the generations that follow them. It won’t be easy, so we need to provide them every possible tool.

It’s well documented that Fresno is fighting concentrated poverty. Fresno Unified’s answer to concentrated poverty is concentrated education, and that effort starts at an early age. The Board of Education has invested $10 million in resources in early learning. The research is overwhelming that starting the formal education process as early as possible is critical. If we can get our youngest residents into classrooms when they’re 4 years old, we’re setting them up for increased success throughout their academic career.

With the help of our original investments back in 2011, we now have 62 early learning sites, totaling 109 classrooms offering 182 classes and serving more than 3,200 students. Our $10 million expansion of early learning programs has led to deeper collaborative work with national organizations like the Packard Foundation. It too recognizes that early learning for our youth is paramount. In fact, last year the Packard Foundation made a 10-year investment in only three places in the country, and Fresno Unified was one of those places.

Fresno Unified offers a range of structured early learning programs that help build and promote social and emotional development, language and cognitive skills, pre-math and literacy skills as well as developing a child’s motor skills. Programs offer a wide-range of options for students and parents, including three-hour and full day pre-kindergarten programs, dual-immersion with instruction in Spanish at selected sites, inclusion programs, early learning classes focused on oral language development,

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Message from First 5 Executive Director Emilia Reyes

Exposing Children to Positive Experiences, Learning Early on is Essential

When you brought your newborn baby home from the hospital did you drive a good 20 miles under the speed limit like I did? Were you so cautious in everything you did, for fear of doing something wrong? Me, too. And I’m guessing you and I are not alone.

Babies don’t come with parent manuals when they are born. We enter into parenthood with experiences handed down to us from our own parents and from what we’ve seen from parents around us. Sometimes this is a good start. Sometimes it is not. Unless we are experts in early childhood development, it’s likely that we will all need some guidance along the way. We need to know how to best communicate with our young children, help them learn, get along with others and so much more. We need information, help and support.

I’m the executive director at First 5 Fresno County -- an organization dedicated to making a positive impact in the lives of children ages 0-5 and their families -- and I’m also a mom, and I get it. I know that parenting can bring so many what-ifs that the weight can be tremendous. Fortunately, First 5 Fresno County is here to help.

When you work in efforts that support parents with knowledge and resources to help their young children thrive.

The majority of the brain develops in the first three years of life. By exposing children to positive experiences early on, we help ensure they walk onto the school campus their first day of kindergarten ready to learn. Ready to learn does not necessarily mean that the child is reciting his ABCs and 123s. Being ready to learn is so much more than that. A child is ready to learn when he knows he is loved. She is confident. His curiosity is embraced. Her physical body is well. It takes parents, families, neighbors, schools and the community to get our young kids to this place.

Equipped parents don’t know everything, they just know when and where to ask for help. First 5 Fresno County is working to equip parents by providing them with information about what to expect as their babies grow from within the womb to school-aged children, and every stage in between.

In addition, First 5 Fresno County is proud to partner with Fresno Unified and other school districts through the Birth to Third Grade Initiative. This initiative helps schools and communities create support for children and parents every step of the way, from birth through third grade. This new way of investing in young children and families is making such great strides that Fresno Unified has attracted additional funding from the Lucile Packard Foundation to improve parents’, caregivers’ and educators’ interactions with young children -- a great win for parents and their little ones.

And finally, the community can help by ensuring resources are readily available to families. Yes, we as parents are our children’s first teachers, but we aren’t their only teachers. First 5 Fresno County partners with organizations to connect families with young children to whatever it is they need to thrive. Perhaps it’s as simple as providing parents with tips on interacting with their babies. Or maybe it’s as complex as helping a parent identify a child’s disability and connecting them to state-funded services. For many, it’s somewhere in between. Whatever the case, we want parents, pediatricians, childcare providers, aunts, uncles, grandparents and teachers to all have somewhere to turn when they are concerned about a child in their care.

More importantly, we want to connect them to the resources they need to help that child succeed -- and be ready for kindergarten.

Yes, the responsibility of parenting becomes oh-so-real on that extraordinarily slow ride home from the hospital. The good news, though, is that we as parents are not alone. First 5 Fresno County is here to help build a community that supports parents and is devoted to helping all young children in Fresno County thrive.

For more information, visit www.first5fresno.org.

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See SUPT. MESSAGE SPANISH AND HMONG

Continued on page 15
Knowledge is Power: Fresno Unified School District Offers Comprehensive Professional Learning Program for all Employees

Editor’s Note: Fresno Unified is committed to maintaining its status as the employer of choice in the central San Joaquin Valley. The district will offer a series of stories outlining the many benefits of working within Fresno Unified.

For video, go to vimeo.com/fresnounified/employerofchoice

Fresno Unified employees hold interesting and challenging jobs, are rewarded for the contributions they make in students’ lives, and are provided with a variety of training and development opportunities to progress professionally.

All employees -- certificated staff, certificated leaders, and classified staff -- are provided with a system of professional learning that offers opportunities to grow professionally and gain skills and knowledge for high performance.

“Our wide range of professional learning opportunities separates Fresno Unified from many school districts statewide,” said Melissa Dutra, instructional superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Learning. “A true professional never stops learning. We equip our employees with curriculum based on best practices and the most up-to-date research.”

Certificated teachers receive a minimum of 24 hours of district-led professional learning and a minimum of 54 hours of site-based professional learning. Trainings consists of face-to-face as well as structured collaboration time to maximize teacher learning.

As part of the continuum of support for teachers, Fresno Unified is committed to thoughtful, common, and differentiated professional learning. For example, to meet the needs of new teachers, each new teacher is assigned an instructional coach who works side-by-side with them on a weekly basis for two years.

Support is intended to help new teachers take effective actions that will result in substantial and sustained improvements in performance. They also participate in five additional days of professional learning that includes classroom observations and conference style sessions to meet their needs. These five days support the baseline professional learning that all teachers receive.

EARLY LEARNING
Continued from page 1

education, be held back a grade or get in trouble with the law than students who did not attend preschool.

The district began the building process for increasing preschool participation in 2010 with the launch of the Early Learning Task Force. The group reviewed research highlighting the positive impact of early childhood programs, found an inadequate supply of early learning programs in Fresno and committed to increasing access to early learning programs in the district.

The Board of Education unanimously approved the recommendations of the Early Learning Task Force presented in a comprehensive report to the board and community in 2011. Since that time, enrollment in early learning programs has steadily increased each year:

Because research clearly shows early education programs must be high quality to really make a difference for students, Fresno Unified devoted staff and funds to develop an intensive professional development and coaching model. This has proven to be a tremendous success, providing increased support for individual learners in preschool classrooms.

In addition, the district secured the Starting Smart and Strong Initiative, a grant supported by the Packard Foundation, and is creating innovative practices to improve the quality of adult-child interaction for early learners. For example, providing resources to families, extended families and informal caregivers so they can provide nurturing environments to children.

Also, as part of the Starting Smart and Strong Initiative Fresno Unified is partnering with Early Head Start, Head Start, and Children’s Services Network to provide educators with the tools and training they need to create quality connections and engaging learning activities that address the needs of all children.

The district is already seeing the benefits of these practices for children, service providers and interagency collaboration across Fresno.

Enrolling in Preschool

• Enrollment for preschool for 2016-17 school year has been underway since late March

• To enroll, call (559) 457-3802 or (559) 457-3803
Sixth Grade Camp Trips Create Lasting Memories for Students

For the first time in the history of Fresno Unified, all district sixth grade students had the opportunity to go to outdoor school this year. For many students, it was their very first time to the mountains.

With the school year winding down, a final handful of schools will take their trips in May. More than 4,200 students traveled to overnight camps, with student participation at nearly 90% for the trips.

Students stayed in Calvin Crest, Green Meadows and Sierra Outdoor School, all in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. More than 50 of the district’s 67 sixth grade classrooms already have camp reservations set for the 2016-17 school year.

Students had the chance to learn science and environmental lessons in an outdoor setting and interact outside the four walls of the classroom with peers, staff and parents. Students hiked, tested their skills on climbing walls and participated in a variety of other fun activities not possible in the normal school setting.

McCardle Principal Linda McLaughlin’s sixth grade students spent three nights at Calvin Crest camp March 8-11. She attended dinner and the quiz show Spin It to Win It activity on the final evening.

“I was able to get to know some students on a different level by sitting down to eat dinner family style and it was awesome to see students working together as cabin groups to review what they learned during the outdoor education experience,” McLaughlin said.

She said it made a huge difference to families to not have to worry about fundraising to pay for sixth grade camp.

Lori Barcus, a sixth grade teacher at McCardle, said camp was “one of the best experiences we could ever provide for them.”

“Not only are the outdoor interactions with nature an amazing way to learn, but their team building skills and relationships with others are also enhanced,” Barcus said. “We truly believe that our students have gained a wealth of knowledge and experiences at camp that will enrich their lives forever.”

Rick Christensen, a sixth grade teacher at Yokomi Elementary School, said naturalists at Sierra Outdoor School presented the perfect mix of adventure and education to keep students highly engaged and thoroughly entertained.

The district’s Goal 2 staff congratulated all 67 elementary schools in supporting students and getting them to camp. The schools worked hard to make the expanded enrichment opportunities a reality for sixth grade students and teachers did a terrific job ensuring students will remember this experience the rest of their lives.

Kings Canyon Middle School teacher Celeste Avedikian, top, poses at Microsoft headquarters in the Silicon Valley with CoderGirlz members, from left, Nayelli Evans, Tiffany Gimbari, Sydnee Spllettstoesser, and Carolina Pulido from Cooper Academy and Vannie Chanpheng, Betsua Andrade and Alison Chang from Kings Canyon.

Girls in Programming Club

Encouraged to Crack the Code

Nearly three dozen CoderGirlz club members from Computech, Cooper Academy, Kings Canyon and Scandinavian middle schools and Edison High School had the life-changing opportunity to meet with a diverse panel of female technologists at Microsoft’s Silicon Valley campus.

Codergirlz is a new Fresno Unified coding club for middle school girls who are curious about coding or already love to code. The clubs build self-confidence and interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics and prepare students for computer science courses.

The Microsoft developers the students met with on March 28 encouraged the girls to help change the culture of women in technology by pursuing their

See CODERGIRLZ
Continued on page 12
Tenaya Middle School Teacher uses Humor to Connect with Students

Tracy Owensby teaches English and the Laptop Program at Tenaya Middle School, where she has taught her entire 25-year career. She was an Excellence in Education finalist in February, recognized by her peers for her challenging and engaging lessons and welcoming classroom environment, and for helping create a positive campus culture.

What is different about teaching middle school students vs other grades?

Working with middle school kids is watching the process of “human metamorphosis” daily. They come in short, sweet, and a bit naive, and leave having invented it all. That said, I believe kids of all ages need to be nurtured through creative and challenging content, high expectations and structure, and definitely a teacher with a good sense of humor!

**How did you come to choose teaching as a career?**

Honestly, I tried to fight it. My dad, Ed Parrish, was a teacher and administrator. However, being a tad stubborn, I wanted to do my own thing. I was a Business Marketing major at Fresno State, and at the end of my junior year, I realized I was fighting nature.

**What do you enjoy the most about your job?**

I am always making fun of myself, to get a laugh out of them, in order to connect content with something silly or positive. (Trust me, there is nothing fun about grammar!) I also love that

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Rosemary Galvan-Reyes, a 20-year employee with the district, is the highly regarded attendance clerk at Roosevelt High School, a position she has held for two years. She was a finalist for an Excellence in Education award in February. Roosevelt High Principal Michael Allen says Galvan-Reyes provides “vital support to some of our most at-risk students.”

**What is the weirdest excuse you have heard as to why a student was absent?**

My dog was in labor and I had to help it.

**What do you do to encourage better student attendance?**

I collect cans and buy bus tokens for students who I know are trying very hard to get good grades and trying to accomplish their dreams of walking across the stage and receiving their diploma.

**Why are some students absent so often?**

It could be many reasons: I have to watch over younger siblings, I don’t have clean clothing, and I am being bullied and am afraid to ask for help. Or the family is homeless and embarrassed to ask for help or afraid if they do they might be rejected or looked down upon.

**If you were not an attendance clerk, what career would you choose?**

I would have loved to have been an attorney.

**What is your dream vacation?**

Hawaii.

**What is one thing most people do not know about you?**

I was a victim of domestic violence. But that’s OK. It made me stronger and I will always fight for anyone who needs help.
Oscar Rivera arrived at Edison High School in 2014 knowing only a few words of English and still recovering from his 1,000-mile trek -- on his own -- from his home in Honduras to Texas. His father was dead and his mother missing.

Despite obstacles that would have defeated many twice his age, the 17-year-old is on track to graduate June 6 from Edison. He arrived with zero credits but thanks to the guidance of counselors, took extra courses and worked hard so that he can graduate on time with his class.

“To have a kid who has gone through what he has, walked all that way, I think he can do anything he puts his mind to,” said Arthur Sulcer, Oscar’s academic counselor.

He also benefitted from the provisions of Assembly Bill 167, which waives local graduation requirements for foster-care students in favor of the state-mandated graduation requirements. The bill applies to foster-care students who changed schools in their junior or senior years.

Oscar earned a 3.5 GPA last semester and is earning A’s and B’s this semester. He plans to attend Fresno City College as part of the Promise Scholars program for students in foster care.

“We think that she passed away,” Oscar said. “It took him two months to reach the United States to find work and send money home. An uncle sent him $100 for the journey. He traveled by foot with a group of 20 as far as Guatemala, then traveled alone.

A year later, he and his siblings had no money and at age 13 he decided to walk to the United States to find work and send money home. An uncle sent him $100 for the journey. He traveled by foot with a group of 20 as far as Guatemala, then traveled alone.

He carried only a school-sized backpack with food, some clothes, a small knife and a blanket. He slept along the way on the ground, hearing wild animals at night. It took him two months to reach Texas, arriving Dec. 16, 2013. The border patrol placed him in a camp for Honduran refugees. He was there for 29 days before a relative in Mendota paid his airfare to fly to Fresno. He was able to obtain paperwork allowing him to stay with the uncle.

He worked in the fields of Mendota for nine months, but immigration officials told him he would be deported unless he went to school. He attended Mendota High School for two weeks but his living arrangement with his relatives was no longer working out.

He was placed in the foster care system and went to live with his foster parent on September 3, 2014 and began attending Edison High. This move set him on a path to success.

“My foster mom helps me with everything in life,” Oscar said.

At Edison High, he took English immersion classes to learn the language and worked hard to do well in school. He was motivated by a desire to help his sisters. He made friends and impressed his teachers. He will get a part-time job this summer and hopes to travel to Honduras to visit his sisters after graduation. His sisters call every Sunday. His ultimate goal is to become a California Highway Patrol officer.

“Sending money to his family, that’s his main goal right now.”

This, his final semester at Edison, he takes seven classes (including three English courses), then three hours of physical science at night four days a week at Fresno Adult School so that he can graduate next month. He will be allowed to graduate with the state-mandated requirement of 130 credits.

He will graduate in June despite arriving two years ago with zero credits and little English.
Gabby’s Room has opened at Heaton Elementary School in a portable classroom, filled with donated and new sensory integration and motor skills equipment to help students with autism.

The room is named for Gabrielle Cleo Ellis, a graduate of Fresno High School and student at Fresno City College who died at age 20 in 2010 in a car accident. She had plans to pursue a career as an art therapist for children.

Her mother, Christine Breaud, is the speech language pathologist at Heaton. Donors include Breaud and the Ellis Family Partnership of Nancy, Howard and Robert Ellis.

“It’s wonderful to see children do what comes natural through play. Children have taught me so much about living joyfully in the moment,” Breaud said.

Gabby’s Room features four different swings, water and sand tables, bean bag chair, spin top, exercise balls tent, LED lights, tumbling ramp, crash pad, scooter, tubs, kinetic sand, and a trampoline. Donated extra funds are available to replenish materials and purchase additional supplies. Some of the equipment came from other motor skills rooms in the district that were no longer being used.

Students with autism typically struggle with sensory input and output. Sensory integration (SI) is a developmental theory describing how people organize sensory information from their bodies and the environment to move, play and learn. SI develops in the course of ordinary childhood activities and provides a crucial foundation for later, more complex learning and behavior. The sensory experiences include touch, smell, sight, taste, hearing, movement, and body awareness. Gabby’s Room is specifically designed to stimulate and challenge all of the senses.

The equipment is for autism program students primarily, but time is set aside for general education students to use the equipment as well.
Roeding, Lawless Teachers are Educators of the Week

Julie Johnson, a sixth-grade teacher at Roeding Elementary School, and Karen Wong, a first grade teacher at Lawless Elementary School, were both recently named KSEE24’s Educator of the Week. Each week, the station honors a teacher in the valley who goes above and beyond.

Edison, Computech Excel at History Day Competition

Following the Fresno County History Day competition March 12, Edison High School champions who will move on the state competition May 5-7 in Rocklin are: Historical Paper on the Explorations of John Muir, Gisell Vandrick; Historical Paper on the Encounters Leading to the Compromise of 1850, Catherine Jalomo; Group Website on the Exploration of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Laura Larsen, Jake Hanson, Hannah Millhollen, Ryhan Arnett; Group Performance on the Encounters of Religious-based Hate, Rachel Mrkaich, Anthony Perez, Omar Ceja, Richard McCoy, Gisel Delacerda.

Other winners were: Third place Group Exhibit on the Exploration of Cloning, Dillion Lay, Sandra Rodriguez-Paredes, Johana Herrera and Maria Macias; third place Group Website on the Exploration of Women’s Rights, Darielle Green, Sambria Morgan, Valerie Estrada and Summer Ghaeleb; runner-up Group Documentary on the Jewish Curse (Encountering the Holocaust), Harneet Kaur, Mariana Olivo, Karen Tapia and Anyely Hernandez; runner-up Individual Exhibit: The Encounter that Launched the Gay Rights Movement, Mayahuel Garcia; runner-up Historical Paper on the Encounters of the Youth Counter Culture, Samira Abed; runner-up Individual Website on Womansim: An Exploration of Black Feminism, Katie Bordona.

Fresno Unified, AT&T Partner to Teach Students Valuable Lesson

Roosevelt High School students learned firsthand the dangers of distracted driving thanks to a simulator provided by AT&T on campus March 31. Students had the opportunity to take a test drive in the “It Can Wait” simulator, which aims to teach students about the dangers of sending or looking at texts, Tweets, posts or emails while driving.

Wawona Will Host Multicultural Fair

Wawona Middle School will host an on-campus Multicultural Fair from 11 a.m.-3 p.m., May 14 to bring the community together and promote cultural awareness. Various community members and organizations will be on hand to present information to attendees. The event will also feature bounce houses, food trucks, the mobile health truck, and cultural presentations.

Edison Debaters are Valley Champions

Edison High School seniors Samira Abed and Katie Bordona won a Valley title in Public Forum Debate at Stockdale High School March 4-5 and moved on to the California High School Speech Association’s State Championships in April. They were joined by Edison’s Kyle Tsutsui.

COLLEGE FUTURES

Continued from page 1

higher education,” said Fresno Unified Superintendent Michael Hanson.

The non-profit College Futures Foundation works to remove systemic and institutional barriers to college degrees, enabling students to access the resources they need to complete their degrees on time and help California thrive.

Project will Align Resources

Through the project, the district and colleges will work to better align systems and coordinate resources to increase student academic achievement, college preparation, matriculation and transition, university transfers, and the rate of bachelor’s degree completions.

The effort builds on an existing Fresno Unified partnership with UC Merced that embeds seven UC Merced professional and technical staff in Fresno Unified’s Department of Equity and Access to help develop and monitor student data between the two educational systems.

Staff is able to monitor students not at grade level or who have gotten off track to graduate so that they get the support they need.

How it will Work

Using the College Futures Foundation grant, the district will place personnel from Fresno State and the State Center Community College District in Fresno Unified to work alongside UC Merced and district staff to improve practices that boost student achievement in high school and college.

Through the project, Fresno Unified and higher education partners will be able to identify the most challenging barriers that keep students from transitioning successfully to college. The partnership will be able to access “real time” accurate student data; develop new, critical indicators to help spot students who are struggling; and improve monitoring of student achievement from all educational sources.

Proven Track Record

One of the reasons Fresno Unified received the grant from the College Futures Foundation was the success it had already achieved with the work of its Equity and Access staff. The work was launched in 2009, focused on building a career and college-going culture. The first phase focused on training for academic counselors, A-G course completion (for admission to UC and CSU campuses) and graduation rates.

Equity and Access worked with academic counselors on tools and processes so they could better identify and remove barriers keeping students from being eligible for college, including establishing an A-G Monitoring Tool database. Staff also redesigned the summer school program starting in 2010 so that students who had gotten off track to graduate or complete A-G courses could make up the work. Students were pre-enrolled in the classes they needed and had to opt out if they were not going to attend summer school.

Social/Emotional Addressed

More recently, deeper investments are being made in providing social emotional supports to students, such as social workers and counselors, because behavioral issues and poor attendance is often the reason students get D’s or F’s in classes and are then not eligible for college.

See COLLEGE FUTURES

Continued on page 10
Students, Community March for Cesar Chavez

The legacy of Cesar Chavez is kept alive for students every year through the Cesar E. Chavez Day of Service and Learning, a citywide event for all ages that includes a commemorative march from the Saroyan Theatre to the Fresno Adult School Cesar Chavez campus.

Daytime events were held at the Fresno Adult School Cesar Chavez Center. Students, staff and the community also honored the legacy of Chavez with dancing, essays and a garlanding ceremony at the event, held on March 17, its 16th year.

Tioga Middle School students swept the Cesar Chavez Essay Project middle school awards this year, while high school division, a Design Science High School student took first and Edison High School students took second and third.

Winners from Tioga were Sofia Medina, first; Tiara Cardenas, second; Victoria Rosales, third. Their teacher is Joseph Bushong. High school winners were Isaac Hernandez, first, from Design Science (teacher is Crystal Arredondo); Caolilin Mullings, second, from Edison (teacher is Edward Garcia); and Miguel Arredondo, second.

For video, go to vimeo.com/fresnounified/cesarchavez16

See Cesar Chavez Continued on page 11

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The district’s implementation of a better support system for students has paid off in a number of ways:

• The graduation rate has increased from 69.2% in 2010 to an estimated nearly 82% in 2015

• A-G completion rates have increased from 25.8% in 2008 to 46.57% in 2014

• Application rates to UC increased from 999 in 2009 to 2,048 in 2014

• Application rates to Fresno State increased from 220 applicants in 2009 to 695 in 2014

• 85.77% of students from the 2014 graduating class applied to community college

El Distrito Colabora con los Colegios para Mejorar la Transición a Educación Superior

El Distrito Escolar Unificado está embarcado en un proyecto innovador para incrementar que el número de estudiantes de bajos ingresos obtengan sus títulos de licenciatura.

Usando una subvención por $500,000 de la Fundación de Futuros Colegios, el distrito está asociado con el Colegio Comunitario de Fresno, la Universidad de Fresno y la Universidad de Merced para compartir información e incrementar la transición exitosa de los estudiantes al colegio y del colegio comunitario a una universidad de cuatro años.

“Veo esta nueva asociación como un paso crítico en asegurar aún más que nuestros estudiantes alcancen sus sueños de educación superior,” dijo Michael Hanson, Superintendente del Distrito Unificado de Fresno.

La Fundación Colegios del Futuro es una organización sin fines de lucro que trabaja para eliminar barreras sistemáticas e institucionales para obtener títulos universitarios, permitiendo a los estudiantes el acceso a los recursos que ellos necesitan para obtener sus títulos en el colegio y contribuir con el crecimiento de California.

Con una conferencia de prensa en abril, el Distrito Unificado de Fresno inició su colaboración con los colegios, conocida como la Sociedad de Educación Superior del Distrito Unificado de Fresno.

A través de este proyecto, el distrito y los colegios trabajarán para alinear mejor los sistemas y coordinar recursos para incrementar el aprovechamiento académico de los estudiantes, en la preparación para el colegio, matriculación y transición, transferencias universitarias y los promedios de títulos de licenciatura completados.

El esfuerzo de base en una sociedad existente entre el Distrito Unificado de Fresno con UC Merced quien colabora con siete miembros del personal profesional de UC Merced y con personal del Departamento de Equidad y Acceso del Distrito Unificado de Fresno para ayudar a desarrollar y monitorear la base de datos entre los dos sistemas educativos.

Personal está disponible para monitorear a los estudiantes que no están a nivel de grado o que se han salido de su camino a la graduación para que reciban el apoyo que necesitan.

Usando la subvención de la Fundación para Colegios del Futuro, el distrito asignará a personal de la Universidad Estatal de Fresno y del Centro Estatal del Distrito de Colegios Comunitarios, para trabajar en el Distrito Unificado de Fresno junto con UC Merced y el personal del distrito para mejorar las prácticas que impulsan el éxito del estudiante en preparatoria y el colegio.

A través del proyecto, el Distrito Unificado de Fresno y los socios de educación superior, podrán identificar las barreras más comunes que interfieren con la transición exitosa de los estudiantes al colegio. La sociedad será capaz de tener acceso exacto a la información del estudiante en “tiempo real”, desarrollar nuevos indicadores de pensamiento crítico para ayudar a identificar a estudiantes que están en apuros; y mejorar el monitoreo del aprovechamiento estudiantil con todos los recursos educativos.

Una de las razones por las que el Distrito Unificado de Fresno recibió...
Maravilla, third, from Edison (teacher is Erica Jimenez).

Cesar E. Chavez Day of Service and Learning is a joint project of El Concilio de Fresno, the district and Fresno Adult School, the California Highway Patrol, and other public and private agencies.

A committee collaborates with district departments to support the development of Chavez curriculum and service learning in all of Fresno Unified schools.

Marchando por César Chávez

El legado de César Chávez es mantenido vivo por los estudiantes cada año a través del Día de Servicio y Aprendizaje de César E. Chávez, un evento que abarca toda la ciudad y para personas de todas las edades que incluye una marcha conmemorativa desde el Teatro Saroyan a las instalaciones de la Escuela de Adultos de Fresno César Chávez.

Los estudiantes, personal y la comunidad también honraron el legado de Chávez con bailes ensayos y una ceremonia de guirnaldas, este año celebrada el 17 de marzo en su 16vo año.

Los estudiantes de la Escuela Secundaria Tioga se llevaron los premios del Proyecto del Ensayo este año, en la división de estudiantes de escuelas secundarias, mientras que en la división de escuelas preparatorias, un estudiante de la Escuela Preparatoria Design Science se llevó el primer lugar y los estudiantes de la Escuela Preparatoria Edison se llevaron el segundo y tercero.

Los ganadores de la Tioga fueron Sofía Medina, primer; Tiara Cárdenas, segundo; Victoria Rosales, tercero. Su maestro Joseph Bushong. Los ganadores del nivel de Escuela Preparatoria fueron Isaak Hernández, primero, de Design Science (maestra Crystal Arredondo); Caolin Mullings, segundo, de Edison (maestro Edward Garcia); y Miguel Maravilla, tercero, de la Edison (maestra Érica Jimenez).

El Día de Servicio y Aprendizaje de César Chávez es un proyecto conjunto del Concilio de Fresno, el distrito y la Escuela de Adultos de Fresno, la Patrulla de Caminos de California y otras agencias públicas y privadas. Un comité colabora con los departamentos del distrito para apoyar al desarrollo del currículo y servicios de aprendizaje en todas las escuelas de Distrito Unificado de Fresno.

Taug Kev Rau Cesar Chavez

Cia qhov Cesar Chavez tsim tau tseg ciaj sia rau cov tub ntxhais kawn ntawv txhua xyoo txog Cesar E. Chavez Hnub ntwm nws tej kev ua haujlwm thiaj kev kawn uas yug ua ib qhov kev nco txog rau tas nhio jez zog zool li tauq kev ntwm lub Saroyan Theatre mus rau tom Tsev Kawn Ntawv Cesar Chavez.

Cov tub ntxhais kawn ntawv, neeg ua haujlwm, thiaj neeg jez zog muab kev qhuas tej uas Chavez tsim tau tseg los ntwm kev ua yeeb yam, sau ntwat thiaj ua kev nco txog uas yug tshim sim rau thauam lub Pbl Hlss Hnub Tim 17, uas yog xyoo thib 16 lawm.

Tsev Kawn Ntawv Tioga cov tub ntxhais kawn ntawv qib nrab yeej qhov sib kheem sau ntwx txog Cesar Chavez xyoo no. Cov tub ntxhais uas yeej nyob rau cov tsev kawn ntawv qib siab yog Tsev Kawn Ntawv Design Science yeej thib ib thiab Tsev kawn Ntawv Edison yeej thib ob thiab thib peb.

Tus uas yeej nyob rau Tioga yog Sofía Medina tau thib ib, Tiara Cardenas tau thib ob, Victoria Rosales tau thib peb, lawv tus xib fwj yog Joseph Bushong.

Nyob rau cov tsev kawn ntawv qib siab yog Isaak Hernandez tau thib ib ntwm Design Science (tus xib fwj yog Crystal Arredondo); Caolin Mullings tau thib ob nyob ntwm Edison (tus xib fwj yog Edward Garcia) thiab Miguel Maravilla tau thib peb nyob ntwm Edison (tus xib fwj yog Erica Jimenez)

Cesar Chavez Hnub uas ua Haujlwm thiaj Kawn yog ib qhov kev koom tes los ntwm El Concilio de Fresno, hauv pau ssev kawn ntawv thiaj tsev kawn ntaww rau laus, cov tub ceev xwm xeev California thiaj Iwm cov kooshaum jez zog. Majaa ib pawg neeg muab kev koom tes ntwm hauv pau ssev kawn ntaww los pas npaj Chavez cov kev kawn nyob rau Fresno cov tsev kawn ntaww.

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Fresno Unified School District

For the first time in more than a decade, nearly 82% of Fresno Unified students are graduating from high school on time. In order to reach the ultimate goal — 100% of our students graduating on time college and career ready — it will take everyone’s support.

Professional Aid Griselda

I am ready.

Mark W. Stagis, D.D.S.
Nathan E. Vick, D.D.S.
Christopher R. Gates, D.M.D

- Delta Dental PPO providers
- Text message & email appointment reminders
- CEREC - technology to do crowns in a single appointment
- Invisalign - straight teeth without braces
- Kid friendly office
- Friendly patient financing

6215 N. Fresno St., Suite 101 - (559) 439-1245
www.fresnosmilecenter.com
Health Officer: Summertime can bring on Foodborne Illnesses

As we head into the summer months, we need to consider a public health issue that has increasing impact as the weather warms. That issue is foodborne illnesses. These illnesses remain a daunting public health challenge, but can be prevented.

Foodborne illnesses are caused by eating food that has been contaminated with viruses, bacteria, toxins, or parasites. Each year, one in six Americans gets sick from a foodborne illness and 3,000 die.

Symptoms of foodborne illness are often attributed to “stomach flu” and these symptoms may include diarrhea, nausea and vomiting, abdominal cramps, fever, joint aches, and fatigue. They may occur within minutes after eating the contaminated food or as long as weeks after ingestion of the offending agent. The symptoms can range from mild to life threatening. Individuals at particular risk for serious illness or death include infants, older adults, and those with weakened immune systems.

A wide variety of fresh foods frequently harbor organisms that can cause foodborne illness. The opportunity to ingest these organisms or their toxins may occur in one of three ways:

- When these fresh foods are improperly prepared or cleaned
- When food containing these organisms comes into contact with other foods
- When foods are not adequately cooked

Organisms can also be spread to food by persons who have been infected with foodborne illness organisms and then handle or prepare food for others.

A recent study conducted by the University of California at Davis reveals that many safe food preparation practices are overlooked even by those who consider themselves to be well-informed on food safety.

To protect ourselves and others from these preventable illnesses we must know and follow the basic guidelines:

CLEAN, SEPARATE, COOK, and CHILL published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture found at http://1.usa.gov/1pZBC3a

We must also be aware of symptoms of foodborne illnesses. Contact your health care provider for any diarrhea lasting longer than three days or when diarrhea is accompanied by high fever, blood in the stool, or so much vomiting, that liquids cannot be kept down and very little urine is passed.

By Dr. Ken Bird
Fresno County Health Officer

Don’t Laugh at Me

Sunnyside High School’s Don’t Laugh at Me (DLAM) bullying prevention group visits the state capitol after presenting at Crocker-Riverside Elementary School in Sacramento April 8, students’ first opportunity to take their message on the road outside the Fresno area. Students also got to meet DLAM founding member Muhktar Ali, who now works as a bill reader in Sacramento and arranged a tour of the capitol.

CODERGIRLZ

Continued from page 5

interests, regardless of traditional gender roles. The panel stressed pursuing passions and trying many things without worrying about failing.

They explained that technology will be a significant component of any career in the future and it isn’t necessary to major in computer science to land a job that involves coding.

Fresno Unified students articulated their interests, hopes and doubts with maturity beyond their years and then asked a series of probing questions with tact. Those questions included “What does it take to land a job at Microsoft? Any interview tips for us?”

The students left the session with the technologists with Microsoft swag and vouchers to eat at the Microsoft café. The field trip also included a visit to the Tech Museum of Innovation in downtown San Jose.

“The entire day was charged with the excitement and I think it’s safe to say that many, if not all, of the girls went home with an expanded notion of what is possible,” said David Jansen, Fresno Unified technology services manager.
la subvención de la Fundación de Colegios del Futuro fue gracias al éxito que ya ha tenido con el trabajo de su personal de Equidad y Acceso. El trabajo del proyecto fue lanzado en el 2009, enfocado en construir una cultura de carreras y asistencia al colegio. La primera fase se enfoca en la capacitación de consejeros académicos, en completar los requisitos de la A-G (para admisión a las instituciones de UC y CSU) y en los índices de graduación.

El Departamento de Equidad y Acceso trabajó con los consejeros académicos en las herramientas y procesos para que pudieran mejor identificar y eliminar las barreras que evitan que los estudiantes sean elegibles para el colegio, incluyendo el establecimiento de una base de datos como Herramienta de Monitoreo. Personal especializado también rediseñó el programa de clases de verano empezando el 2010.

Más recientemente, se han hecho inversiones considerables para proporcionar apoyo socio emocional a los estudiantes tales como trabajadores sociales y consejeros, porque asuntos de comportamiento y pobre asistencia son en muchas ocasiones, la razón por la que los estudiantes tienen D’s o F’s en sus clases y no son elegibles para el colegio.

La implementación del distrito de un mejor sistema de apoyo para los estudiantes ha dado frutos de diferentes formas:

- El índice de graduados ha aumentado de 46.2% en 2010 a un aproximado de 82% en 2015
- Los índices de completar los requisitos de la A-G han aumentado de 15% en 2009 a 82% en 2015
- Los índices de solicitud de ingreso a UC aumentó de 220 solicitantes en 2009 a 695 en 2014
- Los índices de matriculados a la Universidad de Fresno se incrementó de 1,000 en 2009 a 2,048 en 2014
- El Departamento de Equidad y Acceso impulso el proyecto hacia la graduación de 69.2% en 2010 a un aproximado de 82% en 2015

Fresno Hauv Paus Tsev Kawn Ntawv tab tom khawb av uu dej num thsiai nos nce tus naj npawb ntawv cov tub kawn ntawv khwv thav niaj tsawg Paus Tsev Kawn tiaw lawv qhov bachelor’s degrees.

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STUDENT COLUMN

Students Learn to Serve, Care for Others at Edison High School

Being an active member of the Fresno Unified Student Advisory Board (S A B), I genuinely enjoy serving the students of my campus and district. This is my fourth year being in S A B and student government, and the work we do makes a substantial impact on students of all ages. Over the years, I have learned what it takes to be a leader and I know my efforts have influenced kids to want to make a difference.

Ever since I was old enough to acknowledge it, I have seen the amazing work teachers do for students day in and day out. I am so grateful for the work that every Fresno Unified employee does to help every student grow as individuals; your work will never go unrecognized.

I have personally experienced the Human Element campaign’s growth and impact on students since my freshman year as it has grown into a nationally recognized campaign. Throughout these four years, I have watched and learned from successes and shortfalls as how to successfully carry out a “kindness campaign.”

Many parents, teachers, and members of the community have preached the whole “don’t bully” spiel, yet we figured it would be more beneficial to just simply promote kindness. In doing so, we came up with our trend #FresnoKIND. #FresnoKIND is a double-meaning trend that means as a Fresno kind, we are kind. In this year’s video, “Rewind,” we encourage everyone to think before a negative situation plays out, and speak truths in kindness to provide a foundation for a positive, kind situation to take place. The video recently placed in the top 25 of the Great American NO BULL Challenge video competition. Top winners will be announced May 13.

Here at Edison High School, we are winding up the school year with enjoyable, engaging, yet educational events for everyone. We are planning for a multicultural rally that will showcase a multitude of different cultures through unique, student-produced performances. Along the cultural lines, we are planning our annual Cinco de Mayo festivities, a whole week dedicated to Mexican American dancing, singing, and many other performances celebrating Mexican and various Hispanic cultures. Students are preparing for AP tests, which start the first two weeks of May. At the end of these extensively strenuous weeks, students can reward themselves by attending our “A Stroke at Midnight” prom hosted by our junior class.

As my senior year comes to an end, I’d like to thank every teacher/coach who has helped mold me into the student, teammate, leader, and young adult I am today. Without the outstanding work of Edison Campus Culture Director Fabiola Perez and Principal Lindsay Sanders, I would not be where I am today. The entire Edison staff and students have made me feel welcome since the day I stepped on campus, and my goal is to make every other student feel safe and love being a part of the Edison family. Here at Edison, we are “One Tiger, Many Stripes.”

Banquet will Recognize Fresno Unified Scholarship Winners

A Fresno Unified Scholarship will help Acsa Payan of Duncan Polytechnical High School achieve her dream of attending Fresno State and a career as a teacher.

Coming from a family of seven with a limited, unstable income, Acsa was sometimes unsure she would ever make it to college. The Fresno Unified Scholarship provides not only a much-needed financial boost but recognizes her dedication and determination to pursue higher education.

Acsa is one of 45 students awarded Fresno Unified Scholarships this year, provided through the generosity of Fresno Unified employees and the community. All winners will be recognized May 10 at an inaugural awards banquet at Tornino’s, organized by Parent University. The community is invited to attend the banquet.

Through the Fresno Unified Scholarship Fund, the district will award $60,000 in scholarships to students this year, many who have overcome losing parents, language barriers, extreme poverty and numerous other hardships. The students persevered to excel academically and be leaders among their peers.

All of the scholarship recipients have inspirational stories about how they achieved academic success. For Acsa, the turning point was when she joined the child development pathway at Duncan her junior year. Prior to that, she was unsure about continuing school and discouraged about college.

In the child development pathway, she found students with similar interests and she got to experience the real world of work in her chosen field.

“Being with my preschool students gave me motivation to go to school every day and made my interest grow more and more,” Acsa said. “My school has prepared me for the career I want to achieve in the future, and that is becoming a kindergarten teacher.”

She said she has discovered a “true passion for teaching” and is determined to “make a difference in children’s lives.”

Fresno Unified Scholarship Banquet

6 p.m. May 10 at Tornino’s
Information: (559) 457-6006
as well Child Development Centers and programs for children 3-5 with disabilities.

As you often hear from our partners at First 5 of Fresno County, a child’s brain is influenced and shaped by experiences beginning at birth, with 90% of their brain development complete by kindergarten. By age 3, children from families with low levels of education have heard 30 million fewer words than the children of working class or professional parents. A strong language-based preschool program can close this gap by accelerating vocabulary development before kindergarten. Researchers have found that every dollar spent on preschool saved $2 to $12 spent later on by the criminal justice system and for welfare and special education services. Early learning has an impact on us all.

No matter the program, they strengthen our students’ ability to succeed in the classroom long-term, reduce the likelihood of dropping out down the road and provide them the tools they will need to stay on track to graduate college and be career ready. Early learning registration is vital for our youth and our community.

You can learn more about early learning opportunities in this edition of Building Futures or by calling (559) 457-3682 or (559) 457-3803.

Thawj Coj Tsew Kawm Ntawv Cov Lus Tshaj Tawm

Peb ib txim hnv teaj lau muab txoj lus piv tias, “Koaj laus lawm los koj yeey teewm kwam tau, tias sio koj puas xav txog tias? “Taxw hais tias koj me npauj li kas los koj yeey yuaw tsuwm kwam tau thiaib.”

Peb cov menyuam yog cov uas tsem ceeb tshaj rau peb. Laww yob peb cov neej zej zog yam tom ntej, laww yuaw yog cov los saibxyuas peb lub zej zog thiaib peb lub lub chaw yam tom ntej — yog li npawm yuaw tsam lai kom oportunidaes de aprendizaje temprano en esta edicion de Building Futures o Llamo al (559) 457-3682 ó (559) 457-3803.

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May 2016

FRESNO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT ACADEMIC CALENDAR
SCHOOL YEAR 2016-2017

BOARD ADOPTED
January 20, 2016

TEACHER INSTITUTE DAYS
August 11-12

DISTRICT BUYBACK DAY
August 20, 2016
November 7, 2016
February 6, 2017

INSTITUTE & BUYBACK
DAYS ARE
NON-STUDENT DAYS

VACATION & HOLIDAYS
Independence Day: July 4, 2016
Labor Day: Sept. 5
Veteran’s Day: Nov. 11
Thanksgiving: Nov. 24-25
Winter Break: Dec. 10-Jan. 6
MLK Jr. Day: Jan. 18
Lincoln’s Birthday: Feb. 12
Presidents’ Day: Feb. 20
Spring Break: Apr. 10-17
Memorial Day: May 30

HOLIDAYS FOR CLASSIFIED
PERSONNEL

BOARD OF EDUCATION
MEETINGS
2nd & 4th Wednesdays
unless otherwise indicated.
Board Meetings are held at the
FUSD Education Center
2309 Tulare Street, 2nd Floor

Public Schools Week - April, 2017
CA Day of the Teacher Week - May, 2017
 Classified Employees Week - May 7-13, 2017

Black figures denote school will be in session
Red figures denote non-student days when school will not be in session

JULY, 2016

S M T W T F S
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24
25 26 27 28 29 30 31

SEPTMBER, 2016

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MAY 2016

S M T W T F S
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9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24
25 26 27 28 29 30

AP TESTING
STANDARDIZED TESTING WINDOW

SCHOOL BEGINS
August 15, 2016
SCHOOL ENDS
June 9, 2017

Elementary & Secondary Reporting Periods

Oct. 21-22: Progress report
Dec. 10-13: Progress report
Feb. 10-13: Progress report
April 10-13: Progress report

AP TESTING
STANDARDIZED TESTING WINDOW

May 23 - June 17: 4-Week Session
May 23 - July 29: 10-Week Session
June 6 - August 5: 8-Week Session
June 20 - July 29: 6-Week Session

(559) 442-8273
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State Center Community College District

Fresno City College

JUMP START YOUR CAREER THIS SUMMER

May 23 – June 17: 4-Week Session
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Company Name

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