KEEPING STUDENTS IN CLASS
Health and Wellness Centers Planned at Six Schools

The district has taken a significant step to improve the health of its students and families.

Community health clinics will be built at six schools -- all in regions of the city where residents have the least access to health care -- following a vote by the Fresno Unified Board of Education on Feb. 8.

Health centers will be built at:
- Addams Elementary School
- Bakman Elementary School
- Sequoia Middle School
- Tehapipe Middle School
- Duncan Polytechnical High School
- Sunnyside High School

The clinics will be modeled after Gaston Middle School’s Health and Wellness Center in southwest Fresno, which opened with the school in 2014.

The Gaston health center not only serves Gaston students but those ages 0-19 years old in the surrounding community. The center has become a significant asset to southwest Fresno, with the number of patient visits rising from 3,373 in 2014-15 to 4,235 in 2015-16, with an expected 5,500 patient visits through June of this year.

The clinic is open 40 hours a week, Monday through Friday and is operated by the non-profit Clinica Sierra Vista. The center is augmented with a registered nurse and licensed vocational nurse provided by the district who work out of the school nurse's office.

Based on the success of the Gaston center, Fresno Unified identified several high-needs areas for similar clinics. Health centers at Addams, Bakman and Tehapipe are targeted to open in the 2017-18 school year, with the others to follow.

The board has selected Clinica Sierra Vista to operate the health centers. Clinica is partnering with Valley Children's Healthcare to provide health center facilities and equipment. Other partners in the planning process are to be announced.

See HEALTH CLINIC Continued on page 3

Nelson Named Interim Superintendent

The Fresno Unified Board of Education named acting superintendent Bob Nelson as interim superintendent at a special board meeting Feb. 15. The board continues to move forward on a search for a new superintendent following its decision to buy out Michael Hanson’s contract.

Nelson has worked for the district for 20 years, most recently as chief of staff. He has also served as superintendent of the Chawanakee Unified School District.

The board “looks forward to working with the community in a collaborative and transparent way on the search process for the next permanent superintendent,” board president

See SUPERINTENDENT Continued on page 3

RAPID ALERT Fresno Unified's Emergency Notification System
Info in English, Spanish and Hmong

Bullard High Opens New Classroom Building

District Honors Exemplary Employees (Pages 8 and 9)
Fresno Unified College Applications Up at CSU and UC Campuses

A pilot project to encourage high school seniors to pursue more college options appears to be paying off with a jump in applications to California State University and University of California campuses.

New data from the district’s Office of Equity and Access shows that for this school year, 578 eligible Fresno Unified seniors applied to both CSU and UC campuses corresponding to their academic profile. This compares to 382 eligible seniors applying in 2015-16.

The increase follows the launch of the I am Ready College Packets initiative last fall, prior to the application deadlines for CSU and UC. The customized packets were sent to 4,135 seniors, detailing California public college options that matched each student’s academic profile.

“We are extremely pleased with the increase in our students who applied to CSU and UC given that they met the eligibility requirements for both. The I am Ready College Packets are proving to be an additional tool to help our students turn their college dreams into reality,” said Jorge Aguilar, associate superintendent for equity and access.

The district initiated the I am Ready College Packets based on the premise that many students and parents are not aware of all the colleges students are eligible for based on their academic profile.

Data from the Office of Equity and Access indicates that while more students are eligible for college, they are not pursuing all their options. In fact, 85% of Fresno Unified students applied to college last year, but less than half of eligible students applied to colleges that corresponded with their academic profiles.

The packets contained a matrix of California public universities and colleges that matched the student’s academic profile and recommendations on next steps to take. A letter was sent to their parents, as well, encouraging them to support their student in pursuing all college options. The letters were translated in English, Spanish and Hmong. Students and their families were encouraged to explore all options and meet with the student’s academic counselor.

The packet also contained information on CSU/UC admission requirements, private colleges and universities, scholarships, Free Application for Student Aid (FAFSA) and the California Dream Act.

Students at Fresno High School work on applications for Fresno State University during an event last fall launching the I am Ready College Packets project to encourage students to apply to more colleges. The district recently learned that for this school year, 578 eligible seniors applied to both a CSU and UC campus corresponding to their academic profile, compared to 382 eligible seniors applying in 2015-16.

Students Paired with Employers for Job Shadow Day

More than 100 high school students had the chance to spend several hours at a job site matched with their interests as part of Fresno Unified’s first Job Shadow Day on Feb. 2. The job sites included Sunrise Medical Supply, where students learned about various equipment to help customers with mobility. The district’s Career Readiness Department had arranged job shadowing with 11 industry partners covering nine of the 15 industry sectors in California. Students participated in tours, sat alongside employees working in various positions, attended meetings, and learned about state-of-the-art equipment and production processes.
Fresno State Partners with Fresno Unified to Give Students Options

Message from Dr. Joseph Castro, President of Fresno State University

Through the I Am Ready campaign, Fresno Unified School District students and parents are encouraged to consider a wide array of higher education options. As the president of California State University, Fresno, I am pleased to partner with the district and other organizations to support the success of all students.

Fresno State provides a quality, affordable higher education for students throughout the Central Valley and beyond. In 2016, Washington Monthly ranked Fresno State in the Top 25 nationally among universities. Our 24,500 talented and diverse students, over half who come from Fresno County, pursue degrees in areas such as agriculture, arts, business, education, engineering, health, and science. We also have a successful Division I athletic program with 21 varsity sports.

Fresno State provides one of the best values in higher education. Our annual tuition and fees – at $6,300 – are the lowest in the California State University system and over 80% of our students receive financial aid. Last year, we allocated $230 million in financial aid (mostly grants and scholarships), which helps to ensure that our students graduate with relatively little or no loan debt.

I encourage you to prepare for Fresno State by meeting with your high school counselor and enrolling in A-G courses (fresnostate.edu/studentaffairs/recruitment/freshman/requirements.html). Applications are due during the month of November prior to the fall semester (which begins in August). By successfully completing A-G courses with a B or an A, you will maximize your chances of being admitted as a freshman. You may also attend Fresno City College or another community college upon graduation from high school and transfer to Fresno State (after successfully completing the appropriate courses).

Last fall, Fresno State joined the district, Fresno City College and other K-12 school districts and community colleges in Fresno County to launch the Central Valley Promise. The Central Valley Promise provides one semester of free tuition at Fresno City College for district students who meet admission requirements. This initiative will include programs and support services for middle and high school students and parents to help students be prepared to enter Fresno City College, Fresno State or another university.

College graduates earn, on average, over $1 million more during their lives than those without a college degree. While college is not for everyone, I urge all to consider it. As the first person in my family to graduate from a university, I know firsthand how a higher education transforms in positive ways the lives of students and families. Every Fresno Unified student can seize the opportunity to achieve their goals and fulfill their dreams – right here at home at Fresno State. I urge all students to #BeHeld and prepare for a university or college degree or certificate.

I believe in every Fresno Unified student! Go ‘Dogs!

Joseph Castro; Twitter: @josephcastro
Instagram: @josephcastro

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HEALTH CLINIC Continued from page 1

process have included Kaiser Permanent Fresno with a $99,371 grant through the California School Based Health Alliance, the Fresno County Department of Health, St. Agnes Medical Center and Community Medical Centers.

The centers will provide primary care and treatment, physicals, case management, immunizations, vision care, mental/behavioral care, lab services, referrals for dental care, drug and alcohol counseling, health education and transportation to the main clinic.

“By adding health clinics to six more schools and neighborhoods, we continue our efforts to do all that we can to make sure our students are in school, learning, and to be a beacon for the communities surrounding our schools,” said interim superintendent Bob Nelson.

SUPERINTENDENT Continued from page 1

Brooke Ashjian said in a Jan. 30 statement.

Hanson’s last day was Feb. 1, bringing to a close nearly 12 years as superintendent of the fourth largest school district in the state. He is credited with working with the board and staff to lift the district in a number of areas. During the past 12 years:

- The district emerged from financial crisis and avert a state takeover
- New and improved facilities were completed throughout the district
- The graduation rate increased 14.6% from 69.2% (2009) to 83.8% (2015)

- The dropout rate decreased 8.3% from 20% (2009) to 11.7% (2015)
- A-G course completion increased 8.3% from 37.2% (2012) to 47.5% (2015) among graduating high school seniors
- The district’s accountability system was broadened to include multiple measures of success

Nelson said that the work during the past 12 years created a firm foundation for continued stability for the district.

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District Launches Rapid Alert to Notify Parents of Emergencies

The district has launched a new system for notifying parents and guardians quickly of a campus emergency.

Rapid Alert will send a text message to the cell phones of parents or guardians if an incident occurs on campus that will disrupt the school day or require an early dismissal.

This system provides an additional tool for quickly notifying parents/guardians and staff, above and beyond the district’s current SchoolMessenger notification system.

Because a text message only allows for 160 characters, messages will be brief, but will provide pertinent details and any necessary instructions.

The Rapid Alert emergency notification system was officially launched Feb. 8 with a test text to all parents and guardians with easy to follow instructions on how to “opt in” to the system. The district asked parents to “opt in” because text messages can impact data plans.

The Rapid Alert texts are sent to the emergency cell phone numbers have on file for each student.

For Rapid Alert to be successful, it’s critical that parents make sure their emergency cell phone number on file is accurate. Parents should let their schools know if there has been an emergency cell phone number change.

So what kind of safety issue will warrant a Rapid Alert? The district determined that the system will be used if there is a safety issue at a school site that is either going to disrupt the school day or require an early dismissal.

Examples of this type of emergency are a gas leak, a water main break, a foggy day schedule, power outage, or a safety issue involving police action that directly impacts school arrival and/or dismissal.

The district will continue to use SchoolMessenger phone messages sent either by the district or school to inform parents of important information. But Rapid Alert allows the district to send a visual text message to help ensure parents receive an important message quickly, and in English and Spanish.

Rápida Para Notificar a los Padres las Emergencias

El distrito ha puesto en marcha un nuevo sistema para notificar rápido a los padres y tutores de las emergencias en los planteles escolares.

La alerta rápida enviará un mensaje de texto a los celulares de los padres o tutores si acontece un incidente en el planteles escolar. El cual interrumperá las clases si requerirá un cambio en el horario.

El sistema proporciona una herramienta adicional para notificar rápidamente a los padres/tutores, al personal y más allá del sistema de notificación actual de Mensaje Escolar (SchoolMessenger) del distrito.

Debido a que un mensaje de texto sólo permite 160 símbolos, los mensajes serán breves, pero proveerán detalles pertinentes y cualquier instrucción necesaria.

El sistema de notificación de emergencia de Alerta Rápida fue puesto en marcha oficialmente el 8 de febrero con un texto de prueba a todos los padres y tutores con instrucciones fácil de seguir sobre cómo “opt in” en el sistema. El distrito solicita a los padres “opt in” debido a que los mensajes de texto pueden impactar los servicios de datos.

Los textos de Alerta Rápida son enviados al número de celular de emergencia que las escuelas tienen en el archivo de cada estudiante.

El distrito de la Alerta Rápida tiene éxito, es importante que los padres se aseguren de que el número de celular de emergencia en el archivo está correcto. Los padres le deben dejar saber a la escuela si ha habido un cambio en el número de celular de emergencia.

Por lo tanto, ¿qué tipo de problema de seguridad garantizará una Alerta Rápida? El distrito determinó que el sistema se usará si hay un problema de seguridad en una escuela, lo cual, ya sea que se interrumpirá el día de clase o se requerirá salida temprana.

Ejemplos de este tipo de emergencias son una fuga de gas, una rotura en la tubería principal de agua, horarios de días de huelga, apagón de luz o un problema de seguridad que implica acción policial lo cual impacta directamente llegar a la escuela o salir de la misma.

El distrito continuará enviando los mensajes de teléfono de Mensaje Escolar ya sea que son del distrito o la escuela, para informarles a los padres acerca de información importante. Pero Alerta Rápida permitirá al distrito enviar un mensaje de texto visual para asegurar que los padres reciben rápido el mensaje importante en inglés, español y hmong.

Hauv Paus Tsev Kawm Ntawv Tau Na Hov Qeiv Khia Kom Ceev Ceev tshib los Ceeb Toom Tej Niam Txiv thamua Muaj Tej Xwmm Ceev

Hauv paus tsev kawn ntawv tawu ua ib qho kev ceeb toom ntuaw rau tej niam txiv thib tej neeg saib xyuss sais tixoq ib qho xwmm ceev tshib sim hauv vaa joog kawn.

Qhov Keiv Ceeb Toom Ceev yuav xa ib tsab xov ntauw ntauw rau tej tixoq tawm teu rau tej niam txiv los yosg neeg saib xyuss yog tias muaj ib qho xwmm tshed tshib sim hauv vaa joog kawn tawm ntauw jauv vauj thamua kawn los yosg tsev kom muaj kev tso tawn ntxov.

Qhov keiv na yuav muaj ib qho tji ceeb toom rau tej niam txiv neeg saib xyuss thib tej neeg khiaj dej num sai sai ntxiv, tshaj li hauv paus tsev kawn ntauw qhov keiv ceeb toom “SchoolMessenger” tam sin no muaj.

Yeeb vam qho xov ntauw ntauw tsaus pub 160 tasis tntawv nkaus xwb, tej xov tsaus yog hais me ntxis xwb, tiam sis yuav npaj muaj hauv qhia ntxis thib tey kev qhia tseev kom muaj.

Qhov Keiv Ceeb Toom Ceev qho kev ceeb toom xwmm ceev tso tawn raug cai rai lub Ob Hlis tii 8 nrog rai tib qho kev sim ntauw ntauw rau rau tshia tust ntauw rau tshiab neeg saib xyuss roq kev qhia uooy yooj yim trog kev los “ixay” li cas rau qho kev ceeb toom.

Hauv paus tsev kawn ntauw rau rau tih shinq “ixay” yim taj tew uav ntauw ntauw kui yuay muaj teeb meem rau tej “data plans”.

Qhov Keiv Ceeb Toom Ceev ntauw rau raug xa rau xov rau tshia xwmm ceev tej tew ceeb kawn ntauw ntauw hauv nan tew tshia xwmm ceev ntauw ntauw taub xwmm ceev ntauw.

Rau Qhov Keiv Ceeb Toom Ceev kom uo yau zoo, nns tseem ceeb heev uas tej nian tixiv nco tsoov tis tis xov tsoop xwmm ceev ntauw teu rauhau ntauw ntauw thw, tej nian tixiv tsoop tsaus tia qhia rau rauhau tej tew ceeb kawn ntauw paub yoh tis nns muaj ib qho kev hauv xuoy xwmm ceev ntauw teu.

Yog li ntauw hom teeb meem ntauw yeb nab dabi tih thiaj xyuav yib qho qei Keiv Ceeb Toom Ceev. Hauv paus tsev kawn ntauw tua tixiv xis tis qho kev na ntauw ntauw rauhau tis qho kev na ntauw mui yauj xis yog tis ntauw ntauw muaj teeb meem ntauw yeb nab yeeb hauv ib lub tsev kawn ntauw twg tua thamua sim cui ntauw kawn los yosg tsev kom muaj ib qho kev sow tawn ntxov.

Tej yam kev pivi tixiv ntauw hom xwmm tshed ceev yeg nkey paim (gas leak), kav dej loj tawm, hauv tsaus nhaub, huav taw xob tua yeb, los yog ib qho kev teeb meem ntauw yeb kawn meem tawm rau rauhau rau ntauw teu rauhau tawm ntauw jauj ntauw ntauw rau tej teeb meem ntauw tijog tew ceeb ntauw los yosg tawm ntauw.

Hauv paus tsev kawn ntauw kui yee tseem ntauw los siv “SchoolMessenger” hu tsooy too xav xov ntauw ntauw hauv paus tsev ceev ntauw los yosg ceeb ntauw los ceeb ceeb teum teu rauhau tis tixiv tsoop qhov ntauw lus qhia tesee ceev. Tiam sis Qhov Keiv Ceeb Toom Ceev rau rau hauv paus tsev kawn ntauw los xa ib qho xov ntauw ntauw rau tej ntauw rau tauhau tawm ntauw qho ceeb ntauw hauv tawm ntauw.

www.FresnoUnified.org
Bullard High School Opens new Academic Building with 15 Classrooms

The transformation at Bullard High School continues, with the Northwest Academic Building opening its doors for the first time to students and staff Feb. 14.

The building features 15 classrooms. Most house social science classes, with three larger rooms devoted to science labs and career technical education (CTE). The CTE and labs are designed with more open space for larger tables to foster collaboration among students.

The project also includes a small garden and fountain north of the cafeteria as well as an outdoor workout space with artificial turf adjacent to the existing weight room.

The building is part of the district’s robust campaign to ensure quality facilities in support of quality instruction. It is one of the final projects using Measure Q funds.

The Northwest Academic Building is part of a major construction project underway at Bullard High that began with the completion of the Southwest Academic Building in January 2016. With construction of the two new classroom buildings the school was able to eliminate 30 portable classrooms.

With the Northwest Academic Building done, construction crews will focus on opening Bullard’s new administration building and expanded library media center that includes a 100-seat lecture hall. That phase will feature a new entrance with raised Relief mascot sculpture and signage that will create a clean, contemporary entrance directly at the front of the school on Palm Avenue. That phase is expected to be completed by June.

With the district concluding projects funded by Measure Q (approved by voters in 2010) and Measure K (approved by voters in 2001), plans are already underway to build on the work with Measure X. Voters approved $225 million Measure X on Nov. 8.

The Fresno Unified Board of Education will continue to use the 2009 Facilities Master Plan to provide a vision for improving district facilities while anticipating future needs. In addition, on Sept. 28, the board updated high school master plans to reflect improvements completed, projects underway, and additional input from the community and the board.

The Fresno Unified Board of Education approved a list of Measure X projects at its Oct. 12 meeting. Projects include:

**New school:** In southeast Fresno for enrollment growth.

**District-wide:** Science and technology labs, career/technical education classrooms, music and arts classrooms, elementary school security upgrades, parking lot gates.

**Cafeteria air conditioning:** Centennial, Del Mar, Ericson, Fremont, Gibson, Holland, Jackson, Manchester, Phoenix, Powers, Pyle, Roeding, Starr, Thomas, Vinland, and Wishon elementary schools; Baird, Computech, Cooper, Fort Miller, Scandinavian, Tenaya, Tioga, Wawona, and Yosemite middle schools; and Roosevelt High School.

**New classroom buildings to replace portables:** Bullard TALENT K-8 School and Columbia, King, Hidalgo, Homan, Leavenworth and Norseman elementary schools.

**Classroom modernization:** Anthony, Balderas, Hidalgo, Leavenworth and Storey elementary schools and Rata School.

**Building infrastructure projects:** Upgrades to electrical systems at Burroughs Elementary School, Baird, Cooper and Tioga middle schools and Hoover, McLane and Roosevelt high schools; new gym lockers/bleachers at Ahwahnee, Kings Canyon, Scandinavian, Tehipite and Yosemite middle schools and Duncan, Fresno and Hoover high schools; plumbing improvements at Addams and Thomas elementary schools, Hamilton K-8 School, Wawona Middle School and Roosevelt High School; and cooling and heating upgrades at Birney, Malloch and Mayfair elementary schools, Computech, Cooper, Fort Miller and Kings Canyon middle schools and Hoover, McLane and Sunnyside high schools.

**High School Master Plan Projects:**

**Bullard** — Renovated or rebuilt south gym.

**Duncan** — New and renovated career technical education classrooms, expanded ROTC facility, renovated library.

**Edison** — New theater, new second gym, renovated/expanded existing gym.

**Fresno** — Renovated academic and IB/CTE buildings, new second gym, renovated cafeteria.

**Hoover** — New theater, renovated library, renovated/expanded administrative offices.

**McLane** — New theater and second gym.

**Roosevelt** — Renovated cafeteria, renovated library, new second gym.

**Sunnyside** — Renovated theater/music complex, renovated CTE labs, security upgrades.

Project recommendations may change based on availability of local and state funds, site conditions, enrollment, program needs, building system assessments, and other district priorities. For more potential Measure X projects, go to www.fresnouinified.org.
District Offers Summer Learning

Students will have the opportunity to retake core academic classes, accelerate their learning and try new activities, such as art, during the 2017 Extended Learning summer session.

Keeping students on track for graduation, while preparing them for post-secondary education and workplace success, is the driving force behind the Fresno Unified Extended Learning Summer Program.

Last summer, more than 13,000 students participated in learning opportunities outside of the traditional school calendar that allowed them to recover credits for graduation or to further develop skills gained during the regular school year.

This year, the elementary summer program will focus on fundamental reading skills, helping kindergarten through second grade students stay on track to read at grade level. Students in grades three through five will have opportunities in literacy and language development for English learners, accelerated learning toward GATE (gifted) identification, and enrichment programs that focus on career exploration. Special education programs will be available at all grade levels.

Middle school students needing additional support in mathematics will be able to strengthen those skills while becoming accustomed to a middle school campus. Career readiness-based enrichment programs will also be available, focused on design, robotics and health.

At the high school level, credit recovery options will be offered in all core areas and courses needed for graduation as well as training opportunities to earn job certifications. The high school summer program will be broken into two 11-day sessions of instruction.

In addition, acceleration opportunities for students who wish to take Advanced Placement (AP) courses later in their high school career will be provided. Counselors will work with students to schedule summer coursework.

All courses offered through the Expanded Learning Summer Program are taught by qualified teachers who are committed to providing high-quality academic instruction in a safe, structured environment. Parents will be notified by letter in the spring regarding program placement, and are encouraged to contact their school site for additional information on summer learning opportunities.

Applications for Extended Learning After School Programs Available Soon

Fresno Unified operates daily comprehensive Extended Learning after school programs at 29 elementary schools across the district, with applications for the 2017-18 school year available starting March 27.

These Extended Learning programs are funded by the state’s After School Education & Safety Program (ASES) grants. The Extended Learning program is an extension of the regular school day, offering literacy and academic enrichment that is in line with regular school day core programs.

The daily schedule includes academic and literacy support assisting students with homework or reviewing and re-teaching state standards in language arts and mathematics.

The program also includes an enrichment component to engage students in new opportunities with a variety of activities. These activities can include community service learning, recreation and physical activities, science and technology, career awareness, and other enrichment activities based on student interests. The district’s Nutrition Center provides two nutritious snacks each day.

All students from each of the 29 school sites, from transitional kindergarten through eighth grade, are eligible to enroll. Programs operate school days only from the end of the school day until 6 p.m. Capacity is limited, however, and enrollment is determined through a lottery system. Students not selected are placed on a waiting list.

Applications for next school year will be available at school sites and will be accepted until April 21.

Parents whose students are accepted into the program will be notified via letter from school or by phone in early May. Parents of students accepted will be required to attend a mandatory orientation. Students selected for the waiting list will be notified at a later date when space becomes available. For additional questions or information contact school sites or the Extended Learning Office at (559) 248-7535.

Go to Participating Schools for After School Program Applications

| Anthony | Lawless |
| Bakman | Leaveworth |
| Columbia | McCadle |
| Del Mar | Norserman |
| Esterby | Powers- |
| Ericson | Ginsburg |
| Ewing | Pyle |
| Fremont | Robinson |
| Greenberg | Roeding |
| Hamilton | Thomas |
| Holland | Vang Pao |
| Homer | Viking |
| Jefferson | Vinland |
| Kirk | Webster |
| Kratt | Yokomi |

Key Dates for Fresno Unified Extended Learning Summer School Sessions

Elementary and Middle School

- June 14: First Day of Classes
- July 13: Last Day of Classes

High School

- June 13: June 27: Session 1
- June 28: July 13: Session 2
- July 14: Summer Graduation

Note: July 4 is a holiday
GOAL 2: ARTS, ACTIVITIES & ATHLETICS

Academic Decathlon: Battle of the Brains

The district’s best brains brawled during the Fresno County Academic Decathlon Super Quiz on Feb. 4 at Central East High School. This year’s academic decathlon theme was World War II. The overall winner was University High School with 49,654.1 points, followed by Edison High School with 48,800.1 points, and in third, Bullard High with 41,895.2 points. Sunnyside High School placed eighth, with 37,661 points. Duncan Polytechnical High School fielded a team for the first time in 13 years and took first place in Division 4. Dean’s Medalists (highest scoring students) included Edison High’s Marcus Tan in second place with 8,687.3 points behind University High School’s Lillian Torres with 9,039 points.
Exemplary Educators Announced at Annual Awards Dinner in February

During a festive, inspiring evening Feb. 7, 630 guests gathered to celebrate and honor the district’s 49 Excellence in Education finalists. Five outstanding educators were announced as the top winners:

- Classified category – Tianna Gonzales, office manager at Turner Elementary School
- Classified category, elementary – Judith Sanchez, Aynesworth Elementary School
- Classified category, middle school – Stephen Ruiz, Ahwahnee Middle School
- Certificated category, high school – Fabiola Perez, Edison High School
- Administrator category – Teresa Morales-Young, teacher development

Gonzales, Morales-Young and Perez will move on to the Fresno County Educator of the Year awards.

Finalists were nominated by their peers for their work above and beyond for students and the district. The finalists demonstrated a love for their work, willingness to collaborate and support their colleagues and above all, genuine concern for the students of Fresno Unified and a desire to help them succeed in school and beyond.

Judith Sanchez
Elementary Teacher Winner

Job: First grade teacher at Aynesworth Elementary School
Selected because: Sanchez has a true passion for her students and knows that their experience even as young as first grade can either set them on a path for learning or discourage them. She encourages technology in the classroom, guiding the students as they create PowerPoint presentations about what they are learning. Students who need to get the “wiggles” out can go bounce gently and read on a small trampoline in the corner. She is the lead teacher for her grade level, leading with passion and always keeping student success as the focus. She is an outstanding listener and creates opportunities for colleagues to express their ideas and works hard to bring about group consensus and do what is best for students even if it is uncomfortable for adults. She works after school with migrant students and English learners of all grades, tutoring the students in reading and language arts to help them catch up and be fluent English speakers.

About: Sanchez was educated as a young child in Mexico. She has immersed herself in researching new teaching strategies and spends many hours of her own time mentoring new teachers or teachers new to a grade level. She has taught a variety of grade levels, including high school. She is a great cook; her specialty is mole. She has been with the district since 2011, all at Aynesworth. She feels a sense of urgency to inspire students “before they get to the point…where they hate school.”

Quote: Aynesworth Principal Jane Keeler -- “Everybody feels better and energized to do their best after spending time with Mrs. Sanchez.”

Stephen Ruiz
Middle School Teacher Winner

Job: History teacher at Ahwahnee Middle School
Selected because: He consistently articulates his overall goal for his students -- that they strive for success. This is written on the wall of his classroom and he reiterates this to his students every day. He has established a culture in his classroom of respect between teacher and students and students and students. He challenges his students to learn through productive struggle and constant revision of challenging content. He has high expectations for students and they do not want to disappoint him. He started an English learner intervention class two years ago, with the redesignation rate for students at Ahwahnee increasing 8% the first year and another 10% the second year. He is the department chair and lead teacher for history. He started a computer game club and basketball club for students.

“I push my students and make my students believe they can be successful in life.” Stephen Ruiz, Excellence in Education middle school certificated winner

About: He is a lifelong learner himself, when he learns something new, whether it is for his classroom or as a leader, he calls it his personal “software upgrade.” He has been at Ahwahnee for three years and with the district for four years. “I push my students and make my students believe they can be successful in life,” Ruiz said.

Quote: Principal Jose Guzman -- “Mr. Ruiz believes that by challenging students with the highest of expectations they will learn to always expect it out of themselves.”
Awards: Excellence in Education Winners Announced at Gala Dinner

Fabiola Perez
High School Teacher Winner

Job: Campus culture director and leadership teacher at Edison High School

Selected because: She is the magic behind the culture and energy at Edison. She works hard to help students feel connected to their school. She assisted students this year in launching #BeKindBeATiger random acts of kindness campaign, which has now gone districtwide. The students opened school with over 500 tweets of random acts of kindness. Perez also monitors student participation in Goal 2 (engaging in arts, activities and athletics) and has increased student involvement in clubs, dances, graduation events, and freshman orientation. She works with a team of teachers to help support English learners by sharing her own journey as an English learner. She has facilitated the school’s Tiger of the Month campaign to have staff recognize students monthly from their classes. She encourages students to engage outside their social groups and focus on making a difference on campus. She guides students to make decisions that will make them better individuals.

“I wouldn’t be here today if it weren’t for the teachers in my life.” Fabiola Perez, Excellence in Education high school certificated winner

About: Perez emigrated from Mexico as a child and faced struggles without citizenship documents. She was homeless her senior year of high school but was still a three-sport athlete and valedictorian at Roosevelt High School. One of her teachers at Roosevelt gave her the hope she needed to persevere -- Lindsay Sanders, now her principal at Edison. “I wouldn’t be here today if it weren’t for the teachers in my life,” Perez said. She became a teacher to do the same for other students. She has been campus culture director for three years at Edison and with the district as a teacher and coach since 2008. She became a U.S. citizen Feb. 21.

Quote: Principal Lindsay Sanders -- “She has countless individuals who continue to come back and visit to share the impact that she has had on them from her early years of teaching to now.”

Tianna Gonzales
Classified Winner

Job: Office manager at Turner Elementary School

Selected because: Gonzales is highly skilled at handling the front office and a variety of work beyond her normal duties, all done with grace and a smile. For example, she learned to navigate the school’s budget when the campus was short an administrator. Her warmth and friendliness make families and students feel welcome and lift the spirits of staff. She knows just the right words when offering support and guidance to students in need. She will walk students home or help them across the street. She has boundless energy for supporting staff and smoothing the way for teachers to do their work in the classroom.

About: Gonzales has worked for the district for 13 years, all of them at Turner, starting as an after school assistant. Although she works full time and has a family, she has taken classes to pursue her teaching credential. She takes the time to get to know students and encourage them to pursue their dreams. “I want to instill in their minds that it’s not if I go to college, it’s when I go to college.” Gonzales said.

Quote: Turner teacher Linda Christensen -- “She is there for the children and parents to guide and support with a smile and a true feeling of care and concern.”

Teresa Morales-Young
Administrator Winner

Job: Administrator for teacher development

Selected because: Through her work overseeing the support of aspiring, new and veteran teachers, Morales-Young has a direct hand in giving teachers the tools they need to be the best they can be for students. Her efforts are improving teachers’ skills in every corner of the district. Through her leadership of the teacher development team, the district has established a variety of teacher pipeline programs for selecting, training and retaining teachers. Morales-Young also represents the district in partnerships with institutions of higher learning in redesigning teacher preparation programs. She does her job with enthusiasm and pride, always placing students and teachers at the center of her work.

“Teresa is a visionary leader, passionate and dedicated to serving our students and teachers.” Maiv Thao, teacher on special assignment in teacher development

About: Morales-Young began at Fresno Unified 20 years ago as a teacher and has been administrator for teacher development for eight years. Because she gets to support new and veteran teachers to excel in front of the classroom, she considers her job “the best in the world.”

Quote: Maiv Thao, teacher on special assignment in teacher development -- “Teresa is a visionary leader, passionate and dedicated to serving our students and teachers.”

Interim Superintendent Bob Nelson congratulates Excellence in Education finalist Myrie Moghee.
Students Throughout District Aim to Inspire 15,000 Acts of Kindness

All over the district, high school students are posting about helping others, whether it’s being a sounding board for a friend, putting away the trash cans for a neighbor or buying flowers for a teacher.

Edison High School senior Ollie Wagner said the kindness campaign, which began with Edison at the start of the school year, has made a noticeable difference on her campus.

“There’s been a complete shift on campus, less fights, a lot less issues,” Ollie said. “We’ve seen a huge shift in the way our students interact with each other and teachers as well.”

Edison’s #bekindbealeader launched 500 social media posts about random acts of kindness in just the first week of school. The Student Advisory Board (SAB), made up of student leaders from all district high schools, has set out to replicate Edison’s effort districtwide, and is encouraging staff and Fresno Unified school board members to post acts of kindness on social media as well. The goal of #bekindbealeader is to post 15,000 kindness acts by May 16.

SAB’s last meeting of the school year. Kindness acts can be captured on all social media forums, including Twitter, Instagram and Facebook. Results will be announced at the May 17 board of education meeting.

“We could use everyone’s help,” said Leslie Loewen, district campus culture manager. “If you see an act of kindness you should post it. If you do an act of kindness, you should let us know, even if it feels unnatural. Your act of kindness inspires others.”

This latest kindness effort builds on the Human Element kindness campaign Fresno Unified high school student leaders have been spreading at all campuses since the 2012-13 school year.

Ollie said the #bekindbealeader is especially important now.

“There’s so much hatred in the media, so much outrage, hate speeches,” Ollie said. “I think it’s so important to instill in children, in teenagers… that no matter how much hatred there is in the world, kindness starts with just one person.”

For more information on all Human Element actions, past and present, check out the Human Element website at www.FresnoKIND.org or Facebook.com/FresnoKIND.

District Expands Opportunity for Students to Earn College Credit

Jose Escobar, left, and Joseph Anglin work with employees from Grid Alternatives learning how to install solar panels as part of a Construction Technology class at Hoover High School. Students receive college credit at Fresno City College for the class.

Fresno Unified is expanding the number of classes high school students can take for college credit, offering 44 different sections of dual enrollment courses this school year compared to five sections last year.

The dual enrollment program is expanding to all high school campuses, said Kristen Boroski, director of career readiness for the district. Students are earning credit at Fresno City College for classes ranging from construction to video production to manufacturing.

“It’s definitely about giving kids different opportunities that they normally wouldn’t have so that they understand the rigor of a college course so that they’re better prepared to succeed in post-secondary training,” Boroski said.

Late last year, the Fresno Unified Board of Education approved a dual enrollment partnership with State Center Community College District that paved the way for expansion. The agreement, approved at the Nov. 9 board meeting, is connected to Assembly Bill 288, a 2015 law that requires public schools provide better transitions for students between high school and college.

Advantages of dual enrollment for students include:

- Saving money, as dual enrollment courses are offered to students at no cost
- The opportunity to explore courses in a career field prior to starting college
- Experiencing the rigor of college coursework and college processes and practices

Joseph Anglin, a senior at Hoover High School, is earning college credit taking a Regional Occupational Program (ROP) construction class.

“It takes away time you have to spend in college. In a sense, it’s saving you a little money.” said Joseph, who plans to attend community college, then transfer to a four-year college.

Jose Escobar, also in the ROP construction class at Hoover, said he is not only earning college credits but “learning things I will use in the future.”
Hidalgo Elementary Students to the Rescue at Pet Adoption Center

Students at Hidalgo Elementary School are helping to rescue animals as one of several projects taken on by the school’s kindness club, K-Kids Club.

For video, go to vimeo.com/fresnonified/hidalgovolunteers

Once a month a group of about eight Hidalgo students volunteers at the adoption center of the Animal Compassion Team (ACT), cleaning the puppy and cat rooms, spending time with the animals, and any other projects needing support, said Jennifer Jones, a teacher at Hidalgo.

For many of the students, it is their first opportunity to volunteer and they are learning what it means to serve the community they live in and to work toward a common goal with others.

Hidalgo fifth-grader Karina Mendoza said she’s learned the importance of being kind to animals. Hidalgo student Brian Garcia, also a fifth-grader, said volunteering at the adoption center was fun.

“The animals we helped were very nice,” Brian said.

Students who volunteer at ACT are part of the community service committee of the K-Kids Club. Other committees include Room Buddies, Random Acts of Kindness, Meaningful Work, Peer Mediation, and Character Counts. The goal of the K-Kids Club is to spread kindness starting at the school, then at home, and then into the community.

Summer Program as an Edison Student led to Researcher's Success

Edison High School alumna Robin L. Whitney has been named director of research for the Hillblom Center on Aging at University of California San Francisco, Fresno (UCSF Fresno).

Whitney’s interest in public health was sparked in 1999 while a student at Edison when she participated in the Fresno Summer Biomedical Research Internship Program at UCSF Fresno.

She worked that summer investigating cancer in children exposed to pesticides.

Seventeen years later, Dr. Whitney is overseeing research related to the care of older adults in the San Joaquin Valley with the goal of improving access for local patients to cutting-edge clinical studies. She also will evaluate outcomes of new, collaborative models of care for older patients in the region.

After graduating from Edison High, Whitney earned bachelor’s degrees in English and German, graduating magna cum laude from Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Mass. She earned a bachelor’s degree of science in nursing, graduating magna cum laude from University of Southern Maine in South Portland. She earned a doctorate in nursing from University of California, Davis.

Since the Summer Biomedical Research Internship Program was established in 1988, more than 200 high-achieving students have graduated from the program.
Sunnyside Swim Coach Receives CIF Award

Sunnyside High School swim coach and teacher Karyn Klatt has been selected as one of 13 recipients for the prestigious statewide CIF Model Coach Award. Sunnyside athletic director Sue Farmer, teachers and other administrators said this about Karyn as cited by the CIF: “Klatt has been coaching swimming for 30 years and exemplifies everything that is right, good and wonderful about educators today. She is a teacher in the truest sense of the word. She teaches her student-athletes not only how to swim, but she constantly stresses and teaches them how to be good human beings and citizens. She provides her swimmers a place where they can come to feel valued and accomplished, and that they matter in this world.

“She has high expectations for her student-athletes, supporting them in the pool, classroom and community. She is inclusive of all who are interested in participating on her swim teams, supporting all team members from the most talented to the beginner. Additionally, she shares her knowledge generously with other coaches as they look to her for guidance and advice.”

Edison High School Basketball Coach Scores 300 Victories

T.J. Wilkins, social science teacher and varsity boys basketball coach at Edison High School, reached a coaching milestone, achieving 300 varsity victories on Jan. 17 with a dramatic victory over Madera South High School.

Roosevelt High’s Virtual Enterprise Teams Win Awards

Roosevelt’s Virtual Enterprise team earned awards at the VE International Trade Show Jan. 18-19 in Bakersfield. Competing against 110 teams, team members placed seventh for Best Perfect Pitch, placed eighth for Best Professional Booth, and won honorable mention for Best Newsletter, Best Impact Marketing Piece, Best Employee Manual, and Best Human Resource Scenario Presentation.

Design Science High School Sweeps Essay Contest on Democracy

A Design Science High School team of Haroutiun Kglyan, Athena Norris, Lalita Rathasombath, Evan Kirschenmann, Jesse Donadio, Allie Ogawa, Emily Samuelian, Ashley Allen and Rosamaria Ortiz won this year’s Voice of Democracy county-wide essay and speech contest sponsored by the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Haroutiun also won the VFW district contest and competed in Sacramento Jan. 21-22, where he won an additional $200, bringing his total cash prize to $1,200. All local winners were recipients of cash scholarships valued up to $1,000. The team’s VFW sponsor is Design Science teacher Gabe Villasenor.

Student Support Services, Attendance/SARB have Moved

Two areas under the Department of Prevention & Intervention have moved. Student Support Services and Attendance/SARB are now located at Fresno Adult School, 2500 Stanislaus St., Fresno, CA 93721. Phone numbers have also changed and the new fax number is (559) 457-6001.

Terronez Buzzing about Boys Soccer Title

As the Terronez Middle School boys soccer team headed to the league Division I playoffs, a deal was struck that if the team brought home the championship trophy, administrators and teachers would get buzz cuts. On Dec. 14, the team won the league middle school boys soccer title, its first in school history. The barbers were on hand at Terronez on Jan. 27 during lunch to give buzz cuts to six members of the Terronez staff.

Subscribe to E-Newsletter on College and Career Readiness

The district’s College and Career Readiness Department is seeking subscribers to a new monthly e-newsletter for teachers, students, parents, and industry partners. It will highlight student and teacher experiences, industry news on internships and job opportunities, and other important dates and information. Subscribe to the newsletter by texting ‘CCR’ to 42828. Subscribers will be asked to add their email address. They can unsubscribe at any time.
Gaston Middle School Celebrates Black History Month

Gaston Middle School's Black Student Union hosted its third annual Black History Month events on Feb. 1 to kick off Black History Month activities. Students from the Black Student Union collaborated with peers from choir, drama, band, art club, the after-school program, leadership, speech and debate, and the Voces Unidas Club, as well as King Elementary School to plan cultural events for the rest of the month. Top left, from left, Kennedy Jennings, Jada Brooks and Anna Davis perform as Diana Ross and the Supremes. Bottom left, King students in the assembly learn from their older peers. Below, from left, Jennifer Cerezuela, Destiny Cooks and Autumn Arnez re-enact the 1960 lunch counter protest at Woolworth's in Greensboro, N.C.

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

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Bullard Student Starts Volunteer Club and Food Recovery Program

Bullard High School sophomore Mark Topoozian’s desire to give back to his community led him to launch a volunteer club at his school and lead an effort to get unopened school lunch packets to senior citizens in need.

Mark is among the hundreds of Fresno Unified students who volunteer in a variety of ways to help others and make their community better.

Mark’s efforts at Bullard started last year as freshman class president. He and other ninth grade officers organized a Christmas toy drive and donated more than 100 toys to patients at Valley Children’s Hospital. This memorable experience sparked Mark to launch a community service club this school year for students at Bullard called The Drive. The goal of the club is to organize student volunteer projects through the school year. It’s open to all students.

The Drive packed holiday meal boxes at the Community Food Bank for those in need earlier this school year and most recently delivered Valentines to the California Armenian Home skilled nursing facility. The club has a variety of other projects planned.

Mark, sophomore class president this year, hopes The Drive will encourage his peers to give back: “Students want to get involved. They just don’t know how to go about it.”

Bullard High School sophomore Mark Topoozian has led an effort to have unused school lunches delivered to a senior citizens facility. He also started a community service club.

Mark is also helping to make sure unopened lunch food from Bullard High does not go to waste. Earlier this school year, he noticed that many students were tossing lunch packets in the trash and wanted to find a way to share the food with others. Thanks to Mark’s determination, Bullard is the first high school to be part of the Food Recovery Program, a partnership established in 2013 between Fresno Unified and the Community Food Bank.

Unopened lunches from Bullard are now transported daily to residents at Masten Towers, a low-income community in a variety of ways, including serving on numerous committees and boards.

Mark developed a heart for senior citizens while volunteering at the California Armenian Home. He helped residents with their cognitive thinking and social skills. Mark said as he got older and became more aware of his broader community, he was shocked at the high number of people living in poverty and on the street.

“When I see homeless people, I want to give back.” he said.

As part of his involvement in student leadership, Mark was among a group of selected Fresno Unified leadership students who attended the California Association of Directors of Activities (CADA) leadership camp at UC Santa Barbara last summer. In addition to leadership activities, he plays baseball for Bullard and holds a black belt in karate. He is also a member of the Fresno Junior Chamber of Commerce and volunteers at Valley Children’s Hospital.

Mark is a 4.0 student and hopes to earn a scholarship to play baseball at a major university in California. Because of his passion for helping others, he plans to major in biology or chemistry and is hoping to pursue a career in the medical field.

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Food to Share can help get that food to neighborhoods with little or no access to fresh produce! Find out how you can become a donor or benefit from food giveaways in your community.

For more information, contact Fresno Metro Ministry at 559-485-1416 or chanel@fresnometmin.org

Made possible with funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/National Implementation and Dissemination for Chronic Disease Prevention Initiative
Fresno Unified Recruits and Celebrates Advanced Placement Students

Fresno Unified has seen a boost in enrollment in Advanced Placement courses with a 10% increase in students taking AP classes this spring when compared to spring of last year.

The district credits the additional 690 students enrolled to improved student support through each AP instructional coordinator at school sites. The AP instructional coordinator helps organize one-on-one tutoring plus free online tutoring with the Khan Academy.

The Khan Academy is a free resource provided by the College Board. AP instructional coordinators also heavily recruit students for AP classes with a personalized effort to find out what each student needs along the way.

Previously, Fresno Unified provided 260 hours of tutoring for each comprehensive high school. Now, each school site has more than 2,000 hours to provide tutoring and exam preparation.

"Fresno Unified is excited about the increased number of students taking Advanced Placement courses. We strongly believe that our efforts in promoting a college-going culture, rigorous instruction, and access to tutoring has had a positive impact on our AP enrollment and retention in support of our goal of preparing career-ready graduates district wide," said instructional superintendent Katie Russell.

To celebrate their students’ success, this year Bullard High School hosted a brand new event for students who have earned a qualifying score on an AP test. On Feb. 23, the students gathered at Pardini’s for a dinner event that included award certificates and T-shirts. A video featured testimonials from students.

Bullard is hoping to bring more awareness of AP tests and reward students for their hard work. A total of 89 Bullard students were honored for their achievements in AP courses such as Spanish, Human Geography, Government, European History and more.

Edison High School also acknowledges AP students who’ve earned a qualifying score on their tests by holding lunch and pep rally on campus. Many Fresno Unified high schools also host parent nights to celebrate their students’ success on AP tests.

Reception Celebrates Addicott's Newly Modernized Campus

Students, families, teachers, staff, and community members gathered at Addicott Elementary School Jan. 24 to celebrate the campus’ modernized facilities.

The event was also an opportunity to show appreciation to those who made the renovations possible, including Fresno voters through Measure Q. The event featured games, activities, and tours.

Addicott serves kindergarten through sixth grade students with severe disabilities, including those who are orthopedically impaired, intellectually disabled, have multiple disabilities, are deaf and have other health impairments.

The $2.5 million project included additional handicap accessible walkways, safety features, and expanded sensory walls and gross motor areas so students can expand their skills. New features enhance curriculum and instruction, including eye gaze technology in classrooms, ELMO electronic overheads, E-Beam software, new short-throw projectors, Wall-talker whiteboards, and sound proofing wall features.

Guests at a Jan. 24 open house try out new technology to celebrate renovations at Addicott Elementary School, which serves students with severe disabilities.
Healthy Minute

3rd Annual Employee & Family Wellness Expo
With 5K Run/2-Mile Walk

Join Us
in this exciting journey of wellness education, nutritional awareness, and health consciousness!

WellPATH will host its 3rd Annual Employee & Family Wellness Expo with a 5K Run/Walk & 2 Mile Walk. This event is designed to promote health and wellness across the district, encourage our community to get engaged in their health and wellness, and support higher education by donating all funds raised to the Fresno Unified School District Scholarship Fund.

The 5K/Walk and 2 Mile Walk cost $20 per person until the night before the event and $25 per person for same day registration. Children age 10 and under participate free of charge and require adult supervision at all times. All race participants will receive a FREE WellPATH T-Shirt, WellPATH tote bag, and a WellPATH water bottle.

For more details and to register for the race, visit: www.JHMBHealthConnect.com/events

This event is FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

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WellPATH seeks to foster a healthy work environment and engage Fresno Unified School District employees in their health and well-being. Participation in program activities is open to active employees, spouses, domestic partners, dependent children age 18+, early retirees, and retirees covered under the District’s health benefit plan.

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Theatre

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