District Welcomes Students Back

First Day of School

I'm looking forward to participating in band and meeting my teachers.

– Branden Sandoval, eighth grade, Sequoia Middle School

I was nervous at first, but not that nervous now. I know my teacher is going to be nice.

– Camilla Torres, third grade, Figarden Elementary School

It's good. There's a lot of new people. It's a good environment.

– Kalon Wiley, ninth grade, Bullard High School

First-grader Zyanna Leal is having a good first day of school at Figarden Elementary School. Fresno Unified, the fourth largest district in the state with more than 74,000 students, started the new academic year Aug. 14.

Superintendent Finalist Started at Burroughs

Bob Nelson, who started with Fresno Unified in 1991 as a teacher at Burroughs Elementary School, is the only finalist the district’s board of education is considering to lead the state’s fourth largest school district.

The board will make a final decision on the superintendent at a future board meeting. The Fresno Unified Board of Education selected Nelson as the only finalist on Aug. 12 following two days of candidate interviews.

“It’s an incredible opportunity to be the final candidate for superintendent of Fresno Unified,” said Nelson, who has been serving as interim superintendent since Feb. 15 following the resignation of Mike Hanson.

Nelson said he will continue to advocate for “positive dialogue in terms of making things better for students,” as well as an “attitude of civility.” A top priority will be reaching a contract with the Fresno Teachers Association.

Nelson, 48, is starting his 24th year with Fresno Unified, where he has served as a teacher, school administrator, Human Resources administrator and chief of staff.

Nelson left the district in 2012 to become superintendent of the Chawanakee Unified School District in North Fork. He returned to Fresno Unified in 2015 as Hanson’s chief of staff.

Nelson is married and has seven children, ranging in age from 21 months to 21 years. Nelson and his wife, Tiffany, have served for many years as foster parents, and four of their children are adopted.

He is pursuing his doctoral degree from the University of Southern California and has taught education classes at Fresno State University.

For video, go to vimeo.com/fresnounified/firstday2017

More than 74,000 students are expected to attend district schools this year, supported by a staff of more than 10,000 dedicated employees.

“We had a smooth start to the new school year last...
District Serving Up New School Meals App and Food Items

This school year, parents can tap into a new app and interactive website to easily view information on school menus for breakfast and lunch each day.

The app features an image and description of food items, as well as nutrition and food allergies information. The innovative and interactive web site and mobile app make school menus more convenient and informative than ever before.

The app can be accessed by searching for “School Menus by Nutrislice” on Google Play or the App Store or visit fresnounified.nutrislice.com.

“This new app makes it even easier to take advantage of the nutritious, free school meals that our district offers to all our students. We know that when our students are eating healthy foods, they are better prepared to learn,” said Interim Superintendent Bob Nelson.

The district is also introducing several new menu items this school year, including:

- Barbecue pulled pork sliders with coleslaw
- Alaskan pollock fish sticks with curly fries and a whole grain Hawaiian roll
- Super Nachos, consisting of locally sourced whole grain corn chips from La Tapatia Tortilleria
- Breakfast taco with turkey sausage, eggs, low fat cheddar cheese, jalapeno and picante sauce wrapped in a whole grain baked flour tortilla
- Beef maple sausage served with scrambled eggs and toast

The Fresno Unified School District will again offer breakfast and lunch at no charge to all students regardless of income levels. The free meals for all students was a policy change in 2014 that is reducing burdens for both families and school administrators.

The practice supports the district’s efforts to eliminate all barriers to student learning, and helps ensure students are not hungry at school while they are trying to learn.

The program is part of the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), an option available to schools under the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program. The CEP allows high-poverty schools to expand access to free school meals while reducing paperwork and streamlining meal service operation. Meal applications are no longer required.

“The goal of the Food Services Department is to provide nutritious, appetizing meals to help students do their best in school each day, and implementing the CEP helps us meet this goal,” said Food Services Director Jose Alvarado.

Se puede tener acceso a la aplicación a través de buscar “School Menus by Nutrislice” en Google Play, App Store o visitando, fresnounified.nutrislice.com.

“Esta nueva aplicación facilita incluso tomar ventaja de los alimentos nutritivos y gratis que nuestro distrito ofrece a todos nuestros estudiantes. Sabemos que cuando los estudiantes toman alimentos saludables, están mejor preparados para aprender,” dijo el Superintendente Interino Bob Nelson.

El distrito está introduciendo también varios productos nuevos en los menús este ciclo escolar incluyendo:

- Barbacoa de carne de puerco deshebrada con ensalada de col
- Pescado en trozos Alaskan pollock con papas fritas (curly fries) y pan integral Hawaiano
- Súper Nachos, con totopos (chips) de maíz de la Tortillería La Tapatia.

■ Desayuno tornado con salchicha de pavo, huevos, queso cheddar descremado, jalapeño y salsa picante, envuelto en una tortilla de harina.
■ Salchicha de res maple servida con huevos revueltos y pan tostado.

La práctica apoya los esfuerzos del distrito para eliminar todas las barreras al aprendizaje estudiantil y ayuda a asegurar que todos los estudiantes reciban alimentos nutritivos.

El programa es parte de la Provisión de Elegibilidad Comunitaria (CEP), una opción disponible para las escuelas bajo el Programa de Almuerzo Escolar a Nivel Nacional y el Programa de Desayuno Escolar. El CEP les permite a las escuelas con alta pobreza ampliar el acceso a alimentos gratuitos en la escuela reduciendo los trámites y simplificar la operación de servicios alimenticios. Ya no se requiere llenar la solicitud.

See SCHOOL MEALS
Continued on page 16

Fresno Unified School District

2017 Important Dates

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PREPARING CAREER READY GRADUATES
The weekend leading into the start of school, I was awash with emotions. There was the excitement of welcoming back students and staff, the anticipation of opening new buildings at Bullard, Figarden and Turner, and the overwhelming reality that the district was about to kick off a number of new programs -- including our online learning school, eLearn Academy, and our expanded dual immersion programs. Add to that, I was about to have the job interview of a lifetime -- that of superintendent for the fourth largest school district in the state.

Interviews of any kind can be stressful. The sheer anticipation can cause your blood pressure to rise, but as I sat at the downtown hotel that had been booked for interviews, awaiting my opportunity, I had a moment of true clarity. As I looked out onto the atrium lobby, it hit me. This was the very same lobby where I first came to Fresno and met my wife some 28 years ago when I sang at my cousin’s wedding. It was in that lobby, at that wedding that my own personal storyline changed, setting in motion a remarkable journey that directly attributed to my amazing colleagues and the significance of knowing an employee’s name, the value of that was never clearer to me than when I was an HR administrator.

I found an outlet for my love of teaching at Fresno State, working specifically with future counselors and those interested in special education and supporting families grappling with what it means to have a loved one with long-term disabilities. This semester is the first time in five years I haven’t taught at Fresno State. I am over the moon when I visit schools or our Department of Prevention and Intervention and see my former students who are serving as counselors, social emotional specialists, and psychologists with the youth of our district.

Tiffany and I will celebrate our 25th wedding anniversary next year. I know I wouldn’t be here if not for her, as I believe “life balance” is truly whatever your spouse allows and she has given me a true gift. Along our journey, we have been blessed with seven amazing children. Our oldest, Ben, is 21 and away at college; twins Phillip and Joshua recently started his first year in college. Philip, who was born with cerebral palsy, quickly opened our eyes to the world of special education. Tiffany left a teaching career to care for the boys and helped us all become stronger advocates for our son and the youth of our community. Phillip has begun the Adult Transition Program in Madera County and reminds us daily what unconditional love truly is.

Centered around our faith and a desire to support teachers, site leaders and serve district’s human resources team.

I haven’t taught at Fresno State. I am over the moon when I visit schools or our Department of Prevention and Intervention and see my former students who are serving as counselors, social emotional specialists, and psychologists with the youth of our district.

Tiffany and I have always been a firm believer in the importance of personal interaction and the significance of knowing an employee’s name, the value of that was never clearer to me than when I was an HR administrator. I found an outlet for my love of teaching at Fresno State, working specifically with future counselors and those interested in special education and supporting families grappling with what it means to have a loved one with long-term disabilities. This semester is the first time in five years I haven’t taught at Fresno State. I am over the moon when I visit schools or our Department of Prevention and Intervention and see my former students who are serving as counselors, social emotional specialists, and psychologists with the youth of our district.

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Centered around our faith and a desire to help others, Tiffany and I have always felt that there was more we could do to support kids in our valley. That desire has led me back to where I first started, putting in motion a remarkable journey that directly attributed to my amazing colleagues and the significance of knowing an employee’s name, the value of that was never clearer to me than when I was an HR administrator.

I have been a part of Fresno Unified for most of my adult life and I am honored to be serving this community as your new superintendent. I look forward to sharing my plans for the district over the coming weeks.

El Superintendent Finalista Abarza la Oportunidad de Dirigir al Distrito

The Superintendent Finalist embraces the opportunity to lead the district.

The Superintendent Finalist embraces the opportunity to lead the district.

El fin de semana del inicio de clases, tuve lleno de emociones. Fue la emoción del regreso posterior de los estudiantes y el personal, la anticipación de la apertura de los nuevos edificios en las escuelas Bullard, Figarden y Turner y la realidad abrumadora que el distrito estaba a punto de poner en marcha una serie de nuevos programas – incluyendo nuestro aprendizaje escolar en el internet, Academia eLearn y la ampliación de nuestros programas de doble inmersión. Añadiendo a eso, yo estaba a punto de tener la entrevista de toda la vida – la de superintendent del cuarto distrito escolar más grande en el estado.

Las entrevistas de cualquier tipo pueden ser estresantes. El simple hecho de la sensación anticipada puede causar que se eleve la presión arterial, pero mientras que estaba sentado en el hotel del centro que había sido reservado para entrevistas, esperando mi oportunidad, tuve un momento a la verdadera realidad. Mientras miraba hacia el interior del vestíbulo, fue que cayó en la cuenta. Este era el mismo vestíbulo la primera vez que vine a Fresno y conocí a mi esposa hace como 28 años, cuando canté en el matrimonio de mi primo. Fue en ese vestíbulo y en ese matrimoni donde mi historia personal cambió, poniendo en marcha una trayectoria no-calendario la cual me ha llevado a donde inicié, celebrando mi vigésimo séptimo (27th) primer día de clases sirviendo a los estudiantes, personal y las familias del Distrito Escolar Unificado de Fresno.

Me siento honrado y agradecido por la oportunidad de continuar apoyando a los estudiantes y a las familias de nuestra comunidad increíble. Estoy extremadamente orgulloso de ser el primer superintendente de servir a este distrito por casi 30 años, iniciando como maestro en el distrito. Inicié mi carrera con el Distrito Escolar Unificado de Fresno como maestro suplente mientras completaba mis credenciales de pedagogía en Fresno State. Mientras iniciaba mi especialización para obtener mi licenciatura en el desempeño lúdico obteniendo en la Universidad del Sur de California, fue aquel encuentro casual con mi esposa Tiffany, que me trajo aquí y me conecté con otro de mis verdaderos amores, la pedagogía. Después de que obtuve mi certificado en pedagogía comencé enseñando tiempo completo,
First day of school, clockwise starting at left: Hayley Caeton displays a special sign for her first-graders at Figarden Elementary School; Jeff Allen teaches 11th grade U.S. history at Bullard High School; Design Science Middle High School students check out Fresno City College, where they take some of their classes; and Araceli Andrade, a home school liaison at Yokomi Elementary School, has a strong reaction to the first day.
First day of school, clockwise starting at the right: McCardle Elementary School students, from left, Olivia Monson, Melody Moua, Natalie Saldivar, Jade Rufino and Anthony Flores try out the new yoga ball chairs; sixth-grader Dominique Newhouse at Turner Elementary School; kindergartner Koeuy Alana Pe at Turner; kindergartner Kimberly McBee with Jazmine Guzman and Vince Thor at Turner; and Dean Salazar, right, and Eve Triska have fun at recess at McCardle.
Parent University Means Back to School for Parents, Too

Parent University will offer a variety of classes for parents and guardians in the 2017-18 school year.

Classes, starting Aug. 29, will include:

- Early Learning -- Importance of early learning, Fresno Unified’s programs, home strategies, importance of attendance and communication with teacher and school, and screening tools.
- Middle School -- District leadership and goals, grade level standards, middle school expectations, A-G classes required for college and PLUS (Professional Learning Updraft System) classes that provide additional student support.
- 12th Grade -- Potential pitfalls for seniors and resources available, expectations, “senioritis,” post-secondary options, industry sectors, and admissions and requirements for community college, California State University and University of California.

Details on location and times for the classes can be found at https://www.fresnou.org/dept/parentu. Classes are offered in English, Spanish and Hmong.

This will be Parent University’s seventh year providing classes and workshops to parents. The goal of the program is to empower, engage and connect families to their school community in support of student achievement through parent learning workshops at all levels of the school system. Last year, Parent University held 975 sessions for parents.

Regreso a la Escuela Para los Padres También

La Universidad Para Padres ofrecerá una variedad de clases para padres y tutores el ciclo escolar 2017-18.

Las clases iniciarán el 29 de agosto, e incluirán:

- Aprendizaje Temprano – Importancia del aprendizaje temprano, programas del Distrito Escolar Unificado de Fresno, estrategias para el hogar, importancia de asistencia y comunicación con el maestro/a, escuela y herramientas de exámen.
- Escuela Secundaria – Liderazgo y metas del distrito, estándares del nivel del grado, expectativas de la escuela secundaria, clases de A-G requeridas por el colegio y PLUS (Sistema Ascendente de Aprendizaje Profesional) que proveen apoyo adicional al estudiante.
- 12vo Grado – Obstáculos potenciales para los estudiantes del 12vo grado (senior) y recursos disponibles, expectativas, estudiantes que están en el 12vo Grado (“senioritis”) creen que no tienen que hacer ningún trabajo/tarea, opciones de postsecundaria, sectores industriales, admisiones y requisitos del colegio (college) comunitario, Universidad Estatal de California y Universidad de California.

Detalles sobre la localidad y horarios de las clases se pueden encontrar en; https://www.fresnou.org/dept/parentu. Las clases se ofrecen en inglés, español y hmg.

Este será el séptimo año que la Universidad Para Padres provee clases y talleres para los padres. La meta del programa es fortalecer, participar y conectar a las familias a su comunidad escolar en apoyo del rendimiento académico a través de los talleres de aprendizaje para padres en todos los niveles del sistema escolar. El año pasado la Universidad Para Padres llevó a cabo 975 sesiones.

Rov mus Kawm Ntawv rau Tej Niam Txiv Thiab

Parent University yuav qhib muaj ntawv rau tej niam txiv thiab neeg saib xyuas rau lub xyoo kawm ntawv 2017-18.

Cov chaw kawm, pib rau lub Yim Hli tim 29, yuav muaj:

- Kev Kawm Thaum Ntxov – Tseem ceeb ntawm kev kawm thaum ntxov, Fresno Unified qhov kev kawm, tej tswv yim hauv vaj hauv tsev, kev tseem ceeb ntawm kev mus koom kev kawm thiab kev sib txuas lus tus xib fwb thiab tsev kawm ntawv, thiab tej twj siv.
- Tsev Kawm Ntaww Theem Nrab – Hauv paus tsev kawm ntaww kev ntaus thawj thiab tej hom phiaj, tej qauv theem qib, tsev kawm ntawv theem nrab tej kev cia siab, cov chaw A-G raug tseev kom muaj rau kev kawm college thiab PLUS (Professional Learning Updraft System) cov chav kawm uas npaj muaj kev txhawb pab tub kawm ntawv ntxiv.

Noy yuav yag Parent University xyoo thi xya npaj muaj tej chaw kawm thiab kev cob qhia rau tej niam txiv. Lub hom phiaj ntawm qhov kev kawm yog los kuv kev txhawb zog, txuam thiab ntxuas nrog tej yim tsev nteeg rau lawv lub tsev kawm ntaww hauv jez zog rau kev txhawb pab ntawm tub kawm ntaww kev kawm tau los ntawm niam txiv kawm tej kev cob qhia hauv txhua theem ntawm txoj kev kawm. Tseb no, Parent University tau muaj 975 ntu qhia rau tej niam txiv.
Fresno Unified will host its annual State of Education luncheon Oct. 30, the district’s largest single event to raise money for the Fresno Unified Scholarship Fund.

The event will feature Interim Superintendent Bob Nelson as the keynote speaker and will be the first opportunity for the broader community to get to know Nelson and learn more about his goals for the district.

The luncheon will be held from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at a location still to be announced. For ticket information or to inquire about being a community sponsor, call (559) 457-3733.

For video, go to vimeo.com/fresnounified/scholarships2017

In addition to the State of Education fundraising effort, employees and the community are invited to contribute to the fund through https://tinyurl.com/fusdscholarship.

Last spring, the district awarded $61,000 in scholarships to 49 students, all of whom overcame significant obstacles on their journey to academic success. Many of the 2017 winners’ stories will be shared at the luncheon, giving guests an opportunity to learn first-hand how important their support is to Fresno Unified students.

Many of these students struggled with poverty, having only one parent in the home, mastering English, and countless other obstacles -- but managed to excel academically and become leaders of their high schools.

Scholarship winners last year went on to attend a variety of colleges, including University of California campuses in Davis, Berkeley, Los Angeles, Santa Cruz, and Santa Barbara; California State University campuses in Fresno and San Luis Obispo; University of Washington; Stanford University; University of Southern California; University of Pennsylvania; and a variety of other community colleges and universities.

The district’s scholarship fund, established in 2009, has made a difference in the lives of Fresno Unified students by not only helping to defray college costs, but by shining a spotlight on their success and singling them out as worthy of distinction.

University of California campuses in Davis, Berkeley, Los Angeles, Santa Cruz, and Santa Barbara; California State University campuses in Fresno and San Luis Obispo; University of Washington; Stanford University; University of Southern California; University of Pennsylvania; and a variety of other community colleges and universities.

Golfers Tee Up for Scholarships

Fresno Unified’s Goal 2 team raised nearly $5,000 toward student scholarships through its second annual golf tournament.

The Tee-It-Up for the Scholarship Fund Golf Tournament, held Aug. 4 at Airways Golf Course, attracted 66 golfers and more than 20 sponsors.

The tournament raffle was a high point, with memorabilia from local athletes now playing in the NFL driving bids up.

The tournament raised $4,855 for the Fresno Unified Scholarship Fund, which last May awarded $61,000 in scholarships to 49 deserving students.

The Goal 2 team is excited for next year and has begun planning for the 2018 tournament.
FACILITIES

School Opens with New Looks at Turner, Figarden and Bullard

Students at Turner and Figarden elementary schools and Bullard High School returned to school last month to big changes on their campuses.

The work is part of $265 million in projects funded by the $280 million Measure Q bond, approved by voters in 2010. Plans are underway to build on the work with Measure X. Voters approved the $225 million Measure X bond last November.

With the support of the community for local bond measures, Fresno Unified has been able to make significant improvements to campuses throughout the district, including school renovations, new safety and technology updates and new classroom buildings to replace portables.

At Bullard, students and staff returned for the new school year Aug. 14 to a new library media center, which includes a 100-seat presentation hall, computer lab, career center, and counseling and registrar’s offices, as well as several collaborative and small group work areas.

Renovations at Bullard also include a new administration building and a new design for the entrance of the school.

At Turner, staff and students returned to a new classroom building and a new administration building to replace 13 aging portable classrooms.

The new 10,000 square-foot academic building features eight classrooms, student and staff restrooms and a shared internal collaboration space to foster project-based learning.

The new administration building’s prominent location on the corner of Peach and Clay avenues will help reinforce the school’s identity. The 2,000 square-foot building replaces the portable administration building and features a visitor waiting area, meeting room, nurse’s office and restroom, teacher workroom, staff restroom and new administrative offices.

At Figarden, work was completed on a new eight-classroom building and a new four-classroom kindergarten building. The district will soon start construction on another eight-classroom building, scheduled to be completed in late 2018.

The classroom buildings were designed with larger collaborative study areas running down the center of all eight classrooms. The kindergarten classrooms have direct access to restrooms and large teacher workroom areas.

With completion of the Figarden projects, the 20 new classrooms will replace 18 portables.

The Fresno Unified Board of Education approved a list of Measure X projects last October. Projects include science and technology labs, career/technical education classrooms, music and arts classrooms, security upgrades, improved air conditioning systems, a new elementary school in southeast Fresno to accommodate enrollment growth, and a variety of other projects ranging from new classrooms to new theaters and gyms at high schools.

Fresno Unified is getting social!

Tag us and share posts! #FresnoUnifiedIAmReady

@fresnounified  @fresnounified

www.facebook.com/fresnounifiedpage

Get Involved!
EMPLYEO SPOTLIGHT

Wheeler Oversees a Library Where Students Stand in Line to Get In

In his third year as teacher librarian at Sunnyside High School, Eric Wheeler has helped to create a welcoming, fun atmosphere in the library where 200 to 300 students gather. He has worked for the district for 14 years as a teacher, teacher librarian at McLane High School and as a teacher on special assignment to support technology. He was a finalist for the district’s Excellence in Education awards last spring. Sunnyside Principal Tim Liles said of Wheeler: “Student learning is his entire motivation and he approaches his role as a leader on campus to enrich high quality instruction for all.”

What do you enjoy the most about your job?

I love being helpful, connecting students and teachers and staff with resources to help them be successful.

What is the most challenging?

Learning everyone’s names is the biggest challenge. All 2,800 students will visit the library multiple times this year. All 200 teachers, admin, and staff will visit the library.

How have school libraries changed over the years?

School libraries are in a continuous state of change. We still have books, but much of our research and reference collections are curated online. Our patrons look to us for meeting spaces, maker spaces, technology support, technology instruction, printing, bathrooms, book suggestions, research help, and a smile -- always a smile.

How do you entice students to come into the library?

The Sunnyside library is open, available, and welcoming. Students know it is their library. I have not had to “entice” students.

What role does Sunnyside’s library serve?

The Sunnyside library is open from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday. It is a warm place to eat breakfast and a cool place to eat lunch. You can print out work before class, join a game of League of Legends, play chess, study, read, visit with friends, meet a tutor, and work on a group project. The library is the biggest classroom on campus; we are always ready to help students be their best possible selves.

What is surprising about Sunnyside’s library?

We are so busy during lunch, students choose to wait in line to visit the library.

See WHEELER
Continued on page 10

Plant Supervisor at Bullard High School Smooths Campus Moves

Eric Ovalle has been the plant supervisor at Bullard High School for five years and an employee of Fresno Unified for 21 years. He was selected as a finalist for the district’s Excellence in Education awards last spring. Roosevelt High School teacher Deborah Williams, a former colleague, described Ovalle as “hands down the best-of-the-best” and noted the hard work of Ovalle and his team during the large-scale moving required with the construction of new buildings at Bullard.

What is the best part about your job?

One of the highlights of my position is providing a clean and welcoming environment for our students to thrive in.

What is the most challenging part about your job?

The most challenging aspect of my job would be discovering solutions to problems that may arise unexpectedly and demand a swift response.

How has all the construction at Bullard affected you and your team?

I believe all the diverse phases of construction have provided a renewed sense of pride and motivation.

What do most people not know about a plant coordinator?

In my opinion, being a plant supervisor requires a dedicated individual who provides support in various forms to our student community and staff.

Name one thing most people do not know about you.

Something that most people are not aware of is my passion for the restoration of classic vehicles.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

Most, if not all, of my spare time is spent enjoying friends and family quality time.

What is your dream vacation?

My ideal vacation would be to travel to Machu Picchu to explore the Inca ruins in Peru.
Swim, Eat and Learn: A Successful Summer at Fresno Unified

Fresno Unified campuses remained busy over the summer, providing sparkling pools for children and families to cool off in, free nutritious lunches and a variety of summer school classes.

More than 12,700 students attended summer school to get caught up on classes and work towards graduating on time. Students in all grades participated in a variety of classes, including science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), the arts, and English language arts.

Summer school culminated with 118 students receiving their high school diplomas on July 14.

The district established a new partnership with the city of Fresno for the summer to expand the number of high school pools open for community swimming and create more green space at school campuses for summer recreation.

Right, students had the opportunity to learn about set-making and theater arts during summer school.

OPENING OF SCHOOL

Continued from page 1

month, thanks to an incredible amount of preparation and planning by our staff,” said Interim Superintendent Bob Nelson. “As I have visited schools throughout Fresno Unified, I am inspired by the enthusiasm of our teachers and students, and the dedication of our support staff. It’s going to be a great year.”

In addition to new programs, new classroom buildings opened at Turner and Figarden elementary schools and a new administration building and expanded library media center opened at Bullard High School. (See page 8 for expanded coverage.)

With the start of the new school year, the district has launched several new initiatives, including:

- Offering tutoring in elementary school libraries until 4 p.m.
- Increased health services, with a health professional at every campus
- Expanded dual immersion programs in Hmong at Greenberg Elementary School and in Spanish at Wawona School, Rowell Elementary School and McLane High School

Also this school year, the district has initiated additional support at schools to help close the achievement gap for African-American students.

Fresno Unified on Aug. 9 announced the hiring of Wendy McCulley for a new school leadership executive director position to focus on promoting a culture of equity and inclusion for African American students.

The district’s first online school -- eLearn Academy -- is underway, providing flexible attendance options for grades 7-12, an onsite program for grades 7-9, single courses for students who want to accelerate their learning, and site-based online classes.

The district this year will also roll out 25 more low emissions buses, completing the conversion of its fleet to all low emissions buses.

The district established a new partnership with the city of Fresno for the summer to expand the number of high school pools open for community swimming and create more green space at school campuses for summer recreation.

The district’s partnership with the city allowed for 894 fee-based swim lessons to take place, with the Mayor’s Free Swim Scholarship paying for 700 students to receive swim lessons at no charge. The district was happy to provide a safe place for families to escape the heat this summer.

Fresno Unified also opened 45 school cafeterias this summer to offer free meals for any children between the ages of 1 and 18. No proof of financial need or identification was required.

The healthy meals were served every week of the summer. Nutrition Services estimates more than 181,000 meals were provided for children from June 12 through Aug. 11.

Swim, Eat and Learn: A Successful Summer at Fresno Unified

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WHEELER

What book are you recommending to high school students?

Book recommendations begin with a conversation. Every student is unique. I might ask about interests, past books, movies, favorite authors, pets, and hobbies. From there, I try to pull a variety of books and encourage the student to dip into each before selecting some to check out. For example, if a student tells me she is part of our anti-bullying club, “Don’t Laugh At Me,” I might pull the following books to get things started: “Wonder,” by R.J. Palacio, “Monster,” by Patrick Ness, and “13 Reasons Why,” by Jay Asher.

If you were not a teacher librarian, what career would you choose?

If I were not a teacher librarian, I would be an English teacher. If I had to change careers now, I would head to Bitwise and try to find a match for my technology skills and a startup.

Name one thing most people do not know about you.

I conduct “Speed Dating Workshops” in the library. Teachers bring a class of students who are selecting books for independent reading. Based on their interests, I will pull a variety of books, seat students four to a table, place about 20 books on each table, give some quick book talks to highlight books on each of their tables, and ask students to begin “dancing” books by giving each book 30 seconds to interest them before they move on to the next book. Students typically leave with one or more books they would like to take out on a second date.

What is your dream vacation?

My dream vacation is a good book, a beach, tide pools for exploring, and waves for body surfing -- then Disneyland, of course!
Fresno Unified Wins First-Ever SAT Preparation Award

Fresno Unified has won an award that recognizes school districts for encouraging students to prepare for the SAT and college-level courses.

Fresno Unified received the “Growth” prize for having the highest overall percent increase of students linking their College Board and Khan Academy accounts. By linking accounts, students can receive free, personalized SAT practice from Khan Academy.

Since the SAT Practice All In Challenge began in December 2016, Fresno Unified increased the percentage of its students linking their accounts by 36%.

The first-time award was announced by the Council of the Great City Schools in August for Fresno Unified and four other council districts. As a part of the award Fresno Unified School District will receive money to put towards initiatives that advance student success and opportunity.

The increase is a result of a new initiative the district joined last school year. It launched a partnership with the College Board (which administers the SAT) to offer Khan Academy tutorials for free to students taking the PSAT -- the practice test for the SAT.

College Board research shows that students who prepared for the SAT using Official SAT Practice have seen substantial score gains. Twenty hours of practice is associated with an average 115-point increase from the PSAT/NMSQT to the SAT, nearly double the average gain of students who do not use Official SAT Practice.

“I am extremely proud of our students for their efforts in preparing for the SAT and increasing their college options. I am also grateful to our staff for their support of our students, and for the work this partnership has undertaken to make sure all students have the help they need to prepare for the SAT,” said Interim Superintendent Bob Nelson.

Official SAT Practice features video lessons, thousands of interactive practice questions, nine full-length practice tests, and test-taking tips and strategies. By linking their College Board and Khan Academy accounts, students who’ve taken the SAT or a PSAT-related assessment in the past can unlock a custom practice plan and determine what areas to focus on.

The 2017 Official SAT Practice All In Challenge is sponsored by College Board, the Council of the Great City Schools, and Khan Academy. School districts had to be members of the Council of the Great City Schools to be eligible.

Health Message from Dr. Ken Bird and Dr. Paul Hsiao

By Kindergarten, Half of Children have Tooth Decay

We have all heard advertisements for dental care that tell us that a healthy mouth is more than an attractive smile. The fact is, oral health is significant to our personal and public health. Not only is our mouth the portal to our digestive system, but it also serves a key role in our personal interactions and socialization, and is a major point of introduction of infection and chronic inflammation.

Poor oral health in children can affect their well-being in a variety of ways through dental caries and periodontal disease. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, these diseases account for 5 to 10% of public health expenditures and are the fourth most expensive diseases to treat in the industrialized world.

Dental caries (also known as cavities) is a communicable disease that all ages are susceptible to. They cause pain and discomfort that affect nutrition, communication, socialization, and sleeping, all of which affect our overall health and well-being and can result in absence from school leading to lower academic performance. It is critical that children see their dentist on a regular basis, as cavities can be removed or their progression slowed down with more brushing and flossing. If addressed early, root canals and tooth extractions can be avoided.

The California Dental Association estimates that half a million California children missed school in the previous 12 months due to dental caries and that dental caries is the most common chronic childhood disease in the U.S.

By kindergarten, 50% of California children have experienced tooth decay, and by third grade, that percentage is greater than 70%.

Parents are often unaware of the importance and value of baby teeth. Decayed baby teeth hurt and impede the ability of the child to eat, drink, speak, sleep, and do well in school. If your child is on Medi-Cal and needs a dentist, we encourage you to call Free Dental Youth Services at (844) 421-3484 to schedule an appointment.

For more information about the public health aspects of dental care, visit http://bit.ly/254P8SQ.
McLane High Student Work Kicks Off District Art Shows

The district is expanding a pilot arts initiative to schools in the Bullard, Edison, McLane, and Sunnyside regions, giving hundreds more students opportunities to showcase their art in a professional gallery space.

The first art show is Sept. 7 at the district’s leased space in Gallery One at the M Street Arts Complex. The show, “Voices, a Retrospective of ArtVenture Projects,” is part of ArtHop, held the first Thursday of the month downtown.

The district’s expanded arts initiative is the REAL project -- Relevant Engagement in Art and Literacy. Students from transitional kindergarten to high school explore socially relevant themes in literature and express their reflections through writing and art. They have the opportunity to curate and display their work in a professional exhibit environment.

For the September show, McLane High School’s ArtVenture Academy will showcase student art from past projects. The show provides a glimpse into the powerful voice that art provides for Fresno Unified students and what to look forward to this school year.

“Watching students, families, and community members come through our gallery each month was a highlight of my year,” said Catherine Aujero, manager of the Visual and Performing Arts Department. “Families and students beamed with pride. Community members were moved by the caliber of art our students produced and the thoughtful writing that went with each piece.”

Sept. 7 Show

What: “Voices, a Retrospective of ArtVenture Projects”
When: Sept. 7
5-8 p.m.
Where: Gallery One, M Street Arts Complex, 1419 M St.

Computech is Over the Moon

The entire Computech Middle School student body -- about 800 students -- donned UV protection glasses on Aug. 21 to observe the eclipse of the sun.

Meanwhile, the school’s science teachers had traveled to Oregon to view the eclipse in totality, bringing back eye-witness accounts of the historic event. Hoover High School science teachers also traveled to Oregon to see the eclipse.

Computech and other classes throughout Fresno Unified used the eclipse as a real-time science lesson.

At Lawless Elementary School, Kijuana Hartshorn’s special day class students prepared for the big event by playing the roles of the sun, earth and moon. Then they put on their special eclipse glasses to watch the eclipse.

At Sunnyside High School, Tamela Ryatt’s photography students built pinhole cameras for projecting the image of the eclipse, and then recorded the projection with their smart phones.

The activity combined the most basic camera device with the latest technology and launched a semester-long project on the evolution of the camera. Students will present their projects to the Fresno Art Museum, with the most impressive student work selected for display.

Students in Jairo Sanchez’s class at Roosevelt High School used boxes to view and mirrors to project the solar eclipse onto a building.

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Fourth-Grader Collects Backpacks, School Supplies for Students

Zackeria Lovick, a fourth-grade student at Figarden Elementary School, has been collecting backpacks and school supplies for students in need since he was in second grade, and estimates he has passed out more than 500 backpacks over the two years.

Most recently, he delivered 165 backpacks to students at Williams Elementary School during their back-to-school block party on Aug. 9. The backpacks were filled with notebooks, folders and pencil boxes filled with crayons, colored pencils, markers, erasers, scissors, and glue sticks -- the basic school supplies most elementary students need.

Zackeria’s first school supply drive started with 17 backpacks that he personally delivered to students at Del Mar Elementary School. Zackeria started the backpack drive when he was shopping for his own backpack and realized that many families in Fresno could not afford backpacks for their kids to start the school year.

“Something as simple as a backpack with school supplies may not be simple for everyone. I feel like I am helping them,” Zackeria said. “It feels awesome when I am able to give school supplies to other kids because sometimes it is all the extra support they need to succeed.”

Zackeria plans to continue collecting backpacks and school supplies to give to different schools in Fresno Unified. Malarie Mendoza, Zackeria’s mom, works for the district as a resource counseling assistant at Wolters Elementary School and helps him identify schools. So far, 13 schools have received donated backpacks and school supplies.

Zackeria funds his school supply drive through donations from the community. His largest donation has been $500, which was key in helping Zackeria kick-start providing backpacks to students.

Zackeria is thankful that the community continues to support his school supply drive. Zackeria feels that the more he donates, the more people will hear about his school supply drive, and he hopes more people will get involved and give.

“This is a community effort and I wouldn’t be able to do it without the constant support from the community and my family,” said Zackeria.

When Zackeria is not busy with his school supply drive, he enjoys playing baseball, video games, hanging out with friends and going to watch his favorite baseball team, the San Francisco Giants. Zackeria says he is just a regular kid who likes helping others. In school, he likes playing with his friends during recess and learning about his favorite subject, math.

Zackeria has a can-do attitude and says if he could change one thing about school it would be to create a family atmosphere, where everyone gets along: “I think too many kids try and bully others when we should just be helping one another.”

Zackeria will graduate high school in the year 2026. He would like to go to college to earn a degree in sports journalism. His dream is to become a professional baseball player and then work as a sports announcer. He hopes to attend Fresno State to play on their baseball team, like Aaron Judge, an outfielder for the New York Yankees.

To Donate
- Call (559) 577-5448
- Drop off supplies at Studio 614, 614 E. Weldon Ave. (across from Fresno High School) by calling ahead to (559) 930-8181
- Find him on Facebook at Zackeria’s School Supply Drive

African American Students Attend Leadership Camps

Ahwahnee Middle School eighth-grader Damaree Arnold spent a week at UC Merced over the summer getting an in-depth look at what he needs to do to get into college.

Damaree was among 41 students who headed to summer camp at college campuses as part of the district’s African American Leadership Cohorts.

The 2021 cohort, ninth-graders this year, attended camp for four days at Fresno State University while the 2022 cohort, eighth-graders this year, went to UC Merced. The program seeks to accelerate achievement for African American students, ease the transitions to eighth grade and high school and prepare students for California State University and University of California campuses and other top-tier colleges.

Edison High School freshman Harmony Newton, who attended camp at Fresno State, said she feels more prepared for college: “I feel like it
New Teacher Workshop Points Staff in Right Direction

Sequoia Middle School teacher Lisa Milazzo, left, and Gaston Middle School teacher Callie Leflam teach a Let’s Talk About It! session about how to get students involved in classroom conversations. The workshop was part of the district’s new teacher conference Aug. 5-6 to help prepare new employees for their new role educating Fresno Unified students. For the 2017-18 school year, the district has hired 250 new teachers -- 127 for elementary, 85 for middle and high school and 33 in special education. More than 375 employees attended the conference at McLane High School, which was also offered to those in the district’s “pipeline” programs, such as student teachers. The keynote speaker on Aug. 5 was Nicole Dimich Vagle, president of Lighthouse Learning Community. The conference also featured a variety of sessions to help new teachers.

ACSA Hosts Mini Conference

A mini conference featuring Joelle Hood, an advocate for incorporating social emotional learning into schools, will be hosted Oct. 13 by the Fresno Consolidated Chapter of the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA).

The mini conference is open to all management, supervisory and confidential employees with limited seating. ACSA members will be given first priority. Participants may choose a morning or afternoon session with a hosted lunch for both groups. Detailed information will be forthcoming.

Hood is an advocate for youth and helping schools prepare students to become the best that they can be, and help make the world a better place at the same time. Her topic will be “Nourish to Flourish: The Connection between Workplace Well-being & Engagement, Efficacy, and Achievement of Staff and Students.”

For more information on ACSA, email Executive Director Susan Bedi at ACSAFresno2016@gmail.com.
SUMMER LEADERSHIP

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continued making me more dedicated to finishing our schoolwork and being more engaged so we can get into the UC." The leadership cohorts are a joint project of the Goal 2 Department at Fresno Unified, UC Merced, Fresno City College and the Office of the Fresno County Superintendent of Schools.
SCHOOL MEALS
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“La meta del Departamento de Servicios Alimenticios es proveer alimentos nutritivos y atractivos para ayudar a los estudiantes a hacer lo mejor posible en la escuela todos los días e implementando el CEP nos ayuda a cumplir esta meta,” dijo José Alvarado, Director de Servicios Alimenticios.

Paus Tsev Kawm Ntawv Tau Muab Daim Ntawv Thov Pluas Noj Tshiab thiab Cov Khoom Noj

Lub xyoo kawn ntawv no, tej niam txiv muaj peev xwm mus saib tau daim ntawv thov tshiab thiab sib txuas lus tau nrog lub chaw nruab ntug los xyuas qhov lus qhia yooj yooj yim txog tsev kawn ntawv daim ntawv qhia khoom noj tau pluas tshais pluas su txhua hnuub.

Daim ntawv thov muaj tej yam ntxww ib daim duab tshiab kev piav qhia txog cov khoom noj, thiab kuab zaub mov thiab lus qhia txog khoom phiv. Lub chaw nruab ntug tsi m tshiab thiab kev sib qhia thiab “mobile app” ua rau tsev kawn ntawv qhov kev qhia kev noj haus yooj yim tshiab qub thiab yooj yim tshiab yav dhuav los.


Hauv paus tsev kawn ntawv kuj tseem ntxuav qhia ntawv nqaij npus ci xyaw nrog zaub qhov (coleslaw)

- Alaskan pollock fish sticks nrog qov qos yajyw caws caws thiab qhob cij “whole grain Hawaiian roll”
- Super Nachos, uas muaj poq kws los ntawm La Tapatia Tortilleria
- Tshais “tornado” nrog nyuv ntawm turkey, qe, cheddar cheese muaj noj tsawg, kua txob “jalapeno” thiyab kua “picante sauce” qhov nrog daim “tortilla” ci
- Nyuv ntawm npajay nyuj “maple” nrog qe kib thiab qhob cij cij

Fresno Hauv Paus Tsev Kawm Ntaww yuuv rov muaj dua pluas tshiab su noj tis raug them nqaj rau txhua tus tub kawn ntaww txawm khwv tau nyiaj txiag npaan twg los xij. Pluas noj dawb rau txhua tus tub kawn ntaww raws li tsab cui tau bloo thum yuww 2014 ua txo lub nra rau tag nhro cov yim tsev neeg thiab tsev kawn ntaww cov thaww coj thiab kev pab kom paub teev tias txhua tus tub kawn ntaww tau txais pluas noj muaj kuab zaub mov.

Kev ua los txhawb pab hauv paus tsev kawn ntaww kev sib zog peem los tsuem tawm txhua yam thay thiab kev rau tub kawn ntaww kev kawn, thiab

Pab kom paub teev tias tej tuub kawn ntaww nqaij ntsaab plab thum yuww hauv tsev kawn ntaww thauv lawv tab tom kawn ntawww.

Qhov kev pab yob ib feem ntawm Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), ib qho kev xaiv uas muaj rau tej tsev kawn ntaww los ntawm National School Lunch Program thiab School Breakfast Program. CEP pub rau cov tsev kawn ntaww nqaij neeg txom nyeeem coob los tau txais tsev kawn ntaww cov su noj dawb lub sij hauv los tso tej tuuab teev kev khib dej num pab kev noj hauv. Cov ntaww thov pluas noj tis raug teev kom muaj ntxiv lawm.

“Lub hom phiaj ntawm Lub Chaw Saib Kev Pab Khoom Noj (Food Services Department) yob los npaj muaj tej khoom muaj kuab zuab mov, tej pluas noj qab qab los pab tej tuub kawn ntaww kom laww kawn tau zoo hauv tsev kawn ntaww txhua hnuub, thiab siv CEP tej kev pab peb ncev lub hom phiaj no,” Food Services Director Jose Alvarado tau hais li.