District Offers Specialized Programs to Enhance Learning

Fresno Unified offers a variety of school choice options beyond neighborhood schools, giving families the opportunity to enroll their students in specialty programs.

In Fresno Unified, students have the opportunity to apply to a school where they learn a second language, have extra lessons on science and technology, or are immersed in the arts – to name just a few of the more than 20 options.

When students reach high school, seven of the district’s 10 high schools offer specialty magnet programs, ranging from the arts to career technical education to an academy for aspiring doctors.

In addition to the high school magnet programs, high schools offer a variety of career pathways.

“*Our son loves it at Yokomi. I think it’s wonderful that parents do have options. There’s a lot of things kids are interested in. Sometimes traditional things just don’t work for everyone.*”

– Yokomi Elementary School parent Doug Wakida

See SCHOOL CHOICES Continued on page 9

Student Options for Elementary and Middle Schools

**Dual Language Immersion**

- **Spanish**
  - Site-based (for neighborhood students)
  - Burroughs, Calwa, Centennial, Jackson, Lane and Roeding elementary schools (preschool-first grades); Rowell Elementary School (preschool-second grades)
  - Magnet (students can apply from throughout the district)
    - Ewing, Leavenworth and Sunset elementary schools (transitional kindergarten-sixth grade) Wawona School (preschool through second grades)

- **Hmong**
  - Vang Pao Elementary School
  - Apply by Dec. 2 for Ewing, Leavenworth, Sunset and Wawona; random lottery

- **Environmental Science**
  - Ahwahnee Middle School: Apply by Dec. 2; random lottery

Yosemite Middle School
McLane High School

See SPECIALTY SCHOOLS LIST Continued on page 8

**Bullard High School’s offerings include Law and Social Justice Pathway and others**

**Design Science Middle College High School’s offerings include career technical education courses at Fresno City College**

**Duncan Polytechnical High School’s offerings include automotive and others**

**Edison High School’s offerings include biomedicine and others**

**Fresno High School’s offerings**

**FOCUS ON SCHOOL CHOICE**

District Offers Specialized Programs to Enhance Learning

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Page 3: Community Message from a Magnet School Partner
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Page 9: Neighborhood Schools

Zakarius Mosley gets excited about the coding club at Yokomi Elementary School, with Brendon Carrillo at left. Yokomi offers a Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) program with a science and technology emphasis.
Better Health Services for Students Hits the Road in Mobile Unit

A new, larger mobile health unit will began making the rounds of Fresno Unified high schools this fall, providing a health clinic on wheels for students of all ages.

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

The district unveiled the $457,885, colorful mobile health unit at Hoover High School on Aug. 28. The district was able to purchase the custom-fitted new unit through a California Department of Education – Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grant Program. The new unit replaces a 20-year-old mobile health unit.

The new unit is expected to hit the road Tuesdays and Wednesdays in November. It will make a circuit of eight high schools throughout the school year, bringing health services to students in all parts of the district.

The unit provides vaccines to students on Medi-Cal or who are uninsured, as well as sports physicals for all Fresno Unified students. For a schedule of where the mobile health unit will stop, go to Health Services at fresnounified.org.

The unit is staffed with a nurse practitioner, licensed vocational nurse and health assistant.

“This mobile health unit will be a tremendous boost to our families and students,” said Superintendent Bob Nelson. “This brand-new unit is double in size, which translates to more services for our community. We want to help our students have bright and healthy futures.”

The new unit has two exam rooms instead of one, an intake area and a lift for wheelchairs. With the expanded mobile health unit, Health Services Director Jane Banks estimates the district will increase services by at least 30% a year, projecting an average of:

- 852 students served a year compared to 656
- 170 physical exams a year compared to 131
- 1,853 vaccinations a year compared to 1,425

The Health Services Department is proud of all that this unit represents, including all the hours of work from grant specialists to obtain the funds so that families have easy and fast access in their community to basic health services and can be up to date on their vaccinations.

A student’s health is vital to their daily learning. Immunizations, physicals and referrals all play an important role in ensuring students are healthy and in school. For example, a student who is not up to date on their vaccinations cannot attend school, missing important instruction.

Mejores Servicios de Salud para Estudiantes Llegan al Camino en la Unidad Móvil

Una nueva unidad de salud móvil más grande comenzó a recorrer las escuelas secundarias del Distrito Escolar de Fresno en noviembre, proporcionando una clínica de salud sobre ruedas para estudiantes de todas las edades.

El 28 de agosto el distrito presentó la colorida unidad de salud móvil de $457,885 en la Escuela Preparatoria Hoover. El distrito pudo comprar la nueva unidad hecha a la medida a través de un - Programa de Subsidio de Enriquecimiento Académico y Apoyo Estudiantil del Departamento de Educación de California. La nueva unidad reemplaza a una unidad móvil de salud de 20 años.

Se espera que la nueva unidad salga a la carretera este mes los martes y miércoles y haremos un circuito de ocho escuelas secundarias durante todo el año escolar, brindando servicios de salud a los estudiantes en todas partes del distrito.

La unidad proporciona vacunas a estudiantes en Medi-Cal o que no tienen seguro, así como exámenes físicos deportivos para todos los estudiantes del Distrito de Fresno. Para obtener una lista de horario de dónde se detendrá la unidad móvil de salud, vaya a Servicios de Salud en fresnounified.org.

La unidad cuenta con una enfermera practicante, una enfermera con licencia profesional y un asistente de salud.

“Esta unidad de salud móvil será un gran impulso para nuestras familias y estudiantes...” dijo el superintendente Bob Nelson. “Esta nueva unidad es doble en tamaño, lo que se traduce en más servicios para nuestra comunidad. Queremos ayudar a nuestros estudiantes a tener un futuro brillante y saludable.”

La nueva unidad tiene dos salas de examen en lugar de una, un área de admisión y un elevador para sillas de ruedas. Con la unidad móvil de salud ampliada, la directora de servicios de salud Jane Banks estima que el distrito aumentará los servicios en al menos un 30% al año, proyectando un promedio de:

- 852 estudiantes atendidos por año en comparación a 656
- 170 exámenes físicos al año en comparación a 131
- 1,853 vacunas al año en comparación a 1,425

El Departamento de Servicios de Salud está orgulloso de todo lo que representa esta unidad, incluidas todas las horas de trabajo de especialistas en subvenciones para obtener los fondos para que las familias tengan un acceso fácil y rápido en su comunidad a los servicios básicos de salud y puedan estar al día con sus vacunas.

La salud de un estudiante es vital para
SUPERINTENDENT’S Message

State of Education Luncheon is Chance to Share Vision

Oct. 14, our great community will come together at the DoubleTree Hotel to raise money for what is the district’s single largest fundraiser for the Fresno Unified Scholarship Fund. The State of Education luncheon highlights the positive momentum of our district while raising funds to provide college scholarships for numerous deserving high school seniors. Last year, through the generosity of district employees and community supporters, the district raised enough money to award over $100,000 in scholarship to 57 deserving students, providing $50,000 more than the year prior. With more than 300 students applying each year, we continue to strive to provide more each year, and sell out this crucial event again this year.

State of Education also provides a glimpse into the programs and initiatives supporting the youth of our district, ranging from special education investments, facility investments, expanding literacy programs to increased academic learning for our African American students, to our eLearning Companion Device initiative, to the addition of i-Ready assessments. Thanks to the board of education, the district invested an additional $13.2 million this school year in human capital and supports for students who depend on special education and health services. Investments build on best practices and provide new resources to support both special education short-term and long-term strategic plans. This robust action plan ensures all students have inclusive opportunities to interact and learn from one another in significant ways. I look forward to sharing more information at State of Education around our new aligned assessment system, i-Ready. The new suite of tools provides foundational assessments with results in both math and reading. While students will still participate in annual state assessments, i-Ready serves as a criterion-based diagnostic assessment that also indicates the “why” behind the student’s level and what steps will be taken to close learning gaps. The assessment is given three times during the school year. This is an adaptive assessment, meaning the questions can change from student to student based on their responses and gauges their depth of understand-
Roosevelt High School sophomore Grace Vang won the grand prize for her painting in a new art, poetry and logo contest commemorating 9/11.

She was announced as the top winner in the “One Day, One Voice” contest on Sept. 11 at the California 9/11 Memorial in Clovis. Grace was awarded a trip to New York to the National 9/11 Memorial and Museum. She also won a $1,000 scholarship for placing in the top three in the art category.

Edison High School and Gaston Middle School students were also top winners in the competition, sponsored by the Fresno County Superintendent of Schools and the National 9/11 Memorial and Museum.

Grace’s painting is an abstract work showing a firefighter being comforted by a soul, with other souls painted among ruins.

“What with some of the souls you can see there were normal people there when [9/11] happened and you can also see firefighters and police officers,” Grace said. “A lot of lives were lost, and painting this, it was like a reminder of what happened then.”

Fresno Unified Superintendent Bob Nelson noted that the art contest was a way to educate students – most of whom were not alive during 9/11.

“Through this contest, students can learn more about this defining time in our country’s history and help keep the memory alive of those who died in these attacks,” Nelson said.

Grace was among 36 Roosevelt students who won top 10 honors in the competition. Roosevelt senior Sarah Delgado also placed in the top three in the art category and won a $1,000 scholarship. Her painting shows butterflies emerging from the Twin Towers.

“What I had was butterflies replacing the smoke,” Sarah said. “I wanted to capture a different perspective, to let people have hope.”

Edison senior Alyssa Hayashi had the winning logo and won a $1,000 scholarship. T-shirts were created with her logo. Four other Edison students placed in the top 10 in their grades for their art.

Fatima Sanchez, a Gaston student when she entered and now an Edison freshman, placed in the top three for middle school art and won an iPad. All top-10 finishers won medals.

The competition helps raise awareness of 9/11’s impact on the United States. For their submissions, students were asked to reflect on how the country was united following the attacks.

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Little Free Library Book Box Installed at Heaton Elementary

Heaton Elementary School celebrates the installation of a Little Free Library book box on Sept. 13. Fresno Unified is partnering with Reading Heart and Every Neighborhood Partnership to place Little Free Libraries in elementary school campuses in all high school regions. High school students built the Little Free Libraries during a summer school Geometry in Construction class. The event at Heaton was in conjunction with Reading Heart (a non-profit book distribution organization) assemblies. Little Free Libraries, which can be found across the world, increase reading and a sense of community through the free exchange of books.

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Page 4 | PREPARING CAREER READY GRADUATES | www.FresnoUnified.org
State Testing and Graduation Rates Climb for Fresno Unified Students

Fresno Unified students are showing improvement in both test scores and graduation rates, a reflection of the hard work of district students and staff and support of the district’s board of education.

Fresno Unified has had double-digit increases in the percent of students who are meeting or exceeding standards in English language arts (ELA) and math based on preliminary results from the tests, known as Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC). These gains mean that students are better prepared for their next steps in life.

In comparing preliminary results from the past five years (2014-15 to 2018-19), Fresno Unified has a positive change in student performance of 10.5% in ELA and 11.7% in math. The number of proficient students (meeting or exceeding standards) went from 27.4% in 2015 for ELA to 37.9% in 2019. The number of proficient students in math went from 18.1% in 2015 to 29.8% in 2019.

“I’m not one of those leaders who believes test scores measure the total health of a school district, but this is a great part of the story and worthy of celebration,” said Superintendent Bob Nelson. “Although these are positive results, we are still behind the county and state in our results and the work we are doing must continue in an effort to close the achievement gap for some of our student populations.”

While Fresno Unified students continue to make modest gains in performance, the achievement gap for student groups still exists. For example, English learners and students with disabilities lag behind their peers in both ELA and math test scores. Fresno Unified acknowledges the continued work ahead to narrow achievement gaps among student groups.

For graduation rates, Fresno Unified’s four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate was 84.3% in 2016-17 and 85.8% in 2017-18. Fresno Unified’s rate is better than Fresno County and state rates. Rates went up at Bullard, Hoover, J.E. Young and Roosevelt high schools.

**Graduation Rates by High Schools**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High School</th>
<th>2016-17</th>
<th>2017-18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bullard High School</td>
<td>93.7%</td>
<td>95.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambridge High School</td>
<td>30.7%</td>
<td>28.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Science Middle College High School</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>98.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeWolf High School</td>
<td>43.0%</td>
<td>32.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duncan Polytechnical High School</td>
<td>99.1%</td>
<td>99.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edison High School</td>
<td>94.1%</td>
<td>93.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresno High School</td>
<td>91.9%</td>
<td>90.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoover High School</td>
<td>86.5%</td>
<td>86.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.E. Young Academic Center</td>
<td>57.0%</td>
<td>66.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McLane High School</td>
<td>88.0%</td>
<td>88.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patiño School of Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roosevelt High School</td>
<td>86.9%</td>
<td>90.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunnyside High School</td>
<td>93.1%</td>
<td>93.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: In 2016-17, California Department of Education changed the graduation factor so the district has two years of data to compare. Patiño had its first graduating class in 2017-18 so there is no data for 2016-17. Source: California Department of Education

High School Students Turned on to Robotics with New Clubs

The district is launching robotics clubs at all comprehensive high schools this school year as it expands efforts to encourage students to explore science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) related activities and careers.

The clubs will continue to support students who were introduced to technology in middle school and participated in Tournament of Technology (TOT). Students in the high school robotics clubs will transition from block coding into text-based coding.

A student competition is planned for the spring to give robotics students an opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned. A high school robotics tournament is planned for 2021.

Tami Lundberg, executive director of Enterprise Applications and Technology Delivery for Fresno Unified, emphasized the importance of continued STEM opportunities for students.

“With half a million open coding jobs in the United States, and the rapid expansion of robotics automation, it’s important to provide our students with hands-on experience. The new robotics clubs provide just that – the opportunity to develop college and career ready skills in one of the world’s most rapidly expanding industries,” Lundberg said.

The district is also adding a coding category to its highly popular TOT, the largest middle school tech competition of its kind in the state. The 13th annual TOT will be held March 21 at Hoover High School with a record high participation expected.

For the first time, middle school students from Bullard TALENT K-8 School will compete.

TOT is among several computer technology related activities that have grown rapidly in the district. CoderGirlz clubs were launched in 2015 at four elementary and middle schools to encourage students under-represented in STEM fields, growing to 32 clubs this year. CoderClubs were launched in 2016 at five elementary and middle schools for students of all genders, growing to 33 clubs this year.

These clubs will add more hands-on activities this school year: Lego Mindstorms, CyberPatriot, Edison Robot, and Circuit Playground.

Aaliyah Rodriguez, left, and Sydney McClellan from Wawona School compete in robotics at the Middle School Tournament of Technology last April. The district is building on the success of middle school robotics by adding robotics clubs at all high schools.
Design Science High School Settled in at Fresno City College Campus

Design Science Middle College High School, where all students also take Fresno City College classes, has moved into its new home on the college campus.

Design Science’s 268 students started the new school year in the Business Education Building at Fresno City College as part of a partnership with the college. The school occupies six classrooms and seven offices/flexible space in the first and second floors, renovated for Design Science classrooms and labs.

Design Science is one of Fresno Unified’s specialty high schools, offering concurrent enrollment in Fresno City College classes and the possibility of earning an associate degree along with a high school diploma.

The move gives the students easy access to their college classes and tutoring and other college services.

The school had been housed in temporary buildings east of the college across Blackstone Avenue on Cambridge Avenue since its opening. As part of the collaboration, Fresno City College will use Design Science’s former modular buildings.

The long-range plan calls for Design Science to move to a new science building at Fresno City College, targeted for completion in 2023.

“We are honored to call Fresno City College our home. Our students are thrilled to no longer cross Blackstone Avenue multiple times per day. We feel welcomed by President Carole Goldsmith and the FCC community,” said Design Science Principal Tressa Overstreet.

“Our students now have more consistent access to support services, the Ram Pantry, college activities, and tutorial services. Our entire school community is looking forward to continuing our partnership with Fresno City College. We are grateful for this opportunity to provide our students with a college environment. Our students graduate with college preparedness due to the work of the FCC faculty and staff.”

Design Science, which opened in 2005, has a nearly 100% graduation rate. The California Department of Education named it a 2019 California Distinguished School. For the past three years, 100% of seniors applied for college and were accepted by at least one college or university. Many students are the first in their families to attend college.

Students Learn Bike Safety

Doug Johnson, prevention inspector for the Fresno Fire Department, helps with bicycle helmet fittings during the Bike Safety Rodeo at Leavenworth Elementary School on Sept. 14. The California Highway Patrol and fire department teamed to help encourage students to be safe as they ride their bikes.
Eighth Graders will Get Early Look at CTE Pathways

For the third year, students will get a preview of the vast array of career technical education (CTE) opportunities at high schools across the district at CTE: Ticket to the Future. The event will be held at Valdez Hall at the Fresno Convention Center.

This year’s Ticket to the Future is Nov. 4 and 5, with a parent event open to all families from 5-7 p.m. on Nov. 5. Students will be bused from all middle schools during the day to rotate through various booths on CTE programs in the high schools. Current high school students from the programs and teachers will be on hand with demonstrations and to answer questions.

Almost 5,500 8th grade students are expected to visit CTE: Ticket to the Future.

The idea of exposing students at a younger age to the high school CTE options ahead was one of the community suggestions that came out of the district’s CTE Summit in May of 2017. CTE: Ticket to the Future is an engaging, interactive showcase that encourages eighth graders to explore all CTE high school options.

The district will also hold its annual School Choice Expo in conjunction with the CTE: Ticket to the Future parent night, Nov. 5 from 5-7 p.m. at Valdez Hall. The event is open to families and students to highlight magnet specialty programs in elementary, middle and high school.

For some choice schools, students must apply by Dec. 2 for the 2020-21 school year.
Focus on School Choice

Specialty Schools Lists

Continued from page 1

Global Studies

- Baird Middle School (grades 5-8): Apply by Dec. 2; random lottery; also offers agribusiness
- Hamilton K-8 School: Apply by Dec. 2; random lottery

Gifted and Talented Education (GATE)

- Manchester GATE Elementary School (grades 2-6): Apply by Dec. 2; academic admissions criteria; random lottery
- Yokomi Elementary School (grades 2-6): Apply by Dec. 2; academic admissions criteria; random lottery; science and technology emphasis; serves district students and children of downtown employees

International Baccalaureate

- Cooper Academy (grades 6-8): Apply by Dec. 2; academic admissions criteria; random lottery

Math, Science and Technology

- Computech Middle School: Apply by Dec. 2; academic admissions criteria
- Yokomi Elementary School: Apply by Dec. 2; random lottery; serves district students and children of downtown employees

Visual and Performing Arts

- Bullard TALENT K-8 School: Apply by Dec. 2; random lottery

School Choice Options for High Schools

Design Science Middle College High School: Students also enroll in Fresno City College classes; housed at Fresno City College; apply by Dec. 2; random lottery

Duncan Polytechnical High School: Numerous career pathways, including automotive, construction, electronics and medical; apply by Dec. 2; random lottery

Fresno High School: Offers International Baccalaureate, an academically rigorous and relevant curriculum that teaches students to act responsibly, think critically and contribute to a changing society; apply by Dec. 2; random lottery

McLane High School: Dual language immersion; apply by Dec. 2; language assessment exam

Patiño School of Entrepreneurship: Apply by Dec. 2; random lottery

Roosevelt High School: Performing arts; apply by Dec. 2; random lottery

Sunnyside High School: Doctors Academy; apply by Dec. 2; additional application required; random lottery

“We’re looking to engage students of all grade levels in a wide variety of agriculture class projects.”

– Steve Jarena, teacher at Baird Middle School

Taylor Hickman, an eighth grader at Baird Middle School, works on a hydroponics project. Baird, with classes for fifth through eighth grades, is a magnet school that specializes in agribusiness and global studies.

Seniors Amanda Xiong, left, and Gaonha Vang learned real-world skills over the summer at Community Regional Medical Center as part of a volunteering program through Sunnyside High School’s Doctors Academy. The Doctors Academy is a magnet program.

Blong Thao works on a playhouse project last spring as part of the construction program at Hoover High School. Several high schools offer construction courses.

Hillary Tavera, Class of 2019, celebrates last spring with head counselor Donna Rojo at College Signing Day at Design Science Middle College High School. Design Science specializes in dual college enrollment, enabling students to graduate from high school with numerous college credits from Fresno City College.
SCHOOL CHOICES
Continued from page 1

include engineering and construction and others
- Hoover High School’s offerings include fire safety and others
- McLane High School’s offerings include banking and others
- Patiño School of Entrepreneurship includes advanced online marketing and others
- Roosevelt High School’s offerings includes careers in education and others
- Sunnyside High School’s offerings includes video production and others

The district’s four alternative high schools offer career pathway options as well.

No other district in the Valley offers the breadth of school and program options for students that Fresno Unified provides. Fresno Unified is proud to be a district of choice, prepared to meet the unique needs of a diverse community.

Although the 2019-20 school year started less than two months ago, now is the time to consider school choices beyond neighborhood schools for the 2020-21 academic year. Many are popular choices for families and those interested in applying must do so by the Dec. 2, 2019 application deadline.

To find out more about school options, call the Transfers Office at (559) 248-7538 or go to the Transfers Department website at fresnounified.org.

Fresno High Hosts Lecture Series

Fresno High School is offering a Theory of Knowledge Lecture Series as part of its International Baccalaureate Programme, the curriculum that sets it apart as a magnet school.

Fresno High is among several high schools that offer magnet and specialty programs, providing choices to students.

Following a Sept. 19 lecture by Fresno High alum and National Public Radio reporter Laura Tsutsui, the school will offer:

Thursday, Oct. 17: Tour at Bitwise and brief introduction of the Bitwise concept by Alex Gutierrez, community outreach coordinator from Geekwise Academy; at Bitwise, 700 Van Ness Ave.

Thursday, Nov. 21: Superintendent Bob Nelson, Fresno Teachers Association president Manuel Bonilla and Linda Hoff, division head of the Teacher Education Program at Fresno Pacific University – “Negotiation: Moving from Confrontation to Collaboration”; at Fresno High Senate Chambers, 1839 N. Echo Ave.

Lectures are from 6-7 p.m. They are free and open to the public.
Nelson will Discuss his Vision at State of Education Luncheon

Fresno Unified will host its annual State of Education luncheon Oct. 14, featuring Superintendent Bob Nelson as the keynote speaker.

The event is the district’s largest single event to raise money for the Fresno Unified Scholarship Fund.

The luncheon will be held from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the DoubleTree hotel in downtown Fresno. For ticket information or to inquire about being a community sponsor, call (559) 457-3733.

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 $113,500 in scholarships to 57 students, all of whom overcame significant obstacles on their journey to academic success. Stories of 2019 scholarship recipients 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, illness, losing families members, 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 Fresno City College, UC Davis, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, Azusa Pacific University, Fresno State University, Sonoma State University, UCLA 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.

McLane High School Celebrates New Turf at Stadium

McLane High School celebrated the new synthetic turf and other improvements at McLane Stadium the day of its first home football game, Aug. 23. Activities began early with a sunrise breakfast for seniors. Above, members of the class of 2020 gathered on the new turf to watch the sun come up and enjoy activities. Prior to the football game, McLane and district officials and staff held a ribbon cutting ceremony, top photo. From left in the front row are Superintendent Bob Nelson, McLane principal Brian Wulf, board members Veva Islas and Carol Mills, board President Claudia Cazares and in back row from left, chief technology officer Kurt Madden, chief academic officer Kim Mecum, athletic director Brett Mar, Maintenance and Operations manager Tim Patterson, Maintenance and Operations executive director Jason Duke, instructional superintendents Katie Russell and Carlos Castillo and athletic director Pat Riddlesprigger. District officials, staff, board members and team captains also participated in an official coin toss and Superintendent Bob Nelson sang the national anthem. Along with the synthetic turf installation (a first in Fresno Unified), the district updated infrastructure and utilities at the stadium, added portable restrooms and improved accessibility.
Edison and Fresno High Students Join District Board of Education

They started their first day as student members of the Fresno Unified Board of Education with big smiles on their faces. Joshua Camarillo and Richard Romero are happy to be the voice of students as the new Student Advisory Board representatives for this school year.

Both have big dreams, not only for their futures but for their peers. Joshua, a junior at Edison High School, wants to earn a degree either in education or law enforcement. But his focus right now is to work with the district on providing life skills classes for high school students.

“Students need to learn about finances, handling their money, how to do taxes, how to live in the world and do simple stuff like opening a bank account,” said Joshua, who has a professional, polished way of speaking that is mature beyond his age.

Joshua is highly approachable, which will serve him well as he works with different personalities among students and the board of education. He said he learned to be inclusive of all kinds of people from his mother. Joshua added that he has always believed in student voice and advocacy.

Richard Romero, a junior at Fresno High School, also wants to be an agent of change for Fresno Unified students. He has a variety of ideas to help students, and with his outgoing personality, he is likely to succeed.

For example, he is concerned that students sometimes miss too much instruction time on game days. He said he once had to leave at 11 a.m. on the school bus for a 6 p.m. game in Dinuba.

“I want to know if I can help bring ideas to the table about students missing too many hours of class to attend games,” Richard said.

He plans to pursue a career as an English teacher.

“I love writing, but perhaps also biology. I would love to major in both and then become a campus culture director, to give back to my community,” Richard said.

Just like Joshua, Richard cares about his community -- the students of Fresno Unified. Both want other students to let them know how they can help them achieve academically and in their everyday activities.

Joshua points out that being a student is not easy: “As a student, life can be very stressful. There is stress about your grades, stress about your friends, your parents, peer pressure and other issues from home.”

Richard said the best way to deal with the stress of being a student is to be motivated to do well, but not overextend yourself.

“My expectations are high, but not unrealistic,” Richard said.

Both are happy to be part of a district that has a platform for student voices, and that they can sit next to board members and learn about issues that matter and be part of discussions. After their first board meeting on Sept. 4, Joshua said, “It was thrilling. The amount of work that adults are doing downtown to further our education and high school experience is outstanding. I am proud and glad to be part of a district like FUSD.”

Families Invited to Parent University Trunk or Treat Event

The district’s Parent University invites families to its annual Trunk or Treat open house at the Parent Resource Center on Oct. 25.

The fun event will be from 4-6 p.m. The Parent Resource Center is at 850 N. Blackstone Ave.

Community organizations that offer resources to families are invited to participate as well. For more information, call (559) 457-3390.

Trunk or Treat offers a safe and healthy Halloween environment for Fresno Unified families with treats for students and a resource fair for parents. Costumes are encouraged. The theme this year is superheroes.

Trunk or Treat helps Parent University connect Fresno Unified families with many of the district’s partnering agencies to provide up-to-date information and services. Partners will have an opportunity to interact with an estimated 600 families.

Be Counted in the 2020 Census!

What is the Census?
The census is an important opportunity for all U.S. residents to be counted in their communities. The U.S. Constitution mandates that a census of the population be conducted once every 10 years.

Beginning March 2020, every household is encouraged to complete a census form (either online, mail or phone). Your participation and responses are protected under Title 13 of the U.S. Constitution.

We need you and your community counted! With your help we can ensure an accurate and complete count for all.

#FresnoCountyCounts
Follow the Fresno County Complete Count Committee on Facebook for census updates.
Grant Expands After School Program

Students in the district’s after school program now have access to more fitness equipment and additional staff, thanks to a $75,000 grant from Kaiser Permanente Fresno to the Fitness is Aces! program. The grant, announced at Jefferson Elementary School on Sept. 5, paid for additional equipment, including pedometers and trackers, and hired more staff to lead group exercise activities.

Sunnyside High Grad Honored by Legislature

Marc Castro, a 2017 Sunnyside High School valedictorian and 2020 boxing Olympic hopeful, was honored by the California State Legislature Aug. 26. He was presented with an Assembly resolution on the floor of the State Assembly by California State Assemblyman Jim Patterson (R-Fresno) and California State Senator Andreas Borgeas (R-Fresno) in recognition of his outstanding and ongoing contributions to the Central Valley community and his boxing pursuits. Castro, now a student at Fresno State, is a two-time boxing Amateur World Champion.

Fort Miller Students Volunteer at Food Bank

Each month Chicano Latino Americano Student Association (CLASA) students from Fort Miller Middle School volunteer at the community food bank distribution center, led by Amy Sepulveda, teacher and club adviser. CLASA is dedicated to promoting unity by creating a coalition among Chicano/Latino youth and staff; enhancing cultural identity, academic performance, and community involvement.

Fansler Foundation Provides Grant to Rata

The Fansler Foundation has provided a $52,590 grant to Rata High School to purchase a handicap accessible van. To date, the foundation has donated $236,472 to Rata, which serves medically fragile students.

Holland T-shirts Reflect Spirit, Unity

Holland Elementary School Principal Adele Stewart provided Charger T-shirts for all students and staff to help create a sense of belonging and community at the school. The shirts, which say “Holland Chargers Believe Everyone Matters,” will be worn on Fridays to show school spirit.

Duncan Salutes 9/11 Heroes

Duncan Polytechnical High School held its annual ceremony Sept. 11 to honor the victims of 9/11 and pay tribute to local veterans, firefighters and police officers, including campus officers. The school’s Air Force Junior ROTC presented the colors and students lined the hallway holding American flags. The Interact Club provided refreshments and guests could tour the ROTC classroom.

District Hosts Employee Conference

The district will hold a Classified Professional Development Conference from 8-11:30 a.m. Monday, Oct. 28 at Fresno Adult School, 2500 Stanislaus St. To register, Fresno Unified employees should go to iACHIEVE. For more information, call (559) 457-6224. Employees can choose to attend a three-hour session or two 1.5-hour sessions.

Cornerstone Church Provides Backpacks

Cornerstone Church donated 4,400 backpacks filled with supplies to 22 Fresno Unified schools on Aug. 20 as part of the Project Student AIDE. The church will also provide eight bikes to the 22 schools throughout the school year as incentives for good attendance and grades. At Thanksgiving, the church will provide 50 food boxes to each of the schools. The church also has plans to provide Disneyland tickets for a child and adult at each of the schools for students who make significant academic progress. The schools are Addams, Anthony, Calwa, Centennial, Columbia, Fremont, Hidalgo, Homan, Jackson, Jefferson, King, Kirk, Lane, Leavenworth, Lincoln, Lowell, Rowell, Sunset, Vang Pao, Williams, Webster and Yokomi elementary schools.
EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Bullard High Safety Assistant Provides a Listening Ear for Students

Mike Bettencourt is a devoted campus safety assistant at Bullard High School who not only seeks to make the campus safe but to build relationships with students. He started working for the district as a noon time assistant in 2013 at Fremont Elementary School where his son was attending and has been at Bullard since May 2016. Rachael Maciel, a former vice principal at Bullard, said this about Bettencourt: “I can think of several students who had it not been for their relationship with Mike, they would likely not have been successful and would have been suspended or expelled for their emotional and physical reactions to conflict.”

What do you enjoy the most about your job? Working with the kids.

What is the most challenging about your job? Trying to get the kids to understand the importance of being engaged in education. What do you do in your job to make Bullard a welcoming and safe campus? I stay vigilant and create a welcoming culture by smiling and greeting everyone I see.

What are your strategies for helping students who are struggling with behavior issues? I try to build a relationship with these students to create trust and a safe place for students to inform an adult of possible issues, without being singled out.

What are your strategies for developing good relationships with students? Be a good listener while also contributing positively to the relationship.

If you could choose a different career, what would it be? I would be a counselor for kids.

What do you like to do when you are not working? Spend time with my sons either swimming or watching them play together.

Name one thing most people do not know about you. I like to play golf.

What is your dream vacation? Spend about a week in Hawaii.

Yosemite Middle School Teacher is at the Peak of his Profession

Elijah Carrillo is known as an outstanding teacher at Yosemite Middle School who also invests in students not in his classes and is a leader among the staff. He has been with the district for seven years, all at Yosemite. Principal Nichole Horn said about Carrillo: “His strength in instruction, leadership, energy and enthusiasm are contagious for both students and staff. He is able to meet any challenge that he comes across and be successful.”

What made you go into teaching? I love helping people. While I was completing my bachelor’s degree in political science at CSU, Fresno, I worked in a mentorship program called Youth to College and a tutoring occupation with the California Teaching Fellows. This working experience gave me a deep appreciation for mentoring and teaching the youth, which eventually lead to my career in teaching.

What do you enjoy the most about your job? The best part of my job is teaching my kids to have a growth mindset. I like starting off the year teaching them about failing forward (growth mind). Sometimes I have students who might be a grade level behind in their literacy skills, but I tell them that it’s OK where you are. It’s not about failing and staying in one place; it’s about trying again and again until you get where you want to be.

What is the biggest challenge in your job? At first, the hardest part of my job was to find a way to connect to students but once I started to listen to them, create a dialogue, we were able to understand each other, and build relationships. If you can build a relationship with your students, your life as a teacher will be much easier.

What are your strategies to get students interested in history? I like to use an array of different strategies. Using art and technology helps students to be engaged in history. Some new strategies that I’ve acquired working with our district’s English Learner Services include sentence unpacking a primary document to get the students to have a greater understanding of the context of the document and its historical background.

If you could go back and live in another time in history, what would it be? I would like to go back to the Civil Rights era -- see and hear historical figures such as Dolores Huerta and Cesar Chavez. Hearing the words of Martin Luther King Jr. at the footsteps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. would have been incredible.

What do you like the most about middle school students? I like their energy and their potential. We as middle school teachers have such a great impact on our students; we get them ready for high school, for the real world. If we do it right, we get to see

See Elijah Carrillo
Continued on page 14
Students and Teachers Encouraged to Attend Town Hall Lectures

Students of all ages are encouraged to attend the San Joaquin Valley Town Hall, a monthly series of lectures on stimulating topics. Student admission is free.

Elementary, middle, and high school students attend with teacher chaperones. College students are given guest passes when they show their student ID cards. The presentations are at 10:30 a.m. at Saroyan Theatre.

For each lecture, high school counselors select two seniors who are serious about education beyond high school to attend as Town Hall Scholars. These select students meet the speaker in advance of the program and one of them is randomly chosen to receive a $500 scholarship.

Recent recipients from Fresno Unified were Alisia Perez of Bullard High School and Eric Negrete-Enesso from Roosevelt High School.

Upcoming lectures include explorer Nick Buettner presenting “Live Long and Happy – The Blue Zone” on Oct. 16; comedian and author Dennis Miller presenting “America, How Can We All Play Nice Again?” in a special evening event on Nov. 5; and National Geographic photographer Jimmy Chin presenting “World’s Greatest Climb – Free Solo in Yosemite” on Nov. 20.

More information on other speakers for this school year and how students can participate is available at www.valleytownhall.com.

Fresno High counselor Chie Moua frequently escorts students to hear the world-class speakers.

“Attending the lectures allows students to experience first-hand the speaker’s passion behind their work and their journey,” Moua said. “Many have never been to the Saroyan Theatre. It takes them out of their comfort zone and opens their eyes to what is going on beyond the high school campus. They are impressed with how each speaker has contributed to our world. It motivates them to focus on their goal,” Moua said.

Students attending each lecture observe volunteerism, civic engagement, and life-long learning in action as they participate in this all-volunteer run event and mingle with the largely older-adult audience.
El Almuerzo del Estado de Educación es una Oportunidad para Compartir Puntos de Vista

El 14 de octubre, nuestra gran comunidad se reunirá en el Hotel Double Tree para recaudar dinero para lo que es la recaudación de fondos más grande del distrito. Desde el inicio de Becas del Distrito Escolar de Fresno. El almuerzo del Estado de Educación destaca el impulso temprano para abordar las deficiencias que recaudar a los padres en formas de apoyo académico. Ayuda a establecer objetivos académicos basados en lo que los estudiantes saben y dónde pueden tener brechas. La nueva herramienta de evaluación proporciona lecciones e intervenciones en línea que reducen las deficiencias en tiempo real y al mismo tiempo involucrar a los padres en formas de apoyo soluciones. Estas evaluaciones de diagnóstico brindan al distrito oportunidades para desplegar apoyo estudiantil y nos brindan una oportunidad más temprana para abordar las deficiencias académicas, así como las necesidades de aceleración para desarrollar la capacidad estudiantil y los resultados de crecimiento académico.

Nuestro consejo de educación continua comprometiendo recursos que amplían el aprendizaje y las oportunidades de éxito de un niño. Esto ayudado a la inmensurable cantidad de estudiantes que aprueban, que participan diariamente en los desafíos que enfrentan nuestros estudiantes a medida que trabajan juntos para mejorar los resultados académicos.

Espere poder compartir más información en el Estado de Educación sobre nuestro nuevo sistema de evaluación alineado, i-Ready. El nuevo conjunto de herramientas proporciona evaluación fungible, permite cambios en el currículo, ayuda a establecer objetivos académicos basados en lo que los estudiantes saben y dónde pueden tener brechas. La nueva herramienta de evaluación proporciona lecciones e intervenciones en línea que reducen las deficiencias en tiempo real y al mismo tiempo involucrar a los padres en formas de apoyo soluciones. Estas evaluaciones de diagnóstico brindan al distrito oportunidades para desplegar apoyo estudiantil y nos brindan una oportunidad más temprana para abordar las deficiencias académicas, así como las necesidades de aceleración para desarrollar la capacidad estudiantil y los resultados de crecimiento académico.

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