

# BUILDING futures

A Publication of the Fresno Unified School District

P R E P A R I N G C A R E E R R E A D Y G R A D U A T E S

## District Adds More Instructional Time for Students after Break

### ■ UPDATE ON REOPENING OF SCHOOLS

Fresno Unified will increase time with teachers for students in distance learning following the winter break as it continues to work toward bringing students back to campus for in-person learning when it is safe to do so.

Instruction will resume for students following the break on Jan. 12. Note that Jan. 11 will not be an instruction day but will be used by teachers for professional learning.

Upon returning, students in grades 1-6 will have 95 minutes of additional live instructional time with their teachers each week, while middle and high school students will have approximately 35 minutes of additional time per period per week.

The district continues to work toward in-person learning for students, but that

will not take place until Fresno County moves to the [orange Tier 3 – moderate risk – of the state’s risk levels](#).

Upon reaching orange, plans call for a safe, phased in approach to returning students to in-person learning, beginning with 50% of pre-kindergarten through first grade and phasing in 25% of students at middle and high school sites. Once in the orange tier, elementary schools will slowly phase in additional grades every two weeks.

Given the need to maintain six feet of physical distancing, elementary sites will have no more than 50% of students on campus at one time and middle and high schools will have no more than 25% of students.

Once the county is in the orange tier and the district can begin phasing in in-person learning, additional learning time will also be added. If Fresno County does not reach the orange tier

by Feb. 16, schools will not physically reopen until the fourth quarter.

Based on required safety practices, elementary parents will have a choice of in-person instruction with their

teacher on campus or remaining in the eLearn at My School model. Based

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At Muir Elementary School Nov. 18, paraprofessional Katie Aguilar reads to students Michael Montufo, left, and Roger Esperanza while paraprofessional Jacqueline Manriquez helps out. Muir is one of five pilot elementary schools with small groups of students learning in person.

## Portion of Lane Avenue Renamed to Honor Principal Tim Liles

A portion of Lane Avenue that leads into Sunnyside High School was renamed for Tim Liles, the campus’ beloved principal, on Nov. 6 during a ceremony in front of the school.

For video, go to [vimeo.com/fresnounified/timlilesway](https://vimeo.com/fresnounified/timlilesway)

Liles passed away Sept. 22 from a brain tumor. The city of Fresno, by vote of the Fresno City Council, renamed a portion of the street Tim Liles Way in honor of

Liles’ service to both the campus and the community. Superintendent Bob Nelson described Liles as “everything we would hope for in a leader.”

At the ceremony, Fresno City Council Member Luis Chavez, who represents the area and was a student of Liles’, pledged \$2,500 for a scholarship in honor of Liles. Combined with other donations, the fund will have a little more than \$9,000.

Chavez spoke at the ceremony of

Liles’ dedication to his students and the Sunnyside community.

“I think that’s so fitting the fact that we landed on Tim Liles Way because it’s the entranceway to Sunnyside High and we can always say the road to success goes through Tim Liles Way,” Chavez said.

Valerie Davis, who represents the Sunnyside area, said, “I still hear him in my ears. I still feel him in my heart.”



From left, Fresno Unified Superintendent Bob Nelson, school board member Valerie Davis and Fresno City Council Member Luis Chavez celebrate the new sign for a portion of Lane Avenue that was renamed Tim Liles Way on Nov. 6. The renamed street segment leads into Sunnyside High School, where Liles was principal until passing away in September.





## REOPENING OF SCHOOLS Continued from page 1

on a special grouping of criteria, only 25% of the secondary (middle and high school) student population will return to campus.

Once the orange tier is achieved, teachers will be providing instruction in person and via distance learning simultaneously.

A survey was sent in November to elementary parents and guardians as well as all teachers about intentions and capabilities for returning to in-person learning when the county reaches the orange tier. The survey is open until Dec. 3.

District and Fresno Teachers Association leaders held a virtual town hall with parents, students and the community on Nov. 19 to explain plans. The district also held a virtual town hall with internal staff on Nov. 18.

The district began inviting small groups of students back to campus on Oct. 12 to do their online learning. The focus was on students who would benefit the most from returning to campus to take advantage of the district's internet, meals and staff support.

These groups include students in homeless situations and foster care, newcomer English language learners and students with disabilities. Elementary schools had a group of 10 and middle and high schools had two groups of 10.

On Nov. 3, the district doubled the number of cohorts on campuses for online learning. Also in November, the district piloted in-person teaching at five elementary schools for small groups of students in special education.

### El Distrito Aumenta Más Tiempo de Instrucción Para los Estudiantes

#### ■ Actualización y Reapertura de la Escuelas

El Distrito Escolar Unificado de Fresno aumentará el tiempo con los maestros para los estudiantes en aprendizaje a distancia después de las vacaciones de invierno, mientras se continúa trabajando para traer a los estudiantes de regreso al plantel escolar para el aprendizaje en persona cuando sea seguro hacerlo.

La instrucción se reanudará para los

estudiantes el 12 de enero, después de las vacaciones. Tengan en cuenta que el día 11 de enero, no será un día educativo, sino que será utilizado para capacitación de aprendizaje profesional de maestros.

Al regresar los estudiantes de 1ro a 6to grado, tendrán 95 minutos de tiempo adicional de instrucción en vivo con sus maestros cada semana, mientras que los estudiantes de secundaria y preparatoria tendrán aproximadamente 35 minutos de tiempo adicional por período a la semana.

El distrito continúa trabajando hacia el aprendizaje en persona para los estudiantes, pero eso no tendrá lugar hasta que el Condado de Fresno regrese al color [naranja Nivel 3 – riesgo moderado – de los niveles de riesgo estatal](#).

En cuanto alcancemos el nivel naranja, los planes requerirán un enfoque seguro y gradual para el regreso de aprendizaje en persona para los estudiantes, iniciaremos con el 50% de pre-kinder a quinto grado y el 25% de los estudiantes en las escuelas secundarias y preparatorias. Una vez que regresemos al nivel naranja, las escuelas primarias pasarán gradualmente a grados adicionales cada dos semanas.

Considerando la necesidad de mantener el distanciamiento físico de seis pies, las escuelas primarias no tendrán más del 50% de estudiantes en el plantel escolar a la vez y las escuelas secundarias y preparatorias tampoco tendrán más del 25% de estudiantes.

Una vez que el condado esté en el nivel naranja y el distrito pueda iniciar gradualmente el aprendizaje en persona, también se aumentará tiempo adicional de aprendizaje. Si para el 16 de febrero, el Condado de Fresno no ha alcanzado el nivel naranja, no se reabrirán las escuelas en forma física hasta el cuarto semestre.

Basado en las prácticas de seguridad requeridas, los padres de primaria tendrán la opción de instrucción en persona con su maestro/a en el plantel escolar o permanecer en el modelo eLearn en My School. Basado en la agrupación especial del criterio, solo el 25% de la población de estudiantes de secundaria (secundaria y preparatoria) regresarán al plantel escolar.

Una vez que se logre llegar al nivel naranja, los maestros estarán proporcionando la instrucción en persona y simultáneamente, a través de apren-

dizaje a distancia.

Se enviará una encuesta en noviembre a los padres y tutores de primaria, como también a los maestros con el propósito y posibilidades de regresar al aprendizaje en persona cuando el condado alcance el nivel naranja. La encuesta permanecerá abierta hasta el 3 de diciembre.

El Distrito y los líderes de la Asociación de Maestros del Distrito de Fresno llevaron a cabo una reunión de foro abierto con los padres, estudiantes y la comunidad el 19 de noviembre para explicar los planes. El distrito también llevó a cabo una reunión virtual de foro abierto con el personal interno el 18 de noviembre.

El distrito comenzó a invitar a grupos pequeños de estudiantes para el regreso al plantel escolar el 12 de octubre para llevar a cabo su aprendizaje en línea. El enfoque fue centrado en los estudiantes que mayormente se beneficiarán de regresar al plantel escolar y tomar ventaja del internet del distrito, alimentos y del apoyo personal.

Estos grupos incluyen estudiantes en situaciones de personas sin hogar y bajo el cuidado en hogar de crianza, estudiantes aprendices de inglés recién llegados y estudiantes con incapacidades. Las escuelas primarias tenían un grupo de 10 estudiantes y las secundar-

ias y preparatorias tenían dos grupos de 10 estudiantes.

El 3 de noviembre, el distrito duplicó la cantidad de grupos en los planteles escolares para el aprendizaje en línea. También, en noviembre el distrito llevó a cabo la enseñanza en persona en forma piloto en cinco de las escuelas primarias para grupos pequeños de estudiantes en educación especial.

### Hauv Paus Tsev Kawm Ntxiv Sij Hawm Qhia rau Cov Tub Kawm Ntawv

#### ■ Kev Hloov Tshiab rau Kev Rov Qhib Tsev Kawm Ntawv

Fresno Hauv Paus Tsev Kawm Ntawv yuav tau ntxiv sij hawm rau cov kws qhia ntawv thiab cov tub ntxhais kawm uas tseem kawm nrug deb tom qab lub caij ntuj so, ua yuav los coj cov tub ntxhais kawm rov qab mus tom tsev kawm ntawv tim ntsej tim muag thaum muaj thaum muaj kev nyob nyab xeeb lawm.

Kev qhia ntawv yuav muaj ntxiv mus tom qab so tas rau lub Ib Hlis Hnub tim 12. Nco ntsoov tias Lub Ib Hlis Hnub tim 11 yuav tsis yog ib hnub qhia ntawv tab sis yuav siv los rau cov kws

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**KEY CONTACTS FOR PARENTS**

**CONSTITUENT SERVICES:**  
457-3736 [Constituent Services Webpage](#)

**EARLY LEARNING:**  
457-3682 [Early Learning Webpage](#)

**ENGLISH LEARNER SERVICES:**  
457-3928 [English Learner Services Webpage](#)

**FAMILY LEARNING AND TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT CENTER:**  
457-3939 [Tech Support](#)

**FOOD SERVICES:**  
457-6250 [Free meals sites](#)

**HEALTH SERVICES:**  
457-3294 [Health Services webpage](#)

**HOMELESS AND FOSTER CARE:**  
[Project ACCESS](#), 457-3359 [Project ACCESS webpage](#)

**QUESTIONS ABOUT eLEARN AT MY SCHOOL:**  
[School phone numbers](#)

**SOCIAL EMOTIONAL SUPPORT:**  
[Department of Prevention and Intervention](#), 457-3340 [Resources](#)

**SPECIAL EDUCATION:**  
457-3220 [Special Education webpage](#)

Fresno Unified School District



Fresno Unified School District

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Building Futures is a monthly publication of Fresno Unified School District prepared by the Communications Office. To place an ad, contact (559) 457-3733 or email [Communications@FresnoUnified.org](mailto:Communications@FresnoUnified.org).

# SUPERINTENDENT'S Message

## Feeling Grateful Even in this Time of Uncertainty

The holidays are upon us and I want to wish you all a very happy and safe holiday season. Does anyone else feel like this year has flown by and felt like 100 years wrapped in one all at the same time? We have been constantly consumed with the global pandemic, keeping our Fresno Unified family safe, and pivoting our entire educational system to ensure high-quality instruction for our students even in a digital format. Every minute has felt precious, urgent, and heavy, making it feel as though we have never had enough time, all the while we have all endured more in 2020 than seemed imaginable to go through in a decade! My hope for you and your loved ones is that this holiday season you can live in the moment, push the urgency away, and enjoy the precious moments that are at our fingertips even in this craziest of years.



Robert G. Nelson, Ed.D.  
Superintendent

As hopefully you heard in our town halls in November, as a district we continue to plan for the eventual safe return to in-person learning on our campuses. We believe the time to start phasing in our in-person instruction will be when Fresno County reaches the orange or "moderate"

tier of the State's Blueprint for a Safer Economy. As I'm writing this message, we have fallen back into the most restrictive tier of the state's guidelines, which is purple or "widespread." Unfortunately, that means we have some major work to do as a county to control the spread of COVID-19 before we can safely bring students and staff back for in-person learning. Please, please continue to practice safety by wearing your mask, physically distancing from those outside of your household, washing your hands frequently, and getting your flu shot. Your daily actions make all the difference to our district being able to return to our campuses.

Having said all of that and feeling the heavy pandemic fatigue right along each of you, there are things happening at the district that I'm incredibly grateful to share. First, I'm so grateful to our community for supporting our Fresno Unified Scholarship Fund. When the pandemic cancelled our plans to join in-person for our annual State of Education luncheon fundraiser, our teams quickly pivoted to ensure our Class of 2021 would still be supported by our scholarship fund this year. We're so proud to share that our community came together to raise more than \$50,000 for our scholarship fund. Those dollars directly support dozens of graduating seniors with financial scholarships as they head off to the college of their choice next fall. I cannot thank you all enough for your donations and support!

Also, we continue to operate and work to

expand our small cohorts of students who are on campuses doing their distance learning each day. These small cohorts provide a safe and reliable space for our students with disabilities, foster and homeless students, and our English language learner newcomers to complete their distance learning each day. They have access to stable internet, healthy meals, and support from our classified staff and site leadership in the moment.

We continue to provide assessments and crucial services for our students on campuses that absolutely cannot be provided through a distance learning format, and our sports continue to practice safely together. All these activities are happening in line with required safety practices and more. Mandatory mask-wearing, and increased sanitizing of our learning spaces, cafeterias, bathrooms, and buses for our students happen every day, maintaining physical distance, practicing daily self-health screenings, and conducting robust contact tracing are all happening to support our efforts to limit the spread of COVID-19.

Lastly, we are starting the implementation of our newly adopted district Vision, Mission, Values and Goals, which the board approved on Oct. 21. Please take a moment to read the vision and mission statements and watch for more information on the

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## Message from Nicole Linder, Executive Director, Marjaree Mason Center Building Futures Free of Domestic Violence

Marjaree Mason Center (MMC), Fresno County's only dedicated provider of domestic violence shelter and support services, is guided by our mission to "support and empower adults and their children affected by domestic violence, while striving to prevent and end the cycle of abuse through education and advocacy." This mission has been the driving force of our work since we opened in January of 1979. However, we cannot do our work alone. We are appre-



Nicole Linder  
Executive Director,  
Marjaree Mason Center

ciative of the active partnership with FUSD as we work together to meet the needs of children impacted by the trauma of domestic violence.

Children staying in emergency and transitional safe housing benefit from FUSD's Project ACCESS. Project ACCESS is a primary resource to MMC families by dedicating a FUSD social worker who helps children maintain enrollment in school and advocates for children's rights and district services. Families receive bus tokens, food, clothing and housing assistance. Children who need additional learning support are also connected to internal and external resources. Most recently, Project ACCESS has been a critical resource helping families secure laptops, tablets, and hotspots for successful online learning.

In turn, MMC provides youth education programs to help FUSD students detect the red flags of domestic violence while learning the components of a healthy rela-

tionship. Safe Dates is an 11-week curriculum-based program presented to middle school students. kNOW MORE is a forum for teens to speak to other teens utilizing drama, music, social media and other real-life situations and statistics of domestic violence in teen relationships to demonstrate the seriousness of the problem, while communicating the resources and help that are available.

"Students have a difficult time learning when they are in crisis and do not know where to turn. The student programs in our schools continue to meet students where they are and match them with the resources they need, so students are able to focus on learning once again," said Leslie Loewen, Fresno Unified campus culture manager. "We truly appreciate the knowledge and services MMC has provided over the years and the innovative options they have worked with us to create in ever-changing times."

**Non-Discrimination Policy:** Fresno Unified School District does not harass, intimidate, or discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, immigration status, ancestry, age, creed, religion, political affiliation, gender, gender identity or expression or genetic information, mental or physical disability, sex, sexual orientation, marital, pregnancy or parental status, military veteran status, or any other basis protected by law or regulation, in its educational program(s) or employment (BP 0410). For the full policy, a list of compliance officers, and Title IX information, go to [www.fresnounified.org](http://www.fresnounified.org).



## PARENTS

# Frequently Asked Questions about the Reopening of Schools

In anticipation of the district's eventual return to campus in the second semester, Fresno Unified and Fresno Teachers Association (FTA) have worked together to finalize plans for when Fresno County achieves orange tier status, and the district can safely bring students and staff back to in-person instruction. The district and FTA hosted two town hall meetings the week of Nov. 16 to provide details about the timeline for returning, school schedules, safety and health protocols and more. Here are a few frequently asked questions that came from those virtual events. To learn more about Fresno Unified's plan please review the Strategic Plan for Reopening found on [Fresnounified.org](https://www.fresnounified.org).

**When will Fresno Unified bring students and staff back to campus for in-person instruction?** Students and staff will physically return to campus when Fresno County reaches the orange tier. Focused on safety, stability and access to high quality instruction, Fresno Unified does not plan on bringing students and staff back to campus for in-person instruction until that time.

**What safety procedures will be in place?** When that occurs, all state and county safety protocols are required, including PPE use, self-health screening, and physical distancing of six feet. Given that there is no scenario under which we can provide six feet of physical distance for ALL our students, our return to school, even in the orange tier, will be in phases, starting with our youngest students.

**How will students be phased in?** Using our phased in approach, after two weeks of orange numbers, the following Monday 50% of students in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten could return and secondary sites could begin phasing in 25% of their enrollment. Two weeks after that, 50% of students in grades 1-3 could return with secondary continuing to phase in up to 25% of their enrollment. Two weeks after that, 50% of students in grades 4-6 could return with a max of no more than 25% of students returning at the secondary level.

**Why are middle school and high school students not returning in the same way as elementary?** Our intention

is to keep students with their teacher. Based on physical distancing requirements of six feet, secondary sites can only accommodate up to 25% of their student enrollment. Secondary students that return to in-person instruction will be identified based on a specific criteria:

- Have an Individualized Education Program (IEP)
- Struggled with attendance and/or connectivity during distance learning
- Academically struggling with multiple failing grades or is in need of additional intervention supports
- English language learners, homeless, foster youth
- At least one parent is an essential worker (education is essential)

**What will school schedules look like second semester if Fresno is in the purple/red tier?** When students return on Jan. 12, there will be a shift to daily student schedules. To provide more instructional time for kids, additional instructional minutes are being added to the week. Teachers will also have added planning time.

**What will school schedules look like in second semester if Fresno is in the orange/yellow tier?** We anticipate adding additional instructional minutes when we reach the orange tier and students and teachers return to in-person instruction. Schedules for second semester are available on the district website for elementary and middle/high schools.

**What professional learning will be provided to staff around returning to campus in the orange tier?** Site leaders will provide professional development to teachers on Jan. 11, 2021. This day will resemble a traditional buyback day to review schedules, timelines and health/safety protocols. Students will have the day off.

**Will families be given a choice of sending their student to campus or staying with distance learning?** Parents will have a choice to keep their student home. Based on required safety practices (wearing a mask, physical distancing of six feet, etc.) elementary parents will have the choice of in-person instruction with their teacher on campus or remaining in the eLearn at My

School model. An elementary parent survey is available from Nov. 20-Dec. 3 at [fresnounified.org](https://www.fresnounified.org) for families to communicate their plans for returning or remaining in distance learning. Based on safety guidelines at the secondary level, only 25% of the student population will return to campus, based on a grouping of criteria.

**Will students be required to wear masks when they return to campus?** Yes. Based on state and local health guidance, masks are required both inside and outside for students, staff and essential visitors for ages 2 years old and older. Fresno Unified is supplying five masks to each student and district staff member.

**What additional personal protective equipment (PPE) is being provided to employees?** All staff have or will receive five Fresno Unified cloth masks. Additional PPE is provided to health services staff, special education, early learning and athletic trainers. Classroom and office kits have been created to include hand sanitizer, wipes, first aid kit and gloves.

**With physical distancing requirements of six feet, how many students can be in class?** Class sizes will be reduced when we are able to safely return some students to campus for in-person instruction. Based on physical distancing requirements of six feet, no more than 10 students will be in a classroom.

**How will teachers provide instruction with some students physically in class and others continuing with distance learning?** Technology provides Fresno Unified teachers the ability to simultaneously teach students both on campus and those who remain at home. This method provides more instructional time for students and ensures students receive the same high-quality instruction whether in-person or remote. It also allows more students to stay with their teacher.

**How will transportation be provided for students?** Transportation details are being finalized, but we know riders will be required to wear masks and physical distance on the bus and at the bus stop.

**How will meals be served?** Break-

fast and lunch meal distribution will continue on a grab and go basis at designated sites. Students returning to campus for in-person instruction will receive their meals on campus during scheduled meal periods.

**What type of health screening will be in place for students and staff?** Since last spring, Fresno Unified staff have been conducting a self-health screening at home prior to leaving for work. That same screening tool will be in place for students. If an employee, student or essential visitor answer "yes" to any of the self-health screening questions, they should stay home and notify their school site or department. You can find more detailed information on health and safety protocols by viewing this [video](#), our [self-health screening tool](#) or in our newest version of the [Strategic Plan for Reopening Schools](#).

**What if a student or staff member shows COVID symptoms at school? What happens then?** COVID symptoms may include high fever and chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, congestion or runny nose, fatigue, repeated shaking/tremors, muscle pains or body aches, headache, sore throat, new loss of smell or taste, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea. While some of these symptoms can also indicate the common cold or flu, students and or staff showcasing any of these symptoms will be sent home. Students will be sent to an isolation room until they have been picked up by parents. Staff/students will have to isolate for at least 10 days or until they have received a negative COVID test, symptoms are resolved and they have gone 24 hours without a fever and without fever reducing medication. Household family members will also need to quarantine for a minimum of 14 days.

**What if there is a positive outbreak at school? How will parents and staff be notified?** As we have seen during our small student cohorts, if a student or staff member is having symptoms on campus, they will be immediately sent home. However, this is no indication of a positive case. Should a student

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# Walk/Run for the Class of 2021 Raises Money for Scholarships

T-shirts and swag bags were handed out Nov. 12 and 13 to the participants of the virtual Walk/Run for the Class of 2021, the primary fundraiser for the Fresno Unified Scholarship Fund.

Corporate, community and individual sponsors contributed \$50,125 through the walk/run for scholarships. Participants were invited to walk or run on their own and post photos to #IPledge or send to communications@fresnounified.org.

The walk/run fundraising effort for scholarships is part of the district's [IPledge campaign](#) launched in September to highlight the efforts of staff and students to do their part to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and make the most of virtual learning. The Walk/Run for the Class of 2021 focused on this year's seniors, who have shown resilience despite the impact of COVID-19 on their final year of high school.

The goal of the campaign is to motivate, encourage and connect the Fresno Unified family and larger community during this time.

## Walk/Run for the Class of 2021 Top Corporate and Community Sponsors

### **GOLD LEVEL (\$5,000)**

Fresno Housing Authority  
SIMPBK  
CalViva  
EECU  
AALRR  
Darden Architects  
HAW-Fifty

### **SILVER LEVEL (\$2,500)**

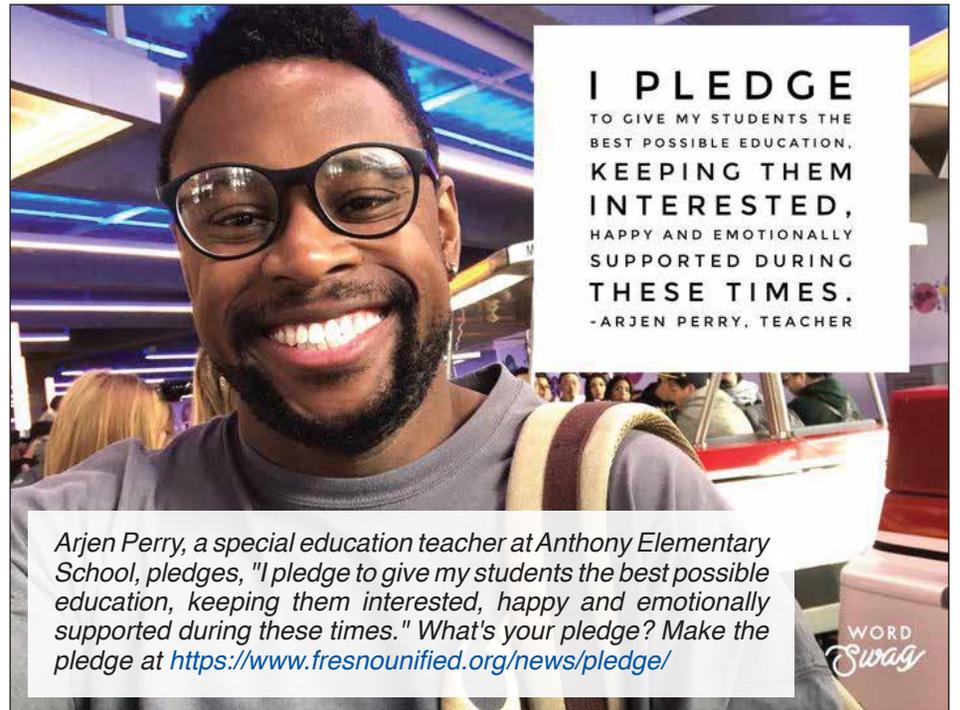
Fresno County Superintendent of Schools  
Blair, Church & Flynn  
Fresno State

### **BRONZE LEVEL (\$1,500)**

Welty Center  
MeTEOR Education  
ACSA

### **TEAM LEVEL (\$500)**

Central Unified School District



**I PLEDGE**  
TO GIVE MY STUDENTS THE  
BEST POSSIBLE EDUCATION,  
KEEPING THEM  
INTERESTED,  
HAPPY AND EMOTIONALLY  
SUPPORTED DURING  
THESE TIMES.  
-ARJEN PERRY, TEACHER

Arjen Perry, a special education teacher at Anthony Elementary School, pledges, "I pledge to give my students the best possible education, keeping them interested, happy and emotionally supported during these times." What's your pledge? Make the pledge at <https://www.fresnounified.org/news/pledge/>

# Administrative Assistant Wins Fresno County Educator Award

Annette Montague, administrative assistant for school leadership, was named Employee of the Year for Fresno County on Nov. 22.

Montague was selected as one of three finalists from among classified employees throughout Fresno County school districts. The awards were aired on ABC30.



High School, was a finalist in the administrator category.

The awards are given annually by the Fresno County Superintendent of Schools Office. Montague qualified after winning a Fresno Unified Excellence in Education award in February.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, Montague heard her name announced while watching from home. (She and the other finalists had pre-recorded acceptance speeches.)

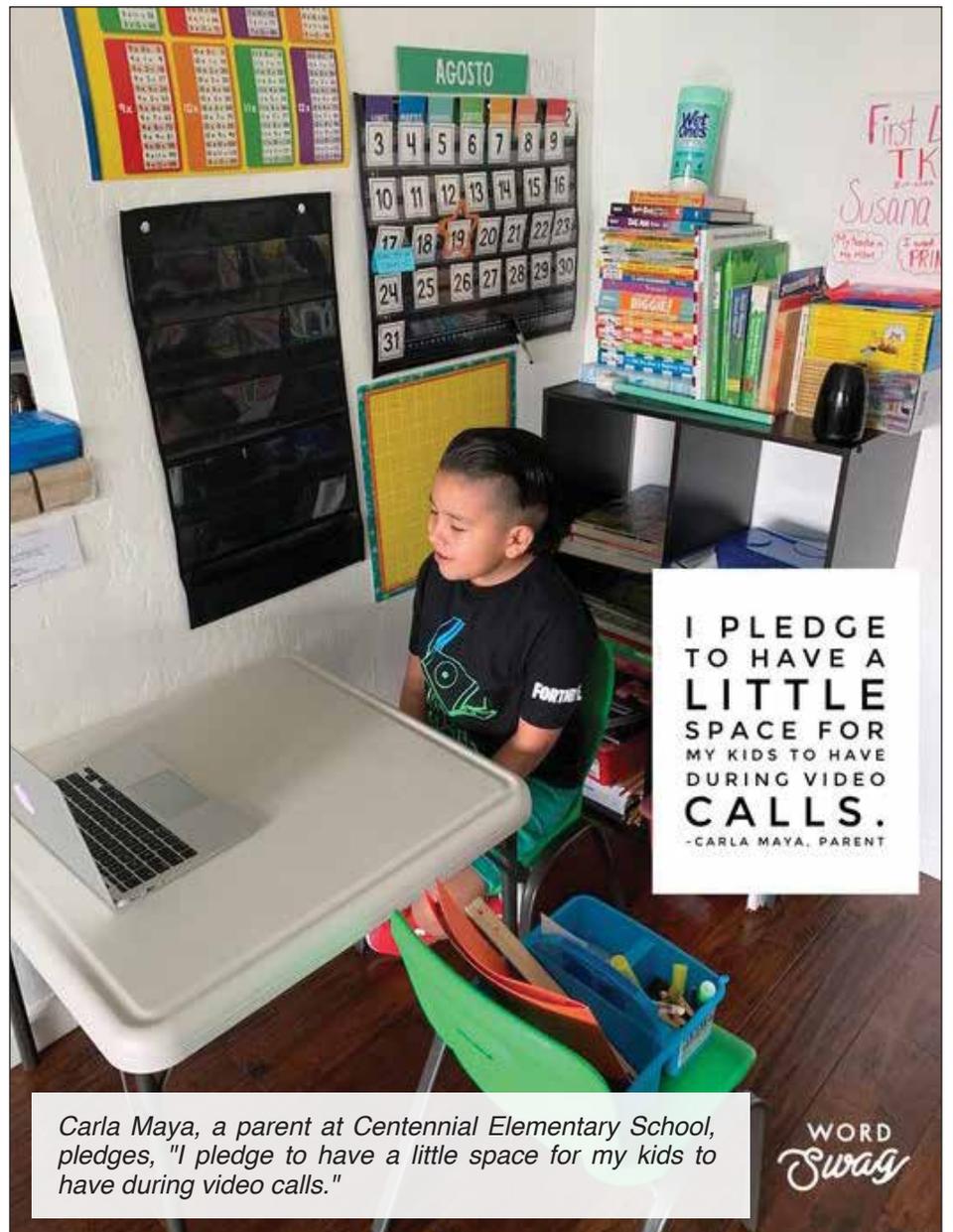
She later reflected on the shock she felt when she heard her name and on what the award means to her.

"I thought how truly humbled I am by this award. This is about giving the very best service to our staff, schools, students, and families. It's what I strive to do all the time and what I think we all need to do," Montague said.

Rebecca Wheeler, principal at Hoover

Montague, a 26-year veteran of several departments, can be relied upon to be calm, collected and confident, even during challenging situations and crises. As the executive assistant in the School Leadership Office, she works directly with school sites as well as families and community members.

She understands that many families have trouble navigating the district's system. She has a sense of urgency to solve problems, especially when they directly involve a child's education. Her sincere concern and caring for district families, community members and her colleagues is evident.



**I PLEDGE**  
TO HAVE A  
**LITTLE**  
SPACE FOR  
MY KIDS TO HAVE  
DURING VIDEO  
**CALLS.**  
-CARLA MAYA, PARENT

Carla Maya, a parent at Centennial Elementary School, pledges, "I pledge to have a little space for my kids to have during video calls."



## DEDICATED EMPLOYEES

# Employees Find New Ways of Supporting Students during Pandemic



*Lupe Martinez, plant coordinator at Tehipite Middle School, uses a special sanitizing tool on Nov. 19.*

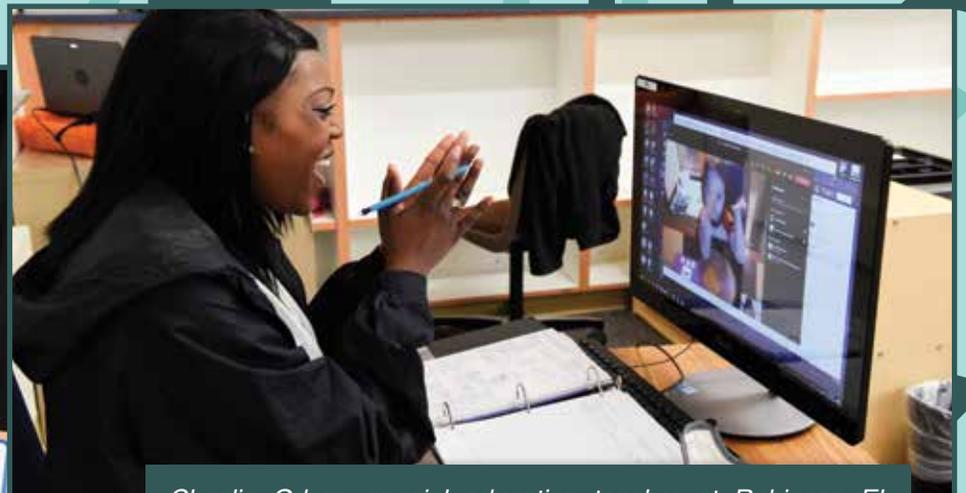


*Crystin Puentes, a counselor at Tehipite Middle School, works with Angelica Barajas as she does her online learning on campus on Oct. 13.*



*Campus safety assistant Demiree Garcia talks with Wishon Elementary School fourth grader Matthew Molina during a lunch break on Oct. 13. The safety assistants help to encourage and engage the small groups of students who have been invited to do their online learning at their campus.*

*Robinson Elementary School kindergarten teacher Joe Dawson has built an elaborate teaching space at his classroom to get the most out of distance learning.*



*Cheslie Odom, special education teacher at Robinson Elementary School, tries to keep online learning lively and fun.*



## DEDICATED EMPLOYEES



*Licensed vocational nurse Patricia Harris helps a student at Muir Elementary School on Nov. 18. The student is part of a small group on campus for learning.*

*Bus driver Hector Arevalo sanitizes his bus between trips, one of the many safety protocols the district has implemented as it has brought small groups of students back to campus.*



*Donna Kossian, library media technician at Starr Elementary School, works on a protective book cover on Nov. 19. Although schools are closed for most students, they can use the district's Destiny internet site to check out books and pick them up on Thursdays.*

*Administrative secretary Leticia DeSantiago works with co-athletic director Brett Mar in the Goal 2 office, helping to coordinate athletics and activities in different formats due to COVID-19.*



*Jessica Avina, a school psychologist at Robinson Elementary School, works with a student online on Nov. 17.*



# Focus Groups Helping the District Implement New Strategic Plan

As the district moves forward on a strategic plan surrounding its newly adopted vision, mission, values and goals, it held 18 virtual focus groups with 487 students in November.

In December and January, the district will hold additional focus groups with parents and staff.

The Fresno Unified Board of Education adopted the vision, mission, values and goals on Oct. 21 after hearing from more than 66,000 constituents.

The vision, mission, values and goals will guide the district as it develops objectives during the second semester with departments and schools. The development of objectives is the second phase of the strategic plan to ensure the district's goals guide program evaluations and the allocation of resources.

## VISION

Fresno Unified School District – where students, families and staff are valued and empowered to achieve their greatest potential.

## MISSION

We nurture and cultivate the interests,

intellect, and leadership of our students by providing an excellent, equitable education in a culturally proficient environment.

## VALUES

### We Value Learning

- We provide high quality teaching and learning that involves challenging and relevant experiences to produce critical, collaborative, and solution-oriented thinkers.
- We create learning experiences that support a wide range of ability and are focused on improving every day with constructive and consistent feedback.
- We emphasize learning is enjoyable, engaging, and interactive.
- We know all individuals can learn and we demonstrate that by having high expectations and a growth mindset.

### We Value People and Our Community

- We create a welcoming place where diversity, equity, and inclusion are at the forefront of all our decisions to create a place where people are treated with respect and compassion.

- We strive to ensure that all feel loved, valued, informed, and heard.

### We Value Positive Behavior

- We promote all individuals to grow intellectually, emotionally, morally, socially, and culturally.
- We demonstrate a passion for life rooted in respecting and understanding one another.
- We prepare our students to play active roles in building positive communities.

### We Value Accountability

- We have a responsibility to action and own the consequences of our actions.
- We measure and reflect on outcomes to improve the quality of our work.
- We use evidence-based methods and make data-informed decisions.
- We own the intent and the impact of our actions at all levels of Fresno Unified.

## GOALS

### Student

- Improve academic performance at challenging levels

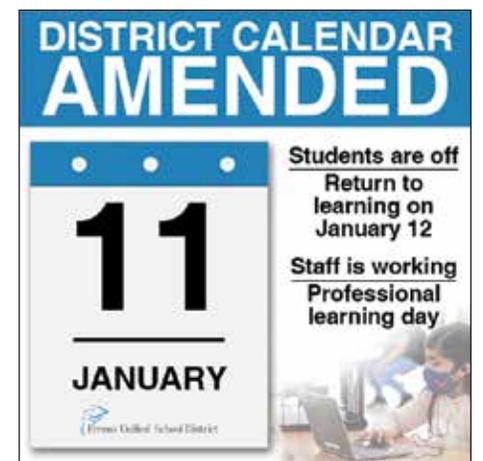
- Expand student-centered and real-world learning experiences
- Increase student engagement in their school and community

### Staff

- Increase recruitment and retention of staff reflecting the diversity of our community

### Families

- Increase inclusive opportunities for families to engage in their students' education





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# Fresno Unified Food Services Department Feeding more than Students

From the first day of school closures due to COVID-19 in March, the district's food services staff stepped forward to fill a gap for not only students, but their families and even the community.



**Amanda Harvey**  
Director of Food Services

Although campuses were closed, the district established grab-and-go food distribution from 23 school sites. The district is currently dispensing food from 47 elementary schools, 11 middle schools and five high schools.

Early in the pandemic, as people lost their jobs and lives were disrupted, Fresno Unified leaders decided they would not turn away anyone who showed up at a school site for food. Some days, the district distributed as many as 60,000 meals in a day.

For the first time ever, the district has recently begun distributing weekend meals on Fridays for those families who want them, and also for the first time, a week's worth of breakfast and lunch meals were provided on Nov. 23 at the start of the Thanksgiving break.

Superintendent Bob Nelson singled out the Food Services staff during the Nov. 9 board meeting: "They have truly stepped up as huge leaders in our district and community during this pandemic."

While many district employees had a



For video, go to [vimeo.com/fresnounified/foodservices](https://vimeo.com/fresnounified/foodservices)

chance to regroup as they worked from home during the initial COVID-19 shut-down, Food Services employees headed to the front lines.

"We've truly been there since Day 1, doing all this hard work serving not just our students but families, the community, adults, needy adults, the homeless and even Creek Fire evacuees," said Amanda Harvey, director of Food Services.

"So, it's been such a great experience for our staff, to be just really the stars right now, to do this for our community."

When families drive up to get meals, "they see a familiar face in a time of complete unknown," Harvey said.

On average, Food Services is serving 20,000 breakfasts and 20,000 lunches every day at its elementary sites.

Nutrition services assistant Carla Garcia said it's been rewarding to be part of the "big picture in the world" and truly serving those reeling from the pandemic.

"It's very motivational to see the smiles you can put on peoples' faces just by handing out food," Garcia said.

Vanessa Pacheco, also a nutrition services assistant, said she knows that many of the students they provide food to have little at home and are struggling financially.

"It makes me feel good knowing I am helping the community out," Pacheco said.

ing for all.

**How will parents/staff be notified if someone at our school/work is confirmed COVID positive?** When an individual is confirmed positive, only close contacts (within six feet, without a mask for more than 15 minutes) are notified. Two confirmed cases in a classroom within 14 days triggers class notification and potential return to 100% distance learning. Three confirmed cases in a school site within 14 days triggers school notification and potential return to 100% distance learning.

See **FAQS ON REOPENING**  
Continued on page 16



Carla Garcia, a food services assistant, said it's been rewarding to serve others during the pandemic.



Vanessa Pacheco, a food services assistant, said the school meals some families get are their only of the day.

## GRAB-AND-GO SCHOOL MEAL LOCATIONS

**BREAKFAST AND LUNCH AVAILABLE FOR FRESNO UNIFIED STUDENTS 7AM-9AM**

ELEMENTARY		MIDDLE
Addams Anthony Bakman Balderas Birney Burroughs Calwa Centennial Columbia Dailey Charter Del Mar Eaton Ewing Figarden Fremont Heaton Hidalgo Homan Jackson Jefferson King Kirk Kratt Lane	Lawless Leavenworth Lincoln Lowell Manchester Mayfair McCardle Muir Norseman Olmos Pyle Roeding Rowell Slater Starr Storey Thomas Turner Viking Vinland Williams Winchell Wishon	Cooper Academy Fort Miller Hamilton Kings Canyon Scandinavian Sequoia Tehipite Terronez Tioga Wawona Yosemite
		HIGH
		Bullard Duncan Edison Hoover Sunnyside



# Board of Education to Discuss Fresno High Warrior Mascot

The district has been gathering information and opinions from various stakeholders on the Fresno High School mascot following the circulation of two petitions – one opposing the use of the Warrior mascot image and one in support of it.

The Fresno Unified Board of Education is expected to discuss the mascot and determine the next steps on the issue at the Dec. 9 board meeting.

Leading up to that discussion, a district team made up of leaders from Fresno High, and the Equity and Access, Communications and Indian Education departments conducted two small listening sessions in September and October, hearing directly from Fresno High

students, alumni, parents and several Native American community leaders.



Fresno High held a virtual town hall for all students on Nov. 9 and the district held a virtual [town hall](#) open to the entire community on Nov. 12.

Those listening to the town hall heard from petition authors, alumni, and a parent, and had the opportunity to submit live feedback and comments through the Q&A feature on Microsoft Teams Live.

All comments were collected, along with feedback from the student town hall, the two small listening sessions, the petitions, conversations and comments from social media regarding the Warrior

mascot, and research on Native American mascot discussions around the coun-

try. All feedback was provided back to the board to discuss on Dec. 9.



In January 2020, Fresno High School – the city's first high school – celebrated its 130th birthday. The board of education will discuss the school's Warrior mascot this month.

## REOPENING OF SCHOOLS Continued from page 2

qhia ntawv rau kev kawm ua hauj lwm.

Thaum rov qab los lawm, cov tub ntxhais kawm qib 1-6 yuav muaj 95 feeb ntxiv ntawm lub sij hawm kawm ntawv nrog lawv cov xib fwb qhia ntawv txhua lub lim tiam, ho cov tub ntxhais kawm theem nrab thiab theem siab yuav muaj li ntawm 35 feeb ntxiv rau ib chav kawm rau ib lim tiam.

Hauv puas tsev kawm ntawv tseem ua hauj lwm rau qhov kom mus kawm tau kom tim ntsej tim muag rau cov tub ntxhais kawm, tab sis qhov ntawd yuav tsis muaj txog thaum Lub Nroog Fresno pauv mus rau [theem 3 – ua yog kob kab ntxwv -pheej txoj hmoo ua yuav -ntawm lub xeev cov kev pheej hmoo.](#)

Thaum ncav cuag kob kab ntxwv lawm, txoj kev npaj hu rau kev nyab xeeb, hais txog qhov rov qab los ntawm cov tub ntxhais kawm rov qab mus kawm tim ntsej tim muag, pib nrog 50% ntawm *pre-kindergarten* mus txog qib ib thiab ntawm cov tub ntxhais kawm hauv tsev kawm theem nrab thiab theem siab mus rau li 25%. Yog tias thaum twg peb mus rau kob kab ntxwv lawm, cov tsev kawm ntawv theem pib yuav maj mam coj cov qib siab zog ntxiv tuaj txhua ob lub lim tiam twg.

Raws li qhov xav tau kom saib xyuas tau txhua leej txhua tus kom nyob nruj

deb lwm tus, cov tsev kawm ntawv *elementary* yuav tsis muaj ntau tshaj li 50% ntawm cov tub ntxhais kawm nyob hauv tsev kawm ntawv tuaj ua ke thiab cov tsev kawm theem nrab thiab theem siab yuav tsum tsis pub ntau tshaj 25% ntawm cov tub ntxhais kawm.

Thaum lub nroog txav mus rau theem kob kab ntxwv lawm cov tsev kawm ntawv yuav pib qhia ntawv kom tim ntsej tim muag tau, yuav muab sij hawm kawm ntxiv rau cov tub ntxhais kawm. Yog *Fresno County* tsis ncav cuag theem kob kab ntxwv ua ntej Lub Ob Hlis Hnub tim 16, cov tsev kawm yuav tsis rov qhib kom txog thaum lub *quarter* thib plaub.

Raws li kev xyuas nyab xeeb, cov niam txiv uas muaj menyuum kawm rau *Elementary* yuav muaj kev xaiv seb yuav cia lawv cov menyuum tuaj kawm rau tom tsev kawm ntawv kom tim ntsej tim muag nrog lawv tus kws qhia ntawv los sis kawm txuas ntxiv rau nram tsev uas yog siv *eLearn* ntawm *My School* tus qauv. Raws li kev npaj cov tshwj xeeb, tsuas yog 25% ntawm cov tub ntxhais kawm theem ob (theem nrab thiab theem siab) yuav rov qab los hauv tsev kawm ntawv.

Thaum peb mus cuag theem kob kab ntxwv lawm, cov kws qhia ntawv yuav muab kev qhia ntawv kom tim ntsej tim muag thiab kev kawm nruj deb ib txhij.

Ib daim ntawv soj ntsuam twb tau muab xa thaum lub Kaum Ib Hlis rau cov niam txiv thiab cov saib xyuas ua muaj

menyuam nyob rau Elementary nrog rau lawv cov kws qhia ntawv txog ntawm seb yuav ua li cas thiab kev yuav tuaj rov qab tau li cas kom tuaj kawm tau kom pom ntsej pom muag thaum uas lub nroog rov qab mus cuag theem kob kab ntxwv. Daim ntawv soj ntsuam no tseem yuav qhib txais txog ntua lub 12 hlis tim 3.

Hauv Paus Tsev Kawm Ntawv thiab *Fresno Teachers Association* cov kws qhia ntawv koos haum tau tuav lub rooj sib tham hauv *town hall* uas yog tham rau hauv virtual nrog cov niam txiv, cov tub ntxhais kawm thiab cov peej xeeb hauv zej zog thaum Lub Kaum Ib Hlis Hnub tim 19 los piav qhia txog lub hom phiaj. Hauv paus tsev kawm ntawv kuj muaj lub rooj sib tham hauv *virtual* nrog lawv cov neeg ua hauj lwm thaum Lub Kaum Ib Hlis Hnub 18.

Hauv paus tsev kawm ntawv pib caw ib pawg tub ntxhais kawm ntawv rov qab tuaj rau tom tsev kawm ntawv thaum

Lub Kaum Hli Hnub 12 kom lawv tau ib qho chaw kawm *online*. Qhov no yog rau cov tub ntxhais kawm uas tsim nyog txais kev pab los ntawm siv/txais *internet zoo*, zaub mov noj thiab txhawb nqa los ntawm cov neeg ua hauj lwm.

Cov pab pawg no suav nrog cov tub ntxhais kawm nyob tsis muaj tsev thiab cov menyuum ua nyob nrog niam qhuav txiv qhuav, cov tuaj tshiab kawm lus Askiv thiab cov menyuum xiam oob khab los yog muaj kev tshwj xeeb. Cov tsev kawm theem qis coj 10 tus tub ntxhais kawm thiab tsev kawm theem nrab thiab theem siab muaj ob pab ntawm 10 leej.

Lub Kaum Ib Hlis Hnub tim 3, hauv paus tsev kawm ntawv ntxiv ob npaug ntawm cov tsev kawm ntawv ua kawm *online*. Tsis tas li ntawd lub Kaum Ib Hlis, hauv paus tsev kawm ntawv tau sim qhia tim ntsej tim muag coj ib pawg me me rau tsib lub tsev kawm ntawv theem qis rau cov tub ntxhais kawm tshwj xeeb.



## Important Dates

- December 21-January 8** Winter Break
- January 11** Professional Learning for Staff
- January 12** Return to School (Online)
- January 18** Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday
- February 8 and 15** Presidents Days Holidays



# For Performing Arts Students, the Show Must Go On — Virtually

Distance learning has not suppressed the creativity of Fresno Unified students.

Throughout the district, students and staff are finding ways to participate in visual and performing arts. Examples include:

At Edison High School, students from the Tiger Theatre Company competed in the Drama Teachers Association of Southern California Theater Festival, held virtually. This year, Joshua Corey and Sarah Debord placed with their performance of “Uncle Vanya” by Anton Chekhov. Annie Cooper, Riley Randel and Bella Anooshian placed in Graphics Design for “Once on this Island.”

The Tiger Theatre Company competes every year in this festival, though it is outside Southern California and is not a performing arts school like the other competitors.

“This year, the kids have really stepped up through the challenges of performing virtually,” said theater teacher Bianca Ankrum.

At middle and high schools, students with moderate to severe disabilities in Alternative Learning Pathways (ALPs)



Leavenworth Elementary School students presented virtual band and orchestra concerts.

classes are participating in music instruction through the Play with Us program, which uses United Sound curriculum.

Through Play with Us, a trained special education music teacher provides a weekly interactive videoconference music class for middle and high school students. Sequoia Middle School has been having great success with the

program in Lois Henderson’s class.

Henderson said Play with Us has been an exciting addition to the school week.

“Students with moderate to severe disabilities, typically, have limited access to the experts in the arts. The accommodations and modifications that have been made in these classes make this program accessible and enjoyable for our students,” Henderson said.

“Fresno Unified has definitely made a good decision to fund this program. The students’ reactions are beautiful. The students with the most severe needs have the most fun. Oh, and they’re learning to listen and develop an awareness about music too.”

At Roosevelt School of the Arts, students in the Showcase and directing classes presented “The Longest Day Project -- a Melodrama in 4 Acts” virtually on Nov. 12. Seniors wrote, directed, and acted in their first virtual production. The show was inspired by a skit by Jimmy Fallon, Kristen Wiig, and Will Ferrell.

Kratt and Leavenworth elementary band and orchestra students put together some great Flipgrids to share their love of music. In many of the videos, family members could be seen enjoying their performances.

The virtual band and orchestra concerts were led by music teacher Harmony Mendez. The Flipgrids premiered for students at the Quarter 1 celebration on Oct. 30.

Students and teachers are also working on a virtual art exhibit expected to premier in January.

# Valley PBS Program Featuring Fresno Unified Teachers is a Hit

Parents have embraced [Reading Explorers](#), a program for children pre-kindergarten to third grade featuring Fresno Unified teachers. The program is available every morning before online learning starts.

Reading Explorers is a partnership with Valley PBS featuring hand-picked exemplary and entertaining Fresno Unified teachers. It is on Channel 18 and streamed on [Valley PBS Facebook Live](#) and [www.valleypbs.org](#) from 7:30-8:45 a.m. every weekday. Different teachers

offer 15-minute lessons for pre-school, transitional kindergarten, kindergarten, first grade, second grade and third grade.

The programs have been an especially useful tool for Fresno Unified families with preschoolers through kindergartners, based on emails and Facebook



Sidney Vang, a literacy coach for the district, teaches a lesson on Valley PBS for second graders. The Reading Explorers program offers lessons every morning before online learning starts for pre-kindergarten through third grade.

comments from parents expressing their gratitude, said Deanna Mathies, executive officer for the Early Learning Department.

The district’s Early Learning Department is working hard to provide new ways to engage its preschool through

kindergarten students as it is often difficult for children that young to sit and learn in front of their laptop or tablet. Some of the district’s preschool students are as young as 3.

That work includes the Valley PBS shows. For example, preschool literacy coach Claudia Readwright in one of her episodes introduced artist Grant Wood, whose passion was painting people and the countryside. His works include “American Gothic,” a man and woman in front of a country

home. Readwright explains how Wood used his sister and dentist as models for the painting.

During the episode, the children chanted and sang songs, including a chant about a crow. The art activity was creating a scarecrow, using a ruler to make a plaid

shirt and blue paper and sponge paint for the pants.

Early learning literacy coach Karina Lara in one of her episodes introduced the focus for the week – dental health. She also discussed strategies that children can use to calm themselves, using a Calm Down Wheel she spins to demonstrate the different ideas.

The episode included an intentional message with embedded vocabulary and learning for the week, sorting pictures with the children of healthy and non-healthy foods, singing and chanting with the students in English and Spanish about brushing teeth and using Chompers the dinosaur puppet to model how to brush and floss.

## Reading Explorers Schedule

- Pre-kindergarten – 7:30 a.m.
- Transitional kindergarten – 7:45 a.m.
- Kindergarten – 8 a.m.
- First grade – 8:15 a.m.
- Second grade – 8:30 a.m.
- Third grade – 8:45 a.m.



# LINKED LEARNING SPOTLIGHT

## Fresno High Combines Work-Based Learning, Academic Rigor

Fresno High School's first cohort of students from a new International Baccalaureate (IB) careers-related program will graduate in June, another milestone for the district's original high school.

When Fresno High added the Career-related Programme in the spring of 2018, it launched an opportunity for students to develop career-critical skills within a challenging academic framework.

The program combines coursework from the IB diploma program with a hands-on and individualized curriculum. Each program provides students the opportunity to participate in industry work-based learning experiences, such as internships, industry certifications, career-focused certifications, guest speakers, and job shadow events.

"Our program is young compared to others in the district, but the foundation is strong. The purpose of the career program is to ensure students realize their career aspirations, their definition of success, and most importantly, their full potential. We want to make sure that every enrolled student has a plan, whether that plan is a four-year college or university, a CTE program at the local community college, or straight to work, they will be prepared," said Keisha Shabazz, career program coordinator.

A new, two-story career technology education building expected to be

completed in 2021 will house Warrior Entertainment, Construction & Design, and HVAC programs. The building will include a video production suite with recording studio, sound studio, and stage; presentation center; and construction and HVAC shops and individual yards.

### Fresno High IB Career Programs:

#### Construction, Design, and Architecture Technology (C.D.A.T.) Academy

- Students can begin the program as early as ninth grade by enrolling in the Engineering, Construction, and Design course
- Can focus on one of the areas in their senior year
- Also offers the only HVAC technician program for high school students in the Valley through a dual enrollment partnership with Fresno City College's HVAC technician program; students who earn a grade of C or better in the course are guaranteed a seat in the FCC program; 2019 graduates Michael Barrios and Alexx Brown have graduated from the city college program and are now certified pre-apprentice in HVAC technology
- Students can earn college credits, industry certifications, CPR and Stop the Bleed Certifications, and an IB CP Diploma



Students from Fresno High School's construction program installed a Little Free Library box at Heaton Elementary School in September 2019. The construction program is among several offered through the International Baccalaureate program that combines work experience with rigorous academics.

Last March, Fresno High's Women in Construction team of four female construction students won the annual WIC Build Competition for best doghouse.

"Being a female student in the construction course use to be intimidating but then I realized that I'm just as good, if not better, than the male students. I make sure that I have a voice in the construction of any project I'm involved in. There needs to be more women represented in the construction field, from laborers to project management," said

Ayanna Moore, a senior CDAT Academy student.

In alignment with IB's goal that students contribute to their community, construction students worked with Reading Heart, Every Neighborhood Partnership and district departments to build eight Little Free Libraries for the eight district high school regions. In addition, 27 CDAT students helped three families build their homes through a partnership

See **CTE SPOTLIGHT**  
Continued on page 14

## Sunnyside High School Team Wins Esports League Tournament

Sunnyside High Team 2 took first place in the districtwide esports league tournament, which concluded Nov. 14, battling in League of Legends.

About 100 students from 11 district high schools and the Center for Advanced Research and Technology (a partnership between Fresno and Clovis unified school districts) participated.

Placing second was Team 2 from DeWolf High School and third was Team 1 from Sunnyside.

Because of COVID-19 restrictions, all team members competed on their own from their homes. The winning team was able to gather briefly to celebrate at

the Sunnyside library and pick up their medals and prizes. They had not seen each other since March, when school closed, and had never met the freshman of the team, Yufang Yang. They only recognized him from his voice.

The tournament was the culmination of the fall season for the Fresno Unified eSports League – FUEL – which attracted more than 130 students competing on 27 teams representing their high schools.

The championship tournament was broadcast on the [Battlefy](#) online platform, where other students and the community could watch the games.

Esports is a booming industry with numerous job opportunities beyond being a player, including game design, coding, testing, sales and marketing,

production, streaming and management. More than 200 colleges and universities are actively recruiting and providing scholarships for esports players.



Team 2 for Sunnyside High School won the districtwide esports league tournament in November. Students are, from left, Steven Touch, Justin Her, Jet Xiong, Kory Heu, coach Alan Gurrola and Yufang Yang.



## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

# Roosevelt Bilingual Instructional Aide is Bridge for Newcomer Students

*Martha Grijalva left a career in banking to become a bilingual instructional aide at Roosevelt High School out of a desire to do “something more meaningful to my heart,” she said. She has worked at Roosevelt since the fall of 2016, helping students who have recently arrived from another country. She was a finalist for a district Excellence in Education award in February. Anne Batard, vice principal at Roosevelt, said this about Grijalva: “Martha is an essential part of Roosevelt High School, supporting our most vulnerable students so they can reach their goal of graduating high school,*



*ready for college and careers.”*

**You had an earlier career in banking. Why did you make the switch to helping English learners?** The reason I made the switch from banking to students is because kids are my heart and I had to go with what I really feel makes a difference in this world, and that is working with young people.

**What is the hardest part about your job?** The hardest part of my job is to get them to “want” to do the work and to get them to advocate for themselves. Most of my students are very shy.

**What do you enjoy the most about your job?** The part of my job that I enjoy the most is seeing their growth. I get to see improvement in their grammar and math skills, and as soon as they start speaking more, I will be able to hear the improvement in their language skills.

**How has your job been affected by the pivot to virtual learning?** I don’t feel my job has been affected tremendously, although it is a little different than being face to face with my students. I feel being in person, I get to know them better and know what angle to approach them from to be able to assist them better.

**What has been the biggest impact to English learners with the switch to distance learning?** The biggest impact to English learners is that they don’t feel as much support because we (bilingual instructional assistants) aren’t there to physically point out things in the books from their classes and we have no eye contact. I feel eye contact with my students is key to get a clear understanding of what is expected from them and to get a better understanding of how I can better assist them. We are better

connected emotionally when we are face to face. They can see and hear the care we have for them when we are in person rather than virtually.

**Name one thing most people don’t know about you.** One thing most people don’t know about me is that I have led a group for women for our church called Hurts, Habits and Hang-Ups and I also serve as a back-up singer for our worship band at our Celebrate Recovery program.

**What do you like to do when you are not working?** When I am not working, I like to do gardening and enjoy spending time with my loved ones, Mom, children and grandchildren.

**What is your dream vacation?** My dream vacation is to see the Aztec pyramids.

# Norseman Teacher: Virtual High Fives Aren’t the Same Thing

*Mark Hernandez is among staff across the district doing their best to care for the entire student, even during this time of virtual learning. Hernandez has been with the district since 2009, at Norseman Elementary School for six years and is in his first year as a teacher on special assignment at Norseman. His focus is on facilitating a smooth transition for the small cohorts of students who are learning online on campus, supporting new teachers and training noon time assistants (his first job with the district). He was an Excellence in Education finalist for the district in February. Pam Guizar, vice principal at Pyle Elementary School who was a teacher on special assignment last school year at Norseman, said this about Hernandez: “Mr. Hernandez sees the importance of reaching out and teaching the whole child. He has gone through many hours of voluntary train-*



*ing through the Department of Prevention and Intervention to understand what lies beneath the surface of our students to best reach their needs.”*

**What prompted you to become a teacher?** I was inspired by many of the teachers I had growing up, specifically those at Jackson Elementary. These teachers saw past the trauma and emotional baggage I carried every day at school and nurtured my potential. Shout out to Mrs. Schulz at Edison for staying in touch over the years.

**What do you enjoy the most about your job?** I enjoy the flexibility in my schedule. I am better able to build relationships with staff, students, and community.

**What is the biggest challenge in your job?** The biggest challenge is navigating the constant changes brought on by distance learning.

**What is the biggest challenge for teachers and students in distance learning?** The biggest challenge for teachers and students in distance learning is community building. Virtual hugs and high-fives aren’t the same as the real

thing.

**I know you are highly involved in helping students with social emotional issues and learning more about how to help. What has it been like to try to help students in this area when you are not face-to-face with them?** I am fortunate to see some of these students every day as they are part of our cohort. For those I do not see I lean into the social emotional learning supports and services put in place by our teachers, support staff, counselors, and climate and culture initiatives. Our site’s collaborative effort in rethinking and maintaining our designated social/emotional time each day, along with counseling services, has made a meaningful impact.

**What advice do you have for parents during this time of virtual learning?** Parents and guardians -- we appreciate and value your efforts in supporting us support your children. We are in this together!

**You are a master teacher. What is the No. 1 thing you try to teach aspiring teachers?** Many of our students come to school with heavy hearts and trauma, most out of their and our control. Being

that constant and inviting face when they walk into your classroom each morning is just as important as what you plan to teach them that day.

**Name one thing most people don’t know about you.** Most of the framed nature photography in my home was taken by me. I have developed a passion for hiking and photography and decided to combine the two.

**What do you like to do when you are not working?** Due to COVID-19, I have not been able to do many of the things I love as much such as day trips and hiking. For now, binge watching “Grey’s Anatomy” and “Downton Abbey” are my go-to when not working.

**If you were not a teacher, what career would you choose?** If not a teacher I would love to be a theoretical physicist and futurist. I am fascinated by how the laws of physics shape our future.

**What is your dream vacation?** My dream vacation would be at a mountain resort during the winter. I would have a personal chef who makes me eggs benedict every morning.



# STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

## District's Homeless Students Struggle More during School Closures

Being a student during the COVID era is not easy, but for students without permanent housing, difficulties are compounded. Students in homeless situations often have trouble accessing the internet, a quiet place to do schoolwork, and even adequate food.

“Jane,” a Fresno High School junior (her real name is being withheld for confidentiality reasons), is one of the district’s 406 students in homeless situations. Because of their struggles, the district has invited some of the most vulnerable homeless students to do their

online school at their campus to give them access to reliable internet, staff support and school meals.

Despite the hurdles she has had to overcome, Jane shows amazing resiliency.

Jane’s family has dealt with a severe lack of permanent housing for about three years. Sadly, homelessness is not new to Jane.

“When it started happening, I was just a kid, so it was just like normal to me,” said the 16-year-old.

Her family has lived in relatives’ homes, backyards, shelters, and motels. Her mom is single and suffers from a chronic illness and is unable to work, leading to their lack of financial stability and housing.

Currently, she and her mom and sister are living with an aunt, under less than ideal circumstances for distance learning, but she does not complain about it.

“I am living in a living room, on an air mattress. Some people don’t comprehend that there are other people who are worse off than you,” Jane said.

Through the years and the constant moving and changing schools, Jane has learned the difficult lesson that nothing is permanent in life. That’s why she wants to improve her grades, finish high school, and have a career – perhaps as a chemistry teacher.

“Chemistry is a stronger subject for me, probably because my teacher is so helpful and explains it more. It is my favorite

subject,” Jane said.

Like in chemistry, for her life to improve she must mix the correct elements to get the right formula. She is trying to get her grades up, focusing on school, and attending after-school hours support to make up for missed work.

Online learning has become a hard element for her; she learns better when she can ask questions of her teachers in person.

For now, she deals with the frustration that comes from her time in front of a screen by listening to music.

“You have to face the reality that there is a pandemic going around, that sometimes things are going to get hard, but you just have to get through it. That is part of life,” Jane said.

Jane and her sister receive support through the district’s Project ACCESS, services for those in homeless situations and foster care.

### CTE SPOTLIGHT

Continued from page 12

with Self Help Enterprises.

#### Warrior Entertainment (Video Production)

- Students can begin the program as early as ninth grade by enrolling in the Video Production course
- Students learn pre-and-post video production -- story concept, storyboarding, lighting, scriptwriting, directing and more
- Students can earn college credit courses and Adobe Premiere and Photoshop certifications, and an IB CP Diploma

Students in the Warrior Entertainment program are learning from industry experts and getting real-world experience. On Nov. 6, the program virtually hosted CBS news anchor and correspondent Vladimir Duthiers.

In September 2019, Warrior Entertainment students were hired as interns to film the training videos for the FUSD mobile health unit, and a group of students filmed a commercial for a local Tower District coffee café.

The program began hosting the annual Fresno High Film Festival in May 2019. In the 2020 Slick Rock Festival, recent graduate James Ledesma was a finalist in the sports-highlight category.

“I’m enjoying video production and videography. My teacher, Mr. Brown, is straight from the industry and has taught me a lot,” said junior Devonte Mayberry.

#### Army Junior Reserve Officer Training Corp (JROTC) – Battalion Warriors

- Gold Star rated program certified by U.S. Army Cadet Corps
- Character development and citizenship programs that focuses on the values of citizenship, service to the United States, personal responsibility, and a sense of accomplishment
- Students can earn CPR and Stop the Bleed Certifications, and an IB CP Diploma

Fresno High’s JROTC consistently places in the top five of regional and state drill competitions. 2017 graduate Constance McMichaels became the first female student from Fresno High School appointed to the U.S. Army’s military academy at West Point.

## Take the next step in YOUR EDUCATION



Pursue your calling through a variety of degree and certificate options at Fresno Pacific University, including our biblical seminary. With programs spanning ministry, theology and counseling, you’ll be equipped to make a direct impact in your community.

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Fresno Unified

## Building Futures

### Interested in Placing an Ad?

Shared on fresnounified.org, social media platforms and electronic newsletters  
For more information about placing an ad, call (559) 457-3733



SUPT. MESSAGE  
Continued from page 3

whole package of board-adopted beliefs. We ask for your help in implementing these goals and values every day as part of our Fresno Unified family. We love you all!

**Vision:** Fresno Unified School District -- Where students, families, and staff are valued and empowered to achieve their greatest potential.

**Mission:** We nurture and cultivate the interests, intellect, and leadership of our students by providing an excellent, equitable education in a culturally proficient environment.

Estar agradecido aún en estos momentos de incertidumbre

Pronto llegarán las vacaciones y quiero desearle a todos una temporada festiva feliz y saludable. ¿Alguno de ustedes siente cómo que este año pasó volando y al mismo tiempo se siente como si hubieran pasado 100 años? Hemos sido consumidos constantemente con la pandemia global, manteniendo a nuestras familias del Distrito Escolar Unificado de Fresno seguras y gira sobre nuestro sistema educativo para garantizar una instrucción de alta calidad para nuestros estudiantes aún en un formato digital. ¡Cada minuto se siente precioso, urgente y a la vez pesado, haciéndolo sentir como que nunca hubiésemos tenido suficiente tiempo, a pesar de lo que todos hemos padecido más en el 2020, lo que pareciera inimaginable durante una década! Mi expectativa para ustedes y sus seres queridos es que esta temporada festiva puedan vivir el momento, hacer a un lado la prisa y disfrutar los preciosos momentos que están a nuestro alcance aún en este año tan loco.

Espero que hayan escuchado acerca de nuestra reunión de foro abierto en noviembre, como distrito continuamos planeando el eventual regreso seguro al aprendizaje en persona en nuestros planteles escolares. Creemos que el momento de iniciar a introducir gradualmente nuestra instrucción en persona, será cuando el Condado de Fresno alcance el nivel naranja o “moderado” del Plan Estatal para una Economía más Segura. Mientras que escribo este mensaje, regresamos a un nivel más restrictivo de las directrices Estatales, el cual es morado o “generalizado”. Desafortunadamente, eso significa que tenemos un trabajo primordial por hacer como condado para controlar la propagación del COVID-19 antes de poder regresar a los estudiantes y al personal de forma segura al aprendizaje en persona. Por favor, por favor continúen con las prácticas de seguridad usando el cubrebocas, distanciamiento físico de los que están fuera de su hogar, lavarse las manos frecuentemente y recibir la vacuna contra la gripe. Sus acciones a diario marcan la diferencia para que nuestro distrito pueda regresar a nuestros planteles escolares.

Habiendo dicho todo eso y sintiendo la intensa fatiga a lo largo de la pandemia junto con cada uno de ustedes, hay cosas que

suceden en el distrito de las cuales me siento increíblemente agradecido de compartir. En primer lugar, me siento muy agradecido de nuestra comunidad por apoyar nuestros Fondos de Becas del Fresno Unificado. Cuando debido a la pandemia cancelamos nuestros planes de unirnos en persona en el almuerzo anual para la recaudación de fondos sobre el Estado de Educación, nuestros equipos rápidamente giraron en torno para asegurar que nuestra clase de 2021 todavía continuará siendo apoyada por nuestros fondos de becas este año. Nos sentimos muy orgullosos de compartir que nuestra comunidad se unió para recaudar más de \$50,000 dólares para nuestros fondos de becas. Estos dólares apoyan a docenas de estudiantes seniors (grado12) a graduarse con becas financieras mientras se dirigen al colegio/universidad de su elección el próximo otoño. ¡No puedo agradecerles lo suficiente por sus donaciones y apoyo!

Además, continuamos operando y trabajando para ampliar nuestros grupos pequeños de estudiantes, quienes están en el plantel escolar tomando el aprendizaje a distancia todos los días. Estos grupos pequeños proveen un espacio seguro y confiable para nuestros estudiantes con incapacidades, estudiantes en hogar de crianza y sin hogar y nuestros recién llegados aprendices de inglés completan su aprendizaje a distancia cada día. Ellos tienen acceso a un internet estable, alimentos saludables y apoyo de nuestro personal clasificado y líderes del plantel escolar al instante.

Continuamos proveyendo evaluaciones y servicios cruciales para nuestros estudiantes en el plantel escolar los cuales por supuesto no se pueden proveer en un formato a través del aprendizaje a distancia y nuestras prácticas de deportes continúan de forma segura juntos. Todas estas actividades se realizan de acuerdo con las prácticas de seguridad y más. Es obligatorio usar cubre bocas y se aumentó la desinfección de nuestros espacios de aprendizaje, cafeterías, baños y los autobuses para nuestros estudiantes todos los días, manteniendo distanciamiento físico, practicando exámenes de salud propia y conducir rastreo de contacto para apoyar nuestros esfuerzos y limitar la propagación del COVID-19.

Por último, estamos iniciando la implementación de la Visión, Misión, Valores y Metas del distrito recientemente adoptados, los cuales la junta directiva aprobó el 21 de octubre. Por favor tomen un momento para leer las declaraciones de la visión y misión y estén atentos a más información sobre todo el paquete de las creencias adoptadas por la junta directiva. Solicitamos su ayuda en la implementación de estas metas y valores de todos los días como parte de nuestra familia de Fresno Unificado, ¡los queremos a todos!

**Visión:** Distrito Escolar Unificado de Fresno – Donde los estudiantes, las familias y el personal son valorados y fortalecidos para lograr su mayor potencial.

**Misión:** Nutrimos y cultivamos los intereses, el intelecto y el liderazgo de nuestros estudiantes por medio de proveer una educación excelente y equitativa en un

ambiente culturalmente competente.

Zoo Siab rau Tus Kheej Txawm Tias Lub Caij Tsis Paub Yuav Zoo Li Cas

Lub caij so twb los txog peb lawm tiag, kuv xav foom koob hmoov rau nej txhua tus thiab thov kom nej tsuas noj qab nyob zoo rau lub caij so no xwb. Puas muaj leej twg xav tias zoo li lub xyoo no, zoo nkaus li 100 tawm xyoo qhwv ua ib qho rau tib lub sij hawm xwb? Peb niaj hnuv tau hnov txog kev kab mob sib kis thoob ntiag teb, Fresno Hauv Paus Tsev Kawm Ntawv pov hwm muaj kev nyob nyab xeeb rau tsev neeg, thiab tau hloov tag nrho cov kev kawm kom zoo tshaj plaws txawm tias yuav siv duab yeeb los sib txuas xws. Txhua feeb muaj nuj nqis heev, maj nrawm, thiab ceev, ua rau nws zoo li peb tsis muaj sij hawm txaus li, txhua lub sij hawm peb txhua tus tau nyiaj tiv nyob rau xyoo 2020 no, zoo li twb mus dhau ib txheej tiam lawm! Kuv cia siab rau koj thiab cov neeg koj hlub rau lub caij so no, kuv tsuas xav kom nej nyob hnuv rau hnuv rau lub sij hawm no, tso kev nyuaj siab ntshov plawv mus, thiab kom muaj kev txaus siab rau lub sijhawm zoo uas nyob ntawm peb ntsis ntv tes txawm hais tias peb nyob rau lub xyoo zoo li no.

Vam tias koj tau hnov cov lus hauv peb lub rooj sib tham hauv cov town halls nyob rau lub Kaum Ib Hlis ntuj no, raws li hauv paus tsev kawm ntawv peb tseem npaj ua kom muaj kev nyob nyab xeeb kom peb rov qab qhia tau ntawv tom tsev kawm ntawv thiab pom tim ntsej tim muag. Peb ntseeg tias lub sij hawm ua yuav rov pib qhia ntawv kom pom tim ntsej tim muag yuav tsum yog thaum Lub Nroog Fresno rov qab mus nyob rau tier kob kab ntswv los sis “theem nruab nrab” ua yog qhia los ntawm Lub Xeev Blueprint rau Kev Nyab Xeeb. Thaum ua kuv sau cov lus no, peb tau rov qab poob mus rau qhov ua peb sawv daws yuav tsum tau txwv raws li lub xeev cov lus qhia, uas yog kob tsam xem los yog “thoob plaws.” Thaum ua zoo li no lawm, txhais tau tias peb muaj qee txoj hauj lwm tseem ceeb uas yuav tsum tau ua hauv lub nroog los tswj hwm kev sib kis ntawm tus kab mob COVID-19 ua ntej peb yuav coj tau cov tub ntshais kawm thiab cov neeg ua hauj lwm rov qab tuaj tsim ntsej tim muag. Thov siv kev tiv thaiv los ntawm kev npog koj lub qhov ncauj, nrug koj tus kheej kom deb ntawm cov neeg sab nraud koj tsev neeg, ntxuav koj ob txhais tes tas li, thiab txhaj tshuaj tiv thaiv kab mob khaub thuas. Koj qhov kev niaj hnuv ua yuav pab rau peb tau rov tuaj rau lub tsev kawm ntawv.

Qhov uas kuv tau hais tas los lawm thiab paub tias tus kab mob loj no nyob ib npuag ncig ze ntawm peb, muaj qee yam kev zoo siab ua tshwm sim rau hauv paus tsev kawm ntawv ua kuv xav qhia rau nej paub. Ua ntej, kuv zoo siab tshaj plaws xav ua tsaug rau peb lub zej zog rau txoj kev txhawb nqa Fresno Unified Scholarship Fund cov nyiaj txiag ua yuav pab rau cov tub ntshais kawm tom ntej no. Thaum ua peb tau muab txhua yam tshem tawm xwb li lub koob tshiej State of Education Luncheon los nrhiav nyiaj txiag rau cov tus ntshais kawm vim tus kab mob loj no, peb cov neeg tau maj ceev ua kom peb

tub ntshais kawm tiav Class of 2021 tseem yuav txais kev txhawb nyiaj los ntawm peb cov nyiaj ua thov tau thov rau xyoo no. Peb zoo siab heev qhia tawm tias peb lub zej zog tuaj sib sau ua ke thiaj li tau \$50,000 rau peb cov nyiaj pab cuam kawm ntawv rau peb cov tub ntshais kawm. Cov nyiaj no yuav txhawb nqa coob leej ntau tus ua tau kawm tiav qib siab thaum ua lawv dhau mus rau lub tsev kawm college uas lawv xaiv rau lub caij nplooj zeeg tom ntej no. Kuv ua tsaug tsis txawj tas rau nej txhua tus rau nej cov nyiaj thiab qhov nej txhawb nqa rau peb cov tub ntshais kawm!

Tsis tas li xwb, peb tseem niaj hnuv khiav hauj lwm thiab ua hauj lwm los pab rau ib pawg tub ntshais kawm ua tseem niaj hnuv tuaj kawm tom tsev kawm ntawv ua yog tseem kawm huav online kev deb. Cov pab pawg me no muab tau ib qhov chaw ua paub tias yuav nyob nyab xeeb thiab tso siab tau rau peb cov tub ntshais kawm ua yog xiam oob qhab, tsis muaj tsev nyob los yog nyob nrog niam qhuav txiv qhuav, thiab peb cov neeg tuaj tshiaj kawm lus Askiv kom kawm tau txhua hnuv txawm hais tias yog kawm hauv online xwb. Lawv muaj kev nkaug tau rau hauv internet zoo, tau zaub mov noj, thiab txhawb nqa los ntawm peb cov neeg ua hauj lwm thiab pawg thawj coj txhua lub sij hawm.

Peb tseem niaj hnuv muab kev ntsuas xyuas thiab cov kev pabcuam tseem ceeb ruau yam uas ua thiab muab tsis tau li kev kawm nyob deb, muaj muab nyob rau tom tsev kawm ntawv no, thiab peb cov tub ncaus pob ua tseem niaj hnuv xyaum. Txhua yam ua yuav tau ua no peb yeej ua raws li kev noj qab haus huv thiab tshaj ntawd. Yuav tsum ua txhua hnuv- looj ntaub npog qhov ncauj, thiab ua kom huv si ntawm peb qhov chaw kawm, chaw noj mov, chav dej, thiab lub npav thauj menyam kawm ntawv, nrug tus kheej kom deb lwm tus, kev soj ntsuam tus kheej kev noj qab haus huv txhua hnuv, thiab kev taug kev sib cuag txhawb peb lub zog txwv tsis pub kis mus ntxiv ntawm tus kab mob COVID-19.

Thaum kawg no, peb tab tom pib siv Lub Zeem Muag, Lub Hom Phiaj, Qhov Muaj Nqis thiab Cov Hom Phiaj tshiaj, uas cov thawj coj tau pom zoo rau hnuv 21 Lub Kaum Hlis. Thov siv sij hawm me ntsis los nyeem lub zeem muag thiab nqe lus ntawm lub hom phiaj thiab saib kom paub ntau ntxiv ntawm tag nrho cov thawj coj-kev ntseeg ua tau txais. Peb thov kom koj pab nqis tes rau cov lus muaj nqis thiab ua li cov hom phiaj no txhua hnuv pab rau Fresno Hauv Paus Tsev Kawm Ntawv tsev neeg. Peb hlub nej txhua tus!

**Lub Zeem Muag:** Fresno Hauv Paus Tsev Kawm Ntawv - Cov tub ntshais kawm, tsev neeg, thiab cov neeg ua hauj lwm muab txiaj ntsig thiab txhawb zog kom siv lawv lub peev xwm mus cuag lawv lub hom phiaj.

**Lub Hom Phiaj:** Peb tu thiab saib xyuas cov kev txaus siab, kev txawj ntse, thiab kev ua tus coj ntawm peb cov tub ntshais kawm, kev kawm kom sib luag huav ib puag ncig.



## DISTRICT ROUNDUP



### Hoover, Sunnyside Coaches Nominated for National Award

Tim Carey, the girls lacrosse coach at Hoover High School, and Karyn Klatt, the girls swim and dive coach at Sunnyside High School, have been nominated for the 2019-20 [National Federation of State High School Association \(NFSH\)](http://www.nfsa.org/) Coach of the Year award for the Central Section. Coaches were selected based on the positive work they have done with student-athletes in their programs.

### Learning is Sweet at Malloch Elementary

Malloch Elementary School kindergar-

ten teacher Kami Farmer organized Halloween cookie kits for students to use at home, learning math and reading skills along the way.



### Roosevelt Fishing Club Donates to Shelter

The Fishing Club at Roosevelt High School, led by advisor Mike Spencer, assembled 400 goodie bags and delivered them to the Marjaree Mason Center shelter. Staff and students donated the candy and treats for Operation Halloween, which would usually have been a trunk o' treat event. "These are certainly different times, but our staff and students are still the same: amazing." Spencer said.



### Report Fraud, Waste or Abuse on Hotline

Dishonest or fraudulent acts can be confidentially reported by calling the Anti-Fraud Hotline, (559) 325-3200, or by completing the fraud, waste or abuse reporting form online at:



<http://www.pccpas.com/fresno-unified-fraud-alert>

The anti-fraud waste or abuse reporting hotline is available to report alleged fraud in the district. The responsibility for monitoring the hotline rests with the internal auditor, Price, Page & Company. A report may be made anonymously.

#### FAQS ON REOPENING Continued from page 9

**If a student/staff member has been around someone with COVID-19, would they be required to test before coming to school, even with no symptoms?** No. If they are determined a close contact, requirements dictate they quarantine for a minimum of 14 days regardless of a test result. This is because an exposed person can develop COVID-19 anytime during that 14-day incuba-

tion period. Should families want to have their child tested, they should contact their healthcare provider or contact one of the county's many testing sites.

**Fresno County recommends testing staff for in-person instruction every two weeks. Is there a plan in place for testing staff on a regular basis?** While guidance may change, at current we anticipate 10% of district staff will be randomly tested for COVID-19.

## Fresno City College

# SPRING SEMESTER STARTS JANUARY 11

[www.fresnocitycollege.edu/spring](http://www.fresnocitycollege.edu/spring)

*Stay safe, learn online!*



State Center Community College District