

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

WELCOME BACK FRESNO UNIFIED FAMILY



Students, Staff Heading Back to Classrooms in Hybrid Schedule

- **What will Classrooms Look Like?** (Page 4)
- **Simultaneous Teaching** (Page 4)
- **FAQs** (Page 5)
- **COVID-19 Testing** (Page 6)
- **Transportation and Meals** (Page 6)
- **Cleaning Protocols and Self-Health Screening Tool** (Page 11)

On April 6, Fresno Unified will begin welcoming students back to in-person instruction after extensive preparation for a smooth, safe and productive return to campuses.

With COVID-19 infection numbers continuing to decrease, along with increases in available vaccines and more robust plans for surveillance testing, the

This Story in Spanish and Hmong on Page 2

district is elated to be reopening schools. “This long-awaited day is almost here, and we are beyond excited to have students back together on campuses with their teachers and staff,” said

Superintendent Bob Nelson. Students in pre-kindergarten through
See REOPENING OF SCHOOLS Continued on page 2



First-grader Jacie Thao from Bakman Elementary School was part of a simultaneous teaching pilot in March. When schools reopen in April, strategies learned from the pilot classrooms will help teachers district wide deliver teaching at the same time to students in the class and at home distance learning.

Class of 2021 Graduation Plans

The district is making preliminary plans for modified outdoor graduation ceremonies for the Class of 2021.

District leaders have been working on the logistics of how to hold outdoor ceremonies that honor seniors and provide an opportunity for their family to watch them receive their diploma. Plans would include spacing students apart and other



Plans are being made to hold ceremonies for McLane and Sunnyside high schools at their stadiums. For ceremonies for the other high schools, the district is working with outdoor venues to secure an environment that is both visually pleasing and mindful of health and safety protocols.



Teacher Engages Students During Virtual Lunch Time (Page 7)



From Jefferson Elementary to Deputy Superintendent (Page 8)



Sports Back On (Page 9)



Superintendent Message in Spanish and Hmong (Page 15)



REOPENING OF SCHOOLS
Continued from page 1

second grade, as well as grades 7, 9 and 12 will return on April 6 following a hybrid, two-day a week schedule. All other grades – 3 through 6 and 8, 10 and 11 -- return on April 13. Students will be on campuses from about 9 a.m. to at least 2 p.m.

The hybrid schedule is necessary due to physical distancing requirements, which do not allow for all students to be on campuses at one time.

Using the hybrid schedule, students who choose to return to campus will be identified in either A group or B group. Following the district's simultaneous teaching schedule, the A group students will attend class in person on Tuesdays and Wednesdays and the B group will attend in person on Thursdays and Fridays. On days students are not in person, they will participate as they have been through distance learning. All students are distance learning on Mondays.

Families that choose to keep their student home will continue distance learning daily as their teachers provide instruction to students physically in the classroom, while simultaneously teaching to those remaining at home. See the district's [Reopening of Schools page](#) for more details on schedules.

Teachers will be using simultaneous teaching to instruct their students who are in class with them and those who are learning at home. For more on simultaneous teaching, see story on Page 4.

Parents were asked to let the district know their preference for either in-person instruction or to remain in distance learning at home through an online Parent Selection Form that was available March 9-16.

The district heard from 58,276 of students – 82 percent. Of those who responded, 60% of students expressed that they wanted to return to in-person instruction and 39 percent said they preferred to remain in distance learning at home. Parents who did not respond through the online selection form and wish to have their student return should contact their school site regarding options.

For more information, including simultaneous teaching schedules, FAQs and more, visit the Reopening of Schools webpage at <https://www.fresnounified.org/covid19/>.

Los Estudiantes y el Personal Regresan a los Salones de Clase

El 6 de abril, el Distrito Escolar Unificado de Fresno comenzará a dar la bienvenida a los estudiantes de vuelta a la enseñanza en persona después de una extensa preparación para un regreso sin problemas, seguro y productivo a las escuelas.

Las cifras de infección por COVID-19 siguen disminuyendo, junto con el aumento de las vacunas disponibles y planes más sólidos para las pruebas de control, el distrito está entusiasmado con la reapertura de las escuelas.

“Este día tan esperado ya casi está aquí y estamos más que emocionados de tener a los estudiantes nuevamente juntos en las escuelas con sus maestros y personal,” dijo el Superintendente Bob Nelson.

Los estudiantes de pre-kínder a segundo grado, así como los grados 7, 9 y 12 regresarán el 6 de abril siguiendo un horario híbrido de dos días a la semana. Todos los demás grados – 3 a 6 y 8, 10 y 11 – regresarán el 13 de abril. Los estudiantes estarán en las escuelas desde las 9 a.m. hasta al menos las 2 p.m.

El horario híbrido es necesario debido a los requisitos de distanciamiento físico, que no permiten que todos los estudiantes estén en las escuelas al mismo tiempo.

Utilizando el horario híbrido, los estudiantes que decidan volver a la escuela serán identificados en el grupo A o en el grupo B. Siguiendo el horario de enseñanza simultánea del distrito, los estudiantes del grupo A asistirán a clases de forma presencial los martes y miércoles y los del grupo B lo harán los jueves y viernes. Los días que los estudiantes no estén en persona, participarán como lo han hecho a través del aprendizaje a distancia. Todos los estudiantes están en aprendizaje a distancia los lunes.

Las familias que decidan mantener a su estudiante en casa continuarán con la enseñanza a distancia todos los días mientras sus maestros brindan instrucción a los estudiantes

físicamente en los salones, a la vez que simultáneamente enseñan a los que se quedan en casa. Consulte [la página de reapertura de escuelas](#) del distrito para obtener más detalles sobre los horarios.

Los maestros utilizarán la enseñanza simultánea para instruir a los estudiantes que están en clase con ellos y a los que están aprendiendo en casa. Para obtener más información sobre la enseñanza simultánea, vea el artículo de la página 2.

Se pidió a los padres que le comunicaran al distrito su preferencia por la enseñanza presencial o por permanecer en la enseñanza a distancia en casa a través de un formulario de selección de padres en línea que estaba disponible del 9 al 16 marzo.

El distrito escucho a 58,276 de los estudiantes – el 82%. De los que respondieron, el 60% de los estudiantes expresaron que querían volver a la enseñanza presencial y el 39% dijo que preferían permanecer en la enseñanza a distancia en casa. Los padres que no respondieron a través del formulario de selección en línea y desean que su estudiante regrese deben comunicarse con su escuela para conocer las opciones.

Para obtener más información, incluyendo los horarios de enseñanza simultánea, preguntas frecuentes y más, visite la página web Reapertura de escuelas en <https://www.fresnounified.org/covid19/>.

Cov Tub Ntxhais Kawm, Cov Neeg Ua Hauj lwm Rov Qab Mus Rau Chav Kawm

Lub Plaub Hlis hñub tim 6, Fresno Hauv Paus Tsev Kawm Ntawv yuav pib txais tos cov tub ntxhais kawm rov qab tuaj kawm ntawm rau tom tsev kawm ntawv tom qab pib npaj rau kev sib hloov kom zoo, xyuas kev nyab xeeb thiab saib khoom muaj txiaj ntsig rov qab mus rau tom tsev kawm ntawv.

Nrog rau COVID-19 tus lej kis kabmob txuas ntxiv mus tsawg zuj zus, nrog rau cov tshuaj tiv thaiv muaj ntau ntxiv thiab ntau txoj kev npaj zoo dua rau kev tshuaj xyuas, lub hauv paus tsev kawm ntawv no zoo siab yuav rov qhib cov tsev kawm ntawv.

Superintendent Bob Nelson hais tias, “Hñub pib hñiaj hñub tos twb los txog ze

lawm, thiab pib zoo siab heev kom cov tub ntxhais kawm rov qab mus kawm ua ke nrog lawv cov kws qhia ntawv thiab cov neeg ua hauj lwm.”

Cov tub ntxhais kawm nyob rau qib pre-kindergarten mus txog qib ob, nrog rau qib 7, 9 thiab 12 yuav rov qab rau lub Plaub Hlis tim 6 nrog rau kev kawm sib xyaws, ob-hñub ib lim tiam. Txhua lwm qib - 3 txog 6 thiab 8, 10 thiab 11 - rov qab tuaj rau lub Plaub Hlis tim 13. Cov tub ntxhais kawm yuav pib kawm ntawv txij li 9 am sawv ntxov mus txog tsawg kawg 2 pm tsaus ntuj.

Lub sijhawm kawm sib xyaws tau muaj vim yog qhov yuav tsum nyob sib nrug, uas coj tsis rau txhua tus tub ntxhais kawm tuaj kawm uas ke nyob hauv tsev kawm.

Siv daim ntawv teem caij nyoog sib xyaw (hybrid), cov tub ntxhais kawm uas xaiv rov qab mus tom tsev kawm ntawv yuav raug muab faib ua pawg A los sis B. Ua raws li tsev kawm ntawv lub sij hawm qhia tib txhij kawm ua ke, cov pab pawg A yuav tuaj kawm rau tom chav kawm rau hñub Tuesday thiab Wednesday thiab cov pab pawg B ho tuaj kawm rau tom tsev kawm ntawv rau hñub Thursday thiab Friday. Hñub cov tub ntxhais kawm tsis tuaj kawm rau tom tsev kawm ntawv, lawv yuav rov mus kawm li lawv kawm yav dhau los uas yog kawm nrug deb tom tsev. Txhua tus tub ntxhais kawm ntawv tom tsev rau Hñub Monday.

Cov tsev neeg uas xaiv cia lawv cov tub ntxhais kawm nyob hauv tsev yuav tau kawm tom tsev txhua hñub thaum lawv cov kws qhia muab kev qhia ntawv rau cov tub ntxhais kawm nyob rau hauv tsev kawm ntawv, thaum qhia ib txhij rau cov uas nyob hauv tsev. Saib rau hauv paus tsev kawm ntawv kev [Rov Qhib Tsev Kawm Ntawv nplooj](#) kom paub ntau ntxiv ntawm cov sij hawm.

Cov kws qhia ntawv yuav siv cov kev qhia ib txhij los qhia lawv cov tub ntxhais kawm uas nyob hauv chav kawm nrog lawv thiab cov tub ntxhais uas kawm tom tsev. Yog xav paub ntxiv txog kev qhia ib txhij ua ib ke, saib zaj ntawv qhia ntawm Nplooj ntawv 4.

Cov niam txiv raug thov hais qhia rau lub hauv paus tsev kawm ntawv hais tias lawv xav rov tuaj kawm tom tsev kawm ntawv los sis kawm ntawv nyob tom tsev los ntawm Niam Txiv Daim Ntawv Xaiv

See **REOPENING OF SCHOOLS**
Continued on page 10



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SUPERINTENDENT'S Message

We're Ready to Open our Doors to Students and Staff

Hello, Fresno Unified family! I hope you have been able to spend time with loved ones over this spring break, enjoying our warmer weather and that renewed sense of hope for the health of our community as our COVID-19 numbers decrease and more of us have been able to get vaccinated. I feel like we're finally coming out of a long, harsh winter.



Robert G. Nelson, Ed.D.
Superintendent

As most of you are aware, last month our district and labor partners came to an agreement for our return to in-person instruction for those students who choose to do so. Our return will begin on April 6. On that day, we will welcome back our pre-kindergarten through second grade students, as well as grades 7, 9 and our high school seniors. Then a week later, on April 13, the rest of our grades will come back. Based on the information we received from the Parent Selection Form that was available March 9 through March 16, we expect more 58,000 students to return to in-person instruction. That number reflects about 60% of the parents who filled out the online form. We had about 40% say that they want to remain in distance learning from home.

While we are ecstatic about reopening our schools, the reality is our campuses

will look and feel far different than our pre-COVID classrooms, cafeterias, libraries, buses and even hallways looked. In our classrooms, we will be doing our best to physically distance students from each other, do extra cleaning of frequent touch spots, and everyone will be wearing masks. Recess and lunches will be staggered to limit the mixing of student groups. Our teachers will be simultaneously instructing their students in the classroom and those at home, using technology that has been piloted by a group of teachers for several weeks. Using cameras, microphones and other technology, teachers can keep their students together, with some in their desks at school and others at home.

To make sure we can physically distance our students, we will use a hybrid schedule, with all students in distance learning on Monday, student group A attending in person on Tuesday and Wednesday and group B on Thursday and Friday. When not physically in their classroom, students will learn from home as they have been. As always, go to fresnounified.org for more details on the reopening of schools.

To get to this long-awaited day, know that our staff has been working extremely hard on the details of how to keep students and staff safe, while providing high quality instruction and all the support services that our students need.

One of the components of that safety plan, required under the governor's reopening of schools plan, is to conduct surveillance COVID-19 testing of staff and students. In partnership with United Health Centers, we have already been piloting PCR testing twice per month for staff that has been on

campuses. The goal was to randomly select 10%-12% of in-person staff for testing. This voluntary testing will be expanded to students once we are back on campuses. We will provide our families with more details on testing when we have finalized plans.

Many of our staff has also received their COVID-19 vaccination after they became eligible for the shots on March 1 under the state's vaccination tiers. We are grateful to Valley Children's Hospital and United Health Centers for offering exclusive FUSD shot clinics, and for a variety of other partners who stepped up with vaccines for educators. While our reopening plans aren't contingent on everyone getting vaccinated, we know that this added layer of safety is a huge relief to our staff and to the students and their families as they return to in-person learning this month.

I want to also share some other significant recent news. During the March 10 Fresno Unified Board of Education meeting, trustees voted to name Mao Misty Her as our district's new deputy superintendent. This selection makes Misty the highest-ranking Hmong K-12 professional in the nation. Misty is a Fresno Unified family member in every sense of the word, attending elementary, middle and high school in the district after her family immigrated to the area. She went on to earn her master's degree from Fresno State, with the intention to return to Fresno Unified to give back. For over 27 years Misty has served our district, from bilingual instructional aide, to elementary teacher, vice

**See SUPT. MESSAGE
SPANISH AND HMONG
Continued on page 15**

**Message from Todd Suntrapak, President and Chief Executive Officer of Valley Children's Healthcare
Valley Children's and Fresno Unified Partnering for a Healthy Community**

Over the years, Valley Children's and Fresno Unified have enjoyed partnerships on a number of initiatives all centered around a single core value that we both share -- the health of our kids.



Todd Suntrapak
President and Chief Executive Officer of Valley Children's Healthcare

If we have learned anything from COVID-19, it is that it takes all of us working together to keep our kids healthy. Since the start of the pandemic, Valley

Children's has partnered with schools to develop guidelines for returning medically complex kids to campus, provided considerations for classroom set ups and offered trainings to your staff on detecting child abuse in virtual learning settings. Our dedicated school health COVID-19 email address -- direct to a Valley Children's provider -- has allowed us to answer hundreds of questions on the pandemic, kids and schools.

We know that healthy and safe teachers, staff and administrators are key to keeping our kids well and getting them back in school. Last month, Valley Children's was honored to serve as a vaccination site for FUSD teachers and staff, all in an effort to ensure that the adults involved in the care of our kids have access to the vaccine so that they could feel confident returning to school.

In a matter of five days, we vaccinated nearly 1,500 FUSD team members and look forward to welcoming them back to our hospital to receive their second doses, as scheduled. Many of you have expressed gratitude to the district for making the vaccines available and to Valley Children's for our help.

And as we have said all along, anything that helps our kids, our schools, and our communities -- count us in!

As we move forward, we cannot let our guard down. The vaccine is an important part of getting our community -- and our schools -- working again. But it is not the only part. Help our kids by wearing a mask, washing your hands and keeping your physical distance from each other. It will take all of us to make that happen. We can do this. Our kids are counting on us.

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.



WELCOME BACK



Students will be Spaced Apart in Classrooms and in other Areas

When students return to campuses, classrooms will be rearranged to allow for spacing between students, and students and staff will wear masks and wash their hands frequently.

These are just some of the safety protocols that the district will have in place to help keep students and staff

safe.

Every type of activity, from lining up for class to recess to eating lunch, will be modified to reduce the possibility of COVID-19 spread. Schools have been given safety signage to help students follow the new safety practices. As part of on-going preparation for

the reopening of schools, a team of district leaders from various sites and departments did walk-throughs at campuses in March, resulting in the creation of a Principal School Readiness Guidebook.

The most significant change to classrooms will be the number of students in a classroom at one time. Because of the need for physical distancing, the average classroom will have 10 students, with the number based on the size of the classroom. The district will use a hybrid schedule to accommodate all of the students who wanted to return to in-person learning, with group A students coming to school on Tuesdays and Wednesdays and group B students coming on Thursdays and Fridays. All students are in distance learning on Mondays.

Other safety measures:

- All students, staff, and visitors must complete a self-health screening every day before coming to a campus

or district site. The self-screening checks for symptoms, and whether the student or staff has a family member with COVID-19 or has been in close contact with someone who is infected. (See page 11 for the self-screening tool.)

- Teachers will have students wash or sanitize hands frequently and if necessary, wipe down hard surfaces.
- All classrooms will be outfitted with a plug-in purifier and/or a portable air filtration system. A door or window may be open to increase air flow.
- Younger students will have their own set of supplies when possible to reduce sharing.
- Physical activity will be outdoors only.
- All schools will have isolation rooms for ill students until they can be picked up.



When schools reopen in April, students will be physically spaced apart for safety. The number of students in a class will be based on the size of the class. Classrooms will look similar to the classroom of Lawless Elementary School teacher Cyndi Salinas, who was one of the teachers piloting simultaneous teaching in March.

Students at Home and in the Classroom will be Taught at the Same Time

Teachers are learning a new skill – simultaneous teaching.

When school reopens on April 6 to in-person learning, teachers in all grades will be instructing students in their classrooms at the same time as their students who are learning at home. This is called simultaneous teaching.

 For video, go to vimeo.com/fresnounifiedsimultaneous

With the hybrid schedule that the district will use, students come to school two days a week, learning from home the three other days. Group A will come on Tuesdays and Wednesdays and group B on Thursdays and Fridays. All students are in distance learning on Mondays. The hybrid schedule is necessary to maintain enough physical distance

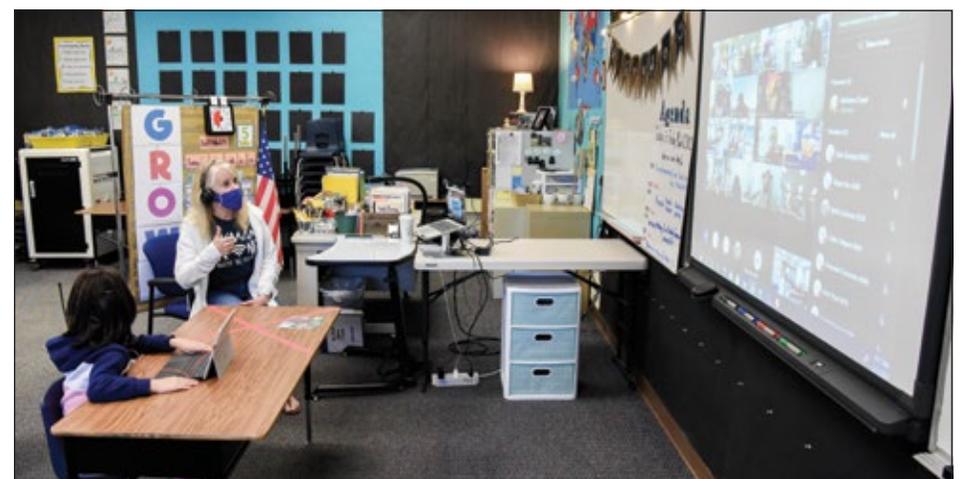
between students in the classrooms.

Some students wanted to remain in distance learning the entire week.

Simultaneous teaching 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.

The district has made a significant investment in technology to ensure simultaneous instruction goes as smoothly as possible. Teachers have state-of-the-art wireless headphones equipped with microphones and cameras, two screens, document

See **SIMULTANEOUS TEACHING**
Continued on page 10



Lynn Cheek, first grade teacher at Bakman Elementary School, is one of more than 90 teachers who volunteered to bring up to 10 students back to their classrooms in March to pilot simultaneous teaching – teaching students in the classroom at the same time as those in distance learning at home. When students return in April, all teachers will use simultaneous teaching.



WELCOME BACK



Frequently Asked Questions about Returning to In-Person Instruction

Return Dates for In-Person Instruction

When will Fresno Unified bring in-person instruction back? Small cohorts, Monday in-person supports, and small pilot groups have already returned to campus. Beginning April 6, Fresno Unified plans to return additional students to in-person instruction using a hybrid model (two days a week), due to physical distancing guidelines. On April 6, pre-kindergarten through second grade and grades 7, 9 and 12 will return. On April 13, grades 3-6 and grades 8, 10 and 11 will return.

What does the hybrid model look like? Students who choose to return to campus will be identified in either A group or B group. Following the district's simultaneous teaching schedule, the A group students will attend class in person on Tuesdays and Wednesdays and the B group will attend in person on Thursdays and Fridays. A/B groups will be identified by the district with a priority on class size leveling to maintain physical distancing. All students will learn from home on Mondays.

Families who choose to keep their student home will continue distance learning daily as their teachers provide instruction to students physically in the classroom, while simultaneously teaching to those remaining at home.

For a graphic on hybrid schedules go to Page 10. For more information regarding the hybrid model, visit <https://www.fresnounified.org/covid19/>.

Can high school athletic teams return to practice and competition? Yes. High school athletic teams have been given the green light to return to practice and competition with modifications and a shortened schedule. High contact sports of football and water polo must test weekly prior to competition. Indoor sports are required to test daily to practice and compete. Testing protocols are being finalized.

Safety Practices

What safety procedures will be in place? When students and staff return to campus, all state and county safety protocols are required, including wearing masks, self-health screening, and physical distancing. Given that there is no scenario under which we can provide adequate physical distance for ALL our students, they will return using a phased-in hybrid model reducing the number of students in class at one time.



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

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, etc.) families have the choice of in-person instruction with their teacher on campus or remaining in the eLearn at My School model through simultaneous teaching. Parents were asked to fill out a Parent Selection Form online between March 9 and 16 to determine their preference for in-person or distance learning.

Will students and staff 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 masks to each student and district staff member. If there is a medical reason a student or staff cannot wear a mask, a doctor's note must be provided.

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



When schools reopen, students will practice physical distancing as another safety layer.

kit and gloves.



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

With physical distancing requirements, how many students can be in class? Class sizes will be reduced when students return to campus for in-person instruction. Based on physical distancing requirements, an average of 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.

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 or school. 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](#) found on www.fresnounified.org.

What if a student or staff member shows COVID symptoms at school? 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 showing 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

See [FAQS](#)
Continued on page 7



WELCOME BACK



Bus Transportation and Meals will be Modified to Ensure Safety

As with most aspects of school routines, bus transportation and meals will look a little different when schools reopen on April 6.

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

Bus transportation routes have been developed, with all buses prepared to deliver students to schools for the 9 a.m. start. This will be the first time that buses will be delivering all students at the same time. In the past, start times have varied for schools.

Bus riders and drivers will wear masks and physically distance on the bus and at the bus stop. To accommodate physical distancing, buses will operate at less than full capacity. The district asks families to drive their students to school or walk with them, if that is an option for them.

Buses will be sanitized multiple times a day.



When schools reopen, students will be spaced out in the cafeteria during meals. Schools may use outdoor tables for eating, or other non-traditional spaces. This photo was taken at Bakman Elementary School in March when teachers were instructing small cohorts of students as they piloted simultaneous teaching in preparation for the reopening of schools.

Some schools will have modified drop-off and pick-up areas to avoid congestion. How students enter campuses may also be modified to avoid congestion. If students are not coming early for breakfast, parents are asked to have their students arrive closer to the 9 a.m. start time for classes.

The district's Food Services Department is ready to resume serving school meals at the regular times. Students will be physically distanced at tables and in lines for meals. Food Services staff will serve breakfast for students coming to campus for in-person instruction from 8 a.m.-9 a.m.

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

For students who are continuing to learn at home, all schools will have grab-and-go breakfast and lunch meals available from 7 a.m.-8 a.m.

Student and Staff COVID-19 Testing will Help Prevent Outbreaks



United Health Centers partnered with Fresno Unified to hold random COVID-19 staff testing at Hoover High School.

The district began a pilot COVID-19 testing program for employees in March in preparation for more widespread testing for both staff and students when schools reopen.

The Fresno County Department of Public Health recommends testing 10% of staff who are on campus for instruction.

Surveillance testing helps identify potential community spread and changes in the virus, especially in situations where people can be asymptomatic. Testing is strongly encouraged to reduce the spread of COVID and potential campus/department outbreaks. Based on state and local guidance, the district will likely offer testing opportunities multiple times a month.

Fresno Unified began piloting free random surveillance testing for

employees March 5. It has also been testing student athletes in high-contact sports – football and water polo – every week prior to competition. With the recent approval for the indoor sports seasons to commence, coaches as well as the athletes who play basketball, volleyball or wrestle will be tested daily to ensure their health and safety.

Once schools reopen, the district will have a process for surveillance student and staff testing each week. The testing would be voluntary. COVID-19 antigen testing involves the student self-swabbing both nostrils with a cotton swab. Results are available within 15 minutes. Parents will be asked to sign permission forms.

Those with COVID symptoms should seek testing immediately through one of the many [Fresno County free testing locations](#) open daily.



FAQS

Continued from page 5

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 10 days.

Transportation and Meals

How will transportation be provided for students? Transportation routes have been developed. Riders will be required to wear masks and physically distance on the bus and at the bus stop. To honor physical distancing, buses will operate at less than full capacity. Families who can, should walk or drive their child to school.

How will meals be served? When all

grade levels return in April, breakfast and lunch will be available onsite at traditional mealtimes. For those who remain in distance learning, all schools will provide grab-and-go breakfast and lunch meals from 7-8 a.m.

Parent and Staff Notifications

What if there is a positive case at school or work? How will parents and staff be notified? If a student or staff member is having symptoms on campus, they will be immediately sent home. However, this is not an indication of a positive case. Should a student or staff confirm positive, the entire school/work community will be notified by email, letter or phone message. Close contacts (those who were within six feet for more than 15 minutes cumulatively) will be notified personally and instructed to self-quarantine for a minimum of 10 days. To ensure health privacy notifications

will not include the individual's name. Should three individuals at a school or department confirm positive within 14-days (considered an outbreak) Fresno Unified will work with the Fresno County Department of Public Health to message to the school community and determine if returning to 100% distance learning is necessary.

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 10 days regardless of a test result. This is because an exposed person can develop COVID-19 anytime during that 14-day incubation 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.

Student and Staff Testing

Fresno County recommends testing students and staff for in-person instruction every two weeks. Is there a plan in place for testing on a regular basis? Fresno Unified began piloting free random surveillance testing for employees March 5. The district is

finalizing volunteer student testing and expects to have plans ready prior to students returning. Surveillance testing helps identify potential community spread and changes in the virus, especially in situations where people can be asymptomatic. Based on state and local guidance, it's expected that testing opportunities will occur twice a month. Testing is strongly encouraged to reduce the spread of COVID and potential campus/department outbreaks. Those with COVID symptoms should seek testing immediately through one of the many [Fresno County's free testing locations](#) open daily.

When will Fresno Unified staff be vaccinated for COVID-19? Educators and childcare workers became eligible for the COVID vaccine on March 1. Exclusive FUSD vaccination clinics were made available to employees. [Fresno County Department of Public Health](#) and several community partners continue to offer vaccines. By late March, most educators who chose to get vaccinated will have received both vaccines. While the vaccination is not required for staff to return to in-person teaching, the district hopes that all employees will take advantage of the free vaccinations to help reduce the spread of the virus.

Computech Engages Students with Fun Facts about Teachers

Computech Middle School P.E. teacher Gabe Brown, who is in charge of noon time activities, had to think outside the box over the past year during virtual learning to help students connect with their peers and their teachers.



Teacher Gabe Brown leads lunch time activities at Computech Middle School, including Easter egg dyeing.

He launched the Computech Lunch Lounge, which has grown to about 300 members. The virtual Lunch Lounge offers different channels that target students' interests. Students can connect with each other playing online games, studying and sharing music, art and even pets.

Over the past virtual school year, Brown also hosted lunchtime activities, including games, live cooking shows, building gingerbread houses, dyeing Easter eggs and online gaming. One especially popular activity used Kahoot to feature fun facts about teachers, with students competing to guess which activity went with which teacher.

Learning more about their teachers' lives outside the classroom was fun for students and teachers enjoyed learning more about their co-workers as well. Virtual lunchtime activities will continue after the spring break when school resumes in a hybrid schedule.

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](#)
- SOCIAL EMOTIONAL SUPPORT:**
Department of Prevention and Intervention, 457-3340 [Resources](#)
- SPECIAL EDUCATION:**
457-3220 [Special Education webpage](#)

Fresno Unified School District

Important Dates

- April 6** Return to In-Person Learning Begins for Grades Pre-K-2, 7, 9 and 12
- April 13** Return to In-Person Learning for All Other Grades
- May 31** Memorial Day Holiday
- June 11** Last Day of School



Fresno Unified Administrator Blazes Trail for Hmong Educators

With the promotion of Mao Misty Her to Fresno Unified's deputy superintendent, she becomes the highest-ranking Hmong K-12 professional in the nation.



Her's roots in Fresno Unified are deep. She attended Fresno Unified schools from first grade through graduation from Duncan Polytechnical High School, has worked for the district for 27 years and both her parents worked for the district for 30 years.

"She is the real deal in every respect: hard-working, caring, and fully committed to the Valley and our kids," said Superintendent Bob Nelson.

The Fresno Unified Board of Education approved the selection of Her at its March 10 meeting.

Her started in Fresno Unified as a bilingual instructional aide and has also been an elementary teacher,

vice principal, principal, assistant superintendent and instructional superintendent.

Her said she has always had a strong desire to give back to the district where she learned English and was nurtured and supported by caring teachers.

Her's family immigrated to the U.S. in 1980 as refugees. Her father was a soldier in the Laotian Civil War, fighting alongside the U.S. After fleeing to a refugee camp in Thailand, they eventually immigrated to Garden Grove and then moved to Fresno, where Her enrolled in the first grade at Jefferson Elementary School, knowing no English.

Her earned her bachelor's and master's degrees from Fresno State.

Her's philosophy is to "lead with compassion, creativity, courage, and a commitment to collaboration." She wants to strengthen connections with

New Name for Early Learning Center Unveiled



The Fresno Unified Board of Education voted unanimously Oct. 21 to rename the Early Learning Center for LaVera Ethridge-Williams. On March 26, district and community leaders gathered with family members of Mrs. Ethridge-Williams to officially unveil the new sign for the center at Fresno and A streets. Mrs. Ethridge-Williams, who passed away Dec. 21, was a longtime childcare center owner in Fresno. She was also known for her contributions to education and community service. In 1968, Mrs. Ethridge-Williams became the first African American woman to own and open a childcare center in West Fresno. La Vera's Educational Center was the first in a chain of family owned and operated centers throughout Fresno. The center at Fresno and A streets now owned by Fresno Unified was originally one of Ethridge-Williams' centers.

parents and communities.

"I want to ensure their voices are what is

helping to transform our system to best serve our students," she said.



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Play Ball: Schools Get the Go Ahead to Resume Competition



With improved health conditions in the community, Fresno Unified has been able to launch sports for the first time this school year. Action is underway in football, water polo, tennis, golf, cross country, track and lacrosse. Other sports have begun practicing. Athletes in the high contact sports of football and water polo must test for COVID-19 weekly before competition. Indoor sport athletes need to test daily. Left, Bullard High School takes on McLane High School in girls lacrosse on March 8. In front is Bullard's Elizabeth Chassey, with Bullard's Ariana Miranda at right and McLane's Lupe Garcia at left. Below, Manuel Gonzalez and the Edison High School boys soccer team take on Faith Christian Academy of Coalinga on March 25.



Sunnyside High School Achieves Record Seven 2021 Dell Scholars

Seven seniors from Sunnyside High School have been awarded [Dell Scholarships](#), a new record for the campus.

Prior to this year, the largest class of Dell winners from Sunnyside was six in 2014. With this year's winners, Sunnyside has a total of 62 Dell Scholars since the inception of the scholarship program in 2005, the most among any high school in the nation.



Dell Scholars each receive a \$20,000 scholarship towards the college of their choice as well as a laptop and personal support for college. The 2021 Dell Scholars from



DELL SCHOLARS
Michael & Susan Dell Foundation

Sunnyside are Ivory Clemons, Vanessa Esquivel, Brissa Gomez, Alondra Mijangos, Brianna Peralez, Jolene Uribe and Serenity Yang. The students are all in the Doctors Academy, which is part of the Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID) program at

Sunnyside.

"The Dell Scholarship is a source of pride for both our AVID seniors and the Sunnyside community as a whole," said Tony Fiori, AVID coordinator and teacher. "These AVID students, as well as the teachers and counselors who support them, put tremendous time and energy into the application process and understand the opportunities that a scholarship of this magnitude can provide. We are so proud of all of our recipients!"

The Dell Scholar program targets low-income, highly motivated students who are better than their numbers indicate and demonstrate the drive to succeed despite personal obstacles, according to the Dell Scholars website. The ideal candidate will demonstrate a unique "GPA" of grit, potential, and ambition in their quest for a college education.



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REOPENING OF SCHOOLS
Continued from page 2

online uas muaj nyob rau lub Peb Hlis tim 9-16.

Koog tsev kawm ntawv hnov los ntawm 58,276 tus tub ntxhais kawm - 82 feem pua. Ntawm cov teb ntawd, 60 feem pua ntawm cov tub ntxhais kawm qhia tias lawv xav rov qab mus kawm tom tsev kawm ntawv thiab 39 feem pua hais tias lawv yuav nyob twj yus kawm tom tsev. Cov niam txiv uas tsis teb rau hauv online xaiv thiab xav kom lawv cov tub ntxhais kawm rov qab mus kawm to tsev kawm ntawv yuav tsum hu rau lawv lub tsev kawm ntawv txog kev xaiv.

Yog xav paub ntau ntxiv, txog kev qhia ib txhij ua ib ke cov sij hawm, cov lus nquag nug thiab ntau yam ntxiv, mus xyuas Cov Tsev Kawm Ntawv Rov Qab Qhib los yog Reopening of Schools lub webpage ntawm <https://www.fresnounified.org/covid19/>.

Signs that Schools are Reopening



Schools across the district have been replacing their "campus closed" signs with "Welcome Back Fresno Unified Family" banners. Banners for elementary campuses feature Successful Simon, the district's good attendance mascot. Burroughs Elementary School office assistant Maria Sanchez, left, and Fresno Unified board member Veva Islas put up the banner at Burroughs.

SIMULTANEOUS TEACHING
Continued from page 4

cameras and other equipment.

Students in pre-kindergarten through sixth grade will all have new durable headsets with better microphones.

Beginning last fall and ramping up in February, teachers piloted simultaneous teaching so that they could learn and share best strategies and try out tech devices. In March, more than 90 teachers returned to their classrooms with small groups of students and simultaneously taught their students at home.

"We are learning so much from our Fresno Unified piloting teachers who have engaged in simultaneous teaching," said Ryan Coe, a director in Instructional Support Services. "Our teachers are bridging their instructional skills and strengths developed from distance learning to engage our students, both in person and online, in high-quality instruction and interactive experiences.

"Most importantly, students in person

and online feel connected to each other, to their classroom, and to their teacher."

The biggest challenge, said Manchester GATE Elementary School fifth grade teacher Lauren King, is being able to roam around the classroom to help students, while still engaging with students virtually. With the correct placement of screens, a web cam and the use of wireless microphones and headsets, this is possible.

The district has held numerous training sessions to share best strategies for this new method of teaching that will be necessary when schools reopen.

While the key goal of simultaneous teaching is quality instruction, the technology involved will also connect the students in the classroom with their peers learning from home. Using the new headsets, students at home "will be able to hear like they are next to you," Coe said.

SCHEDULES WHEN SCHOOLS REOPEN IN APRIL

Elementary School

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Group A	Online (Monday Meeting)	In Person	In Person	Online	Online
Group B	Online (Monday Meeting)	Online	Online	In Person	In Person
Group C: 100% Online	Online (Monday Meeting)	Online	Online	Online	Online

Middle and High School

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Group A	Online (Advisory)	In Person ODD Periods	In Person EVEN Periods	Online	Online
Group B	Online (Advisory)	Online	Online	In Person ODD Periods	In Person EVEN Periods
Group C: 100% Online	Online (Advisory)	Online	Online	Online	Online



DISTRICT ROUNDUP

Baird, Computech are Distinguished Schools

Baird and Computech middle schools have been named California Distinguished Schools for 2021, the California Department of Education announced in March. The Distinguished Schools program recognizes schools that have made exceptional gains in implementing the academic content and performance standards adopted by the state for all students.

Patriot's Pen. Patriot's Pen winners were Nancy Mendoza Ochoa, Baird Middle School; Julian Garcia, Cooper Academy; and Husam Ali, Computech Middle School. Voice of Democracy winners were Rahmeen Ali, Jennifer Garcia Villa, Brianna Mendoza Ochoa, Harris Arnautovic, and Bryan Garcia, all from Design Science Middle College High School.



Students Place in VFW Annual Essay Contest

Eight district students placed in the Veterans of Foreign Wars annual essay contests: Voice of Democracy and

Read Across America at Edison High School

Students in Chris Finley's Restorative Justice class at Edison High School were asked to share their favorite children's book and how it made them feel as part of Read Across America Day, March 2. "There was so much excitement in the virtual room," Finley said. "They shared the transformative power of reading. Then moved on to current books that they like, and we created a shared book list for the class."



in March to purchase new bikes to reward students with perfect attendance through a drawing every month. The goal is to have students ready to learn and on time every day.



Baird Middle School is Tops in Region in Science Olympiad

Baird Middle School has placed first in the region in the Science Olympiad virtual competition, with all its team members earning medals, a first for the school. The students earned six first-place and five second-place medals. Baird, a 5-8 school, competed against schools with all seventh and eighth graders.

Mid Valley Financial Donates to Aynesworth

Mid Valley Financial donated \$750 to Aynesworth Elementary School students

Fresno Unified has New Cleaning Protocols in Place

With the return of students and staff to campuses, the district has developed thorough new cleaning processes.

As part of routine daily cleaning, custodial staff will use EPA-approved disinfectants on chairs, tables, door knobs, handles, uncluttered flat surfaces, keyboards, light switches/buttons, phones, sinks and anything else in the classroom that is touched frequently.

Teachers and staff can clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces throughout the day as needed.

An important part of keeping a classroom clean and safe is frequent handwashing. If soap and water is not readily available, hand sanitizer with more than 60% alcohol content will be used.

The hand washing routine for students and staff will include:

- Before and after class or when sharing items
- Before, during and after preparing food
- Before eating food
- Before and after caring for a student
- After using the restroom
- After blowing your nose or sneezing
- After being a public place and touching something that may be frequently touched by others
- Before touching your eyes, nose or mouth

Room disinfectant foggers will be used as needed. These cannisters propel a fine mist of disinfectant throughout a room.

COVID-19 Daily Self-Health Screening Tool

Revised: December 4, 2020

Ask the following 3 questions every day before school/work:

3 Questions		Action
1	<p>Do I have any of the following symptoms that are new or worsening?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fever or chills • cough • shortness of breath or difficulty breathing • fatigue • muscle or body aches • headache • repeated shaking/ tremors • new loss of taste or smell • sore throat • congestion or runny nose • nausea or vomiting • diarrhea 	<p>If YES STAY HOME</p>
2	<p>Have I or anyone in my household been confirmed/suspected with COVID-19 in the last 14 days?</p>	<p>If YES STAY HOME</p>
3	<p>Have I been notified that I am a close contact* with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 14 days?</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin-top: 5px;">*Close Contact- someone who has spent 15 minutes cumulative or more time within 6 feet or less of a positive person starting from 48 hours before the person began feeling sick.</p>	<p>If YES STAY HOME</p>

If a student, employee or essential visitor answers "YES" to any of the above questions, they should:

- Remain home – **DO NOT** go to school/work
- **DO** notify your child's school/employee's department supervisor



LINKED LEARNING SPOTLIGHT

Roosevelt High School Offers Students Diverse Career Pathways

Roosevelt High School students in career technical education programs continue to push forward during this past year of distance learning, gaining valuable workplace skills.

Students in the Public Service Pathway have learned 911 terminology that will give them an advantage in the hiring process for dispatchers, culinary students have videoed their cooking efforts at home and Fashion Design & Costuming students made masks to distribute to medical workers.

Public Safety Pathway: This is Roosevelt's newest career pathway and will graduate its first group of students in June.

- Students learn about all aspects of public service, including law enforcement, fire, emergency/medical and military
- They recreate crime scenes, and learn how to think critically under pressure
- Through a partnership with the Fresno Fire Department, teacher Krishna Reyes did a summer externship working with firefighters
- Courses are Intro to Public Safety, P.E. for Public Service, Criminal Justice and Public Service Leadership
- Seniors in Public Service Leadership class are also enrolled in Medical Terminology at Fresno City College.
- Students can earn certifications in CPR, Stop the Bleed and OSHA 10

The pathway just started a 911 course. Although the class is not required to be hired as a dispatcher, Roosevelt students who take the course will be better prepared to compete for dispatcher jobs.

Business Academy: Students take two classes focused on marketing and the sales sector.

- Juniors create their own business and have an opportunity to compete in front of judges in partnership with Fresno State's Lyles Center
- Seniors take the Marketing Enterprise class, which simulates a business; teacher facilitates, and students run the businesses they have created



In October 2018, students in the Public Service Pathway at Roosevelt High School learn forensics skills studying a fake crime scene. Public Service is just one of many career pathways students can explore.

- Instead of traveling to showcase their businesses at trade fairs, students participated in virtual trade show hosted by New York City Schools

Culinary: In Foods 1 and 2 students can earn their food handlers card and learn creativity in the kitchen. During distance learning, students have been given supplies so they can cook at home and some have recorded themselves.

Videography and Video Production: Students produce newscasts and record

campus activities, such as sporting events and theater productions. Students have been selected by Kincaide Productions to participate in a mentorship.

Fashion Design and Costuming: Students have been hard at work creating their designs from home using home kits and sewing machines for students in the advanced class. When the pandemic hit, students (with help from teachers and community members) sewed 2,200 cloth masks for medical facilities, health care providers senior centers and dentist offices up and down the valley.

Teacher Academy: Students begin with Cross Age P.E., teaching P.E. to students at nearby Jackson Elementary School. Juniors begin to go into the classrooms, helping with stations and whatever the teacher needs. Seniors also assist in classrooms, with more opportunities to teach lessons as they continue to learn about careers in education. They also have an opportunity to take the California Basic Education Skills Test and the No Child Left Behind paraeducators exam. Students can apply for the district's Teacher Academy internships in the summer to work in elementary schools.

Health Academy: Students begin with introductory classes. As juniors, they choose Sports Medicine or Allied Health. Students in Sports Medicine work with athletes during games and have the opportunity for dual enrollment credit with P.E. 20 through Fresno City College in the spring semester. Students in Allied Health volunteer at Community Regional Medical Center, also with dual enrollment opportunities through Fresno City College. Students can earn up to 11 units in their junior and senior years. The program also offers CPR, Stop the Bleed and OSHA 10 certification and will soon offer an Exercise Science and Sports Medicine certificate through Precision exams.

Enroll in Fresno Unified's High-Quality Preschool

Parents of preschool students can now enroll their child using an online process. Preschool enrollment opens on April 6 for Fresno Unified's high-quality early learning programs for the 2021-22 school year. Please visit: earlylearning.fresnounified.org.



Options include [dual immersion language programs](#) at select schools. Through dual immersion,

students learn to speak, read and write in two languages. Programs are available in Spanish and Hmong.

Fresno Unified offers preschool for 3-year-olds and pre-kindergarten for 4-year-olds.

Research shows that children who start school early build a strong foundation for future success. For more information, go to fresnounified.org, contact your school, or call (559) 457-3416.



Preschool enrollment will begin April 6 for the next school year.



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

TK Paraeducator is Loved and Valued Member of Viking Staff

Paraeducator Martha Bishop did not have a computer and did not use email prior to schools converting to distance learning in March of last year. But Bishop has always taken challenges head on. She now skillfully uses technology to teach and support her transitional kindergarten (TK) students and parents at Viking Elementary School. “She can teach class without a credentialed teacher being with her. That is how proficient she has become,” said Principal Christie Yang. Yang also said that Bishop goes far beyond her job description to create connections with families, teach the whole child and



support her coworkers at Viking. Bishop has been with the district for seven years, all at Viking in the TK class. She was a finalist for the district’s Excellence in Education in January.

What is the hardest part about your job? The hardest part is seeing a kid struggle online and not be able to reach in and help them.

What do you enjoy the most about your job? I enjoy everything from wiping hands to teaching art, math and music.

What is it like teaching TK students online? It’s a challenge but rewarding. You never stop. There is always something to do. Thinking outside the box, the more fun you make it the more the kids will want to come.

Do you have any funny stories of the online classroom? Yes. One day Mr. [Chad] Christensen had been kicked off

of Teams. I had to jump in with a “Go find an object that sounds like this letter or this color.” The letter was “I.” All of a sudden, my screen is empty. Then students came back with smiling faces holding up a cube of ice. One had an ice cream with three different flavors, the other had an Iron Man toy.

One day we were teaching about simple machines, and we had the students make a small catapult. We gave them some puff balls to use in their launch. Kids, dads and moms were excited. As they demonstrated their newly made catapults, we noticed an onion flying through the air on one of the student screens. When asked where he got the onion, he replied, “My dad gave it to me.”

What do you enjoy the most about that age of students? They are like little sponges, waiting to absorb anything and everything that is new.

What will be the best part about schools reopening? We are doing the pilot, so we have half of our students here. I will feel like it is open when we no longer have to be social distancing. There is nothing like getting down to their level and watching the learning lights come on.

Name one thing most people don’t know about you. I play the piano and organ.

What do you like to do when you are not working? Sit on the couch with my son and two daughters and enjoy a great comedy. I also like to take a ride to Wonder Valley to see some good friends.

If you could pursue any career, what would it be? The career I am doing.

What is your dream vacation? I’d like to go to Hawaii, Paris or New York.

Elementary Music Teacher doesn’t Miss a Beat during School Closures

Harmony Mendez teaches music at Leavenworth and Kratt elementary schools, where she has built strong programs for all grades. During distance learning, she made sure students had instruments and music at home and created music videos of her students performing from home.



Mendez has worked for Fresno Unified for three years. She was a finalist for the district’s Excellence in Education awards in January. Leavenworth Principal Erica Piedra said about Mendez, “She inspires our students by believing in them and teaching them at high levels.”

What made you decide to be a teacher? Teaching runs in my family. On my father’s side, I am a fourth-generation teacher. My great-grandfather, Marion Drumm, would farm and teach in a

one-room schoolhouse in Indiana. My mom is a first-generation college graduate in her family and a retired elementary teacher. My older sister, Melody Drumm, was the first person in my family to become a music teacher and inspired me to do the same. (She also teaches for Fresno Unified.)

What is your music background? Since preschool, I sang in musical programs at church. When I was in first grade, I begged for piano lessons so I could be like my sister and did them for a year. In fourth grade, I began band on saxophone and played that instrument through my freshman year of high school. I performed in annual solo/ensemble festivals as well as played in church. In eighth and ninth grades, I was in an afterschool jazz band. In my saxophone year of high school, I began playing the bassoon, which was complimentary to the oboe, which my sister played. In my sophomore year, I also joined choir. In my junior year, I sang in two high school choirs and played bassoon in the La Sierra University Orchestra. In my senior year, I continued to sing and play bassoon. I

began my college career at Concordia University Irvine, where I played bassoon, sang and played handbells. When I transferred to California State University Long Beach, my schedule would only allow me to focus on bassoon.

What instruments do you play? I mainly play bassoon but can also play alto saxophone.

I understand you come from a family of musicians? My sister, Melody Drumm, who is five years my senior, plays oboe and has been a major influence on my musical career. We have both played in the Sequoia Symphony Orchestra together for seven years. We have also played in several musicals together for the College of the Sequoias and taught summer music classes together at California State University Stanislaus.

What has it been like to teach music online? It has been difficult to start students on instruments without being able to correct assembly and mouth position errors. A positive effect of teaching online has been the opportunity

for students in classroom music to share things at home such as pets, toys, etc.

What will be the best part about schools reopening? Students transitioning back to in-person learning and being able to eventually practice and perform in a face-to-face ensemble.

What do you enjoy the most about your job? My greatest joy is to see students of average ability work hard, excel, and become an integral part of an instrumental group.

What is the most difficult part about your job? Music not being treated like a valuable part of a child’s education. Music is often viewed as an extra activity that should not require a commitment and attendance is optional.

If you could choose another career, what would it be? I would choose to be a politician, so I could advocate for more music programs in schools.

Who is your favorite musician? Michelle Grego, the second bassoonist

See **HARMONY MENDEZ**
Continued on page 14



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Bullard High School Student Founded Non-Profit When she was 8



In February 2016, Danay Ferguson, then 9, poses with classmates. Her non-profit, Reading Heart, was still in its early stages.

Danay Ferguson easily exemplifies the power of books. Danay founded the non-profit organization Reading Heart in 2014 when she was 8.

Reading Heart is a book donation program dedicated to serving children in hospitals and in areas with limited access to books. Danay, now a freshman at Bullard High School, never imagined a single idea would expand into an ambitious community literacy project.

“It’s been a difficult, tiring but fun journey,” Danay said.

Reading Heart went from one dolly and a couple hundred books to four storage units, seven trailers and more than half a million books collected over six years, with help from several other organizations.

Last year has been a bit different. Danay said that during the pandemic, the organization received more donations,

but their distribution events were reduced due to COVID-19 restrictions. Instead of a book tour, they organized drive-ups at schools where students could choose a book.

Reading Heart also partnered with two local churches to create a bookstore with 150,000 books, sorted by age and grade, to give to families.

“Now, it’s more important for kids to have books in their hands. Sometimes it is just nice to be able to get lost in a good book without having to worry what else is going on,” Danay said.

She admits to being a bookworm. Her current favorite genre is horror novels.

Danay said she has opted to remain in distance learning for the rest of the school year. The virtual learning model has helped her improve her grades and concentrate on her dreams of becoming a writer or a lawyer while expanding

Reading Heart’s focus. They are in the planning stages of a project that will allow kids to write or illustrate their own book to be printed and donated to the Reading Heart book tour.

books into the hands of children with limited access to them. She has support from her family, Reading Heart board members, other organizations and community members.

Danay is not alone in her efforts to get



Danay Ferguson is now a freshman at Bullard High School. She wants to be a lawyer or a writer. She still loves to read.

Testing Tech Teaching Tools



Lawless Elementary School second grade teacher Stephanie Ortiz uses multiple screens to teach her students learning at home and those physically in her class in March. She piloted simultaneous teaching to learn and share best strategies for the return of school in April.

HARMONY MENDEZ Continued from page 13

of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, who was my inspirational bassoon instructor at California State Long Beach.

What is your dream vacation?
My dream vacation is travelling to

Germany and Austria to visit the places where Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven lived.

Name one thing most people don’t know about you. I ran cross country and track all four years of high school and was a scholar athlete. I also worked at Arby’s in my hometown of Hemet in high school.



SUPT. MESSAGE
Continued from page 3

principal, principal, assistant superintendent, instructional superintendent and now as our deputy superintendent. Misty is also a proud parent of a Fresno Unified student, and both of her parents served as classified employees with the district for over 30 years each. Misty brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to the role of deputy superintendent, but most importantly she brings an unwavering love for our students, families, staff, and community.

I will leave you with this thought: Thank you for your patience during this time of distance learning. We know many of our students have struggled; we know many of our families remain in crisis due to the pandemic. Please continue to extend grace as we transition to a hybrid in-person learning schedule, while continuing to serve our students who choose to learn from home. Please also continue to do your part to reduce the spread of COVID-19 with physical distancing, wearing a mask and washing your hands, and consider getting the COVID-19 vaccine when it is available to you. I look forward to the reopening of schools on April 6!

Estamos listos para abrir nuestras puertas a los estudiantes y al personal

¡Hola, familia del Distrito Escolar Unificado de Fresno! Espero que haya podido pasar tiempo con sus seres queridos durante estas vacaciones de primavera, disfrutando de nuestro clima más cálido y ese renovado sentido de esperanza para la salud de nuestra comunidad a medida que nuestros números de COVID-19 disminuyen y más de nosotros hemos podido vacunarnos. Siento que finalmente estamos saliendo de un invierno largo y duro.

Como la mayoría de ustedes saben, el mes pasado nuestro distrito y los socios laborales llegaron a un acuerdo para nuestro regreso a la instrucción en persona para aquellos estudiantes que elijan hacerlo. Nuestro regreso comenzará el 6 de abril si nuestro condado permanece en el nivel rojo. Ese día, daremos la bienvenida a nuestros estudiantes de prekinder a segundo grado, así como a los grados 7, 9 y estudiantes del 12 grado de la escuela preparatoria. Luego, una semana después, el 13 de abril, el resto de nuestros estudiantes de los demás grados volverán. Según la información que recibimos del Formulario de Selección de Padres que estuvo disponible del 9 al 16 de marzo, esperamos que más de 58,000 estudiantes regresen a la instrucción en persona. Ese número refleja aproximadamente el 60% de los padres que completaron el formulario en línea. Aproximadamente el 40% dijo que desea permanecer en el aprendizaje a distancia desde casa.

Si bien estamos entusiasmados con la reapertura de nuestras escuelas, la realidad es que nuestros planteles escolares se verán y se sentirán muy diferentes a como se veían nuestras aulas, cafeterías, bibliotecas, autobuses e incluso pasillos anteriores a COVID. En nuestras aulas, haremos todo lo posible para distanciar físicamente a los estudiantes entre sí, hacer una limpieza adicional de los puntos de contacto frecuentes y todos llevarán mascarillas. Los recreos y almuerzos se escalarán para limitar la mezcla de grupos de estudiantes. Nuestros maestros instruirán simultáneamente a sus estudiantes en los salones de clase y a los que están en casa, utilizando tecnología que ha sido probada por un grupo de maestros durante varias semanas. Usando cámaras, micrófonos y otra tecnología, los maestros pueden mantener a sus estudiantes juntos, algunos en sus escritorios en la escuela y otros en casa.

Para asegurarnos de que podamos distanciar

físicamente a nuestros estudiantes, usaremos un horario híbrido, con todos los estudiantes en aprendizaje a distancia los lunes, el grupo de estudiantes A asistirá en persona los martes y miércoles y el grupo B los jueves y viernes. Cuando no estén físicamente en su salón de clases, los estudiantes aprenderán en casa como lo han estado haciendo. Como siempre, visite fresnounified.org para obtener más detalles sobre la reapertura de las escuelas.

Para llegar a este día tan esperado, sepa que nuestro personal ha estado trabajando arduamente en los detalles de cómo mantener seguros a los estudiantes y al personal, mientras brinda instrucción de alta calidad y todos los servicios de apoyo que nuestros estudiantes necesitan.

Uno de los componentes de ese plan de seguridad, requerido por el plan de reapertura de escuelas del gobernador, es realizar pruebas de vigilancia COVID-19 del personal y los estudiantes. En asociación con United Health Centers, ya hemos realizado pruebas piloto de PCR dos veces al mes para el personal que ha estado en los planteles escolares. El objetivo era seleccionar al azar entre el 10% y el 12% del personal en persona para realizar las pruebas. Esta prueba voluntaria se ampliará a los estudiantes una vez que estemos de regreso a clases en los planteles escolares. Propondremos a nuestras familias más detalles sobre las pruebas cuando hayamos finalizado los planes.

Muchos miembros de nuestro personal también recibieron la vacuna COVID-19 después de ser elegibles para las vacunas el 1 de marzo según los niveles de vacunación del estado. Estamos agradecidos con Valley Children's Hospital y United Health Centers por ofrecer clínicas de vacunas exclusivas para FUSD, y por una variedad de otros socios que dieron paso al frente con las vacunas para los educadores. Si bien nuestros planes de reapertura no dependen de que todos se vacunen, sabemos que esta capa adicional de seguridad es un gran alivio para nuestro personal y para los estudiantes y sus familias a medida que regresan al aprendizaje en persona el próximo mes.

También quiero compartir algunas otras noticias importantes recientes. Durante la reunión de la Junta de Educación del Distrito Escolar Unificado de Fresno del 10 de marzo, los fideicomisarios votaron para nombrar a Mao Misty Her como la nueva superintendente adjunta de nuestro distrito. Esta selección convierte a Misty en la profesional Hmong K-12 de mayor rango en la nación. Misty es un miembro de la familia del Distrito Escolar Unificado de Fresno en todos los sentidos de la palabra, asistiendo a la escuela primaria, secundaria y preparatoria en el distrito después de que su familia emigró al área. Luego obtuvo su maestría en la Universidad de Fresno State, con la intención de regresar al Distrito Escolar Unificado de Fresno para retribuir. Durante más de 27 años, Misty ha servido a nuestro distrito, desde asistente de instrucción bilingüe hasta maestra de primaria, subdirectora, directora, asistente del superintendente, superintendente de instrucción y ahora como nuestra superintendente adjunta. Misty también es una orgullosa madre de un estudiante del Distrito Escolar Unificado de Fresno, y sus dos padres se desempeñaron como empleados clasificados en el distrito durante más de 30 años cada uno. Misty aporta una gran experiencia y conocimiento al papel de superintendente adjunta, pero lo más importante es que aporta un amor inquebrantable por nuestros estudiantes, familias, personal y comunidad.

Los dejo con este pensamiento: Gracias por su paciencia durante este tiempo de aprendizaje a distancia. Sabemos que muchos de nuestros estudiantes han tenido dificultades; sabemos que muchas de nuestras familias siguen en crisis debido a la pandemia. Por favor continúe extendiendo la tolerancia mientras hacemos la

transición a un horario híbrido de aprendizaje en persona, mientras continuamos sirviendo a nuestros estudiantes que eligen aprender desde casa. Por favor continúe también haciendo su parte para reducir la propagación del COVID-19 con distanciamiento físico, usando una mascarilla y lavándose las manos, y considere recibir la vacuna COVID-19 cuando esté disponible para usted. ¡Espero pronto la reapertura de las escuelas el 6 de abril!

Peb Npaj Txhim Qhib Peb Qhov Rooj Rau Cov Tub Ntxhais Kawm thiab Neeg Ua Hauj Lwm

Nyob zoo, Fresno Unified tsev neeg! Kuv vam tias koj tau siv sij hawm nrog cov neeg koj hlub rau lub lim tiam so tas los no, ua tau huab cua zoo thiab caij nyooog zoo thiab sov ua rau peb rov qab muaj kev cia siab tias muaj kev noj qab haus huv hauv peb lub zej zog raws li tus kab mob COVID-19 tsawg zuj zus thiab peb coob tus tuaj yeem tau txhaj tshuaj tiv thaiv. Kuj zoo li peb nris pa los ntawm lub caij ntuj no los lawm.

Raws li cov coob kuj paub, lub hli dhau los peb lub hauv paus tsev kawm ntawv thiab cov neeg ua hauj lwm pab cuam tau los koom tes pom zoo rau peb txoj kev rov qab mus rau kev qhia tim ntej tim muag rau cov tub ntxhais kawm uas xaiv rov tuaj. Peb yuav pib rau lub Plaub Hlis hnuv tim 6 yog tias peb lub nroog tseem nyob hauv them liab. Hnuv ntawd, peb yuav zoo siab txais tos peb cov tub ntxhais kawm qeb pib mus txog qib ob, nrog rau qib 7, 9 thiab peb cov tub ntxhais kawm qib kaum ob. Tom qab ntawd ib lub lim tiam tom qab, lub Plaub Hlis hnuv tim 13, tag nrho co qhib uas tsis tau hais yuav rov tuaj kom tas. Raws li cov ntau ntawv peb tau txais los ntawm Niam-Txiv Daim Ntawv Xaiv uas muaj nyob rau thaum Lub Peb Hlis hnuv tim 9 txog Lub Peb Hlis hnuv tim 16, peb zoo siab tias ntau li ntawm 58,000 tus tub ntxhais kawm yuav rov qab tuaj kawm tim ntej tim muag. Tus lej suav txog 60% ntawm cov niam txiv uas ua daim ntawv online. Peb tau txais txog 40% tau hais tias xav kom nyob nrug deb kawm twj ywm nram tsev.

Peb kuj zoo siab txog kev rov qhib peb lub tsev kawm ntawv, tab sis qhov tseeb tiag yog peb cov tsev kawm ntawv yuav yuav tsis zoo li qub thiab zoo nkauj txawv dua li thaum ua ntej COVID-19, cov chav kawm ntawv, chav noj mov, tsev qiv ntawv, tsheb npav thiab cov kab kev mus rau cov chav kawm. Hauv peb cov chav kawm, peb yuav ua qhov zoo tshaj plaws rau cov tub ntxhais kawm sib nrug deb ntawm lwm tus, yuav nquag txuav ntawm cov chaw neeg kov kov, thiab txhua tus neeg yuav looj daim npog ntsej muag. Kev ua si nraum zoov thiab noj su yuav muab tso kom txwv. Peb cov kws qhia yuav thib txhij ua ib ke qhia lawv cov tub ntxhais kawm hauv chav kawm thiab cov hauv tsev, siv tshuab leg dej num uas tau sim ua hauj lwm los ntawm ib pawg kws qhia rau ntau lub lis piam no. Siv koob yees duab, microphones thiab lwm yam tshuab leg dej num, cov kws qhia yuav cia lawv cov tub ntxhais kawm nrog lawv, nrog qee tus tuaj hauv tsev kawm ntawv thiab lwm cov nyob tom tsev.

Txhawm rau kom peb cov tub ntxhais kawm nyob sib nrug deb, peb yuav qhia ntawv siv lub sij hawm sib xyaws, nrog txhua tus tub ntxhais kawm kev kawm deb hnuv Monday, cov pab pawg A tuaj koom tim ntsej tim muag rau hnuv Tuesday thiab Wednesday thiab pab pawg B rau hnuv Thursday thiab Friday. Txaws tsis nyob hauv lawv chav kawm, los cov tub ntxhais kawm ntawv yuav kawm los ntawm kev kawm deb li lawv tau ua dhau los. Raws li ib txwm muaj, mus rau fresnounified.org kom paub cov ntsiab lus ntau ntxiv txog kev rov qhib cov tsev kawm ntawv.

Txhawm rau qhov niaj hnuv no tos ntev los, thov kom paub tias peb cov neeg ua hauj lwm sib zog ua kom tiav ntawm cov phiaj xwm ntawm kev cov tub ntxhais kawm thiab cov neeg ua hauj lwm muaj kev nyab xeeb, thiab tswj kom muab

kev qhia zoo thiab muab txhua yam kev pab cuam uas peb cov tub ntxhais kawm xav tau.

Ib qho ntawm cov phiaj xwm kev nyab xeeb, tus tswv lub xeev xav tau los ntawm qhov yuav rov qhib tsev kawm ntawv txoj kev npaj, yog kev soj ntsuam COVID-19 kev kuaj cov neeg ua hauj lwm thiab tub ntxhais kawm. Peb muaj kev koom tes nrog United Health Center, peb twb tau sim PCR qhov kev kuaj ob zaug ib hlis rau cov neeg ua hauj lwm nyob hauv tsev kawm ntawv. Lub hom phiaj yog cia li xaiv 10% -12% los kuaj ntawm cov neeg ua hauj lwm hauv. Qhov kev kuaj no yuav muab nthuav ntxiv rau cov tub ntxhais kawm (yog yeem kuaj) thaum peb rov qab los ntawm lub tsev kawm ntawv. Peb yuav muab cov ntsiab lus ntau ntxiv rau kev kuaj thaum peb tau ua tiav cov phiaj xwm.

Coob tus neeg ua hauj lwm kuj tau txais lawv cov tshuaj tiv thaiv COVID-19 tom qab lawv tau txais kev tsim nyog txhaj tshuaj thaum Lub Peb Hlis hnuv tim 1 raws li lub xeev qhov kev txhaj tshuaj tiv thaiv kab mob. Peb zoo siab thiab ua tsaug rau Valley Children's Tsev Kho Mob thiab United Health Center chaw kho mob rau cov chaw txhaj tshuaj rau FUSD, thiab rau ntau cov koom haum uas tau txhaj tshuaj tiv thaiv rau cov kws qhia ntawv. Peb lub hom phiaj yuav rov qhib tsev kawm ntawv tsis yog txawm hais tias txhua leej txhua tus yuav tsum tau txhaj tshuaj tiv thaiv, peb paub tias qhov no muab kev nyab xeeb ntxiv thiab yog qhov txiaj ntsig zoo rau peb cov neeg ua hauj lwm thiab rau cov tub ntxhais kawm thiab lawv tsev neeg thaum lawv rov tuaj kawm rau lwm lub hlis.

Kuv xav qhia cov xov xwm tshiab thiab tseem ceeb tsis ntev los no. Thaum lub Peb Hlis hnuv tim 10 Fresno Hauv Paus Tsev Kawm Ntawv Board of Education lub rooj sib tham, cov thawj coj tau xaiv tsa Misty Her ua tus tuam thawj saib xyuas hauv paus tsev kawm ntawv tus thawj tswj hwm tshiab (deputy superintendent). Qhov kev xaiv no ua rau Misty yog ib tug nyob qeb siab tshaj plaws hauv peb lub tsev kawm ntawv cov Hmoob qhia ntawv K-12. Hais lo lus, Misty yog Fresno Hauv Paus Tsev Kawm Ntawv tsev neeg tus ntxhais txawj ntse, nws kawm elementary, them nrab thiab them siab hauv peb lub nroog txij li nws tsev neeg tsiv los nyob rau thaj chaw no. Nws tau mus kawm kom tiav qib siab tau nws daim Master ntawm Fresno State, nrog lub hom phiaj rov qab los txhawb Fresno Unified. Ntau tshaj 27 xyoo Misty tau ua hauj lwm rau peb lub nroog, pib ua tus pab tus kws qhia ntawv qhia ob hom lus, rau tus kws qhia ntawv, tus lwm thawj kws qhia ntawv, tus thawj kws qhia ntawv, tus lwm thawj saib xyuas hauv paus tsev kawm ntawv, tus thawj saib thiab tam sim no yog tus lwm thawj saib hauv paus tsev kawm ntawv. Misty kuj yog ib tus niam txiv zoo muaj me tub me nyuam kawm ntawm hauv Fresno Unified, thiab nws leeg niam thiab txiv tau ua hauj lwm tu tsev nrog rau hauv paus tsev kawm ntawv ntau dua 30 lub xyoo. Misty coj kev paub txawj nte thiab kev paub mus rau lub luag hauj lwm ntawm tus lwm thawj saib hauv paus tsev kawm ntawv, tab sis qhov tseem ceeb tshaj plaws nws coj kev hlub tsis tu ntau rau peb cov tub ntxhais kawm, tsev neeg, cov neeg ua hauj lwm thiab lub zej zog.

Kuv yuav tso qhov kev xav no rau koj: Ua tsaug rau koj lub siab ntev ntawd lub sij hawm peb kawm kev deb. Peb paub tias coob tus tub ntxhais kawm tau ntsib kev tawm tsum; peb paub ntau tsev neeg tseem nyob rau lub sij hawm muaj kev ntxhov txom nyem. Thov ua siab ntev thaum peb hloov mus rau lub sij hawm kawm sib txuas tim ntsej tim muag, tsis tas li peb yuav muab kev pab cuam rau peb cov tub ntxhais uas xaiv qhov kawm tom tsev. Thov koj pab ntxiv ua qhov kom txo tau kev kis tus kabmob COVID-19 xws li nrog kev txav deb ntawm lwm tus, looj daim npog ntsej muag thiab ntxuav koj txhais tes, thiab txiaj txim siab txais cov tshuaj tiv thaiv COVID-19 thaum muaj rau koj. Kuv npaj siab yuav qhib cov tsev kawm ntawv rau thaum lub Plaub Hlis 6!



The Magic of Reading



King Elementary School Principal Summer Gaston-Gehris helps sixth grader Cyndalynn Serrano choose a book March 19 during the Magic of Storytelling event. ABC30, Disney, First Book and Educational Employees Credit Union partnered to donate 5,000 books to Fresno Unified. More than 60 students at King will receive books, along with students at five other campuses.

Athletic Support Staff Learns about COVID-19 Testing



The district held training on March 18 for athletic support staff who are helping students conduct self-testing for COVID-19. Students participating in indoor sports must take the Abbott BinexNOW test every day and students in high-contact sports – football and water polo – every week prior to competition. Staff is, from left, district co-athletic director Brett Mar, vice principal on special assignment with Goal 2 Joe Di Filippo, Fresno High School vice principal John Kaup, McLane High School athletic director Felix Juarez and Sunnyside High School athletic director Sue Farmer in the background.



 Fresno City College

THE BIG READ

Saturday, April 24 • 2:00PM

Keynote Address by
Joy Harjo (Mvskoke/Creek Nation)

The Big Read comes to Fresno City College this year, celebrating the book *An American Sunrise* by Joy Harjo, the current U.S. Poet Laureate, and first ever Native American to hold the position. Join us for Big Read events throughout April at our website:

fresnocitycollege.edu/bigread

