The district hosted a virtual State of Education program on Oct. 18 that featured a message from Superintendent Bob Nelson and highlighted past scholarship winners and top sponsors.

Through sponsorships and donations, the event raised $52,500 for the Fresno Unified Scholarship Fund, which last year awarded scholarships to 76 inspiring seniors.

The online event took the place of the annual State of Education luncheon, which the district was unable to hold due to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis. The State of Education is the district’s single largest fundraiser for the Fresno Unified Scholarship Fund.

“While we wish we were in person for this event like previous years, we are grateful to still have an opportunity to share the state of education in Fresno Unified and support our Fresno Unified Scholarship Fund,” Nelson said.

This year’s gold sponsors were Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo, CalViva Health, Darden Architects, Educational Employees Credit Union, Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission, Fresno Housing, HAW – Fifty Six, and SimPBK. Fresno State University Advancement was a silver sponsor and bronze sponsors were Fresno County Superintendent of Schools, Central Unified School District, McTEOR Education and ACSA.

During Nelson’s virtual address, he highlighted some of the district’s successful initiatives, including the launch of new vision and mission statements and values and goals. He also noted the hard work of the instructional team, which “pivoted and redesigned the education system overnight, in fact, more than once, throughout the pandemic. “They have worked to ensure our students had access to high-quality learning whether they were learning remotely, in a hybrid model, or in person with safety mitigations.”

Nelson said the district is pursuing growth targets through the iReady assessment and learning tools, increasing attendance rates more than 90% with a focus on chronic absenteeism, helping families connect better with their students’ educational journeys, and increasing staff diversity.

Nelson highlighted the addition of 30 minutes a day of instruction time for students and the successful roll out of district learning devices to take home for every student who needed it. He noted the district’s continued fiscal strength with a bond rating affirmed again at Aa3 by Moody’s Investors Service, and $86 million in facility improvements. Nelson discussed the 95% completion of cultural proficiency training for staff departments and school sites.

Nelson said he is committed to gains in four key areas:

- Access to early learning for all
- Meaningful inclusion for students in special education
- Leadership development
- Continuing to nurture community love and belief in Fresno Unified

As part of those goals, Nelson said that early learning continues to expand, and the district has moved from one preschool inclusion class to 17. He noted that Fresno Unified was one of eight districts selected nationwide to receive a Wallace Foundation grant for an equity-drive principal pipeline initiative.

“Navigating through this pandemic has been, and continues to be, the single most difficult leadership challenge of my life but it’s news like I’ve shared tonight that keep us all going,” Nelson said. “We know we have much work ahead of us, and there are many things to improve on, but I see the incredible work and progress happening every single day on behalf of our kids.”

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

District Partners with Community Groups for COVID-19 Support

Fresno Unified has teamed with several organizations to support campuses when there are positive cases of COVID-19 so that as few students as possible miss school.

The district has contracted with a coalition of groups to conduct contact tracing at middle and high schools.
This means they help the school figure out which students were in close contact with a student or staff member who has tested positive for COVID-19.

The contract, approved by the Fresno Unified Board of Education Sept. 8, is with Fresno Building Healthy Communities as the lead agency in the Immigrant Refugee Coalition (IRC). The other IRC partners are Fresno Interdenominational Refugee Ministries, Reading and Beyond and the Jakara Movement.

Additionally, the IRC is providing quarantine counseling and health education services to families impacted by COVID-19 in multiple languages.

In middle schools and high schools where students change classes, the potential for close contacts is extensive. A close contact is defined as someone who has been within six feet of a positive person for 15 minutes or more within a 24-hour period.

Contact tracing is a time-consuming undertaking and the partnership with IRC has freed school staff to do their regular duties while making sure that contact tracing is accomplished.

For middle and high school students, close contacts who are not fully vaccinated are required to quarantine at home. The quarantine period is 10 days from the date of the last exposure, or they may return on day 7 with a negative diagnostic test result from day 5 or 6.

If a close contact is fully vaccinated and not exhibiting any symptoms, they do not have to quarantine.

For elementary students, close contacts without COVID symptoms do not have to quarantine if there is just one case in their classroom. But if there is a second case within 14 days at that classroom, close contacts have to follow the quarantine protocol, which includes a modified quarantine option — allowing asymptomatic students to remain at school and test on day 5.

The district is also providing school site locations for outside partners to conduct COVID-19 vaccinations. To find a nearby vaccination site, go to https://myturn.ca.gov. Gaston Middle School and Hoover and Sunnyside high schools are testing locations. More testing locations are here.

More information on COVID-19 protocols is available here on the district’s website.

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**Running for a Cause at Birney**

Sixth grader Aiden Martinez and sixth grade teacher Robert Garcia participate in an all-school jog-a-thon at Birney Elementary School Oct. 26. This year, the event raised money for the Pulmonary Hypertension Association, in honor of a Birney staff member’s son who has the disease. November is Pulmonary Hypertension Awareness Month. The school raised $8,529.16 – a record for the event – with Blanca Origel’s third graders raising $975, the most for a single class. Some students wore costumes to promote healthy eating.

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**Learn about Special School and Program Options for Students**

Fresno Unified School District is offering five days of virtual exploration in early November to help eighth graders choose their path for high school and students of all ages and their families learn about magnet and specialized programs.

This is an important time for students and families as they prepare for the Dec. 1 deadline for school transfers.

[Transfer Form Here]

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the virtual Choose your Future Week, Nov. 8-12, will take the place of traditional in-person events.

Eighth graders will spend time with their teachers virtually exploring the options available to them as they prepare to move on to high school next school year. During Choose your Future Week, students will learn about specialty high schools and career technical education pathways available throughout the district, and explore campus culture, activities, as well as athletic options with students from their regional high school.

It’s the perfect time for families to engage their eighth grader and ensure they’re set up for high school success.
Families can also participate in the Choose your Future journey attending the virtual Parent University learning modules focused on important transitions for students. Use this link to Parent University for more information on the sessions.

Another component of Choose your Future Week is a virtual version of the district’s traditional annual School Choice Expo. Using the virtual online format, families can visit exhibitor booths any time during the week at their convenience.

Families can select exhibitor booths and unique programs they want to learn more about from among nearly 30 magnet and specialized schools. Programs range from visual and performing arts, International Baccalaureate, science/technology/engineering/and mathematics, dual language programs, world languages, early college to career technical education and many more.

Families will use the exhibitors tab to select the school and department booths they are interested in learning more about and explore information specific to that school. This will be a great experience for all! Please pre-register with Expo Pass prior to or during the event. Follow the link https://www.fresnounified.org/schoolchoice2021/ for your quick registration.

Visit the Virtual School Choice Expo November 8-12, 2021: https://www.fresnounified.org/schoolchoice2021/ for more information on the sessions.

Este es un momento importante para los estudiantes y las familias mientras se preparan para la fecha límite del 1 de diciembre para las transferencias escolares. **Formulario de transferencia aquí**

Debido a las restricciones de COVID-19, la semana virtual Elije tu Futuro, del 8 al 12 de noviembre, tomará el lugar de los eventos tradicionales en persona.

Los estudiantes de octavo grado pasan tiempo con sus maestros explorando virtualmente las opciones disponibles para ellos mientras se preparan para pasar a la escuela preparatoria el próximo año escolar. Durante la semana de Elije tu Futuro, los estudiantes aprenderán sobre las escuelas preparatorias de especialidades y las vías de educación técnica profesional disponibles en todo el distrito, y explorarán la cultura del campo escolar, las actividades y las opciones deportivas con estudiantes de su escuela preparatoria regional.

Es el momento perfecto para que las familias involucren a su estudiante de octavo grado y se aseguren de que estén preparados para el éxito en la escuela preparatoria. Las familias también pueden participar en el trayecto de Elegir tu Futuro asistiendo a los módulos de aprendizaje virtuales de la Universidad para Padres que se enfocan en las transiciones importantes para los estudiantes. Utilice este enlace para Parent University (Universidad de Padres), para obtener más información consulte el cuadro de información.

Otro componente de la semana de Elije tu Futuro es una versión virtual de la tradicional Exposición anual de Elección de Escuelas (anual School Choice Expo) del distrito. Usando el formato virtual en línea, las familias pueden visitar los puestos de las exhibiciones en cualquier momento durante la semana a su conveniencia.

Las familias pueden seleccionar puestos de expositores y programas únicos sobre los que quieran aprender más de casi 30 escuelas magnet y de especialidades. Los programas van desde artes visuales y escénicas, Bachillerato Internacional, ciencia / tecnología / ingeniería / y matemáticas, programas de dos idiomas, idiomas del mundo, educación universitaria temprana hasta educación técnica profesional y muchos más.

Las familias utilizarán la pestaña de expositores para seleccionar los puestos de la escuela y el departamento sobre los que están interesados en aprender más y explorar información específica de esa escuela. ¡Esta será una gran experiencia para todos! Preinscribase con Expo Pass antes o durante el evento. Sigue el link https://www.fresnounified.org/schoolchoice2021/ para su rápida inscripción.

Visite la Expo Virtual de Selección de Escuelas del 8 al 12 de noviembre: https://www.fresnounified.org/schoolchoice2021/

**Kawm txog Tsev Kawm Ntawv Tshwj Xeeb thiab Cov Qhoos kas uas Cov Tub Ntxhais Kawm Ntawv Yuav Xaiv tau**

Fresno Hauv Paus Tsev Kawm Ntawv tab tom muab tsib hnb kev tshawb nhiaj saum huab cua (virtual) thauv lub Kaum Ib Hlis los pab cov tub ntxhais kawm qib yim xav lwv tsoj hauv kev uas laww nyiam npaj rau thauv lawm mus kawm theem siab (high school) thiab tag nrho cov tub ntxhais kawm tus hlob tus uay thiab lawv tsev neeg kawm txog cov magnet thiab cov kev kawm t shwj xeeb (specialized programs).

Nov yog lub sij hawm tseem ceeb rau cov menyau kawm ntawv thiab tsev neeg uas laww npaj yuav kev hloov tsev kawm ntawv rau lub Kaum ob hlis uas yog huab kawg. Daim ntawv hloov tsev kawm ntawm nyob nov Transfer Form Here

Vim yog COVID-19 cov kev tsxwv, Lub Lim tiam Xaiv Koj Lub Neej rau yav tom ntej, yuav pauv mus au rau saum huab cua rau thauv lub Kaum Ib Hlis 8-12. English Cov tub ntxhais kawm qib yim yuav siv sij hawm nrog...
lawv cov sib hwv tshawb nrhiav cov kev xaiv uas muaj rau lawv thau ꦓ lawv npaj mus kawm them siab (high school) rau xyoo kawm ntawv tom ntej. Thaum Lub Lim tiam Xaiv Koj lub neej rau Yav Tom Ntej, cov tub nttxhais kawm yuav kawm txog cov tsev kawm them siab qhov lawv tshwj xeeb (specialty) thiab cov kev kawm ua hauj lwm muaj nyob thoob plaws rau hauv cov tsev kawm ntawv, thiab kawm txog tsev kawm ntawv cov kab lis kev caí, kev ua ub no, nrog rau kev ua kis las nrog cov tub nttxhais kawm los ntawm lawv lub tsev kawm them siab hauv cheeb tsam.

Nws yog lub sijhawm zoo tshaj plaws rau cov tsev neeg los kom lawv cov menuyam kawm qib yim coj los koom thiab xyuas kom lawv npaj txhij rau kev mus kawm them siab (high school) kom tiāv. Cov tsev neeg kuj tuaj yeem koom nrog hauv qhov Xaiv koi txoj kev tuaj mus yav tom ntej los ntawm kev mus koom lub Tsev Kawm Ntawv Niam Txiv saum huab cua kev kawm qhia txog qhov tseem ceeb ntawm kev hloov pauv rau cov tub nttxhais kawm. Siv qhov txuas no mus rau Parent University kom paub ntaw ntxiv thiab los saib cov ntawv.

Lwm qhov tseem ceeb ntawm Lub Lmtiam Xaiv koi Lub Neej rau Yav Tom Ntej yog qhov sib koom saum huab cua uas hauv pauv tseng kawm ntawv ib txwm muaj txhua xyoo lub koom txoos Tsev kawm ntawv Xaiv tau (School Choice Expo). Kev siv saum huab cua (online format), cov tsev neeg tuaj yeem mus ntsib cov chaw neeg teeb khoom txhua lub sijhawm hauv lub lim tiām thaum twg los tau.

Cov tsev neeg tuaj yeem xaiv qhov chaw thiab cov kev pab cuam tshwj xeeb uas lawv xav kawm nttxg txog muaj ze li ntawm 30 cov magnet thiab cov tsev kawm tshwj xeeb(specialized school). Cov qhoos kas no muaj pib li kev hu nkauj seev ceev kos duab thiab ua yeeb yam, International Baccalaureate, science/technology/ engineering/thiab lej, kawm ob hom lus, world languages, kawm ntawv qib siab thau ntsov mus rau kev kawm ua hauj lwm thiab ntaw yam ntxiv.

Cov tsev neeg luav siv lub rooj qhia (exhibitor tab) los xaiv lub tsev kawm ntawv thiab lub rooj qhia uas lawv xav kawm nttxg txog thiab tshawb nrhiav cov ntaub ntawv tshwj xeeb rau lub tsev kawm ntawv ntawd. Qhov no yuav yog qhov kev kawm zoo rau txhua tus! Thov sau npe ua ntej nrog Expo Pass rau npe ua ntej los sis txog kiag thaum ntawv mam rau los tau. Mus raws qhov txuas no https://www.fresnounified.org/schoolchoice2021/ rau ko koj rau npe tau ceev.

Mus saib qhov kev qhia txog tsev kawm ntawv saum huab cua (Virtual School Choice Expo) rau thau Kaum ib hlis tim 8-12: https://www.fresnounified.org/schoolchoice2021/

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**School Choice Expo**

November 8th-12th

Virtual exhibitor booths available all week.

**Elementary Schools**

- Ewing Dual Immersion PK-6
- Leavenworth Dual Immersion PK-6
- Sunset Dual Immersion PK-6
- Hamilton PK-8 Global Studies
- Bullard TALENT K-8 Visual & Performing Arts
- Manchester 2-6 GATE
- Wawona Dual Immersion PK-5
- Yokomi Science & GATE 2-6

**Middle Schools**

- Ahwanhnee 7-8 Environmental Science

**High Schools**

- Bullard
- Cambridge
- CART
- Design Science
- DeWolf
- Ducan Polytechnical
- Edison

**Fresno Unified School District Important Dates**

- **Nov. 11** Veterans Day Holiday
- **Nov. 22-26** Thanksgiving Break
- **Dec. 1** Transfer Deadline
- **Jan. 10, Feb. 28 and March 21** No School for Students (Professional Learning Days for Staff)
Superintendent's Message
Reflecting on Our Successes and Setting New Goals

Hello Fresno Unified family! This past month we held our annual State of Education virtually. Although we would have loved to have been together in person, I was thrilled to provide the keynote and more importantly to raise money for our Fresno Unified Scholarship Fund! Thanks to our amazing sponsors, we raised $52,500 to fund scholarships for our Class of 2022! Special thanks to our Gold sponsors for helping to make this a reality: Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo attorneys, CalViva Health, Darden Architects, Education Employees Credit Union, Fresno EOC, Fresno Housing, HAW – Fifty Six, and SimPBK.

We shared stories from several of our 2021 scholarship recipients that I encourage you to take a moment to watch. Thank you Ayomide, Marcus, Yoseline and Kenji for sharing your stories – we’re so excited for your next chapters!

I also was able to speak to the State of Education here at Fresno Unified. Although it seems like the only focus has been COVID-19 since March of 2020, great things have been happening across the Fresno Unified School District. I was able to share several successes, including our newly adopted district Vision, Mission, Values and Goals, student SBAC growth, moving to a completely 1-to-1 device district wide, the district’s bond rating being affirmed again at Aa3 by Moody’s Investors Service, completing foundational cultural proficiency training for staff at 95% of our departments and school sites, $86 million in facility improvements, a 95% employee retention rate, teacher staffing at 98% at the beginning of the school year, and hiring an additional 130 teachers in August and September to support our expanding eLearn Academy.

In addition, I’m committed as superintendent to realizing gains in four additional key areas: universal early learning access for all; meaningful inclusion for our special education students; leadership development, knowing that principals make an incredible impact on the success of our children; and continuing to nurture community love and belief in Fresno Unified.

To those ends, our early learning teams are continually working to increase our early learning offerings, and I’m thrilled to share that they have moved from one preschool inclusion class to 17 preschool inclusion classes in just two years!

Our district was also recently announced as one of eight school districts across the country to be selected to participate in the Wallace Foundation’s Equity-Centered Pipeline Initiative. This multi-year, multi-million-dollar investment supports our endeavors to continue building an equity-centered principal pipeline and continuing to develop our own leaders to grow within our district. Grants like this one show us that we are growing the community and national belief in Fresno Unified as a system, and to encourage continued philanthropic investment and belief in our district, we’re proud to share that we have taken the first steps to establishing the Foundation for Fresno Unified Schools.

Navigating through this pandemic has been, and continues to be, the single most difficult leadership challenge of my life. However, these successes on behalf of our students keep me going every day. We know we have much work ahead of us, and there are always improvements to be made, but I see the incredible work and progress happening every single day on behalf of our kids. There truly is nothing like the Fresno Unified family, and I can’t thank you all enough for supporting this family as we grow our next generations of leaders.

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Reflecting on Nuestros Éxitos y Estableciendo Nuevas Metas

¡Hola familia del Distrito Escolar Unificado de Fresno! El mes pasado celebramos virtualmente nuestro Estado de la Educación anual (State of Education). Aunque nos hubiera encantado haber estado juntos en persona, ¡estaba encantado de ofrecer la nota principal y, lo que es más importante, de recaudar fondos para nuestro Fondo de Becas del Distrito Escolar Unificado de Fresno! ¡Gracias a nuestros increíbles patrocinadores, recaudamos $ 52,500 para financiar becas para nuestra Clase que se Graduara en el 2022! Un agradecimiento especial a nuestros patrocinadores nivel Dorado (Gold) por ayudar a hacer esto realidad: los abogados Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo, CalViva Health, Darden Architects, Education Employees Credit Union, Fresno EOC, Fresno Housing, HAW - Fifty Six y SimPBK.

Compartimos historias de varios de nuestros beneficiarios de las becas 2021, las cuales los animo a que tomen un momento para ver. Gracias Ayomide, Marcus, Yoseline y Kenji por compartir sus historias. ¡Estamos muy emocionados por sus próximos capítulos!

También pude hablar acerca del Estado de la Educación aquí en el Distrito Escolar Unificado de Fresno. Aunque parece que el único enfoque ha sido COVID-19 desde marzo de 2020, han estado sucediendo grandes cosas en todo el Distrito Escolar Unificado de Fresno. Pude compartir varios éxitos, incluida nuestra Visión, Misión, Valores y Metas del distrito recientemente adoptados, el crecimiento de los estudiantes en el SBAC, el cambio a un distrito de dispositivos completamente 1 a 1, la calificación de bonos del
Nuestro distrito también fue anunciado recientemente como uno de los ocho distritos escolares del condado que serán seleccionados para participar en la Iniciativa de Canalización Centrada en la Equidad de la Fundación Wallace (Wallace Foundation’s Equity-Centered Pipeline Initiative). Esta inversión de varios años y varios millones de dólares respalda nuestros esfuerzos para continuar construyendo una canalización principal centrada en la equidad y continuar desarrollando nuestros propios líderes para crecer dentro de nuestro distrito. Subvenciones como esta nos muestran que estamos aumentando la creencia de la comunidad y nacional en el Distrito Escolar Unificado de Fresno como un sistema, y para fomentar la inversión filantrópica continua y la creencia en nuestro distrito, estamos orgullosos de compartir que hemos dado los primeros pasos para establecer la Fundación para las escuelas del Distrito Escolar Unificado de Fresno.

Navegar a través de esta pandemia ha sido, y sigue siendo, el desafío de liderazgo más difícil de mi vida. Sin embargo, estos éxitos en nombre de nuestros estudiantes me mantienen activo todos los días. Sabemos que tenemos mucho trabajo por delante y siempre hay mejoras que hacer, pero veo el increíble trabajo y el progreso que ocurre todos los días en nombre de nuestros niños. Realmente no hay nada como la familia del Distrito Escolar Unificado de Fresno, y no puedo agradecerles lo suficiente por apoyar a esta familia mientras hacemos crecer nuestras próximas generaciones de líderes.

**Xav txog peb qhov peb ua tiav thiab Teeb tsa lub Hom phiaj Tshiab**

Nyob zoo Fresno Unified tsev neeg! Lub hli dhau los no peb tau muaj peb lub Xeev Kev Kawm ntawv (State of Education) txhau xyooy rau saum huab cua. Txawm hais tias peb yuav nyiam tuij nyob ua ke tim ntsej tim muaj, kuv zoo siab heev los muab cov ntsiab lus tseem ceeb thiaq qhov tseem ceeb thiaj yog los nrihav niyaj los pab rau peb pub niyaj Fresno Unified Scholarship Fund! Ua tsauq rau cov neeg uas tuij txhawb nqa peb, peb nrihav tau li $52,500 los pab rau cov niyaj pub dawb (scholarships) rau peb txawm hais kuam tiav Class of 2022! Ua tsauq tshwj xeeb rau peb cov neeg txhawb nqa Gold sponsors uas tau pab ua qhov no muaj tseeb: Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo kws ljj choj, CalViva Health, Darden Architects, Education Employees Credit Union, Fresno EOC, Fresno Housing, HAW – Fifty Six, thiab SimPKB.

Peb tau qhia cov dab neeg los ntawm peb ob peb cov uas tau txais niyaj pabuam 2021 uas kuv xav koj siv sijhawm los saib.. Ua tsauq rau Ayomide, Marcus, Yoseline thiab Kenji uas nej tseem tau qhia txog nej cov dab neeg – peb zoo siab heev rau koj lub nee yav tom ntej!!

Kuv kuj tuaj yeem hais lus rau Lub Xeev Kev Kawm ntawv nyob rau hauv Fresno Unified no. Txawm hais tias nws zoo li COVID-19 thiaj qhov qhov tseem ceeb xwb txij li lub Pebl Hlis 2020 los, nws kuj muaj tej yam zoo tau tshwim sim thooob plaaw hauv Fresno Unified School District. Kuv tuaj muaj peev xwm qhia tau.ntau yam kev ua tau zoo, suav nrog peb lub hauv paus tsev kawm ntawv lub zeem mus. Lub Hom Phiaj, Qhov Tseem Ceeb thiab Lub Hom Phiaj, cov tib ntxhais kawm SBAC tsoj kev loj hlob, txav mus rau 1tug menyuum tauj 1 lubbhauv siv rau hauv lub district no, lub hauv paus tsev kawm ntawv daim ntawv cog lus (bond) tau lees paub dua ntawm Aa3 los ntawm Moody’s Investors Service, kev cob qhia kev pub qhov txog Iwm tus txoj kab li kev cai rau cov neeg ua haujlwm ntawm tau kawm tiav 95% uas nyob hauv cov tuam tsev tsev tuaj dem num thiaq cov tsev kawm ntawv, $86 lab hauv kev txhim khu ko chaw tsev kawm ntawv, 95% cov neeg ua haujlwm tseem tuav lawv txoj hauj lwm, muaj cov xibhv qhia ntawv ntawv lus 98% thaum pib ntawm lub xyooy kawm ntawv, thiab tuaj 130 tus kws qhia ntxiv nyob rau lub yim hli ntuaj thiab lub Cujbl Hli los pab tshawb peb qhov qhia ntawv saum huab cua eLearn Academy.

Tsis tas li ntawd, kuv tau cog lus ua tus thajw saib xyuas kom paub txog kev muaj ntxiv hauv plaub qhov tseem ceeb: muaj kev kawm thaum txnov rau txhua tus; muaj txjaj ntsig nrog rau peb cov menyuum kawm ntawv tshwj xeeb; kev txhim khu rau kev ua thawj coj, paub tias cov thawj xib hwb tau ua tej yam zoo kawg rau peb cov menyuum tsoj kev kawm tiaw; thiab txaus ntxiv txhawb nqa zej zog txoj kev hlub thiab muaj kev ntseeeg rau Fresno Unified.

Txog rau qhov kawg no, peb pawg kawm thaum txnov tseem ua haujlwm...
Message from Jeffrey Nkansah, Chief Executive Officer of CalViva Health

Healthy Habits and Healthy Communities

If the last 24 months has taught us anything, it’s that “good health” affects us all. Education, interpersonal connections, our economy and our personal happiness are all interconnected to how healthy we are – both as individuals and as a community.

As the largest Medi-Cal health plan in Fresno, Madera and Kings counties, access to affordable, quality healthcare is a cornerstone of CalViva Health. In CalViva Health’s 10 years serving the Central Valley, we have re-invested more than $15 million back into the community through our program: CalViva Cares.

We know that building a healthy community is more than just doctor visits and regular check-ups. We created CalViva Cares to cultivate relationships with leaders and grassroots organizations in our footprint that create real change in the communities we serve.

CalViva Cares supports hundreds of community benefit organizations in Fresno, Madera and Kings counties. Our projects range widely from scholarships for local primary care physicians to COVID-19 vaccination education, and support to providing free eye exams and glasses for valley students of all ages. One of our main areas of focus this year is youth recreation. Through our partnerships with organizations like Fresno Unified School District, we know the positive impact youth sports and recreation can have on adolescents. Some of our funded projects include:

- Edison High School boys basketball uniform sponsorship
- Fresno Police Activities League: Frank H. Ball Center “Good Times are Back”
- Boxing program at Romain Park
- Impact Athletics with On Ramps
- Covenant Church

We have also committed funds to multiple outdoor play and green space projects throughout the Central Valley. Our focus on youth recreation and outdoor play is a commitment to the future of our community. Besides the obvious benefit of improved health through exercise, youth sports provide critical life skills like teamwork, problem solving, socialization and building self-esteem.

We know the resources provided by CalViva Cares help give our students the foundation to be our future leaders – and the future looks brighter than ever.

Jeffrey Nkansah
Chief Executive Officer of CalViva Health
Fresno Unified has been awarded an $8.2 million grant from The Wallace Foundation to develop and support a pipeline for equity-centered principals.

Fresno Unified is among eight large, high-needs districts funded for the five-year endeavor. The grant will help develop school principals who are better equipped to meet the changing needs of diverse districts nationwide.

The Equity-Centered Pipeline Initiative is based on extensive research that effective principals have a strong, positive impact on students and schools.

“We are honored to have been selected for this important work of strengthening our principal pipeline with a focus on the specific impact of school leaders on our diverse students,” said Superintendent Bob Nelson.

Fresno Unified’s more than 70,000 student population includes 69.1% Hispanic, 10.8% Asian, 8.2% African American and 8.8% white students.

Eighty-five percent of students are socioeconomically disadvantaged, 17.5% are English learners, 10.9% have disabilities and 1% are in foster care.

“Our foremost underserved groups are African American youth, foster, homeless youth, special needs, and English language learners, particularly newcomers,” Nelson said. “So how do you raise a generation of leaders who can address the kind of systemic things that have caused those kids not to thrive? How do we go about fixing those things and making them better for the students we serve?”

Fresno Unified was chosen through a rigorous, competitive process. The goal is to develop principals who can advance each district’s own vision of equity. The district, working with community and university partners, will also develop mentoring and training for current principals and vice principals.

The Wallace Foundation will conduct a series of independent research studies as the work proceeds to learn lessons on how the districts create principal pipelines and other supports to accomplish equity goals. The project is based on research showing comprehensive principal pipelines can boost student achievement.

As part of the grant, Fresno Unified will partner with San Diego State University, National University, the California Department of Education and the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

“We’ll be working with top-line educational theorists to try and make sure that what we’re doing is sustainable, substantial, and is actually accomplishing our goals,” Nelson said.

By working with internal and external partners, the Equity Centered Pipeline Initiative will support the recruitment of aspiring leaders, build a support system for current principals and principal supervisors and launch an assistant principal academy.

“Fresno Unified is excited to partner with San Diego State University,” said Julie Severns, administrator for leadership development in Fresno Unified. “We see the alignment between our district’s current efforts related to equity and the great focus on equity within the leadership preparation programs at SDSU. We look forward to learning together and developing opportunities in support of aspiring and existing leaders in our district.”

Along with Fresno Unified, districts selected for the grants were Baltimore City, Columbus City, District of Columbia, Jefferson County (Kentucky), Portland, San Antonio and Winston-Salem Forsythe (North Carolina).

Greenberg Elementary School Principal Linda Ramirez works with a student earlier this year. The district has been awarded an $8.2 million Wallace Foundation grant in support of developing an equity-centered principal pipeline.
Grants Help District Serve Homeless Students

Along with the $8.2 million Wallace Foundation grant, Fresno Unified has landed several other grants that will help it better serve students. The Education for Homeless Children and Youth Grant will be used to develop a partnership between Fresno Unified’s Project ACCESS and Live Again Fresno, a community organization that works with families and students living in motels. Through this partnership, the district will hire four community navigator specialists who will receive training in the Community Resiliency Model (CRM). The community navigator specialists will help increase academic achievement and reduce chronic absenteeism among the district’s homeless students. “We will also be using some funding for additional tutorial support for students experiencing homelessness and performing below grade level in effort to increase their academic performance,” said Tumani Heights, a manager who oversees Project ACCESS, which serves the district’s homeless and students in foster care.

Other grants include:

- The Department of Prevention and Intervention has been awarded two grants targeting homeless students: One-time funding of $101,596 from the Federal American Rescue Plan and three years of state funding at $86,000 per year.
- From the Kaiser Permanente Foundation: $150,000 over two years to underwrite the cost of the newly hired Fresno Unified wellness coordinator, Anita Ruiz.
- From the California Department of Education’s Learning Communities for School Success Program: $1.9 million to fund the Department of Prevention and Intervention staff who target chronically absent students at select middle schools.
- From the California Department of Education: $97,400 for the Special Education Department targeting the district’s homeless youth over two years. This grant was augmented by $101,597 of Federal American Rescue Plan funds.

Edison High School Hosts Celebration for Students' AP Success

Despite the challenges of distance learning and online testing during the last school year, 648 Advanced Placement (AP) exams from Edison High School students received a qualifying score during the spring. Earlier this fall, Edison celebrated the 365 current 10th, 11th and 12th graders who were among those receiving a qualifying score on the AP exams. At the amphitheater on Sept. 30, the school celebrated the students’ perseverance through distance learning and the switch to an online exam for most of the tests instead of the usual pen and paper structure. “Students were able to adapt to and overcome this shift in format. For many Edison students, this was their first time taking an AP class and test,” said Janina Schulz, a teacher at Edison and the advanced courses instructional coordinator. The school celebrated the success of the students as it gears up for the new round of AP tests coming this spring. Edison anticipates that 1,000 students will take approximately 2,000 AP exams. Edison offers 23 AP courses. At the end of courses, students have the option of taking AP tests administered by the College Board at high schools. Colleges may accept a score of 3 or better on an AP test as credit toward completing the corresponding course. Senior student Gannon Peebles,
who earned a qualifying score on all five AP exams he took, said, “After excelling on all of my AP exams, I feel relieved, but also proud. The tests were challenging because of distance learning, but to see myself work through that and succeed fills me with a sense of incredible pride.”

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

Thomas Stewart, a junior, was among the Edison High School students honored earlier this fall for receiving a qualifying score during the spring on an AP exam.

Teacher Instrumental in Preserving the Hmong Language, Culture

Zer Lee is a teacher on special assignment who develops materials for the district’s Hmong dual language immersion (DLI) program, offered at Vang Pao and Balderas elementary schools. Fresno Unified is among just five districts in the country with Hmong language immersion programs. Lee began working for the district in 1998 as a bilingual instructional aide, has been a teacher since 2006 and is in her fourth year working on the Hmong language program in English Learner Services. During school closures last year due to COVID-19, Lee was instrumental in translating and recording important information for Hmong-speaking parents. Lee was an Excellence in Education finalist in January. Doua Vu, a manager in English Learner Services, said about Lee: “There is a very limited amount of instructional materials in Hmong so Zer is developing [all subjects] for grades kindergarten through fourth.”

Describe your role developing materials for the Hmong DLI program. I create and translate curriculum, curriculum pacing guides and quarterly assessments to measure our students’ performances. I support, coach and co-teach with the Hmong DLI teachers.

Why is the Hmong language program important? The Hmong language program is important because our program and educators play a role in preserving an indigenous language that is rapidly disappearing globally. We realized that the vast majority of our second and third generation Hmong American children are no longer speaking nor understanding our native tongue. Many of our Hmong American youths are currently struggling with their identities due to their limited exposure to the language and culture. Language plays a huge role in preserving a culture and the identity of its people.

What have been some of the difficulties in developing the Hmong resources? Some difficulties are the lack of literacy resources, especially digital resources in Hmong. Due to the lack of resources, it has been really difficult to gather materials to meet or align with the state standards and unit of studies. Almost every literacy resource, such as texts, phonics activities, worksheets, assessment data, assessment data recording tools, are having to be developed from our office or from our DLI teachers. Also, the language itself has not been formally standardized, therefore my team and I have to also negotiate language terms and languages as we write our texts.

What made you decide to be a teacher? When I first attended college, it never crossed my mind that I would be a teacher. However, when I began working as a bilingual instructional aide at Lane Elementary School, I discovered that teaching was my niche. I found myself enjoying my days with my little kiddos and witnessing their little lightbulbs turned on.

What do you enjoy the most about your job? I enjoy developing curriculum and collaborating with teachers to bounce ideas off. I enjoy seeing the ideas from our [professional learning communities] or professional development sessions come to fruition -- teachers taking what they’ve learned or experienced and implementing them in the classroom. Also, due to not having a classroom of my own, I love the fact that I have the flexibility to walk in and observe or co-teach with teachers and interacting with students across grade-levels in our Hmong DLI program.
What is the most difficult part of your job? The most difficult part of my job is having to balance curriculum writing and supporting all 16 Hmong DLI teachers, which is a span of pre-kindergarten to fourth grade with fifth grade coming next year. It would be nice to have at least another TSA to help support our growing program so I can have more meaningful time to be in space with teachers to plan and support them and have another colleague to collaborate with and assist with developing materials.

If you could choose another career, what would it be? I would still stay in education; however, I would be an academic counselor. I would love to work with youth, especially with the economically challenged youth, to educate them on the importance of developing good study habits to sustain good grades and course selections to further prepare them for college.

What is your dream vacation? My dream vacation is to travel back to Southeast Asia and to China to visit the Hmong villages and visit their schools.

Name one thing most people don’t know about you. I came from a large family of 13 children — I’m the youngest. I’m also the first in my family to attend a university. Although I grew up in a large family with very little money, I never once felt poor nor felt that I was at a disadvantage. My parents have always taught my siblings and me that if we want something, we must work for it.

McLane Counselor Wins Award for his Work Helping Students

As a first-generation college student, McLane High School counselor Yia Le understands how difficult the leap to higher education can be. For his hard work helping students realize their college dreams, he was recently recognized with the Arthur S. Marmaduke High School Counselor Award.

He was honored by the California Student Aid Commission during a virtual ceremony Oct. 19. The city of Fresno also issued a proclamation declaring Oct. 19 “Yia Le Day.”

The Marmaduke award is given to a high school counselor in recognition of exemplary work helping students get into college. Nominees are evaluated based on their work educating students about financial aid, participating in college fairs and workshops, their impact on students completing financial aid forms, what they have done to prepare students for college, and their support for underrepresented and first-generation families. Le received a plaque and $1,500.

Le said he was inspired to become an academic counselor by his family background and past jobs as a tutor at Ayenworth, Ayer and Lowell elementary schools. He has been a counselor at McLane for four years. Le’s family immigrated from Laos to Thailand, where Le was born, and came to the United States when Le was 3.

“I was always reminded that education is the key to opportunities and success. I wanted to be in a position that can inspire and help students search for better opportunities, and I am very blessed to be in this position at McLane,” Le said.

He attended Balderas Elementary School, Computech Middle School and Sunnyside High School. He graduated from Fresno State with a bachelor’s degree in psychology and master’s in Student Affairs and College Counseling with a Pupil Personnel Services credential.

“I am a proud product of Fresno Unified and I am extremely grateful that I had the opportunity to come back and serve our district,” Le said. Le said he draws on his own experiences when helping students. “As a first-generation student and growing up in southeast Fresno, I have to reflect back on my experiences and try to put myself in my students’ shoes,” Le said. “I remind myself to be patient, flexible, and always be positive when helping my students with something that they’ve never seen, like college and financial aid applications.”

He said many barriers and factors can hinder students from going to college, but the biggest obstacle is often the cost, making financial aid and scholarships extremely important.

“T was very proud of our district for establishing a scholarship fund and for pushing our students to complete their financial aid applications,” Le said.

The award, he said, is an opportunity to highlight the campus and Fresno Unified.

“I was super excited for our team because we’ve always wanted to put McLane High School and Fresno Unified on the map,” Le said. “Our students and staff are amazing! We did it, Highlander Nation! This may or may not be an attempt to recruit students to McLane.”

When asked about the city proclaiming it “Yia Le Day,” he said: “This one
blew my mind. I am not sure what I
did to deserve this incredible honor
and I am forever grateful for Fresno
Unified and the city of Fresno. I
dedicate this one to our students!
With respect, integrity, spirit and
excellence, ’Highlanders rise above!’

McLane High School counselor Yia Le works with senior Manjot Kaur. Le has
been recognized with the Arthur S. Marmaduke High School Counselor Award.

New Student Board Members Strive to Hone their Leadership Skills

Student members of the Fresno Unified Board of Education this year are Maise
Aguilar, a senior from Fresno High School, and Ishan Singh, a senior at
Sunnyside High School.

Maise is also the student body president at Fresno High and Ishan is
speaker of the house at his school. Both
are involved in the Student Advisory Board, made up of representatives
from all district high schools, and
are also leaders for various clubs and
activities on their campuses.

Ishan says his involvement in student leadership goes back to Forkner Elementary School but says his
role now allows him to “represent a
community of 75,000 individuals.”

Although not voting members on the board, Maise and Ishan can express
their views to the elected trustees and
bring issues to the forefront. Ishan
said he wants to provide students with
a “stage where they can be heard and
express themselves for who they are.”

He said the biggest issue at Sunnyside High is “proper representation and
recognizing the hard work of our
students.” He said student leaders
are trying to establish “inclusive,
welcoming environments where
all types of individuals will have
a voice and be praised for their
accomplishments or determination.”

Maise said she also wants to provide an
avenue for student issues.
“I think that is an important aspect, as
they’re our future and their opinions
and wants are valid,” Maise said.

Ishan said he’s already gained much
more insight into the educational
system. Maise agreed.

“As a student board member, it has
been a great experience to sit on the
board,” Maise said. “I have heard many
perspectives that come straight from
our community and it has opened my
eyes in a tremendous amount of ways.”

It’s been a joy, they said, to be back on
campus for in-person learning.

“When we first went into quarantine,
I was a sophomore and as you could
imagine a person can grow a lot
within two years,” Maise said. ”I
have really enjoyed just simply being
there around my peers and teachers.
I’m glad we were able to come back,
especially since this is my senior year.
It’s something that we cannot take for
granted.”

Ishan said being back in in-person
classes will better prepare him for
college and “it allows me to be close to
those that I love.”

Ishan’s goal is to attend an Ivy
League university and pursue a
career as a cardiothoracic surgeon or
neurosurgeon. Maise hopes to attend
a University of California campus and
major in psychology.

Maise Aguilar

Ishan Singh
Sunnyside High Student Wins New Car for Having Perfect Grades

Sunnyside High School’s Joanna Mendez was this year’s winner of a 2021 Toyota Corolla in a drawing for students with 4.0 grade point averages.

“I was so excited! I ran down the grandstand stairs crying tears of joy! I thought, ‘Finally my hard work has paid off,’” said Joanna, a senior.

Joanna won the car on Oct. 7 at The Big Fresno Fair. Her name was drawn from among other 4.0 students from throughout Fresno County as part of the annual 4.0 & Above program, a partnership between the fair and the Fresno County Superintendent of Schools.

She attended the fair announcement with her parents, who she called her “biggest supporters.”

Joanna said she did not always take school seriously.

“I realized that I want something for myself in the future so I had to change it around – and I had a lot of time to think during quarantine and that’s what I decided to do,” Joanna said.

“I started wanting to go to a UC and I knew to get accepted, I have to have good grades. I’ve always been a ‘good’ student, just never a 4.0. I’ve always completed my work but never tried my best.”

Joanna said she knew she could do better – not just the bare minimum. She said one of her teachers, Cyndi Mello, was the first to know she wanted to become a 4.0 student.

“She believed in me and pushed me to be the best I could,” Joanna said.

Mello said she was thrilled to learn Joanna had won the car. She has worked with Joanna for four years through Sunnyside’s Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID).

“Watching her mature, overcome obstacles -- especially during the pandemic -- has been an absolute pleasure to observe,” Mello said. “I watched proudly as Joanna became more involved in extracurricular activities. The more engaged she became, the more her grades improved. Her achievements are commendable.”

Winning the car – her first – was a big boost for Joanna, who had started working so she could buy a car for when she goes away to school. Joanna is applying to UC campuses and may major in business.

“I just want to pursue something that I know I will enjoy. I’ve also been thinking about maybe, somewhere in the future, starting an organization to help domestic violence survivors. If that’s the way to go then I would major in social work or human services,” Joanna said.

Joanna said she is grateful to her parents, Mello and others “who have been there for me since day one.”

“I wouldn’t be who I am today without all the love and support I have received. I also want to thank myself for not giving up. I was at a very low point mentally and I picked myself back up.”

Career Technical Education Works at McLane – Take it to the Bank

McLane High School alumni Matthew Martin and Cheng Xiong exemplify what career technical education (CTE) programs can achieve.

Martin and Xiong, 2011 graduates, were part of the inaugural group of student bankers when Union Bank opened a branch at McLane. The bank is the centerpiece of the Academy of Finance and Entrepreneurship at McLane, one of several career pathways at the campus.
They now oversee student bankers at McLane, giving back to the program that launched their careers. “I think it shows that the program does work. We’re doing a full 360 right now,” said Xiong, branch service and sales officer.

Martin, the branch manager, said the students are excited when they learn their supervisors first learned about banking at McLane. “Me going through the program, I felt I could relate to the students and I felt I could help them in a way that not many can just because I went through the program myself,” Martin said.

Twelve students work at the bank as tellers. Students are provided stipends for their training and for the working in the bank. Since it opened 10 years ago, 101 interns have worked in the program. Both Martin and Xiong were hired immediately after high school by Union Bank. Martin worked at a branch on Kern Street in downtown Fresno, and Xiong worked at the Fashion Fair branch. Xiong has been at the McLane branch since 2019 and Martin since 2016.

McLane was the first student-run bank west of the Mississippi River at the time of its opening (there were credit union partnerships in Kern County). With the success of the McLane pilot, Union Bank has opened four more student-run branches. “This was the vision that we hoped for when we began the program – educating our students for success in college and careers, with a specific focus on financial literacy to also empower families within our community,” said Brad Berrett, a career education manager for the district.

“Seeing students become successful in their own career paths and then coming back and teaching future generations to do the same exceeded our expectations, but embodies the ultimate goal within education: enter to learn, go forth to serve. This is a model of what we hope to achieve with all of our programs in helping more students to find success, make connections, and give back to our community.”

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

Forkner Renamed for Prominent Journalist

Forkner Elementary School will be renamed for H. Roger Tatarian, who rose to the highest ranks in newspaper journalism and later returned to teach at Fresno State.

It will be the first school in Fresno Unified to be named for an Armenian. Mr. Tatarian passed away in 1995.

The Fresno Unified Board of Education unanimously approved the name change on Oct. 13. The name will be launched with the start of the new school year in August.

The board had originally suggested naming one of the buildings at the Francine and Murray Farber Educational Campus that will be built at 10th Street and Ventura Avenue after Mr. Tatarian, but supporters instead lobbied for a school to bear his name. Mr. Tatarian grew up in southeast Fresno and graduated from Fresno State in 1938 with a degree in political science. He went to work for the United Press International (UPI) news service, where he was a reporter and editor throughout the world. He eventually became editor-in-chief of UPI.

After retiring from UPI, he returned...
to Fresno State to join the journalism faculty, mentoring and training a new generation of journalists.

He wrote “Day of Mourning, Day of Shame,” a collection of his essays. His legacy is honored at Fresno State with the Roger Tatarian Endowed Chair in Journalism, the Roger Tatarian Journalism Grant and a plaza near the building where he taught.

Forkner Elementary School will be renamed for prominent journalist and professor Roger Tatarian.

## District Roundup

### Roosevelt Health Pathway Connects Students with Mentors

As part of orientation day on Sept. 8 for students in the Health Pathway at Roosevelt High School, students had an opportunity to sign up for mentors and got their passport signed to get them started with the new G.E.A.R program – grades, engagement, attendance and reward.

### Sunnyside Student Projects Place at Fair

Students in Sunnyside High School’s ag mechanics program took two first and two second place ribbons in the Big Fresno Fair for the dog houses they built. The agriscience students excelled as well – 40 of their 50 plant projects placed first in their divisions.

### RSA Presents Play

Roosevelt School of the Arts presented "Check, Please" in October, welcoming audiences back to live theater. The school offered numerous evening and matinee performances.

### Tehipite Tops TikTok

Tehipite Middle School launched a new school-wide positive TikTok challenge campaign to combat the alarming trend of TikTok videos promoting negative school-related challenges. Students are encouraged to team up to create and post a TikTok in response to the official Tehipite Middle School positive challenge. Student posts earn points towards swag and awesome prizes. The new campaign has resulted in incredible positive student response, less misbehaviors on campus, and an overall significant increase in positive school culture.

Tehipite plans to continue with monthly TikTok challenges through the rest of the academic year.

### Edison Students help Beautify Fresno

Students in Edison High School’s Key Club participated in a Beautify Fresno event Oct. 2. The students joined others in cleaning up Ventura Street and the Maxie Parks Community Center. Of the 68 volunteers, 35 were from Edison High. The volunteers picked up 107 bags of trash.

### McLane Featured in National Brochure

McLane High School’s Medical Education and Research Academy (MERA) is featured in the National Academy Foundation’s (NAF) brochure. McLane’s MERA has been recognized as a NAF Model School.

[NAF Brochure Featuring McLane](#)
Peer Mentoring Participants Connect at Ranch

From left, Angel Pena Calderon, Bryan Bravo Lopez and David Ulloa Moran participate in a community building activity at Wonder Valley Ranch on Oct. 26. The students are part of the district’s peer mentoring program, which pairs middle school students and freshmen wanting a peer mentor with successful sophomores, juniors and seniors.

Governor Visits Sunset Elementary

Governor Gavin Newsom visited Sunset Elementary School on Oct. 5 and signed several education bills. He spent time in teacher Alma Renteria’s transitional kindergarten class. Sunset is a dual language immersion school. Clockwise from the governor are Arya Martinez, Daniel Nunez, Maximiliano Espinoza and Jonah Barajas.

Athletics Photos

Bullard High School golfer Jaden Trammell works her way out of a sand trap. Shaya Schultz competes for Edison High School in tennis.
McLane High School band members from left, Taklya Randle, Israel Ocampo, Homid Shahabzada and Jesus Diaz Jr. entertain at the game against Sunnyside High School.

Sunnyside High School’s Dae’Shawn Bias (No. 14) and JaJuan King (No. 7) mix up it with Roosevelt High School’s Daniel Pacheco (No. 8) and David Contreras (No. 9).

Fresno High School’s Iven Sanouvang Keoboupaha

Roosevelt High School’s AnaKarina Castellanos

McLane High School’s Elizabeth Cerda
Tehipite Middle School Launches Steve's Scholars for New Year

Tehipite Middle School Principal Marilyn Lopez-Cuevas is with Jerri-Anna Dorsey at the Steve's Scholars kick-off on Oct. 1. Eighth graders were honored for their one year in the program and new seventh graders learned about the program in a virtual presentation. Francine and Murray Farber established the Steve’s Scholars program in 2012 as a lasting memorial to their son, who died unexpectedly in 2001 at age 42. Steve’s Scholars will receive $1,000 scholarships for each of their first two years of college after successfully meeting all the requirements for the program beginning in the seventh grade at Tehipite. Steve’s Scholars have to maintain at least a B average and at least 95% attendance in grades 7-12. They are also required to take California’s college preparatory courses, known as A through G classes, and complete community service annually.

For video, go to vimeo.com/fresnounified/stevesscholars21

Students and Teachers Learn from Virtual Visiting Artists

Students in grades 4-6 across the district are learning about various forms of visual and performing arts this year through virtual sessions with nationally known visiting artists.

Sessions began in September at Bullard TALENT K-8 School with artist Jason Nious. Nious has traveled extensively with Cirque du Soleil, Step Afrika, Stomp and the International Body Music Festival. Nious’ class was “Step it Up! Self Expression through Body Percussion.”

Students learned body percussion basics, time-keeping exercises, ensemble rhythm techniques, a blend of traditional and contemporary stepping choreography and tools to create their own steps to express themselves rhythmically.

Each participating school chose which artist would be teaching at their school. All students participate in a lesson a day for five days with the artist.

Upcoming sessions include theater specialist Maria Schaedler-Luera, ”Exploring Social Change through Drama;” choreographer and dancer Harlan Brownlee, “Moving and Modeling Earth Systems: Exploring Forces of the Earth’s Land, Water and Air;” and vocalist Imani Gonzalez, “Exploring World Cultures through Music.” The artist sessions are through Focus 5, Inc.

“We are so lucky to have nationally recognized artists working with our students and teachers integrating art into the curriculum,” said Heather Kuyper-McKeithen, manager for visual and performing arts.

The artist residencies are designed to teach the teachers strategies to continue to incorporate art into all of their core subjects, even after the artist is gone. The artist residency program includes a planning meeting with each grade level team participating prior to the sessions with students. Teachers also have the option of doing additional professional development with artists.

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

Students in Tracy Sandoval’s fourth grade class at Bullard TALENT K-8 School have fun with virtual visiting artist Jason Nious’ body percussion session on Sept. 29. Students in grades 4-6 across the district are participating in Focus 5 sessions that will expand their knowledge and skills in various forms of visual and performing arts.
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