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CUSD Today

August 2021

Clovis Unified School District — WHERE CHARACTER COUNTS!

Volume 24, No. 1

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Clovis Unified School District
1450 Herndon Ave.
Clovis, CA 93611

WELCOME BACK

Grateful for a new year!

WELCOME TO CUSD TODAY'S BACK-TO-SCHOOL EDITION!
We can't wait for Aug. 16, when all of our students return to school campuses and traditional schedules resume at our schools.



These are words we have longed to say since March 2020! While we must and will remain diligent to the health and safety requirements and guidelines set before us by state and county health agencies, we are grateful for the opportunity to see students back in classrooms full-time.

Within this context of ongoing safety, we are eager to give our full attention to the business of educating students to be the best they can be in mind, body and spirit.

In the days just prior to your receipt of this issue of *CUSD Today*, we shared through emails and our website details of how current California health and safety requirements, and multi-layered COVID mitigation practices like deep cleaning and contact tracing, will be implemented for the coming school year. These details continue to be available on our website at cusd.com, and we will update them as the year progresses.

In the pages of this **Back-to-School** issue, you will find useful insights about preparing students to come back to campus, getting ready for school and how parents can best stay informed about district and school news.

Please know that our full Clovis Unified educational team of 6,000-plus employees is here to support you, and we encourage you to reach out with any needs.

These past 18 months since the shutdown began, I have been so proud of students, families and staff as together we navigated what seemed impossible. And that incredible effort gave us our launching point and theme for this year – "Mission: Possible!"

Clovis Unified family, we've got this.

Mission: Possible!

Eimear O'Farrell, Ed.D.
Superintendent



Photo special to *CUSD Today*. Preschoolers enjoy the playground during Clovis Unified's Summer Fun held this year at Century Elementary. Watch for emails and check out your school's website for important information about the upcoming school year, including health guidelines for recess, meals and more.

Summer Learning



Photos special to *CUSD Today*. Thousands of Clovis Unified students participated in classes this summer to fortify their learning experience or complete recovery work. New among the summer programs was the Career Technical Education Summer Academy that had nine different sessions including agriculture education (pictured, top) and automotive instruction (pictured, bottom). Students experienced hands-on, real-world learning in the CTE labs that were a sampling of what is offered in CUSD high schools during the school year.

GET READY!



Quick facts for 2021-22 school year

- 1 Clovis Unified School District begins the new school year Monday, Aug. 16. Schools are back to their traditional, pre-COVID timetable with full-day, five days a week schedule.
- 2 Clovis Unified students and staff are required to adhere to current health and safety guidelines as determined by California and Fresno County health agencies. Updates are available on your school's website.
- 3 Individual schools' start and end times can be found on each school's website under Bell Schedule on the "About" tab.
- 4 Cafeteria breakfast and lunch meals will be free this year for all students, thanks to an extension during the pandemic by the U.S. Department of Agriculture of a program to ensure all children have access to meals. Daily school breakfast and lunch menus and nutritional information are available through Nutrilice at www.cusd.nutrilice.com or on the district's mobile app. 
- 5 School websites are an important resource about club signups, co-curricular activities, teachers, class supply lists and more. Check often for new information.
- 6 A listing of bus schedules is available at www.cusd.com/ViewSchoolBusSchedules.aspx.
- 7 Six CUSD schools have new leadership. New principals and their schools for the 2021-22 school year are Demetra Vincent-Walker, Boris Elementary; Laurel Graves, Freedom Elementary; Kelli Hinojos, Temperance-Kutner Elementary; Cecelia Dansby, Woods Elementary; Omar Hemaidan, Buchanan High; and Eric Swain, Clovis West High.
- 8 Back-to-School Night will be held in the first few weeks of school at each campus. Parents should plan on participating to learn from their child's teacher about coursework, expectations, grading policies and preferred communication methods. Dates and times can be found on individual school websites.
- 9 Parents are encouraged to login to Parent Connection weekly. This resource provides information about your student's academic standings on assignments, homework and attendance. A link can be found on cusd.com or the CUSD app.
- 10 CUSD's free mobile app keeps you in touch with your school and upcoming events. Be sure to download the app from the Apple and Android stores if you haven't already. It's going to be a great year! 

BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT

INSIDE:

> ANNOUNCEMENTS

Electric school buses hit the road.

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> GET TO KNOW US

We're here to support our students.

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> SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Our 'Mission: Possible' theme.

See Page 5

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Get to know us!

Here for you

Clovis Unified's primary purpose is to provide an outstanding educational experience during the school day for our kindergartners through high school seniors. We also want to support our students and their families in areas outside of the K-12 classrooms that will put students on pathways to success.

A multitude of resources and opportunities are available at each school, ranging from emotional wellness support, academic counseling, special education, technology, co-curricular activities, teams and clubs, categorical programs and supplemental services. Check out your school's and Clovis Unified's websites to find out more.

Child Development

Clovis Unified's Child Development team offers academic enrichment and childcare for those who are in need of specialized services. They serve the unique needs of the diverse populations within CUSD, as well as provide a bridge between home and school. Activities are designed to be a balance of educational, social and recreational opportunities for the children attending.

The programs are:

■ **CAMPUS CLUB:** A fee-based before and after school enrichment and childcare program for grades K-6, available at most CUSD elementary school sites. Before-school care starts at 7 a.m. and after-school care concludes at 6 p.m. Care is also available during fall, winter, spring and summer breaks. Details: 327-9160, www.cusd.com/campusclub.aspx.

■ **PRESCHOOL:** Clovis Unified offers two types of preschool programs: state funded and private pay at 29 elementary sites. Preschool provides a high-quality, developmentally appropriate kindergarten-readiness program for children turning 4 years old by Dec. 1, 2021. The state-funded programs are Monday to Friday for 3 hours per day and available at no-cost to qualifying families. Private-pay program hours vary. Details: 327-9180, www.cusd.com/Preschool.aspx.

■ **ASES:** The After School Education and Safety Program provides a safe and educationally enriching alternative for K-6 children during non-school hours through partnerships with local community resources. Priority registration for this free program is given to homeless and foster youth, and it is offered at 12 CUSD sites. Details: 327-0673, www.cusd.com/ASESprogram.aspx.

■ **YOUTH PARENT PROGRAM:** This program serves pregnant or parenting teens and their children, and its goal is to assist students earning their high school diploma while providing helpful resources and services. Details: 327-9186, www.cusd.com/YouthParentProgram.aspx.

Campus Catering

Campus Catering creates healthy, delicious meals for students across the district. This year, thanks to an extension during the pandemic of the USDA's no-cost program, meals will be free for all students for the entire school year.

Campus Catering employees serve more than 4.5 million meals annually and are ready to welcome back students with a smile and a tasty meal to fuel them for learning.

By introducing a variety of choices like fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains and lean proteins, the Campus Catering team is teaching students to develop healthy eating habits.

The food service team hosts taste tests and focus groups with students throughout the school year to make sure our menus are full of customer favorites like breaded chicken drumsticks, crispy Cobb salad, freshly baked whole-grain rolls and more.

Parents and students can view breakfast and lunch menus on the CUSD app by clicking on "Meal Menus" on your school's resource list, or by visiting www.cusd.com/nutrislice.



School area system creates smaller, interactive communities

CUSD Today

cludes our online, alternative and specialty schools.

For families new to Clovis Unified, it is helpful to understand the structure of the district and how to interact with us. We highly value people-to-people connection and want to hear from you.

CUSD is the 14th largest public education district in California with around 43,000 students. It operates 52 schools that include five traditional high schools, five intermediate schools and 34 elementary schools.

The district also has four alternative education schools, an online school, an outdoor school, CART and an adult education school.

Clovis Unified's 200-square-mile boundary includes most of the City of Clovis, 20 percent of the City of Fresno and parts of Fresno County. In order to maintain a smaller, interactive approach, the district is divided into five school areas and an educational service area that each has an overseeing area superintendent.

Each school area includes a high school and its feeder schools. We have Bear Nation, Cougar Country, The Stampede, Eagle Country and The Wolf Pack! Educational Services in-

Clovis Unified will always be united in its core values and aims to provide the best education we can to all of our students, and our area structure supports those goals by creating easier access and customized leadership. Smaller areas help keep our growing size in check and allows for people to interact with one another.

Keep in touch

Parents and the community are invited to share comments, questions or concerns by contacting a child's classroom teacher, school administrator or area superintendent.

School websites have staff and administrator contact information. During back-to-school night, teachers will review with parents the best method to connect with them – some prefer emails, others like phone calls or texts.

Teachers generally should be a parent's first stop, but parents are always welcome to contact school staff, including the principal or a school's area superintendent as needed.

Working together, we will make a powerful team for our students and create a path for them to succeed.



Several ways to keep connected

If you are reading this edition of *CUSD Today*, thank you. This is one of many tools Clovis Unified uses to keep in touch. Communication is critical in our 43,000-plus student district – the 14th largest public school district in the state – and it will remain a top priority as this year we transition toward a post-pandemic future.

There are multiple ways Clovis Unified will share information this school year, and we encourage our stakeholders of students, parents, staff and community to watch for these important messages.

Our most frequently updated platform is our website, cusd.com. It should be the first stop when looking for COVID-related updates, district resources, school board agendas or program information. An associated app is available in the Apple and Android store. App push notifications keep parents updated on breaking news. Time-sensitive news will also be sent out through emails as needed; parents and guardians should make sure their contact information on file is accurate.

Superintendent Eimear O'Farrell, Ed.D., will send video messages as warranted when we encounter bigger news items, and watch for online community forums that will strive to provide clarity on more complex issues as well as serve as a way to collect questions and comments from viewers.

On a monthly basis, Clovis Unified mails families and employees *CUSD Today*, from August through June. Our district newspaper – paid for by advertisements by community partners – showcases some of the bigger events and general news of the district while also highlighting many great things going on in our 52 schools.

The district also uses *Two Minutes Today*, a short video blog emailed monthly to parents, to provide information about current news. (Watch for this month's segment that will discuss ways to get ready for the school year and emotional wellness support.)

The CUSD Parent Bulletin is produced when it becomes important to delve deeper into a trending topic in society to provide parents with information to consider for

their child, such as emotional wellness, navigating social media or the dangers of vaping. These newsletter-style reports are directly emailed to parents and contain tips on how to talk with your child about these challenging issues.

Clovis Unified's social media platforms are filled with some of the daily happenings of our students, schools and staff.

Followers on Facebook (Clovis Unified School District) and Instagram (ClovisUSD) will learn about CUSD good news, upcoming workshops, awards and events.

Additionally, each of our schools has its own newsletter, website and social media channels with useful information specific to that campus. They also offer links to Clovis Unified's Parent Connection, NutriSlice and Peachjar that let parents and students easily find out about grades, schoolwork, lunch menus and more.

Many of these resources are available on Clovis Unified's mobile app, and those who do not yet have it are encouraged to download it today!

BUCHANAN AREA
Area Superintendent: Kevin Kerney, 327-9370
High School: Buchanan
Intermediate: Alta Sierra
Elementary: Century, Cole, Dry Creek, Garfield, Tarpey, Woods

CLOVIS AREA
Area Superintendent: Scott Dille, Ed.D., 327-9360
High School: Clovis
Intermediate: Clark
Elementary: Cedarwood, Clovis, Gettysburg, Jefferson, Mickey Cox, Red Bank, Sierra Vista, Weldon

CLOVIS EAST AREA
Area Superintendent: Jennifer Thomas, 327-9365
High School: Clovis East
Intermediate: Reyburn
Elementary: Boris, Fancher Creek, Freedom, Miramonte, Orazo, Reagan, Temperance-Kutner and Young

CLOVIS NORTH AREA
Area Superintendent: Darin Tockey, 327-9355
High School: Clovis North
Intermediate: Granite Ridge
Elementary: Bud Rank, Copper Hills, Fugman, Mountain View, Riverview

CLOVIS WEST AREA
Area Superintendent: Marc Hammack, Ed.D., 327-9375
High School: Clovis West
Intermediate: Kastner
Elementary: Fort Washington, Liberty, Lincoln, Nelson, Maple Creek, Pinedale, Valley Oak

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES
Area Superintendent: Steve France, 327-9380
Specialty Schools: Center for Advanced Research and Technology (CART); Clovis Adult Education; Clovis Community Day Elementary; Clovis Community Day Secondary; Clovis Online; Enterprise High; Gateway High; Sierra Outdoor School



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➤ Announcements



Photo Special to CUSD Today.

CUSD bus driver Guy Foell charges one of the district's new electric buses that joined the fleet this summer. Charging stations were installed in the bus yard in June.

Electric school buses hit the road

Clovis Unified's big yellow school buses are going green, and they quietly rolled through the streets taking students to and from summer school.

Six electric buses – five delivered in June and the last to arrive any day now – have joined the district's three other EV buses that were purchased last year. It's part of CUSD's ongoing effort to use clean-powered vehicles and reduce emissions to the environment.

About 90 percent of the costs for the new buses were funded by grants from San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, VW Mitigation Trust Fund and PG&E, said Transportation Director Sheryl Boe.

"We're excited and grateful to partner with these organizations as they support our continuous efforts of reducing greenhouse-gas emissions throughout our district," Boe said.

With charging stations and required electric support installed also in June, the buses were immediately put into service. The electric-powered vehicles seat up to 78 students and can travel around 90 miles when fully charged. The buses

can be distinguished by the green-painted bird flying over the entrance door. They are expected to begin saving the district in fuel and maintenance costs.

The nine electric buses cost in total \$3.17 million, Boe said. The VW Mitigation Fund awarded the district \$2.4 million, San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District \$540,000, and PG&E provided \$4,000 rebates for each bus.

The district also received \$383,000 from SJVAPCD and \$68,000 from PG&E to fund the electrical infrastructure and charging stations along with PG&E designing and constructing infrastructure needed to support the district's new electrical equipment.

"It's really been a team effort, and we're all committed to doing our part to reduce emissions," Boe said. "We look forward to providing cleaner air for our students, staff and community."

Clovis Unified has an overall fleet of 166 buses, some of which operate using alternative fuels and diesel fuel for longer range trips. Boe said there are plans to purchase additional electric buses in the next five years.

\$19M in scholarships awarded

The total is in: Graduating seniors in 2021 received \$18,853,129 in college scholarships!

"These students worked extremely hard to achieve numerous accomplishments during a pandemic, changing schedules and little personal contact with their counselors and teachers," said Carol Shanahan, former guidance counselor director. "The Clovis Unified counselors are very proud of these students."

Each Clovis Unified high school reported scholarship amounts received by their graduates, which are: Buchanan, \$2,962,795; Clovis, \$2,024,562; Clovis East, \$4.3 million; Clovis North, \$3,901,972; Clovis Online, \$34,000; Clovis West, \$5.6 million; Enterprise, \$25,000; and Gateway, \$4,800.

Shanahan offered other highlights of the recent CUSD seniors:

- All seniors participated in CUSD's College and Career Exploration Program called Xello, which assisted them with the development of post-secondary plans.

- 70 percent of seniors completed the FAFSA/Dream Act, paving the way for many opportunities for financial aid, scholarships, and Cal Grants.

- Many seniors earned college credit while attending high school through Unitrack with Fresno State, Clovis Community College Advantage Program (CCCAP), CTE Dual Enrollment Courses, English 1A partnership, and College Enrichment Courses.

- Many CUSD seniors completed a Career Technical Education Pathway, providing education and experience in careers they may be interested in pursuing.

- Graduating seniors reported acceptance to a multitude of universities that include all State University and University of California campuses, Stanford, Columbia, USC, Penn State, MIT, Air Force Academy, West Point, Naval Academy, Smittcamp Honors College, Lyles College of Engineering, Vanderbilt, Syracuse, Baylor, University of Wisconsin and University of Chicago.

CUSD sees results of paperless service

Paperless school newsletters, teacher messages and flyers resulted in saving the equivalent of 12,717 trees, according to Peachjar, the district's electronic routing system. Each Clovis Unified school uses Peachjar to distribute messages about upcoming events and activities, and the service emails directly the electronic

flyers to parents and guardians. There is also a Peachjar link on school websites that makes available recent materials.

Mark your calendars!

Clovis Unified's 2021-22 student calendar is available online and indicates holidays, grading periods and end of quarters/semesters for the upcoming, new school year.

Here are a few key dates:

- Aug. 16, School starts
- Nov. 22 to 26, Thanksgiving Holiday
- Dec. 20 to Jan. 3, Winter Break
- April 11 to 18, Spring Break
- June 3, School ends

Full calendars are available on cusd.com/calendars.aspx.

Win a home, support CUSD!

The Foundation for Clovis Schools is one of 11 community nonprofits that will benefit from Granville Homes "Hope of Hope" fundraiser. Granville and its trade partners



are donating a brand-new house valued at more than \$500,000 in Copper River Ranch (in the Clovis

North area) and selling a limited number of tickets to be entered into a drawing for it.

Tickets are \$100 each. Also being offered is a two-ticket bundle for \$200 that includes two tickets for the house and automatically enters those tickets in an additional drawing for a 2-year lease on a Lexus SUV. There are other additional prizes.

Tickets purchased directly from the Foundation for Clovis Schools benefits Clovis Unified through student scholarships and teacher grants. To purchase a ticket call the Foundation at 327-9095 or fill out an interest form at foundationforclovischools.com/granvillehomeofhope.aspx.

The drawing for the Lexus will be Sept. 29 and for the home and additional prizes will be Oct. 13.

The Foundation for Clovis Schools is a nonprofit fundraising organization made up of volunteers that supports the district with such programs as Students of Promise, Superintendent's Breakfast and Classroom Grants.

Details: FoundationForClovisSchools.com.

In a virtual classroom, or in-person classroom, your child needs to be immunized.

In order for your child to attend school, all school districts in Fresno County require immunization records. If your child isn't up-to-date with vaccines, it can compromise their health and academic growth.

Why Does Your Child Need Immunizations?

With COVID-19 closing schools, you may have pushed back your child's vaccination schedule. Now that children are starting to return to schools, children who are not protected by vaccines can be exposed to dangerous diseases including:

- Whooping Cough • Measles • Meningitis
- Chickenpox • Tetanus

Who Should Get Vaccinated?

To ensure health and safety, all children attending private and public schools, preschools and childcare, should be up to date on their immunizations.

Don't wait any longer – make an appointment with your child's doctor today.

For more info, visit fcdph.org/school



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Putting 'possible' in our 'Mission: Possible' theme

By Eimear O'Farrell, Ed.D.
Superintendent

THE START of another school year is upon us, and we are so thrilled to open our schools with full-time, in-person instructional schedules! During the pandemic, we pushed through so many challenges and learned that our students, our staff, and our community is far stronger, far more resilient, and far more tenacious than we ever thought possible.



Eimear O'Farrell, Ed.D.

It's ironic that our theme this past year for our 'diamond anniversary' celebrating 60 years as a unified school district, centered us so much on the notion that diamonds shine brightest when under the most extreme pressure. As a district that has always put the needs of our students front and center, we were reminded of the importance of the amazing educators whose dedication and love for our kids is always centrally pivotal to their success. And, yes, we found lots of ways to shine brightly, by providing a safe working and learning environment for our educators to take care of our kids. As I visited all 52 of our schools, I witnessed teachers, counselors, nurses, psychologists, support staff, bus drivers, campus catering folks, custodial staff, and so many more, all pouring love and confidence into our kids on a daily basis. They used the most innovative and creative, and sometimes totally goofy ways to reach our kids, to make them smile, to engage them, and to ensure that they were ready for the upcoming 2021-22 academic school year. It was exhausting just watching them,

whether it was in-person, or through distance learning. Our educators found so many amazing ways to push through a plethora of challenges, and in doing so, they modeled to our kids that even in the face of immense adversity, our attitude, and our perseverance is key to our success and our ability to shine!

Day in, day out, this past year, our team of amazing educators demonstrated to our kids, at a time when they needed us most, that we were there for them, and that we weren't giving up on them or for them. I want to acknowledge our CUSD educators publicly for all they did for the kids of our community during this past year.

We will always remember how you lovingly shone brightly for our kids and made the seemingly impossible possible!

What a great foundation for our Clovis Unified theme this year! Mission: Possible. It leans into the fact that we have built the confidence in our students to know that with a dash of determination, and

a spoon of perseverance, along with a hefty dose of laughter, all stirred up with a positive can-do attitude, we can indeed make anything possible.

Our mission has always been clear in Clovis Unified: to develop our students in mind, body, and spirit. However, our "annual theme" always leans into the specific time and moment of our school year, and this year, we fully acknowledge that our mission is also to ensure that every student comes out of this pandemic with a sense of their own potential, and the fact that with the right attitude, and the support of our amazing team of educators, anything is possible.

Recently I spoke with a young girl who will be entering first grade and spent her kindergarten year doing school from home. She was attending the district's Summer Fun program, taking classes in Sparkle Fun and Ocean Exploration. Her eyes danced as she told me about the glitter projects and sea discoveries, and how excited she was to be on campus this fall. It's time to start getting ready for "Back to School," get backpacks organized, and sharpen those pencils! Awaiting our students is an exciting school year of engaging learning, co-curricular activities, socialization and support.

So much is possible when great people link arms together and work toward a common goal! We know that firsthand now, as we all did exactly that ... and we are eager to share that same positive attitude with your children again this year. Doc always reminded us that "It's people, not programs that make the positive difference." Mission: Possible? Yes, we readily choose to accept this mission, and look forward to sharing all those possibilities with our entire community in this upcoming 2021-22 school year!

LESSONS

Inspirations by, for and from our CUSD students



Photo special to CUSD Today.

Children in Clovis Unified's Summer Fun "Ocean Explorers" class studied the wonders of sea life using hands-on science, reading and art activities. Students were said to have had a "fantastic" time!

"Always be on the lookout for the presence of wonder"

E.B. WHITE, AMERICAN AUTHOR

Begin planning now for your child's success

CUSD Today

Close to 43,000 students will return to Clovis Unified's campuses Aug. 16, but helping students have a successful 2021-22 school year begins now.

For some students, this will be the first time since the start of the pandemic that they will be back on campus. Parents are encouraged to begin preparing now for the start of the school year by establishing routines, increasing structure within their child's day, and talking with their child about any concerns regarding the return to school. Review current health and safety practices together so kids will know what to expect and can be assured measures are in place to keep them safe. (CUSD and school websites are updated regularly with the most current state and county guidelines that the district follows.)

Some students may be a little rusty with ways of engaging in a classroom. Parents can encourage their children that this is not uncommon given last year and that these skills will quickly develop. Discuss ways they can become an active participant in class. Reassure them it's OK to ask the teacher questions if they need help, to join in a class discussion and to offer ideas. Remind them of good habits, like listening to others and taking turns. For younger children, consider role playing and take turns being the student, teacher or friend.

The following are recommendations offered by Clovis Unified teachers, staff and administrators that can help kids have a great start to the new school year.

Before school starts

- **Visit school to help your student become familiar with where things are.** Be sure to find your child's classroom, or classrooms for those in intermediate or high school. Note where the restroom, library, cafeteria and nurse's office are located.

- **Identify your child's drop-off and pick-up meeting place on the school site.** If a child is participating in Campus Club or taking a bus home from school, be sure he or she knows

where to go.

- **If your child will be walking to school, practice the route.** If possible, make arrangements for your child to walk to school with a friend or child in the neighborhood.

- **Visit the school website.** It contains valuable information including school start and end times, Back-to-School Night dates, lunch menus, and details about getting involved in co-curricular activities. There is also a full listing of teachers and administrative staff, including contact information.

- **If your child is interested in sports or co-curricular activities,** find out through the website how to get involved and when signups are. Help your child prepare and begin to train or practice.

- **Ease students back into a regular school schedule.** The week before school starts, have students go to bed and wake up earlier a little more each day, moving them closer to what the school bedtime/wake-up routine will be.

- **Grab a good book.** If students have not been reading this summer, there is still time to warm up those reading skills. Have bedtime reading with younger students.

- **Set up a homework station in the home.** Find the best place for students to get their work done. Have kids help as you equip it with necessary supplies. Make sure it has a good work surface and lighting.

- **Go back-to-school shopping.** Take inventory of what your child has and fill in the gaps with what he or she needs. Keep in mind Clovis Unified's dress code if purchasing clothes. On many teachers' websites (found through the school website), class supply lists are available. Other items to consider are a backpack, water bottle or athletic shoes.

- **Talk about what that first day may be like and ask your child how he or she feels about it.** Offer reassurance, enthusiasm and support. Let them know it's OK to be nervous and let them know that lots of other students feel the very same way.

- **Have your child plan out what he or she will wear for the first day of school.**

- **Encourage your student to enter the new school year**

with a mindset of meeting new people and having new experiences. Talk about getting involved at school and joining at least one activity such as a club, academic or sports team, or the performing arts.

- **Fuel the body well.** Take a shopping trip and talk with your child now to help choose foods that are nutritious.

- **Pre-make a few dinners that can be frozen.** Having meals ready the first week of school can help the whole family avoid added tension and keep things running smoothly.

After school starts

- **Make sure your child eats breakfast before school.** Have students bring a water bottle to keep hydrated throughout the day. Pack a good lunch. Send a few healthy snacks.

- **Be sure your child gets enough sleep.** Doctors recommend children up to the fifth grade get as much as 10 to 11 hours of sleep each night.

- **Establish regular weekday routines** for school, homework, mealtime and bedtime.

- **Have your child go to bed organized** with backpack, P.E., or co-curricular clothes and equipment ready for the next day.

- **Make lunches the night before.**

- **Drive safe.** Stop when the school bus red lights are flashing, indicating students are boarding or exiting, and pay attention to crossing guards and school speed limits.

- **Keep informed.** Review all materials the school sends home. Browse the website often to check for important information and dates.

- **If the first couple of days are a little difficult:** remain positive and calm. Let your child know you care and are there to support him or her.

- **Check in with your child after school.** Review homework. Follow your student's progress on Parent Connect. If a child begins to struggle in a given subject and you are unable to help, talk it over with his or her teacher.

► Please see *Planning*, Page 9

— ABOUT US —

CUSD Today, Clovis Unified's good news publication, is sent directly to the homes of all CUSD parents and staff, as well as district supporters. In an effort to unify the CUSD community, the newspaper highlights the achievements of Clovis Unified students and staff; profiles new and updated Governing Board policies; and shares general news and information happening within the district.

Circulation: 34,000.

Funding: All costs associated with producing, printing and mailing CUSD Today are entirely funded by our advertisers. To show your appreciation of their support, we ask you to consider patronizing these businesses and services as the need arises.

Story submissions: Please submit all ideas to the Site Coordinator at your school. Please contact your school to find out who your Site Coordinator is. Editorial deadlines are two weeks before the publication date. We do our best to include as many submissions in each issue as our editorial space will allow.

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SCCC STATE CENTER COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

Editor's Note: Around the District highlights positive activities and accomplishments of students and schools throughout the district. Here, find items about the end of the 2021 school year as well as some good news from over the summer.

Kiwanis scholarships

The Clovis Kiwanis Club awarded scholarships to graduating Clovis Unified School District students, through its scholarship program that has been in place since 1992. "As a committee, we feel this group of students will represent CUSD and Clovis Kiwanis as the best of their class," said Eddie De Leon, chairperson of the Kiwanis Scholarship Committee. The 2021 recipients are **Haley Mozier**, Buchanan High; **Tyrell Lopez**, Clovis High; **Julie Vang**, Clovis East High; **Paige Freeburg** and **Haley Wirth**, Clovis North High; **Deynoona Zaghmouri**, Clovis West High; and **Ryan Wilder**, Gateway High.



Morning academy a hit at Miramonte

Third- and fourth-grade students at Miramonte Elementary had the chance to come to school an hour early during the final weeks of school to participate in the Miramonte Enrichment Academy – and around 70 kids came each day! The students rotated through different stations that provided extension activities such as cooking, gardening, STEM and art.

The academy was an idea developed by Miramonte teachers as a way to help students have more socialization while also providing activities that were new and fun to do. They also had an academic component. For example, when doing gardening activities, there was written work and lessons about the life cycle of plants.

Librarians share stories

Clovis Unified librarians found an interactive way this past spring to encourage reading while also getting kids outdoors through Story Walks.

Red Bank, Tarpey, Gettysburg elementary schools and others put out story boards that represented pages in a book, with each panel having a scannable QR code that would then provide the recorded version of the page.

"Story Walks were perfect this year in that students could be out of the classroom, stay socially distanced and enjoy a story. It was also fun for the kids since they could not come into the library for a story time this year," said Gettysburg Elementary's Starlene Finley. Tarpey librarian Georgi Leonardo said the boards were such a hit at her school, that they are thinking of continuing the program next year. At first, she said, it was



challenging to literally take a book apart in order to create the boards. "I've been taught that 'Books are knowledge' and never hurt them. Of course I got over it when I saw kids coming on their own time with parents that first Wednesday afternoon," she said. Teachers took their class through the stories, and at Red Bank, the books were even made available for families to experience, organized by librarian April Lencioni, that included hybrid and online students.

"This felt like a scavenger hunt. I wouldn't know what was next until I got to the next story board," said Gettysburg fourth-grader Nolan Calvillo. Said second-grader Abby Higginbotham, "I loved all of the Book Walks. They are really fun."

CN State History Day winner

Clovis North student Shailey Shah won the co-championship award for State History Day and advanced to the national competition. The state competition held virtually in May involved nearly 1,200 students, 726 projects and 23 counties represented. This is the second year Shailey won state co-champion. The National History Day took place in June and included around 3,000 students from the U.S., China, Korea and South Asia.

BHS robotics makes Worlds

The Buchanan High robotics team, the Bird Brains, won the Chairman's Award for the Greater Central Valley, which qualified them for the World Championships (virtual) for the third year in a row.

Additionally, student Ethan West was

selected as a Dean's List Finalist and will be competing at the World Championship level as well.

The Bird Brains put in hundreds of hours at home throughout the pandemic and pushed this team to great heights. A few accomplishments include:

- Wrote grants to increase access to STEM and robotics at local Title I schools and for student scholarships, for which they were awarded \$12,000

- Created their very own robotics game and led a group of our new members to gain the skills that they would have learned during a regular build season.

The Bird Brains team members are Alyssa Copeland, Annika Garza, Antonio Avila, Austin Owen, Austin Rodriguez, Ben Alcalá, Ben Waddill, Braydon Cook, Camden Kirk, Caroline Keppler, Chase Griffith, Colby Kirk, Colby Olsen, Curtis Gendron, Daphne Person, Emme Gorden, Erica Kokor, Ethan West, Genie Lee, Grayson Pressutti, Hailey Ferris, Haley Geers, Hunter Liggett, Jacob Menz, Jasmine Le, Jioppearl Cesa, Juddiah Urbano, Katelynn Compton, Kavan Singh, Kylie Alexander, Kylie Copeland, Levi Miller, Liana Vangyi, Livian Ngo, Lucas McGary, Lyndon Phillips, Makayla Wyckoff, Matt Zetz, Mazin Abi-Rached, Michael Simpson, Noah Menz, Parker Wyatt, Pratham Hombal, Raymond Williams, Sabrina Olmedo, Sanmeet Deol, Skyler Wilson, Taylor Hirata, Taylor Taniguchi, Thomas Coleman, Tyler Petersen and Zane Abi-Rached.

CTE Career Skills Challenge

Several Clovis Unified students placed in Fresno County's Career Skills Challenge held at the end of the school year. Congratulations to the following winners in their respective categories:

- Auto/Diesel** (Instructors Michael Miller/Ricky Jones): 1st Place, **Collin Camini**, Clovis North; 2nd Place, **Ryan Pyzer**, Clovis North; and 3rd Place, **Tyler Collins**, Clovis North

- Construction Building Information Modeling** (Instructor John Eichmann): 1st Place, **Aidan Puga**, Clovis East; 2nd Place, **Benjamin Garcia**, Clovis High

- Culinary Arts Dessert Preparation** (Instructor George Bonanno): 1st Place, **Alyse Flores**, Clovis High

- Fire Fighting** (Instructor Randy Finfrock): 1st Place, **Jace Baker**, Buchanan, and **Nicholas Hanson**, Clovis East; 2nd Place, **Timothy Chavez**, Clovis North, and **Brendon Mathieu**, Clovis East; 3rd Place, **Hayden Dolan**, Clovis North, **Tanner Henson**, Clovis High and **Chase Mathieu**, Clovis East

- Today's Class Auto** (Instructor Jason Mullikin): 1st Place, **Collin Camini**, Clovis West; 2nd Place, **Zachary Dellamaggiore**, Clovis High; 3rd Place, **Benjamin Tout**, Clovis High.

- Today's Class Diesel** (Instructors Michael Miller/ Ricky Jones): 1st Place, **Ryan Pyzer**, Clovis West

Roses in 2022!

Ten Clovis Unified students will march in the annual Rose Parade Jan. 1, 2022, in Pasadena! Accepted into the prestigious 300-member 2022 Bands of America Honor Band are:

- From Clovis East High – **Avery Ramirez**, clarinet.

- From Clovis North High – **Cassandra Baber**, color guard, **Sarah Elsberry**, clarinet; **Sarah Lesser**, color guard; **Olivia Pavao**, color guard; and **Savannah Wightman**, piccolo.

- From Clovis West High – **Tailia Hovsepian**, piccolo; **Matthew Kerber**, alto sax; **Samuel Lozano**, trumpet; and **Adam Garabedian**, trombone

Additionally, Clovis North band teacher David Lesser has been selected to be a member of the faculty for the honor band.

Lesser, who is teaching the saxophone section, and band students began receiving material earlier this year to start rehearsing. "Through the course of the next months, students will have regular music assignments, meetings and assessments to ensure that once we arrive in Long Beach Dec. 27, students are well prepared to be able to put everything together in a short amount of time," said Lesser of the preparation.

The Bands of America marches in the parade every four years, but it was unable to do so in 2021 when the parade was cancelled due to COVID restrictions.

At this time, the 2022 Rose Parade is scheduled to occur.



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New principals appointed at Woods, Freedom, T-K and BHS

By Kelly Avants
Chief Communications Officer

July 21

At their July 21 meeting, the Clovis Unified Governing Board continued the process of staffing schools for the upcoming school year, and made the following appointments to open principal positions:

■ Cecelia Dansby, current learning director at Buchanan High to principal of Woods Elementary

■ Laurel Graves, current deputy principal at the Clovis North Educational Center, to principal of Freedom Elementary.

The two principal appointments were needed to fill openings created by the Governing Board's June 23 appointment of current principals Kristen Belknap, Ed.D. and Darrin Holtermann to new roles. Holtermann was appointed to the position of Director of Instruction and MTSS, and Dr. Belknap was appointed to the position of Deputy Principal at the Reagan Educational Center. Both appointments were effective July 1.

The board also discussed a resolution related to calling on the State of California to give local governing bodies more control. As part of their conversation, the board

BOARD BRIEFS

heard an update on the most recent information released by California's Department of Public Health.

In other action, the board:
■ Received written staff reports on the After School Education and Safety (ASES) Program, and received the Program Self-Evaluation for Child Development Pre-school Report.

■ Received a video presentation of the annual update on Clovis Unified's Special Education Programs.

■ Approved an addendum to the Superintendent's Contract related to a recent salary comparison study (available as an attachment to the agenda material).

■ Approved a triennial agreement with Fuel Education for online educational products and services; with GrowthPoint Technologies for Career Technical Education services; with School Services of California for legislative consulting and advocacy services; and with

Comprehensive Youth Services for student support services.

■ Approved reduced hours in the Nurse Assistant Program from 285 to 214.

■ Adopted resolutions No. 3818, No. 3820 and No. 3821 related to the annual workers compensation coverage and general liability for volunteer personnel, and the department of social services community care licensing designee.

June 9

Before the start of the meeting, the Governing Board honored 131 retiring employees of the district at their annual Retiree Celebration and adopted Resolution No. 3817 expressing appreciation for the contributions of these employees to the students and community of Clovis Unified.

The board took action to appoint the following individuals to new roles:
■ Omar Hemaïdan, former deputy principal at Reagan Educational Center, to principal of Buchanan High.

■ Kelli Hinojos, former learning director at Reyburn Intermediate School, to principal of Temperance-Kutner Elementary.

■ To the position of learning director at the noted schools: Michelle Dodson (Buchanan High), Ann Castro (Clovis West High), Whitney Swillis (Clovis North Educational Center – Special Education).

In other action, the board:

■ Approved the annual 2021-22 District Budget and the 2021-24 Local Control Accountability Plan for the District and the Clovis Online School, copies of which are available on the District's website at www.cusd.com.

■ Approved the appointment of members to the Citizens' Oversight Committee for the Clovis Unified School Bond funds for two-year terms.

□ *The next regularly scheduled meetings of the Governing Board are Aug. 11 and 25, with the public portion beginning at 6:30 p.m., at 1680 David E. Cook Way, Clovis. Complete agendas, minutes and video from meetings are available online at www.cusd.com.*

Planning:

FROM PAGE 5

■ Help your child learn how to keep organized by creating check lists or using a daily planner.

■ Plan some down time for your child. Kids do better having had some time to relax.

■ Attend Back-to-School Night and meet your child's teacher.

■ Students, make a habit of packing your homework in your backpack right after completion to assist with being organized in the morning.

■ Students, put your phones away and spend part of your free-time unplugged. Talk with friends, get outside or join in a family activity.

■ Secondary students, always communicate with your teacher about upcoming co-curricular events that will take you out of class.

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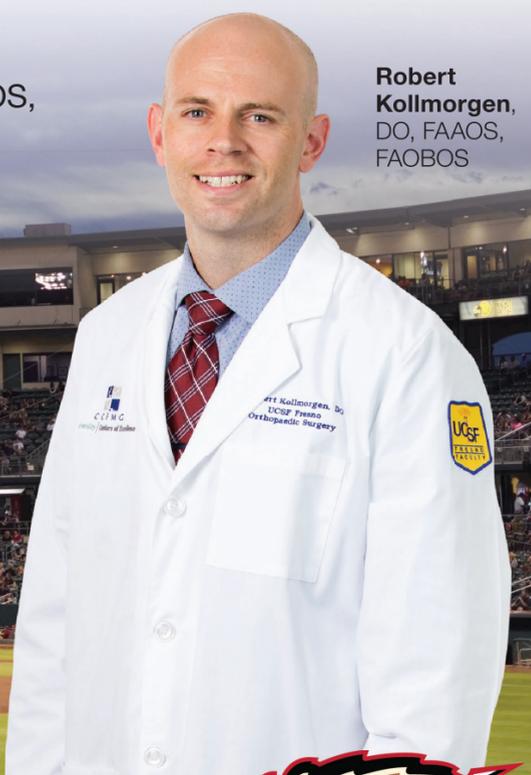
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