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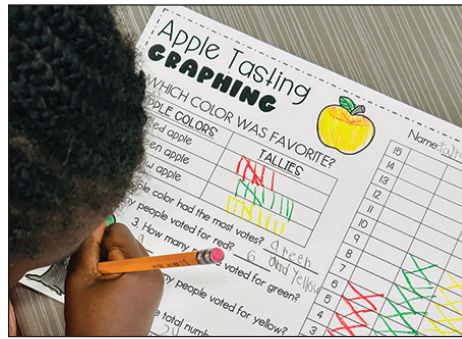
November 2024

Clovis Unified School District — DEVELOPING STUDENTS IN MIND, BODY & SPIRIT Volume 27, No. 4

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Clovis Unified School District
1450 Herndon Ave.
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Apple Exploration!



Learning became an adventure and a tasty sensation when first graders at Hirayama Elementary recently spent time in "Mrs. Mayfield's Apple Orchard." The curious kids in teacher Caitlin Mayfield's class studied the life cycle of apples from seeds to fruit, voted for their favorite kinds of apples and graphed the results, and dressed like Johnny Appleseed. The class even created apple volcanoes (pictured above, Victor, Tayla and Josiah react to their volcanoes) and made applesauce to eat (pictured bottom right, Michael gives his a thumb's up!) "The activities spanned across all academic disciplines and immersed kids in thematic learning in the areas of reading, math, writing, art and science," said Mayfield who was inspired by the national event Rock Your School that encouraged creating out-of-the box experiences for students.



Photos special to CUSD Today

Future of CUSD to be impacted by bond vote

This November, the community will decide on the future of Clovis Unified's facility program with their votes on Measure A. If passed, funds from Measure A would provide enhanced safety and technology features on all 53 campuses; complete the final phase of Clovis South High to ease overcrowding; and modernize infrastructure and update classrooms at older schools, some of which are 60+ years old. The citizen-recommended measure maintains the existing tax rate. Without approval, work to build or modernize schools would stop and Clovis Unified would not be able to access state facility funds that require matching local dollars. To learn more: cUSD.com/2024Bond.



Free 1-on-1 tutoring

Need homework help? It doesn't matter if it's day or night – Clovis Unified students in all grade levels can access Tutor.com in their Clever account for free! Students using the service, which is a part of The Princeton Review, can expect one-on-one help from a knowledgeable tutor through a live messaging window. There is also the ability for the student or tutor to share screens on a whiteboard on which both write and view. With more than 3,000 expert tutors who can help with 250 subjects, students can get the extra support they need whether it's for second grade math or high school AP Chemistry. Students can also submit an essay or research paper for a tutor to review and provide feedback. To access the on-demand service, students should login to their Clever account and select the Tutor.com app where they will find easy instructions to get started.



Clovis Unified state scores top in area

“
We remain committed to keeping student achievement and academic success as top priorities this year.

Corrine Folmer, Ed.D.
CUSD Superintendent

Results provide insights, help develop learning strategies

Clovis Unified students showed continued improvement on the 2024 California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) results that were released by the state in October. District educators are now analyzing the data in a variety of ways – from grade levels to demographics to individual students – and developing plans to further shape classroom instruction and student interventions.

“While our Clovis Unified students are performing up to 20% above state and county averages, we remain committed to keeping student achieve-

ment and academic success as top priorities this year. We continue to learn from studying student achievement data what is working well and where we have opportunities to further support students,” said Superintendent Corrine Folmer, Ed.D.

In English Language Arts (ELA), 67.06% of students in Clovis Unified scored at or above proficiency level (state average 47.04%; county average 44.3%); in math, 52.41% of CUSD students were at or above grade level proficiency (state average 35.54%; county average 32.18%); and in science, 46.37% of CUSD students were at or above grade level proficiency (state average 30.7%; county average 25.82%). “This forward progress is the result of our in-

credible educational team who are champions for student success,” Folmer said. “I’m proud of their continuous improvement approach to meet the needs of our students.”

During 2020 and 2021, state testing was halted because of the pandemic.

When the CAASPP tests returned in the spring of 2022, scores showed a decline in numbers across the state compared to pre-COVID year results. The 2022 scores established a new baseline for districts, and since that time, Clovis Unified achievement has shown growth year over year, with an overall 3% gain in math, 1% in ELA and 5% in science.

► Please see *State scores*, Page 4

Lessons in the Court

Clovis Unified Mock Trial students from the district's five comprehensive high schools, as well as Leadership students from Maple Creek Elementary, were invited to the Fifth District Court of Appeal to watch the Supreme Court of California in action.

The Supreme Court held a special oral argument session in Fresno in October from Chief Justice Patricia Guerrero, with the only other time the Court held such a session in this area was in 2010. Students at the rare event listened to the argument for an appeal from the defense attorney of a woman found guilty of second-degree murder. Students not only watched the legal process they've learned through Mock Trial happen in front of them, but also had a chance to ask questions to the Supreme Court justices in an open forum discussion.

“Hearing the attorneys argue the wording of the law so specifically was fascinating,” said Clovis East High student Manasa Kota. “It’s a whole different side to the legal process that we rarely see.”

“This trial was obviously about a real, unfortunate matter, but I feel as though it’s important and significant to experience this because if someone had wanted to go into the law field, they would have to experience this on a daily basis,” said Clovis High student Parker Hernandez.



Famous Instructors

Temperance-Kutner Elementary fifth graders had two special guest teachers providing details about the United States Constitution: President George Washington and Alexander Hamilton!

In fifth-grade teacher Patricia Clark's room, "Washington" led class all day, infusing facts about the Constitution into every lesson. Students sang the Preamble, learned vocabulary words from the Constitution and more. Meanwhile, in teacher Ginger Hazel's class, "Hamilton" took students on a virtual tour of Independence Hall in Philadelphia, Penn., and studied the Preamble in small sections to learn what each part means.

“The next day when I showed up, the students were full of stories about 'General George Washington' and all that he'd taught them the day before,” said Clark.

“I was so sorry that I'd 'missed it.'”



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Announcements

PARENT ACADEMY

Workshops provide tips to help students succeed



At a CUSD Parent Academy workshop held last month, parents learned about life-saving first-aid strategies and took part in hands-on safety training.

Clovis Unified Supplemental Service's Parent Academy hosts free, monthly Parent Night workshops for parents to learn about topics that may affect their child and about district resources and programs available to help their child. Workshops are held at the CUSD Professional Learning Center, 326 N. Clovis Ave., in Clovis, with free dinner and childcare at 5:30 p.m., and the workshop at 6 p.m. (unless otherwise noted below.) Upcoming topics include:

- Nov. 7 - "Mr. Peace - Leadership: From Passion 2 Purpose!" Building good character in our kids and community.
- Jan. 9 - "Newcomer Parent Night" Resources in CUSD and the community for new and immigrant families. To be held from 5:30-7 p.m. at Weldon Elementary.
- Feb. 6 - "Navigating Modern Parenthood" - Challenges of homework, social media and peer pressure, and tips on how to guide students and balance homelife.
- March 6 - "Enhancing Family Communication" Tips about strengthening bonds; active listening; and conflict resolution.
- April 10 - "Family Literacy Night" Learn about one author's journey and how parents can support reading at home.

Topics are based on parent feedback and requests. To register for a Parent Night or to find out more about the Parent Academy, visit: cUSD.com/ParentAcademy.

partners with the community in creating these cultural events where students can learn about themselves and one another.

Conferences include keynote speakers and professionals in the community discussing their experiences, answering questions, and providing information about college and careers.

Clovis Unified's leadership conferences are open to all students regardless of race and ethnicity.

Upcoming conferences are:

- CUSD Native American Student Conference, Nov. 19 at the Mercedes Edwards Theatre
- CUSD Asian Student Success Conference, Dec. 4, at the Reagan Educational Center
- CUSD Transition Student Conference, Jan. 28, at Mercedes Edwards Theatre. Transition students only.
- Fresno County Superintendent of Schools African American High School Student Leadership Conference, Feb. 4, Fresno Convention Center
- CUSD African American Student Leadership Middle School Conference, Feb. 21, at the Clovis North Educational Center. Open to Central Valley Intermediate Schools.
- CUSD Latino High School Student Success Conference, March 3, Clovis North Educational Center
- CUSD Officer Jesus Ceron Latino Student Success Middle School Conference, March 21, at Kastner Intermediate

"Knowing each other's culture and diversity is important and can lead to better understanding between students and our community," CUSD Coordinator of Community Relations Saul Salinas, Ed.D., said. "It's also vital students learn about paths to success as they consider their futures after high school. The conferences also provide leadership exposure for students wanting to make a positive impact on their campuses and communities."

More information and signups are available through CUSD intermediate and high school counseling offices.

Sneak Peek for Class of 2025!

The graduation schedule for the Class of 2025 has been announced. Mark your calendars now for the commencement ceremonies:

- Clovis East High, May 27
- Clovis Online, May 28
- Clovis High School, May 29
- Alternative Education, June 2
- Buchanan High, June 3
- Clovis North High, June 4
- Clovis West High, June 5



Bonner awards given

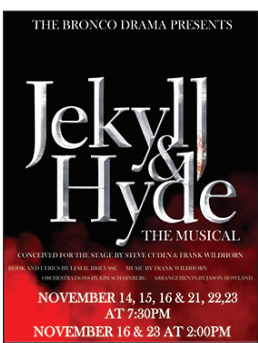
Four Clovis Unified elementary schools were awarded the 2024 Virtues and Character Recognition Award by the Fresno State Kremen School of Education and Human Development Bonner Advisory Board. Mabel Franks, the director of the Bonner Center, recently presented the awards in person to Dry Creek, Garfield, Tarpey and Woods elementary schools in October.

The award recognizes educational institutions' dedication to character development and civic education.

"At Tarpey, every facet of the educational environment is dedicated to fostering good character and promoting ethical decision-making, ensuring that students not only excel academically, but also grow as responsible and compassionate individuals," said Tarpey GIS Ying Vang. "This recognition reflects the school's intentional focus on character and civic education, making Tarpey a shining example of the transformative power of values-driven education in shaping the next generation of leaders and engaged citizens."

The Bonner Award is given alternately each year to elementary schools and secondary schools (intermediate and high schools).

CN performs 'Jekyll & Hyde'



Clovis North's Bronco Drama will perform "Jekyll & Hyde" as a musical this month. The classic thriller is a gripping story of a brilliant mind that goes horribly awry. Dr. Jekyll is trying to find a cure to help his father who struggles with mental illness, but instead he creates a serum that turns the doctor into an alternate and awful personality, "Mr. Hyde." The show will be held at 7:30 p.m. Nov. 14-16 and 21-23, and at 2 p.m. Nov. 16 and 23 at the Mercedes Edwards Theatre, 902 Fifth St., Clovis. For information and tickets: thebroncodrama.com.

PBIS Awards announced

Twenty-two Clovis Unified schools and one district program recently received the 2024 Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Award. PBIS is an evidence-based, tiered framework for supporting students'

behavioral, academic, social, emotional and mental health. Each year, California PBIS recognizes schools excelling in the program for students, based on a stringent set of requirements.

Clovis Unified recipients are, for Platinum Level, Clovis Unified Preschool, Gateway High and the following elementary schools: Boris, Cole, Dry Creek, Fancher Creek, Fort Washington, Freedom, Fugman, Garfield, Gettysburg, Lincoln, Maple Creek, Mountain View, Ozae, Reagan, Red Bank, Temperance-Kutner and Young; for Gold Level, Copper Hills, Jefferson and Weldon elementary schools; and for Bronze Level, Clovis Community Day School.

'It's a Wonderful Life' coming in December

Clovis High's Drama Den will kick off the holiday season with the production "It's a Wonderful Life." The story tells the saga of George Bailey, who feels overwhelmed by his responsibilities and dreams of escaping his life, and his encounter with his guardian angel on Christmas Eve who shows George what life would be like if he did not exist. The play will be at 7:30 p.m. Dec. 5-7 and 12-14, and 2 p.m. Dec. 7 and 14 at the Dan Pessano Theater, 2770 E. International Ave., Fresno. For information and tickets: cUSD.com/drama.



CUSD Band Night, Oct. 30

For a musical delight and rare sight, watch all 10 Clovis Unified intermediate and high school marching bands and color guards perform at CUSD Band Night. Held at 6 p.m. Oct. 30 at Veterans Memorial Stadium on the Buchanan High campus, the entire ensemble will play together the National Anthem before conducting individual performances. The night gives student musicians the opportunity to watch, cheer and enjoy the many talented bands of Clovis Unified.

CUSD holiday closures

Clovis Unified schools will be closed Nov. 11 for Veterans Day; the week of Nov. 25 through 29 for Thanksgiving Break; and Dec. 23 through Jan. 6 for Winter Break.

The CUSD District Office at Herndon and Sunnyside avenues will be closed Nov. 28 and 29, Dec. 24, 25 and Jan. 1.

Student conferences create understanding

Clovis Unified has opportunities for students to participate in student leadership conferences each year. The district

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Clovis Unified School District offers a variety of special education services and programs to serve children with communicative, physical, learning, emotional and other special needs. To learn more about services and the referral process, contact CUSD Special Education Department at 327-9400.

Workshops planned

Clovis Unified's Special Education team holds workshops to provide families with information about its various programs.

Upcoming are:

- Nov. 15 - "Parenting Preschoolers" Free webinar from 10-11 a.m. Learn about supporting your child's development; strategies for difficult behaviors; and tips to effective parenting. Register: www.tinyurl.com/FRCNov-15-24

For more information or to request an interpreter for a meeting, call 327-8455 or email familyresourcecenter@cUSD.com.

Community advisory

Clovis Unified holds regular meetings throughout the year of its Special Education Community Advisory Committee (CAC) that are open to the public. The committee serves in an advisory capacity to the Special Education Local Plan Area.

Its goal is to raise community awareness about the needs of students and their families regarding Special Education programs and to provide information, workshops and resources to families to help ensure that quality programs educate the student with exceptional needs in mind, body and spirit.

CAC meetings are held at the CUSD Professional Development Building, 1680 David E. Cook Way, Clovis. Remaining meeting dates for the school year are Nov. 21 ("Universal Design for Learning," noon-1 p.m.); Feb. 27 (TBD, noon to 1 p.m.); May 22 ("Annual Service Plan Review SPED Budget," 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.).

For more information or to request an interpreter for a meeting, call 327-8455 or email familyresourcecenter@cUSD.com.

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Salazar brings inspiring message

■ 7 CUSD schools hear from popular speaker

Students shared their dreams and heard motivational stories as part of assemblies celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month and featuring a nationally recognized speaker.

In October, all Clovis Unified intermediate schools, Gateway High and Clovis Community Day School students heard from Gabe Salazar, who is recognized as the top Latino Youth Speaker by "Popular Hispanics" magazine.

Salazar shared his personal story of overcoming homelessness and gang influences with students and encouraged them to dream big in life.

Salazar called up a handful of students

during the assemblies to ask them what their dreams for the future are, while their peers cheered on their goals for life. Salazar also quizzed kids on Latin American history and culture.

"Knowing each other's culture and diversity is important and can lead to better understanding between students and our community," said event organizer CUSD Coordinator of Community Relations Saul Salinas, Ed.D.

Hispanic Heritage Month is Sept. 15-Oct. 15 and honors the histories and cultures of those who make up the Hispanic community. Several Clovis Unified schools held activities as part of the celebration, including Clovis East High where its Folklorico Dance Team performed for their peers at lunch.

State scores:

FROM PAGE 1

A few highlights of the 2024 scores for Clovis Unified compared to 2023 include:

ELA – elementary schools

- 13 schools grew up to 5%
- Four schools grew up to 10%
- Two schools grew by 10% or more

ELA – secondary schools

- Three intermediate and one high school showed growth

Math – elementary schools

- 14 schools grew up to 5%
- Five schools grew up to

2024 CAASPP Results

Percent of students meeting/exceeding state standards on the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress tests.

	ELA	MATH	SCIENCE
Clovis Unified	67.06	52.41	46.37
State Average	47.04	35.54	30.7
Fresno County Average	44.3	32.18	25.82
Central Unified	41.78	28.68	22.5
Fresno Unified	34.72	25.14	16.81
Madera Unified	32.64	19.42	16.39
Sanger Unified	48.76	37.52	31.9

Source: California Department of Education

10%

- One school grew by 10% or more

Math – secondary schools

- Four intermediate and three high schools

showed growth

Parents can view their child's CAASPP scores in ParentConnect.

Individual school results and more information can be found at: <https://caaspp-elpac.ets.org/caaspp/>

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On course to grow student achievement

By Corrine Folmer, Ed.D.
Superintendent

AIM 1 of our strategic plan states the following: Maximize Achievement for ALL Students.



Corrine Folmer, Ed.D.

But what does that look like in our schools? That is a question best answered through the innovative, intentional teaching delivered by educators (surrounded by a safe and welcoming environment) every day in classrooms across our district. Educators take the time to build relationships with their students and support them to be the best they can be in mind, body and spirit.

A first-class education does not happen by chance. It starts with the establishment of high standards and an expectation that all of us can achieve those standards, both individually and collectively. That includes the high standards we apply in hiring the best people.

I truly believe that there is no better educational team in the nation than the one you find in Clovis Unified, and that is a belief based on first-hand experience as a student, parent and educator. Every day, I witness people who not only know how to do their job, but who care enough to give that job their very best. While perfection is not an attainable standard, we are a team that recognizes our students deserve no less than our very best and we strive for continuous improvement in being the best in everything we do. It is this quality and passion that is found in the people who comprise our educational team in Clovis Unified.

We also apply those high standards to the maintenance and repair of our facilities and grounds. Research and experience have taught us that students perform their best when the classrooms and schools they attend are clean, well-maintained and up-to-date. We want our students to be proud of their school.

I mentioned above that great teaching is intentional, and over the past two years our school teams

have been engaged in a district-wide effort to reassess our instructional practices. We are living in a time where students across California took troubling strides backward in their academic progress since 2019. To meet that challenge, our team sat down and reviewed the systems and expectations that have been used in the past to spur student achievement and are reestablishing and refining them for the present.

The work of our team centers around three points:

- Identifying essential standards for each grade level and ensuring teachers are intent on student mastery of those standards.

- Pinpointing resources for teachers to support them in teaching, lesson design, interventions, and benchmarking assessments, as they work to ensure that students are making progress toward the mastery of those essential standards.

- Re-examining the practices of our professional learning communities (our teacher teams) at each school, to focus on the use of student learning data to drive decisions on lesson design, interventions and re-teaching for mastery.

And while that is a quick summary, do not be led to believe this work is not hard. It is the heavy lifting necessary to meet the needs

of our students and ensure they are given every advantage possible.

I am proud of the commitment our educational team has made to delve deeper into these areas and the implementation of best practices to support our students' learning. One example of this is the work of our teachers, teachers on special assignment (TOSAs), and our Curriculum, Instruction and Accountability Department around creating resources for the essential standards being taught and assessed at each grade level.

In fact, at a recent parent meeting in one of our school areas, the work around instruction and the essential

standards was shared. While expressing enthusiasm about the essential standards effort, parents in attendance also asked how they could help support the work at home. Within a week, the TOSA team had created essential standards parent guides for math and reading.

Those standards are listed along with examples, ideas for work to reinforce the standards at home, and links to online lessons for students who are struggling in a particular standard. Their work is now being shared around our district. For any needed resources for supporting your student please visit: <https://www.cusd.com/CurriculumInstruction.aspx>.

It is the type of work I have just described that supports our mission to be a quality educational system providing the resources for ALL students to reach their potential in mind, body and spirit. Today, our students are making forward progress, and according to assessment results just released by California, their academic achievement remains 15-20% above state and county averages. Our students outperformed their peers around the State in Advanced Placement test pass rates, English Language Arts, Math and Science assessments.

We also saw our students' achievement rate grow by about a percent year-over-year, which is slightly greater than students around the state. These statistics are a testament to the work underway in our classrooms and by our educational leaders. However, just as our founding Superintendent Dr. Floyd "Doc" Buchanan once set a 90% goal for grade level achievement rates (when students were performing around the 30% level), we are not where our students need us to be - yet.

I am confident that the work that's been done to thoughtfully and intentionally bring our team together around essential standards and practices will see the number of students achieving grade level mastery continue to grow, and to grow quickly in the years to come.

Great education is also a partnership, like the one I described above with our parent meeting. It is both exciting and inspiring when we see where that partnership can take our students. Thank you for partnering with us.

LESSONS

Inspirations by, for and from our CUSD students



Photo special to CUSD Today

Graduates of Clovis Unified make deep connections during their years in school, and recently some returned to their alma maters in celebration of homecoming events. Some even got back into the action, like these Clovis High alumni musicians who joined with the current marching band and performed on the field and in the stands during homecoming. "Once a Cougar, always a Cougar!"

“There is no place like home.”

L. FRANK BAUM, AUTHOR OF "THE WONDERFUL WIZARD OF OZ"

EVERY DAY COUNTS!

10 reasons why kids need to be in school

Regular, daily school attendance is crucial for children to succeed in learning and developing skills that will serve them for a lifetime. An absence may be required for an illness, but parents are urged not to plan vacations, schedule non-urgent medical appointments, or let students stay home during school hours. Consider these benefits of being in school every day!

Academic Success

Instruction does not stop when a child is absent. Missing school makes it harder for kids to learn fundamental concepts for reading and math or keep up with an ongoing unit of history or science. Studies show missing just 1-2 days per month can negatively impact a child's academic performance, comprehension, and test scores.

Reading Skills

Regular attendance in elementary school positively impacts a child's reading ability. Research shows kids with daily attendance have higher literacy skills by fourth grade than those who are absent more frequently.

Confidence Builder

Children thrive on routine, and consistent school attendance provides beneficial structure and purpose. Kids feel good about staying caught up not only with the daily lessons and class activities, but also with caring for themselves by getting ready each day and learning how to interact with others in formal and social settings.

Social Development

The school setting provides dynamic experiences with building relationships. Students learn how to interact with adults like teachers, librarians, campus staff and coaches; engage with classmates and the student body; and make friends with whom to talk and play. And as an added bonus, at school, teachers and school counselors are available with guidance if students need help navigating these interactions.

Time Management

Studies show being late to school can actually lead to students developing poor attendance habits and negative attitudes. It can also increase their stress. By helping children develop good morning

routines that get them to school on time, kids will start the day off right while also learning valuable skills. Managing time effectively will be needed for college, for work and for life!

Graduation Celebration

According to research, poor attendance in elementary school is a leading indicator that a student may later drop out of high school. On the flip side, by freshman year, regular daily attendance patterns become a leading indicator that a student will graduate, stronger even than test scores.

Behavior & Wellness Benefits

Regular attendance provides students with daily access to a variety of services and supports. From free meals served to all students, to mental health and well-

ness programs, to character-building lessons, and to positive role-models and structure, each campus promotes a nurturing, safe environment. Students in school are less likely to get in trouble with the law.

Being Prepared

Research shows students who attend school regularly keep up with assignments and homework and develop better ways to prepare for a quiz or exam. Learning how to be prepared can also help them stay organized and feel comfortable joining a club, team or other co-curricular activity.

Participation & Critical Thinking

Consistent attendance allows students to follow the curriculum, be confident they haven't missed a key concept, and be more likely to participate in class. Regular attendance also exposes students to a variety of topics, challenges and ideas that encourage growth of problem solving and critical thinking skills.

Habits for Life

The benefits of attending school every day are overwhelming. Students have their best opportunities to succeed in mind, body and spirit when they maintain engagement, have stability, interact with others and have guidance available. Through their school career, they will be empowered with knowledge about academics and themselves, and they will be equipped with skills for college and careers.

IT'S THE LAW

California law requires all students to attend school daily and be on time.

- **Chronic absenteeism:** Defined by the state as a student missing 10% of school, or about 2 days per month, regardless of whether the absences are excused or unexcused.
- **Truant:** Under California Education Code, a child is considered truant and parents could have consequences if, for unexcused reasons, the child is absent 3 full days in a school year; absent or tardy 3 times for more than 30 minutes; or any combination of these.
- **Excused absences and tardies:** These include but are not limited to illness, medical appointment, court appearance and bereavement.
- **To report an absence:** Call your child's school or report the absence through Parent Connect within 24 hours of the absence. Any unreported or non-cleared absences will be considered unexcused.
- **Independent Study:** Should necessary family or out-of-town events come up, our school sites can offer short-term, site-based independent study that allows a student to do school work while gone and not be considered absent. Independent study must be arranged in advance of a planned short-term leave. Contact your school for details.

— 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. We greatly appreciate their support! Advertisements in CUSD Today are not an endorsement of the business or service by the district.

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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Workshops offered

We know the financial aid process can feel overwhelming, but help is available. Clovis Unified counselors and financial aid partners will host a series of workshops to support senior students and families in January and February. Detailed information and workshop dates will be available in December at cusd.com/financialaid.aspx.

Financial aid explained, help available for seniors

By Stephanie Frazier
CUSD Lead Counselor

As high school seniors prepare for their future, understanding financial aid is essential whether the dream is college, technical school or another career path. Clovis Unified is committed to supporting students and families throughout the financial aid process.

What is Financial Aid?

Financial aid is money that helps pay for education beyond high school and comes in several forms:

- **Grants:** Federal, state and institutional money that does not need to be repaid (e.g., Cal Grant, Pell Grant, Golden State Teacher Grant).
- **Scholarships:** Awards based on academic, athletic or other achievements that do not need to be repaid.
- **Federal Work-Study:** A program that allows students to work while in school to help pay for college expenses.
- **Loans:** Money borrowed from federal or private institutions that must be repaid, typically with interest.

Important Deadlines

For the 2025-2026 college school year, the financial aid application season begins in December with the opening of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the California Dream Act Application (CADAA). To qualify for state financial aid, such as the Cal Grant, both the FAFSA and CADAA must be submitted by March 2.

Why Complete the FAFSA or CADAA?

Filing a FAFSA or CADAA is the first step in determining eligibility for federal and state financial aid. Even if you believe your family will not qualify for need-based aid, many scholarships, grants and work-study programs require these forms. To qualify for the California College Promise (CCP) program, which provides free tuition for eligible students at community colleges regardless of income, students must complete the FAFSA or CADAA.

Resources for Families

Families are encouraged to contact their student's high school counselors for assistance or visit cusd.com/financialaid.aspx. The CUSD Financial Aid website provides access to financial aid resources such as financial aid checklists and timelines as well as answers to frequently asked questions and specific steps to complete financial aid forms.

Get Ready Now

Before applying for financial aid, students and parents will need to create an FSA ID (for FAFSA) or an account for the CADAA. These IDs will serve as electronic signatures and are required to submit the applications. For more information about creating an FSA ID, visit cusd.com/financialaid.aspx.

For more details about upcoming workshops, deadlines and resources, please contact your high school counselor or visit cusd.com/financialaid.aspx.

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COMMUNITY HEALTH PARTNERS

Editor's note: "Around the District" is a regular feature of *CUSD Today* that highlights positive activities and accomplishments of students and schools throughout the district.

Winning student films

Alta Sierra and Clark intermediate student filmmakers were among the award winners at the Fresno County Superintendent of Schools Picture the Valley film festival. Students entering their work in the contest created a variety of films throughout the school year, and submitted them to be judged against other student projects at the festival.

Congratulations to our district's winners for Documentary: "Porsche Documentary" – Aaron Vanny, Harnoor Uppal and Sukhjot Singh, Alta Sierra Intermediate; Personal Narrative: "Blank Page" – Riley Gentz and Miles Mellon, Clark Intermediate; Public Service Announcement: "The Deal With the Devil" – Brennan Estes, Sheldon Touriel, Liam Nelson and Duncan Baxter, Alta Sierra Intermediate; Special PSA: "A.I." – Riley Gentz, Clark Intermediate.

Learn more: <https://picturethevalley.org/>

Freedom connects

Students at Freedom Elementary recently left their backpacks at home, donned matching school shirts and spent the day focused on getting to know each other better. During their "No Backpack Day," students of all grade levels solved puzzles, made friendship bracelets, played team-building games and more. There were smiling faces all around campus!



Police join the game

The Wolverines at Woods Elementary had some special visitors during their lunch recess recently: Clovis Police Department Corporal Nick Mason and Officer Evan Roehlk. Upper-grade students especially enjoyed playing football with the officers, who were both the quarterbacks for the game. "They thought it was cool to have a quarterback that could throw deep," said Woods' GIS Gregory Raymer, who coordinated the visit.

College Days at TK



The Temperance-Kutner Elementary AVID site team is encouraging students all over campus to dream big when it comes to their plans for college. The school holds designated "College Days," where students can dress up in their favorite college gear to earn small prizes. Younger students learn about goal-setting, while older students spend time researching colleges they may be interested in attending in the future.

"The response from students has been overwhelmingly positive," said teacher Samantha Morales. "Our College Days not only spark interest among students but also ignite meaningful conversations about college aspirations among peers and family members."

AVID, or Advancement Via Individual Determination, is a program available district-wide that encourages students to pursue their academic goals by offering support in reading, writing, critical thinking and organizational skills to put students into a college-going mindset.

Wildcats paint with artist

Valley Oak Elementary sixth-graders recently got the chance to paint with local artist Sarah Lowe. After a lesson about abstract art and incorporating "value" (the artistic element of light and dark) into a painting, Lowe had students use acrylic paints and water to create their own abstract masterpieces and explore the various shades of



Anything for students

At Young Elementary, second-grade students got an up-close look at a variety of animals as special guest "Reptile Ron" brought two owls, a Hercules rabbit, a Komodo dragon, a turtle, a bearded dragon and a huge snake to the school. He taught students about the creatures and helped wrap up the grade-level's recent lessons on animals and their habitats.



"This experience for the students really brought everything together that we were studying in benchmark weeks prior," said teacher Nicolette Santos. She literally found herself gripped by the experience when she timidly volunteered to hold a six-foot long Burmese Python named 'Dwayne the Rock Johnson.'

"The crowd favorite was definitely me being wrapped in the snake! I was nervous, but I would do anything for the students!"

each color they used.

"This was an amazing opportunity for the students to get to work with a local artist who has been commissioned to do art for people in the Central Valley!" said sixth grade teacher Rammel Del Mundo. "It was a great time for the students to express themselves!"

Pie for jog-a-thon at Cole

The Cole Elementary Bulldogs put their best running "paws" forward during their "Go Dogs Go" Fun Run recently and raised over \$31,000 for their school. Students ran, danced and skipped around the course, wearing matching "Go Dogs Go" t-shirts.

With support from the community, they surpassed their goal of \$25,000. As incentive for students to reach the fundraising goal, Principal Jennifer Arruda agreed to take a pie to the face, and GIS Briana Williams took part in a water dunk challenge.

SV defines student success

All 69 third-graders at Sierra Vista Elementary received their very own dictionaries thanks to a recent donation from the Clovis Rotary. To explore their new books, students went on a "dictionary hunt," looking for specific things

within the pages like words they are studying in class, a United States map and more. "A few of their favorite pages are the longest English word, the multiplication chart and the sign language alphabet," said third grade teacher Tammy Adrian.

"We appreciate the Clovis Rotary for supporting our students at Sierra Vista," said the school's GIS Mandy Howland. "The excitement and smiles of our students as they opened their dictionaries to see all the resources in them were infectious!"

Mediator Mentors at Lincoln

Upper-graders from Lincoln Elementary spent a day with the Clovis West High peer counselors, training to become peer mediators at their own school! The high schoolers discussed a variety of topics with the elementary students, ranging from active listening skills and ways to approach conflict to bullying and exclusion. They also role-played some mediation situations with the younger students.

"I was excited to see our students engaged and motivated to participate in the training," said Lincoln Elementary Peer Mediator advisor Carrie Kiser. "They were asking great questions and truly enjoyed learning from the high school students."

The Lincoln Lions can now take their training back to their school and serve as peer mediators and lunch monitors to help build connections between the upper grade and primary grade students. The high school peer counselors will visit the elementary students a few times this year to check in and continue growing the connections they built during training.



Riverview loves reading

As part of a year-long goal to create a culture of literacy on campus, Riverview Elementary invited four football players from Fresno State to read to their students. Third-through sixth-grade classrooms heard a story read by the Bulldogs, who also talked about the importance of working hard in school. The football players even came out to recess with the Rams and signed autographs, played basketball and kickball, and challenged students to a race!

Lights, sirens, learn

A new ambulance simulator is providing an "on the go" feeling for Clovis East and Clovis North students in Patient Care Pathway Career Technical Education courses. The equipment allows students to practice the medical skills they're learning in class, from loading a patient into the ambulance to administering CPR and checking vital signs, in a simulated ambulance that staff can tilt and shake from outside to give the feel of driving down a road.

CTE courses allow high school students to learn career skills from a variety of industries and gain hands-on experience in those fields. For more information about Clovis Unified's 21 CTE pathways: <https://www.cusd.com/Career-Readiness.aspx>.



Remembering Patriots Day

Around the district, students and staff participated in ceremonies, assemblies and lessons to remember and learn about the events of Sept. 11, 2001. From a flag-raising ceremony at Clovis East High and visits from first responders at elementary schools, to a "Hero's Run" Jog-a-Thon at Copper Hills Elementary and a banner bearing the names of all victims of 9/11 hung at Clovis North High, schools honored and remembered the heroes of that day in a variety of ways. A Blackhawk helicopter even landed at Clovis Elementary, and the Fresno County Sheriff's helicopter visited a few elementary school sites.

"Seeing the countless people who put others' lives before their own recognized selflessness and sacrifice even in the darkest of moments," said Clovis North High Leadership student Stella Seita. "When I think about 9/11 now, I don't just see it as a moment of loss, but as a moment of resilience, compassion, and unity."



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Wolfpack hosts Special Olympics Soccer

More than 600 special education students from 15 high schools and seven adult transition programs (ATP) took to the fields at Clovis East High for the annual Special Olympic High School/ATP Soccer Competition in October.

"Through the power of play, we unite people with and without intellectual disabilities to create a more connected community," said Morgan Swain of Special Olympics Northern California. "Our programs aim to transform athletes into leaders and promote acceptance, unity and respect."

Teams spread out over 10 soccer fields to play against each other, while other athletes spent time at soccer skills stations to work on dribbling, running, and kicking and shooting for the goal.

Close to 150 student and teacher volunteers from Clovis East High helped run the event. The AFJROTC and

Fire Careers classes helped set up and clean up the event, CTE Medical Careers offered first aid and helped keep score, Unified PE students assisted at the skills stations and the soccer teams refereed.

Leadership students made banners to display at the end, while cheerleaders cheered for all athletes as they played.



Touchdown! Fall sports underway



Clovis Unified held its annual Elementary Football Carnivals featuring all of the district's 35 elementary school teams and cheer squads! The young athletes played on the big fields at Lamonica and Veterans Memorial stadiums in several 15-minute games and had fun while parents and fans cheered them on from the stands.

Fun fact: Joining the carnival for the first time was the Hirayama Heat, taking the field in their new red and gold uniforms. Welcome to the CUSD family!

Rodeo Bowl rivalry begins

The Clovis High Cougars scored the first win as they faced off on the football field against the Salinas High Cowboys this fall in the first ever "Rodeo Bowl!"



Since both schools come from cities home to the oldest rodeos in California, they decided to honor their roots with a rivalry game each year. The hosting city's rodeo association (this year, Salinas) held a special dinner for the teams. A large belt buckle trophy was created for the winning team to take home each year, with smaller belt buckles made for each winning player.

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► Employee Briefs

Visit from CUSD legend

The staff at Boris Elementary recently heard insights from school name-sake Virginia Boris, Ed.D., who is a former Clovis Unified educator and leader. The special guest led Chargers' staff through a discussion about meeting the needs of students in a variety of ways, from intervention programs to emotional supports. They were reminded that the focus is always on their students and making sure to positively impact their individual achievements.



Plant Ops celebrated

In October, Plant Operations Appreciation Day recognized the custodial, maintenance and grounds crews who make up the district team. These men and women keep our campuses in tip-top shape. They work hard to set up district events. They volunteer their time to build relationships with students through coaching or advising clubs. We appreciate these valuable members of Clovis Unified's education team who do their best for the success of our students!



Pinedale librarian honored

For four decades, the late Carol Lewis shared an enthusiasm for reading with kids as the librarian at Pinedale Elementary. In October, the Fresno City Council honored her 43 years and commitment to literacy, with a proclamation declaring Oct. 10 as "Carol Lewis Day."



Pinedale Principal Debra Bolls attended the meeting alongside Lewis' family to celebrate the life and legacy of the educator.

"Mrs. Lewis had a servant heart like no other," said Bolls. "Whether it be staying long after hours so that high school and intermediate students could get their homework done on the computers and use the printer, or siblings whose mom couldn't pick them up until after 5 p.m., Carol gave tirelessly so that others were taken care of."

In late October, Pinedale Elementary was scheduled to hold a ceremony of its own, naming the school library after Lewis. Attendees were to dress as their favorite book character.

Conference presenters

In October, two Clovis Unified Curriculum, Instruction and Accountability employees were featured presenters at the

annual Codestack Live Conference held in Anaheim and hosted by the San Joaquin County Office of Education. Marshall Hamm and Erica Robinson-Lopez presented on the rollout of BeyondSST platform in Clovis Unified, sharing insights and information with other districts in attendance. The platform is a web-based data management tool used to design, facilitate and monitor Student Success Team (SST) meetings. "It was literal magic to show other districts in the state how CUSD shines when it comes to doing what's best for students," Robinson-Lopez said.

Marlins turn 20

Fugman Elementary is celebrating its 20th anniversary this school year, and to commemorate the school held a rally and invited some special guests: all of the school's past and present principals – Sharon Uyeno, Jennifer Thomas, Tammy Graham, Michael Olson and Jeremy Pierro – as well as the namesake of the school, retired administrator James S. Fugman, Ed.D. Current Principal Pierro filled a time capsule with notes of the students' favorite movies, books and more that they voted on together. The capsule will be opened again in 10 years at the school's 30th anniversary.



Board reviews textbooks, spring teams honored

By Kelly Avants,
Chief Communications Officer

► BOARD BRIEFS

Oct. 9

The Clovis Unified School District Governing Board held a public hearing Oct. 9 to allow for comments on the district's sufficiency of textbooks and instructional materials. No comments were made by the public at the meeting. Later, the board adopted a resolution declaring that the district has sufficient textbooks and instructional materials to meet the needs of its students in the 2024-25 school year.

In other action, the board:

- Approved an amendment to the Successor Agreement between CSEA and the district related to clarifying the existing longevity stipend structure.
- Approved an agreement with Food 4 Thought to provide fresh fruits and vegetables to families in the State Preschool Program.
- Approved all conference, fundraiser and student trip requests, change orders, voluntary communication recreation programs, minutes from the Sept. 25 meeting, and the sale/disposal of surplus equipment as submitted.
- Approved an annual agreement with The Positivity Project to use the curriculum in district schools.
- Approved an agreement with Quality Behavioral Solutions to train staff to manage challenging behavior safely and effectively for students with special needs.
- Approved funding the projected actuarial 2023-24 retiree health and welfare benefit costs on a pay-as-you-go basis.
- Approved the appointment of individuals to the current

year Career Technical Education Advisory Committee.

■ Approved an agreement with the California Department of Education for funding of services provided to preschool students in the district for the 2025-26 school year.

Sept. 25

Student athletes who brought home team or individual championships during the Spring CIF season were at the Governing Board's Sept. 25 meeting to be honored. The following teams were congratulated on their successful competitive seasons and the hard work and perseverance required for their accomplishments.

- **Buchanan High School:** Boys Track – CIF Valley Champions, Head Coach – Brian Weaver; and Girls Track – CIF Valley Champions, Head Coach – Brian Weaver
- **Clovis High School:** Boys Volleyball – CIF Valley Champions, Head Coach – Rich Lake
- **Clovis East High School:** Girls Badminton – CIF Valley Champions, Head Coach – Janine Sodersten; Boys Tennis – CIF Valley Champions, Head Coach – Phil King
- **Clovis North High School:** Boys Golf – CIF Valley Champions, Head Coach – Jordan Everson; Softball – CIF Valley Champions, Head Coach – Courtney Dale; Boys Swimming and Diving – CIF Valley Champions, Head Coach – Peter Fecht; 2024 California State Track and Field Champion (Shot Put and Discus) – McKay Madsen
- **Clovis West High School:** Girls Swimming and Diving – CIF Valley Champions, Head Coach – Adam Reid; 2024 California State Swimming Champions (Girls 200 Medley Relay) – Hailey Marinovich, Hannah Marinovich, Audrey Hill, Sophia Oka-Fedder

In other action, the board:

- Held a public hearing to receive input on an energy services agreement with Electric Motor Shop to install energy efficient lighting across the district's schools. No one was present at the hearing to address the Board. Later in the meeting, the Governing Board approved the agreement which is designed to reduce energy consumption and achieve operational savings for the district.
- Accepted the California Community Schools Partnership Grant.

Sept. 11

Student leaders from the Interschool Council who will serve as representatives of their peers to the Governing Board this year were introduced at the Sept. 11 meeting. They are Miranda Renteria (Buchanan), Makenzie Chang (Clovis), Kenzie Jacobo (Clovis East), Sajan Gill (Clovis North) and Natalie Lawson (Clovis West). They will each attend three meetings in the 2024-25 school year.

In other action, the board:

- Awarded a bid for construction of campus security improvements phase III to various multi-prime contractors and authorized the Superintendent or designee to enter into multi-prime agreements and a construction management agreement with Mark Wilson Construction.
- Approved a resolution authorizing budget transfers for the 2023-24 fiscal year for funds operated by the district.
- Approved a resolution to recalculate the 2023-24 Gann limit appropriation and estimate the 2024-25 Gann Limit Appropriation.

The next scheduled meeting of the Governing Board is Nov. 13 at 6:30 p.m. at 1680 David E. Cook Way in Clovis. Complete minutes, agendas and videos of meetings are available at cUSD.com.

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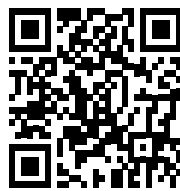
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Complete your orientation starting December 2nd at scccd.edu/orientation or log in to your Student Portal. Don't wait – the earlier you complete orientation, the earlier you can register for classes!



Scan the QR code on December 2 to complete your Online Orientation!

January - April: Academic Advising Begins

Check with your high school counselor to see when advising will take place on your campus. Clovis Community College, Fresno City, Reedley College, and Madera Community College counselors will be available to help you plan your first semester of college courses!



There's still time to apply for Summer/Fall 2025



?? Questions? ??

Visit www.cloviscollege.edu/outreach for links to live Zoom help, YouTube videos, or to make an appointment with an Outreach Specialist.



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