

**From:** [Communications](#)  
**To:** [Communications](#)  
**Subject:** Community Zone -- June 20, 2023  
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**Attachments:** [image007.png](#)  
[image008.png](#)  
[image010.png](#)  
[image011.png](#)

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June 20, 2023



### Photo of the Week



High School Graduation

Hoover

### Dates to Know

June 21 at 7 p.m.  
[Board of Education](#)

### Video of the Week



[Graduation at Edison High School](#)

## Greetings!

Welcome to Community Zone, an e-newsletter from the Fresno Unified School District featuring news of the district and schools. [Sign up](#) to receive this newsletter every two weeks. Questions? Contact [Communications@fresnounified.org](mailto:Communications@fresnounified.org).

## Community News

### Senior Spotlight: Isai Perez Hernandez from Sunnyside High School

Sunnyside High School's Isai Perez Hernandez attributes his strong work ethic and motivation to his father, who lost his life in 2021 during a robbery as he worked as a street vendor. Isai found the strength to not only move forward but to excel academically, demonstrating true resilience to his mom, siblings and peers. With his big heart, Isai looks forward to becoming an elementary teacher where he can positively impact others the same way teachers made a difference in his life. Isai is a valedictorian at Sunnyside High and earned the California Seal of Biliteracy. He will attend Fresno State.

### District holds 44th annual Math-O-Rama Competition

Fresno Unified middle schools celebrated math prowess with the three-day Math-O-Rama event at Kings Canyon Middle School, a four decades old tradition. More than 725 students participated from Math 7, Math 8, Accelerated 7 and Algebra 8 classes in a four-event rotation. Medals and ribbons were awarded to all and trophies were presented to the first-place school in each grade level. Kings Canyon was the top school for Math 7 and Tioga Middle School was the top school for Math 8, Accelerated 7 and Algebra 8.

### Have you Read our Faces Magazine?

Make sure to check out the second edition of our district's "Faces of Fresno Unified" digital magazine. The magazine features the accomplishments and talents of the Fresno Unified family through words, photos and videos. The spring edition highlights the district's six Excellence in Education winners, a student who starred in a Disney series and much more! Read the inspiring stories of principals at Tehipite and Terronez middle schools, the music teacher at Wawona K-8 School and a custodian who became a teacher. Find out what drives the intervention specialist at Kirk Elementary School and an Edison High School alum now doing graduate studies at Purdue University. Learn more about a 1960 Roosevelt High School graduate who has endowed a \$5,000 annual award for a Roosevelt teacher. Watch for our upcoming graduation edition!

[Spring Edition of "Faces of Fresno Unified" Magazine](#)

## **GATE Certified Teachers Honored**

Our district's latest cohort of GATE certified teachers was honored recently for their hard work better equipping themselves to challenge our accelerated learners. Cohort 6 is made up of 25 teachers and joins a talented and dedicated GATE-certified group of 176 teachers from across the district.

## **Students Compete at Innovation Day**

Students in third through sixth grades showcased their engineering and career skills in our district's annual Innovation Day May 25 at the Save Mart Center. At Innovation Day, students work together in grade-level school teams to solve a design challenge in front of family and friends. They used the skills they learned all year through career-based challenges every month in the Teaching How Innovation Nurtures Knowledge Program.

Winners were:

- **Third Grade:** Storey Elementary School — Storey Superstars coached by Kelley Bell; students were Shayna Her, Mannatt Gill, Aaron Lara Torres and Aria Blair
- **Fourth Grade:** Burroughs Elementary School — Dynamic Broncos coached by Lorraine Gomez; students were Jayla Ramos, Damian Parra, Isaac Lopez and Leland Hernandez
- **Fifth Grade:** Gibson Elementary School — New Knights on the Block coached by Sara Medina-Baker; students were Alex Ozcariza, Robert Guerrero Jr., Noah Saldana and Elaine Aquino
- **Sixth Grade:** Kirk Elementary School — Roar coached by Michael Harris; students were Carlton Williams, Alina Aguilar and Valentin Jimenez

## **Preschool and Kindergarten Registration Underway**

Preschool registration is underway for Fresno Unified's high-quality early learning programs for the 2023-24 school year. Free programs are available for all 3- and 4-year-old children. An online process is available. Visit: [earlylearning.fresnounified.org](https://earlylearning.fresnounified.org)

Research shows that children who start school early build a strong foundation for future success. For more information, parents can go to [earlylearning.fresnounified.org](https://earlylearning.fresnounified.org), or call (559) 457-3416. Options include [dual immersion language programs](#) at select schools. Through dual immersion, students learn to speak, read and write in two languages. Programs are available in Spanish and Hmong.

Registration is also ongoing for [transitional kindergarten](#) (TK) for students turning 5 between Sept. 2 and April 2. Students who are 5 on or before Sept. 1 qualify for kindergarten. Dual immersion language programs are available at select schools.

[Online Registration](#)

[Kinder and TK Enrollment Video](#)

[Preschool and Kindergarten Flyer](#)

## **Superintendent Board Remarks from June 14, 2023**

- Superintendent Nelson started his remarks by wishing everyone a happy LGBTQ+ Pride

Month! Superintendent shared that Pride Month started as just a day over 50 years ago following the Stonewall Uprising where LGBTQ+ community members fought for their rights and equality. President Clinton was the first president to recognize June as Pride Month and Superintendent shared that we celebrate here at Fresno Unified each year as we call for unity, visibility and equality for our LGBTQ+ community. Superintendent applauded our students and staff who marched in the annual Pride Parade and recognized our GSA leaders who were interviewed by Teen Vogue earlier this month.

- Superintendent Nelson recognized the wrap up of the 22/23 school year last week, including beautiful celebrations, promotions, and graduations. Superintendent shared his pride and congratulations to our graduates and their families. Superintendent also shared his gratitude to all the teams and organizations that made our graduations happen, including special thanks to those who brought the first Latinx graduation ceremony to life and those who continued the African American graduation celebration this year.

- Superintendent Nelson then recognized the start of our summer academies this week at almost 90 of our school sites. Superintendent thanked the many staff, teachers, and leaders that are making our summer academies a reality, providing critical summer learning and opportunities for our students to continue their academic gains. Superintendent Nelson also reminded the community that free summer meals are available at all of our summer academy school sites. Anyone ages 1-18 are welcome to enjoy lunch on-site at our summer academy schools from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. on weekdays. To find the full list of summer academy school sites offering lunch on site please visit our website at [www.fresnounified.org](http://www.fresnounified.org) or [through this direct link](#).

- Superintendent Nelson then acknowledged that our teams are deep into planning for the upcoming 23/24 school year. In preparation, Superintendent encouraged staff to check their Employee Zone email newsletter for great professional learning opportunities including the New Teacher Training, the PL Summit, and our Classified Fall Conference all coming up in August.

- Superintendent Nelson also encouraged leaders and teachers to take advantage of upcoming ParentSquare trainings, as our SchoolMessenger service ends on June 30. There are tons of trainings available, and staff may also reach out to Celeste Corona Arroyo in the Communications Office to set up customized trainings for your teams. You can reach Celeste at [Celeste.CoronaArroyo@fresnounified.org](mailto:Celeste.CoronaArroyo@fresnounified.org).

- Superintendent then made a few shoutouts including:

- Congratulations to the office teams at Wilson, Burroughs, and Easterby elementary schools for receiving the Golden Heart Award for Customer Service. Golden Heart Awards are given quarterly based on customer service feedback from parents on staff friendliness, timeliness of response and professionalism,

- Congratulations to Edison graduate Samaria Simpson who received the single largest scholarship from Fresno Unified ever! Samaria received a \$4,500 scholarship plus enhancements due to trustee Thomas' amazing Giving Tuesday fundraising for the foundation – taking Samaria to more than \$10,000 in scholarships, and

- Recognition to our Communications and Media Teams for the hard work they are currently putting into our special graduation issue of the digital [Faces of Fresno Unified Magazine](#)! At the end of this month, we'll release the graduation edition which will include a spread on every high school graduation, highlights of valedictorians and scholarship recipients from every school, and much more. Instead of one compilation video of all of our high school graduations, this year every single school will have their own graduation video featured in the digital magazine! A print version of the magazine will also be mailed out in July as a keepsake to every single scholarship recipient.

- Superintendent Nelson then shared the Edison graduation video as a teaser for the graduation issue of the digital Faces of Fresno Unified magazine, which will be released at the end of June.

- Last, Superintendent Nelson reminded all staff, students, and families that on Monday our district will be observing the Juneteenth holiday. Juneteenth is the oldest-known celebration marking the end of slavery in the United States. Even though the Emancipation Proclamation was made effective in 1863, it could not be implemented in places still under Confederate control. As a result, in the westernmost Confederate state of Texas, enslaved people would not be free until much later. Freedom finally came on June 19, 1865, when some 2,000 Union troops arrived in Galveston Bay, Texas. The army announced that the more than 250,000 enslaved black people in the state, were free by executive decree. This day came to be known as "Juneteenth" by the newly freed people in Texas. We're proud to be celebrating this holiday in our district and all offices and sites will be closed, including summer meals, on Monday, June 19th.

[View Full Board Meeting Recap](#)

## School Buzz

### **Steve's Scholars Peer Mentoring Doubles at Roosevelt**

Thanks to generous donations from Francine and Murray Farber and the Mentoring Program in the Department of Prevention and Intervention, counselor Anita Hernandez and Steve's Scholars advisor Andrea Ocampo doubled the size of the peer-to-peer mentoring program this year at Roosevelt High School. Ninth grade Steve's Scholars said the program, which matches them with 11th and 12th grade Steve's Scholars, helped them with their transition to high school. One ninth grade mentee said: "My mentor encouraged me to fix my grades and taught me to check my grades more frequently." The team nominated the program for the district's Peer Mentoring of the Year award because of its successful use of technology, focus on college and career topics and the connections mentors and mentees made.

### **Cambridge Celebrates Climate and Culture Goals**

Cambridge High School worked hard this past school year to help change the narrative for students from all parts of the district and the mindset toward alternative education. The climate and culture team was successful at its goal to improve family connections based on previous data from the Panorama Climate and Culture Survey. Staff and students celebrated with a carnival on May 12 in conjunction with a career fair. Students had a great time and some went home with raffle prizes donated by staff members.

## **Lawless Second Graders Meet Mayor Jerry Dyer**

Lawless Elementary School second graders met with Fresno Mayor Jerry Dyer on May 3, part of an effort to offer students more community real world learning, Teacher Rocio Hernandez said, "We received the warmest welcome from the mayor and his wonderful team. This enrichment opportunity supported our social studies government unit as students learned the role of our strong mayor government format. The message our students received was that they are important, loved and appreciated in our city and that they can be anything they want to be in the future. It was inspiring to many students as they related to the many roles shared in the presentation and activity. To close, students took part in a city planning activity with Fresno's city planners. This will be a field trip we all remember."

## **McLane Football goes to Hume Lake**

The McLane High School football team, led by coach Andrew Pancotti, spent three days at Hume Lake Camp in May building leadership, team chemistry and problem solving. Way to go, Highlanders!

**Donate to the  
Scholarship Fund**

**Volunteer**

**Work for Fresno Unified**

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