

**From:** [Communications](#)  
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February 27, 2023



## Photo of the Week



Girl Power Club at Kirk Elementary School

## Dates to Know

**March 8** (see website for time)

[Board of Education](#)

## Video of the Week



[Early Learning Video](#)

## 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

### Manchester GATE Student Wins Spelling Bee

The district's first in-person elementary spelling bee since 2020 was held at Fresno High School's Royce Hall February 23, featuring 70 fourth, fifth and sixth graders from 25 schools.

The winner was Samantha Tanalgo from Manchester GATE Elementary School, with the word "porcelain." Second place went to Mateo Ortega-Arredondo from Bakman Elementary School and third place went to Ian Trevino from Columbia Elementary School.

Jeff Aiello, chief executive officer of Valley PBS, was the spell master and the master of ceremonies was Ryan Coe, director from Instructional Services. Samantha and Mateo will represent Fresno Unified at the Fresno County Spell-Off March 21.

### Help Families Connect with New Ways for Funding College

California's new children's savings account program, [CalkIDS](#), offers newborns up to \$100 and low-income public students between \$500-\$1,500 as scholarships for their future higher education expenses. It also aims to help families start saving with tools like [ScholarShare 529](#), California's official college savings plan.

For more information on [www.calkids.org](http://www.calkids.org) please see recent press releases from Governor Newsom's office (click [here](#)) as well as the California Department of Education (click [here](#)).

## Superintendent Board Remarks from February 22, 2023

- Superintendent Nelson started his remarks encouraging staff and families to participate in our Spring Climate and Culture Survey. Superintendent shared that this is a critical opportunity to provide feedback directly to our schools regarding the unique environment, safety, and needs of our individual campuses. Staff who spend 50% or more of their time at a [school site can access the survey here](#) and [parents/guardians can access the survey here](#).

- Superintendent also made his final reminder to our high school seniors to submit their scholarship applications before the deadline of March 1. [The application can be accessed here.](#)
- Superintendent then shared a few highlights and shout outs:
  - Congratulations to Bullard and Duncan for their 100% pass rate for dual enrollment in the fall semester!
  - Congratulations for DeWolf High School's selection as a Model Continuation High School by the California Department of Education! DeWolf will serve as a resource to other districts for the next three years as districts work to develop and improve continuation high schools.
  - An additional shoutout to DeWolf High School as they were highlighted for their students' Black History Month research projects focused on civil rights activists.
  - Gratitude to the board of education for approving Juneteenth as an additional district holiday at the last board meeting.
- Superintendent then closed his remarks sharing a video from the recent HBCU Caravan Tour where several of our students were offered on-the-spot scholarships! [You can see that video here.](#)

[View Full Board Meeting Recap](#)

## School Buzz

### **Edison Student is County Superintendent Superstar**

Edison High School senior Thomas Stewart has been selected by Fresno County Superintendent of Schools Michele Cantwell-Copher as the March Superintendent's Superstar. Thomas is highly involved at his campus, including with the Black Student Union, and has participated in the Black History Month program for the past five years. He recently had an [opinion piece](#) published in The Fresno Bee.

Thomas will be honored at the Fresno County Board of Education meeting at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 16 at the Fresno County Office of Education.

### **Students Create Project for Black History Month**

Students at DeWolf High School worked hard on a research project on civil rights activists. Pictured is Shevon King, showing off his group's final product.

### **Tenaya Aviation Club Students Take Flight**

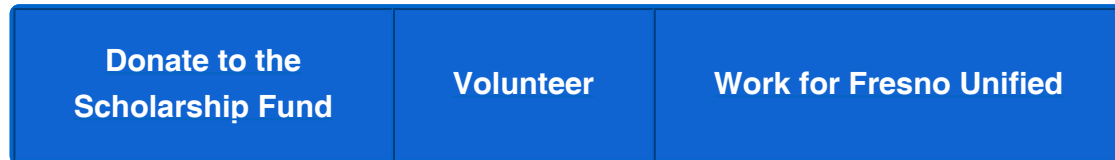
Tenaya Middle School teacher Clifton Mickelson, sponsor of the Tenaya Middle School Aviation Club, took five students to the Young Eagles event at Sierra Sky Park on February 12 for a personalized flight over the Fresno area. Experimental Aircraft Association pilots introduced students to the basic mechanics of airplanes and flight and after their flight, each received

a Young Eagles certificate of flight and a professional logbook to keep track of their flying hours. All five students are now qualified to begin ground school and flight training.

### **Fort Miller Principal Featured in Webinar**

Abraham Olivares, principal at Fort Miller Middle School and the district's 2023 Administrator of the Year, was part of a EdWeb event on February 16 along with school culture expert Phil Boyte.

[EdWeb Event with Abraham Olivares](#)



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