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# CUSD Today

September 2021

Clovis Unified School District — WHERE CHARACTER COUNTS!

Volume 24, No. 2

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

2021-22 SCHOOL YEAR

## Great to see you!



Photos by Darren Grubel, Rob Lambert and P.J. Lippert/CUSD Today

Clovis Unified students started the 2021-22 school year back on their campuses for full day in-person instruction. Reports across the district were that students and staff were excited to be back and for the increased engagement found when all students are on campus. The new year was kicked off by the traditional Jefferson Bell Ringing Ceremony at Jefferson Elementary – the location of first Clovis Unified Superintendent Floyd “Doc” Buchanan’s office – with Assistant Superintendent Dr. Scott Dille swaying the bell. At schools around the district, a combination of signs, balloons, cheer squads or mascots greeted freshly arriving students. For more on opening day and school year plans, see Superintendent Dr. Eimear O’Farrell’s column on Page 5. For parent-submitted first-day photos, see Page 9.



## Foundation awards \$130,000 in grants

■ Digital art, science toolkits among 14 selected projects

By Sara Almaraz  
Foundation for Clovis Schools

Approximately \$130,000 in grants for classroom, school and emotional wellness projects was infused across Clovis Unified recently as part of the Foundation for Clovis Schools Classroom and School Grant program.

Projects supporting math mindset, next generation science standards, literacy and ag programs are all underway for the 2021-22 school year. The foundation awarded 14 classroom grants and four social emotional wellness grants to support wide-ranging, innovative projects.

Each year, the foundation invites teachers and schools across the district to submit proposals for projects that enhance learning in a creative and motivational way.

“As a team of volunteers, we raise funds to support Clovis Unified schools, teachers and programs how we can, and that’s especially important now due to the challenges presented by the pandemic,” said Foundation for Clovis Schools Chairperson Michael Fennacy, who’s a partner at Darden Architects.

One of the new projects this year provides technology to students enrolled in art elective courses at Clark Intermediate. In addition to the typical art curriculum, new Chromebooks will allow students to learn and engage through Google Draw, a computer graphics program. The program was first piloted in the 2020-21 school year during distance learning and allows students to digitally create collages, landscapes, portraits and still lifes to supplement their traditional lessons. The Foundation grant provides the laptops necessary to continue the digital Art curriculum at Clark.



Photo special to CUSD Today  
A grant will support digital art like this by Clark Intermediate student Nadine Bartolome.

► Please see Grants, Page 6

### POLICY REVIEW

## Bell schedules, dress code get close look

This school year, Clovis Unified is conducting a Dress Code Review and a Bell Schedule Review, and we encourage you to get involved. Every school will be holding meetings for parents, staff and students to learn more and offer comments.

Feedback will be processed in the fall, and recommendations will be made for any updates or changes later this year.

Families and staff will again have the opportunity for input before final recommendations are made to the CUSD Governing Board. The Board is anticipated to take action in January 2022 to adopt any changes.

### Why now?

**Bell Schedule** – State Legislators passed a law regarding later start times for secondary schools that will take effect in the fall of 2022. Clovis Unified will need to make changes to the start and end times at nearly all school sites to meet the operational supports and requirements to comply with this law.

**Dress Code** – In May, students with the district’s Inter-School Council asked for a review of the CUSD Dress Code, especially in terms of leggings and enforcement, and the Governing Board and administration made plans to conduct a thorough review to be held this school year.

### Get involved:

■ Attend your school’s meetings. Times and dates can be found on your school’s website.

■ Background information about both policies, study parameters, answers to frequently asked questions, a comment form and any new updates can be found at [www.cusd.com/2021review](http://www.cusd.com/2021review).



## Olympian Jenna Prandini returns to hometown stadium

■ Street renamed after Class of 2011 graduate

By P.J. Lippert  
CUSD Today

Clovis High graduate and Olympic medalist Jenna Prandini learned while at a recent Cougars’ football game that the street bordering her alma mater on the north has been renamed “Jenna Prandini Drive.”

Clovis Mayor Jose Flores made the surprise announcement on the field with Prandini during the game’s halftime show, and the fans erupted in cheers – and a few “We love you Jenna!” – as he handed her a copy of the sign that will replace what was formerly Wrenwood Avenue.

Clovis Unified School District Superintendent Eimear O’Farrell, Ed.D., Deputy Superintendent Norm Anderson, Clovis High student representatives, and the Cougar mascot, also joined Prandini on the 50 yard line and gave her congratulatory words and mementos including a plaque reading “Once a Cougar, Always a Cougar,” from the CHS students.

“It’s so amazing being able to spend this special night with you guys,” Prandini said addressing the crowd, “thank you so much for all of this.”

“From [Mickey Cox] Elementary School to Clark [Intermediate], all the way to Clovis High, my family, my teachers, my coaches, my teammates have all pushed me to get this Olympic medal,

► Please see Olympian, Page 3



Top: Clovis High ASB Vice President Owen Lachs presents fellow Cougar Jenna Prandini with a special plaque from the student body. Left: Mickey Cox Elementary cheerleaders are thrilled to meet the Olympian, who attended their elementary school when she was a girl.

Photos by P.J. Lippert/CUSD Today

## INSIDE:

### ATHLETICS

#### Hall of Fame inductees named

Clovis Unified will induct its Fifth Athletic Hall of Fame Class in a showcase event planned for October. *Page 3*

### EMPLOYEES

#### Governing Board honors retirees

Congratulations to 131 Clovis Unified School District employees who retired at the end of the 2020-21 school year. *Page 5*

### SUPERINTENDENT’S MESSAGE

#### Team gives all to keep campuses open

Our students belong at school. The pandemic has thrown a lot at us, and battling our way back to campus has not been easy. *Page 5*

# Grants: Class to build bikes

FROM PAGE ONE

“Going back to [in-person learning] without computers [would have] felt like a step backwards,” said Melissa Fritsch, Clark Intermediate art teacher. “We are so excited to receive new laptops for the art room and continue bringing technology to art.”

Descriptions of the Classroom and School grants follow. Descriptions of Social Emotional Wellness grants (funded in partnership with Kaiser Permanente) will be published in an upcoming edition of *CUSD Today*.

## Boris Elementary

■ **Library Makerspace, Agricultural and CTE Projects** – Provides opportunity for reading, writing and critical thinking development in K-6 students through hands-on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) based projects.

## Buchanan High

■ **Instructional Aide Technology** – Provides computers for instructional aides so they can support students in the classroom, in Google Classrooms, and provide timely feedback to Special Education case managers.

■ **Technology to Support Student Creativity, Equity, and Mastery** – Expands technology within the English Department to provide additional assessment options for students of various backgrounds and abilities in order for them to show content mastery based on their individual learning strengths.

■ **Using Vernier Technology to Enhance NGSS Education and Lab Experiences in Our Science Classes** – Engages science students in inquiry-based, data-driven, and NGSS-centered lab activities and investigations using advanced data-collecting sensors and technology from Vernier.

## Clark Intermediate

■ **Google Draw Technology** – Provides Google draw technology and digital art resources to the art department at Clark Intermediate and Clovis High.

## Gateway High and all Elementary Sites

■ **Gateway Bicycle Building Community Project** – Funds a project at Gateway that connects students with community by assembling one bicycle for each CUSD elementary school.

## Jefferson Elementary

■ **Transforming Math Mindset at Jefferson Elementary** – Promotes positive mindset, creativity and growth in math instruction for fifth graders by supplementing traditional methods with tools that facilitate active engagement through kinesthetic and collaborative learning.



Photo special to CUSD Today

Clark Intermediate art student Marcus Franz created this digital image using technology supported by a recent Foundation for Clovis Schools grant.

## Lincoln Elementary

■ **Learning for Lions** – Helps increase literacy of TK-2 students by continuing to build lending library with multicultural books.

## Miramonte Elementary

■ **Fountas and Pinnell Leveled Literacy Intervention Kits** – Supports first-through third-grade struggling readers by providing leveled, sequential intervention.

## Nursing Services/ Special Education

■ **SPOT Vision Screener for PS-6 SPED Students** – Provides a SPOT vision screener to quickly and easily detect vision issues for students in Special Education programs.

## Red Bank Elementary

■ **STEM Bins: Building Minds for the Future** – Provides boxes filled with a variety of engineering manipulatives and task cards to inspire students to engineer and problem solve.

## Hands-on Minds-on Next Generation Science

– Provides a hands-on learning experience with the Next Generation Science Standards for fourth grade students by using current experiments, models and activities.

## Reyburn Intermediate/ Clovis East High

■ **Discovery of Science iPads** – Supports REC Science department by providing iPads to help students master Next Generation Science standards while completing labs, practicing state assessment questions, and researching new scientific discoveries.

■ **Precision Agriculture- Expanding WiFi to the McFarlane-Coffman Ag Center** – Provides the McFarlane-Coffman Ag Center the most current technologies available, and teaches students the concept of Precision Agriculture.

Learn more: [FoundationForClovisSchools.com](http://FoundationForClovisSchools.com).

# Board hears update on school opening

By Kelly Avants  
CUSD Chief  
Communications Officer

## ► BOARD BRIEFS

### Aug. 25

The Clovis Unified Governing Board enjoyed a moving performance of “We Will Rise Up Together” by the Clark Intermediate Choir to begin its Aug. 25 meeting. Next, the board was introduced to two administrators who have assumed new roles in the district for the upcoming school year.

The introductions were followed by reports from 17 school area and department administrators about the first days of the 2021-22 school year. A smooth opening was reported around the district thanks to the tremendous efforts and pre-planning work by all staff including teachers, counselors, nurses, administrators, bus drivers, custodians, grounds workers, Campus Catering staff, technicians, classified staff, coaches, advisors and many more. “The buzz is back,” said one administrator of the enthusiasm and energy felt among students back on campus.

During an update about CUSD’s continued response to COVID-19, the board

heard from staff about current challenges schools are facing in connection with positive tests that lead to contact tracing and potential quarantines. The district is continuing to refine practical implementations of mandated guidelines and best practices in efforts to minimize impacts on campuses.

### In other action, the board:

■ Authorized the purchase via piggyback of park, playground, recreation and shade structure items with the League of Oregon Cities Master Agreement needed in the District at sites/programs, and the Board recognized it is in the best interest of the District to make purchases without advertising for bids.

■ Approved Resolution No. 3828 authorizing debt service estimate to be provided to the County of Fresno respecting unsold general obligation bonds.

■ Approved Resolution No. 3831 recognizing 2020 Olympian Jenna Prandini, a graduate of Clovis High, for her athletic achievements.

■ Approved the new classified short-term job position

of COVID Assistant to aid in contact tracing, testing and other related needs to help support school sites.

### Aug. 11

During their meeting on Aug. 11 the board heard a report from staff on preparations for the upcoming school year, including work to process thousands of requests to transfer into the school district, and professional development preparations for employees from bus drivers to new teachers. Also included in the report was information about the finalized updates to the district’s COVID-19 Safety Plan detailing the multiple health and safety measures in place in the district during the 2021-22 school year.

□ The next regularly scheduled meetings of the Clovis Unified School District Governing Board are Sept. 8 and 22 in the boardroom at 1680 David E. Cook Way in Clovis. The public portion of the meeting begins at 6:30 p.m. and minutes, agendas and videos of meetings are available online at [www.cusd.com](http://www.cusd.com).

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