This issue of the Visalia Times Delta and VUSD insert marks the traditional closing of the school year. Late spring is a time for closing out the current academic year, the first flush of school-community events, and, of course, commencement. In this issue, we will use a number of articles that describe the accomplishments of VUSD Unified over the past year also a parent's perspective on it in the future.

It is important to remember that good schools are successful because of the hard work and caring teachers who care about students, a strong curriculum and good instructional materials, a positive culture and high academic standards. These factors all contribute to the quality of a school. No single thing creates a great school, for everything has an impact in some way. One element that has made a huge difference is parent support. It would be difficult to overstate the positive influence that engaged parents have on student achievement. Parent involvement comes in many forms, and often evolves as students progress through grade levels. In early grades, parents commonly volunteer in their children’s classrooms or in the library. Attend parent-teacher conferences or help with the school carnival or other school events. Parents of middle and high school students are often specialized and engage with the school through athletics, music or other extracurricular activities. And throughout the public schools, teachers and parents attend school events and programs and games. All of these are important ways for parents to become connected to the experiences of their children as they progress through school.

One of the parent involvement opportunities that connects across all grades from kindergarten through high school is the Back-to-School Night. This event allows families to connect with teachers and learn more about their child’s education. It is also an opportunity for parents to ask questions about classroom expectations, homework, and other important information.

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All district music festival performances are grouped by middle school, combined sixth grade bands, fourth grade classroom music, and middle school bands. Performances will be at the Visalia Convention Center on the following dates/times:

**Monday, May 23**
6 p.m. La Joya Area Band/Choir
(Elbow Creek, Four Creeks, Golden Oak, Ivanhoe, Mineral King, & Pinkham)

**Tuesday, May 24**
6 p.m. Divisadero Area Band/Choir
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**Wednesday, May 25**
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Visalia Unified School District is proud to provide high quality preschool opportunities to young learners. The district currently provides early learning to 3-4 year old children at 15 of its elementary school sites. All Preschool sessions are 5 days a week, 8:00-11am and 12:00-3:30 pm.

With a dedicated staff of early childhood education professionals, preschools boast important readiness skills to help prepare them to be successful in kindergarten and beyond. The program focuses on language development, fine and gross motor skill development, early number concepts, engaging science experiences, and creative arts. The preschool curriculum integrates social and emotional learning which is embedded throughout the three-hour preshool day. A variety of teaching strategies, children learn how to make friends, share their toys, learn independent play, use kind hands and words and problem solve in different situations. Students start each day learning a calming strategy to help with managing their emotions during the day.

Preschool believes that parents are their child’s first teacher. Collaboration with parents to support their child’s learning development is a vital program component. Informational parent meetings focused on topics such as:

- Teachers and administrators have available communication tools to meet the first year parents needs, including an informative weekly and monthly newsletter, the monthly Visalia Community Newsletter, Advisory Committee and additional training support for teachers.
- Classroom technologies, lower student-to-teacher ratio, an educator on each campus to provide social emotional support and a well-defined entrance and exit criteria for students in the specialized programs are all part of a broad re-envisioning of these programs at VUSD.
- Our goal for all students is that they become independent adults who contribute to society at their level of ability. VUSD is excited about the future and the goal of limitless possibilities for all students.

For more information on VUSD’s Special Education Programs, contact Cynthia Yoshida, cyoshida@vusd.org.

Meeting Special Education Needs

Visalia Unified School District administration, teachers, and parents have been working for several months on a new approach to special education. We’re not to the finish line yet, but great progress is being made. This multi-facted effort is the result of feedback from teachers and parents who had concerns about the current program, opportunities and staffing levels for students with special needs.

In response to this growing need, we conducted a survey of administrators, special education teachers, mainstay teachers, and parents. A task force was then formed, which led to the creation of four primary goals for special education:
- Clear and consistent communications
- More consistency and predictability
- Inclusive mind-set
- Expanded options for students with special needs

These goals address the basics of meal planning and cooking, and how to make good decisions. Thanks to State of California grants, VUSD can also qualify for a work experience program at local businesses such as Marie Callender’s.

She has grown so much and is ready for a meaningful life,” said her mom. “I think that if something should happen to me tomorrow, my daughter will know how to live a life of independence. She is in charge of her life and she feels good about her future.”

Another proud parent noted that her adult child, has learned so many valuable life and job skills and expresses interest in an independent future. She has a desire to work hard and not see her feel confident enough to want that before enrolling in the ATP program.

The ATP is a component of the Special Education program at VUSD. For details, contact Cynthia Yoshida, cyoshida@vusd.org.
Summer Programs

Summer Time is OUR TIME!

We are adding portable classrooms at several schools to accommodate continued enrollment growth in the District and changes in programs. For example, we are adding portable classrooms at Veva Blunt Elementary School this summer.

VUSD will also add portable classrooms at Veva Blunt Elementary School, Green Acres and Valley Oak Middle Schools to accommodate continued enrollment growth in the District and changes in programs. For example, we are adding portable classrooms at Veva Blunt Elementary School this summer.

For more information on the ProYouth Summer Camp, please contact Denice Roman. Program Support. ProYouth Learning Center, 1620 S. Lovers Lane, Visalia, CA 93291, (559) 721-4745, deniceroman@vusd.org.

Summer University for Middle School Students

Summer University is a college, career, and enrichment focused program for VUSD District 7th and 8th graders. This year, Summer University will highlight the career pathways of Public Safety & Justice, Hospitality & Tourism, Science Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM), Business Finance, and Health Services.

Students enrolled at all five VUSD middle schools will participate in weekly mini career fairs featuring local guest representatives. Summer University will be held at Redwood Middle School and Mt. Whitney Middle School for a total of 5 days, Monday through Friday, beginning June 10.

The VUSD Migrant Education Program provides services to eligible migrant students who will be in Grades 1-8 during the 2019/2020 school year. We also use this time to replace carpets District's roofs. This includes carpet cleaning, polishing floors, and replacing the most of the foot of our over 2.4 million square feet of space under the Green Acres Middle School and Golden West High School. We are also doing some heating, ventilation and cooling (HVAC) unit maintenance and replacements at several campuses as we set in place every square foot of our 2.4 million square feet of space under the District's roofs. This includes carpet cleaning, polishing floors, and replacing the most of the foot of our over 2.4 million square feet of space under the District's roofs.

For more information, please contact VUSD’s Migrant Office at (559) 730-7569. For questions regarding any of the Migrant programs please contact VUSD’s Curriculum Office at (559) 730-7555.

Summer University will offer summer school classes for high school students who will enter Grades 9-12 in the fall of 2019. Courses will include English, math, history, science, health, and physical education. The summer school program will begin on the first day of school for students who will be in Grades 1-8 during the 2019/2020 school year. We also use this time to replace carpets District's roofs. This includes carpet cleaning, polishing floors, and replacing the most of the foot of our over 2.4 million square feet of space under the.

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