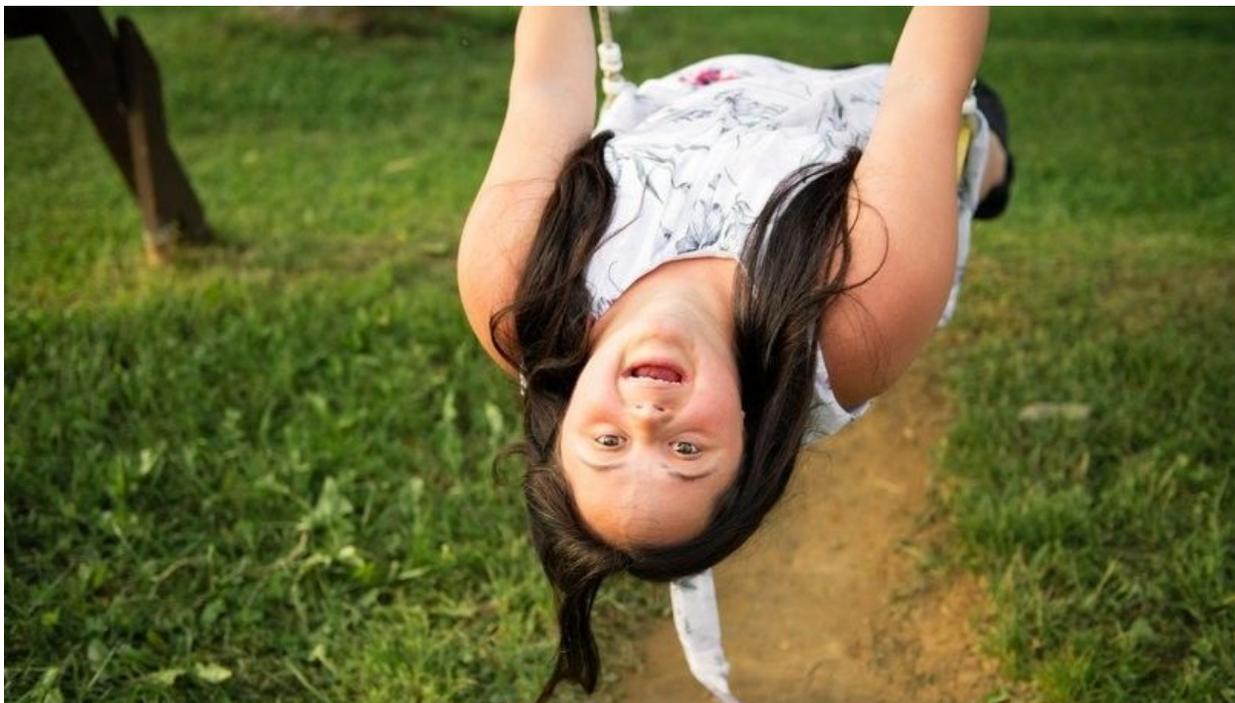




Special Education
NEWSLETTER

Winter, 2021

2021 Brings hope for kids, families, and educators



Important Dates:

- January 27 CAC - Community Advisory Committee <https://www.fcusd.org/Page/28696>
- Feb 15-16 President Holidays
- March 21 World Down Syndrome Day

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- March 29-April 5 Spring Break
 - April 2 National Autism Awareness Day
 - May 27 Last day for students
 - June 3 - June 30 Extended School Year

Director's Comments

This school year continues to bring unique challenges for everyone involved in special education services. Parents have become “crisis teachers” supporting their students in every way they can. Teachers have adapted time and time again to shifting safety and instructional situations. Support staff have learned how to successfully support students over the internet. And students, for the most part, have learned how to gain as much learning as possible from Distance Learning and remote services. A few have even surprised us by thriving in Distance Learning. Most of us, however, would very much like to have students back in schools safely, as soon as possible. As we move closer to reopening, I think it's worth looking back at what we've learned in this pandemic so far.

- Students are resilient, but they need as much support as possible during long-term crises.
- School staff and families are still critically dependent on each other, so relationships are key.
- Embracing the types of services, we CAN provide leads to more innovative educators and more involved students.
- Social-emotional functioning of students is foundational to academic and practical learning.
- We can dramatically reduce transmission risks at school through family screening, maintaining social distancing, and carefully using personal protective equipment when social distancing cannot occur.
- Creating equitable learning experiences requires constant vigilance in schools, and even more so with Distance Learning and technology.

We all know that in-person instruction is the most effective schooling for most students, and we are eager for the day we can fully open all our schools. The District publishes the impacts COVID has on our schools and programs weekly. To view, please visit: www.fcusd.org/COVID

Community Resources: Click through to find resources for families and children during this crisis.

Child/adolescent mood and mental health:

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/education-awareness/shareable-resources-on-coping-with-covid-19.shtml>

Discover ADR! Appropriate Dispute Resolution gives a range of parent IEP supports:

<https://www.cadeworks.org/>

Parent Training and Information Center contract newly awarded to DREDF this year: <https://dredf.org/>

Harvard Health takes a look at in-person, hybrid, and distance learning for students with special education needs:

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/making-special-education-work-for-your-child-during-covid-19-2020102621189>



Aaron Storey, Director of Special Education, joined the Folsom Cordova Unified School District in July 2020. “The pandemic has been incredibly difficult for children and families with disability needs, and a system built around in-person services. We must grasp every safe opportunity we have to engage students both remotely and in-person.”

Email: astorey@fcusd.org

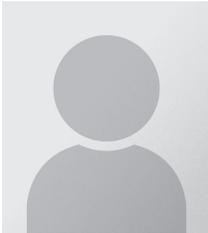
Phone: 916.294.9007



Danielle Tharp, Program Coordinator, is our newest team member. She joined our team in August 2020, just in time for the most challenging year in school history. Danielle came to us from the River Delta USD, where she earned her leadership stripes. Danielle brings calm and clear thinking to complex situations, with a strong background in instruction, professional development, and special education law.

Email: dtharp@fcusd.org

916.294.9007



Hunt Lin, Program Coordinator, is in his eighth year with Folsom Cordova USD. Hunt has a rich professional background that includes work as a Special Day Class teacher and a school site administrator. Hunt is excellent with policy and special education law, but his biggest gift is his work with people. Teachers and staff appreciate Hunt’s sharp wit, and families know him as a problem solver.

Email: hlin@fcusd.org

916.294.9007



Betty Jo Wessinger, Assistant Superintendent of Special Education and SELPA Director, leads the FCUSD Special Education team. Betty Jo’s leadership is marked by her drive for high performance and high accountability, and she makes sure all decisions are made with our students as our highest priority. Her background in law, site leadership, and instruction serve our district and students, as well as providing regional leadership with nearby teams.

Email: bwessing@fcusd.org

916.294.9007

Get to know our leadership team, our CAC schedule, and who’s who on the CAC Brochure:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/12-CIG2SZrxbgC4mLOXoCzn-UE_hCI-mL/view?usp=sharing