

The Fresno Bee



SPECIAL EDITION

Test scores in Fresno area school district keep rising

BY NICK FENLEY
nfenley@fresnobee.com

Standardized test scores in one Fresno area school district have made a triumphant comeback from the pandemic slump that sank results across the state’s public schools.

According to assessment data released this month by the California Department of Education, Sanger Unified’s language arts scores improved by more than four percentage points year over year.

This brings the total percentage of students meeting or exceeding language arts standards up to 53%, which is above the statewide average and mirrors the district’s 2019 results.

Sanger Unified saw similar gains in science, improving by more than four percentage points compared to last year. Before the pandemic, about 25.5% of the district’s students met or exceeded California standards, which fell about five percentage points below the statewide average.

Now, more than 36% of Sanger Unified students are proficient in science, well over the state average of about 32%.

While the district’s math scores are still about 2.5 percentage points behind pre-pandemic results, they remain above the statewide average.

Superintendent Dennis Wiechmann said the school district’s standardized test score gains have been years in the making.

The state education department placed Sanger Unified on a “program improvement” plan in the early 2000s for chronic underperformance on state assessments. In turn, Wiechmann said the district adopted

SEE TEST SCORES, 4A



ALLEN J. SCHABEN TNS file

Immigration and Customs Enforcement oversees detainees awaiting deportation.

ICE arrests in Fresno area surge amid Trump crackdown

BY MELISSA MONTALVO
mmontalvo@fresnobee.com

ICE arrests in California’s Central Valley have risen by 58% in the first seven months of the Trump administration compared to the same time period last year.

The Fresno Bee analyzed U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement data obtained via a Freedom of Information Act request filed by the Deportation Data Project, a UC Berkeley

Law School initiative.

The data sheds light for the first time on how ICE operates in the Central Valley, such as where administrative arrests have taken place and which demographic groups have been most impacted.

ICE arrested an estimated 1,156 individuals in Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced and Tulare counties between January to the end of July.

During the same time period in 2024, ICE made 733 arrests in the six-county region.

While many of these cases are pending, at least 516 individuals have already been deported. Most of these arrests took place in the Fresno and Bakersfield areas, where ICE has sub-field offices.

Bill Ong Hing, founding director of the Immigration and Deportation Defense Clinic at University of San Francisco, warned that arrests will likely increase throughout the state after last month’s Supreme Court decision that allows immigration agents to conduct

“roving patrols.” He said the court’s decision gives ICE the permission to “racially profile.”

“They’re trying every strategy,” he said.

An ICE spokesperson said the agency could not verify or comment on the data compiled by the Deportation Data Project.

“U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement is executing its mission of identifying and removing criminal aliens and others who have violated our

SEE ICE, 4A

Late-night street food in Tower District is in peril

BY MELISSA MONTALVO
mmontalvo@fresnobee.com

Sidewalk vendors could soon be banned from selling in Fresno’s arts and culture district on the weekends — a move that would cut into peak sale hours for street vendors, community advocates said.

The proposed ban by the Fresno City Council marks a

shift in the city’s strategy from a carrot to a stick approach in working with street vendors.

The council voted Thursday to add new rules under the city’s Sidewalk Vending Ordinance that would prohibit sidewalk vending in the Tower District from Friday through Sunday between 6:00 p.m. and 3:00 a.m. (Councilmembers Tyler Maxwell and Nelson Esparza voted against the new

regulations.)

Additionally, the changes include increased fines between \$100 to \$500 for failing to comply with permit requirements, up from the current \$25 to \$100 range.

“Limiting their hours during peak times will directly harm their income, reducing their ability to sustain their businesses. It will also limit the vibrant street life that makes

our city welcoming and unique,” Julia, a community member who helps vendors through the permitting process, told the City Council.

The new proposed rules build upon existing regulations, which limit where and when vendors can sell in the Tower District. In 2023, the city launched a pilot program with limitations on where vendors could operate following a surge in vendors along the nightlife corridor. An official sidewalk vending ordinance that went into effect in January.

Martha Alvarado, owner of Tamales La Jarocho push-cart,

SEE STREET FOOD, 6A



We’re dedicated to delivering the journalism you rely on. Discover the stories that matter to you inside. Subscribers, explore more stories and features like puzzles and games at [fresnobee.com/edition](#).

FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE QUESTIONS, CALL US AT:
800-877-3400
OR REACH US ONLINE AT:
[fresnobee.com/customer-service](#)



Always Here for Women's Health

Siempre Aquí para la salud de las mujeres



Schedule your next appointment today!
¡Programa su próxima cita hoy!