



THE BLUE BIRD

Driving Students To Success

Message from the Chief



Hi Team,

I hope this message finds you well and in good spirits. As we navigate through the daily routines and responsibilities of ensuring safe transportation for our precious cargo, I wanted to take a moment to express my heartfelt appreciation for your unwavering dedication and tireless efforts.

Each day, rain, or shine, you demonstrate exceptional professionalism and compassion in your roles as drivers and attendants. Your commitment to the safety and well-being of our students and staff is truly commendable and does not go unnoticed.

In particular, I want to extend special recognition to our team for their continued dedication to welcoming riders with disabilities. By ensuring accessibility and accommodating the diverse needs of all students and staff, you not only provide transportation but also promote a culture of inclusivity and support within our school community.

As we move forward, let us remain steadfast in our commitment to inclusivity, always striving to create an environment where everyone feels valued and respected. Together, we have the power to make a positive impact in the lives of those we serve.

Thank you once again for your outstanding contributions and unwavering commitment. Your hard work and dedication make a world of difference every single day.

Regards,

Paul Idsvoog, Chief of Operations and Labor Management

Welcome to your quarterly newsletter. This newsletter has been designed with you in mind. Our goal is to keep you updated and informed on what is happening in the **Transportation Department.**

Office Staff

Main Phone: 559-457-3138

Director: Paul Rosencrans 73103
Admin. Sec: Marianne Johnson 73179

Business Ops Manager:
Melissa Beltran 73384
Manager II: Ramiro Salas 73104

Supervisor: Chris Zamudio 73142
Supervisor: Jennifer Moren 71326
Supervisor: Robin Jenkins 73296
Supervisor: Tony Aboularge 73122
Trainer: Lanesha Ruben 73292

Dispatcher: Emma Fontes 73298
Dispatcher: Carlos Fonseca 73297
Dispatcher: Michael Alonzo 73297

Accountant I: Mao Thao 73139
Office Asst. I: Keng Xiong 73199
Acct Clerk II: Allen Thaoxauchay 73132

We transport approximately **15,000 students** to and from school daily with a total of **1.43 million miles** annually on 106 buses.



CHRISTIAN AGUILAR

Name: Christian Aguilar
Title: Bus Driver Route: 73 Bus: 53
Years as a Bus Driver: 2 years
Years as an FUSD Employee: 2 years



FUSD Schools he serves:

- Erickson Elementary
- Tenaya Middle School
- Wawona Middle School
- CART

Christian enjoys listening to students share how their day went at school, their plans for the future and their accomplishments.

The best advice Christian would share with a fellow driver is:

“Don’t speed. Be aware of your surroundings and never put yourself in a situations where an accident can occur. “

He enjoys spending time with his family.

Once more, the Sunshine Committee has excelled in its efforts to foster camaraderie and appreciation within our community.

As we returned from Winter Break, they greeted our Bus Drivers with warmth, offering coffee and pastries, setting a tone of welcome and appreciation from the start.

In February, they prepared a grand celebration for Black History Month, uniting us over a feast that honored diversity and highlighted the richness of our collective heritage.

March we celebrated with a "Nacho Average Friday" event, expressing gratitude to our drivers for their hard work and dedication.

The Sunshine Committee continues to reinforces morale and unity, bringing us closer together. Their commitment to recognizing and valuing the contributions of all members, has been instrumental in cultivating a supportive and inclusive environment within our team.

Event Calendar

April– Driver Appreciation Day
April 23rd-Hotdogs and Hamburgers

May– Summer Celebration
May 15th-Sandwiches, chips and fruit

June– End of Year Celebration
June 5th-TBA



Committee: Twyla Hunt, Leigh Jenkins, James Krebs, Corina Lozoya, Lisa Torres, Lanesha Ruben & Willie Woods.



Did you know to become a Bus Driver it takes a lot of training?

Our Drivers have to do 40 hours of training to be eligible for their Bus Driver Certificate.

They must complete 20 hours of classroom instruction and 20 hours of behind the wheel instruction.

Once they complete their training, there are several other processes including a CHP test in order to earn their 5 year certificate.

To keep their certificate valid they must document 10 hours of training every year and on the 5th year they must re-test with the CHP to renew their Bus Driver Certificate.

It takes a lot of commitment to become a Bus Driver and we are very proud of all of our drivers.

They are dedicated to making sure our students get to school safe and on time.

Thank you to our Drivers for your commitment and dedication!



April

Jesus Ojeda-Salazar 4/2
 Gloria Castellan 4/14
 Allen Thaoxauchay 4/21
 Dean Wenger 4/22
 James Castro 4/23
 Melissa Beltran 4/28
 Desmend Yarbrough 4/28

May

Willie Woods 5/6
 Leigh Jenkins 5/9
 Susana Sambrano 5/18
 Diana Branco 5/24
 Everado Gomez 5/30

June

Catalina Decastro 6/3
 Michael Lysenko 6/5
 Joe Castro 6/6
 Leonette Recinos 6/7
 Juan Avila 6/29
 Carmen Montoya 6/13
 Kong Lee 6/15
 Hector Arevalo 6/19
 Machele Giannopoulos 6/26

**Happy Birthday to all
 our Drivers and
 Staff !**

A Day of Training: On March 4th, our drivers seized the opportunity for professional development through a series of in-services. They participated in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) training, enhancing their sensitivity towards individuals with special needs. Our drivers also enjoyed, "Staying Positive in a Negative World" led by Arianne Jacobs Toves, MPA, MHC, they explored strategies for managing emotions in challenging situations. Finally, they engaged with BusHive, our new field trip software, generating valuable insights and posing thoughtful inquiries. We extend our gratitude to all the leaders for their contributions to our team's growth and improvement.



Tamara Neely, HR/
 Classified Development &
 Arianne Jacobs Toves,
 MPA, MHC



JASON BENTON

Name: Jason "Cowboy" Benton
 Title: Bus Driver Route: 71 Bus: 33
 Years as a Bus Driver: 5 years
 Years as an FUSD Employee: 4 years

FUSD Schools he serves:

- Yokomi Elementary
- Fort Miller Middle School
- Tenaya Middle School
- Fresno High School
- Duncan Polytech



Jason appreciates all the friendly and supportive staff.

The best advice Jason would share with a fellow driver is:

"Always pay attention to everything and double check. Don't be in a rush."

In his free time he likes to ride motorcycles and spend time with his dogs and birds.

DISTRICT RESOURCE

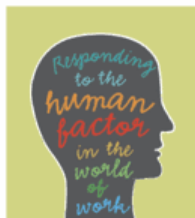
CLAREMONT

Powered by  uprisehealth

Claremont is a firm of select professionals who can help you with life's challenges. You will be referred to a conveniently located counselor or resource with expertise in your area of concern. These services are provided at NO charge to you as part of your benefits package.

Claremont EAP services include:

- Counseling visits
- Work/Life referrals
- Legal consultation
- Financial consultation
- Confidentiality



If you are needing services please call 800-834-3773 or go to:
claremonteap.com

If you would like a brochure please see the staff in the
Transportation office

LET'S GO ON AN ADVENTURE!

Did you know sense winter break of our 2023/2024 school year our FUSD's yellow fleet fulfilled **978** trip request on **1,370** buses?

Where did our Buses go?

- 190 buses transported our ROP programs to various functions.
- 174 buses visited different school sites for different activities.
- 105 buses took our students to various musical events
- 100 buses took students to the Fresno Chaffee Zoo
- plus a whole lot more!

This does not include charter bus trips.

LEONETTE RECINOS

Name: Leonette Recinos

Title: Bus Driver Route: 33 Bus: 56

Years as a Bus Driver: 19 years


Years as an FUSD Employee: 6 years

FUSD Schools she serves:

- Adams Elementary
- Baird Elementary
- Bullard Talent
- Fresno High School

Leonette loves her conversations with her high school students and learning their plans for their future. She also enjoys listening to music in her bus.

The best advice Leonette would share with a fellow driver is:

“Have a great time doing your routes and enjoy meeting new staff and students every new school year  ... P.S. Don't trust a blinking left or right.”

In her spare time she enjoys charter driving, cooking and mostly spending time with her children.



Adventure

The Transportation department is happy to fulfill bus trip request.

Only 25 trips are available a day. Don't miss out on the opportunity to take your students on an adventure.

To learn more on how to [Request a School Bus](#) please visit the Transportation Staff website.

Email your request forms to Transportation.trips@fresnounified.org

Honoring Excellence: Fresno Unified's Robert C. Blackwell Safe Driving Award Recipients

In Fresno, California, the bus drivers of Fresno Unified are often unsung heroes, navigating the city's bustling streets with care and dedication. Among them, some achieve a remarkable milestone – 20 or more consecutive years of accident-free driving, earning them the prestigious Robert C. Blackwell Safe Driving Award.

Named after Robert C. Blackwell, a former Public Safety officer known for his dedication to highway safety, this award celebrates the exemplary professionalism of Fresno Unified's bus drivers. To qualify, drivers must have 20 or more years of accident-free service, showcasing their meticulous attention to detail and commitment to passenger safety.

While several drivers have achieved this feat, the journey doesn't end there. Recipients must undergo a rigorous process administered by the California Highway Patrol, including a comprehensive review of their driving record and proficiency tests. This ensures they possess the skills needed to navigate any driving situation safely.

In a world where safety is paramount, the Robert C. Blackwell Safe Driving Award highlights Fresno Unified's drivers' unwavering dedication. Let's celebrate these individuals and acknowledge their enduring legacy of safety and professionalism, ensuring the well-being of our community's children for years to come.



Honoring our Blackwell Safe Driving Award Recipients



Elva Fonseca



Rosemary Morales



Twyla Hunt



Lanesha Ruben



James Krebs



Kathy Sanders

Ernest "Ernie" Lorta
Not pictured

Lisa Torres



Emma Saucedo-Fontes



“

ANYONE CAN **DRIVE A CAR**
BUT IT TAKES SOMEONE
SPECIAL TO **DRIVE A SCHOOL BUS!**

”

The Sunshine committee celebrated Black History Month with a warm gathering, featuring homemade dishes representing tradition and love. It emphasized inclusivity, uniting our bus driving family in a shared commitment of respect and community, honoring Black history and fostering camaraderie.

CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH



Sunshine

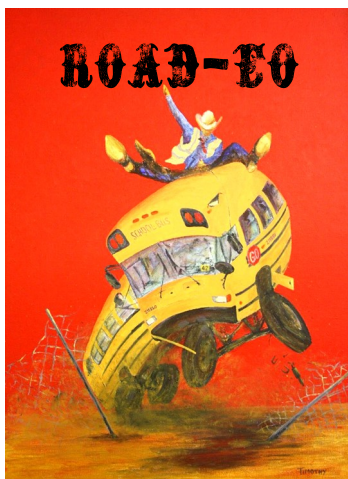


Committee

On March 15th our Sunshine Committee hosted “Nacho Average Friday.” They had nachos, cheese and all the fixings for a fun and festive meal. Thank you to the team for putting on these fun and inclusive events.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY

“NACHO” AVERAGE FRIDAY



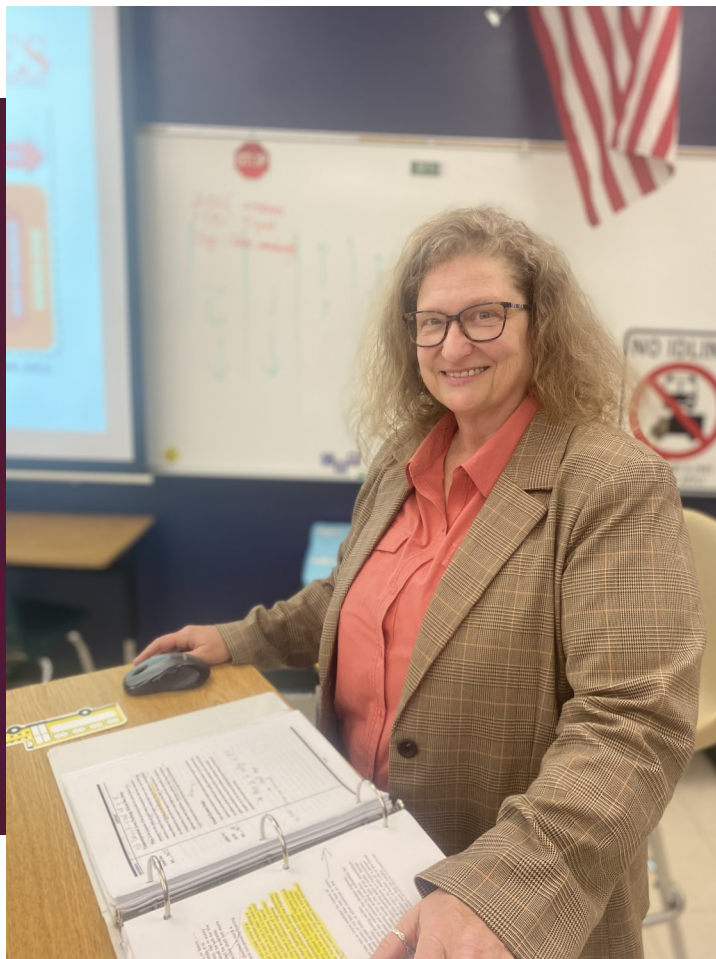
Get ready to ride with the Road-eo team! With 13 members and growing, we're on the fast track to success! In Clovis, Carlos Fonseca snagged 2nd place overall, with Carlos, Elva, and Christian scoring 2nd place team honors!



Now, we're revving up for Garden Grove! CASTO's hosting sectionals and State Championships in Galt for the first time since Covid! Join us and boost your bus-driving skills for both competition and everyday routes! Shout out to Deputy Superintendent Misty Her for her continued support!

**“I can do this.
You can do this.
Together we
can do this and
so much more!”**

JENNIFER MOREN
Transportation Supervisor and
State Certified Instructor



Tell me about you Jen, how many years have you been in Transportation with FUSD?

I am currently serving in my 27th year in the school bus industry. Eighteen of those years have been in the Fresno Unified Transportation family.

How long have you been instructing classes? What goals do you have for those who take your class?

I have been helping to train school bus drivers since 2011. Goals I have include inspiring my students to take their dreams of becoming safe school bus drivers all the way to their own personal finish line!! I want to help others see the importance of safely transporting kids to learning opportunities so they can prepare for their futures.

What do you enjoy most about teaching and the transportation department at FUSD?

As I meet new people who are wanting to become school bus drivers, I feel privileged to help equip them with the knowledge and skills they need to accomplish their aspirations. I am truly passionate about helping others succeed.

“Jen is doing an extraordinary job helping us build our team.”

-Melissa Beltran, Business Ops. Manager, Transportation

What are your goals for FUSD’s Transportation Training Center at Caesar Chavez Adult School?

I would like to broaden the reach of training offered to more members of our surrounding communities to serve a larger demographic.

What motivates you professionally?

I am most inspired by playing a role in helping others serve our kids & watching them take what I share with them and build something even greater than they anticipated! It is as rewarding as planting a garden, caring for it, having patience, and watching it grow to its full potential.

What do you do in your spare time?

I volunteer serving kids through FCA, and my community through local ministries.

“We very much appreciate Jennifer’s dedication to the department and our training initiatives to ensure our new drivers are well-prepared and equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to be the best in the Valley.”

-Paul Idsvoog, Chief of Operations and Labor Management, FUSD

Not Just A Job

In the early morning light, I take the wheel, A school bus driver, with a heart that's real. For in this seat, it's more than just a job, It's an adventure.

With a trusty map and a steady hand, I navigate the roads, across the land. Through rain or shine, through wind or storm, I keep our precious cargo safe and warm.

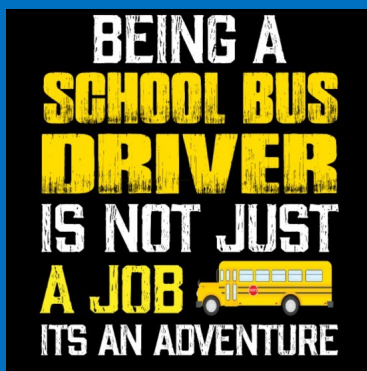
The laughter fills the air, as children play, Their innocence brightening up the day. Their chatter and giggles, like music to my ears, As we journey through the passing years.

Each stop we make, a new chapter unfolds, With stories untold as dreams unfold. For in this rolling classroom, lessons are learned, and memories made, as the wheels turn.

From field trips to games, and everything in between, Every day brings something new to be seen. As a school bus driver, I'm more than just a guide, I'm a companion on this adventure ride.

So though the road may be long and the days may be tough, I take pride in knowing, I'm more than enough. For being a school bus driver is not just a task, It's an adventure.

Through the highs and lows, I'll carry on, For in this role, my heart beats strong. For being a school bus driver is not just a job, It's an adventure. -Unknown



ANITA JONES

Name: Anita Jones

Title: Bus Driver Route: Relief Bus: 12

Years as a Bus Driver: 21 years

Years as an FUSD Employee: 8 years

FUSD Schools she serves:

- As a relief driver Anita serves all schools

Anita likes the high quality of support from the staff, managers, administration, dispatch, training team, and drivers.

The best advice Anita would share with a fellow driver is:

“Safety is our first priority to all our students. We transport each day with care and a smile.”

In her spare time she enjoys spending time with her family and grandchildren. She loves to bake and cook for friends and family. Traveling is one of her favorite things to do because she enjoys seeing different places and scenery. She enjoys the adventure of hiking, going to the beach, and getting an adrenaline rush at Magic Mountain. Traveling the world is on her bucket list.



SMOOTH TRANSITION



busHive is a leader in transportation management software. They are a single software platform that can effectively organize the workflows of an entire transportation operation.

The implementation of the new system will significantly enhance communication processes by consolidating various functions onto a singular platform. This comprehensive solution will facilitate seamless management of field trip requests, approval workflows, pertinent notes, and any subsequent change requests. Through this integrated system, requestors and approvers will gain direct access to all pertinent information related to their respective trips and requests, streamlining the approval process, and fostering enhanced transparency and efficiency throughout the communication chain.

Stay tuned for this exciting new platform.



JEFFREY JOHNS

Name: Jeffrey Johns

Title: Bus Mechanic

Years as an FUSD Employee: 20+ years

Departments served:

- Transportation-Bus Shop

After 20 years wrenching for John Deere and another 20 years at Fresno Unified, I've decided it's time to close the tool box!

Fresno Unified has been a great experience but it's time to open another chapter and move on to my next adventure. Checking off a few bucket list items, hanging out at Buck Rock and spending time at La Playa in San Blas, Nayarit.

I'm planning to finish out the year, then it will be Adios Amigos!

-Jeff



Training Corner

Did you know our training team is here to help you stay compliant and up to date on all your driver requirements?

Here are some of the ways they can help you:

- Classroom instruction
- Behind the Wheel instruction
- Proficiencies
- Retraining
- In-Service
- Insure Driver Validity
- Help prepare for CHP test and renewal
- DOT FMCSA
- Keep the department updated on all new bus regulations



Need help preparing for your pre-trip inspection test?

Reach out to one of your team members today!

Certified Pre-Trip Team

Gabriel Castro
Kellie Cavazos
Stevan Fabela
Carlos Fonseca
Elva Fonseca
Stacie Valeriotte



“THIS IS A NOVELTY...A NOTE FROM THE SCHOOL BUS DRIVER.”

FROM THE BUS SHOP



Ensuring Road Safety: A Peek into the Work of Motor Carrier Inspector Shane Wise

Shane's responsibilities entail inspecting a fleet of buses four times a year, with meticulous attention to detail. The inspection schedule is rigorous, starting with 35 buses in March, followed by a surprise inspection of 20% of the fleet in June. July sees another round of inspections for 35 buses, concluding with a final sweep in September to ensure every vehicle meets safety standards.



When asked about his professional motivations, Shane's response is clear and resolute: "To promote safe operation of motor vehicles on public highways and to prevent the loss of life due to mechanical issues." This commitment to safety underscores every aspect of his work.

Beyond the inspection bay, Shane finds solace in spending time with his family, highlighting the importance of work-life balance in his life. However, his dedication to ensuring road safety doesn't waver even during his leisure time.

During inspections, Shane encounters a myriad of vehicular issues, ranging from cracked exhaust brackets to malfunctioning lights and worn tires. His keen eye for detail allows him to identify potential hazards that could compromise public safety, reinforcing the significance of his role in safeguarding lives on the road.

In essence, individuals like Shane Wise serve as pillars of safety in the transportation industry, their unwavering commitment to excellence ensuring that every journey is a safe one.



-Tony

Tony Aboularage, Supervisor of Vehicle Maintenance

We are committed to making sure our students have a good experience on their bus ride to school or home. When a student loses an item we want them to be able to reclaim their items in a timely manner.

With our new [policies and procedures](#) regarding lost and found, we hope to make the process of reclaiming items easier.

For items that are not claimed at the end of every semester, we are partnering with [Eco World](#). Proceeds will be donated to the FUSD Scholarship Fund.

For more information on how Eco World can help you fundraise for your school, contact Marianne in the Transportation Department.





The more training and practice a driver has the safer he or she will be.

At the Road-EO drivers compete against each other using their skills in precision driving. Each event is either timed or measured to determine the score. The events consist of an obstacle course which includes backing, parallel parking, student loading/unloading, right and left hand turns, and written exams on rules and regulations and vehicle inspection.

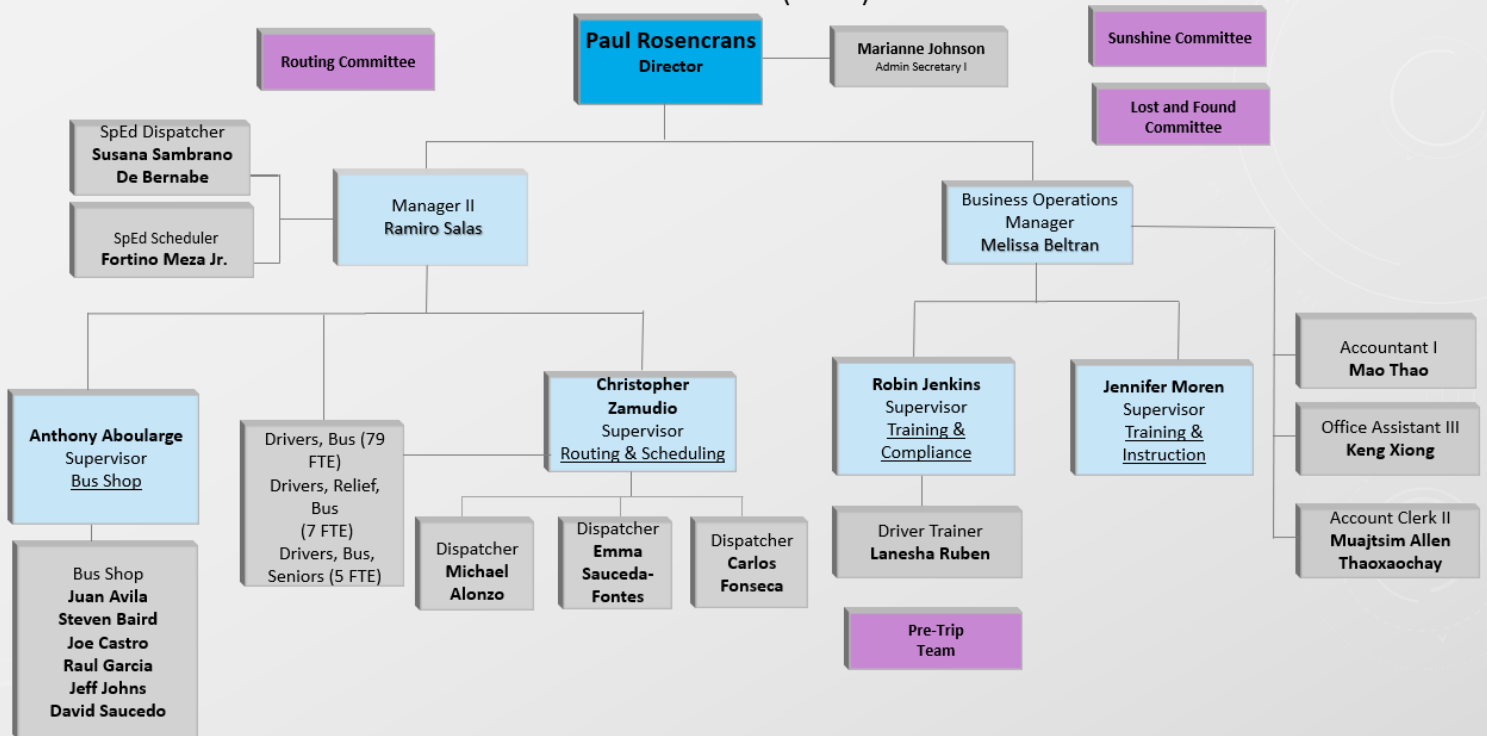
Road-EO is a great skill builder that is beneficial to the drivers, school district and the students that ride the bus.

Fresno Unified's 23/24 Team: Christian Aguilar, Anthony Balderas, Efrain Carmo-
na, Kellie Cavazos, Stevan Fabela, Carlos Fonseca, Elva Fonseca, Angelica Gamez,
Leigh Jenkins, Ismael Lopez, Virginia Lozano, Corina Lozoya, Christina Rodriguez.

We wish our team the best of luck this year!



TRANSPORTATION-(559)457-3138



2023/24

Join our Team!!

transportation.fresnounified.org

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