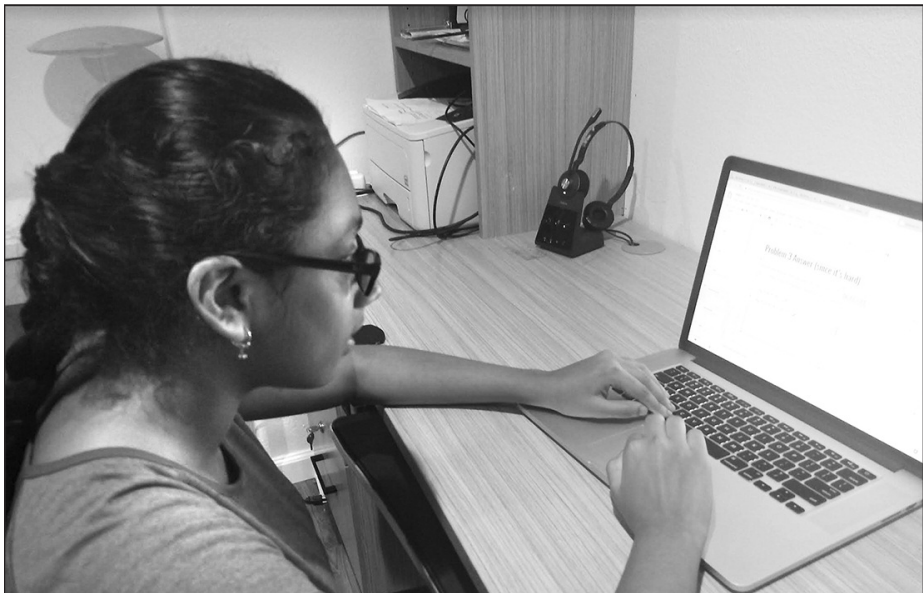


Student tutors help kids prepare for online learning



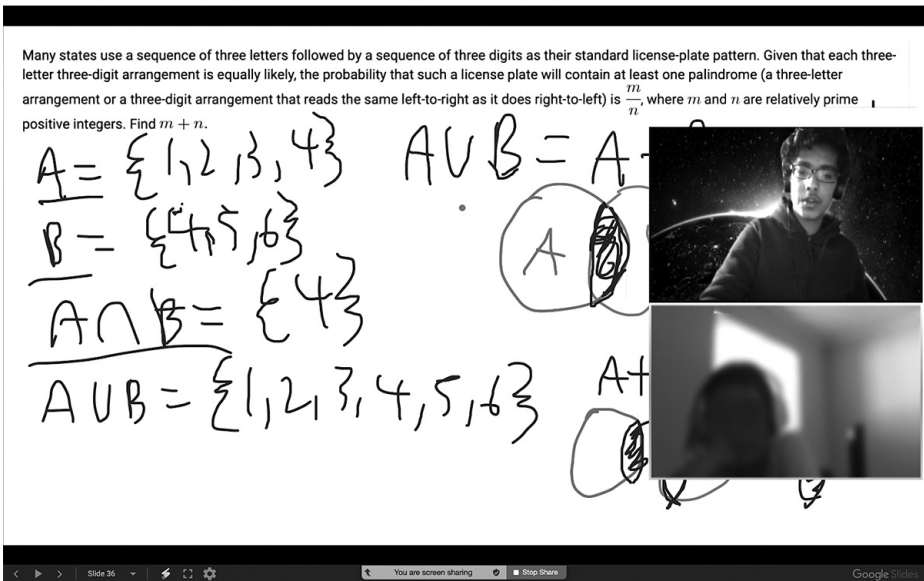
By MIRANDA JETTER

In-person learning, for the moment at least, is a thing of the past. For now, children await a return to distance learning in the Fall. As California tries to grapple with the COVID-19 pandemic and administrators weigh the risks of returning kids to school, Fremont high school students are tutoring younger kids to help prepare them for whatever next year holds.

Fremont Unified Student Store (FUSS), a nonprofit organization set up to support the school district, launched the volunteer peer tutoring program in early May. The goal was to have high schoolers tutor younger children whose learning and comprehension have been adversely affected by distance learning. Though positions are volunteer based, students can earn community service hours for their work. More than 200 kids signed up to tutor and more than 300 families have requested the service so far, according to a press release from FUSD.

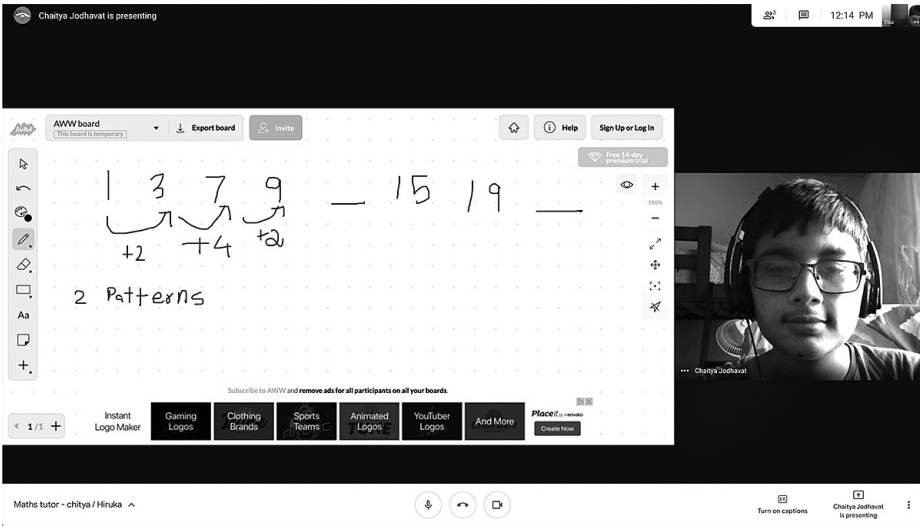
Feedback from parents has been positive. The FUSS website hosts a slew of testimonials thanking the tutors for helping their children. One, in reference to Mishika Agarwal, a freshman at Mission San Jose High School said, “She is patient and encourages my daughter to think on her own when trying to solve problems. She sets a great example.”

Another tutor from the program is Adrish Kar, a sophomore at American High School. He tutors kids in five different subjects with students ranging from third to eighth grade. Though he’s still a student himself, he implemented



diagnostic tests and lesson plans to craft the best learning experience possible. “The most important session with my students,” he says, is “the first one.” The first tutoring session is when Kar takes the student through a diagnostic test to see how they comprehend the material. With that information, he creates lesson plans that complement the student’s learning pace and abilities. He said that he wants each lesson to be “as personalized as possible.”

Though he has become adept at tutoring, there have still been setbacks. One student, Kar said, would always come late to their sessions and eventually stopped coming altogether. In other moments Kar has found it hard to keep kids focused, especially when their attention is mediated through a computer screen. “I have to constantly find new ways



to engage them and make the content interesting,” he said.

Aditi Gupta, a freshman at Irvington High School, is another tutor who has gotten creative about the position. When she first meets with her students, in groups that can range from two to 10, she gives them a survey to fill out that she created. It covers what the student’s strengths and weaknesses are, and what they hope to learn. These surveys are what she turns to if she ever loses track of her teaching plan or can’t think of what material to work

Irvington High School senior said, “When we can’t be physically present in classrooms, we can still learn, practice, and progress further together.” Agarwal said she was happily surprised by how excited her students were to learn. She said that her students “come to each lesson prepared” with “their homework done and new questions for me to answer.”

Kar and Gupta find fulfillment in tutoring because they feel that they’re giving back to their community. Kar said that he wanted to give back to his school district in particular. “It lightens the mood, helping out my community.”

Gupta said that it’s rewarding to be able to help younger kids prepare for the future school year, which she suspects will continue to be difficult. She said that most of her friends are devoting their time to preparing for their own distance learning experience, but that some like her, are also finding time to mail letters of encouragement to frontline workers in an attempt to give back. She said that everyone has to “dig deep and find ways that you can help.”

For more information about the FUSS student tutors go to <https://www.fuss4schools.org/>



HOT AUGUST ZOOMwith romance author Kilby Blades

SUBMITTED BY KNUTI VANHOVEN

You’ve heard how “Love makes the world go ‘round.” You’ll probably have noticed that it also makes the metaphorical cash registers ring for everything from film scripts to historical documentaries. So, at 2 p.m. on Saturday, August 22, Fremont Area Writers (FAW) is looking forward to hosting a Hot August Zoom meeting with Contemporary Romance Writer Kilby Blades as eatured guest.

Her topic, reprised from her presentation at the Writer’s Digest Conference in New York, will be “How and When and Why to Integrate Romance into

Your Novels.” A rising star in the field, Blades seasons her romances with feminism and equality, which are signature aspects of her work. A review in Publishers’ Weekly Review adds, “Blades delivers a saucy romance full of lovely characters who complement each other like fine wine and a good meal.”

FAW is an organization of writers helping other writers. Kilby comes to FAW courtesy of Romance Writers of America’s San Jose Branch. The August 22nd Zoom Meeting is free and open to anyone who wants to improve their writing, regardless of their current skill levels. To obtain the Zoom connection, Email scottfrombayside@yahoo.com.

For more information about Kilby Blades, check out kilbyblades.com.

Hot August Zoom with Kilby Blades
Saturday, Aug 22
2 p.m.
Via Zoom
RSVP: scottfrombayside@yahoo.com

