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# MIDWAY DRILLER

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## TC' \$17 million student center finished

Taft, CA – Taft College has announced the completion of its new Student Center.

The public is invited to the official grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony taking place on Wednesday, August 25 at 1 p.m. on the south patio, easily accessible from Wildcat Way.

Refreshments will be served and guided tours of the 21,000-square-foot facility will be offered. 67Masks will be required and provided, as needed.

Contractor Columbo Construction Company wrapped up all final details so the college could welcome students back to campus on time for in-person fall classes, including access to the new Student Center, starting on August 23.

"Our state-of-the-art facility was truly worth waiting for! We will be offering our students and the entire community a game-changing campus experience," Superintendent/President Dr. Debra S. Daniels said. "In addition, this new building will be a critical component of our plans for Taft College Centennial Celebration events in 2022."

The new Student Center amenities include a 4,740-square-foot student lounge and gaming area, 600 square feet area designated for Associated Student Organization (ASO) offices, a 3,160-square-foot bookstore, print shop, and mail room, a 3,660-square-foot cafeteria and dining area serving a maximum of 244 persons, a 3,360-square-foot cafeteria, kitchen and food service area, a 400-square-foot staff dining/meeting room, as well as 180 square feet for the office of Campus Safety. The Taft College Bookstore was relocated from 515 Finley Drive in Taft.

The \$17 million cost of the highly anticipated Taft College Student Center project was financed using all remaining 2004 Measure A funding.



Taft College's new student center has finally been completed. It will be featured at a grand opening on Aug. 25. Photo by Doug Keeler/Midway Driller

## TUHS students will start school in masks

By Doug Keeler  
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Taft Union High School students will be wearing masks indoors when school starts on Aug. 18.

The TUHSD Board of Trustees reluctantly agreed to the requirements after new Supt. Dr. Jason Hodgson presented the findings from the California Department of Public Health.

It's a big step in the right direction, but TUHS is looking forward to getting back to a pre-pandemic normal.

"We are really, really hopeful to find that normal," Hodgson said. "Our goals... is to get back to normal, to get out of masks as early as possible."

The CDPH said mask requirements will be reevaluated by Nov. 1.

The CDPH said "in-person instruction can occur safely without

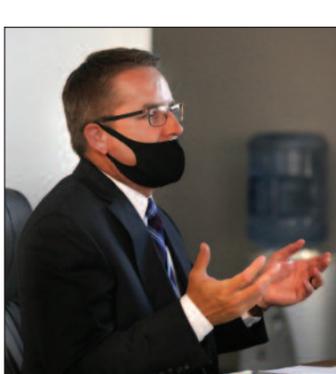


Photo by Doug Keeler/Midway Driller  
Dr. Jason Hodgson discusses California Department of Public Health guidelines with board.

a minimum when other mitigation strategies are utilized."

That means masks at all times indoors and on buses.

The only exception will be eating in the cafeteria while eating and drinking but social distancing will be important there

P.E. classes outdoors will not need masks but indoors classes will.

Still to come is guidance for bands, sports, choir and other extra-curricular activities

The mask requirement will be implemented, but the board isn't very enthusiastic.

"We have not done this. The government has done this to our kids," board member Julie Ortlieb said.

Still she's happy that in-person instruction and sports are coming back.

Board President Paul Linder said everyone, regardless of their view on masking, needs to get along.

"I would just ask everybody to respect each other," he said.

"Our goal is to keep this school open," board member John Kopp added, saying the board is committed to that.



Photo by Doug Keeler/Midway Driller  
Taft High football players will be in Delano to scrimmage two teams Friday night.

## Taft Union football scrimmages Friday

By Jonah Armstrong

Friday evening the Taft Union High Wildcats will be scrimmaging against Delano High School and Mira Monte High.

It will be the first contact for the GTUHS team in almost two years.

The TUHS varsity has around 35 players and the junior varsity has over 50, players ready hit the field.

"We are excited to play against someone else this week" said Head Coach Brian Durkan.

Coaches are looking to make refinements on both sides of the ball as they start to push into the season. Friday's scrimmage will probe for any vulnerabilities that may have gone under their radar.

"We want to play with maximum effort. This will be their first time on film so that we can evaluate



Photo by Doug Keeler/Midway Driller  
Taft Union High School District met in board room Monday night for first time since pandemic began.

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**STARTING THURSDAY, JULY 1, 2021**  
West Side Family Health Care will open at  
**7:00 am Monday - Friday**  
Holiday and weekend hours will remain 10:00 am - 9:00 pm

# NEW HOURS



## West Side Family Health

100 E. North St. Taft, CA 92368  
661-765-1935 • WSHCD.org



For information regarding classes, prices, registration deadlines, ages etc. please call 661.765.6677

