

Student assessments part of roadmap to success

By Corrine Folmer, Ed.D.
Superintendent

CONIC hockey player Wayne Gretzky is credited for the saying, “You miss 100% of the shots you don’t take.” Today, our youth have a popular saying with a similar “be bold and go for it” message: “Shoot your shot.” These phrases are exactly what our educators are building up our students to do! As the Spring semester is in full force, our team is helping prepare our students for upcoming state testing, AP testing and, eventually, finals.



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This preparation requires having established goals and a positive mindset.

In education and in life, clear directions and clear goals are extremely important to achieving success. It is one of the reasons that our teachers spend hours mapping out the entire academic year, carefully planning the instructional strategies they will use to ensure students master the core standards of a given grade level.

Having a clear curriculum map allows our teachers to achieve their learning goals for their students. It also provides our students with the maximum opportunity to, year-over-year, build on the knowledge gained in each grade level so that they graduate fully prepared and ready for life after high school.

Student assessments are another part of this critical roadmap to success, and each spring, California’s standardized tests provide an

opportunity to measure the degree to which our students are mastering grade level standards. Sometimes, these assessments can be a source of anxiety, and I would encourage our students and their families (as well as our teachers) to take con-

fidence that they are nothing to fear. Instead, they are an indicator helpful in guiding instruction and, where necessary, intervention. These assessments are one validation tool of the growth and hard work of our students and staff.

At school, our teachers are reviewing key learnings and practicing key strategies with their students that prepare them to be ready to demonstrate their full understanding of the lessons they have already learned this year. Our

schools will hold rallies and create fun methods to encourage and support their students, and I have even seen some principals and GISs go so far as to perform original song and dance routines to get their students excited.

At home, you can help your child be ready for these assessments, too.

LESSONS

Inspirations by, for and from our CUSD students



Mountain View Elementary fifth grader Jason Hasson represented Clovis Unified in the 2024 Central California Regional Braille Challenge recently. The event held in the U.S., Canada and United Kingdom culminates in a two-day finals in the summer and is the only academic competition of its kind for visually impaired students from first through 12th grade who can read and write braille. Students compete in five areas to test their proficiency using braille: reading comprehension, spelling, speed and accuracy, proofreading and charts and graphs. “Jason did great! He loved participating and is eagerly waiting to see if he finished in the Top 10 because he wants to participate in the finals!” said CUSD Visual Impairment Specialist April Pair, noting he was the only Clovis Unified student to compete this year.

Special to CUSD Today

“Happiness lies in the joy of achievement and the thrill of creative effort.”

THEODORE ROOSEVELT, 26TH PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

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As you hear of your individual school’s assessment schedule, make sure to schedule any family appointments outside of the instructional school day. Leave plenty of time in the morning to get to school to try and avoid the last-minute dash out the door and the possibility of a missed breakfast. In fact, I want our families to remember, too, that our schools offer free breakfast for students so they can have a hot, nutritious meal to start their day. Enforce a reasonable bedtime so your child is rested and ready for the school day, and finally, encourage your child with a reminder that these assessments cover material that their teachers carefully prepared them for all year.

Students, staff and parents are all in this together. We want our students to know we have confidence in them and are eager to watch them “Shoot their shot!”