

Student achievement not where we want it to be – yet!

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EVERYWHERE I go in our school district, I see signs of learning. Sometimes, that learning looks like a classroom full of students working on a back-wall whiteboard puzzling over the formula for solving quadratic equations. Sometimes, it looks like a group of first graders at a kidney table working on reading comprehension with their teacher. And, sometimes, those signs of learning are literally ... signs. Signs on the classroom walls that say things like:



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called a growth mindset. This mindset describes a learner who understands that while there is incredible access to information at one's fingertips, true learning is something one must work at, and it is often messy and challenging. In fact, sometimes we fail and have to try again. Those are life lessons that can get lost in our world of AI-generated essays and carefully edited social media videos that often skip over the process of learning to show a perfect outcome.

Understanding and applying a growth mindset to life is critical not only to success in the classroom, but also success in life. It's a lesson that we adults learn and use on a regular basis, and as our team is diving deeply into California's recent release of student achievement data, we are applying our best growth mindset.

Our amazing instructional team, and growth mindset attitude for ALL students, has allowed CUSD students to rank second in the state in ELA and Math for schools that test more than 20,000 students!

While we are proud of our Clovis Unified students who continue to perform above the county and state averages, and we have seen some classrooms make great gains, we are not where we want to be as a district with respect to our overall district wide CAASPP results. In English Language Arts (ELA), 66.18% of students in Clovis Unified scored at or above proficiency level. In Math, 51.02% of students were at or above grade level proficiency. In comparison, statewide the number of students testing at grade level was 46.66% in ELA and 34.62% in math, and for districts testing more than 20,000 students we are the second highest performing district in the state in ELA and Math.

There is no doubt that our team of incredible educators are working hard to overcome obstacles to learning, and we are using this data to drill down to look student-by-student at how it can inform instruction in the current school year. This is the detailed work that helps us learn and allows us to meet every student where they are in their in-

dividual learning journey.

Some of our schools saw student achievement grow by anywhere from 15-22% at certain grade levels. We must now work together to replicate that level of achievement across every grade level and school in our district.

This fall, the district has been conducting school-by-school reviews of the data and each school site leader is engaged in a process called "Principal Grade Level Expectations" or PGLE, in which individualized plans are created to promote student-by-student growth toward mastery of grade-level standards. Principals provide in-depth assessments, that assist us in looking for trends and commonalities across the district that offer insight as to where and how we can make improvements to better support our teachers and students.

The same level of analysis is happening at every level of the district including the individual teacher-student level, where teachers work with their site leadership to create individualized intervention plans for

every student who did not achieve at or above their grade level standard. That work informs the day-to-day instruction delivered by teachers in the classroom.

Our parents are partners in this learning process as well. We encourage you to use the systems available to you in Clovis Unified like Parent Connect to check your child's progress in class, and the variety of interventions we offer when your child is struggling to understand a concept. Check in with your child regularly to see how things are going at school and pay attention to times that they seem to have struggled in their understanding of a concept in class. Reach out to your child's teacher(s) if needed, and be aware of the six, eight and 12-week grading periods at the secondary level and the progress reporting times in elementary.

We might not be where we want to be today. I would, however, add that all important, growth mindset word and say instead: We aren't where we want to be YET – and working together, we will be!