

Student learning most important of all

By Corrine Folmer, Ed.D.
Superintendent



N Aug. 19 our educational team had the joy of welcoming more than 43,000 students to a new school year, and what an exciting day it was!

From the tearful farewells of parents sending their child to school for the first time to families celebrating the first day of senior year, our schools were buzzing with energy and emotion. Our team was full of enthusiasm at meeting our students, and as I traveled around our school campuses throughout the first week of school, everywhere I looked there was cause to believe this will be a truly great school year.

■ At Hirayama Elementary, every member of the educational team was focused on making the first day of not only a new school year, but also a new school community, its best. With construction on the final buildings of the new school still underway, I witnessed a miraculous transformation in the days leading up to the first day of school, where members of our educational team were joined by crews from our construction partners to work almost around the clock so that our students' and staff's first day experience was a great one.

■ In kitchens across the district, I saw members of our Campus Catering team diligently preparing healthy meals that meet new federal nutrition standards. It is no small feat to appeal to youthful palates while ensuring every menu item is the healthiest it can be, yet this team makes it happen every day.

■ In coaching, as in good teaching, we know the importance of preparation and planning. In the week leading up to Aug. 19, I saw

the hours and expertise of our professional development team creating planning opportunities for our veteran and new to Clovis Unified teachers. Our educational team expects a lot out of themselves because we believe our students deserve only the best, and this was evidenced in the many hours our teachers and professional development depart-

ment put into planning instruction for our students this coming year. What I saw in our institute training was a testament to the passion and dedication of an educational team committed to ensuring they are prepared for our students.

■ Going that extra mile, literally and figuratively, are our bus drivers. Those individuals, who often are

the first to greet our students, keep our kids safe on the trip to and from school. I am always so impressed with the care our drivers put into their work; for example, did you know that, the week before school starts, drivers in our Special Education transportation program make a home visit to the families of the students they will transport this

year? They want the parents and students to know they are in good hands when they step on the bus, and that a personal connection with the family exists with their school bus driver.

■ As I spent time on our school sites, I saw the fruits of labor by our maintenance, grounds, purchasing and facilities teams. Our school sites look beautiful both in and out of the classrooms. In the classrooms there are six schools that now have new classroom furniture needed to replace broken and worn-out pieces. This project was intended to ensure we replace lift top desks whose hinges are so worn they are at risk of falling on a student's head or chairs, and desks that could collapse and injure someone. On the outside, I saw carefully tended landscaping and playfields that invite students to take pride in their education and the team who makes their learning our first priority.

■ Traveling between schools on our first day, I also passed the construction site of our future high school and intermediate school. This campus is rising from the ground in an area of our district that is currently suffering from overcrowding, and on the first day of school we saw student enrollment meeting – and likely exceeding – our projections for the current year as we continue to grow. The Terry P. Bradley Educational Center will open next fall, even as a needed facility bond is on your November ballot to allow all that campuses' buildings to be completed. I encourage you to learn more about Measure A and cast an informed vote in November on this important matter for our schools' future.

Within hours of the first bell of the 2024-25 school year, I was in first and second grade classrooms where students were already at work on academic assignments. Proof that preparation by our incredible educational team and a clear focus is key to the most important work of all – our students' learning!



Corrine Folmer,
Ed.D.

LESSONS

Inspirations by, for and from our CUSD students



Photo special to CUSD Today

Boris Elementary Principal Demetra Vincent-Walker enjoys popsicles with students the week before the new school year began during an evening where incoming families could visit and meet with the principal.

“Children are likely to live up to what you believe of them.”

LADY BIRD JOHNSON, FORMER FIRST LADY OF THE UNITED STATES