

New year brings joy, chance to make a positive difference

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Superintendent



On Aug. 21, my heart was filled with joy as I was able to witness the hours of preparation that our educational team had put in place to warmly welcome our students come alive. It was such an exciting (almost rainy) day filled with anticipation of all the year will bring.



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To kick off the start of a new school year, my Executive Cabinet

team and I visited every Clovis Unified school site. Our custodial teams were on campuses as early as 5 a.m. giving a final once over to our campuses so they sparked for students who would be arriving in a few hours. Members of our transportation team hit the road in shining, recently waxed, yellow school buses on routes they had practiced in the weeks leading up to the start of school. It is often our bus drivers who are the first to welcome a student to school and start their day off on a positive note.

As we visited campuses, it was evident our Campus Catering employees were on site and at work to provide our students with nutritious and tasty meals. As a stu-

dent myself, I remember how much I enjoyed the chances I had to be a student helper in the kitchen and to experience how much pride and effort our kitchen teams put into taking care of our students' need for quality meals.

We encountered groups of leadership students and their activities directors coming on to campuses early to hang signs and balloons that welcomed their peers to school. In the weeks leading up to the first day of school, these leadership students had planned and prepared for activities designed to make students feel a welcome part of their campus community.

Just the sounds of their laughter as they worked hard together put a smile on my face. We saw in

these groups of students how our core value of teamwork and trust is built as teams do hard work together.

These students inspired me as I continued through the day. From the ringing of the Jefferson Elementary School bell (where I started my own journey as a Clovis Unified student), where I witnessed the pride of kindergartners being introduced to this 139-year old tradition, to the sounds of supportive farewells by moms and dads as they entrusted their children to their child's classroom teacher for the first time this school year.

Every campus onto which I walked was filled with the collaborative sounds of learning, the ex-

citement of new relationships, and the joyful smiles on our students' faces for the start of the new year.

On Aug. 15, our educational team came together for our annual General Session (a rally to kick-off another school year), and during that event, our speaker challenged us to acknowledge the positive impact we can make for our students on a daily basis.

Why is my heart full of joy? Because I saw thousands of our team members making a meaningful difference with our students starting on the first day, and it reminded me what I already know: We have an amazing team that is focused on our mission to develop our students to be the best they can be in mind, body and spirit.