

Fresno Unified, Everybody's Responsibility, Everybody's Future

While every educational institution across our community has a vital role to play in our efforts to strengthen the economy, prepare individuals and create healthy neighborhoods, being the largest, Fresno Unified is often on central stage. When Dr. Buster offered up his services to lead in a time of turmoil, few of us who heeded his call for assistance and crafted *Choosing Our Future: A Community Wide Call to Action*, believed there were any guarantees of improvement. What we did know is that a state takeover would have shattered the confidence of a community working hard to create a proud and prosperous future. This bulletin is devoted to celebrating the successes of many, those visible and visible only to a few, who have aligned their minds, spirits and daily work behind a shared, essential and inspired purpose.

Student Achievement—Preparing Children For Self Reliance & Community Service

Children are the central focus of education. For success, all adults—parents, teachers, staff, administrators, volunteers—must unite behind strategies to improve opportunities for children to develop character and competence and a commitment to life long learning. While every measure is imperfect and incomplete, the following indicators present an encouraging pattern of improvement:

- Fresno Unified Student Groups met 43 or 46 Targets for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)
- AYP Percentage Proficient in Mathematics (+2.4) outpaced other large urban districts.
- AYP Graduation Rate of 78.8% was a 2.5% increase over previous rate which met the AYP growth target.
- The API of 667 showed a +9 point gain, far above the AYP target of 590.
- Five Program Improvement (PI) schools made AYP for the second consecutive year and excited PI. An additional four PI schools met AYP and are poised to exit based upon 2008 AYP results.
- Only two schools will enter PI 1—Bakman and Academy for New Americans.

Creating a Context for Success

As pointed out in *Choosing Our Future*, the community has a major role to play in improving the lives and achievements of children. Thanks to the *Regional Jobs Initiative*, there are now targets for educators to align curriculum toward to create pathways for all students across many industries. Thanks to an outstanding effort by the *Workforce Investment Board* to identify skills needed in industry clusters, both **State Center** and **West Hills** have created over 30 new certificate programs and 2,000 more people have prepared themselves for high quality, existing jobs. A shared challenge remains---lighting up these pathways all the way into our grade schools. As more children see a path that fits their area of passion and natural talents, the motivation needed to persevere will unleash. Relevance, relationships and rigor...the three R's of the student success are gaining ground as the community continues to step up together to support our education sector.

A Community Celebration—Let's Pause To Acknowledge How Far We Have Come

Ken Maddy, remembered as a statesman who could bring people together from every persuasion to work behind a shared goal, would no doubt be pleased that the institute named in his honor is hosting an event to celebrate successes at **Fresno Unified**. *The Kenneth L. Maddy Institute* is the primary host for the celebration slated for Tuesday, November 13 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Downtown Club. RSVP to jejohnson@csufresno.edu.

In the words of **John Gardner**, "There is no possibility that centralized authority can call all the shots in large and complex human systems, whether the system is a corporation or nation. Individuals in all segments and at all levels must be prepared to exercise leaderlike initiative and

responsibility to assess problems at their level and move to solve them. To emphasize the need for dispersed leadership does not deny the need for extremely able top leadership. We need our great high-level leaders. But they will be more effective in every way if the systems over which they preside are made vital by dispersed leadership. We must demand high performance at every level of society.” Go FUSD!