



GROSSMONT UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT'S NEWSLETTER

From the office of Superintendent Robert Collins

Reopening Classrooms at Grossmont High School



L. to R.: Principal Theresa Kemper, Superintendent Bob Collins, School Board President Priscilla Schreiber, and ASB President Bryce Mayer open the new classroom building on Monday, December 3rd.

In the past there has been discussion about what has been happening with Proposition H projects. Those questions were answered Monday morning at Grossmont High School when infrastructure upgrades made possible the reopening of 13 completely renovated classrooms for student and teacher use.

The renovations included taking the building down to the foundation and building new walls, ceilings, roofing, doors, windows, and floor. Modern furniture, whiteboards, door locks and technology is a part of every classroom.

And this is just the beginning! Ribbon cuttings celebrating the reopening of newly renovated classrooms and other construction projects will now be a regular occurrence, covering every school in our District over the next 18 months.

Character Education in our District Building Upon a Culture of Values and Ethics

One of the questions I received concerning my first newsletter was "What is character education all about?" My desire is to build upon what has been done already in the Grossmont District. For years, our District has published articles regarding character education that have been used by teachers. In athletics we have a program called *Pursuing Victory with Honor*.

We teach values daily in the classroom, at lunch and in our activities. Teachers expect that students are **trustworthy, respectful, responsible, caring, fair and good citizens**. These values are the centerpiece of the *Character Counts!* program developed by Michael Josephson of the Josephson Institute for Ethics. It is a program that I have used for many years.

What I am currently discussing with staff and students is that we make the teaching and practicing of the above universal values a comprehensive part of what we do daily. We should remind students of the importance of **being responsible**: not being tardy, completing homework and never using profanity. Discipline codes and classroom rules should emphasize the importance of **being respectful**.

We also know that businesses seek employees who are **trustworthy, respectful and responsible**. Government and community leaders look for individuals who are **good citizens** and are **caring** about the needs of others.

Being **trustworthy, respectful, responsible, caring, fair** and exhibiting **good citizenship** are necessary traits for each student to reach their highest potential and for the quality of life in our communities. Public schools have a responsibility to ensure that we do what we can to promote, reinforce and develop these qualities in our students. A character education program developed by staff and students, will contribute greatly to accomplishing **our District goal of ensuring that all students are educated in an emotionally and physically safe, supportive environment.**

While visiting schools, I will be collecting examples of how our schools are currently addressing character education. I also want to convene a student conference this Spring to address character education in our schools. Such a conference would bring student representatives from throughout the District to discuss how we can improve our school environment and build a culture of character and values.

Pursuing Victory with Honor

Have you ever watched a sporting event where an athlete argues vociferously with an official's call or where abusive language is used? *Pursuing Victory with Honor* is another program of the Josephson Institute, designed to instill in our student athletes the same six pillars of character that are part of a strong education program. It has been a part of the Grossmont's character education program for years. Coaches are extensively trained and students are taught to be respectful of officials and opposing players. The emphasis is to ensure that each athlete understands that winning is important, but how one wins or loses is far more so.