

Fresno State University President Challenges West Fresno Middle School Students to Pursue Their Dreams



Above: Dr. Castro addresses WFMS students.

Dr. Joseph I. Castro, the eighth President of Fresno State University, had a simple and powerful message for West Fresno Middle School’s promoting class of students: “Be bold and pursue your dreams.”

Castro shared his story about growing up as the grandson of migrant workers in the Central Valley. As the first person in his family to graduate from university, Dr. Castro understands the hard work and commitment it takes for today’s students to achieve their academic goals. He encouraged the soon-to-be ninth graders to finish their high school education and to pursue a higher education in college or university.

One hundred and eleven West Fresno Middle School students promoted into high school on Wednesday, June 7th, in the Washington Union High School auditorium. Over 500 friends and family members attended the event honoring the hard work put in by this eighth grade class.

“This promoting class is resilient and bold in their learning, adapting and persevering.” states Principal, Lucio Cortez. Cortez described their growth both academically and socially. He says that this particular class of students was not only focused on academics, but also involved in all aspects of campus culture. These students participated in volunteer work throughout the year, including, planting trees with Tree Fresno, reading to West Fresno Preschool students, and facilitating safe drop off zones at West Fresno Elementary School. Students also participated in West Fresno’s art and music programs, including band and choir.

Notably, this class of students served as leaders for West Fresno Middle School’s anti-bullying initiative. Student recited an anti-bullying pledge each morning and hosted a rally to raise awareness. Cortez is proud of his students’ achievements and wishes them well at Washington Union High School in the fall.



Above: Washington Unified School Board Members: Henry Hendrix, Eddie Ruiz, Anna Campbell, Terry Ruiz, Darrell Carter, and Steven Barra with Fresno State President, Joseph Castro, and WUSD Superintendent, Joey Campbell, at West Fresno Middle School’s 8th grade promotion.

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The Washington Unified School District
Proudly Serves:

- American Union Elementary School
- American Union Preschool
- Easton Community Day School
- Easton Continuation High School
- ELM High School
- Washington Union High School
- West Fresno Elementary School
- West Fresno Middle School
- West Fresno Preschool
- WUSD Adult Education Program

Superintendent's Message



Washington Unified
Superintendent
Joey Campbell

Dear Washington Unified Families,

I'd like to invite you to participate in our **2017 Summer Reading Challenge!** As you know, reading to your child every day is crucial to their success. We are excited to have partnered with Footsteps2Brilliance™ to offer every single family living within Washington Unified's boundaries a free online literacy application. This unique app works on any device and can be used in both English and Spanish. Students and families will enjoy the interactive books and games that Footsteps2Brilliance™ has to offer.

Research tells us that reading to your child, just 15 minutes a day, will ensure that they don't lose valuable learning over summer vacation. I encourage all families to go to our website and register today! Please visit: www.washingtonunified.org for more information. For those families that don't have a device, we encourage you to find ways to bring books into your home. You can visit your local library to check out books to read during the summer.

I challenge each student to read for 15 minutes a day, 3 times a week!

You will not only learn worthwhile skills, you will ensure that you are ready to succeed in school and beyond.

Sincerely,
Joey Campbell, Superintendent



West Fresno Sites To Undergo Much Needed Renovations This Summer

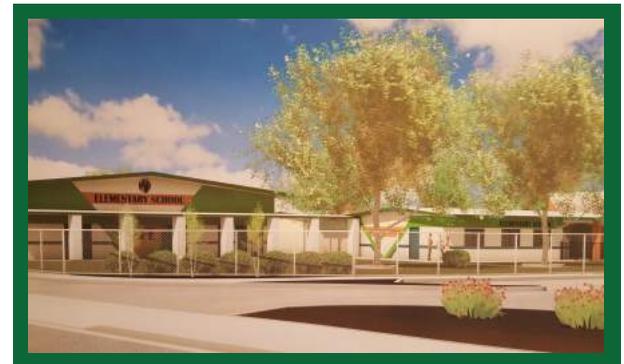
Washington Unified is excited to begin much needed campus renovations at both the West Fresno Elementary School and West Fresno Middle School sites. Providing a safe and inviting campus environment is a priority at Washington Unified. Parents, students, and community members have been looking forward to campus updates and are excited for the process to begin.

Parents recently expressed their desire to see improvements on both sites, including bathroom repairs and providing umbrellas for shade on hot days. As a result, preliminary plans are in place and include updated paint and landscaping for both sites.

West Fresno's student population has grown over the past two years. Over 750

students attend West Fresno Elementary School and 400 students attend West Fresno Middle School each day. While the district's maintenance teams do their best to keep facilities in good repair, it is hoped that the planned renovations will aide in serving more students.

The project is currently underway. Shade umbrellas have already been purchased and repairs will be made to various buildings throughout campus. Staff and student restrooms will be completely renovated in order to better serve the student body.



Above and Below: Preliminary drawings of West Fresno School Sites after summer renovations include updated paint and landscaping.



“Mathematical Mindset” Responsible for Rising WUSD Math Scores

Washington Unified’s math scores are on the rise. Preliminary results from the 2017 California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CASSPP) show that WUSD met its goal of raising Math scores by at least 5%. Districtwide, students improved 9%.

Mindset is currently a hot topic in education. The work of researcher Dr. Carol Dweck has led the way for educators as they try to figure out how to empower students to embrace learning with a growth mindset instead of being stuck with a fixed mindset.

According to Dweck, a “growth mindset is based on the belief that your basic qualities are things you can cultivate through your efforts...everyone can change and grow through application and experience” (Dweck, 2006, p. 7). The opposite of that, a fixed mindset, is believing you only have a certain amount of intelligence or ability and you really cannot change who you are (Dweck, 2006).

Stanford professor Jo Boaler argues that students often maintain a negative relationship with math because, from a young age, they have developed a fixed mindset where they believe that they are just not good at it (Boaler, 2016). Once this mindset is developed, it has devastating effects on their math abilities for the rest of their lives. Think about it. We hear people say things all the time like, ‘I am just not a math person’ or ‘I’ve never been good at math.’ When children hear these things, they start to believe that math is something that you either are or are not good at. And once they get a bad grade on their first math test, they fix their mindset that they have fallen into the ‘not good at math’ category.

This year, Washington Unified School District has embarked on a journey to transform this mindset in both our teach-

ers and our students. Twenty-one teachers and 5 administrators participated in our first cohort of a Stanford University online course instructed by leading researcher Jo Boaler called How to Learn Math: For Teachers. This eight-session course, grounded in the most current research about how our brains work, is designed to help teachers transform how their students experience math.

Teachers from Kindergarten through

.....
“They have begun to see all their work as valuable whether they get the right answer or not.”

.....
-WFES Teacher Jessica Lambert

12th grade are excited about the things they are learning and have already seen some amazing shifts in the mindsets of their students and the math knowledge

they are gaining because of it.

West Fresno Elementary School teacher Jessica Lambert says, “This course has really changed the way I view mathematical processes. It is no longer just about getting the right answer, but truly the process and I praise students for their struggles and their

valuable whether they get the right answer or not. I have also started conducting number talks and the students love it.”

WUSD is committed to continuing our work in shifting the mindset of our students and staff, especially in the area of math. Parents, you can help to cultivate a growth mindset with your child by focusing on a few powerful strategies: **Encourage your child to take risks** even if you think they may fail. Failure is a great teaching tool for all of us as our brains show the most growth when we struggle with something (Boaler, 2016). Instead of praising your child for receiving a high grade on a test, **praise them for the hard work** they put into studying and preparing for the test. Encourage your child to believe in themselves even when they struggle. **Praise their effort through the struggle.**

Boaler, Jo (2016). Mathematical Mindsets. San Francisco, Ca: Jossey-Bass.

Dweck Ph.D., Carol (2006). Mindset: The New Psychology of Success. New York: Ballantine



Above: Jessica Lambert’s 5th Grade students at West Fresno Elementary working through a Math Challenge. Lambert is one of a handful of teachers who implemented the “Mathematical Mindset” Approach.

American Union Awarded \$10,000 Grant for STEM Initiative



American Union Elementary School's Principal, Heather Gomez, isn't shy when it comes to her vision for her students' education: "All American Union students will experience an education that incorporates Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) so that they will be better prepared to engage in the opportunities of a 21st Century world." Gomez hopes that her school's focus on STEM will prepare students to meet the requirements of the rigorous state standards, as well as make their education relevant to real life.

American Union's administrators and teachers have intentionally designed an instructional and professional development program that focuses on STEM activities. This year, teachers have been trained in engineering practices specifically for use in elementary classrooms and in applying a "growth mindset"* when it comes to teaching mathematics. A STEM team was formed and members were able to attend a STEM symposium aimed to equip educators with

instructional strategies aligned with STEM activities and lessons.

Students have access to American Union's STEM electives, including courses in Computer Aided Design (CAD) and 3D Printing, Robotics, and Coding. Students also receive STEM focused instruction in American Union's After School program through enrichment activities on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons.

American Union Elementary School was recently awarded a \$10,000.00 grant from the Wonderful Company for a STEM initiative entitled: Eagle Engineers. The Eagle Engineers program was designed so that all American Union students would be able to study STEM skills through an integrated educational experience.

The grant allows American Union to participate in Project Lead the Way, which provides standards based lessons to students about science and engineering. Students will get to participate in projects designed to "engage students in hands-on activities, projects, and problems; empower them to solve real-world challenges; and inspire them to reimagine how they see themselves." Students will study many engineering concepts, including: robotics, computer systems, and the science of flight.

It is hoped that by infusing these STEM concepts into a student's early education, they will be inspired to continue their learning through programs like the Wonderful Academy in 6th through 8th grades and beyond.



Above: Lorenzo Felix proudly displays the basketball game he designed during AU's "Cardboard Challenge."

*A "growth mindset" is a term from Carol Dweck's groundbreaking work out of Stanford University. Dweck Ph.D., Carol (2006). *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*. New York: Ballantine Books.



Above: Frederick Hilliker and Gerardo Rios collaborate on their project for American Union's cardboard challenge.

Right: Citali Guillen-Ferreira beside her basketball game.





Left: Idaly Jimenez Garcia



Below: Jesus Aquino Aguilar

WFMS Offers Art Program

West Fresno Middle School recently offered students art classes. Students were able to study shapes, contrast, color, sketching, and shading.

Principal, Lucio Cortez was thrilled with the results of the program. "Within one month, Mrs. Jensen was able to teach our students the skills to create incredible things. Students loved the opportunity." Cortez hopes to be able to continue the Art program during the regular school year so that more students can take advantage. Way to go Eagle artists!

CULTIVATING ACHIEVEMENT GROWING FUTURES

Congratulations Washington Union High School Class of 2017

Audra Salwasser
UCLA

FRESNO STATE
Discovery. Diversity. Distinction.

UCLA BRUINS

Erica Botello & Roman Reyes
CSU Fresno

UC MERCED BOBBETS

Jose Saldana & Leah Thao
UC Merced

SACRAMENTO STATE HORNETS

China Bonner
CSU Sacramento

Jesus Crespín & Eric Manzo
UC Berkeley

Cal

SE STATE

Vanessa Sierra
Azusa Pacific University

Liseth Santos
UC Santa Barbara

UCSB

ASU

AZUSA PACIFIC UNIVERSITY

Congratulations to this year's top graduates: Valedictorians - Eric Manzo, Audra Salwasser, Luis Valencia, Liseth Santos, Alexandra Gardner, Jesus Crespín, Kathryn Reisdorfer, Erica Botello along with Salutatorians - Mary Valencia and Haley Sanchez.





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Washington Unified School District is providing Footsteps2Brilliance®, a comprehensive literacy app, to the parents of all children up to 3rd grade who live in our district boundaries. This engaging app will help your child excel at reading.

Read with your child 15 minutes per day to:

- ✓ *Build lasting relationships*
- ✓ *Improve school attendance*
- ✓ *Improve test scores and performance in school*

1. Register for your Super Secret Code at:

www.myf2b.org/register/wusd

2. Download the app from your app store.



3. Play 15 minutes each day with your child.