



September/October 2009

We're Off and Running!

Students in the Tustin Unified School District returned to school on September 1. I want to thank our administrators, principals, teachers and staff members for helping facilitate a smooth opening to the new school year. The District welcomed over 22,000 students – the largest enrollment in TUSD history.

As you know, we have been facing difficult budgetary times while continuing to offer an excellent academic program and keeping its focus on the most important thing – educating students. This year the District's priorities will include student achievement, Early College Program, facilities, high-quality employees, financial responsibility, parent/community partnerships, Response to Instruction (RtI) and technology.

Administrative changes for the 2009-10 school year include:

Erick Fineberg, Tracy Barquer and Jen Smith are handling the principalship roles at Beswick and Thorman elementary schools, and Pioneer Middle School, respectively.

New or newly-assigned assistant principals are Debbie Dowler at Hicks Canyon Elementary School, Jon Black at Hewes Middle School, Eric Kilian and Angela Yeh at Pioneer Middle School, and Margaret Sanders at Tustin High School.

The Tustin Unified School District continues to receive many accolades and awards for its outstanding students, teachers, administrators, staff and schools. Even with the state budget crisis, TUSD has had much to celebrate during the past school year.

Pioneer Middle School was selected as a National Blue Ribbon School. During the past five years, Tustin Unified has received four National Blue Ribbon honors and 18 California Distinguished School awards.

Nelson Elementary School was selected as a California Title I Academic Achievement School.

Our Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) scores continue to be higher than California and national scores. Each year hundreds of our high school students earn the distinction of Advanced Placement (AP) Scholar by the College Board. TUSD continues to do very well in Academic Performance Index (API) scores and similar school rankings in comparison to all schools and districts in California. TUSD's graduation rate of more than 95 percent exceeds that of the county and state.

Last November, our community passed the District's \$95 million bond measure – Measure L – to continue repairing and renovating the 20 oldest schools in TUSD. This bond measure is an extension of the next phase of work in the Measure G (\$80 million bond) modernization program passed in November 2002. Under the Measure G program, Foothill High School's new state-of-the-art science center will open this fall. The District is also moving forward on Tustin High School's new quad and science center. Additionally, we are working on a Master Plan for Thorman Elementary School and Currie Middle School.

Hicks Canyon Elementary School's new two-story building with 12 additional classrooms and a multipurpose room opened on the first day of school. Beckman High School's new science building is scheduled to open this fall. Construction is continuing on the new Orchard Hills K-8 School, which is scheduled to open in the fall of 2010.

All these amazing accomplishments and projects would not be possible without hard-working students, dedicated employees, involved parents and community support. I'm looking forward to continued success in the Tustin Unified School District in 2009-10.

For the latest news and information about the school district, please visit the TUSD Web site at www.tustin.k12.ca.us during the year.