

Friday Reflection

October 2, 2020

Something occurred this week that hasn't happened in six and a half months. Students stepped into classes to learn in person. Approximately 26% of our students physically showed up Tuesday morning to attend classes. Even though wearing masks, excitement to attend school radiated from the students. Some were grateful to meet their teachers, and others enjoyed interacting among peers. In either case, our students followed the procedures established and respectfully engaged. Everyone left school that day a little more tired than on others day, but it felt like a productive day.

Fast forward to yesterday, and we did a repeat of a "first day". Another 26% of our students came to make it our 3rd "first day" of the year. I sensed the same excitement and gratefulness for attending school in person. In some ways, what students were doing at school wasn't all that different than what students were doing at home on-line. However, for some, it was critical to see their teachers in the flesh.

I ended both Tuesday and Thursday saying "goodbye" to students as they exited the campus. One of my jobs was to pass out a bag of food to as many students who would take it. Because we want to expose as few students to each other as possible, we placed lunch at the end of the day. Students are encouraged to take a "lunch" and leave. This will keep interactions at school to a minimum. Some students were reluctant to take the lunch because they haven't participated in the lunch program in the past. However, what I tried to explain to a few students was that we have permission to pass out lunches to any and every student who would like to take one.

One of my highlights this week was visiting several classrooms. It was warming to see some familiar faces and exciting to see new ones. I was challenged to recall names from over six months of absence. I also got to learn several new names. We have some great students who attend Tustin High School, and I appreciate learning their names and their stories. I spent some extra time in the Link Crew class yesterday, and was reminded of how kind and thoughtful our students can be. The students in this class chose this course for the sole purpose of welcoming and connecting students. Coming to a new school can be a scary proposition, especially in this particular time. However, our Link Crew students have still figured out ways to reach out and be there for students.

Another important leadership group spotlighted this week was our ASB. They presented a video in place of our "Welcome Back Assembly". Again, I was reminded of the talented students who attend Tustin High School. ASB has found a way to communicate and plan activities, despite the challenges of distancing. We have creative and thoughtful students, and it is great to be a Tiller!

Go Tillers!

Dr. Jon Tuin

Tustin High School Principal