

Strategies that Work

In the fall of 2002, the Poway Unified School District Board of Education established two major goals and adopted specific, measurable targets for each (See Pages 10-14). Since that time, the district has achieved consistent growth toward the accomplishment of each of these targets. Reflecting upon the district's progress, Poway Unified School District's Superintendent of Schools, Don Phillips, attributed the following keys to our district's current success:

1. Staying the course with long term goals and measurable targets

Since the 2002-03 school year, the entire school district has focused its efforts on the achievement of two broad goals:

- Increase achievement for all students through a comprehensive literacy effort
- Provide a physical learning environment to support learning for all.

2. Clear focus on academic standards

Poway Unified has adopted the California State Academic Standards and focused efforts on helping teachers and students fully comprehend, implement and master them. Our district is creating a curriculum mapping project. We have implemented a standards-based elementary progress report and identified "essential learnings" distilled from state standards.

3. Using student performance data to inform classroom practices

Since 2002, Poway Unified has developed and maintained a data management system and benchmarking assessments that provide teachers and students timely information on student progress.

4. Empowering students to set goals, track their own progress and participate in the management of their own learning

A byproduct of using performance data to inform classroom practice has been the active participation of students in understanding and managing some aspects of their own learning. Improved assessments and feedback systems have provided teachers and students opportunities to identify and manage classroom and individual learning goals. These practices have become well-established in grades 2-5 and are beginning to be used at other grade levels as well.

5. PUSD Parents as Partners

The Poway Unified School District continues to benefit from a highly educated and involved community base that values education and supports district efforts. Parent participation in shared governance and decision-making at the polls in support of Proposition "U", service on School Site Councils (SSC) at each school and District Advisory Councils (DAC) and the Citizen's Oversight Committee have advanced district efforts. At the grass root level, our active PTA, which boasted a membership of 18,587, recorded over 300,000 hours of volunteer service.

