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Principal Smith Retires

In February 2002, the El Dorado Union High School District announced the appointment of Jerry Smith as Principal of El Dorado High School. Eight years have passed since Smith assumed the leadership role, and he has well proven himself as a positive force in contributing to significant change at the school.

Smith has guided the effort to raise the school's academic standing, ensuring that his school maintains a positive learning environment with high expectations for all students. His belief that, "Students who feel connected to school do better academically," has helped to focus the direction that El Dorado High School has pursued. The school is the most socioeconomically diverse in the district, and during Smith's administration the school achieved an almost 100-point gain in the Academic Performance Index, from 695 in 2002 to 793 in 2009.

"I have enjoyed every day working with our students and community," says Smith. He attributes parental and community involvement as a highly important aspect to the positive outcome for his students. He encourages parents and the community to become important partners in students' education and strongly believes that open communication supports student learning.

Smith has been a strong role model and instrumental in focusing the culture of the school. He admits that he is, "Fortunate to witness on a daily basis the ability of his students to grow into positive contributors to our community." He adds, "It is a great feeling inside to know that we as educators have made a positive difference in our students' lives." As an administrator, Smith has also been an avid supporter of his teachers and school as well as a strong collaborator and negotiator.

He has seen the school undergo numerous physical changes as well, with the addition of the Carl Borelli Amphitheatre completed in 2005 through community fund-raising and donations, the renovated Bennett Park Athletic Complex in 2009, the ongoing renovations and modernization due to the voter-approved Measure Q bond, and most recently the new Culinary Arts Center, which had its official opening in March 2010.

Prior to his role as Principal, Smith was hired from Buckeye School District after 25 years of teaching and served as an Assistant Principal for 1-1/2 years at Oak Ridge High School in El Dorado Hills. In 1998, having arrived to El Dorado County from Del Norte, and while employed in the Del Norte Unified School District, he served as a team teacher in a Humanities Core program, in other Social Science classes and in Special Education, as well as in Physical Education. At Del Norte he became a Department Chair of the History/Social Science Department, served as a Mentor Teacher, and as a Staff Development Trainer for Humboldt County.

Upon retirement, Smith plans to enjoy his grandchildren, reconnect with his love of horses, and plan for the next phase of his life. Smith's retirement takes effect on July 31.