

Doc's Charge

We believe in high standards in Clovis schools. We believe competition is an ingredient of high standards and an important motivational tool. We recognize three levels of competition. First, we want you to make sure that all of our students learn to compete against themselves; that's the toughest competition of all. Second, we want you to encourage our students to compete in specialty areas to help them build on their strengths and overcome their weaknesses, because that's the way they get jobs and that's the way they have to perform in life. Third, we want you to teach our students to work in groups and to compete in groups because we think that students who can't work in groups are going to have trouble in tomorrow's world.

Competition does not start with schooling. Competition starts with little children just wanting to play – to catch or hit or kick a ball. Eventually, they learn a few skills and all of a sudden one of them looks at the others and says hey, let's keep score. Now they're interested in winning and losing, which is mostly what life's all about.

While you are working with our children in Clovis we want you to remember the heart of the Clovis program: We want you to teach students to win with class and to lose with dignity. But we also want you to teach them that there is a lot more to being a winner than the final game score. We want you to teach them to root for their team to win, not for their other team to lose. We want you to teach our kids what to do when they lose. We want you to get them off their duffs and get them back in the fight. Don't you let them give up. And if we can teach them not to be quitters by the time they finish the twelfth grade in the Clovis schools, they will probably make it through life.

Our philosophy is very simple: A fair break for every kid. We believe the schools and the students belong to the people. If our community wants their children to read, write, do arithmetic, sing, dance, play in the band, or compete in forensics – whatever our community wants, we are going to do – but we're going to do it first class.

The professionals who work in our district are proud that we do not have collective bargaining. We are the only large school district in the state where the teachers and the administrators can still publicly say they like each other. I say that tongue in cheek, but my goodness, it's amazing how often you read in the paper of adults fighting over the rights and benefits of adults. Does anybody remember children anymore?

In Clovis, we still like children. We make no bones about it. We've got a Clovis image to keep up, and we're looking for people a cut above the average. We're concerned about your appearance, your attitude, your teaching skills, your ability to work with students, but most of all we're concerned about your character and your values. You are going to be around our children when nobody else is there. You are going to see and do things with them that nobody else will ever know about.

We're looking for role models, and we've learned an interesting thing – if you really want to develop winners you've got to surround children with winners. And a lot of people think you are a winner or you wouldn't be sitting here. Nobody gets this far without being recommended by a building administrator. And that administrator's reputation is on the line because he or she has recommended you and hopes you reciprocate a little bit by trying to make his or her judgment look good.

So what we're really saying to you is we think education revolves around teamwork and trust. We want you on our team, and we want to know that you want to be there. So we spend a lot of time telling you about the people and facilities you are going to work with and in – the school staff, the community, and the children, as well as the supplies, equipment, and materials – so from the first day of school it's all forward. We don't want you to look around at the beginning of the school year and say, "My Gosh, if I'd known it was like this I would never have signed with this district."

If you are still interested in working at Clovis under those conditions, we'd like to offer you a contract. We people in Clovis get excited when teachers and students do things nobody thought they could do. As long as you work in Clovis don't you ever lose that spirit...and never forget our motto, "*Sic 'em!*"