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Kaelin chosen Superintendent of the Year

It comes as no surprise that when the Butte County School Administrators Association, under the auspices of the Association of California School Administrators announced their Superintendent/Principal Administrator of the Year the name Doug Kaelin was given.

The announcement was made at a special dinner held at Feather Falls Casino on June 8 where administrators such as Gridley's Wilson School Principal Tracey Allen was named as Principal of the Year.

Kaelin is entering into his fourth year at Biggs Unified School District where he has also held the title of Principal, until this year.

Kaelin was nominated by Butte County Office of Education Superintendent Tim Taylor and Biggs Elementary School Principal Minden King.

Their letter stated, "When Mr. Kaelin became the Superintendent the school district was noted for being a low performing, dysfunctional system.

The district was in AB1200 status, had 48 out of compliance issues in the CPM, the WASC school accreditation was in jeopardy of not being approved, and had not had a collective bargaining agreement for over seven years.

"Biggs Unified was a school district noted as unsafe for children and Biggs had over 165 inter-district transfers."

Biggs Unified School district hired Mr. Kaelin in January of 2011 showing that with his extensive background of experience as a teacher, probation officer and school administrator Doug was the right choice. The letter went into detail of how Kaelin has turned the district around such as, "hiring outstanding administrative staff who have changed the morale of the school and greatly improved student achievement; made tough decisions by moving teachers into positions based on what was good for kids not the adults; hired a new maintenance team who cleaned the school grounds up to show the community that the district takes pride in providing a safe and clean school environment; personally took charge of student discipline to eliminate the bullying and disruptive student behavior that created a school culture that was unsafe; increased technology across the schools and has teachers and staff focused on student achievement."

The nomination letter stated, "Recently Doug hosted the Butte Schools 14 Superintendents at his district for a countywide meeting. Most of the superintendents commented that they didn't recognize the place with all the great changes he has made. Doug has led that district towards excellence and he is the epitome of what a small school district leader is. Biggs now has a two year agreement with his bargaining units. He has 46 interdistrict transfers coming into his district now. He has hired outstanding new staff who love being in this district."

Turning a school district around is no easy task for any small school district leader but Kaelin has accomplished this and so much more.

When asked about plans for this coming school season Kaelin said that five new teachers have been hired and three computer labs will be added. A restructuring project at Richvale Elementary entails turning the longtime school into a STEMS Learning Academy with two new teachers hired who are experienced in STEMS, which is the academic disciplines of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

New High School Principal Mandy Leghy will be on board soon and the district sent 10 coaches and 10 students to a Athletes Committed Conference at Richardson Springs near Chico for anti drug training this month.

"We will continue to move the district forward in a positive manner. It takes all of us in a joint effort," Kaelin stated.

Congratulations on a much deserved award!