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Investment in education to improve student success and benefit region overall

On Thursday, April 4, Fresno County leaders released a baseline report card, which is considered the starting point for a new regional effort to improve student success.

More than 11,000 students were tested to evaluate kindergarten readiness and the results showed that only 37.5 percent were considered prepared.

The new regional effort, Fresno Area Strive, is designed to support the success of every child from cradle to career. It is part of a nationwide movement in more than 70 cities, and was established in Fresno at the urging of Fresno State President John Welty.

The Fresno partnership includes the Fresno, Central, Clovis and Sanger school districts, Fresno State, Fresno Pacific University, National University and community and business organizations like Big Brother/Big Sister, Reading and Beyond, and the Fresno Business Council are also involved.

The Fresno movement involves 130,000 students across the four school districts and more than 50,000 students in higher education.

The Fresno Area Strive team will now begin meeting to improve kindergarten readiness as well as another alarming statistic the report unearthed: 29 percent of kindergarteners missed 10 or more days of school.

President Welty said, "This is a day of great significance for our community," as education, business and government leaders come together to prepare an educated work force for the region in coming



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years.

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