Introduction

Union Public Schools is a vibrant PreK-12 district in northeastern Oklahoma surrounded by thriving retail centers and businesses and a booming housing market. It is a growing district with an enthusiastic and supportive community. Its 28-square-mile boundary stretches across southeast Tulsa into northwest Broken Arrow, but it is neither part of Broken Arrow Public Schools nor Tulsa Public Schools. Instead, Union serves as the unifying force within its own geographical boundaries, providing activities for its families and a sense of pride, support and an independent community identity for its patrons.

Parents choose the Union district for its all-around excellence---wide-ranging academic programs, impressive school-related activities, strong emphasis on character development, outstanding teachers, respected elected and administrative leaders and remarkable facilities. Union patrons make their schools a priority by consistently passing yearly bond propositions to address the needs of a diverse student population while continuing to create some of the nicest and most well-maintained learning environments in the country. The cumulative total of bond propositions Union voters have said yes to just since 1996 amounts to $136,325,000!

An example of the district’s premiere facilities is the Union Multipurpose Activity Center (UMAC) which houses the 5,660-seat John Q. Hammons Arena as well as the SouthCrest Wellness & Sports Medicine Center, classrooms, offices, concessions, banquet rooms, locker rooms and the UWear Spirit Store. The Union Performing Arts Center and Union Tuttle Stadium are two other facilities at Union High School that serve students and the community throughout the year. The same is true for the 8-lane, 25-meter swimming pool at the Union Sixth/Seventh Grade Center and the Union Challenge Adventure Ropes Course at Union Intermediate High School.

Businesses also see Union as a quality investment. Many of them regularly have participated in the Union Schools Education Foundation Endowment Campaign as part of the donor recognition program at the UMAC or have participated in one of the Foundation’s many fund raisers.

Union is an awe-inspiring district with enviable accomplishments, yet its atmosphere is personal, warm and inviting---almost small-town in its friendliness. Its history and related community pride is a big part of the reason.

When Union was founded in 1919, it combined four small, rural communities and had only four students in its graduating class. As Tulsa grew to the southeast, especially during the boom of the 1980s, so did Union.

Today it’s the ninth largest school district in the state, serving more than 14,000 students at its 11 elementary sites, the Sixth/Seventh Grade Center, the Eighth Grade Center, the Intermediate High School, the Alternative School and Union High School. All of its schools meet both State Department of Education and North Central Accreditation
standards, and historically Union students exceed state and national averages on standardized tests each year.

The criterion-referenced testing program Union developed ensures coherence and clarity. It is an example of how assessment can be a true part of the teaching and learning process, using results to diagnose problems and guide the instructional process rather than sort students or purport to judge overall accountability through a single score.

Other pluses parents point to in the area of teaching and learning include gifted classes, Union’s special education program, art, music and physical education at every level, and nurses, counselors, instructors for English Language Learners and reading specialists at every site.

Union’s award-winning Parents as Teachers (PAT) program offers instruction to parents of infants and toddlers. Other early childhood programs include classes for 4-year-olds, Kindergarten and the Primary Multiage Program for grades 1 and 2.

Children in the Multiage Program stay with one teacher for more than a year and progress as quickly as their development allows, but those needing more time to master skills can do so without being "held back." Looping, or having the teacher advance with the same class the next year, is another way of providing more personalized instruction at the elementary level.

At the secondary level, the emphasis is also on personalized instruction and teacher-student relationship building by creating what has become known as “Smaller Learning Communities.” Research shows when teachers know each student by name and students feel connected with their teachers, students are more motivated and successful in school.

Union’s comprehensive secondary curriculum provides both college-bound and non-college-bound students a wide range of offerings. Among them are Advanced Placement (AP) courses in all core academic areas and Concurrent Enrollment, which enables students to earn college credit while fulfilling high school coursework requirements. Students interested in careers or courses in vocational areas are transported to the appropriate Tulsa Technology Center campus for the curriculum they desire.

Union is innovative, especially when it comes to meeting student needs. Success at Union Alternative School has netted higher attendance and lower dropout rates than at alternative programs anywhere else in the state and has earned the school national recognition as well as an award from the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence.

When absenteeism, language and poor nutrition became barriers to student success at some of Union’s elementary schools, the district formed partnerships with community organizations and institutions of higher education to roll out “Community School” services which included a school-based health clinic, nutrition classes, federally funded breakfasts and lunches, summer camps, telemedicine services and mentoring programs. Not surprisingly, community partners in these programs said they had never experienced a staff as committed to the success of students as the teachers, administrators and support employees from Union.

Adult Education is one of the fastest growing departments in the districts. It offers adults everything from the basics in reading, writing and math, and workplace education to parenting skills and English as a Second Language.
Union is a dynamic district that has a knack for meeting its changing needs and finding opportunities to improve itself in the process. Thus its slogan: “Working to form a more perfect Union!”

**Our Mission**

It is our Mission to provide our community of learners with educational opportunities to acquire and develop the best possible academic, vocational, recreational, social and participatory skills, enabling them to become valued, contributing members of a changing global society.

**Our Goals**

- Academic excellence for all students
- Preparation of students for positive citizenship
- A positive educational environment in which students, parents, community and staff assume responsibility for their role in the learning process
- District excellence for all employees
- Expanded opportunities for learning
- Increased use of technology
- Enhanced Union pride
- Support base to include patrons, partnerships and community resources
- Long-term plan to accommodate growth

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**Message from the Superintendent**

Dear Union Patrons,

It is my pleasure to provide an overview of the district’s 2004-05 school year. This snapshot cannot fully describe each of our sixteen schools and all of their activities but it will provide evidence that gives a flavor of the district as a whole. You are invited to learn more about the specifics of the district through our web site, www.unionps.org, or by personal visits to our campuses and interactions with our quality employees and volunteers.

Union Public Schools is a dynamic, growing school district that exists to provide students with challenging learning experiences that are engaging, relevant and help them become well-adjusted, productive and educated citizens. Parents entrust their precious children to our professional staff knowing that we intend to nurture students in a safe, stimulating and caring environment. Our students benefit from strong parental involvement in school and co-curricular activities which positively encourages a high degree of accountability from our staff. Working together, parents and staff members provide a motivating and enjoyable learning environment.

School spirit and pride abound at Union. Respected for quality facilities, impressive technology, ethical business practices and an excellent teaching staff, Union is serious about developing strong leadership and character. Our administrators have empowered
teachers to develop professional learning communities to share “best practices” which makes everyone at Union into a learner.

This school year continued Union’s evolution into a larger, more diverse student body. The challenge to address the needs of all students and give each one the chance to succeed has led to new programs and expanded opportunities, leading to the declaration that 2004-05 can be celebrated as a great year. However, each year is a new chance to improve and positively influence the lives of our students leading to an exciting future at Union Public Schools.

Sincerely,

Cathy Burden, Ph.D., Superintendent

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Facilities/Operational Statistics

Food Services

The Food Services department consists of 100 employees who served 12,294,764 lunches and 263,750 breakfasts during 2004-2005. The popular “Breakfast in a Bag” program continued at Briarglen and Clark elementaries. The districtwide Fit Kids Committee worked to create a “total environment” approach by addressing menus, nutritional education and physical education.

Transportation

Union’s 92 buses covered 58 routes with 1,500 bus stops during the school year. With a total of 61 drivers, 5,500 students were transported daily – a total of 826,113 miles during the school year.

Maintenance Services

Twelve members of the grounds crew kept 480 acres of school property manicured, and set up and cleaned for more than 120 major events. The department processed 173 work orders (7,663 hours) to care for staff, furniture and surplus items.

Two facilities employees scheduled 11,121 events during the year with an estimated attendance of 1,093,387 people. Facility rental revenue totaled $367,435.

Construction

Eight construction or renovation projects valued at more than $7 million were completed at Union facilities during the 2004-2005 school year. The largest was a $5-million fine arts wing on the south side of the High School, which included larger space for vocal music and orchestra, storage for the drama department and new facilities for the band.

A $600,000 plaza was constructed to connect Union Tuttle Stadium, the fine arts wing and the High School, and to add a ticket booth.
With the recent completion of upgrades to the district's football and basketball facilities, the long-range planning committee turned its attention to the track and cross country facilities, spending $235,000 to renovate the track/cross country area at the High School with new locker rooms, coaches' office and weight room.

Union Intermediate High got a $93,000 upgrade to its fire alarm system which included new pull stations and new emergency lights in parts of the building. Another summer improvement at the Intermediate High was a $45,000 renovation of the drama department's dressing, makeup and prop rooms. Increased student enrollment in photography classes at the High School resulted in a $43,000 photo lab expansion.

The 8th grade renovation project includes new science labs, several new classrooms, new office space, and a new media center triple the size of the present media center. Phase one of re-roofing the Intermediate High School replaced about a third of the roof at a cost of $592,380. Andersen Elementary received a new roof at a cost of $457,200.

New security cameras at Boevers helped officials maintain pride in their school building and safety for their students. SecureNet donated the equipment, whose estimated value ranged from $8,000 to $10,000, and included eight high-resolution color cameras and a 16-channel digital recorder. Placed outside the building in key locations, including entrances, the cameras monitor and record their surroundings.

The most widespread project was the replacement of floor covering in seven elementary and middle schools at a total cost of $320,850. The project included 20,000 square feet of new tile and 12,000 square yards of carpet at Briarglen, Boevers, Clark, Darnaby, Grove, Peters gym and the 6/7th Grade Center.

Students at Andersen have a beautiful new running track and a bigger, safer bus loop area, thanks to the PTA. Their latest gift of $8,947 was used to rebuild the school's running track and to add a 30-foot concrete extension to the bus loop area to enhance both convenience and safety.

Cedar Ridge received a new running track thanks to the 2003 bond issue. The 474-yard asphalt track which students use for recess and P.E. classes cost approximately $25,000.

Union Board of Education members approved the purchase of an office building in the central part of the district to consolidate, under one roof, services for district schools and patrons and to make way for a middle school alternative program once the space is created at the current Education Service Center on 129th East Avenue.

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**Student Statistics**

Growth has been a constant factor throughout Union’s history. As Oklahoma’s ninth largest district, Union served 13,969 students in the 2004-2005 school year. Of those, 6,676 were elementary age and 7,293 were in our secondary schools; 51.4 percent were male and 48.6 percent were female. In terms of ethnic origin, 11 percent were Native American, 12.2 percent were Hispanic, 11.8 percent were African-American, 5.5 percent were Asian and 59.6 percent were Caucasian.
More than 41% of our students reported that they live with just one of their biological parents -- 4,944 living with their mothers and 806 with their fathers.

In 2004-2005, approximately 2,030 students throughout the district were bilingual or lived in a home where a language other than English was spoken, compared to 206 in 1995. The total bilingual count included 43 different languages.

8.7% or 1,226 of our students were enrolled in special education.

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**Student Achievement**

A record 13 Union High School students were named National Merit Finalists. They were Rachel E. McMurray, Stephen P. Shepherd, Carly A. Allred, Michael D. Mills, Emily B. Higgins, Matt Byford, Elizabeth Hullinger, Cody Tidwell, Marcelle G. Martin, Andrew P. Robbins, Emily R. Smith, Jimikaye Beck and Rachael Cain.


Three Union students won Awards of Excellence in the state PTA Reflections contest. Darnaby fourth grader Jessica Shenoi and Union 8th grade student Taylor Sides both won in Visual Arts while McAuliffe second grader Mason Farquhar won in Literature. Jessica was also the national winner in the Poison Prevention Art Contest during National Poison Prevention Week.

Two Union seventh graders claimed top honors in the Oklahoma Bar Association Law Day Contest. Jessica Crews won first place for her poem, “We The People,” and Kelsey Cornell won second place for “Fight.”

Peters fourth grader Sunia Hassan won first place in the national 13th annual InSights Art Competition for her crayon picture of zebras. Hassan, who has limited vision, entered the contest at the end of the school year.

Darnaby students helped raise more than $800 in funds to benefit victims of the tsunami in southeast Asia, selling Valentines candy before, during and after school. McAuliffe students also raised around $5,500 through a garage sale and used toy sale.

Sixth grader Ashton Collier had an outstanding summer on the junior golf tour. Competing in the girls 11-and-under age division on the PGA’s South Central Section Junior Golf Tour, Collier was named that division’s Player of the Year. She was the Tulsa City Champion, winning the girls 11-and-under age division by 22 strokes, as well as the Woman’s Oklahoma State Champion of the girls’ 11-and-under age division.

Union seventh grader Arden Zhan qualified for grand recognition through the Duke University Talent Identification Program. Students who qualify at the grand level scored equal to or better than 90 percent of the juniors or seniors who took college entrance exams (ACTs and SATs), representing just 2% of the entire Talent Search population.
Thanks to a scholarship honoring Oklahoma Teacher of the Year James Kerr, Kristin Nichols, enjoyed a great opportunity to attend NASA’s Space Academy in Huntsville, AL. Not only did Nichols experience a “moonwalk mission” in a zero-gravity simulator, she was named flight director and missions specialist for her team and won “best mission.”

Four Union students were named to the 2004-2005 All-State Jazz Ensemble. Only 21 members can serve on the ensemble and more than 450 students statewide auditioned. Selected from Union were senior Noah Swanson, junior William Carr, senior Sam Price, and sophomore Daniel Thompson. This was Swanson’s second year in a row to achieve this position in the All-State Jazz Ensemble.

Four Union students -- seniors Rachael Cain and Marcelle Martin, junior Christina Terry and sophomore Nicole Schultz (fourth alternate) -- were named to the 2004-2005 All-State Honor Choir. In addition, Schultz and Michelle Myers were named to the OCDA (Oklahoma Choir Directors Association) Women’s All-State Honor Chorus.

Senior Rachael Cain was selected as a member of the All-OCDA Jazz Honor Choir after competing with over 1,000 students for a position in this 24-voice choir.

Drug-Free Youth members spearheaded a very successful Angel Bear "I Care" project which raised approximately $50,000 to provide gifts for 1,400 children and food for 335 families through donations from students, teachers, businesses and churches over the holidays.

Named to the All-OCDA Junior High Honor Chorus were eighth graders Allie Dossman and Kelcee McKee, and freshmen Katherine Wooten and James Buchanan.

Union senior Carly Allred, was chosen as a Sir Alexander Fleming Scholar by the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation, providing her the opportunity to participate in a hands-on medical research program over the summer.

Wesam Keesh and Elizabeth Hullinger were named Mr. and Miss Union, the highest honor bestowed on a Union student.

Seniors Elizabeth Hullinger and Matt Byford were named Students of the Year at Union High School.

Senior Jamie Hall won the People’s Choice Award for her artwork, “United Tribes in 2005,” in which visitors or employees of the Creek Nation were given the opportunity to vote on the artwork they felt was the best. Hall was also honored for her Native American painting at the Creek Council House Museum in Okmulgee after she won second place within the Muscogee Creek Nation and second in the statewide competition.

MidFirst Bank awarded Grant Baker and Jamie Hall $50 U.S. Savings Bonds as part of the American Indian Chamber of Commerce’s “Students in Excellence” program which recognized outstanding academic work in the classroom and extracurricular activities.

Two Union students placed first in the Business Professionals of America state spring leadership conference. Senior Maziar Daee placed first in Job Interview, while sophomore Trevor Sarratt took first in Java Programming. They were then eligible to compete at the national level in Anaheim, California.
Union High School’s student magazine, The Voice, was recognized with the Sweepstakes Award by the Oklahoma Scholastic Media.

A team of Intermediate High students, the Union Traders, won first place during Junior Achievement Investor Challenge. More than 200 students from 20 eastern Oklahoma area high schools challenged each other in an intense competition that simulated 60 days on Wall Street in only two hours.

Senior Chris Galegar was named one of six Oklahoma students to win national recognition from Scholastic. His black-and-white photograph of a girl in the woods was honored in New York in June.

Representing the largest number of cadets, 32 members of the Air Force JROTC participated in the 16th annual 26-mile Bataan Memorial Death March at White Sands, N.M., during spring break.

**Sports**

Union athletes garnered six state championships in 2004-2005. In football, the Redskins finished 13-1 and won their second 6A state championship in the last three years.

Union won its fourth consecutive 6A state team gymnastics championship in March, and the Redskins celebrated a 5-4 victory over Owasso in the Class 6A state high school baseball final.

Junior Danielle Gilchrist anchored the 1600-meter relay and finished with four gold medals to help clinch the 6A girls second state track title in three seasons. Senior Mackenzi Adams won the state title in the 110-meter and 300-meter hurdles.

Junior Blake Boswell breezed to his second straight No. 1 singles crown, leading the boys’ tennis team to the Class 5A state championship.

Union boys’ soccer zoomed back to excellence with a 2-1 victory over Broken Arrow in the Class 5A state title contest.

**Spirit**

The 8th Grade Cheerleaders took first during the Frontier City Spirit-Fest and won the Small Junior High 3A division.

The Varsity and Junior Varsity cheer squads each won first at a regional qualifying competition, allowing them to compete in Nationals in Orlando, FL. The Junior Varsity Cheerleaders placed first in the nation in the JV Division at the UCA National High School Cheerleading Championships, and the Varsity squad placed tenth in the nation in the Medium Division.

The Varsity Pom Squad won tenth during Nationals competition, while the Junior Varsity Pom placed seventh in the Pom division and third in the hip-hop division.

The Shining Stars JV Dance Team took first place during the 2004 Oklahoma State Dance Team Championships and were named State Champions in both the Kick and Jazz
divisions. They also received the Academic All-State Highest GPA Team Award in the JV Division with a team GPA of 3.75.

The Union Elite 8th Grade Dance Team picked up honors at the American Dance/Drill Team Kansas Spectacular Competition, including Division 1 Sweepstakes Team, Gussie Nell Davis Award, Judges Awards in Jazz, Kick, & Novelty, Sweepstakes Award Officer, Best in Class Officer, Winners Circle, Best in Class Runner Up Small Ensemble and Judges Award for Officer.

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Curriculum/Programs/Special Events/Initiatives

Curriculum

The goal of Union’s Curriculum and Instruction department in 2004-2005 was to, and continues today, provide curriculum materials, instructional strategies and professional development to increase student achievement. The Union Learning Model (ULM) serves as an instructional compass, ensuring the district effectively uses resources to accomplish instructional excellence for all students. The model was developed from a collaborative process involving administrators and teachers, and is composed of four research-based tenets: inquiry, assessment, differentiated instruction and technology.

Inquiry

An old adage states: “Tell me and I forget, show me and I remember, involve me and I understand.” Inquiry is a strategy that encourages students to seek resolutions to questions and issues while constructing new knowledge.

Differentiation

The goal of differentiation is to meet each student’s instructional needs using various techniques which increase student success. Developmental appropriateness, learning styles, varying cultural backgrounds and prior experiences must be considered to individualize learning.

Assessment

Assessment involves the processes used to collect information about student progress toward educational goals. Assessments include classroom observations and evaluations to obtain day-to-day information about student progress, district assessments to guide instruction, and state tests to gauge whether students have met standardized academic benchmarks.

Technology

Technology is a tool designed to help students and staff to be more effective and efficient. A variety of technology tools provide many resources to access and process information critical to solving problems and asking new questions.

Examples of programs/strategies supporting the Union Learning Model:
• Comprehensive reading program based on Literacy First processes
• Everyday Mathematics, a standards-based elementary mathematics program
• Science and Technology for Children (STC) elementary science kits
• Accelerated Math program for elementary remediation and enrichment
• Cognitive Tutor curriculum option for algebra students
• Extensive Pre-AP and AP (Advanced Placement) program at the secondary level
• Strong laboratory science program
• Excellent fine arts program districtwide
• Award-winning Intermediate/High School alternative program
• Locally-designed assessments to gauge student mastery of essential skills in math and reading
• Portfolio assessments in elementary grades to provide diagnostic reading information
• Evening, Saturday and elective classes to assist students with ACT and SAT test preparation
• Academic Camp for Enrichment, a summer academy for 10th graders, designed to maximize students’ qualification for the National Merit Semifinalist program

Programs

At the Union Eighth Grade Center, the ZAP (Zeroes Aren't Permitted) program, designed to prevent students from forgetting a single homework assignment, improved grades and helped teach responsibility.

The Intermediate High hosted a series of “Super Saturdays,” all-day intensive but fun college preparatory test classes. The classes offered students a chance to review for important college entrance exams, providing students personalized assistance in math, language arts and social science and helping reduce ‘test anxiety.’

An eight-night ACT test preparatory course was offered as an in-depth preparation tool for students who have never taken the ACT test and to get personalized assistance in math, language arts and science for students who have taken the ACT exam and received low scores in certain areas.

Union, which has long stressed the importance of reading on the elementary level, implemented a new reading initiative program to boost reading skills on the secondary level. As part of the program, High School students enrolled in a reading enrichment program. Using such tools as written tests, group work and computer exercises, students were motivated and “reluctant readers” were empowered to meet daily and weekly goals of sustained silent reading with books of interest to them.

The Union 6th/7th Grade Center hosted a “fiesta” of information in October for parents of 6th, 7th and 8th grade Hispanic students to communicate pertinent information about the school and activities throughout the year. Presenters from social, community, medical and legal services were also available to disseminate information and answer questions from the parents.

Teachers at Boevers proved how math can be fun during a Family Math Night. They demonstrated different games which parents can play with their children, encouraging them to have fun but also learn. Parents also checked out game kits they could take home to play with their children.
The Bedlam Campus Community Health Services Program opened at Clark Elementary School in January, providing a convenient way for children at the school to receive a wide range of health care services without leaving their school building. The clinic provides at least one full-time physician’s assistant and/or a resident physician, and a pediatrician visits the clinic as part of a rotating schedule.

Briarglen Elementary teamed up with Tulsa Technology Center (Lemley Campus) for Partners in Education. TTC staff and students held a drive for school supplies during the first few weeks of the year to benefit needy students throughout the school year.

Jarman fourth graders met behind the school for a night of “moon-gazing” in conjunction with their study of the solar system. Members of the Tulsa Astronomy Club set up their big telescopes to get a good view of the moon and its craters, a cluster of stars beyond our solar system and other amazing sights in outer space. One highlight was the appearance, exactly on schedule, of a US satellite equipped with a solar panel that for several seconds brightly reflected the light of the sun.

Clark, Jarman and Grove students were treated to a visit from the Great Safety Adventure, an interactive, traveling program sponsored by Lowe’s which features rooms of a house in which students learn about home safety.

During this election year, Peters held its own election based on the book Duck for President. A teacher ran for principal for the Quacker party and Principal Jennifer Randall ran as the incumbent for the Panther Party. Students registered to vote, listened to campaign speeches and watched skits over the school television, then voted in a schoolwide election. The winner of the election was sworn in by Superintendent Dr. Cathy Burden before a formal Inaugural Ball.

Briarglen invited families to participate in its first-ever “Read and Feed.” Dinner was provided by the PTA with the cafeteria workers preparing and serving dinner.

Union Public Schools led Oklahoma districts in putting automated external defibrillators in all its buildings. The Union school board approved the purchase of 28 automated external defibrillators at a cost of $60,546, or $2,162 each. The Oklahoma Heart Association commended Union for having the forward thinking to place AEDs in all buildings.

Union High School’s fine arts department -- including drama, band, orchestra and vocals -- presented West Side Story in February. The musical starred Jon Henry as Tony, Rachael Cain as Maria, Pete Brennan as Riff and Mallorie Rodak as Anita.

Night school became Union Evening Academy, a name that reflects the mind-set director Art Naylor wants to establish.

Voters in Union’s District 5 elected Ed Payton to the Board of Education with 60.44 percent. He replaced long-time member Bill Bruner who resigned in December.

TTC students visited their Partners in Education at Briarglen and read to students during the annual Round Robin Reading event.

The annual Union/Jenks Math Conference drew about 600 third and fourth graders from the Union and Jenks School districts to engage in a series of fun math activities. “Math in
Motion” featured KTUL Channel 8 meteorologist Taft Price and his “Weather Mathematics”; a Physical Fitness Math Session and a Star Power Session.

Union High School Repertory Theatre presented Picasso at the Lapin Agile and won first place in the Regional One-Act play competition in Owasso. Named to the all-star cast were Wesam Keesh, Jonathan Henry, Kendall Foote and Nick Faith.

The Intermediate High presented Charley’s Aunt, a comedy by Brandon Thomas, at the Intermediate High School Studio Theatre.

Union Public Schools commemorated the opening of its new $5-million Fine Arts wing in a dedication ceremony March 17. The fine arts addition is approximately 27,000 square feet, and includes the existing band, vocal music and stagecraft areas. Housed in the new addition is the new band room and concert band room, along with ample storage for all of the fine arts programs, as well as a new scene shop built to current building codes. In conjunction with the project, site improvements were made in and around the addition, around the High School and around the stadium, including a plaza area outside the new wing. Flintco, Inc., was the construction manager and Sparks Architecture was the architect.

Clark Elementary switched from its Continuous Learning Calendar (CLC) to the traditional school calendar. The change was recommended after tracking declining attendance rates, especially in July when the year-round school calendar begins. Plans included applying different strategies to achieve quality student engagement at Clark, including reduced class size and a “Newcomers Class” for non-English speaking students before they enter the regular classroom.

Thanks to its new Multipurpose Activity Center, the Union District trumped Yale University on the basketball court. After some convincing from the production company, ESPN changed the venue for shooting part of a series on the history of college basketball from the college in New Haven, Connecticut, to the Union Multipurpose Activity Center. "Hoopology," a series of 10 one-hour programs, highlighted the best of college basketball history -- top 10 coaches, players, games and other events. It aired on ESPNU, the newest addition to the ESPN family of networks.

The Union Multipurpose Activity Center showcased a new wall, made out of stained glass, that not only recognizes significant donors to the Union Schools Education Foundation, but also brightened the foyer with a unique piece of art. Featuring swirling colors of blue and red, the piece is the work of artist and designer Karen Meyer and Loman Studios, Inc. The donor wall was paid for by The Merrick Foundation and the Jerry and Valda Buchanan family.

The annual Union Redskins/Jenks Trojans football classic took on a whole new dimension, with the inception of the annual Backyard Bowl presented by MidFirst Bank. The sponsorship evolved from MidFirst’s desire to support education in the communities they serve.

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**Employee Information**
The entire Operations Department Maintenance Staff was honored as Operations Employee of the Year. They were also June’s honorees and the Fourth Quarter winner. They included: Ned Hansen, Steve Stilley, Jim Coldwell, Mike Lightner, Kevin Metzger, Don Wyatt, Ken Hunt, Larry Worthington, Tracy Copeland, Mark Schenk, Dale Ross, Dave Maddon and William Jones. Other monthly and quarterly winners included: July – Pamela Pettigrew-Smith, Clark child nutrition worker; August – Dee Harris, 6th/7th custodian; September & First Quarter winner – Jorge Delgado, Jarman custodian. October & Second Quarter winner – Norma Whomble, Briarglen child nutrition manager; November – Dale Stewart, Jonna Shafer and Rita Medina, Darnaby building engineer and staff; December – James Vaughn, 6/7 custodian. January & Third Quarter winner – Rhonda Opela, McAuliffe child nutrition manager; February - James Vaughn, 6/7 custodian; March – José Govea, McAuliffe custodian. April – William Jones, district electrician; May – Shari Johnson, High School child nutrition manager.

Led by teachers Matt Dobson and David Hudson, 11 riders from the Intermediate High raised $1,650 as part of a 150-mile bicycle trek for the Multiple Sclerosis Society. They rode from SouthCrest Hospital to Camp Gruber and back, raising awareness of the disease and collecting pledges from students and fellow teachers.

For the 12th consecutive year, Union Public Schools received the Association of School Business Officials International and the Government Finance Officers Association Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for fiscal year end 2004. These awards represent a significant achievement by Union and reflects its commitment to the highest standards of school system financial reporting.

Union Schools raised more than $113,000 for the United Way during 2004-2005, the largest donation of its kind in Union’s history. Contributions came from payroll deductions, one-time gifts and fund-raising events sponsored at the school sites. The total was a 10-percent increase over the previous year and included $31,668 in Key Club donations, individual donations amounting to more than $500. For the fourth year, Union participated with the Tulsa Weather Coalition as part of United Way’s Day of Caring projects.

Myriam Puleo began helping Union students and their parents as the district's bilingual parent educator, working with Union's five Title I elementary schools which receive federal funding to help students of low-income families. Puleo's work uses model programs such as Parents as Teachers and Families and Schools Together, and she can open doors in the social services area because she works closely with Community Services of Greater Tulsa and is a member of the steering committee for East Tulsa Prevention Coalition. She also works as a translator in Union's Parents as Teachers program.

Judy Rowell, a history teacher at the Intermediate High, was named the 2004-2005 Union Teacher of the Year. With 33 years of teaching behind her, Rowell has served 25 of them at Union. Building level Teachers of the Year included Marilyn Chronister - Andersen; Ted Auwen - Boevers; Rita Wade - Briarglen; Kari Eddy - Cedar Ridge; Rod Ackmann - Clark; Mary Bauer - Darnaby; Brenda Robinson - Grove; Paige Bergin - Jarman; Leah McCullough - McAuliffe; Lisa VanLandingham - Moore; Debbie Steen - Peters; Jan Green - Sixth Grade Center; Angela Heffley - Seventh Grade Center; Glenn Howard - Eighth Grade Center; Michael Murray - Alternative School; Judy Rowell - Intermediate High and Gary Pinkerton - High School.
Boevers art teacher Judy Ide contributed an article, “Exchanging Ideas with Artists on the Internet,” to the educational publication Arts & Activities.

McAuliffe music teacher Charles Johnston was invited to present a classroom teaching demonstration to the Oklahoma Kodaly Educators at a convention of the Oklahoma Music Educators Association. Only one teacher in the state is invited to do the demonstration each year. Students showed skills and songs learned in the Kodaly approach to music education.

Tulsa Talons football player Josh Blankenship, supervisor of the Intervention Program at the 6th/7th Grade Center, was auctioned off for charity at the Fox and Hound. The winner accompanied Blankenship for dinner for two at the Fox and Hound on Valentine’s Day. Proceeds went to ‘Cancer Sucks,’ an organization that raises funds for cancer victims.

Union Superintendent Dr. Cathy Burden was named one of the 2004 Tech-Savvy Superintendents of the Year by eSchool News, a news publication which focuses on K-12 schools and technology, and she was named one of “75 Who Made a Difference” as part of the Diamond Anniversary celebration of the University of Oklahoma College of Education. She was selected as one of 75 alumni who have helped make an impact in the lives of those they touch by using the values and philosophies of education to enrich their world.

Eighth grade teacher Matt Fore won a $2,500 gift certificate from Best Buy for items to be used in the classroom.

Moore enrichment specialist Evelyn Roberts was named the Elementary Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence winner. The Medals of Excellence, presented each year, are the top education honors in the state.

Three Intermediate High teachers were featured in the spring edition of Classified, a newsletter published by the Oklahoma Energy Resources Board. American History teacher Dallas Koehn was featured as a Core Energy Master teacher and for giving “countless hours to helping the new high school curriculum become a reality and a success. Science teacher James Granger was featured in a photograph working with students on the same subject matter, and the publication quoted science teacher Kathy Pursley. Core Energy is an education program designed to teach students about the concepts of oil and natural gas in a fun way that uses scientific equipment to reinforce state guidelines on science.

Jarman’s Denise Thomas and McAuliffe’s Nancy Laughrey each received $500 for developing an outstanding educational program highlighting flu prevention and the “Don’t Bug Me” campaign sponsored by Hillcrest HealthCare System and the Tulsa Health Department.

Dale Barnett, band director of the Renegade Regiment and instrumental coordinator for Union, retired at the close of the school year, leaving a legacy of success and excellence in the instrumental music program for the past 23 years. Bruce Carter, a veteran high school band director with more than 27 years of experience in Mississippi and Texas, was named as director of the Renegade Regiment.

Australia, Poland and Mexico were among the destinations for 11 Union teachers selected by the Funds for Teachers Foundation to study in other states and/or abroad over
the summer. Of the 37 grants awarded in the Tulsa area, Union received four. Cedar Ridge teachers Betsy Glad and Pam Snodgrass received $7,500 to study animal life and different cultures in Australia while Jarman teachers Jeanine Cory, Wanda Gatlin, Laurie Nevins and Sheri Tallman received $5,460 to study animal and plant life in Florida. Susan Weavel of Grove and Holly Clark of Boevers received $6,670 to visit Cuernavaca, Mexico, to learn more about the Hispanic culture while Intermediate teachers Bill Polson, Judy Rowell and Rhonda Johnson received $7,250 to visit Washington, D.C., and Poland to visit museums and historic sites about the Holocaust.

Union Alternative School was selected as one of eight semi-finalists nationwide to receive recognition from the US Department of Education’s National School Dropout Prevention Recognition Initiative.

The Union Schools Education Foundation awarded fifty-one grants totaling $17,866 to teachers at 15 of the district’s 16 sites.

Jarman fifth grade teacher Paige Bergin was named a DaVinci Scholar by the DaVinci Institute, which honors three exemplary graduates of the University of Oklahoma who have been teaching for three years or less in Oklahoma.

Alternative teacher Michael Murray was named the winner of the 2005 Janis Updike Walker Award by the Oklahoma Alternative Education Association. The award is given to the “most outstanding alternative education practitioner” in the state.

Cedar Ridge teachers Betsy Glad and Kari Eddy and Intermediate teacher Paula Bray attained certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, bringing Union’s total of Nationally Certified teachers to 26.

Director of Purchasing David Young was awarded the W.L. “Bill” James Outstanding Member Award by the National Association of Purchasing Management of Tulsa. It is the highest honor bestowed on a member each year.

Jarman fourth grade teacher Barbara Smith was named as a participant in the State Superintendent's Master Teachers Project 2005-2006 in Elementary Language Arts sponsored by the State Department of Education. She will conduct study groups throughout the school year as well as curriculum modification and mapping.

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**Technology Progress**

Union continues its commitment to students and employees to provide the technology tools that they need. Every teacher at Union has been provided with a classroom computer since 1999 and been upgraded with a new computer before their warranty expires. During 2004-2005, more than 280 teachers were upgraded with new Dell GX280 computers, monitors and printers. Each computer comes loaded with Microsoft’s Windows XP Professional, Office XP Professional, Picture It and Publisher. The computers that were replaced are repositioned as student computers in classrooms and mini-labs. A Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) pilot was started at the ESC.

Several new and upgraded student labs were installed. Two new English Language Learner (ELL) labs were installed at Moore and Peters. These labs run the Waterford
Software program from Pearson Digital Learning. The music keyboarding lab at the High School was upgraded with new computers, new music keyboards, new software and a new network. The software programs range from teaching students how to play the keyboard to composing their own music. A business lab was upgraded at the High School and five elementary labs were upgraded at Boevers, Darnaby, Grove, Jarman and McAuliffe. The multi-media computer to student ratio at Union is now 1 to 4 and the teacher to computer ratio is still 1 to 1.

Communications

The Communications Department worked to build and strengthen relationships within and outside of the district. It served as the liaison with the media. It assisted in awareness campaigns for the Bedlam Clinic and Union’s elementary schools involved in the “Community Schools” program. It created the “Bee the Builder” information campaign for the February 8, 2005, $13-million bond issue voters overwhelmingly passed. Communications also created presentations on the history of the district for the Long-Range Planning Committee; produced a slide presentation for the annual Teacher of the Year reception and co-produced the annual back-to-school kick-off celebration.

The Union web site underwent changes to polish its appearance and communicate information and achievements to the community. A new section for the UWear Spirit Store was created, featuring an on-line listing of merchandise. The Union Multipurpose Activity Center web site also received a complete makeover to highlight coming events as well as promote classes at SouthCrest Wellness and Sports Medicine Center. Continuing its partnership with the University of Tulsa’s electrical engineering and computer science departments, a new search engine powered by Google was installed, a new calendar system was added and work continued to track teacher competency evaluations and record professional leave requests. Other refinements were made to the Union Employee Network, the district Intranet, to improve communications. With the assistance of TU, the web design curriculum also expanded, adding a third teacher and additional classes to meet student demand and interest in web creation skills.

The web site, department publications and videos continued to win state and national awards during the 2004-2005 school year. Both The Communicator and the 2003-2004 Annual Report were honored by the National School Public Relations Association, while the web site, www.unionps.org, and the bond election video won an Award of Excellence and Award of Merit, respectively, from the Oklahoma School Public Relations Association.

Electronic & Printed Publications

1. The History of Union Schools – A 10-minute video of Union’s rich history, starting with its founding in 1919. Available on DVD and VHS.
2. Bedlam Clinic – A five-minute overview of the services provided at the Clark Elementary School/ O.U. Bedlam Medical Clinic. Available in English and Spanish on DVD and VHS.
3. Union Schools Education Foundation - Working to Form a More Perfect Union – An interactive information CD about the Foundation, its endowment campaign, teacher grants and projects.
4. Union Alternative School – A six-minute overview of Union’s nationally recognized program for at-risk students. Available on VHS.
5. The Communicator - An 8-to-12-page newsletter for patrons; approximately 27,000 copies printed every two months and mailed to every district household, to area media and to district state legislators.

Other publications:

- Comprehensive Annual Financial Report - Review of district finances
- Union Board of Education Policies - Updated annually and distributed to every employee
- Student Handbooks - Published annually for all students K-12
- District and Foundation Annual Reports - Combined in a special issue of The Communicator
- Information Packets - A collection of district brochures, maps and calendars providing both general and specific information about the district.
- Emergency Procedures Guide - An employee manual for dealing with and reporting emergencies
- PTA Newsletters - Newsletters produced by members of the parent-teacher organizations at each site
- Parents as Teachers Newsletter - A monthly publication to parents of infants and toddlers in the district
- Contract Booklets - Negotiated contracts for the Union Classroom Teachers Association and the Union Support Personnel Association
- Annual Bond Election Materials

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**Economic Condition & Outlook**

Oklahoma’s economic condition continues to rebound. Reports from the Oklahoma State Treasurer’s office indicate that state General Fund revenue collections for the 2005 fiscal year were 7.8 percent above the prior year and 9.5 percent above estimates. Oklahoma taxpayers will be issued tax rebates later this year and a substantial deposit will be made to the state’s Rainy Day Fund to bring it to its statutory cap of $461.3 million. This will be the first time since the Rainy Day Fund was created that it will reach its maximum.

In addition, the Oklahoma Dynamic Economy and Budget Security Fund for research and development will receive $94 million of the excess revenue collections. The 2005 Economic Outlook published by Oklahoma State University credits high energy prices as a stimulus for economic growth in energy-producing states such as Oklahoma.

In his 2005 State of the City address, Tulsa’s mayor cited an unemployment rate of 4.1 percent, reflecting a decline from the 6.3 percent reported in 2003. Workforce Oklahoma, the state’s workforce development system, continues to be the catalyst for employment growth. Working in conjunction with the Tulsa Mayor’s Office of Workforce Development and Chambers of Commerce in our region, a diverse group of employment, education and training providers are integrating services to assist local customers in finding jobs and qualified workers, making career decisions and accessing training
opportunities. Union Public Schools contributes to these workplace initiatives by offering community programs for both adults and children such as:

Adult Basic Education – classes for adults who need basic skills instruction in reading, writing, math and life skills,

- Workplace Education – links education goals to the employer’s desire for high performance work and product quality,
- G.E.D. Preparation – instruction to prepare adults to take the Tests of General Educational Development (G.E.D.),
- English as a Second Language – instruction to non-English speaking adults to help them be productive citizens of our community.

Three of Tulsa’s top five employers are major healthcare systems that continue to expand. A joint effort between Bedlam Community Health Partnerships and Union Public Schools has produced cutting-edge services for the Union community. The new Union Public Schools Bedlam School-Based Health Clinic opened its doors this year at Roy Clark Elementary School, providing a convenient way for students to receive a wide range of health care services. It operates at no cost to the school district. The primary goal of the clinic is to serve the families of all children in the school, including those who qualify for Medicaid or have no health insurance. The clinic provides at least one full-time physician's assistant or a resident physician, and a pediatrician visits the clinic as part of a rotating schedule. The physicians work with and assist school nurses.

Vision 2025, a one-penny 13-year increase in the Tulsa County Sales Tax for regional economic development and capital improvements, continues to fund projects throughout the Tulsa area, including instructional materials for common education. Union Public Schools collected $220,197 in fiscal year 2004-2005 in Vision 2025 reimbursements for classroom-related expenses.

Overall, Oklahoma’s economic activity appears to be slightly ahead of the projections made by Oklahoma State University’s 2005 Economic Forecast, and the City of Tulsa continues to be optimistic regarding its economic outlook.

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**Bond Funds**

On February 8, 2005, district voters approved a $13-million bond proposal which included funds to construct a new elementary school to address the needs of a growing elementary student population in the northeastern portion of the district. Other equally crucial items on the ballot included: phase II construction of the 8th Grade Center; textbooks and classroom materials; library books; instructional equipment; technology, building repairs and renovations to sites district-wide; and phase II construction of the soccer facility.
**2004-05 bonded capacity:**

General Obligation Indebtedness..............$53,950,000

Sinking Fund Balance.........................................(2,127,650)

Net General Obligation Indebtedness........$51,822,350

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**Grants/Federal Programs**

During the 2004-05 school year, Union received $4,129,056 in federal grant money. Grants were used to fund such programs as drug education, special education, professional development, remedial programs, enrichment programs in math and reading, and supplies and materials.

The district’s child nutrition program received $1,461,403 in federal and state money. Approximately 26% of Union’s students took advantage of free or reduced meals.

Union received a $75,000 grant to help the 400 homeless students living in the district. According to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, homeless in this case means students who lack a fixed, regular and adequate night-time residence.

The State Board of Education approved a Mathematics and Science Partnership grant for Union Public Schools and the University of Tulsa. The grant was one of nine awarded across the state for professional development institutes serving 58 public school districts. Union teachers Rebecca Morales and Kathy Pursley, along with Jerry McCoy, University of Tulsa, Applied Assistant Professor in the Department of Physics and Engineering Physics, prepared the successful grant application. The alliance provided a summer institute and follow up training for math and science teachers from Union and other area schools designated as high-needed schools.

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**Revenue**

The State Department of Education requires Union Public Schools to report all revenue and expenditures on a modified cash basis when reporting monthly and yearly management information. This data is presented to the Board of Education and the patrons annually in August during a public meeting.

Union Public School’s 2004-2005 general fund revenue was $68.8 million. As always, the primary source came from state aid, 35.2 percent ($24.2 million). More than 30.8 percent ($21.2 million) came from ad valorem tax revenue, reflecting new housing and the area’s commercial growth, especially along the 71st Street corridor. The remaining collections come from:

- Federal sources – includes grants received from federal agencies
- Other state sources – includes auto license tax, state land earnings, state flexible benefit allowance, state grants and fees
- County sources – includes county 4-mill ad valorem, mortgage tax, Vision 2025
• Local sources – includes building rental fees, extended day fees, interest earnings, night school and summer school tuition

The district has continued its contractual exclusive vendor relationship with Great Plains Coca-Cola Bottling Company. The contract has provided Union with $3,481,798 over the last six and one-half years, as well as free product, promotional goods and services to help fund site and district activities.

Spending

General Fund expenditures in 2004-2005 totaled $67,727,245. At least 58.3 percent of every dollar spent was used for teacher salaries, benefits and student instructional needs. More than 11.5 percent was spent on operations and maintenance. Another 6.4 percent was spent for student services which would include counselors, nurses and other student support services. Transporting the students used 3.5 percent, and the remainder of the budget was spent for general administration, school administration, including principals and their office staff; other instructional staff services such as media specialists at each school site; and staff development.