New schools greet students

First day of school jitters were especially strong this year for many elementary school students who began the year on a brand new campus. Yokomi and Bakman Elementary Schools opened their doors this fall to many excited students, parents and teachers. Both schools were built with the newest technologies available, including interactive white boards; teachers and students are allowed to touch the "smart board" as if it were a screen.

Designed to use these new technologies to immerse students in hands-on science education in addition to their regular lessons, Yokomi Elementary is a science and technology magnet school built to accommodate 700 students. Many parents and youngsters came nearly 90 minutes early to the downtown campus on the first day. Arturo Nava, 7, gave a relieved smile when he found his name among the second-graders assigned to the school. Micheal Lebda, who normally works in the school district's science office, volunteered to help the students check in. "They're [the families] used to school starting earlier," he explained as he scanned classroom lists while a group of anxious preteens surrounded him. A long line formed into the office where secretary, Trina Salazar, guided Spanish-speaking families to their proper classrooms. Meanwhile outside, Vice Principal Tracy Pennell and science teacher Susan Ballinger hung a large banner with classroom assignments posted.

Across town, near Belmont and Chestnut Avenues, Bakman Elementary School was also crowded with students excited about the new campus. Program Manager Lisa Herrington stood outside to help students find their way to the lists of assigned classrooms. Herrington commented on how the school uses land more efficiently with its two-story design. She explained that Bakman is a "community-based school. We want the community to be able to feel comfortable to come on the campus. We want it to be open.

There was good news in the 2005 Adequate Yearly Progress report released in August by the state of California, and then there was great news.

The great news went to Baird Middle School and Ayer Elementary School. Officials of those two facilities were notified that they and their students moved out of Program Improvement (PI) status by earning an Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) report. Schools are placed on PI status, sort of an academic purgatory, when tests indicate that students are not making adequate progress. They escape PI status when test scores show progress.

The AYP is part of President Bush's "No Child Left Behind" program, which measures students' progress in four categories – graduation rate, students' proficiency in math and language arts and the percentage of eligible students who take the required test.

(The most recent data, released in September, can be accessed at www.cde.ca.gov/reports.asp, click on the AYP page).

Seventy-seven of Fresno Unified's 88 schools increased the percent of students scoring proficient or advanced on the language portion and 78 schools increased the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced on the math portion.

Superintendent Michael E. Hanson noted that while only 30 schools earned AYP status (some do not yet have complete results), many Fresno Unified schools made considerable academic achievement gains.

"The report identifies many challenges for the Fresno Unified School District. The most important thing we can do as a district is to prepare ALL of our students for their future by increasing their academic achievement," Hanson said. "Therefore, our principals and other district leaders have reviewed the reports and begun the important process of identifying unique needs and areas for improvement at each school. The district has set aggressive targets for improvement."

Please see Results, Page 8
Do You Have A Child Enrolled in School?

If you answered YES, you can join Educational Employees Credit Union - now over 128,000 members strong!

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Superintendent’s Message

Michael E. Hanson
Superintendent of Schools

A new school year is an exciting time, with new challenges and new opportunities to support students. I am very proud to be here to serve as your Superintendent and to work with the entire community to make this the best school district in the state. If we want our students to be successful then we must prepare them for their futures by giving them the best education possible. Though it is a great responsibility to prepare so many students for college and for careers, it is also a goal that our district can reach by focusing on four simple things: student achievement, teamwork in schools, staff development and community/parent engagement.

First, we must remember why we are here. Our primary goal is to teach students and to increase their academic achievement. Our children deserve this above all else.

Second, we must work together. It is not good enough to plan to do good work on our own. We have thousands of employees who are working hard, but we won’t go anywhere until we all rowing together in the same direction. We need teachers to design lessons and tests together, principals to collaborate with other principals, activities directors to coordinate programs with other directors, and central office staff to provide support to our schools. I am committed to supporting our teachers, site leaders, and classified staff because our students’ success rests on how well we work and how well we work together.

Our primary goal is to teach students and to increase their academic achievement.”

Third, we must build capacity from within. Our school district requires strong leadership at every level of the organization and a central office that supports staff development. I stress that this is not a time to sit back and wait for direction. Our district needs leaders, now more than ever before, who are innovative, dedicated, and persistent. We also need to prepare each of our leaders for the work ahead by giving them new skills and new knowledge.

Finally, each of our teachers will tell you how critical it is for you to be involved in your child’s education. Just as it is your obligation to get your child to school on time each day, it is also your obligation to become an active participant in your child’s education. Here are some things that you can do that will have a profound impact on your son or daughter’s education: visit their school, meet with their teacher(s), work with other parents to sponsor new programs, help your children with their homework.

Above all else, talk to your son or daughter about what they learned in school each day.

Message from Fresno Unified PTA

The Fresno Unified PTA Council would like to wish a warm welcome back to our students, teachers, parents, administrators, and staff. Fall is always an exciting time of year. The undercurrent of enthusiasm is felt on each campus as students greet old friends, meet new teachers and settle in for the year ahead.

After the summer break, we are often refreshed and ready for the challenges and opportunities that come with a new school year. We are reminded that each of us play a role in helping our children be successful in school. Our teachers bring dedication to ensure students grow both academically and socially. Our children must commit to participating in class to learn all they can. Most importantly, parents must recognize the critical role they play in helping students succeed in school.

As greater academic demands are placed on students each year, it is essential that parents become partners with educators to support their child’s progress. Studies tell us that parent involvement is the strongest element in determining a student’s success in school. While your role is not to teach algebra, there are a few simple things you can do to help your child attain that success. Fresno Unified PTA would like to offer some helpful suggestions.

The first involves attendance. Studies show that daily attendance is the most important aspect of learning. It is imperative that your child, unless truly ill, attend school each day. Daily attendance ensures that students will progress with their peers. Each day missed is a day they fall behind.

However, simply getting your student to school is not enough. To support the efforts of teachers and your child’s efforts in the classroom, here are a few suggestions you should try at home:

• Make sure your child is well rested and has breakfast before school.
• Limit television, video games and computer games until homework is completed.
• Provide a quiet place for your student to complete homework.
• Talk with your child about school. If he/she is having problems academically or socially, communicate your concerns with your child’s teacher.
• Get involved in your school’s campus activities. Parent’s support of school shapes their student’s attitudes about school and fuels their child’s enthusiasm for learning.
• Above all, talk with teachers about your child progress.

Finally, we encourage all parents to join the parent clubs at your schools. Whether it’s a PTA, PTO or Booster Club, be a part of our community of parents to support the education process at your school. United effort brings success to all.

This year begins a new chapter in the history of Fresno Unified. As we commit to supporting student success, we welcome a man to our community who is equally committed to that success, our new superintendent, Michael Hanson. We are encouraged by the leadership and dedication he brings to our District.

We wish you and your family an exciting and successful school year.

Fresno Unified PTA Council

Building Futures wins praise

Building Futures, a publication of the Fresno Unified School District, was recognized by the National School Public Relations Association at its annual convention.

Building Futures is the centerpiece of the District’s commitment to communicate with its stakeholders. This is the second year the newspaper has been published by the Community Relations Office. The District recently expanded the distribution of Building Futures to include a wider area of Fresno.

Building Futures was one of 830 special purpose publications reviewed by the school association. It received an honorable mention award.

NSPRA’s mission is to advance education through responsible communication. It accomplishes that mission through a variety of services provided to its members and to other school leaders who contract with or buy from it.
TEACH YOUR CHILDREN TO BANK NOW AND YOU MIGHT NOT HAVE TO BE THEIR BANK LATER.

As parents, you’re always concerned with providing your children with the right guidance — especially the importance of making the right financial decisions — and that’s where we come in. We offer resources and products that can help provide your child with a solid financial future — like Hands On Banking® (handsonbanking.org), a free online financial education program. Plus, we are a leader in student loans and have indispensable tools like our online College Planning Checklist, credit education materials, and free Wells Fargo College Checking® when you receive your statements online — everything you need from Wells Fargo’s 150-plus years of experience. We can even link your accounts to your children’s for easy funds transfers. Providing your children with financial independence provides you financial independence. Speak with a banker today or visit wellsfargo.com/student for more information.
Khmer hope to KEEP history alive

Designed to empower Khmer students of Fresno Unified through the education of Khmer history, language, and culture, the Khmer Emerging Education Program (KEEP) provides Khmer students with the tools needed for not only academic achievement, but also for better relationships with their families and peers. KEEP is a K-12 after-school program which meets at Greenberg Elementary School. It began in 1991 by several FSU students who were once Khmer child refugees. The Khmer, the preferred term used by those who have immigrated from Cambodia, began arriving in the U.S. in increasing numbers in the 1980’s (after the fall of Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge).

Dr. Pamela L. Dungy began working with KEEP almost 10 years ago and recently completed a doctoral dissertation for the University of San Francisco on the impact of KEEP. “There was just a dynamic there that I hadn’t ever seen,” she recalled. The program was inspired to reach out to the children of Khmer refugees who “were particularly vulnerable,” she said. Growing up by their elders. As a result of this, Dungy said, “their parents were not able to pass down their values and history.” Through KEEP, students were better able to build a connection with their parents and community through exposure to their heritage. Not only as a way to assist these English-learning students, the program also works as a deterrent from gang involvement by providing Khmer youth with better ties to their parents and by giving them a stronger sense of self. Though English-learning is a big part of the program, learning their Khmer heritage is also significant. As Dungy explained, “When they see [their heritage] as negative, and yet they don’t fit in to the mainstream because they’re still in between, then they don’t know where to go. And that’s where this gang influence really, really takes hold.”

Following the strict discipline that is customary in Khmer schools, KEEP students must comply with a zero-tolerance policy and wear uniforms. KEEP staff meet twice a month to plan and coordinate lessons which typically focus on not only Khmer language arts, reading, writing and speaking, and Khmer culture, but also involve health and physical education, computers, cross-cultural education, and awareness of crime prevention. In 1998, a traditional Khmer dance ceremony concluding every school year. After 4 years of this program, students are able to read, write, and translate Khmer into English and vice versa. Additionally KEEP students accomplish academically in their regular studies, testing better in English than mainstream students. The reason being, Dungy said, is that “whenever you have to learn in two languages — in your normal school you’re learning English, and in this school you’re learning Khmer — and your brain has to cognitively travel those different roads, it opens up. You do better in testing, you do better in life.”

Dungy further researched the impact of KEEP between June 2004 and March 2005 using “Photo-voice,” a relatively new research strategy which relies on communication through photography. Four sophomore KEEP students where given cameras and asked to use them to answer research questions about KEEP. The research questions were not answered by the KEEP students with a simple verbal response, instead Dungy told them that “the image is the trigger and from that we will dialogue about how the image answers the question.” It was important to Dungy that they not work together so that their responses would be unique and personal. “They were unique in my opinion with their commitment and their maturity level because they are good students in school, they were toggling school and activities and going to KEEP and this project.”

Dungy continues to present her KEEP research – even traveling to Cambodia – using 13 display banners which not only tell a history of the program and the research, but show over 40 images and the students’ collective answers to the research questions. Research can be accessed at http://www.fresno.k12.ca.us/divdept/keepstudents.

Honors for Edison grad

The Fresno Unified School District Board of Trustees honored Edison High School graduate and NBA star Bruce Bowen over the summer for his basketball camp and work with Fresno youth. The San Antonio Spurs’ small forward and defensive specialist returns to his hometown every summer to conduct a basketball camp for youngsters. At 6-foot-7, 200 pounds, the 34-year-old Bowen is a big man in more ways than one.
District adopts Character Counts

Teachers and administrators in Fresno Unified School District will instill the six Pillars of Character in the District's students during the 2005/2006 school year.

Fresno Unified has adopted CHARACTER COUNTS!, the most widely implemented approach to character education in the United States.

CHARACTER COUNTS! is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, nonsectarian framework that teaches the Six Pillars of Character: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship. The CHARACTER COUNTS! Coalition embraces thousands of schools, communities and nonprofits.

The Six Pillars of Character will be reviewed throughout the year. The traits of the pillars are:

- Trustworthiness – Be honest. Don’t deceive, cheat or steal. Be reliable – do what you say you’ll do. Have the courage to do the right thing. Build a good reputation. Be loyal – stand by your family, friends and country. Trustworthiness is blue, like true blue.
- Respect – Treat others with respect; follow the Golden Rule. Be tolerant of differences. Use good manners, not bad language. Be considerate to the feelings of others. Don’t threaten, hit or hurt anyone. Deal peacefully with anger, insults and disagreements. Respect is gold, like the Golden Rule.
- Fairness – Play by the rules. Take turns and share. Be open-minded: listen to others. Don’t take advantage of others. Don’t blame others carelessly. Fairness is orange, like dividing an orange into equal sections.
- Caring – Be kind. Be compassionate and show you care. Express gratitude. Forgive others. Help people in need. Caring is red, like your heart.

For November it will be Respect, December and January will be Trustworthiness, February is Caring, March is Fairness, April and May will be Citizenship and June and July will be used to review the year.

The District's character education program is administered by Caran Resciniti. She can be contacted at 457-3711.
Hoover’s Rotella in ‘Who’s Who’

Teacher serves hearing impaired; student makes award nomination

The prestigious publication of “Who’s Who Among America’s Teachers, 2005” will have Fresno Unified’s Donald Rotella among its list of stellar educators. For over 25 years, Rotella has worked as a specialist serving deaf and hard-of-hearing students within Fresno Unified. Only academically successful students who themselves have been in “Who’s Who Among American High School Students” and “The National Dean’s List” are allowed to nominate a teacher believed to be worthy of the “Who’s Who Among America’s Teachers” list. Rotella was nominated by a former student and “was shocked and honored,” he said, when he got the letter informing him of his accomplishment.

Rotella’s desire to help others is reflected in the scope of his activities in education. He has been implemental in furthering the Special Education Program in Fresno Unified by winning numerous major grants and mini-grants for the program. He has also worked as a sign language instructor at Fresno Pacific College where his classroom comprised of other teachers, administrators, and other employees of Fresno and Clovis Unified School Districts. Additionally, Rotella works as a home/hospital teacher to many students, including high-risk students, within Fresno Unified. Throughout his entire career in Fresno Unified, he has continued to work as a private tutor which shows just how very much of Rotella’s life is dedicated to education.

Rotella served for fourteen years as the Chairperson for the California Educators for the Deaf. Through this organization, he said, “we were able to discuss legislation and other areas that will help deaf students.” Additionally, Rotella used his time on the committee to “keep people informed and assist other educators” when teaching deaf and hard-of-hearing students. Not only had he been a member of the organization’s Board more than any other Board member in its history, he also worked as the organization’s Area 4 Representative for Central California Counties. With Rotella’s involvement, the statewide organization grew in caliber and success. His achievements as an educator have also earned him many prestigious proclamations and resolutions from the Fresno County Board of Supervisors and the California State Assembly.

Hoover High teacher Donald Rotella nominated for “Who’s Who.”

Hoover High teacher Donald Rotella nominated for “Who’s Who.”

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Ad funded by California Department of Health Services
Volunteers stuff the buses

County Bank, Infinity Broadcasting and Walmart teamed up to stuff and deliver backpacks to Mayfair, King and Addams elementary schools in the Fresno Unified School District and one school in Clovis. In photo, Charlotte Carlberg of County Bank and Glynna Morgan of KMJ580 Radio help load the 1,000 new backpacks. The volunteers stuffed the backpacks with school supplies then followed the buses to the receiving schools and helped unload them. The various schools held contests to determine which students received the backpacks. At Mayfair, for instance, the students wrote essays which were judged by the faculty.

Fresh nutrition

These students at Burroughs Elementary School bite into some just-picked plums delivered to the school by Fresno County farmers. The Fresno Unified School District supports the efforts of its schools to provide nutritious lunches and snacks to students on a daily basis. The District thanks the many farmers who provide fresh fruit and vegetables to schools.

Results ‘not good enough’
Continued from Page 1

performance targets for the upcoming school year to increase the number of students who are proficient on state standardized tests.” The 2005-2006 Fresno Unified School District Performance Targets:

1. All schools will make AYP
2. 40% of students will score at the proficient or advanced level on the CST ELA and Math tests in 2006.
3. 50% of students scoring at the Basic level on the 2005 CST ELA and Math tests will advance at least one level on the 2006 CST ELA and Math tests.
4. 50% of students scoring at the Below Basic level on the 2005 CST ELA and Math tests will advance at least one level on the 2006 CST ELA and Math tests.
5. 75% of students scoring at the Far Below Basic level on the 2005 CST ELA and Math tests will advance at least one level on the 2006 CST ELA and Math tests.
6. No student will drop back into lower performance levels
7. 40% of Special Education students will score at the proficient or advanced level on the CST ELA and Math tests in 2006.
8. 75% of English Learners will advance at least one level in English Proficiency.

In the coming weeks, district leaders will work with principals to set individual school targets based on their unique needs. Performance Targets will help schools engage in a Cycle of Continuous Improvement. The process of continuous improvement looks very similar to the process of teaching: plan for instruction, implement instructional strategies, assess student learning, reflect on student performance, and plan for future instruction - it is a continuous loop. While there will be a consistent review and evaluation process, the diagnosis will lead to different strategies for each site. The Fresno Unified School District takes ownership and responsibility for our schools and we will implement innovative strategies at the district and site level to improve how we educate all of our children.

“We have important and difficult work ahead of us to improve the educational achievement of our students,” Hanson told new and returning teachers in his eNews Bulletin message. “We need all departments to focus on the achievements of all of our students by working together and building capacity. For the rest of the year we must focus on three important things:

First, remember why we’re here, 79,000 children deserve our best effort, our best teaching and our best schools.

Second, our work requires strong leadership at every level of the organization. We need leaders who are innovative and persistent and who are willing to work together to solve the daunting challenges before us.

Third, we must create and maintain a culture of continuous improvement. It is not good enough to plan to do good work; we must also check to make sure that we do good work.”

Hanson said the District must face the hard reality that too few schools made the AYP list and far too many are on the PI list.

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Experienced, Dedicated Teachers committed to excellence!

September Auditions

Sherlock Holmes
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the musical
Sept. 30, 4:30pm

Moscow Ballet’s Nutcracker
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at Fashion Fair

Classical Ballet
Creative Dance

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Now Registering for Fall Classes!
Air Quality Flags to signal day’s outlook

Green and red may mean the difference, for those sensitive to air pollution, between going out and staying in. Working in partnership with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District and the American Lung Association of Central California, Fresno Unified will be implementing the Air Quality Flag Program. As the health of its students is Fresno Unified’s top priority, the program will be using colored flags to caution students, teachers, and parents about air pollution and help them breathe easy.

A green flag will, of course, mean good air quality. A yellow flag will mean that the quality is moderate; therefore those who are extremely sensitive (such as students and adults suffering from asthma and respiratory diseases) should consider limiting their outdoor activities. An orange flag will be a step down in air quality, meaning that the air is now unhealthy for sensitive groups. When a red flag is raised, those sensitive to air quality should probably stay indoors and everyone else is advised to consider limiting outdoor activity.

Using flags, the program makes it easy to know when to use caution because of a rise in air pollution. Additionally, parents are encouraged to keep their child’s school nurse informed if the student suffers from asthma or other chronic health problems. Temperature may also be a factor in determining healthy air quality: during the summer, activities should be held in the morning, while wintertime activities are best done in the afternoon.

Mayfair Elementary 6th graders attach the “Moderate” Air Quality Flag to the school’s flag pole.
New tools to keep FUSD clean

Custodians from all around Fresno Unified participated in a workshop on the campus of McLane High School at which they were able to get first-hand advice and instruction in the use of new tools by the makers themselves. Area Coordinator Vince Diak explained that the workshop enabled, “custodians and vendors a chance to get together and share their work experience.” The last time this occurred was approximately 6 years ago, so July’s workshop was able to cover a lot of new materials and tools that were created to make the custodians’ jobs much easier.

Diak said that in addition to learning how to properly use tools and materials, there was also a “focus on safety.” Custodians went through training on the hazards pertaining to asbestos amongst other environmental risks during a two-hour presentation by Lyn Peters. Additionally, custodial staff met with representatives from companies such as Central Sanitary Supply, Pioneer Chemical, West Coast Chemicals, and Valley Sanitary Carpet Spotting where they were advised on innovative systems of chemical portioning which increase safety and save money. Hotsy Pressure Washing’s representative, Mark Lamtrip also presented the custodians with an exhibition of their cleaning device.

Around 220 custodians were in attendance at the workshop with a total of 450 people participating in the busy day.

Fresno Schools are proud to offer an array of school choices that help children follow their dreams and become true architects of their future. One option for families to explore is the Magnet Program, offered at all grade levels. Magnet Programs offer pathways that focus on a child’s interests and strengths. Themes include the Performing Arts, Science, Technology, Global and International Studies. Only three magnet programs have admission criteria—Edison High Middle and High School and Sunnyside Doctor’s Academy. Applicants for these schools must complete an additional packet available at the school site or Student Services.

Open Enrollment is yet another opportunity to choose all other schools within the Fresno Unified School District. The Open Enrollment application process allows families to select a school outside of their attendance area, without having to meet any criteria at all, other than interest.

The application process for Open Enrollment and Magnet Programs is much simpler, due to a new easy-to-understand application. The deadline is November 28, 2005 for the 2006-07 school year.

Choosing the Right School for your Child

Fresno Schools are proud to offer an array of school choices that help children follow their dreams and become true architects of their future. One option for families to explore is the Magnet Program, offered at all grade levels. Magnet Programs offer pathways that focus on a child’s interests and strengths. Themes include the Performing Arts, Science, Technology, Global and International Studies. Only three magnet programs have admission criteria—Edison High Middle and High School and Sunnyside Doctor’s Academy. Applicants for these schools must complete an additional packet available at the school site or Student Services.

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Magnet Program admission and Open Enrollment admission is determined by available space. When the number of applicants exceeds the spaces available, FUSD conducts a computerized lottery to select students from an applicant pool.

In Fresno, dedicated staff members, motivated students and active parents are the keys for creating a school environment that values accomplishment and demonstrates school pride. Learn more about the right school choice for your child by attending a Magnet Fair (refer to the parent handbook for dates and locations) or contact Student Services at 457-3343 for more information.

The application process for Open Enrollment and Magnet Programs is much simpler, due to a new easy-to-understand application. The deadline is November 28, 2005 for the 2006-07 school year.
Knightly News broadcast creates the ‘Starrs’ at Starr

It’s 8:25 AM at Starr Elementary School and all eyes and ears are patiently anticipating the ‘Knightly News.’ Starr students, known as the ‘Knights,’ who participate in the Journalism Club, present a live news broadcast to the entire school every morning in place of the conventional morning announcements heard at most elementary schools across the country.

“When the bell rings at 8:20, kids can’t wait to get into their classrooms to see the news,” said Kathy Scott, principal, who is new to Starr Elementary this year. “We don’t have any lingering on the playground,” she said.

The program started last year when the Starr PTA contracted with parent, Michael Payne, to create and provide after school enrichment programs. The Journalism Club soon formed and from there a broadcast sound studio took over an un-used librarian’s room.

Foam wall sound suppressors, a table, microphone, camera, laptop serving as a teleprompter and a world map make up the Starr studio. Each morning two students anchor the morning announcements seen live via closed circuit television by some 400 kindergarten through sixth grade students. Camera and laptop are also student operated while parent-creator, Payne, is in charge of the script and production elements such as photos, music and editing which comprise the five minute broadcast.

The program, now recruiting new students through the Journalism Club, has caught the attention of local newsmens, John Wallace, who soon will be coming to speak to the group. According to Principal Scott, the program has given children a goal to be part of the newscast.

“They are learning what it takes to be part of the news,” she said.

Starr students read the school news to their fellow students as other students work the teleprompter under the watchful eye of instructor Michael Payne.

McLane students train at Fresno State Camp

Sports medicine careers

Many of the McLane High School graduates of the training course at California State University, Fresno, show off their certificates of completion.

About two dozen students who are part of the Medical Academy at McLane High School recently attended a Sports Medicine Camp at California State University Fresno.

“We learned how to wrap the knee cap, tape the ankle and wrap rotator cuffs,” he said. “We learned the difference between a sprain and a strain, how to use a spine board and how to sustain the neck (of an injured person).” Randy said he is planning to become a paramedic and believes the Medical Academy at McLane will help him achieve that goal.

McLane has 360 students in grades 9 through 12 who are enrolled in the Medical Academy, Taylor said. It is in its fifth year of operation.

“Not all of the students want to go into sports medicine but the camp was a good opportunity to expose them to some things we don’t do here,” she said.

Many of the McLane High School graduates of the training course at Cal State University, Fresno, show off their certificates of completion.
Continued from Page 1

used for the community.

Third-grade teacher Brad Jelmini is also excited about the new interactive white boards that he can use in his class. "It comes with galleries and could be connected with the internet. You can put that up on the screen in a large format so everyone can see it." Principal, Mike Jones, who previously worked at Lincoln and Easterby Elementary School, said when the "smart boards" were shown to the parents, teachers, and students during the orientation. "Everyone left with their mouths wide open.

Jones himself couldn't wait until opening day so that he can get back to working with the students he's been away from since March when he started work on Bakman. At Bakman, "There's a great staff, it's a great building. Over half of our parents came last Friday [to the orientation," he said. Teacher Ann Alto, also liked the actual design of the school in which the classrooms are all contained within one building. "I think it fosters a feeling of more camaraderie between teachers," she said.

Linda and Visa Lee escorted three new students to Bakman's first day. Lee said they woke up at six a.m. because "they couldn't wait to come to the new school." The family, who attended orientation, already had a chance to see inside the new classrooms. The kids chatted about the new projectors and how the school is two-story. Hafaeza Lane's 5 and 10-year-old kids also couldn't wait for the first day. "They were really excited. My five-year-old was up at 6:30, waking up her older sister," she said.

Vice Principal Tracy Pennell (front) and science teacher Susan Ballinger (back) hung a large banner with classroom assignments posted. They were quickly surrounded by mothers and youngsters looking for their home rooms.

This huge mural depicting Panther Pride adorns the blacktop playground area of Addams Elementary School. The mural, which also depicts the snow-covered Sierra Nevada Mountains and its lifeblood water supply for the San Joaquin Valley, was painted by parent Catherine Wiley, who is very involved in the school's activities. Wiley is currently working on another mural, this one inside the school's cafeteria. It will depict academic pride. Students and teachers are voting on a saying that will be incorporated into the academic mural. Wiley also has contributed a "reading meter" for the Advanced Reading program at the school.

Peace of mind. DR. DON YOSHIMURA board certified neurologist, trained and completed his residency at UC San Diego Medical Center. He is board certified by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology.

Great energy. DR. DEBORAH VAN GUNDY board certified in internal medicine, completed her fellowship at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center. She specializes in endocrinology, diabetes, and metabolic disorders.

Breathe easier. DR. PAUL WILLIAMS trained at Stanford University and Naval Hospital in Oakland, is board certified in both internal medicine and infectious diseases. In addition to his clinical practice, he is actively involved in medical research.

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Building Futures
Fall 2005