When Addicott Principal, Karen Dockery, and her team of teachers and instructional aides were told to “dream big” while planning a new playground accessible to their 63 severely disabled students, they didn’t realize their vision would come to fruition as quickly or as completely as it has.

Thanks to funds made available through the district and Measure B, Wells Fargo and an anonymous donor source, Addicott’s three-phased construction plan for a unique playground facility accessible to all students at the school is ongoing.

According to Dockery, Addicott’s eight classrooms include “medically fragile” preschool through seventh grade children. Over 90% of the students are non-ambulatory, meaning they are in wheelchairs, and the majority are non-verbal and are not toilet trained. Some require nurses to accompany them to school, with others needing oxygen or possessing feeding tubes and tracheotomies. Addicott staff includes a full-time nurse and procedure nurse in addition to a health aid.

Each student’s areas of primary growth and needs are addressed by their own Individual Education Plan (IEP). Standard subjects such as math, science, language and history are approached in non-traditional manners. “Our goal is to make each student as independent as possible,” said Dockery. “We focus and work on functional skills such as self-help and gross motor skills,” she added.

Phase I of the playground project is complete with special “rubberized” ground surfacing and ramps, specially designed to accommodate wheelchairs. The initial covered structure has unique “play panels” and a slide. Phase two is planned to have another dome-type structure with a slide and separate wheelchair swings and more play panels. Phase III will finish out the project with more play panels, slides and final surfacing.

“It is very heartwarming to see this project happen,” said Dockery. “We have children that have never been on a slide before because there was no way to get them on one without this special equipment,” she said.

Dockery said that seeing the equipment is the only way to fully understand what their new “dream playground” is all about. Parents and students alike at Addicott will soon be doing just that.
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Superintendent’s Message
Working Together Better

In last summer’s edition of Building Futures I wrote that the success of our district is dependent on the dedication, diligence, fair and honest communication, and above all, the deep engagement of all who live and work in the community served by FUSD. “I told you that I would bring focus and rebuild systems of accountability. In other messages I talked about the need for innovative leadership and the need to implement cycles of continuous improvement. Finally, I have talked about the need for all adults to work well together, toward a common goal.

The same messages are true today, but for this article, I am choosing to focus on the last concept listed above – we must work well together. It is important for all to know that we have shining examples of high level teamwork and cooperation, and we have even more examples where we can improve. However, we can not afford to rest until all of our people work well together all of the time. It is clear that we have numerous people working hard, but they do not work together all of the time. It is equivalent to people rowing a boat diligently, but not rowing in the same direction. The message is clear, our future as a district, and our ability to build a better future for our children is dependent on our ability as adults to work well together all of the time.

We – parents, teachers, administrators, classified staff, and community members – are the people who need to take the lead to improve how we work together. While I am pleased with early indications of progress, I am not satisfied that we have done all we can in this area. This isn’t just a theme for a newspaper article, it is a critical element of our work today. On December 7, 2005 the Board of Education approved a new organization chart for the district. One of the primary reasons for reorganizing the district was to refocus our work to better support schools and students. Along with these changes, we’ve also rewritten the job descriptions for many district leaders to require them to work outside of their “silos” and to work in multi-departmental teams to develop innovative programs and procedures to support student learning. New School Improvement team has been developed, with vice principals, assistant principals, and a principal on special assignment. Each of these people are being asked to work across all district departments to facilitate school improvement efforts. Finally, we continue to work collaboratively with our bargaining units to complete negotiations and to swiftly implement items that have already been agreed upon. There are other signs of people working together to build our future.

The Choosing our Futures Task Force and community leaders continue to meet with district staff to implement task force recommendations. English and Math teachers from all of our high schools have been meeting regularly to develop a common curriculum for California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) intervention classes for our seniors who have yet to pass the test. Our Assistant Superintendents of K-8 schools have brought together researchers, curriculum experts, and PI 5 school principals (schools in Program Improvement Year 3) to develop new systems of accountability and support. These efforts to bring people together, to solve complex problems, across multiple departments are just the beginning. We still have great work to do to rebuild a culture of professional trust, where parents, teachers, administrators, classified staff, and community members can rely upon one another. This is not easy work however. In fact, it represents my greatest challenge as your superintendent.

Working together doesn’t mean that we always agree with each other, or that we always like what other people are doing. I expect and value disagreements and I realize that there may be multiple ways to solve a problem. However, rather than focusing on sources of differences, I believe it is critical that we return to the one thing that we must all agree upon: working together. To do that, we must be focused on improving student learning.

In the fall 2005 edition of Building Futures I wrote, “Every student in our district deserves a high quality education with talented teachers, safe schools, and a challenging curriculum.” Today, I would add one more thing to the list of things that our students deserve: teamwork among all of the adults in their world.

Thank you for caring about our students, for working hard each day to give our students every opportunity to succeed, and for finding new ways to work together with other parents and educators. At this time of the year it is natural for me to pause and count my blessings. I consider each person engaged in the challenging work of education to be one of those blessings. As a district, we honestly feel that we are pulling out all the stops to support our seniors. As parents, I recommend that you support your child and urge them to take advantage of all the intervention opportunities offered by the district.

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FUSD prepares for California Exit Exam

Fresno Unified currently has 1,332 seniors who have yet to pass the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) in order to earn a high school diploma. With that in mind, I would like to share how Fresno Unified has been actively engaged in organized efforts towards our students’ successful passing of the test and on the road to graduation.

First, seniors who have not passed the CAHSEE have been through an individual diagnostic plan conference with their parents and school site personnel. Retired counselors and administrators have been hired on a part-time basis to take on the roles of CAHSEE Case Managers to coordinate these efforts at each high school. Upon evaluation by the school, each student is placed in appropriate intervention classes to meet their particular needs based on previous exam scores; the class of 2006 has had the opportunity to take the exam once as a sophomore, twice as a junior and three times in their senior year until receiving a passing score.

Next, during the winter break (December 19-22), seniors can attend intervention classes at their home school for four days, 4 hours and 15 minutes each day. Approximately 42 teachers will provide the classroom instruction. Curriculum has been developed by high school math and language arts teachers and focuses instruction based on student achievement. Textbooks are purchased common textbook materials to use in these intervention classes.

Also, in January and February (January 7, 14, 21, 28, and February 4) students will have the opportunity to attend Saturday classes, each consisting of four hours of instruction. These classes will focus on content as it relates to test taking strategies. In all, 39 additional hours of instruction will be available to these seniors through the intervention programs. Bus transportation is provided for all students who attend, and English and Special Education teachers are also included in the program.

California joins 29 other states that require high stakes exit exams. The CAHSEE will not be going away; it is the District’s hope that current seniors will take advantage of all the intervention programs established so they will feel confident and achieve success in passing the next exam to be held on February 7 and 8, 2006. When students are sophomores their attitude is “yes, I know the CAHSEE is required.” When they are juniors they often say, “yes, I know about the CAHSEE and I am starting to worry.” When students finally become seniors and have yet to pass the CAHSEE, many feel stress and have negative thoughts. We don’t want our students to suffer this kind of frustration or to give up. It is our intention that these programs will lead each student to success.

As a district, we honestly feel that we are pulling out all the stops to support our seniors. As parents, I recommend that you support your child and urge them to take advantage of all the intervention opportunities offered by the district. Continue to give them the encouragement; urge them to never give up. It’s not too late to take advantage of the warm welcome to Fresno Unified School District and your support early on, and look forward to working with you this year.

Michael E. Hanson
Superintendent of Schools

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Students ‘learned and earned’
680 take part in Fresno County’s Student Pollworker program

Did you happen to notice a high school student working at your local polling place this past election day? Over 680 area high school seniors “learned while they earned” by taking part in Fresno County’s Student Pollworker program.

The pollworker program in Fresno County began in 2002, as a result of a statute in the state election code permitting high school seniors who are at least 16 and holding a 2.5 grade point average, to work at the polls at election time. “Operation Youth Vote” quickly developed soon after.

According to Victor Salazar, Fresno County Clerk/Register of Voters, the program is a collaborative effort with school districts in recruiting students to work at the polls on election day. Fresno County's program is one of the most successful in the state. Additionally, students, recommended by their high school government teachers, must also be United States citizens and attend a mandatory two-hour training course.

Duties are the same for the student pollworker as for the actual poll clerk. These duties range from checking voters in and distributing ballots to showing voters how the voting machine works. Students are even paid $85 for their day worked at the poll, from the hours of 6:30 am-9:30 pm. Hours worked can be used by the students for community service towards graduation, extra credit and on job or college applications.

“I am convinced that if you get young people to work as pollworkers, from that point forward, they will be engaged in the election process,” said Salazar.

Students working at the polls are only one part of the three point program. Other points of the program include the active engagement of voter registration with voter registration drives directed at youth and helping to conduct student body elections. “Education about voting is essential so when people do actually vote, they already know the process,” said Salazar.

While other counties across the state have suffered with poor pollworker attendance, Fresno County has not had to “close its doors to democracy, due to the contributions of student pollworkers,” boasts Salazar.

Fresno County has 430 polling places staffed by 1700 pollworkers. Over 40% of this poll work force is made up of student workers from over 20 area high schools. “Students are a significant contribution to the success of elections held in our county,” said Salazar.

A contest, held in conjunction with the program, awarded a special prize to the high school with the most student pollworkers and the highest percentage of workers within the senior class. Bullard High School and SOUL Charter School (School of Unlimited Learning) were this year’s recipients of the award. Both schools were presented with an American flag certified to have flown over the U.S. Capitol.
Baird students receive ‘cool’ helmets

"Helmets Are Cool!" Just ask 15 lucky students at Baird Elementary School that were fitted with brand new bicycle-style helmets in October, as part of the Fresno Fire Department’s helmet give-away program, "Helmets Are Cool!"

According to Deputy Chief/Fire Marshall Kerri Donis, the helmet program is funded by Fresno’s non-profit Fire Chief’s Foundation. The Fig Garden and North Fresno Rotary Clubs also contributed money to the foundation especially for this program.

Through the program launched this school year, which heightens fire safety and prevention awareness, all kindergarten through eighth grade classrooms throughout Fresno Unified School District proudly display an 11 x 17 inch "Helmets Are Cool!" poster. In addition, each school is given a larger poster to hang in a common area for everyone to see.

The program also supplies all Fresno fire engines with the bicycle helmets. When fire crews are out conducting routine inspections of fire hydrants or returning from responding to a call and see a child out riding a bike or skateboarding without a helmet, they will stop and fit the child with a helmet. Besides the free helmet, the child will also receive a trading card with a picture of the "Helmets Are Cool!" poster on the front and safety tips on the back.

The primary funding force behind the Fresno Fire Chief’s Foundation is "Epicurean Delights". The fundraiser, held at Central Distributing on W. Shaw Ave., features a sampling of gourmet foods prepared by firehouse cooks and professional chefs, including live and silent auctions. This year’s event on May 15 attracted over 300 guests, while plans for next year are underway with the date set for May 6, 2006.

The first "Fire Safety House" for the city of Fresno has been ordered with proceeds from "Epicurean Delights" 2005. This mobile classroom will teach children how to respond to real life hazards like smoke and heat. Due to arrive in Fresno by next summer, the "Fire Safety House" will create an environment that provides children with the knowledge needed to prevent fires and the steps to follow if they ever find themselves in a fire situation.

To date, over 500 of the original order of 2000 helmets have been given away through the program. Donis said that another order has been placed for an additional 500 skater-style helmets.

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Simón Silva makes believers of Sunnyside High students

When Sunnyside High School Junior Ricardo Trejo met Simón Silva, noted Latino artist and public speaker at a youth leadership conference in Sacramento, he knew he just had to find a way to convince him to speak to his fellow peers at school.

Through a series of conversations with school officials, not only did Trejo persuade Silva to come speak at Sunnyside High, but he also brought along Los Angeles based immigration attorney, Russell Jauregui, whom he met at the conference too.

On November 3, over 1,000 ninth through twelfth grade students were inspired by Simón Silva’s speech and art slide show, including anecdotes from his childhood journey as a farm worker toward a successful career as an artist. “Silva was truly one of the most humble and transparent speakers we have ever had come to Sunnyside High School,” said Val Martinez, AVID Coordinator and AP Spanish language teacher. “His most powerful message was that he proudly paints images of a life he was once ashamed of,” she added.

Silva grew up working in the fields of California with his family of 13. As far as Silva’s family was concerned, his attraction to school and especially art, was irrelevant. He also knew the possibility of going to college with his family’s blessing was remote. But with the persuasive efforts of his mother and aunts, Silva went on to attend college and has become one of the country’s favorite Latino artists and writer of adult and children’s books. According to Martinez, many of the students who participated in the 90-minute presentations given by Silva, are AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) students at Sunnyside. The AVID program targets “B” and “C” students who have the desire to go to college and possess the willingness to work hard, but fall short of their potential.

Typically these students are the first in their family to attend college and many are from low income or minority families. AVID students are enrolled in the school’s toughest classes such as honors and AP (Advanced Placement) and also take AVID as an elective one period a day. This class elective teaches organizational and study skills, provides help from college tutors and allows participation in enrichment and motivational activities, such as Silva’s, which help make college seem attainable.

After a potluck luncheon, thirty lucky students, upon teacher recommendation, spent the afternoon with Silva in a writing and art workshop. Then, that evening a parent component was attended by over 70, sharing Silva’s work with others in the community at the Latin-American, “Arte Americas Museum”.

Attorney, Russell Jauregui, also spoke to many undocumented students about immigration issues. His speech has motivated those students to become politically involved, circulating petitions to try and get Congress to enact legislation helpful to problems which immigrant students face.

The day of motivational presentations was sponsored by Central Valley AVID, Sunnyside High School, UC Merced and Arte Americas. Martinez said that reactions from students about Silva’s speech were positive. Many students commented to her on how they could relate to Silva’s struggles, as they were going through some of the same things in their homes. But most importantly, Martinez thought that many students came away believing that they too can maybe one day accomplish the same sort of things as Silva has.

For more information about Silva, visit his website at www.simonsilva.com.
FUSD students ‘Mix It Up’

On November 15, Fresno Unified high school students joined over three million students from across the nation in Teaching Tolerance’s “Mix It Up” campaign. Each high school’s Human Relations Council planned activities to help participating students cross social and cultural divides. The “Mix It Up” campaign provided opportunities for students to interact with other students whom they may have not otherwise met or had conversation with.

Every high school in Fresno Unified participated in the nation-wide campaign. During lunch in the cafeteria at Bullard High School, students representing the Human Relations Council and Leadership met with five students they previously did not know and asked them a series of questions while sharing homemade desserts each individual had prepared. While at Duncan Polytechnical High School, students were assigned a color as they entered the cafeteria during lunch and then sat at tables covered in that particular color. Signs in Duncan’s cafeteria displayed inspirational messages and students were also given a list of conversation starter questions.

State Superintendent visits FUSD students

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O’Connell visited Fresno Unified students recently to unveil a new audio public service announcement called “Wash Your Hands.”

“By washing hands often, students can increase their chances of avoiding the flu so they can stay healthy, stay in school and keep learning,” O’Connell said. “It is important to remind students about simple steps they can take to protect their health so schools will have fewer sick days for students and teachers.

“The president recently announced federal plans to prevent the possible pandemic of the bird flu,” O’Connell added. “Although the bird flu isn’t in the U.S. right now, the usual flu season is just about to start and the very best way to avoid catching colds and any strain of the flu is to take preventative measures.”

The California Department of Education is working with the California Department of Health Services to provide the “Wash Your Hands” public service announcement throughout the state.
Hildago Teachers travel to China as ambassadors

Three Hildago Elementary School teachers traveled over 6,000 miles this month to Beijing, China, to take part in the Eisenhower Foundation’s “People to People Ambassador Program.”

National Board Certified teachers, Gay Ockey, Reading First Coach, Maryann Lambaren, first grade bilingual teacher and Clara Silva-Romero kindergarten teacher, joined a delegation of 300 professionals specializing in early childhood education for the 2005 U.S.-China Joint Education Conference. The seven-day event was comprised of conference sessions, site visits providing the opportunity to observe Chinese professionals in their own element and setting and cultural activities, with visits to the Imperial Palace and The Great Wall of China.

According to Jack Jarvis, principal of Hidalgo, the school has the highest population of English language learners in Fresno. “We are interested to find out how schools in China, where children speak many dialects of their language, accomplish literacy,” said Jarvis.

Hidalgo teachers experienced the unique opportunity to meet Chinese colleagues face-to-face, discussing common problems, sharing knowledge and successful techniques and effective strategies. Work sessions focused specifically on exploring the Chinese education system, including curriculum, instruction, literacy, science, mathematics, violence prevention, family involvement and assessment.

People To People International (PTPI) Ambassador Programs provide for educational travel experiences for professionals. Through meetings, seminars and cultural activities, participants connect with people in similar professions overseas. The program joins “common interests in un-common places through journeys that enrich the world one person at a time.” Dedicated to strengthening cross-cultural communication across the nations, PTPI supports the basic values and goals of its founder, President Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Returning from the People To People project in China, Hidalgo teachers gained a fresh global outlook on student interaction, teacher training, material resources for classrooms, curriculum development, administration and teaching standards.

Science brought to hurricane evacuated students

Many of the 5,000 students in hurricane ravaged parts of Houston, Texas, got excited about science when the City of Fresno’s ScienceMobile rolled into the area in October.

For 33 days, students and their families alike, who lost their homes in Hurricanes Rita and Katrina, conducted all sorts of scientific experiments and took part in interactive science activities aboard the 40-foot long, $285,000 specially equipped classroom on wheels. The National Science Foundation funded the cost of $35,000 for this trip.

According to Manuel Hernandez, a Fresno community services department supervisor, seven days a week, he and mobile staff worked with students until dark on computers, high tech communications equipment and tubs of materials for lessons in chemistry, physics and biology.


“The students and people of Houston have never seen anything quite like what we do with our ScienceMobile,” said Hernandez. “Our “hands on approach” to science is unique,” he said. Science activities included launching rockets, mini robots, physics, bottle cars (recycled from Fresno Unified) and more.

Fresno’s ScienceMobile is the only mobile unit in the Community Science Workshops, a network of 11 small interactive science education centers across the country funded by the National Science Foundation. Paul Fonteyn, provost of the University of Massachusetts, Boston, hosts the Community Science Workshops. Over $6 million in National Science Foundation funding has been spent to develop the after-school workshops for underserved neighborhoods in cities that include Houston and New Orleans.

The National Science Foundation, City of Fresno, University Of Massachusetts, Boston, the Children’s Museum of Houston and Community Science Workshops teamed up to bring the science mobile to Houston schools and shelters, providing fun and educational activities to the youth and their families in the storm torn area.

As a result of Fresno’s ScienceMobile making the 4,500 mile round trip, the city of Houston is now acquiring its own mobile unit. A grant is also being submitted for an additional five more units to serve other regions of the country as well. To learn more about Community Science Workshops and their projects go to www.scienceworkshops.org.

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Homeless Students Given a Boost Through Project Access

For the past nine years, Fresno Unified School district’s homeless youth have been loyal served and reliably monitored by Project Access, with over 3,582 families having received careful assistance through this program since 2000.

According to Laura Tanner-McBrien, program manager and the district’s homeless and foster care liaison, the federally and state funded program works with the whole family dealing with temporary housing issues. The program’s goals are to see that students who find themselves living in such places as motels, shelters, cars and even sometimes garages, are enrolled, attending and ultimately succeeding in school.

Through Project Access, families who are missing certain pieces of documentation needed to enroll their children in school, are assisted with the problem so these students can attend school right away. The program provides social and outreach workers to help the families and students referred to them by shelters, schools and other parents within the program. Backpacks and school supplies are supplied to students working through Project Access. Foster youth are also served under the project’s umbrella since January 2004.

With Fresno's current shortage of available temporary housing, the program works hard to provide referrals to families experiencing homelessness. They also coordinate such things as bus tickets for students to get to school if they are placed outside of their school boundaries.

Project Access workers check-in with kids at the school sites and also with their parents at home, often troubleshooting problems that the students are experiencing to try to help them become more successful in school. Students who are seniors, are offered graduation incentives such as a free grad night trip or a cap and gown as a reward for graduating. Tanner-McBrien said that the program has experienced a nice success rate with the programs’ seniors graduating from high school.

The program has also maintained a large database, accounting for all services that families have been afforded throughout the project. Through the database, workers are able to access services that have been given to a family. The Matthew Mueller Foundation through Hope Lutheran Church, has generously contributed over $40,000 to the district’s homeless students through Project Access. Each September, the foundation holds a pancake breakfast fundraiser with the proceeds going towards the project.

The district’s program received top honors in 2002 with the National Association for Education of Homeless Children and Youth’s “Outstanding School-Based Education Program” providing services to students in homeless situations award.

Student artists

Arte Americas recognized Fresno Unified School District students for their artistic endeavors in various media during Hispanic Heritage Month. Above, a senior at Roosevelt High School who is also class president and Miss Rough Rider, receives an award for her work (on easel). Below, a first-grader at Slater elementary school, is congratulated by his teacher Robin Nickel for his award. Joe noted that he adopted the artistic style of his namesake, Diego Rivera.
McCardle Elementary Awarded Blue Ribbon

McCardle Elementary School received the prestigious “Blue Ribbon School” award on Veteran’s Day at the “2005 No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Schools Program,” held in Washington D.C.

Principal Kathy Dennen, accompanied by sixth grade teacher Lori Barcus, third grade teacher Susy Leal and second grade teacher Ann Simerly, accepted the award from Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings. McCardle was one of 300 elementary, middle and high schools chosen nationally for the award this year and the only school in the Central Valley to receive the honor.

McCardle was recognized with this honor by meeting the criteria of at least 40% of its students being from disadvantaged backgrounds with dramatically improved student performance in accordance with state assessment systems. According to Dennen, McCardle’s 550 students excel because teachers at the school have high expectations for them. “Our teachers teach to standards, pace the kids, do ongoing assessments, are data driven and collaborate among staff, creating a strong learning environment,” she said.

A celebration of the award was held October 18 at the school. Students were served “blue” treats, were presented with a blue ribbon and participated in a “read and feed”, where kids took part in silent reading and eating of their treats. The school also received special recognition from Senator’s Boxer and Feinstein office, including an American flag which was flown over the nation’s Capitol.

Dennen is serving her third year as principal at McCardle. She commented that data used in the selection process for the award is compiled for several years, including time when Dr. Alan Harrison was principal of the school.

“McCardle has a real family atmosphere between parents, staff and children,” said Dennen. “It’s a place kids come first,” she said.

Spreading some holiday cheer

Sal Aguinaga, “Holiday Project Coordinator,” along with his fellow employees from the district’s Instructional Media Center, are in their 11th year of collecting toys, clothing and food to make the holidays brighter for families less fortunate at Centennial and Thomas Elementary Schools. Over the years 95 families including 384 children have had a more enjoyable holiday thanks to the generosity of our employees along with donations from several local stores. Fresno Unified School District has a long history of helping its neediest families during the holiday season. The District administration and all of the staff throughout the District also wishes all of its families a Happy New Year.

‘Serving Fresno’ volunteers spruce up FUSD sites

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Now he’s a rock star
Greenberg vice principal adds to his long resume

Curtis Shamlin, Vice Principal of Greenberg Elementary School and role model for some 875 students, now has added recording star to his list of titles.

New York Based recording company “Magna Carta” recently signed Shamlin’s metal band “Speakers for the Dead”, to a contract and CD release. Although Shamlin’s musical interests are nothing new, as his former band “Gryp” produced songs under five different labels and went on the road touring full-time, Shamlin is quick to point out that it is different this time. “I won’t quit my job,” Shamlin said.

Shamlin’s vice principal role is new this year, when he was promoted to the position from a teacher of at risk students. He explained that both music and his working in education are “in his blood”. “I think I may be the only elementary school vice principal around who has a metal band,” said Shamlin. “My goal is to be the first vice principal ever to have a number one record,” he said.

Shamlin’s care and compassion that he shows towards the students of Greenberg is evident within his band too. The band’s lead guitarist, Jason Garcia, was recently diagnosed with both lung and brain cancer. Shamlin immediately began raising money for Garcia’s radiation and chemotherapy treatments. A trust has been formed and donations are being accepted through: Pilgrim Medical Trust-Jason Garcia, Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church, 3673 N. First, Fresno, CA 93726.

Students at Greenberg are excited to hear the new CD, planned for release, March, 2006. A music video and possible movie soundtracks are on the horizon for the band. Also, Tower Records currently carries the band’s demo record. Hear Shamlin’s band’s music and see photos on their website: www.speakersforthedead.com.

Kids First Festival
Fresno Unified’s annual Kids First Festival in October was a huge success. A variety of stage performances filled the air showcasing Fresno Unified students. There was a variety of delicious foods and information on the many programs in our district. This year, the Fresno Blood Bank Mobile participated and we are happy to report that they received over 20 donations of the gift of life. A special thanks goes to our Maintenance Department and Music Coordinator, Kate Wippern, for helping the Community Relations Office make this another successful event.