Introduction

Union Public Schools is a rapidly growing suburban, K-12 district in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The 28-square-mile area that comprises Union is unique in that it does not encompass a township, but rather incorporates within its boundaries much of southeast Tulsa and the northwest portion of nearby Broken Arrow. The school system acts as a unifying organization within the community, providing activities for its families and a sense of pride, support and identity for its patrons.

When Union was founded in 1919, it combined four small, rural communities and had only four students in its graduating class. A two-story brick building housed all of its classes, K-12. In the 1980s, Tulsa’s residential and commercial building began booming toward the southeast, and Union’s student population grew along with it. Today the district serves more than 13,300 students in its eleven elementary sites, the Sixth/Seventh Grade Center, the Eighth Grade Center, the Intermediate High School, the Alternative School and Union High School. All have State Department of Education and North Central Association accreditation.

Thanks to a supportive community, the district has been able to fund computers, local- and wide-area networking and other instructional technology to enhance reading, language, math, science, music and writing skills. Every school has media specialists, nurses and counselors. Programs for gifted students and students with special needs are also offered at every grade level, as are music, art and physical education.

Elementary school students and their parents have the option of following Union’s Continuous Learning Calendar (CLC or year-round program) or the Traditional Learning Calendar (TLC or 9-month school year). The nine-year-old CLC program has steadily grown at the elementary level, and the Board has voted to offer it through eighth grade if and when there is a demand for it.

Another option at the elementary level is the Primary Multiage Classroom for grades 1-3. 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."

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.

Community education, the district’s central enrollment center and Union Alternative School are located in the district’s Extended Education Building, 5656 S. 129th E. Avenue. The alternative education program helps students stay in school or return to school, giving them a chance to get back on track to graduate.
Other features of the district include the Extended Day Program (before-and-after-school care for Union students in grades K-5), a host of parent organizations and the Union Schools Education Foundation which funds innovative teaching projects to reward and reinforce excellence.

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

Message from the Superintendent

Dear Patrons,

The pride of Union Public Schools is in its people. We have students with character, dedicated staff and patrons with high expectations. It is a pleasure to present this annual report to educate the community concerning the challenges and the successes of the 2002-2003 school year and to celebrate the accomplishments of the people who have made them happen.

Due to the overall economic conditions in the state, education funding during the 2002-2003 school year continued to spiral downwards requiring district budget cuts throughout the year. Every effort was made to curtail spending while minimizing the impact on student learning. However, the severity of the budget reductions required vacated positions to be left unfilled, professional training to be curtailed, and adjustments to be made in every site and department. With no relief in sight by the end of the year, staff members were advised that planning for 2003-2004 anticipated a reduction of about one hundred teaching and support positions.

Even in the face of pervasive budget worries, morale and dedication remained strong. The 2002 6A State Championship in football set the tone for the year and a record number of National Merit Scholars, talented fine arts students, and caring contributors to their community kept things going in a positive direction. Union programs were
highlighted for Awards of Excellence in many areas including alternative education, the
district webpage, the Native American program and financial reporting. A total of
seventeen Union teachers were Nationally Board Certified attesting to the high standards
of our staff.

This administration takes our responsibility to be accountable to our public seriously, so I
hope that you make it a point to review some of the year’s highlights as a way of tracking
our progress. Community support is a critical component in our success, and I am
confident that the more patrons know about our district, the more pride and support there
will be.

Sincerely,

Cathy Burden, Ph.D., Superintendent

Facilities/Operational Statistics

Union’s well-equipped buildings, swimming pool, ropes course, stadium, ball fields,
tracks, gymnasiums, theaters, etc., were used by district and community organizations for
everything from practices, games, rehearsals, performances, meetings, job fairs and craft
fairs, to before-and-after-school care, classes, competitions and parent-sponsored fund-
raising events. Over 25,607 scheduled activities were held in our facilities last year.
Booked events took place from early in the morning until late at night, seven days a
week, nearly every day of the year.

Approximate value of facilities: $264,920,903 for buildings and contents.

Transportation

A fleet of 92 buses transported more than 5,500 students a total of 4,200 miles per day.

Food Services

Counting breakfasts and lunches, our child nutrition workers prepared and served
2,056,928 meals.

Operations

In February, district voters approved a $16-million bond proposal which included funds
to renovate Union’s 8th Grade Center. Among other improvements, new classrooms and
science labs may be built, the library/media center expanded, hallways remodeled to
enhance traffic flow, a security system installed, the heating and air conditioning system
upgraded, and restrooms will be brought up to standards required by the Americans with
Disabilities Act.

Work began on the new Fine Arts wing at the High School, a two-story, approximately
34,000-square-foot structure designed to accommodate growth. With the continued
growth of Union’s fine arts program, major improvements were needed to accommodate
the vocal and instrumental music, drama, speech and debate programs.
Construction continued on the $22-million Union Multipurpose Activity Center south of Union Tuttle Stadium on the High School campus. The 5,662-seat arena, versatile practice and performance floor space, student store, locker and dressing rooms, concessions, offices and meeting rooms, and the SouthCrest Wellness and Sports Medicine Center is scheduled to open in the fall of 2003.

**Student Statistics**

Growth has been a constant factor throughout Union’s history. As Oklahoma’s ninth largest district, Union served 13,517 students in the 2002-2003 school year. Of those, 6,567 were elementary age and 6,950 were in our secondary schools; 50.5 percent were male and 49.5 percent were female. In terms of ethnic origin, 9.6 percent were Native American, 9.2 percent were Hispanic, 10.2 percent were African-American, 5.4 percent were Asian and 65.6 percent were Caucasian.

8.1 percent or 1,097 of our students were enrolled in special education.

Throughout the district, approximately 1,600 students were bilingual in 2002-2003, compared to 206 in 1995. The total bilingual count included 36 different languages.

More than 32 percent of our students reported that they live with just one of their biological parents.

**Student Achievement**

In 2002-2003, district-developed Criterion-Referenced Tests (CRTs) were administered in mathematics and language arts in grades 3-8. The tests measure students’ knowledge at the beginning and end of the school year to inform instructional decision-making and curriculum planning.

Union students also participated in the Oklahoma School Testing Program. Union students exceeded the national average in all content areas of the SAT-9. Students in grades 5 and 8 taking the state CRTs exceeded the state average in every content area.

About 81 percent of Union’s seniors took the ACT and/or the SAT. Those tested achieved an average score of 22 on the ACT and 1152 on the SAT. By comparison, the national average on the ACT was 20.8 and on the SAT, 1026.

Union's graduating classes consistently receive millions of dollars in scholarship offers to colleges and universities throughout the country, and the class of 2003 received more than $8.4 million in scholarship offers.

In 2002-2003, 266 Union High School seniors earned college credit based on their performance on the Advanced Placement Testing Program. In addition to 25 Pre-AP classes, Union offers 20 Advanced Placement classes which allow students to earn college credit while learning about a subject in greater depth and developing study and analytical skills that are important to success in college. In partnership with Tulsa Community College, Union offers a Concurrent Enrollment Program, enabling students to earn both high school and college credits at the same time.
Union Alternative School was honored with the Oklahoma Medal for Excellence in Alternative Education Award. The $7,500 award is given by the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence. Union Alternative’s highly successful drop-out prevention program incorporates block scheduling of core classes with options for art, music, sports and a broad range of electives from creating children’s books to CPR training. In 2002-2003, the program boasted a 97 percent success rate and has been modeled by districts from Tulsa to Taiwan.

Ten seniors were named National Merit Finalists. They are Andre Boustani, Megan DiGregorio, Jennifer Haggard, Kathryn Kyle, Drew Mathews, Deborah Mercier, Melanie Nolen, Eric Paugh, Janae Wallace and Travis Webb. Stefan Gordon was named a Semifinalist as was Joanna Noble who attended the Oklahoma School for Science and Mathematics.

National Merit Commended Students were Michael Balenti, Daniel Castell, Mallory Fuhrmeister, Daniel Gimlin, Stephanie Heald, Katie Miller, Leah Pranger, Lisa Ryan and Costa Stasinopoulos.

The 2002 Redskin football team had an outstanding season, posting a 14-0 season record and winning the State Championship gold ball for the first time since 1963 when Union played in Class C.

Mallory Fuhrmeister and Jared Myers were named Miss and Mr. Union — Union High School’s highest honor. 2002-2003 Senior Royalty and Miss Union Royalty also included Callie Blythe, Brittany Williams, Daniel Castell and Myles Mumford. The Junior Royalty was represented by Allison Grindle, Leslie Weber, Adam Blankenship and Mark Chandler.

Thirty Union students received honors in the PTA State Reflections Program, including two first place winners earning Awards of Excellence. Darnaby second grader Mitch Carson won an Award of Excellence in the Literature/Primary Division, while Cedar Ridge second grader Aliya Miner won an Award of Excellence in the Music/Primary Division.

Receiving Awards of Merit for Visual Arts were: Primary Division - Leah Cottrill (Andersen), Miaya Daniels (Boevers), Kylee Shelhamer (Darnaby); Intermediate - Eric Wenzel (Andersen), Robin Kurzyna (Briarglen), Geoffrey Gill (Cedar Ridge), Darius Nouri (Peters); Junior - Allison Campbell and Kelsey Coles (6th/7th Grade), Tanner Mathias (8th Grade); Senior - Megan Sanders and Andee Thompson (Intermediate High) and Costa Stasinopoulos (High School). Music winners were: Primary - Kristen Grounds (Darnaby), Intermediate - Kelsey Griswold (Andersen), Melissa Nichols (Darnaby) and Junior - Daniel Thompson (8th Grade). Winners in Literature were: Primary - Jordan Harris (Cedar Ridge); Intermediate - Aaron Lawson (Briarglen), Kevin Davis (Jarman); Junior - Bukola Jaji (6th/7th Grade); Senior - Michael Grogan and Costa Stasinopoulos (High School). Photography awards were earned by: Primary - Danielle Parker (Darnaby), Jacob Frank (Grove), Carli Williams (Jarman); Intermediate - Anne Balenti (Boevers) and Senior - Marcie Davis (High School).

Andersen students represented the district well at the Oklahoma State Chess Championship in Claremore. Fourth grader Drew Cottrill won first place in the K-6 open category, and Cottrill and fifth grader Chris Hardebeck also won the second-place team trophy in the K-6 Open Section. Second graders Matthew Silvey and Tony Lane and fifth
graders Arden Zhan and Nick Crossley won 1st place, earning them the title of 2003 K-6 U750 Oklahoma State Team Champion. Individually, Silvey won the title of K-6 U750 Oklahoma State Champion.

High School vocal music students named to the 2003 All-State Choir included seniors Justine Eckert (3-year All-State member), Stephanie Washington (2-year All-State member) and Michael Earl; juniors Afton Hefley, Courtney Camp, Brittany Schultz, Laura Schultz and Ian De Silva (fourth alternate for Bass I).

Senior Rebecca Guinn and junior Stefani Lawbaugh, were both two-year All-State members. Sophomore Rachael Cain made the All-State Women’s Honor Chorus as a Soprano I, making her one of the top 50 sopranos in the state. Sophomore Michael Lewis also made the All-State Choir as a Tenor I, which means he is recognized as one of the top 25 tenors in the state of Oklahoma.

The Union Jazz Band was one of two area bands selected to perform in “United We Swing” at the Oklahoma Jazz Hall of Fame, showcasing great American music and artistic achievement by youth.

The Renegade Regiment marching band placed second in the Oklahoma Bandmasters Association 6A competition. In Bands of America regional competition in St. Louis, the Regiment took fourth place and also competed at BOA Grand Nationals in Indianapolis.

The 8th Grade Symphonic Band was selected as the Middle School Honor Band for the 2003 Oklahoma Music Educators Association (OMEA) Convention. They were the only middle school band in Oklahoma selected to perform at this year’s OMEA convention.

Darnaby students worked with Tulsa Panhellenic to collect 2,408 new and gently-used books for the Reach Out and Read program. The books were distributed to area pediatricians to give to their young patients.

Union had the highest number of Native American students accepted to the summer internship program for the OU Medical Schusterman Center, a two-week program where students experience every aspect of the medical field. Receiving $200 stipends for their attendance were sophomores Chris Emhoolah and Jamie Hall, and juniors Caleb Shahbandeh and Heather Stiverson.

Members of the Speech and Debate Team were named Regional Champions and sent a record number of qualifiers to state competition at OU. At State, senior Gabe Cole was a finalist and received a fourth place medal in Monologue, and sophomore Matt Nash was a finalist and a fourth-place medalist in Prose Interpretation.

Seventh grader James Buchanan was recognized for his achievement in the top 2 percent of the Duke University Talent Identification Program at the Grand Ceremony on the campus of Duke University in Durham, North Carolina. Receiving State Recognition in the top 25% were Mary Breed, Nathan Brian, Kasey Davis, Patrick Farrington, Ryan Goga, Tyler Hammond, Brent Harkrider, Brian Higgins, David Jones, Lexie Kinion, Aaron Lawrie, Zachary Mabray, Cara Miles, Jennifer Mohr, Hannah Moreland, Henry Pham, Patricia Platia, Elaine Shan, Kylie Smith, Jeff Vogt and Amelia Williamson. The 7th Grade Center also received recognition as the school with the highest number of participants in the state of Oklahoma.
Intermediate and High School German language students placed second overall at Deutsches Fest, the State German Contest at Oklahoma Baptist University.

Peters fourth graders competed at the State Mesonet Science Fair at the University of Oklahoma. Superior ribbons went to Brice Clanin and Will Covalt, and Brice also won third place for the overall competition. Excellent ribbons were awarded to Britney Bruner, Claire Cheffey, Emmie Cook, Macie Gordan, Taylor Gordan, Mackenzie Johns, Sarah Polakow, Amy Richardson, Spencer Mitchell, Cody Vasicek, Elyssia Szkirpan, Will Schoenhals and Katherine Rear. Brianna Argo, Blake Barrow, Amanda Duncan, Katie Dyke and Boone McBride received Honorable Mention.

Jarman’s Fifth Grade Academic Team took second place in the Monte Cassino Academic Challenge.

Freshman Rachel Zimmerman was the Region 3 All-Around champion in the USAG Regionals gymnastics competition for Level 8, 14-year-olds. Out of 41 competitors from Oklahoma, Texas, Kansas, Colorado, New Mexico and Arkansas, Rachel placed 2nd on bars and on beam, 3rd on floor, 11th on vault, and 1st in All-Around. At the Oklahoma USAG State gymnastics meet, Level 6, 10-year-olds, Moore fourth grader Tori Glover took 1st place on floor and bars and 2nd on vault.

Jarman fourth grader Ashton Collier and fifth grader Justin Jones were selected as grade level champions to compete at the state level of the first annual Reader’s Digest National Word Power Challenge.

The boys’ golf team took second place in the Class 5A state golf tournament. Team members included Justin Allert, Steven Christoffersen, Blake Fugett, Mark Mogelnicki, Brett Myers and Brent Potts.

McAuliffe fifth grader Jeffrey Becker finished with a 1st-place medal in All-Around at the Oklahoma State Gymnastics meet. He earned three 1st-place medals, two 2nd-place medals and one 3rd-place medal. He also participated in Regional competition in Austin, TX, where he placed 3rd in All-Around and qualified for the Junior Olympics. Andersen fifth grader Tyler Gasswint was 3rd in All-Around with two 1st-place medals, one 2nd-place medal and three 3rd-place medals. Sixth grader Brock Browning finished in 4th place All-Around, earning three 3rd-place medals and three 4th-place medals.

Union’s varsity baseball team was ranked #31 in the 2002-2003 preseason Top-50 poll of Baseball America.

Seniors Janae Wallace and Daniel Castell were honored by the American Indian Chamber of Commerce of Oklahoma at its Students of Excellence ceremony.

Freshman Brent Potts won 1st place at the Boys 14-15, OGA State Match Golf Championship; placed 3rd at the South-Central PGA Tournament of Champions at Shangri-La; and tied for 4th at the National Texas-Oklahoma Jr. Golf Open. Brent also placed third (boys ages 16-19) at the Jim McLean Future Collegians World Golf Tour in Atlanta.

Senior Cara Blankenship was cast as the youngest member of the Discoveryland Dancers and appeared in Discoveryland’s productions of Oklahoma! and Seven Brides for Seven
Brothers. Cara was also one of only ten accepted to the Oklahoma Summer Arts Institute at Quartz Mountain in the Modern Dance program.

Sophomore Eric Reynolds won the Tulsa Teachers Credit Union scholarship of $2,500, and the Intermediate High also received $500.

Senior basketball player Kelli Arend was honored as the OCA Region 7 Female Scholar Athlete of the Year.

Darnaby Elementary took first place in the large-school division in the 2002 Tulsa Run, and Jarman took fourth.

Courtney Gatlin and Drew Rucinski were named Students of the Year at the 8th Grade Center.

Peters first grader Carson Clark was selected as a winner in the Broken Arrow Police Department’s “Name-the-Patrol-Car” contest. He earned a $50 savings bond for his entry of “Radar.”

High School art students were recognized as winners in the Scholastic Arts Competition at the state level. Gold winners, who went on to national competition, included senior Ryan Bowling (photography) and Lindsey Horn (photography) and sophomore Natlie Johnson (art). Silver winners were senior Megan DiGregorio (photography) and juniors Kelsi Ellis (photography) and Kara Yannaccone (art).

Freshman Josh Walker’s entry won the High School Division of the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife essay competition, and his paper was published in the Oklahoma Wildlife magazine and qualified for national competition. As the winner, Josh won an expense-paid antelope hunting trip to New Mexico.

Fourteen eighth graders submitted works which were accepted for publication in the anthology A Celebration of Young Poets. The published poets included Melyssa Cardenas, Pam Carroll, Amber Collier, Brittnee Cooks, Rachel Hall, Lesley Hemphill, Kirsten Lusk, Chelsea McCormick, Amy Moua, Catherine Payton, Gina Quirarte, Carrie Rowan, Natalie Seefeldt and Jennifer Tran.

Sixth grader Michael Bennett and his partner took first place in the National Dance Competition, Junior Division, for their ‘buck-and-wing’ routine. Michael also placed second in Solo competition in his age group and made the National Junior All-Star Team (Shockwave, Jr.). During competition in the Junior Olympics in Detroit, the duo took a silver medal in the elementary age division.

The Highsteppers received the Circle of Champions and Technique awards and the Choreography Award for Jazz as well as First Place/Gold awards for Team Novelty, Precision Jazz and Kick at the Austin, TX, Starmakers Competition. The Officers earned the Perfect Sweepstakes, Entertainment, Circle of Stars, and Technique Awards in addition to First Place/Gold Awards for Lyrical, Novelty and Precision Jazz. Cara Blankenship and Jennie Nye took the Gold Award in Duet, and Justine and April Eckert won the Silver Award in Duet. Justine Eckert was a Solo Finalist, and Cara Christoffersen was a fourth runner-up in Solo Finalist.
Members of Mu Alpha Theta, the national math honor society, at the Intermediate High fared well in fall competitions. At the OU High School Math Contest in Norman, John Lee took first in Algebra 1, Jacob Lambert placed first in Geometry and Chris Croudy was first in Advanced Algebra. At the OSU High School Math Contest in Stillwater, 16 Union students competed against 584 students from Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, Kansas and Missouri for honors and scholarships. Eric Paugh placed fifth, and he and Chris Croudy received Outstanding Achievement Awards. Earning Meritorious Achievement Awards were Angie Liniger, Costa Stasinopoulus and Stephanie Hardway.

The Intermediate High Math Club attended the TU Hurricane Mathfest, and Eric Paugh and Chris Croudy placed 2nd and 3rd respectively in Speed Computation. Paul Ko was third in Basic Comprehensive Exam.

Highsteppers Cara Blankenship, Jasmine Marshall and Jennifer Nye were selected as All-State Dance Team members by the Oklahoma State Dance Team Director’s Association.

The Shining Stars JV Dance Team took the state title for Jazz routine and also received runner-up for their “Mixed Dance” routine.

The JV Pom squad attended Universal Dance Association (UDA) camp at the University of Arkansas and took 1st place in Home Routine competition, earning a bid to compete at Nationals. Named as All-Stars and receiving a bid to the Citrus Bowl were sophomores Laura Helberg, Haven Hoffman, Katie Nicholas and Jessica Petron. The group also took first place in the Pom Division at the Oklahoma Universal Dance Association State Championship and in national competition at Disney World in Orlando, Florida, they won fifth place.

Members of the Varsity Pom Squad took 13th place at National Competition in Orlando, Florida.

The 9th Grade Pom squad attended the Universal Dance Association camp at the University of Tulsa where they took 3rd place in the Home Routine, competing against JV squads from around the state. Chelsea Holeman, Leigh Mason and Hannah Wright were selected for the UDA All-Star Team.

The 8th Grade Cheerleading Squad placed first in the Large Junior High Division and were named overall champions of the junior high and high school divisions at the America Spirit Championship (ASC) Christmas Classic in Oklahoma City.

Curriculum/Programs/Special Events/Initiatives

The Seventh Grade History Department formed a new Geography Club to assist students in learning to appreciate the value of geography, both physical and cultural. Students participated in activities relating to the geography of Oklahoma, the United States and the world. The objective was to stimulate critical thinking, analysis, and investigation of differing perspectives and opposing points of view, and activities centered on preparation for the Geography Bee.
About 30 High School students enrolled in a new Teacher Education course which introduced students to the education profession. The course covered basic teaching theory and methods in the first semester with limited field experience in the classroom beginning in the second nine weeks and continuing throughout the year. Students participated in tutoring and reading activities with students from selected elementaries as part of their class requirement for exposure to all levels of elementary and secondary education. Union received a $10,000 grant for the class and applied for additional grant monies to continue the program.

State funding cuts forced the district to cut 60 teaching, 41 support and six administrative positions. Thirty of the teaching positions were at the elementary school level and 30 were in sixth through twelfth grades. All of the positions were expected to be eliminated through attrition; that is, through retirement, resignations and the non-renewal of temporary teaching contracts.

Union teachers and staff received an increase in their compensation to cover higher health insurance costs. Each eligible employee received a $1,050 increase in their 2003-2004 compensation that will cover the single health insurance cost, which is expected to be $90 a month higher than it was in 2002-2003. Employees also received a one-time stipend of $270 to cover the insurance increase during the summer months.

The district took bids to replace the nine-year-old artificial turf at Union Tuttle Stadium in time for the 2003 football season. The turf replacement was paid for with building funds generated by Union’s contract with Coke. The turf is used for a number of student activities from athletics to band performances to special student events nearly every day of the year, and Union has also hosted other community activities at the site.

By the end of March, more than $20,000 had been donated to Union Public Schools by area businesses and individuals who wanted to support students as public education faced one of its worst budget crises in the state’s history. Tulsa Teachers Credit Union donated $15,000 while Pamax Management, Inc., owner of Burger King, donated $4,835 from its February campaign.

During the month, Burger King donated 50 cents from the sale of each Whopper at its stores within the school district. Mazzio’s Corporation also donated $300 to the district, and Applebee’s Neighborhood Grill and Bar donated $550 to defray school field trip expenses. Individual contributions included $100 from Gregory and Cynthia Webb and more than $250 from employees. Some administrators donated fees they received for speaking at other events.

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**District/Employee Recognition**

Child Nutrition Assistant Coordinator Vivian Brown was honored as Support Employee of the Year for the district.

Eighth Grade Center science teacher James Kerr was named Union’s Teacher of the Year. Kerr was chosen by the Union Professional Development Committee in recognition of his outstanding service to the district and his representation of the teaching profession.
Union’s building-level teachers of the year were: Andersen-Connie Miller, Boevers-Linda Montgomery; Briarglen-Jami Roberts; Cedar Ridge-Joan Chandler; Clark-Teresa Moore; Darnaby-Judi Hill; Grove-Karen Franklin; Jarman-Geri Stites; McAuliffe-Anita Thornton; Moore-Rhonda Friday; Peters-Colleen Gold; Sixth Grade Center-Karen Rogers; Seventh Grade Center-Deena Churchill; Eighth Grade Center-James Kerr; Intermediate High-Melissa Lord; High School-Alicia Abbott; and Alternative-Patt Mical.

In typical Union fashion, district employees and students far exceeded a Tulsa Area United Way 2001 fund-raising goal of $90,000 – donating a total of $123,000 to the local charity organization, an increase of 43 percent.

Todd Nelson, a math teacher at the high school, was appointed as the Union math curriculum specialist funded by a grant from the Bank of Oklahoma. His job included coordinating the district’s math curriculum program, delivering professional development and designing pre- and post-assessment tools.

Union Redskin head baseball coach Bill Springman was inducted into the Oral Roberts University Hall of Fame.

The Union JOM Program was selected as the recipient of the Honored JOM Program of the Year for the 2001-2002 school year. This honor was bestowed on the Union JOM Program on behalf of all the Creek Nation JOM Programs. A vote was taken by the Creek Nation JOM Programs at the end of the 2001-2002 school year and as a result, the Union JOM Program was voted, by their peers, to receive this honor. This program will be officially honored as an exemplary program at the Statewide JOM Conference in March 2003.

Superintendent Dr. Cathy Burden was named a “Newsmaker” by the local chapter of American Women in Communications.

Director of Special Services Dr. Bonnie Johnson was named State Special Education Director of the year at the annual Oklahoma State Directors conference in Oklahoma City; and school psychologist Dr. Angie Love was named State School Psychologist of the Year.

Union’s Finance Division and the Department of Accounting received honors from two important national business-related organizations for the ninth consecutive year. The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting to Union for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2000. The CAFR also received top honors from the Association of School Business Officials Inter-national (ASBO).

Boevers art teacher Judy Ide was one of only 25 applicants accepted to the Distinguished Fellows Research Institute during the summer at Ohio State University.

Moore principal Sandi Calvin was named a recipient of the 2001 Best of TCC Alumni Achievement Award.

Aaron Parsons, a first-year multiage teacher at Briarglen, was elected to the executive board of the Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI). His term as ACEI Student Representative runs from 2002-2004.
Webmaster Shannon Phillips and the district's University of Tulsa Internet collaborator
Dr. Kaveh Ashenayi presented at the Metropolitan Tulsa Electronic Network (MTEN)
conference.

The Communications Department -- Director Gretchen Haas-Bethell, Janie Froman,
Shannon Phillips and Beverly Thummel -- received three Awards of Excellence in the
Oklahoma School Public Relations Association's annual contest. Top awards were given
to the Election 2000 video, A Window of Opportunity: Election 2000; the district
newsletter, The Communicator; and the annual report, Re-Union Tour 2000.

Andersen teacher Michelle Naylor, 8th grade teacher James Kerr and Intermediate High
teacher Ken Brooking were awarded certification by the National Board for Professional
Teaching Standards.

The addition of Naylor, Kerr and Brooking brings the number of Union teachers holding
National Certification to eight. Jarman’s Vicki Perritt and Moore’s Dr. Evelyn Roberts
earned the distinction in 1998; Peters’ Kimberly Owen gained certification in 1999; and
Briarglen teacher Shelia Smith joined the ranks in 2000. Avi Gelfand, who joined the
Clark faculty in 2001-2002, is also nationally certified.

Intermediate High teacher Chadd McKee was named All-State Volleyball Coach.

Board member Phil Barr was elected Oklahoma State School Board Association District
4 Director.

Cedar Ridge enrichment specialist Cherry Redus was chosen Teacher of the Year by the
Veterans of Foreign Wars Area Post.

Union's Corporate Challenge Team placed second overall in Division 7 in 2002, behind
Phillips Petroleum but ahead of Williams. We received first place plaques for the Fun
Walk and the Team Spirit competition. Union placed first in seven events, second in five
events and third in ten events.

Special services bus driver Betty DeLarzelere was nominated as a Red Cross Everyday
Hero for her work with abandoned and stray animals, both on her own and through
Animal Aid, Animal Rescue Foundation and HALO (Home At Last Organization).

High School teacher Lisa Butler, Briarglen teacher Shawna Hanlin and 8th grade teacher
Mike Mitrik attended the Oklahoma NASA Space Grant Consortium Summer Teacher
Institute, Mission to Planet Earth, in June.

6th/7th grade teachers Sarah Cooper, Karen Rogers and Janet Schonefeld received
scholarships to attend the PACE XIII Elementary Institute at Oklahoma City University
during the summer.

Superintendent Dr. Cathy Burden was selected as Oklahoma Administrator of the Year
by the Oklahoma Association of School Administrators (OASA).

Two Union teachers received recognition for their promotion of Americanism in the
schools by Chapter #589 Military Order of the Purple Heart. Peters teacher Leigh Ann
Keller was honored for the involvement of veterans as speakers in the classroom, and
6th/7th grade teacher Karen Rogers was selected for her “Valentines for Veterans” program.

Intermediate High family and consumer science teacher Linda Parker was named Teacher of the Year by the Junior Achievement of Greater Tulsa (JA), which serves 14 area school districts encompassing 21,501 students.

Building engineers Sheryl Jenson (Moore), Sam Morrison (Jarman) and Sandy Logue (Clark) passed their first class Building Engineer's test.

Union bus drivers took honors in the OAPT (Oklahoma Association for Pupil Transportation) Bus Road-E-O. Crystal Spohn placed first in the transit category, David Collins took first in the conventional category and Angela Spencer was second in the transit category.

The Finance/Human Resources Division instituted monthly training programs on a variety of topics, based on the calendar season and relevant issues facing schools and departments. Topics included job codes, sick leave/FMLA, sub slips, cash handling, purchasing procedures, OCAS coding, and how to read your paycheck.

To aid in substitute teacher placement, the district began using an automated substitute caller system which has the ability to call and place substitutes 16 hours a day. The AESOP system eliminates the need for a paper trail by rolling information directly to payroll.

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**Employee Information**

Union district employees donated $108,752.87 to the 2002 United Way campaign. Forty-five employees were Bronze Key Club donors ($500-999) and five were Silver Key Club members ($1000-2499).

Boevers nurse Sally Reibert received the Clara Barton Award from the American Red Cross for her years of volunteer service as a blood drive coordinator and a blood donor. During the annual Boevers’ blood drive in October, the school collected its 1,000th unit of blood.

McAuliffe music teacher Charles Johnston was appointed to the Board of Directors of the Arts and Humanities Council of Tulsa.

Andersen PE teacher Lowell Ratzlaff received the 2002 Honor Award from the Oklahoma Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (OAH-PERD).

Jarman principal Patti Pitcock and Andersen principal Larry Williams received the “Salute to Administrator’s” Award.

Moore art teacher Rhonda Friday was named the Oklahoma Elementary Art Educator of the Year.
Briarglen fourth grade teacher Jan Green was named the Wal-Mart Teacher of the Year at the 31st and Garnett Neighborhood Wal-Mart. Briarglen principal Courtney Elias also accepted a $1,000 check from Wal-Mart in honor of Green.

Director of Elementary Curriculum Dr. Kathleen Workman was selected as a participant in Leadership Tulsa.

ESL assistant Linda Wright was named the 2003 Oklahoma Bilingual Paraprofessional of the Year by the Multicultural Education Institute. During the summer, Wright taught two Enrichment Spanish classes to elementary students. She also assisted at the enrollment center with non-English-speaking families and hosted a Bilingual Curriculum Night for her students’ parents.

Superintendent Dr. Cathy Burden received the Career Educator Award from the University of Oklahoma College of Education. Dr. Burden was honored for leadership in education since her graduation from OU in 1970.

District Webmaster Mike Vore was named Outstanding Member of the Year by the Oklahoma School Public Relations Association (OKSPRA).

JoAnna Jamison, Community Education Coordinator, received the YMCA Center for Service-Learning’s 2003 Mark Award for her commitment to Service-Learning. She was one of five honorees awarded YMCA 2003 Mark Awards for outstanding service to the community and youth. Union’s Service-Learning project is the Teacher Education class at the High School.

Sixth grade teachers Kris Cunnane, Vicki Haefele, Kate McClintic and Pam Phillips received $500 grants from Thrifty Rent-A-Car’s Neighbors Together for Schools Program. To qualify, teachers must have the child of a Thrifty employee in their class, and student Brock Browning supplied applications to his teachers.

Varsity football coach and athletic director Bill Blankenship was named Oklahoma Coaches Association (OCA) Region 7 Football Coach of the Year. Blankenship was in the June issue of American Football Monthly, a national magazine featuring football coaches. The article focused on Blankenship’s life and career, including his tenure as Union’s football coach and how he guided the Redskins to their first 6A state championship in 2002.

Assistant football coach Mark Garner was selected as OCA All-State Football Coach and a McDonald’s All-State Football Coach.

The Union Schools Education Foundation awarded 62 grants totaling $20,606.06 to 69 different teachers at 15 of the district’s 16 sites. The classroom projects ranged from $52.90 to the maximum amount of $500.00. Two major fund raisers during 2002-2003 allowed the Foundation to award a record number of grants for the largest total amount ever. The fifth annual USEF Celebration, “2002 Stars Around U” raised more than $50,000. Proceeds from the March 25 performance of Celebrity Attractions’ Late Night Catechism and a matching grant from Pinnacle Financial Strategies Foundation added another $15,000.
Head girls basketball coach Jim Stacy was named Frontier Conference Coach of the Year, and varsity wrestling coach Corey Clayton was honored with the 2002-2003 USA-Oklahoma Coaches Achievement Award.

Boys’ varsity basketball coach Rudy Garcia received the Region 7 nomination to coach the Faith 7 game (Oklahoma vs. Texas All-Stars), and girls’ cross country coach Tracy Simmons was named Region 7 Coach of the Year after the team took second in the state.

Jarman art teacher Julie Wilcox received a $100 mini-grant from the Higher Educational Cultural Roundtable.

McAuliffe teacher Lisa Chamberlin was nominated as a role model in the University of Tulsa celebration of National Girls and Women in Sports Day.

USPA executive committee members Sharon Prince and Sherrie Barnes were selected as Oklahoma’s two representatives to attend the NEA-ESP (National Education Association-Education Support Personnel) conference in Orlando, Florida.

Union’s Finance Department was awarded the Certificate of Excellence for Financial Reporting from the Association of School Business Officials International (ASBO) and a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) for the tenth straight year. The department also received an Award of Achievement from the State Department of Education for Excellence in Annual Financial Reporting. The awards were for the district’s Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2001.

Andersen and McAuliffe School Resource Officer Scott Oelke was honored as Employee of the Quarter by the Broken Arrow City Council.

Intermediate High teacher James Bond was invited back for a second summer to participate in the COAST-Pilot Program, a three-week institute offered at the University of Southern Mississippi’s Biloxi campus and sponsored by the United States Navy, the University of Southern Mississippi and a number of associated organizations and institutions. The program’s goal is to acquaint teachers with the dynamics of the marine biome and of the influences the oceans exert upon the entire planet.

Jarman fourth grade teacher Barbara Smith was named the 2002-2003 Union Public Schools Teacher of the Year. The Union Teacher of the Year serves as an ambassador for the district as well as a role model for other teachers. Building Teachers of the Year were Cynthia Vanderpool from Andersen; Heather Federline from Boevers; Sue Huff from Briarglen; Judy Cairl from Cedar Ridge; Kristy Bailey from Clark; Nicole Miranda from Darnaby; Judy Kitchen from Grove; Barbara Smith from Jarman; Molly Linehan from McAuliffe; Donna Bates from Moore and Leigh Ann Keller from Peters. Representing the secondary level were Sally Randolph from the Sixth Grade Center; Scott Pennington from the Seventh Grade Center; Amanda Howell from the Eighth Grade Center; Carol Burgess from the Intermediate High; Bob Buck from the Alternative School and Cherie Andersen from the High School.

Beverley Bighorse, district computer application specialist, was featured in the UNITE Journal (User Network for Information Technology in Education). She was also named one of the directors for the organization.
Ten Union teachers were certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards after a year of extensive and rigorous evaluation. Along with the honor of national certification comes a $5,000 per year pay increase funded by the State Department of Education for the ten-year duration of certification. Receiving the honor were Union Intermediate band instructor Joe Alsobrook, 7th Grade science teacher Angie Hefley, Union Intermediate computer/business tech teacher Terry Houck, 8th Grade government teacher Amanda Howell, Moore music teacher Betty Mitchell, Union Intermediate U.S. History teacher William Polson, Moore physical education teacher Lori Randall, Andersen physical education teacher Lowell Ratzlaff, Cedar Ridge enrichment specialist Cherry Redus and Jarman fourth grade teacher Barbara Smith. With the addition of these ten, Union now has 17 Nationally Board Certified teachers. Andersen fifth grade teacher Michelle Naylor, 8th Grade Center science teacher James Kerr and Intermediate High chemistry teacher Ken Brooking were certified in 2001; Jarman fifth grade teacher Vicki Perritt and Moore enrichment specialist Dr. Evelyn Roberts earned the distinction in 1998; Peters’ reading specialist Kimberly Owen gained certification in 1999; and Briarglen second grade teacher Shelia Smith-Coyle joined the ranks in 2000.

Publications

- Comprehensive Annual Financial Report - Award-winning review of district finances
- Union Board of Education Policies - Updated annually and distributed to every building and department; booklets were distributed to every employee
- Student Handbooks - Published annually for all students K-12
- Communicator - An 8-to-12-page newsletter for patrons; approximately 22,000 copies printed every two months and mailed to every district households, to area media and to district state legislators
- District and Foundation Annual Reports - Combined in a special October issue of the Communicator.
- Insider - A 2-to-4-page newsletter for employees; approximately 1,600 copies printed monthly or more frequently as information warranted
- 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

District Videos

- Forming A More Perfect Union - An overview of the district
- Union Alternative School - A six-minute report on the school and its offerings
- Union Annual Report - A fifteen-minute video version of the district’s annual report
- Sixth/Seventh Grade Center - A seven-minute video featuring the school and its students
- Teacher of the Year - An in-depth look at the 2000-2001 District Teacher of the Year
- Character Counts PSA - A 30-second public service announcement featuring Union students
- CLC - A video overview of the district’s CLC program presented in English and Spanish
- USEF Endowment Campaign - A 12-minute overview of the Foundation and opportunities to contribute to its $1 million campaign

District CDs

- “Union Schools Education Foundation: Working to Form a More Perfect Union” - A comprehensive summary of the valuable contributions the Foundation makes to the district
- “Union District Teachers of the Year” - Photos of Union’s top teachers at work in their classrooms

Technology Progress

The multi-media computer to student ratio at Union was increased to 1:4 and the computer to teacher ratio became 1:1.

At the High School, two business labs were upgraded; the math lab was expanded from 30 to 40 computers; a new social studies lab was installed and a new wireless mobile math lab was installed. Two business labs were upgraded at the Intermediate High, and a mobile math lab was installed.

The Eighth Grade Center received two computer application lab upgrades and a new mobile general curriculum lab; and one of the keyboarding labs at the 6th/7th Grade Center was upgraded.

The Special Education department received a new student management program, Tranquility, along with expansion of the existing Kurzweil Program and the upgrade of two mini-labs at the 6th/7th Grade Center.

Installation of a new bus routing program, VersaTrans, will aid the Transportation department; HVAC/Telephone technicians in Operations received upgraded laptop computers; and the Child Nutrition department upgraded its WinSNAP foodservice management program.

The Communications department upgraded the district Intranet server, and Student Services received an upgrade to the district’s PhoneMaster system.

Districtwide, more than 270 teachers were upgraded to new multi-media computers, and all media center computers were upgraded – secondary schools with ten student look-up stations and three checkout stations and elementaries with five student look-up stations and two checkout stations.
LAN (Local-Area Network) hubs were replaced with Cisco network switches and LAN network backbones were upgraded from 155MB to 1GB. The WAN (Wide-Area Network) will be upgraded during 2003-2004 from a 45MB point-to-point microwave system to a 200MB point-to-point redundant microwave system.

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**Economic Condition & Outlook**

Within Union’s boundaries is one of the most robust retail and restaurant areas in the Southwest, an area in which the state’s largest shopping mall, Woodland Hills Mall, is located. Some of Union’s corporate neighbors include the new Renaissance Hotel, State Farm Insurance, Metris, Metlife, Visteon Corporation and the national headquarters for American Airlines, Avis Rent-A-Car and Quick Trip.

Economic data indicates that the Tulsa metropolitan area continues to be in a period of slow growth. The number of jobs in the Tulsa area dropped by 4.5 percent, but concerted efforts by community leaders had commenced to improve the job market, and Tulsa actually outperformed the national economy in the early stages of a national recession. The average number of jobs in the Tulsa area was 385,140 for the first two quarters of the year, with gains in finance, insurance and construction, which reflected a combined growth through May of 2.9 percent over the same period in 2002. Despite gains in labor, the unemployment rate rose slightly higher to 6.1 percent in May, compared to the national rate of 5.8 percent.

Per capita income in the Tulsa area was $30,884, an increase of 0.6 percent over the previous year, but was projected to improve by 3.7 percent to $32,039 for 2004 when rebounds in hiring were expected. Tulsa boasts of having a relatively low cost of living. The American Chamber of Commerce Research Association reports that Tulsa's combined cost of groceries, housing, utilities, transportation, health care and miscellaneous items is 91.3 percent of the national average. Retail sales in Tulsa were down 4.0 percent for the first five months.

A total of 1,611 residential building permits were issued for the first five months, down 13.3 percent from the previous time the year before, a total value of $22.4 million. Much of the new growth that did occur took place within the Union School District. Lane expansion projects on Highway 51/64 (the Broken Arrow Expressway) and Highway 169 (the Mingo Valley Expressway), as well as a series of improvements on several arterial roadways, are further indications of the rapid growth of commercial, residential and industrial properties within the Union boundary.

Oklahoma has one of the best vocational and applied technology education systems in the country. The labor force is plentiful and better educated than in most cities in the nation. A number of decisions regarding higher education in the Metropolitan Tulsa area have resulted in expansion of courses offered through Northeastern State University, Oklahoma State University, University of Oklahoma and Tulsa University.
Bond Issue & Millage History


On February 11, 2003, district voters approved a $16-million bond proposal which included funds to renovate Union’s 8th Grade Center. No major upgrades have been made to the building since 1985, and improvements are greatly needed to accommodate our growing student population.

Other items on the bond issue included districtwide instructional equipment, textbooks and classroom materials; technology, building maintenance projects, land for future development, soccer field improvements, construction of a plaza to complete the fine arts addition at the High School; and lighting, fixtures, furniture and equipment for the UMAC.

Grants/Federal Programs

During the 2002-2003 school year, Union received approximately $3,631,955 in federal and state grant money. Money was used for programs such as drug education, professional development, teachers for special education, remedial programs, enrichment programs in math and reading, supplies and materials.

Approximately 21.05 percent of Union’s students took advantage of Free or Reduced Lunches.

Union High School was awarded a $33,000 grant as part of the Oklahoma Advanced Placement Incentives Program (OAPIP). The funding was based on the number of Union students who scored a 3, 4 or 5 on Advanced Placement tests.

Union continued as one of only two Oklahoma districts to participate in federal grants for school safety co-ops with law enforcement agencies. The $34,000 Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) grant was used for Drug-Free Youth programs at the secondary level.

Revenue

Our 2002-2003 general fund revenue was $59.9 million. As always, the primary source—35 percent of our revenue—came from state aid. More than 32.6 percent of our money ($19.2 million) came from ad valorem tax revenue, reflecting new housing and the area’s commercial growth, especially along the 71st Street corridor. Federal, county, and other state and local sources, such as auto tags, land earnings, federal grants and various fees, accounted for the other portions of our revenue.

The district’s exclusive vendor contract with Great Plains Coca-Cola Bottling Company will give Union at least $3,072,000 over a five and one-half year period as well as free product, promotional goods and services totalling another $880,000 to help fund site and districtwide activities.
Spending

At least 62 percent of every dollar spent was used for teacher salaries, benefits and student classroom needs. More than 9.4% was spent on operations and maintenance. Another 6.8 percent was spent for student services which would include counselors, nurses and other student support services. Transporting the students used 3 percent, and the rest was 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.

Average per pupil expenditure: $4,392.