

2007-2008 Annual Report

Union Public Schools

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Introduction

Union Public Schools, Independent District #9, Tulsa County, is a premiere Oklahoma school district with a strong sense of community pride. In fact, Union is its own community. Its 28-square-mile boundary does not reside within one particular city.

Instead, it encompasses both southeast Tulsa and a portion of the neighboring city of Broken Arrow, and the schools act as a unifying force for area residents. At the center of the community---our Main Street, if you will---is the school system with its more than 14,500 students, PreK-12.

Parents choose the Union district for its all-around excellence---wide-ranging academic programs, varied school-related activities, strong emphasis on character development, outstanding teachers, respected elected and administrative leaders, and remarkable facilities.

Each year the district has an impressive number of National Merit Scholars, and its graduating classes receive millions of dollars in scholarship offers to colleges and universities throughout the country. Approximately 93 percent of the 2007 graduating class pursued post-secondary education. Union is one of the leading districts in Oklahoma in the number of teachers earning prestigious national certification, and its "Character Counts!" program is considered a statewide model.

When Union was founded in 1919, it combined four small, rural communities - Boles, McCollough, Mayo, and Alsuma - and had only four students in its graduating class. Today it is the ninth largest district in Oklahoma and has twelve elementary schools, a Sixth/Seventh Grade Center, an Eighth Grade Center, an Intermediate High School, an Alternative School, and a High School.

Union's innovative curriculum features programs that provide exemplary educational experiences for students at all elementary and secondary levels. Instructional technology offers students state-of-the-art tools to enhance reading, language, math, science, and writing skills. Art, music, and physical education enrich the traditional curriculum. Professionals in remedial reading, speech therapy, and special education are assigned to the schools along with library media specialists, nurses, and counselors. Courses for gifted students are offered at all levels, as are programs for English Language Learners.

Two Community Schools, complete with health care clinics and other agency services, are among Union's 12 elementary schools. The Extended Day Program offers quality child care before and after school at all elementary sites.

The comprehensive secondary curriculum serves both college-bound and non-college-bound students. Core curriculum classes of varying levels of difficulty are offered to meet individual student needs. In addition to challenging Pre-AP classes, Union offers a variety of 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. Students interested in vocational programs are transported to the appropriate Tulsa Technology Center campus for the curriculum they desire. Union's award-winning Alternative School is internationally recognized and helps students stay in school or return to school, giving them a chance to get back on track to graduate.

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 Union Patrons,

In our fast-changing world, school must be continually adapting to provide an environment for learning that incorporates new technologies, strategies that individualize instruction, and a chance for all students to maximize their opportunities. The 2007-08 school year focus on “being the change” was a message to inspire and set the tone for continual progress.

Rising to the challenge, Union teachers focused at every grade level on incorporating literacy strategies into the classroom. Teachers in all content areas looked for ways to help students make connections, expand their knowledge, and make learning relevant. Union’s learning community expanded for teachers and students alike. More than 80% of the certified staff participated in Professional Learning Communities after school to research effective teaching methods. Test results and other data points analyzed in data team meetings gave insight into the effectiveness of teaching and the mastery of learning. And new opportunities for students included a middle school alternative school, response to intervention initiatives, and a new early childhood education program for three-year-olds.

Union’s reputation as a good working environment was enhanced through a unique partnership with OU-Tulsa Physician’s Group this year. The employee medical Clinic, an on-site professional facility with doctors, nurses, and physician assistants, was opened to provide for all Union staff and their covered dependents. This was another good reason for excellent staff to be committed to Union!

It was a banner year to see student achievement at Union. Eleven National Merit Scholars, three perfect scores on the ACT; three schools – Cedar Ridge, Moore and Clark - recognized as Academic Achievement Award winners, all brought well-deserved accolades. Students distinguished themselves in science fairs, creative writing, mathematics, and fine arts. They also brought in championships and awards in athletics, spirit, and fine arts. Five state championships helped Union earn recognition as the best all-around 6A athletic program in the Oklahoma. The state championship won by repertory theatre students in the One-act Play competition was one of

many outstanding wins for fine arts students. Band and orchestra continued to grow and excel, and Student Council at the High School was recognized nationally for its service orientation.

School spirit and student engagement continued to be strong during 2007-08. To be well rounded, Union encouraged students to become involved and develop their interests and talents. More than 12,000 students studied fine arts; athletics, physical education, and intramurals were open to every student. Training in leadership, service, and character development were integrated at all levels. After-school and summer programs offered expanded learning time for academic and talent development too.

Overall, the changes at Union continue to support a learning community that welcomes parents, partners with community supporters, and pushes for student success. Being the change reinforces our commitment to form a more perfect Union for our students and community.

Sincerely,

Cathy Burden, Ph.D., Superintendent

Operational Statistics

Transportation

Approximately 5,800 students were transported daily on the district's 93 buses. Union's buses drove more than 860,000 miles in 2007-2008, with 64 bus routes covering more than 1,300 stops throughout the district. Sixteen buses were used for summer school with five at Clark, three at Cedar Ridge, four at Rosa Parks, two at the Intermediate High, and three for special education. The district's fuel cost for 2007-2008 was \$511,521.

Child Nutrition

With 127 employees, the Child Nutrition department served 197,177 breakfasts, 278,669 Breakfasts-in-a-Bag and 1,179,036 lunches during 2007-2008. In addition, 47,884 adult lunches and 2,516 adult breakfasts were served along with 16,610 early childhood meals and 14,569 after-school snacks.

Maintenance Services

Maintenance services had 14 employees who processed 6,800 work orders annually ranging from electrical, telecommunications, mechanical, building electronics, hardware, and carpentry. Facility services' four employees each kept 32.7 acres of school property manicured; set up and cleaned for more than 142 major events; and processed 238 work orders requiring 10,297 hours. They also received Oklahoma School Plant Management Association (OSPMA) and Oklahoma Turf Research Foundation training.

Custodial services had 141 employees with 87 night custodians who each maintained 30,000 square feet of building space. Employees received hands-on safety practice training. Eleven different languages were spoken, and Spanish and English classes were offered as was a Building Engineer certification class.

Purchasing and Supply Management included two employees and a safety coordinator. They handled procurement services, districtwide quotes and bids, contract review, maintenance repair and operations sourcing, and scheduling and maintaining facility rentals and agreements.

Warehouse and distribution services involved eight employees who were responsible for food storage and distribution, central receiving, daily mail and delivery service, custodial supply distribution,

records storage, and maintenance and instructional supply distribution.

Union Multipurpose Activity Center

Four employees at the Union Multipurpose Activity Center coordinated UMAC events and facility rental. The number of events held at the UMAC during 2007-2008 totaled 949 with an average of 18 events per week. The UMAC also housed the U-Wear store which marketed Union spirit wear and items, the Fine Arts Department, the Athletics Department, and an in-house production studio.

Construction/Facilities

Major projects for the 2007-2008 school year included construction of the district's 13th elementary school (Thomas Jefferson), which opened in the fall of 2008. The school was constructed with funds from the passage of bond issues in 2006, 2007, and 2008.

Groundbreaking was held in August for a new state-of-the-art early childhood facility. Union partnered with the Community Action Project of Tulsa County to provide education to three- year-olds in a new \$6-million early childhood center east of Rosa Parks Elementary School.

Union's expanded Alternative Education facility was dedicated in October. The new complex featured separate facilities for high school students and middle school students, a new cafeteria, expanded science and computer labs, a greenhouse, and more classroom space. Two adjacent buildings – the former Education Service Center – went through a \$1.8-million remodeling to become the new home for the high school program, and the original building was renovated to house a new middle school for six teachers and 90 students.

The Eighth Grade Center was featured in the "2007 Architectural Portfolio" published by American School and University magazine as one of 234 buildings profiled in the category "Outstanding Buildings: Renovation/ Modernization." In the past 25 years, the 8th Grade Center has gone from a crowded, dark building to a spacious, well-lit school, a transformation that earned it a spot on the list of the top renovated schools in the country.

Union's new Clinic to treat employees' routine medical problems opened in March at the former Education Service Center. The Clinic is part of Union's overall campaign to improve wellness. The district already provided health care for students at two Bedlam Clinics, located at Rosa Parks and Clark elementary schools.

The district broke ground on its new 14-acre park for students and the community. The \$2.17-million park, which includes youth athletic fields, an outdoor classroom/ amphitheater and a walking trail, is located south of the 6th/7th Grade Center and adjacent to Grove. It will be built in two phases and will take nearly a year to complete.

Summer projects involved the High School remodel of the Media Center, second floor, and security entrance; the 6th/7th Grade Center exterior remodel and installation of security cameras; 8th Grade roof replacement; flooring at Boevers and Briarglen; security entrance at Andersen; Briarglen parking lot; and upgrade to T 8 lighting districtwide.

On Tuesday March 4, 2008, voters overwhelmingly passed a \$19.4-million bond issue containing two propositions for improvements in instruction, technology, construction and transportation. Both propositions passed with 78 percent approval. Proposition I asked for \$17,830,000 for instructional purposes, construction projects, security enhancements and recreation projects. Proposition II asked for \$1,570,000 for the purchase of seven new regular route buses, four wheelchair lift buses, and two student activities buses.

Student Statistics

Growth remained a constant factor in the district. Union served 14,519 students during the 2007-2008 school year. Of those, 6,935 were elementary age and 7,584 were in secondary schools; 7,464 were male and 7,055 were female. In terms of ethnic origin, 10.6 percent were Native American, 16.9 percent were Hispanic, 13.8 percent were African-American, 6.6 percent were Asian, and 52.2 percent were Caucasian.

There were 3,540 first through twelfth grade students enrolled in Union's gifted and talented program while 10.2 percent or 1,488 of our students were enrolled in special education.

In 2007-2008, approximately 2,617 students throughout the district were bilingual or lived in a home where a language other than English was spoken, compared to 206 in 1995. The total bilingual count included 65 different languages.

The total number of homeless children enrolled during the 2007-2008 school year was 756, up from 555 the previous year.

More than 40 percent of our students reported that they lived with just one of their biological parents – 5,024 (34.6 percent) lived with their mothers and 881 (6 percent) with their fathers.

There were 818 students (grades K-5) enrolled in Union's Extended Day Program for 2007-2008, of whom 165 attended the morning program, 232 attended the afternoon program, and 421 students attended both programs. The EDP Summer Camp was held at Grove Elementary, offering weekly themes over an eight-week period. Weekly camp attendance averaged 125.

The number of High School students in Advanced Placement (AP) courses was 1,194, while there were 2,735 students, grades 9-12, enrolled in Pre-AP courses.

More than 12,000 Union students were involved in at least one arts class, including 6,925 elementary students who took both art and music. At the secondary level (grades 6-12), 785 were in band; 324 in orchestra; 1,324 in vocal music; 893 in drama; 50 in competitive speech; and 1,879 in a wide variety of visual arts disciplines.

During 2007-2008, 1,686 student participants in the district's Intramural Sports Programs, K-12 Intramurals had 282 teams with more than 1,100 games played; over 5,900 practices held in Union facilities; and over 90,000 student hours spent on Intramural sports activities at Union facilities. More than 680 volunteer coaches and assistants donated over 29,000 volunteer coaching hours.

Summer school was held at Briarglen, Cedar Ridge, Clark, and Rosa Parks Elementary. Thanks to five grants, classes were offered free of charge to families. In summer school, there were 440 first and second grade students enrolled under the Reading Sufficiency Act (RSA); 165 third grade students enrolled in RSA Academy; 45 first through fifth grade students under the Native American grant; 76 fourth and fifth graders under Title I, and 297 first through fifth graders enrolled under an ELL (English Language Learners) grant. In addition, there were 378 students who chose to participate in Cedar Ridge tuition-paid classes offered in June and July.

During the regular school year, 346 first, 431 second, and 449 third grade students were eligible to participate in the Reading Sufficiency Act program.

Student Achievement

Eleven seniors were named National Merit Finalists: James Buchanan, Tim Crowe, Angela Harwood, Brian Higgins, David Jones, Lexie Kinion, Stephen McCollam, Hannah Moreland, Omar Mumallah, Kristin Nichols, and Elaine Shan.

Three seniors – Madison Dowell, Christopher Gill, and Chelsea Rodak – were recognized as Commended Students as part of the 2008 National Merit Scholarship Program.

Seniors James Buchanan and Elaine Shan were selected as members of the Oklahoma Academic All-State class by the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence.

Seniors James Buchanan, Lexie Kinion, and Elaine Shan each scored 36 on the ACT, the highest possible composite score, something only four other Oklahoma students out of 8,000 who took the ACT in June were able to accomplish.

Stephanie Chapman and Jonathan Ameen were named Miss and Mr. Union, the highest honor Union seniors can receive.

Senior Angela Harwood was recognized by the College Board's National Hispanic Recognition Program which provides recognition of the exceptional academic achievements of Hispanic high school seniors and identifies them for postsecondary institutions.

Erin Smotone and Michael Howland were named Union Seniors of the Year.

Senior Stephanie Taylor, editor of *The Voice*, was awarded the Al Neuharth Free Spirit Scholarship, given to only two students per state and recognizing the top journalism students in the nation. The scholarship paid \$1,000 towards her college tuition, and she attended a week-long conference in Washington, D.C., where she met top journalism and media professionals including the founder of USA Today.

Junior Jennifer Luper was recognized as a top scholar and selected for membership in the prestigious National Society of High School Scholars.

The High School Student Council was named a 2008 National Gold Council of Excellence. The National Association of Student Councils applauded its work and challenged the council to continue its "exemplary efforts to build student leaders and work to improve their school and community through service and activities."

CSPAN's Campaign 2008 bus stopped at the High School in May to honor students Bryce Culhane and Bryant Hunter, who placed third in CSPAN's national documentary contest.

Junior Varuna Rao was the first Union High School student to compete at the State Science Fair and she placed 1st out of twelve entries. She also won a \$5,600 scholarship to Southwestern Oklahoma State University and won the US Naval Science Award and the Yale Science and Engineering Association Award.

Sophomore Kate Hehmann won the top award of "Outstanding Interpretation" in Photography at the National PTA Reflections Competition held in Washington, D.C., in May.

Sophomore Hillary Krisman was asked to speak at the Eastern Oklahoma Presbytery conference, which hosted representatives from 72 congregations. Hillary spoke on her experiences at Iron Gate Ministries, the impact of hunger in Tulsa, and about her CHANGEHUNGER initiative. She was one of five nationwide winners of the Sodexo Foundation STOP Hunger Award, earning a \$3,000 scholarship award as well as a \$3,000 grant in her name to the hunger-related charity of her choice, Iron Gate.

Five Union students placed in the Oklahoma State Science Fair. Eighth grader Nour Baroud placed 4th in the Engineering Division as the first Union 8th grader to compete at state level. Freshmen Jonathan Parker placed 2nd in Behavioral and Social Sciences and Kevin Pauly placed 3rd in Botany;

and sophomore Laura Kalb was 4th in Zoology.

Eighth grader Caleb Pitts participated in Operation Tiger Cruise 2007 aboard the USS Nimitz. Sponsored by a Navy sailor, Caleb departed Pearl Harbor and cruised to San Diego participating in the daily shipboard routine with his sponsor.

Eighth grader Cody Byrd was named a finalist in the 2007 Earth Science Week Essay contest which had over six hundred submissions.

Eight students at the 8th Grade Center placed in the top 16 in the 2007 Desk and Derrick Energy Essay Contest, including the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners. The first place winner, receiving a \$500 cash prize, was Grant Christian. As a sponsoring teacher, Linda Newkirk also won a \$250 prize.

In May, the 8th Grade Center held its annual "4.0 Breakfast" to recognize 134 students who achieved a 4.0 grade point average in one or both semesters during the school year.

Seventh grader Mackenzie Kulka came home with a bronze medal placing her third in the world in the 11-12-year-old female tumbling division at the World Age Group Games in Quebec City, Canada. There were a total of 43 countries at the competition. The world age group games is a pre-cursor to the World Championships, an Olympic qualifier.

Sixth grader Kelsey James' essay on what she was thankful for was a first place winner in the Mimi's Café annual "Write Stuff" essay contest. Kelsey wrote about her mother surviving cancer and won \$1,000.

In November, Union's annual Drug-Free Youth membership drive was held at the 7th Grade Center. By taking a drug test and making the pledge, 565 students committed to be drug free and join D-FY.

Boevers third grader Aldo Solis' artwork was selected to be featured in the 2008 Oklahoma Highway Safety Office traffic safety calendar. He received a certificate for a \$100 savings bond courtesy of MidFirst Bank.

Cedar Ridge 5th grader Andrew Sparkman scored first place in the Dove Academy Math Contest, winning a laptop computer. Andersen 5th grader Haley Welch took second, winning a new bike and a \$300-value Advanced Mathematics Class.

Grove fourth grader Niha Gunturu won first place at the Tulsa County spelling bee by correctly spelling 'algorithm.'

Jarman third grader Paige Hill was selected to attend the National Center for Early Academic Excellence in Frisco, Texas.

Jarman Elementary received SILVER status on the Healthy and Fit Schools Scorecard from the Oklahoma Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports.

Senior trumpet player Michael Howland received a once-in-a-lifetime honor after he was named to the Jazz Band of America.

For the first time in school history, the High School Repertory Theatre students won the One-Act State Competition and the Outstanding Tech award. Three students also placed in the top-10 All-Star Cast – Chris Jett, Jackson Currie, and Trey Brown.

The High School orchestra received a rating of superior in concert performance at the 2008 OSSAA (Oklahoma Secondary School Activities Association) State Orchestra contest. Junior violinists Ryan

Goodwin and Josh Ravenell both were in the 2008 All-OMEA (Oklahoma Music Educators' Association) Orchestra.

Junior Varsity and Varsity winter guards were crowned the Winter Guard & Percussion of Oklahoma Champions in their divisions. The JV group won the Scholastic B Class (competing with all varsity level groups). The Varsity guard won the Scholastic A Class by a substantial 6.0 point margin over Westmoore High School.

The Intermediate High boys and girls brought home 35 Superior medals and 11 Excellent awards from OSSAA State Solo/Ensemble Competition at Oklahoma Baptist University, and High School vocalists brought home 10 Superior medals and 22 Excellent awards.

The Intermediate High girls received an Outstanding Achievement award for receiving six Superior ratings in both concert performance and sight-reading at OSSAA State choral competition in April.

The 8th Grade Concert Chorale received perfect scores at OSSAA choral competition earning Superior ratings in both concert performance and sight-singing.

Senior Lady Redskin basketball player Lindsay Palmer was selected the Tulsa World All-Metro Player of the Year. Palmer helped lead the Lady Redskins to a perfect season and go on to win the 6A State Basketball Championship.

Cross Country team members Sara Vaughn and Steven Baker were chosen as the 2008 Jim Thorpe Award winners for Cross Country. Vaughn and Baker were also selected as the 2008 Gatorade Athletes of the Year.

The High School boys' basketball team hosted three other area teams in a series of scrimmages to benefit 'Nothing But Nets,' a program which purchases mosquito nets to fight malaria in Africa.

Varsity softball players Rachel Bailey and Paige Johnson were named All-State softball players for 2007.

Senior baseball player Chase Webb was named the March of Dimes Scholar Athlete for Oklahoma. The award is given to a senior scholar-athlete, boy or girl, based on grade point average, class rank, SAT or ACT score, listing of athletic participation and honors, and listing of extracurricular participation and honors.

Senior Mitch Williams (football and basketball) was named Region 7 Male Athlete of the Year.

Senior Gavyn Clare earned a Silver Award in the Advanced Performance Presidential Champions Program from the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports.

The Great American Rivalry Series honored the Top Scholar Athletes from Union and Jenks. As part of the Series, Allstate, sponsor of these awards, presented each top player with a \$500 college scholarship in recognition of their academic achievement and athletic excellence. From Union the top student athlete was Jonathan Ameen, a senior with a 4.2 grade point average.

Union won state championships in boys' cross country, boys' tennis, boys' track, girls' soccer, and girls' basketball. The Redskins were state runner-up in football. Individual state championships went to Stephen Carney in golf, and Steven Baker and Sara Vaughn in cross country. Junior Boyea Lockett won state gold in both the 100 meter dash and 200 meter dash; Sara Vaughn took top honors in the 800 run and 1600 run; and Sarah Daggett and David Jones took the gold in their 3200 runs. The swim team took a state title in the boys' 200-yard medley relay; and Joey Sheridan won state wrestling at 160.

Sophomore Brittany Harris qualified for the Junior Olympics national competition for the fifth year in a row by finishing second in the all-around and winning the gold medal on vault in regional competition in Wichita, Kansas.

Two Union students took top honors at the USA Gymnastics Oklahoma State Championships. Moore fifth grader Demery Pennington earned the highest All Around score of 38.0 and the Oklahoma State Title for 11-year-olds.

Seventh grader Ashley King earned highest All Around honors and the Oklahoma State Title for 12-year-olds.

The Varsity Cheerleading squad won the school's first state championship since 1990 and received a state certification of achievement for having at least a 3.25 cumulative grade point average. They competed at the National Cheer Association (NCA) Championships and made NCA history, winning back-to-back titles to earn the National Championship and Grand National Champion two years in a row.

JV Cheer took first place and Best Choreography at the ASC Regional hosted by Union. Ninth grade Cheer won first at the Tulsa State Fair Championships, ASC Regional, and JamFest Competition. Eighth grade Cheer took first at the ASC Regional and the Oklahoma Cheer Challenge.

Union's Pom and Dance squads competed at the State Championships earning top honors in many categories including 11 State Champions and one Academic Award.

The Union Varsity Pom placed first at the Universal Dance Association (UDA) camp. The team earned a bid to compete at the UDA Nationals in Orlando, Florida, and captains Alyssa Curly and Megan Snowbarger were named UDA All-Stars.

JV Pom took first at the Tulsa State Fair Championships, UDA Oklahoma Dance Championships, Oklahoma State Dance Team Director's Association (OSDTDA) State Competition, and Showtime International competition in Dallas. Ninth Pom was first at the Tulsa State Fair Championships, UDA Oklahoma Dance Championships, and OSDTDA State Competition. Eighth Pom took first in the Tulsa State Fair Championships, OSD-TDA State Competition, and the Valentine's Classic at Jenks.

The Union Highsteppers competed in the Contest of Champions National Competition in Orlando, Florida, and brought home National Championship trophies in Medium Lyrical and Large Modern. They won first at the Starmakers "Big D" Extravaganza in Dallas and Best of Contest for the team with the highest overall scoring average.

JV Dance was the Tulsa State Fair champion and took first at OSDTDA State Competition and at the Starmakers Competition in Garland, Texas. Union Elite took first in the OSDTDA State Competition.

Teaching and Learning

After months of investigation and discussion by the Long- Range Planning Committee, the Board of Education approved new school boundaries in anticipation of the new elementary school scheduled to open. The new boundaries were designed to ease crowding at three elementary schools in particular -- Clark, Grove, and McAuliffe -- and provide space for pre-kindergarten programs at all elementary sites. The new boundaries allowed Union to house about 600 students at each site with the exception of Boevers, which was expected to hold 500 students.

The High School offered a new program called Credit Recovery, established to provide students with an insufficient number of credits the opportunity to attend High School. Each student in Credit Recovery was scheduled in four core classes (Math, English, Science, or Social Studies), each 90

minutes long, allowing students to earn 0.5 credit for each class for each nine-week period - a total of eight credits during the school year.

National Geographic photographer Paul Nicklen spoke to students at the High School in the first of selected stops in the Tulsa area as part of The Sutton Avian Research Center's sixth annual Natural History Forum.

Almost 600 incoming 6th graders participated in "Moving Up," a fun-filled orientation that helped students overcome the normal anxieties of entering into the world of middle school at Union. Students experienced Locker 101, Cafeteria Drill Squad, and Class Changing. They took a building tour and met their principals, counselors, and teachers.

Sixth graders in the ESCAPE program took advantage of specialty lessons, from learning dance tips from the Highsteppers and how to bake cookies, to the role rescuers play in a tornado disaster. ESCAPE stands for Engaged Students Caught Actively Participating in Education.

The Duke University Talent Identification Program named Union 6th/7th Grade Center as the #1 school in Oklahoma for participation in the TIP program.

A bit of Union was preserved as part of the Oklahoma Centennial celebration. Elementary students placed items representing their schools in miniature time capsules which were incorporated with others from businesses and organizations. Many of the time capsules will be returned to the original owners when Oklahoma celebrates its 150th anniversary in 2057.

The Tulsa Opera Company presented an adaptation of Gilbert & Sullivan's *The Pirates of Penzance* at Briarglen and Rosa Parks. A chorus of students from each school appeared onstage, performing alongside Tulsa Opera's professional artists.

Clark hosted an after-school Arts and Drama Club funded by the Mayor's Mentoring Initiative, to promote interest in music, art, and theater. Meeting twice a week, fourth and fifth graders dabbled in art, went on field trips, played music, and put on the play *Stone Soup*.

Grove, McAuliffe, and Briarglen students participated in an after-school Youth Arts Program funded through a \$12,000 grant for artists-in-residence to visit area students. The program offered students the opportunity to write scripts, make costumes, build stage sets, and eventually perform their pieces.

Students at Darnaby and Jarman enjoyed lessons in art thanks to the Young Rembrandt's Program which teaches that art is not merely a talent but a skill that should be learned by all children. Students received hands-on help testing techniques and learned new ways to approach art using their imagination.

Grove Elementary was selected by Blue Cross/Blue Shield as one of 20 schools in the state to host a special assembly, "The Organ Wise Guys," designed to promote child wellness. Grove received \$3,000 worth of classroom materials.

Rosa Parks third and fourth graders got their hands dirty in Global Gardens, a program encouraging interest in gardening and the environment. Students tended to their own garden plot at the school, learning which techniques are best for different plants.

With the development of its Early Head Start program, a partnership with the Community Action Project-Tulsa County (CAPTC), Union had educational opportunities for everyone from infants and toddlers up to adults through its Community Education programs. The Rosa Parks Early Head Start Family Center, located next to Rosa Parks Elementary, opened in the fall of 2008, providing education and family support services, including medical and health care, to 95-150 low-income children from

birth through three.

About 20 students signed up for the Dropout Recovery Program, an innovative, work-based instruction option for 18-21 year-olds in Tulsa County seeking their high school diplomas or GEDs while acquiring a professional construction-related skill. Area dropouts were given an opportunity to finish their studies while working in the local construction industry. Partners included Union Public Schools, Union Adult Learning Center, Tulsa Mayor Kathy Taylor/the City of Tulsa, Work Force Oklahoma, Career Tech, Tulsa Technology Center, the Association of General Contractors, the Association of Builders and Contractors, and Tulsa-based Cantera Concrete Company. The program's name was later changed to Blueprint for a Better Future.

Union's Adult Education Learning Center moved to the Green Country Event Center near 31st and Garnett. The move allowed Community Education to house its offices, childcare, and classes in the same building and became closer to home for many students. Community Education also partnered with Catoosa Public Schools to provide GED and English as a Second Language classes in Catoosa in addition to services already provided in Broken Arrow, Rogers County, and Osage County.

Union was named the School of the Year by Coaches Aid for having the best all-around 6A athletic program for the 2007-2008 school year. Union received 136 points while Jenks came in second with 120. The School of the Year awards is a system created by Coaches Aid in order to determine which schools in each classification have the best all-around athletic programs.

After a hiatus of eight-plus years, Union revived its Athletic Hall of Fame and inducted 20 members. In the early years of this decade, renovations at Union and the building of the Union Multipurpose Activity Center took focus away from the Hall of Fame.

Community Contributions

The Clark Student Council received help from Lowe's in a spring garden service project. Lowe's provided gardening gloves and trowels for each Council member and the students transformed the courtyard into a bright, colorful flower garden. Students were given their gloves and trowels to keep, along with a package of flower seeds to plant in their own yards.

Big Lots, in celebration of their new store at 91st and Memorial, donated \$2,500 to Cedar Ridge Elementary School during a ribbon cutting ceremony in May.

US Cellular sent 18 employees to six Union schools as mentors as part of the Mayor's Mentoring Initiative. Union had 36 mentors - 16 from Union, two from OU-Tulsa, and 18 from US Cellular - to work with 181 students at six community schools. The US Cellular team was assigned to four schools - Boevers, Briarglen, Grove, and Rosa Parks. Members of the Tulsa Fire Department also served as mentors and met with students at Briarglen and Boevers as time permitted. Engine Company 27 located at 31st and Garnett adopted Briarglen, while Engine Company 30 at 11th and 145th adopted Boevers. The firemen, truck and all, visited each elementary school once a week depending on call volume.

The YMCA program Camp CATCH, designed to fight child obesity and other health-related issues, continued at Clark Elementary with students staying after school to receive a weekly regimen of physical exercise as well as tutoring. The success of the program at Clark spread to other elementary schools, including Grove and Rosa Parks.

Union received a \$150,000 grant for an academic program that benefits low-achieving and at-risk students. The George Kaiser Family Foundation awarded the money, which the district used to hire counselors and provide services for students in the district's Focus program. Focus was in its first year at Union and served seventh-, eighth- and ninth-grade students who were behind academically in the

core subjects of English, math, science, and social studies.

The Assistance League of Tulsa and the Betty Bradstreet Memorial Fund issued grants to five Union schools for a total of \$8,445.10. Projects included Vision Viewer Camera, \$336.25 (6/7th Grade); Music Program/Equipment Matching Grant, \$2,200 (McAuliffe); Drum Corp Equipment, \$3,345.85 (Briarglen); Walkie-talkie for theatre students, \$200 (Intermediate High); Video equip/Reader's Theater Production, \$2,363 (Peters).

Arvest Bank donated \$5,000, on behalf of the Walton Family Foundation, to the Union Schools Education Foundation for the creation of a special "Wall of Fame" to grace the front entrance of the Union Multipurpose Activity Center (UMAC).

The Union Schools Education Foundation annual Auction and Dinner was a great success netting \$101,800 in income – a record-breaking year for the auction.

Employee Statistics

During 2007-2008, Union employed 72 administrators -- 56 certified and 16 non-certified -- and 916 certified teachers. Support staff members accounted for another 683 positions, 537 full time and 146 part time. The ethnic diversity among the staff was African-American 5%; American Indian 5%, Asian 2%, Hispanic 6%, Caucasian and other 82%. Three-hundred-fifty-nine were male and 1,319 female.

Professional Development

Union's Professional Development program focused on literacy and collaboration during the 2007-2008 school year. Our literacy training targeted secondary teachers and allowed them to explore researched strategies that engage the student in the learning process. Supporting those strategies were over 100 activities that any content area teacher could use. Elementary teachers also participated in professional development that supports our literacy efforts. Speakers like Tawnya Powers introduced best practice methods that involve creating literacy centers. Lucy Calkins Writing also reinforced practices that engage the student in the writing process.

Our goal to create collaborative teams allowed 60 individuals from our teaching and administrative staffs to attend the Professional Learning Community Institute. Union Public Schools hosted this event in conjunction with Solution Tree. Each site was represented and Theresa Kiger, principal at Roy Clark Elementary, presented a break-out session. Moreover, our curriculum specialists continued to facilitate data meetings with math, science, and language arts teachers. Collaboratively, the teachers looked at student achievement data and determined the instructional strategies that needed to be incorporated to intervene within and enrich the learning process.

Overall, this translated into over 17,000 hours of professional development.

Employee Achievement

Cedar Ridge third grade teacher Betsy Glad was named Union's 2007-2008 Teacher of the Year. Glad, who has taught third grade for the past 18 years, is also a National Board Certified Teacher and won the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics Teaching. Recognized for her achievements in the classroom, Glad is a teacher other teachers turn to for advice, leadership and training.

Other building-level Teachers of the Year included Jonnie Williams (Andersen), Linda Maxwell (Boevers), Jan Irwin (Briarglen), Kim Wood (Clark), Portia Walker (Darnaby), Megan Colburn (Grove), Sheri Tallman (Jarman), Pat McDonald (McAuliffe), Debbie McClellan (Moore), Kay Leslie (Peters), Janelle Strozier (Rosa Parks), Cela James (6th Grade), Margaret Lewis (7th Grade), Marquita Knecht (8th Grade), Tammy Garcia (Alternative School), Becky Morales (Intermediate High) and Teresa Hudson (High School).

Lindar Ledbetter, child nutrition manager at Clark, was named the Support Services Employee of the Year. She was the honoree for April as well as the fourth quarter. Other monthly winners included July – Mark Rogers, ESC building engineer; August – Dawn Frerichs, transportation secretary; September – James Stampes, bus driver; October – Bernie Gordon, Alternative custodian; November – Janice West, High School child nutrition manager; December – Kim Smith, Clark child nutrition assistant; January – Mark Ashby, grounds and trash truck driver; February – Brenda Warren, 6th/7th child nutrition manager; March – Perry Martin, warehouse foreman; May – Maricela Perez, High School custodian, and June – Reba Holloway, assistant custodial coordinator.

Fifteen teachers earned National Board Certification in 2007 including Gail Herrington – Boevers; Debbie Reeves – Briarglen; Ann Sinning, Jessica Smith, Dixie Tate, and Denise Thomas – Jarman; Michelle Matthews – Moore; Roxanne Easley and Rebecca Hacker – 8th Grade; Donna Hardway, Rhonda Johnson, Dallas Koehn, Becky Morales, and Sharon Trogdon – Intermediate High; and Jona Ghose – High School. Moore's Dr. Evelyn Roberts, one of the district's first teachers to earn the honor in 1998, received re-certification. Union ranked sixth in the nation for new teacher certifications and ninth overall with 56.

Teachers at Cedar Ridge, Clark, and Moore were among 63 Oklahoma schools whose certified personnel received financial awards for their students' test scores. The additional income for teachers at the three schools totaled \$144,500, with those at Cedar Ridge receiving \$3,000 each and certified

staff members at Roy Clark and Moore receiving \$500 awards. Cedar Ridge was rewarded for having the highest Academic Performance Index score in the “all” category, with a score of 1,469.

Cedar Ridge third grade teacher Betsy Glad was honored with the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. Glad accepted her honor in Washington, D.C., as one of two Oklahoma teachers and 93 in the nation who were honored with the Award.

As part of Tulsa Kids 20th anniversary, the magazine honored 20 Tulsans, “Who use their talents every day to help families.” Clark child nutrition employee Pamela Smith was recognized for her 21 years of service to Girl Scouts.

Rosa Parks enrichment specialist Debbie Snider was named a finalist for Oklahoma Teacher of the Year. She was one of only two Tulsa area teachers to make the top 12 list of finalists.

Seventh grade science teacher Janie Evans was one of four Tulsa area teachers who participated in the prestigious 2007 Honeywell Educators at Space Academy program at the U.S. Space and Rocket Center in Huntsville, Alabama.

Eighth grade math teacher Brad Hepner won a laptop computer during Abuelo’s Teacher Appreciation Dinner.

Alternative Principal Richard Storm was invited to serve on the Professional Advisory Board of the Oklahoma Alternative Education Association. The association looks at alternative education programs as well as statewide laws, policies and procedures, sharing ideas with other educators.

High School English teacher Liz Beeman was honored as one of three recipients of the Secondary School Teacher Prize for Inspiration by the University of Tulsa. The High School received a \$1,000 award in Mrs. Beeman’s honor.

ESC Administrative Assistant Jamie Ward passed the Certified Administrative Professional (CAP®) Exam. She is one of only 32 individuals in the state of Oklahoma to have both CPS and CAP certifications.

Treasury clerk Bernice Tharps received a first-place ribbon at the Tulsa State Fair for her cinnamon rolls. She also won second place at the National Soul Food Cook-Off at the Tulsa Civic Center and first place during the National Soul Food Cook-off in Oklahoma City.

Union’s Finance division was recognized by two finance associations and the State Department of Education for its financial reporting. The state awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting to Union giving the district a perfect 100-percent score. Chief Financial Officer Debra Jacoby also received a Certificate of Achievement in Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United State and Canada for Union’s comprehensive annual financial report (CAFR) for the fifteenth year. The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of government accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management

Grove’s Amanda Kennedy, Clark’s Sandy Moore, 8th Grade’s Shawna Taylor and Natalie Jabbour-Sidawi of the Intermediate High received Coffman Distance Learning Scholarships to pursue master’s degrees in Bilingual Education/Teaching English as a Second Language offered by the University of Central Oklahoma.

Jarman teacher Denise Thomas received a scholarship to attend the annual summer Space Academy in Huntsville, Alabama.

Jarman third grade teacher Jeanine Cory received a grant from the Dollar Thrifty Auto Group in the amount of \$500, entitled, “We Are Proud To Be Americans...”

The Higher Education Cultural Roundtable awarded a \$164.45 grant to Jarman principal Patti Pitcock for music education items for pre-kindergarten students.

Four Moore teachers won grants through the Fund for Teachers program to travel to Plymouth, Massachusetts, to study early colonial life and Native Americans of that time period. The teachers – Julie Godfrey, Wendy Johnson, Wendi Rutz, and Tracy Weese – were among 94 Oklahoma teachers who won grants for studies in this country and abroad.

Peters art teacher Melinda Huff, first grade teacher Marina Nelson, and media specialist Kay Leslie received \$1,000 grants from the Oklahoma Foundation of Excellence.

Kay Leslie also received a \$2,363 grant from the Tulsa Assistance League for equipment to upgrade the TV studio for the new fifth grade production called Peters Afternoon Playhouse.

Intermediate High teacher Judy Rowell was accepted to a seminar on African American lives at Harvard over the summer.

Jim Stacy, Varsity Girls Basketball Coach, was named the All-State Coach of the Year. Coach Stacy’s Lady Redskins finished the season with a 27-0 record and won the 6A State Championship.

A number of Union coaches received Region 7 honors from the Oklahoma Coaches Association, including Jim Stacy (girls’ basketball), Kevin Gannon (tennis) and David Lynn (swimming). Ben Wolfe (swimming) was nominated as All-State Coach of the Year, and Penny Patton was Region 7 Junior High Coach of the Year.

Mike Stanton was named the Region 7 Cross Country Coach of the Year, and Shannon Clark was Region 7 Cheer Coach of the Year.

Coach Tom Stockton was awarded the National Federation of High Schools Oklahoma Track Coach of the Year 2007.

Parent Support

The Union Schools Education Foundation distributed 77 grants totaling \$46,753.46 to 68 teachers at 15 different sites. The classroom grants ranged from \$67.45 to the maximum amount of \$2,500.00 at the annual dinner and auction in November 2006.

Community Service

Random acts of kindness broke out at the High School as students and staff worked together on a philosophy to benefit others – for no other reason than being nice to someone. Assistant Principal Dr. Janet Dunlop introduced the program to students in Union Time, their weekly homeroom meeting. One class threw a surprise NASCAR party for a special needs student, who was excited by the attention and the gift of a Hot Wheels collector’s Jeff Gordon NASCAR.

Business students at the Intermediate High teamed with Reasor’s in a campaign to promote good use of smoke detectors. All of the students in the business department decorated sacks from Reasor’s with the message.

Students on the 6th Grade Blue Team collected more than 6,000 individual items for Freedom Boxes put together by the Blue Star Mothers. To show character and citizenship, students also made Valentines for Vets and wrote letters to soldiers.

The Salvation Army Food Drive at Boevers wrapped up with 420 students bringing in 1,364 cans – approximately three cans of food per child!

Cedar Ridge, Darnaby, Grove, and Jarman Student Councils teamed up to support Major Michael Harris and his company of 115 Marines in Afghanistan on their third tour. To support Major Harris and his company during the holidays, students donated items for care packages to be put together by the Blue Star Mothers, OK Chapter 1.

Union Public Schools continued to show its support for the Tulsa Area United Way, raising a record \$154,412, a 7.21 percent increase over last year. In addition, 91 employees were Key Club donors, pledging to give \$500 or more.

The Union I-Care Holiday program assisted a total of 767 district families - up from 727 the previous year - purchasing gifts for 1,527 Union students and food for 433 families during the holiday season. The program was part of Union's ongoing Character Counts! program.

Union participated in Tulsa Mayor Kathy Taylor's Mentoring to the Max initiative as a way to help children in Union and Tulsa have a mentor to serve as a positive role model.

Communications

Union Public Schools re-launched its web site – www.unionps.org - with a brand new appearance. The web site's new features made the site more user-friendly and easier to update and manage.

Union's web site was honored with an Award of Excellence by the Oklahoma School Public Relations Association. The Tulsa Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America also honored the web site with a Silver Link award. The site was recognized for its design, organization, frequent updates and coverage of school events, and its increase in traffic over the past year.

"The Union Football Coach's Show" debuted in August, starring head football coach Kirt Fridrich and hosted by video production manager Andy Erwin. The show is produced by students in the high school's Video Production II class and directed by teacher Ed Taylor.

With schools closed for five days due to power outages, the December ice storm was the perfect test for the district's new Connect-ED phone messaging service. The web-based system allowed Superintendent Dr. Cathy Burden to make instant phone calls to families informing them of school closings. Other avenues for messages included notice of important meetings, parent-teacher conferences and absentee notification from individual principals and directors.

Technology

The Information Technology department had 24 employees – 12 at the Education Service Center and 12 at school sites. They were responsible for 10,635 work orders completed during 2007-2008.

Teacher computers were upgraded in 300 classrooms; the Alternative School computer lab, the Intermediate High media center lab, and the High School graphic arts lab received upgrades.

Union parents gained the ability to monitor their student's academic progress and grades through the district's web site. A new link, Parents Online, was added to the district's web site, www.unionps.org, to connect parents to their children's grades from any computer with Internet access.

Union piloted a security check-in system linked to changes in the state's sex offender laws. The security pilot program from Houston-based Raptor Technologies consists of a computer system that notifies school and law enforcement officials within 10 seconds when a registered sex offender has entered the building. The system was tested at Boevers and Darnaby elementary schools and the Eighth Grade Center before being implemented districtwide.

Economic Condition & Outlook

Union Public Schools is located within the Tulsa Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), a seven-county area whose population exceeds 897,000 or 25.1 percent of the population of the state of Oklahoma. The Tulsa Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce reports Tulsa's major industries as aerospace, transportation and logistics; advanced manufacturing and services; health care; IT and telecommunications; petroleum and natural gas; financial and business services; and education and knowledge creation. The Chamber estimates the value of all goods and services produced in the Tulsa MSA as \$37.2 billion, or 29 percent of the Oklahoma economy. Forbes magazine in 2007 ranked Tulsa as the sixth best city for jobs among the 100 largest metropolitan areas in the country, considering the median household income, unemployment, cost of living and job growth (see Statistical Section page 96 for additional details). Tulsa offers a low cost of doing business at eight percent under the U.S. average due to low rent, energy costs and taxes. Other qualities that attract new growth are Tulsa's sound infrastructure and low cost of living.

The ongoing turmoil in the national and international financial markets will have an effect on the area's economy. The Office of the State Treasurer reports that the state ended its fiscal year with revenues above projections due to the high prices of oil and natural gas in the last few months of the fiscal year. However, the lower oil and gas prices of recent months will begin to affect state revenues in late 2008 and the state is bracing for slower revenue streams and rising operating costs as the economic downturn reaches Oklahoma.

Tulsa has not experienced the recent real estate "bubble" created by property values increasing so rapidly they reached unsustainable levels relative to personal income. In fact, an October 2008 article in *BusinessWeek* reported that the real estate market is quietly humming along in Tulsa. It noted that sales were up almost eight percent. In a recent news conference, the Oklahoma Bankers Association emphasized the strength of the state's banking industry. A high concentration of energy-related industries and lower exposure to the subprime mortgage market are two factors that boosted the rankings of the Tulsa area in the Milken Institute's Best Performing Cities 2008 report.

The unemployment rate in the Tulsa MSA declined to 3.8 percent in 2006, then began an incline to a 2007 level of 4.1 percent, with a projected 2008 level of 4.6 percent. The Chamber projects that this rate will continue to increase through 2009 as the impact of the current national economic event filters through Oklahoma. Union Public Schools contributes to Tulsa's workplace initiatives by offering community programs for both adults and children such as:

- Adult Basic Education – classes for adults who need basic instruction in reading, writing, math, and life skills;
- Workplace Education – links education goals to the employer's desire for high performance work and product quality;
- G.E.D. Preparation – instruction to prepare adults to take the Tests of General Educational Development (G.E.D.);

- English as a Second Language – instruction to non- English speaking adults to help them be productive citizens of our community.

Three of Tulsa's top five employers are major health care systems that continue to expand. A joint effort between Bedlam Community Health Partnerships and Union Public Schools produced cutting-edge services for the Union community. The Union Public Schools Bedlam School-Based Health Clinic operates at both Roy Clark Elementary School and Rosa Parks Elementary. These clinics provide a convenient way for students to receive a wide range of health care services. They operate at no cost to the school district. The primary goal of the clinics is to serve the families of all children in each of the schools, including those who qualify for Medicaid or have no health insurance. The clinics provide at least one full-time physician's assistant or a resident physician. In addition, a pediatrician visits each clinic as part of a rotating schedule. The physicians work with and assist school nurses.

In addition to student health care, Union partnered with the University of Oklahoma Physicians Tulsa to provide low cost medical services for its employees through its newly opened employee clinic. This unique partnership provides access to quality health care while controlling escalating health care costs. The clinic is staffed by a fully-licensed OU physician, a physician assistant, and a licensed practical nurse. Even some pharmacy services are available.

Enrollment

Union has experienced significant growth in student enrollment. During the 2000-2001 school year the district recorded total enrollment of 13,054. In 2007-2008 enrollment reached 14,519. The administration projects enrollment in the 2008-2009 school year to reach approximately 14,650 students with the expansion of the four-year-old program to every elementary site and the implementation of a three-year-old program serving approximately 645 students in pre-school programs. A continued steady yet moderate growth is forecast through 2009.

Facilities

To accommodate this growth in student population the district maintains over 2.5 million square feet of facilities, including twelve elementary schools (grades PreK-5), a Sixth/Seventh Grade Center, an Eighth Grade Center, an Intermediate High School (grades 9-10), an Alternative School serving both middle school and high school students, a High School (grades 11-12), and an Education Service Center. The district's newest construction includes a thirteenth elementary school scheduled to open in the 2008-2009 school year and a facility for three-year-olds.

Bond Funds

On March 4, 2008, district voters approved a \$19.4-million bond proposal which included funds for construction of a baseball/softball complex; furniture, fixtures and equipment for Elementary #13 and the expanded four-year-old program; acquisition of textbooks, media books and instructional hardware/software; and building repairs and renovations to sites districtwide. Also included was the purchase of buses to replace an aging fleet. Other equally crucial items on the ballot included textbooks and classroom materials; library books; instructional equipment; technology, building repairs and renovations to sites districtwide.

Grants/Federal Programs

During the 2007-2008 school year, Union received more than \$5.8 million in federal grant money. Grants were used to fund such programs as drug education, special education, professional

development, remedial programs, enrichment programs in math and reading, and supplies and materials.

The district's child nutrition program received more than \$2.4 million in federal and state money. Approximately 39.9% of Union's students were eligible for free or reduced meals.

Internal Control

Management of the district is responsible for establishing and maintaining an internal control structure designed to ensure that the assets of the district are protected from loss, theft or misuse and to ensure that adequate accounting data is compiled to allow for the preparation of financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP). The internal control structure is designed to provide reasonable, but not absolute, assurance that these objectives are met. The concept of reasonable assurance recognizes that 1) the cost of a control should not exceed the benefits likely to be derived; and 2) the valuation of costs and benefits requires estimates and judgments by management.

Long-Term Financial Planning

The Board of Education of Union Public Schools, in conjunction with the Superintendent and Chief Financial Officer, establishes a system of sound financial planning and management to assure that the district's objectives are addressed and that funds are expended in accordance with plans expressed through the Board budget. The financial management system components include: 1) a planning process that consists of a review of state statutes, Board policies, concepts, ideas, problems, constraints, approaches, and systems before dollar amounts are established in the budget; and 2) a budget that is the expression of the plans of the Board through three main budgets – the General Fund, a Special Revenue Fund, and the Child Nutrition Fund.

Budgetary Controls

The district utilizes budgetary controls to ensure compliance with legal appropriation limitations and to provide an operating plan for the district's resources. The annual appropriated budget includes activity of the General, Special Revenue Funds, and Child Nutrition Funds. Capital projects activity is controlled with approval of project-length financial plans. Initial budgets are adopted at the beginning of the fiscal year with periodic amendments approved by the Board as necessary.

The level of budgetary control is maintained by fund, project, and function. Individual line items may be adjusted without Board action, but total budgeted expenditures may not exceed appropriations at the major fund level without Board approval. The district utilizes an encumbrance system as a technique of budgetary control with encumbered appropriations lapsing at year end.

Independent Audit

Oklahoma state statutes require an annual audit by independent certified public accountants. The accounting firm of Cole and Reed, PC, was selected by the Board to conduct the audit. In addition to meeting the requirements set forth in state statutes, the audit was also designed to meet the requirements of the Federal Single Audit Act of 1984 and related OMB Circular A-133.

Major Initiatives

Major initiatives that were enacted as a result of the 2008 Oklahoma Legislative Session included:

- Science and Mathematics Advanced Recruiting Technique (SMART) Program – created to facilitate recruiting efforts for eligible science and math teachers.
- S.B. 1769: Amendments to the Reading Sufficiency Act and implementation of the Achieving Classroom Excellence Act (ACE) remediation.
- H.B. 2793: Tax-Sheltered Annuities; 403(b) Plan – allows districts to approve vendors.
- H.B. 2074: Cap on Post-retirement Earnings Removed – removed the earnings cap of a retired member of the Teacher Retirement System of Oklahoma who is employed by a district after 36 months.

