PRESS RELEASE

District Opens New Green Building to Teach Trades
More Students to Learn Construction Trades and Stationary Engineering

Thousands of Skilled Trades Jobs Predicted in San Francisco

December 8, 2011 (San Francisco) - Today San Francisco Unified School District opened a new multi-use green facility at John O’Connell High School for students from across the district to learn a range of construction trades.

“The skills that make you successful in college are the same skills that make you successful in careers,” said Deputy Superintendent for Instruction Richard Carranza. “At SFUSD we’re dedicated to providing students with opportunities to learn about a range of career options and develop skills that they can parlay into post-secondary opportunities.”

The first completely solar powered building in the district, designed by PLUM Architects, will be used by O’Connell High students enrolled in construction trades classes during the school day and will also be available after school to students across the school district through a program called “TECH 21, Learn to Earn,” a range of hands-on credit-earning training courses in architecture, construction, engineering, building trades, and automotive industry that were created in partnership with business partners from their respective industries.

District leaders, teachers and students were joined by the Mayor and officials from the Transbay Joint Powers Authority, the Public Utilities Commission and other business partners who will provide students with pre-apprenticeship opportunities.

Mayor Ed Lee spoke about the importance of developing a pipeline today for the highly skilled jobs of the future.

“As we launch this new TECH 21 program today, we are transforming the future of our city’s youth by getting them prepared for the highly skilled trade jobs of the future,” said Mayor Ed Lee. “As the 21st century economy demands a prepared workforce, this new program helps with our efforts by providing the training and support our students need to be successful.”

As part of a recently approved Project Labor Agreement between the Transbay Joint Powers Authority and organized labor, San Francisco youth who are enrolled in technical education programs at school will have unprecedented opportunities to participate in pre-apprenticeship programs. The Transbay Transit Center Project anticipates that it will create more than 125,000 jobs, half of which must go to San Francisco residents. The Transbay project will require workers from diverse crafts, including
plumbers, carpenters, operating engineers, ironworkers, sheet metal workers, electricians, and laborers.

There are currently 2,500 students in grades 10 through 12 enrolled in 26 academies and pathways at nine SFUSD high schools. As part of their education, students take part in an ongoing series of work-based learning opportunities.

The school district is seeking business partners to host students for workplace job shadowing opportunities and meaningful paid internships as well as donations of materials for the carpentry and stationary engineering courses that will be offered at O’Connell’s Tech 21 facility. Materials needed for the new building trades program include safety equipment, tools, shelves and framing squares. For more information, contact James Cole at colej@sfusd.edu or 415.379.7764.