Highlights for August 29-Sept. 4, 2010

Over the summer, 30 SFUSD schools had construction taking place as part of the school district's bond program. In spite of the many challenges to complete complicated construction projects without disrupting the school year, SFUSD is on schedule for completing construction for 32 sites slated for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) improvements paid for by voter-approved bond funds in 2006. The work included bathroom repairs, school gardens, fire and life safety upgrades, elevators, wheel chair lifts, replacement of dilapidated bungalows, exterior yard upgrades and boiler replacements -- all which have improved the buildings considerably and made the schools accessible to all students. The remaining 24 sites in the bond program are currently under construction or in the design phase.

Call for details.

At a time when 31 states have passed "English only" laws, four San Francisco families put their children in public schools where, from the first day of kindergarten, their teachers speak mostly Chinese or Spanish. The documentary Speaking in Tongues follows these students as they become bilingual. KQED, which will be broadcasting the film later this month, is providing a free screening and a panel discussion led by SFUSD officials, including Board of Education commissioner Hydra Mendoza, educators and parents, to discuss the district’s language immersion education initiative.

When: Thursday, September 2, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.
Where: KQED / 2601 Mariposa Str.

Select students at Marina Middle School will be strapped into a real-life seat of a NASA orbiter and experience a demonstration of what it's like to be launched into space like a shuttle astronaut. Dr. Bernard Harris, the first African-American astronaut to walk in space, will be talking to all Marina students about how he became an astronaut, describing his adventures in space, and urging them all to literally reach for the stars using the problem solving skills they learn in science, technology, engineering and math courses while in school.

When: Friday, September 3 / 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Where: Marina MS / 3500 Fillmore St. (at Chestnut St.)

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