



News from Congressman

Tom Lantos

**12th Congressional District of California
San Mateo/San Francisco**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 26, 2004

FOR INFORMATION CALL

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School District Earns Federal Grant For Innovative Bilingual Program

Washington, DC – The San Mateo-Foster City School District has just won a major federal grant for an innovative program that helps native Spanish-speakers succeed in English-language classes and develops the Spanish-language skills of non-native speakers, Congressman Tom Lantos (D-San Mateo, San Francisco) announced today.

The \$96,609 grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Foreign Language Assistance Program will improve the K-12 two-way immersion (TWI) project now serving 469 students.

"This infusion of federal support will help steer the course of the still-developing TWI program in our district," Lantos said. "The program will be able to attract new teaching and administrative talent, and expand to include more students, thanks to the Department of Education's generous grant."

The school district's TWI program is conducted at Fiesta Gardens International School, Bayside Middle School and Hillsdale High School. Fiesta Gardens is an elementary school founded in 1993 specifically to meet bilingual education needs; Bayside Middle School joined the TWI program in 1998 and Hillsdale High in 2002.

Students in the program work together to become bilingual, studying in the same classrooms regardless of their native languages. They receive the same instructional programs as students throughout the District, except that initially they are taught in Spanish for most of the day, gradually receiving half their instruction in Spanish and half in English.

The federal funds will go toward hiring a curriculum coordinator to mentor teachers, expand outreach to parents and add a middle-school Spanish grammar class, among other activities.

The Department of Education's Foreign Language Assistance Program provides grants to new model programs that establish, improve or expand foreign language study in elementary and secondary schools. Projects are selected for support if they show long-term promise and demonstrate methods that can be duplicated by other schools.

"We can all be proud that the San Mateo-Foster City School District is in the vanguard of bilingual education," Lantos said. "The additional federal funds confirm the program's promise, and will extend its possibilities."

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