

For Immediate Release:

December 12, 2002

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**Senator Boxer to Visit *Smart Start San José*
Early Education Program**
City's innovative partnership readies children for success



Event: U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer visited the *Smart Start San José* center at McKinley Elementary School on Friday, December 13 at 1:45 p.m. The Senator will be joined by Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren, local education leaders, and San José Mayor Ron Gonzales, who has led the city's efforts for early education, child care, and other partnerships supporting education.

When: 1:45 p.m., Friday, December 13

Where: McKinley Elementary School
651 Macredes Avenue, San Jose
[At the corner of Appian Lane, west of McLaughlin Avenue and north of Interstate 280]

Who: Mayor Ron Gonzales
U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer
Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren
Colleen Wilcox, Superintendent, Santa Clara County Office of Education
Larry Aceves, Superintendent, Franklin-McKinley School District



Background: *San José Smart Start* is an early education program for pre-school children to prepare them for success upon entering kindergarten. Under the Mayor's leadership, the City of San José has opened nine Smart Start centers since 1999 and is committed to opening at least 20 by 2004 in partnership with schools and community organizations.



Senator Boxer is a strong supporter of early education. Last year, Boxer reintroduced the Early Education Act, which would offer funding to states to expand existing public education systems to include a year of early education prior to kindergarten. The Senator is also a staunch advocate of expanding the successful Head Start pre-school program for needy children.



The McKinley Smart Start Center, which opened in September, is an excellent example of the partnership among federal, state, county and city programs for early education. San Jose contributed \$517,000 to the project, about half of the construction cost of \$1.2 million. The center serves 120 children in four classrooms for both full-day and part-day morning/afternoon programs.