

Tulare County Office of Education

Jim Vidak, County Superintendent of Schools

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For Immediate Release

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Tulare County Office of Education Announces:

2003 Mock Trial Competition Begins Soon

Tulare County Office of Education will, once again, host the annual Mock Trial Competition. This year, twelve teams from Tulare County high schools are scheduled to compete in the first four rounds of the Mock Trial Competition. The rounds of competition will take place in the Tulare County Superior Court on January 28, January 30, February 4 and 6, with trials beginning each night at 5:15 p.m. Semi-final rounds will be held at the court house on February 11, beginning 5:15 p.m.. Finals are February 13 at Visalia's Rotary Theater from 5:30 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. This year's hypothetical case, *People v. Martin*, features a pretrial argument on the Fifth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

The ten- to 20-member mock trial teams are composed of students who take on the roles of lawyers, witnesses, court clerks and bailiffs. All teams must make their presentations based on identical hypothetical case materials. Each team, coached by local attorneys and school personnel, has the opportunity to present the case for both the prosecution and defense during the course of the competition. Three attorneys score the teams on the basis of their analysis and debate of the constitutional issues, the law, and the facts in the case.

Tulare County Office of Education, with assistance from area attorneys and judges, serves as the local coordinator for the Mock Trial Program. The Mock Trial Program is sponsored by the Constitutional

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Rights Foundation, and co-sponsored by the California Department of Education, the State Bar of California, the Young Lawyers' Association and the Daily Journal Corporation.

“The Mock Trial Competition gives students an opportunity to sharpen their research, critical thinking, and presentation skills, while getting a glimpse into the complex world of law. It is a fascinating and entertaining competition to observe,” says Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Jim Vidak.

Schools participating in the 2003 Mock Trial Competition are: Dinuba High School, Exeter High School, Farmersville High School, Golden West High School, Lindsay High School, Monache High School, Mt. Whitney High School, Redwood High School, Tulare Western High School, Tulare Union High School, Orsi High School, and El Diamante High School.

The champions from the final round of the Tulare County Mock Trial Competition will be eligible to compete in the state finals in Riverside, March 28-30, 2003.

For more information, contact Marsha Ingrao at 651-1193.

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