

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:

Mock Trial Semi-Finals to be held February 3 at Tulare County Courthouse

The Tulare County Office of Education's annual Mock Trial competition is in full swing with only four of the original 11 teams remaining. Those four teams will compete in the semi-final round of the county championship on February 3 at 5:15 p.m. at the Tulare County Courthouse. The two winning school's teams will earn the right to compete in the Tulare County Finals at the Rotary Theatre on February 17.

The following schools fielded teams for the 2004 Mock Trial Competition: Dinuba High School, Exeter High School, Farmersville High School, Golden West High School, Lindsay High School, Monache High School, Redwood High School, Tulare Western High School, Tulare Union High School, Orosi High School, and El Diamante High School. Tulare Western High School, Tulare Union High School, Golden West High School and Redwood High School teams will go head to head in the semi-finals.

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.

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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. This year's hypothetical case, *People v. Casco*, features theft, one of the most commonly committed crimes. The defendant, Madison Casco, faces charges of Grand Theft, Theft and Receiving Stolen Property. The student pretrial attorneys prepare a motion on the important legal issue of Fourth Amendment rights to determine if there was a search and if so, if it was reasonable.

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 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 level of effort, research and preparation every team has put into the Mock Trial Competition has been remarkable this year. In fact, the semi-finalists' scores are all within two percentage points of each other," says Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Jim Vidak. "I congratulate all of the schools who fielded teams this year and wish our semi-finalists the best of luck," says Vidak

For information about Tulare County Office of Education, contact the Public Information Office at 559/733.6606 or visit our website at www.tcoe.org. For additional information about Mock Trial, contact Marsha Ingrao at 559/651-0680.

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