

Tulare County Office of Education

Jim Vidak, County Superintendent of Schools

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MEDIA ALERT

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Tulare County Office of Education Announces:

Child Care Center Playground Dedication Ceremony

**December 3, 2007 · 2:00 pm · Manuel Hernandez Community Center, 247 W. Ferguson St.,
Visalia, CA**

Visalia - A well-equipped playground is being enjoyed by preschoolers at the Child

Development Center in North Visalia thanks to collaboration between First 5 Tulare County, the City of Visalia and Tulare County Office of Education (TCOE). A dedication of the new playground will take place Monday, December 3, at 2:00 p.m.

The Child Development Center, operated by the TCOE Child Care Educational Program, is located at the Manuel Hernandez Community Center (247 W. Ferguson in Visalia), and provides Head Start services for 40 low income 3- and 4-year-olds.

The center's old playground equipment and sandbox needed replacing. The new playground includes a large climbing module and a sandbox located in an area with cast-in-place cushioning made from recycled tire material. It also includes a large shade structure to protect children from the sun. There is a new bike path, highly durable grass, a concrete pad that holds activity tables

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and another that holds a playhouse. The new yard meets American Disability Act (ADA) accessibility requirements.

Sixty percent of the \$95,500 renovation was financed through a First 5 Planning Capital Grant. The City and TCOE shared the cost of the remaining 40 percent. City maintenance staff did much of the work themselves, including demolition of the old concrete and equipment, installation of the sprinkler system and planting of the grass. Child Care maintenance staff designed the yard and built the playhouse.

First 5 Tulare County supports the early development of children 0-5 by partnering with the community to develop new programs and link existing programs in innovative ways to ensure children are healthy and ready to learn when they enter school. First 5 is funded through Proposition 10, the Children and Families Act of 1998, which added a 50 cents per pack tax on tobacco products.

"This project was a great collaboration," says Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Jim Vidak. "We appreciate that children served by this Child Development Center will have fun on accessible recreation equipment for decades to come."

-TCOE-

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