

Tulare County Office of Education

Jim Vidak, County Superintendent of Schools

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For Immediate Release

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Tulare County Child Care Planning Council seeks nominations for first annual *Business and Children Award*

Visalia - The Tulare County Child Care Planning Council wants to recognize Tulare County businesses that have child-friendly employment practices.

To that end, the Child Care Planning Council is seeking nominations for a new community program entitled the *Business and Children Award*. The award recognizes a Tulare County business with progressive programs such as "flextime" or job-sharing options, company-provided child care benefits, or an on-site child care center.

The award program also highlights benefits of a child-friendly workplace – benefits that include increased employee motivation and loyalty, and enhanced company reputation.

Each county in California has a child care planning council. Tulare County's council has 25 members from five different categories: parents, child care providers, agency representatives, community representatives and other interested persons who are appointed by the Tulare County Superintendent of Schools and the Tulare County Board of Supervisors.

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“It is important that the community recognize businesses for their efforts to meet the needs of employees with children,” said Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Jim Vidak. “Businesses that support their employees' child care needs are laying the foundation for a better community - a foundation built for productive families and succeeding children.”

“As parents, our whole lives revolve around our children,” said Tulare County Supervisor Phil Cox. “When a business makes it easier for employees to access child care, they are in essence letting workers know their employer cares about them.”

Nomination forms in English and Spanish are available online at www.tularecountykids.org.

Hardcopies of the nomination form can be obtained by calling Tina Shirley, Planning Council Coordinator at (559) 651-3026. **Nominations must be received by August 15, 2008.**

The ***Business and Children Award*** winner will be announced at the first annual Tulare County Child Care Planning Council Legislative Breakfast on September 12, 2008. This invitation-only event will be held at the Visalia Convention Center and attended by elected officials, key business leaders and child care providers. In addition to recognizing the ***Business and Children Award*** winner, the Planning Council will show a short video at the breakfast highlighting the significant local need for child care services.

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For more information about the Tulare County Child Care Planning Council, call Tina Shirley at (559) 651-3026, or visit www.tularecountykids.org.

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