

# Tulare County Office of Education

*Jim Vidak, County Superintendent of Schools*

May 18, 2009

## **MEDIA ALERT**

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## **Tulare County Office of Education Announces: 300 to attend Regional Literacy Conference Wednesday May 20, 2009 • 8:00 am-4:00 pm • Radisson Conference Center, Fresno**

*Fresno* – On Wednesday, May 20, nearly 300 school administrators and teachers will gather for the fourth annual Region VII Literacy Conference at the Radisson Conference Center in Fresno. Region VII is made up of county offices of education and school districts in Fresno, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced and Tulare counties. The purpose of the conference is to gather leading scholars, administrators and classroom teachers to showcase the latest research and best practices for literacy development in preschool through 12<sup>th</sup>-grade students.

The highlight of the full-day conference will be the keynote address by Dr. Isabel L. Beck, Professor Emerita of Education and senior scientist for the University of Pittsburgh's Learning Research and Development Center. Dr. Beck has engaged in extensive research on vocabulary and comprehension, and has published well over 100 articles and chapters, as well as several books. Dr. Beck's work has been acknowledged by numerous awards. She is a recipient of the Oscar S. Causey Award for outstanding research from the National Reading Conference, and the International Reading Association's William S. Gray Award for lifetime contributions to the field. She is also a recipient of the contributing researcher award from the American Federation of Teachers for "bridging the gap between research and practice."

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Dr. Beck will make a two-part presentation to conference attendees – the first will be delivered from 8:30 – 9:30 a.m. Following lunch, Dr. Beck will address the group from 12:45 – 1:45 p.m. with the second part of her presentation. “The importance of developing English literacy skills is critical to the success of students in the San Joaquin Valley,” says Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Jim Vidak. “I appreciate the Region VII English/Language Arts Council in bringing someone of Dr. Beck’s caliber to Central California.”

Between Dr. Beck’s presentations, conference attendees will have the opportunity to attend two breakout sessions on a variety of subjects, ranging from family literacy and preparing students for college reading and writing to English language development and pre-kindergarten writing programs. A third breakout session will begin at 2:00 p.m. A display of materials from a variety of textbook publishers will be open throughout the conference.

“We are delighted by turnout,” says Tulare County Office of Education instructional consultant and Region VII language arts lead Charlene Stringham. “Despite the cutbacks schools are experiencing, many have chosen to use available resources to focus on the critical task of strengthening literacy instruction in their classrooms.”

For information on the Region VII Literacy Conference, contact Charlene Stringham at (559) 651-3031.

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