

# Tulare County Office of Education

*Jim Vidak, County Superintendent of Schools*

May 30, 2014

## **For Immediate Release**

Contact: Robert Herman  
Public Information Officer  
(559) 733-6606 – office  
(559) 303-8568 – cell

## **Tulare County Office of Education Announces: Tulare-Kings Pathways Project Awarded Career Pathways Trust Funding to Expand Linked Learning**

*Award Will Link Employers and Schools, Creating Pathways to College and Career*

Visalia – Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson today announced that Tulare-Kings Pathways Project was awarded a grant from the California Career Pathways Trust (CPT) in the top funding category – “up to \$15 million.” The funds will allow Tulare and Kings counties to expand Linked Learning opportunities for students across the area, giving them the skills they need to succeed in college, career and life. The CPT funding specifically allows the Tulare-Kings Pathways Project to develop the infrastructure needed to link the region’s employer base with schools, enabling work-based learning for more students, and delivering on Linked Learning’s promise of equity, quality and rigor.

“We’re excited to be leading Linked Learning efforts in our region,” said Jim Vidak, Tulare County Superintendent of Schools. “Linked Learning has already made a huge impact for our students. We’ve seen tremendous gains in student outcomes as a result of Linked Learning and

# Tulare County Office of Education

*Jim Vidak, County Superintendent of Schools*

this funding will help us ensure that our students get the resources they need to thrive in college and in the professional world.”

In Kings and Tulare Counties, the Tulare County Office of Education, the Porterville Unified School District and INNOVATE Tulare Kings are working together to coordinate school districts, community colleges, nonprofit partners and employers in a research-proven approach to increase attendance, graduation rates and post-secondary degree completion. In Tulare and Kings counties, 11 districts are participating in the Tulare-Kings Pathways Project: Corcoran Unified, Cutler-Orosi Joint Unified, Dinuba Unified, Exeter Unified, Hanford Joint Union High School District, Lemoore Union School, Lindsay Unified, Porterville Unified, Tulare Joint Union High School District, Visalia Unified, and Woodlake Unified.

The Career Pathways Trust was created by State Senate President pro Tempore Darrell Steinberg and provides \$250 million in competitive grants that encourage partnerships between schools, community colleges and businesses to create and strengthen Linked Learning.

Linked Learning is a proven education approach that integrates rigorous academics with work-based learning opportunities that address our most challenging but necessary education reforms: Common Core State Standards, A-G college prep coursework, and 21st century skills. The Linked Learning model invites employers to partner with schools to ensure that both the academic and professional learning programs are preparing students to succeed in a career within the pathway's field.

# Tulare County Office of Education

*Jim Vidak, County Superintendent of Schools*

Research shows that Linked Learning students have higher graduation rates, higher test scores and are more likely to enroll in a postsecondary degree program than their peers at traditional high schools.

“We know that Linked Learning is ensuring that students graduate high school with the skills they need to be successful in both college and in our local job market,” said Architect Gilbert Bareng, with Mangini Associates, Inc. Tellian Parish McLain. “With this grant, the consortium of local school districts will be able to partner with the business sector and offer more work-based learning opportunities for students. Internships, mentoring, and job shadowing offer employers the chance to shape the next wave of California’s workforce.”

#TCOE#