

Tulare County Office of Education

Jim Vidak, County Superintendent of Schools

April 15, 2016

For Immediate Release

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

Tulare County Office of Education Announces: La Sierra Charter School receives second CAPP grant

Visalia – This week, TCOE’s La Sierra Charter Schools announced that it had received an extension grant from the California State University’s **California Academic Partnership Program (CAPP)**. The two-year, \$80,000 grant will fund La Sierra’s efforts to continue building postsecondary partnerships and disseminating its successful “best practices” throughout the state. The purpose of the original three-year CAPP grant the school received in 2013 was to help it build partnerships with postsecondary institutions for students to successfully transition to college and career. Only nine CAPP grants were awarded statewide in 2013; La Sierra being one of them and one of only two charter schools funded.

The CAPP program has been the impetus behind the creation of the school’s new college- and career-going culture. Since the first CAPP grant was awarded, the school has obtained “a-g” certification from the University of California for 21 of its core courses. La Sierra also reports an increase in the graduation rate, a 30% increase in graduates going directly to college, a 100% completion rate for career certifications in various fields, an increase in students directly transferring to college courses without any remediation, and a 100% pass rate for students attending College of the Sequoias courses on the La Sierra campus.

Tulare County Office of Education

Jim Vidak, County Superintendent of Schools

La Sierra Principal Anjelica Zermeño reports that many students are capable of succeeding in post-secondary education programs if they are provided with sufficient academic preparation and ongoing supports. “Many students have never been told that they are college ‘material,’” she said. “There is power in sharing that belief in students individually and collectively.” In a panel of recent La Sierra graduates enrolled in their first semester at College of the Sequoias, students reported that the school’s leadership, teachers and support staff were crucial to forming their plans to attend and their ability to succeed in their college classes.

Throughout the grant, La Sierra administrators have worked closely with the college, involving a COS counselor in all planning meetings. Today, every La Sierra senior is enrolled in College of the Sequoia’s Human Development 121 (*Student Success*), an online course that typically has a pass rate of less than 50%. In 2015, 100% of La Sierra students passed the course. Each passing grade represents earned college credit and priority registration for La Sierra graduates. La Sierra is also aligning its graphic design and construction trades classes with coursework in both the COS Industry and Technology Department and the Construction Technology program, respectively.

“We are extremely proud of the gains La Sierra continues to make,” said Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Jim Vidak. “The transformation of La Sierra’s culture over the past few years has been phenomenal. All that was great about the school’s military traditions and emphasis on physical fitness, respectful behavior and community service has been augmented by broad and comprehensive student preparation for college and career.”

For more information on the La Sierra Charter Schools, or to arrange a tour of the campus located at 1735 E. Houston Ave. in Visalia, call Anjelica Zermeño at (559) 733-6963.

TCOE