

Special Services selects two new AcCEL program managers

The Special Services Division has two new managers to oversee AcCEL Programs in the Porterville and Visalia areas. In Porterville, TCOE veteran teacher Katrina Smith will take over for administrator Cathy Machado who retired this year. In Visalia, Special Services welcomes Brian Cordero who replaces Carrie Stephens. Ms. Stephens has returned to Visalia Unified as administrator of Special Education.

Katrina Smith, Porterville-Area AcCEL Programs

Ms. Smith has been in the field of special education for over 10 years. She began her career as a Resource Specialist Program (RSP) teacher before teaching within the TCOE AcCEL Program. She was most recently a teacher on special assignment for the AcCEL Program. She will be a program manager for the AcCEL Porterville area, which includes the L.B. Hill Learning Center and 15 special day classes and community based instruction programs.

Ms. Smith holds a Mild/Moderate and a Moderate/Severe Teaching Credential, an Administrative Services Credential, and a master's degree in special education. Her younger brother attended the AcCEL program growing up and inspired her to pursue her passion to work with children with special needs.

Katrina Smith has enjoyed the shelter-in-place experience at home, spending quality time with her husband and three-month-old son.



Brian Cordero, Visalia-Area AcCEL Programs

Brian Cordero grew up in Mountain View, California and attended UCSB and UCLA. He began his career in education after graduating from UCLA with a bachelor's degree in sociology. He then enrolled in a single subject teaching credential program and quickly realized his interest was in special education. He attained his Moderate/Severe Teaching Credential from San Jose State University and began teaching his first adult transition class.



Mr. Cordero appreciates that students with special needs seek access to opportunity, equity, and the freedom to pursue their life goals and dreams. Through education, he sees an opportunity to promote these values. In the Bay Area, Mr. Cordero served as lead teacher for Project SEARCH, a vocational internship program for young adults with significant disabilities. During his years with Project SEARCH, he was also a BTSA support provider and earned his administrative credential.

In the Fall of 2018, he and his husband relocated from San Jose to the Central Valley. They live in Fresno with their dog Corby. Mr. Cordero loves to travel and ski, compete in Spartan Races, and play softball.

ERS Library continues to expand bilingual book collection



Over the past four years, the ERS Library has been growing a collection of Spanish/bilingual books in response to educator demand and classroom need. The collection currently includes over 2,800 books from publishers including Cantata Learning, ABDO Kids Press, Cherry Lake Publishing, and Scholastic. During the 2019-2020 school year, ERS Library Media Technician Maria Ortiz suggested consolidating the Spanish/bilingual books to one area in the library to make it easier for visiting educators to browse the collection. Prior to moving the collection, the books were interspersed throughout the library with English language books on the same subject or by author's last name.

“The Spanish/bilingual books are popular with our dual immersion classroom teachers and we plan to continue adding titles to our collection to meet the growing demand,” said Library Media Supervisor Debra Lockwood. Teachers at contracting school sites may reserve these materials for classroom use by accessing Follett Destiny through the ERS Library portal. Tulare County educators who are planning to add Spanish/bilingual books to their school or classroom library and would like to see the books prior to making any purchases are invited to view the collection in the library at TCOE's Doe Avenue complex. To comply with current state and local COVID-19 mitigation efforts, teachers and administrators who wish to view the Spanish/bilingual collection should make a reservation by calling (559) 651-3031 and asking to speak with a library media technician, or by emailing library@ersconnect.org. Titles can also be viewed online using the Follett Destiny ERS Library Online Catalog at gofollett.com and choosing “Educational Resource Services – TCOE, Visalia, CA.”

Photo above:

~ The collection of Spanish/bilingual books in the ERS library has grown over the past four years to 2,800 titles. The collection is popular with Tulare County's dual immersion classrooms.

TCOE's Resource & Referral program helps First 5 Tulare County distribute supplies to Early Learning care providers



On Monday, Early Childhood Education's (ECE) Resource & Referral Program pitched in to help First 5 Tulare County distribute supplies to 300 local Early Learning care providers. Staff members were ready to go before 7:00 a.m. as a line of cars stretched the length of the Doe Avenue parking lot. Providers had preregistered for the free supplies, which included diapers, wipes, and a backpack filled with emergency supplies. ECE staff helped load nearly 14 pallets of supplies for providers, including family resource centers, family child care homes, and private centers.

To receive news about future Resource & Referral network events, Dr. Alex Elliott, ECE administrator, reminds Early Learning care providers to notify staff of any changes to their contact information by leaving a message at (559) 651-0185 or emailing referralsrr@cc.tcoe.org.

Photo above:

~ Early Childhood Education staff members helped First 5 Tulare County distribute 14 pallets of supplies to Early Learning care providers countywide.

Tulare County welcomes new superintendents



Tulare County school districts welcome several **new superintendents for the 2020-21 school year**. Former Burton School District principal **Troy Hayes** is now serving as superintendent at Alpaugh Unified School District. **Nancy Ruble**, former principal at Alpaugh Unified, was chosen to lead the Pixley Union School District. **Jaime Robles** returns to Earlimart School District where he began his career as a teacher, having recently served as superintendent of Parlier Unified School District. **Ken Horn** comes to Tulare County having worked in the Reef-Sunset Unified School District in Kings County as a principal, assistant principal, and most recently, director of curriculum, instruction, and categorical programs. He now serves as superintendent of Sequoia Union School District. At Eleanor Roosevelt Community Learning Center, former Burton School District principal **Heather Rocha**, now serves as superintendent/director.

Distance Learning Resources

- [Arts All Around Us](#)
- [TCOE Learning at Home](#)

Coming Up!

- Many upcoming student events have been cancelled or postponed. Check the current list of all student events (cancelled, postponed, and tentatively scheduled) on the [Student Events](#) webpage.

View more events at tcoe.org/CalendarofEvents.

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To receive *News Gallery Week*, visit tcoe.org/GetTheGallery, or contact Jennifer Fisher at jenniferf@tcoe.org or (559) 733-6172.
