

news galleryweek

August 18, 2021

TCOE receives large state grant to expand literacy in the Central Valley



The success of TCOE's Readership project – conceived in 2019 and launched in September 2020 – has resulted in the award of a state literacy grant to expand its outreach. Last week, the Readership team was notified that it had received a three-year, \$5 million Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) grant from the California Department of Education. TCOE was one of seven county offices of education to receive the grant.

The new CLSD grant will expand the reach of TCOE's literacy program in Tulare County with the addition of Visalia Unified School District, and include partnerships with county offices of education in Fresno, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, and Merced counties. The Readership pilot program initially included the Tulare County school districts of Earlimart, Monson-Sultana Joint Union, Porterville Unified, Woodlake Unified, and Woodville Union. The focus of the new grant is on adolescent readers, grades 6-12, and participating Tulare County schools now include Monson-Sultana Joint Union School, Woodville Union School, Earlimart Middle School, Oak Valley Union School, Valley Life Charter School, Tulare Tech Prep High School, Burton Middle School and Summit Charter Intermediate Academy, Sunnyside Union School, Alta Vista School and Hope School. Ridgeview Middle School, El Diamante High School, and Golden West High School from Visalia Unified will also be included.

Jenean Bray and Tammy Milligan of Educational Resource Services (ERS) will serve as co-leads for the multi-county project. In the first year of the grant, coaches from the five county offices of education and Visalia Unified will watch the elements of the Readership program as they unfold in other member schools. In subsequent years, the Visalia Unified and county coaches will plan, train, and implement Readership-style programs in their own organizations.

Included in the grant will be many book purchases for the county offices, Visalia Unified schools, the creation of Little Libraries, books for parent events, and books for community locations.

The Readership team noted that state data shows adolescent students' literacy developments slows as they progress through the secondary grades. Persistent achievement gaps exist for subgroups of English learners and students who are socio-economically disadvantaged. As a result, many rural English learners are categorized as long-term English learners (LTEL) throughout their secondary grades, failing to achieve the state's Seal of Biliteracy in high school. The premise of TCOE's grant proposal was that improvement in the area of adolescent reading develops from the motivation to read coupled with increased reading – ultimately leading to reading achievement.

Building on knowledge gained from the Readership project, the TCOE CLSD grant team seeks to impact participating students' reading attitudes and achievements as measured by state tests and designations, while decreasing the percentage of long-term English learners (LTEL) and at-risk LTEL students in grades 6-12. The team also plans to empower teachers to deliver strong standards-aligned literacy instruction and apply Improvement Science and its cycles to improve student literacy. School and district libraries will also be addressed, designing them to be supportive resources for students and teachers creating cultures of literacy on campus.

"We're enormously proud of the work our ERS team and pilot school districts did to develop an amazing literacy project in the midst of a pandemic, implement it, and now expand it for use in five additional counties," said Tim Hire, Tulare County Superintendent of Schools. Readership was born out of a \$500,000 grant awarded in summer 2019 by California Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond. The California Department of Education (CDE) provided the grant to address the statewide trend that more than 50% of K-12 students do not meet the standard for English Language Arts on state assessment tests.

For additional information about the CLSD grant, contact Jenean Bray (jenean.bray@tcoe.org) or Tammy Milligan (tammy.milligan@tcoe.org).

Special Services welcomes Malinda Furtado

Malinda Furtado is the new parent/school liaison for Special Services. In this role, Furtado will provide education and training to the parents of students with special needs. She will also assist in resolving disagreements between parents and school personnel, while promoting parent involvement in special education.

Furtado's experience spans over two decades, and includes work in both schools and parent organizations. She is a bilingual educator who began her career in Nicaragua as a Peace Corps volunteer teaching environmental education in 2000. From 2003 to 2010, she worked with third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade classrooms with high need, limited English populations and helped create a new writing curriculum. She also directed an after-school intervention program, served as a school site representative for Spanish-language instruction, implemented a Spanish-language curriculum for teachers, and developed a district-wide English Language Development handbook for Carmel Unified School District in Monterey County.

Furtado, who has a child with Down syndrome, is also an advocate for greater inclusion and acceptance of people with disabilities. She worked for the past two years as a Parent Reaching Out (PRO) mentor to new parents for the Down Syndrome Association of Central California. She has also given several presentations on her experiences, both personally and professionally, to different organizations, including TCOE.



Farley's Martial Arts, Altura Centers for Health, EQ Solutions support foster youth



Last week, the team from Farley's Martial Arts delivered 200 backpacks and school supplies to TCOE's Dream Center for foster youth. Owner Andrew Farley and his staff held a public donation event earlier this month inviting the community to support the youth with much-needed supplies. When asked about choosing to support foster youth, Farley said, "Giving is living."

The largest donation of backpacks and supplies came from the doctors and staff at Altura Centers for Health. EQ Solutions and other donors contributed notebooks, crayons, glue, hand sanitizer, pencils, and scissors to fill the backpacks in time for the beginning of school.

The Dream Center is Tulare County's one-stop resource center for current and former foster youth up to the age of 25. The center provides students with a variety of assistance, including help with school and college, food, medical benefits, housing, transportation, employment, clothing and hygiene items. For more information TCOE's Foster Youth Services, visit tcoe.org/FosterYouth.

Photos above:

~ TCOE's Dream Center received 200 backpacks filled with school supplies thanks to a campaign organized by Farley's Martial Arts.

~ Andrew Farley (right) and staff pose with the Dream Center's Beth Wilshire (left).



Rotary Clubs donate materials and labor to SCICON



This past Saturday, six Rotary Clubs from Tulare County put together 10 picnic tables at SCICON. The tables were installed under SCICON's new canopy that adjoins the John Muir Lodge, affording the program more outdoor dining space. The canopy also supports a new solar system that will provide electricity to the campus.

Sixty Rotarians and their families spent the morning assembling the new weatherproof tables and helping clear trails at the site. The project was funded by a grant spearheaded by Tulare Sunrise Rotary president Matt Hamilton.

Photos above:

~ Rotarians from six Tulare County Rotary Clubs donated and assembled 10 weatherproof tables at SCICON last week.



Distance Learning Resources

- [Arts All Around Us](#)
- [TCOE Learning at Home](#)
- [TCOE's Educational Resource Services Library](#)

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