

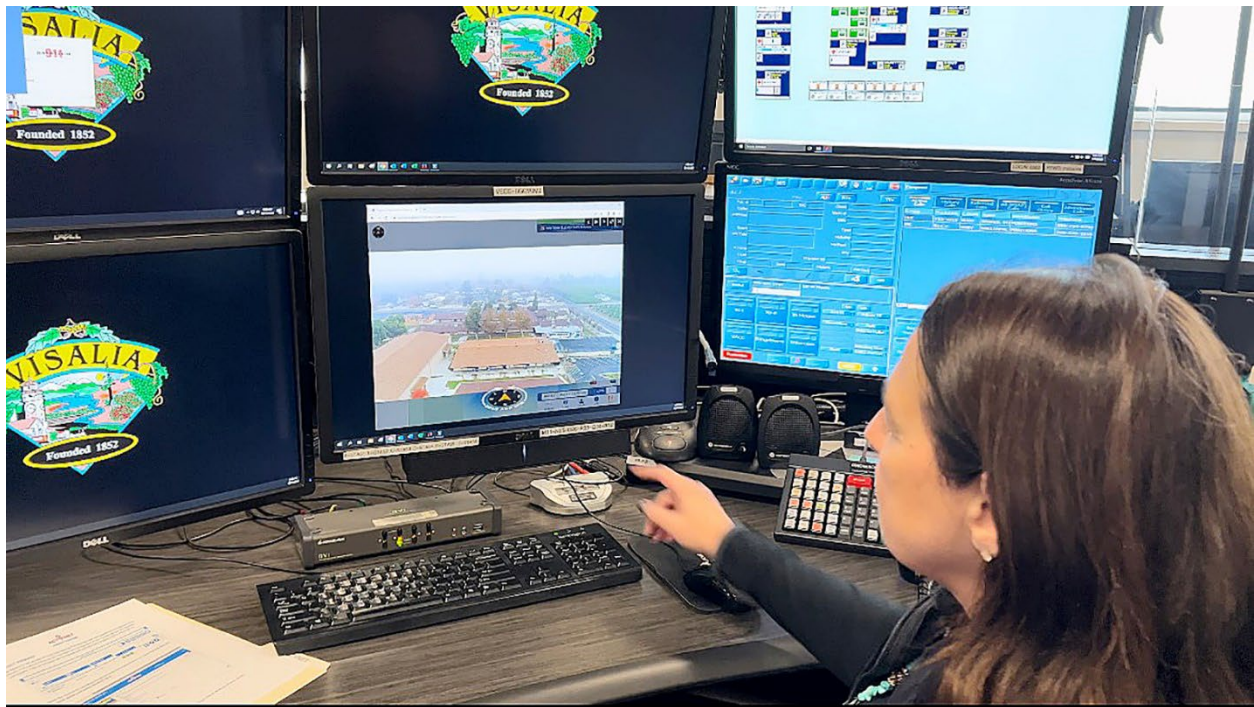
Tulare County
Office of Education

Tim A. Hire, County Superintendent of Schools

news
galleryweek

March 29, 2023

TCOE school safety programs to be featured in
upcoming *Children First* special on ABC30



ABC30's upcoming *Children First* special, "Keeping Kids Safe," features a number of Tulare County stories. The special, hosted by anchors Graciela Moreno and Dale Yurong, will take a closer look at local school and community programs designed to keep kids safe.

Among the stories is an exclusive look at the Tulare County Office of Education's ActVnet program, which has been developed by the CHOICES School Safety department with input from first responders countywide. ABC30 anchor Graciela Moreno reports on a practice drill at Sundale Union School that shows firsthand how the system works in the event of an actual emergency. The segment also includes an interview with Visalia Police Chief Jason Salazar. In it, he speaks about how the system assists law enforcement in accessing a school's cameras, and digital site and building plans, to direct officers arriving on campus. By providing dispatchers a secure and

easy-to-navigate web-based platform, time and confusion in an actual school crisis is mitigated.

“We appreciate ABC30 for sharing the ActVnet story, which is gaining the attention of leaders in schools and first responder agencies throughout the state, and beyond,” said Tim Hire, Tulare County Superintendent of Schools. Currently, ActVnet is operating in numerous schools throughout the county.

The *Children First* special also features a story about students at Dinuba High School, who are part of the Sandy Hook Promise Say Something program. Say Something – another program offered by the CHOICES School Safety department - allows students to anonymously report someone who is at-risk of harming themselves or others.

Other stories in the “Keeping Kids Safe” special include one about Central High East’s NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) Club and their new clothing closet, which is helping students on campus. Another story shares how the Fresno Police Department and Valley Children’s Hospital teamed up to give out free gun locks to families.

To see the entire special, tune into “Children First: Keeping Kids Safe,” Sunday, April 2, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. The special will also be aired on the station’s numerous streaming services.

Photo above:

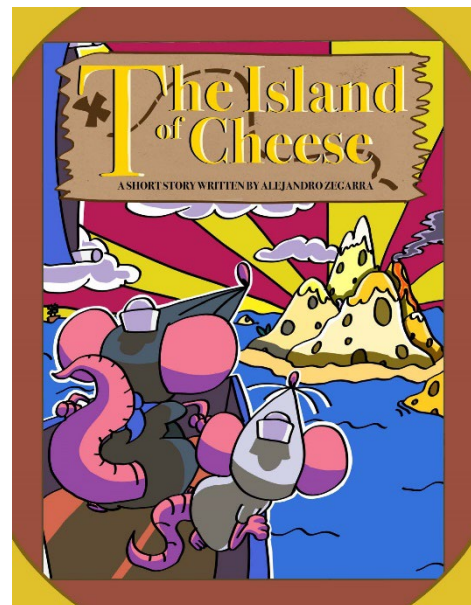
~ A Visalia Police Department dispatcher accesses school cameras through ActVnet as part of a story about the TCOE-developed response system. ActVnet will be featured in ABC30’s latest *Children First* special on school safety, which airs Sunday, April 2.

Young Authors’ Faire now online

The Island of Cheese has it all. There’s an adventure, laughs, pirates, giant catfish, and even a nacho cheese powder beach!

In the short story by sixth-grader Alejandro Zegarra of Cottonwood Creek Elementary School in Visalia, two friends go on a well-planned – at least they thought it was well-planned – trip to the Island of Cheese. They’ve got a map and a sack of their own cheese to keep them fed during the trip. But, on the way to the island, they’re confronted by pirates!

The Island of Cheese is among 45 imaginative books written and illustrated by 123 students from



10 Tulare County schools. These books are a part of Young Authors' Faire (YAF) and can be enjoyed through the Virtual Book Gallery link at www.tcoe.org/YoungAuthorsFaire.

Every year, the Tulare County Office of Education invites students to participate in YAF. The event offers budding writers in grades K-8 an opportunity to showcase their writing and illustration work at the county level and be recognized in a variety of genres. Exemplary works will be recognized in categories such as: fiction, non-fiction, class book, graphics/images, and illustration.

Educational Resource Services takes professional learning to a local school site



This week, Educational Resource Services' (ERS) math and science departments took an innovative approach to professional learning. Curriculum specialists Kim Webb and Jared Marr took their show on the road and landed in fifth-grade classes where teachers could apply what they learned.

To facilitate the site-based training, ERS partnered with Farmersville Unified School District. Thirty-two teachers from Farmersville, Pixley, Woodlake, and Delano came together for the workshop *Sensemaking and Student Engagement in Science and Math: the Five Practices*.

The morning session was devoted to providing attendees with sensemaking and student engagement instruction. Afterwards, teachers were divided into two groups to work in classes of fifth graders, applying their learning during a math and science lesson.

“What was unique is that we were able to immediately apply the learning in classrooms with students,” said Kim Webb, ERS mathematics curriculum specialist. “This unprecedented opportunity to apply new learnings in real time was valuable and greatly appreciated.”

Administrators who want to discuss hosting an ERS training at their school or district site are encouraged to contact Samantha Tate, ERS administrator, at samantha.tate@tcoe.org.

Photo above:

~ Jared Marr, science curriculum specialist, was part of a team from Educational Resource Services that conducted a training about student engagement in math and science. This unique training enabled teachers from multiple districts to be trained and then to apply their knowledge in classrooms with fifth-grade students.

Harmony Magnet Academy medals at State Academic Decathlon



Congratulations to Harmony Magnet Academy (HMA) students who returned as medalists from the state academic decathlon competition this past weekend. Representing the county at the California Academic Decathlon in Santa Clara, juniors Allison Daguman (honors) and Jamie Wilkinson (scholastic) won gold and bronze, respectively, in Division III Interviews.

Also from Harmony, senior Jay Dillon earned the highest overall score (6,204.3) for the team in the combined 10 events. Dillon will receive honor cords for his accomplishments at the state level.

"This has been an incredible experience, both for the team and for me as their coach," said HMA coach Kimberly Marsh. "Our school has not had an academic decathlon team for a few years, and this was my very first year ever coaching an academic decathlon team. On top of that, it was also the first year as a decathlete for every one of my students. I am so proud of these kids. They came to school at 7:30 a.m. every day to work together to build their knowledge and skills, and I have seen them grow so much during the year."

Marsh noted that the team is very young with one senior, three juniors, and four sophomores. And while Dillon did not medal, he was instrumental to the team's success and was their overall scorer at both the state and county levels.

TCOE Student Events Coordinator Paula Terrill, who also sits on the Board of Directors for the California Academic Decathlon, was there for Harmony's outstanding day. She met with the team after the awards ceremony to congratulate them.

"To be perfectly honest, I almost cried when their name was called," Terrill said. "In my mind, every event is an experience for the students, and I want them to do well. But, mostly I want their experience to be amazing. And so when our students were called up, I knew this was an amazing experience that they'll never forget."

The United States Academic Decathlon will take place April 27-29 in Frisco, Texas. However, members of the HMA academic decathlon team will not compete and are currently preparing for next year's competition.

"They are really proud to have represented Harmony Magnet Academy and Tulare County well," Marsh said. "They're already starting to plan for next year. As a teacher and a coach, whenever students get this excited about knowledge and learning, honestly, it doesn't get better than that."

For more information about the Tulare County Academic Decathlon, visit www.tcoe.org/AcademicDecathlon or email Paula Terrill at paula.terrill@tcoe.org.

Photo above:

~ Harmony Magnet Academy students, pictured left to right, junior Allison Daguman, junior Janie Wilkinson, and senior and team captain Jay Dillon.

Students awarded Best of Show honors in annual Student Art Exhibition



In conjunction with National Arts Education month, organizers of the annual Student Art Exhibition have selected over 200 Best of Show winners from pieces in this year's show. The Student Art Exhibition opened as a virtual art gallery in March. The gallery features over 650 hand-drawn and digital works, photographs, and sculptures from 47 Tulare County schools. From the 656 submissions, judges selected 236 works for Best of Show honors. Students, educators, and community members are invited to visit the gallery at www.tcoe.org/ArtGallery to see the pieces selected, which are organized into smaller galleries by school.

Photo above:

~ Self Portrait by Burton Middle School's Amirah Ramos was a Best of Show award winner.

Students with special needs enjoy athletic competition at Special Olympics



On Friday, nearly 200 athletes with special needs entered the Dinuba High School (DHS) stadium through an inflatable tunnel in the shape of the school's mascot – Edgar Emperor. Crowds of cheering DHS students and special education administrators welcomed the athletes who competed in a variety of races and throwing events.

The games were held for students and adults of north county schools and programs in Cutler-Orosi, Dinuba, Exeter, Farmersville, and Woodlake. The north county games were one of four expanded county competitions this year. According to Leigh Mosconi, Special Olympics area director for Tulare County, four competitions are being held this year instead of one centralized event in Tulare. "We are able to expand the events to include district special education programs and more adult programs," Mosconi said. He estimates that more than 1,000 athletes will compete in the four events.



Visalia and Tulare area programs will hold separate Special Olympics events on April 28. Porterville-area programs held their games at Granite Hills High School in March.

Photo above:

~ Last week, students from north county special education programs enjoyed their own Special Olympics. This year, Tulare County will host four, expanded county games.

Around the County

Harmony Magnet Academy's Elijah Garcia named a national Linked Learning Student of the Year



Last week, the Linked Learning Alliance released the names of its first-ever Linked Learning Student of the Year winners. Eight California seniors were selected for the award. Among them was Elijah Garcia, a student in the Academy of Engineering at Harmony Magnet Academy in Porterville.

Cindy Brown, director of Pathways at Porterville Unified, shared that Garcia has been an intern with the district's Energy and Sustainability Project for the past two years. "In that time, he learned to read mechanical building drawings as part of our efforts to retrofit older heating and air conditioning systems," Brown said.



"Through this process, he noticed the inefficiencies in storing data in Excel and pitched the idea of creating an online database to the program's engineer."

Working with a mentor he sought out, Garcia coded and created the database that will ultimately reduce time spent on analytics. His work fast-tracked the initiative, which is expected to help improve indoor air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions at district sites.

Garcia is planning to major in chemical engineering in college and pursue a career making semiconductor manufacturing more sustainable.

The Linked Learning Alliance established the brand-new award to recognize civic excellence, honoring high school seniors who have made meaningful contributions to their community through their Linked Learning pathway experience.

Editor: [Robert Herman](#), Communications Director

Contributors: Nayirah Dosu, Marlene Moreno, Jennifer Fisher, Samantha Tate, Kim Webb, Jared Marr, Paula Terrill, and Juliana Davidian.

To receive the News Gallery Week, sign up [here](#), or contact Jennifer Fisher at jenniferf@tcoe.org or (559) 733-6172.