

Tulare County Office of Education

Tim A. Hire, County Superintendent of Schools

news galleryweek

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Pursuing Victory with Honor scholarship application window is open



The Tulare County Office of Education's CHARACTER COUNTS! Program is proud to announce that applications are now being accepted for the annual Provident-Salierno Pursuing Victory with Honor Senior Scholarships. The deadline to apply is **March 27, 2025**.

The scholarships are available for up to four graduating seniors who plan to attend a college or university in the fall of 2025, possess a 3.0 cumulative high school GPA, and exhibit exceptional sportsmanship, school and community service, and leadership.

Pursuing Victory with Honor is the character education program developed by the creators of CHARACTER COUNTS! as a tool for coaches to instill good sportsmanship in their players. The Provident-Salierno Family Foundation generously supports the annual scholarship for seniors who demonstrate exemplary character on and off the field.

Tulare County seniors are invited to submit their scholarship applications – which will include an essay and two letters of recommendation – by **March 27**. To apply for the PVWH scholarship, complete the scholarship application at tcoe.org/PVWHScholarship.

For additional information, contact CHARACTER COUNTS! facilitator Zoty Briceño at (559) 737-6349.

Blue Point Conservation Science awards Circle J-Norris Ranch with \$80k grant



Last week, Blue Point Conservation Science awarded Circle J-Norris Ranch over \$80,000. The grant, given from the organization's Roots Program, will support up to 16 student interns to help complete a variety of restoration and habitat improvement projects throughout the ranch. The grant will also support plant protection, irrigation, wildlife structures, fence repair, educational signage, and more.

High school students who can work on select Wednesdays and Saturdays beginning in February through May are invited to apply for the internship. The internship is 28 hours and will pay \$560.

A description of the work to be performed by the interns, along with training dates, is available at tcoe.org/CircleJ/roots-internship.

Applicants are encouraged to submit a letter of interest to Amanda Driver at circlej@tcoe.org.

Circle J is the field study site of SCICON and is open to classes of elementary, middle, high school, and college students to conduct earth science lessons of their own or utilize curriculum provided by the program. The program is also home to the UC Merced/SCICON Field Station, which is used by researchers from throughout the state.

CVNIC: College-Ready showcases work in developing equitable grading practices



Last week, CVNIC: College-Ready held its fifth annual network convening with high school teams from 11 school sites across four counties. The teams made poster presentations on their schools' implementation of equitable grading practices. CVNIC: College-Ready program director Stephanie Verners reports that the group has been studying the practices found in "Fearless Grading" by Douglas Reeves since May 2024 by meeting every six weeks.

Reeves is the author of more than 40 books and hundreds of articles on leadership and education.

In "Fearless Grading," he argues that when grades are accurate and fair, students and teachers will see immediate improvements in academic performance, student behavior, and attendance. But when schools cling to grading practices that are demonstrably inaccurate and unfair, then failures persist.

While each school that presented its findings last week differed in its approach to tackling equitable grading practices, Verners reports that there is a connectedness between the projects. While some schools focused on the use of data in grading practices, Fowler High School math teachers focused on outcome-based grading. This allowed them to analyze assessments quicker and provide timely feedback to students. "The celebration is that students know what they need to do to improve," said Verners. "The Fowler team observed a small decrease in Ds and Fs for the fall semester. At the beginning of the year, they spoke to students and families about the adjustments they were making to their IM2 math courses regarding grading. It has been a positive project for them overall and they are optimistic that this change will support more student success in IM2 and next year in IM3."

CVNIC: College-Ready is a Network for School Improvement (NSI) focused on significantly increasing the number of Black, Latinx, and low-income students who are college ready as determined by acceptance into a four-year university with a six-year graduation rate of 50% or higher. CVNIC: College-Ready has chosen to focus on making improvements to high school mathematics instructional systems, as math is often the barrier for students to obtain a-g courses needed to gain acceptance into a university.

For more about the work of CVNIC: College-Ready, contact Stephanie Verners at stephanie.verners@tcoe.org.

Photo above:

~ Math teachers from Fowler High School present their success with outcome-based grading at a recent meeting of the CVNIC: College-Ready network.

Around the County

Redwood High School makes history at CIF Central Section Cheer and Dance Championships

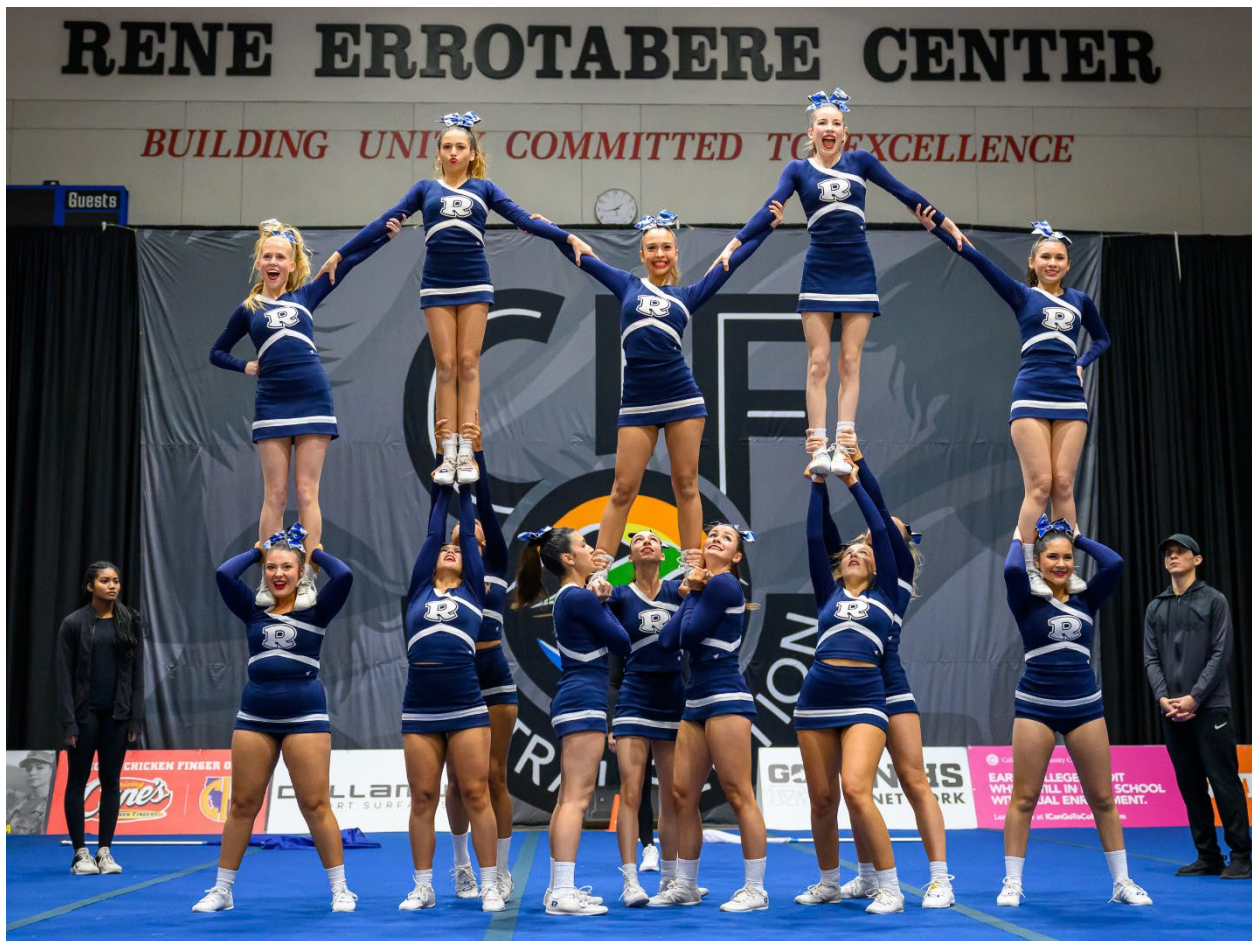


The Redwood High School (Visalia) cheerleading team had a lot to celebrate this weekend after winning the program's first section cheerleading title. The team placed first, with a score of 91, in Cheer Division III at the CIF Central Section Cheer and Dance Championships. Held Saturday at Buchanan High School in Clovis, Redwood competed against Riverdale, El Diamante (Visalia), Madera, and Templeton High Schools.

"This win is a reflection of the dedication and hard work our girls have put in, both on and off the mat," said Yvette Wright, the Redwood cheer advisor. "It's a goal they set for themselves this season, and as a coaching staff, we couldn't be prouder of their achievement in securing this championship title. The girls have truly excelled in holding themselves and each other accountable throughout the year. While this victory is incredibly rewarding, we know our journey isn't over yet."

On February 1, Redwood will compete in the CIF State Championship Invitational in Manhattan Beach. The invitational is open to varsity cheer teams that competed in their respective section championships.

“We still have two more competitions ahead — CIF State and USA Nationals — and we’re excited for the opportunity to continue to grow and challenge ourselves. I have complete confidence in the girls' ability to perform at the highest level, and I know they will represent both Redwood and Tulare County with pride and excellence.”



On Redwood's winning team is Kaylene Barnes, Autumn Flores, Jenni Gagnon, Anaya Gonzalez, Emily Hernandez, Reagan Keeter, Sofia Mendez, Autumn Milburn, Sienna Minasola, April Morales, Ayla Morgan, Jenna Tafoya, Mia Trevino, and Chelsea Vela. They are coached by Myronee Diaz and Michael Avila.

For complete results from the section championships, visit cifcs.org/sports/compcheer/Cheer_results_Jan_2025.pdf.

Photos above:

~ Redwood High School's cheer team celebrates with their championship gear after placing first in Cheer Division III at the CIF Central Section Cheer and Dance Championships held Saturday at Buchanan High School in Clovis.

~ Performing in the Cheer Division III competition of the CIF Central Section Cheer and Dance Championships, Redwood High School won their division with a score of 91.
Photo by Nick Miller

Tulare Joint Union High School District opens new community school



Last week, the Tulare Joint Union High School District held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for its new Community School Center. The center, located at 133 North L Street in Tulare, has been designed as a resource to support parents and community members based on their wants and needs. The district envisions that the new facility will serve as a drop-in center where parents can immediately access staff that can help them navigate programs and resources both inside and outside the school setting. The center will also feature parent classes with training provided by community partners.

The Community School Center will house the district's community school coordinators, district nurse, district social workers, district work-based learning coordinator, district child welfare and attendance coordinator, and community school director.

For more information, contact one of the community school coordinators at (559) 656-5085. To stay up to date on Community School events, including parent training, follow the center's [Padlet](#).

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