

Tulare County Office of Education

Tim A. Hire, County Superintendent of Schools

news galleryweek

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Early Childhood Education celebrates its 60th birthday



This month, TCOE's Early Childhood Education joined programs across the nation in celebrating the 60th birthday of Head Start. President Lyndon B. Johnson created the program as part of his War on Poverty on May 18, 1965.

On the day the program was unveiled, President Johnson announced that the Tulare County Community Action Agency (TCCAA) had been approved for a \$20,530 grant to begin Head Start programs at Maple, Roosevelt, and Lincoln elementary schools in Tulare. Later that same year, additional funds were awarded to create a child development program in Goshen.

By 1967, Head Start transferred from TCCAA to the Tulare County Office of Education, which continues to support it.

Today, ECE is preparing to open its 20th center, awaiting state licensing to operate the Village Preschool in Visalia.

Operating with a budget of \$88 million, ECE employs 419 staff members. The program receives a total of 23 state and federal grants to operate both center base and home base programs, serving over 5,200 children.

“We congratulate ECE on 60 years of service to the families of Tulare County,” said Tim Hire, Tulare County Superintendent of Schools. “The impact this program has had on thousands of children and their families has changed the trajectory of countless lives for the better.”

New staff join Leadership Support Services

This month, Leadership Support Services (LSS) welcomed three new staff members to help Tulare County leaders strategically plan how to best support all students in obtaining improved and equitable outcomes. LSS works with Tulare County district leaders to successfully navigate the world of state and federal requirements as they push their schools forward in a cycle of continuous improvement.

Karen Costa – Leadership Support Services Administrator

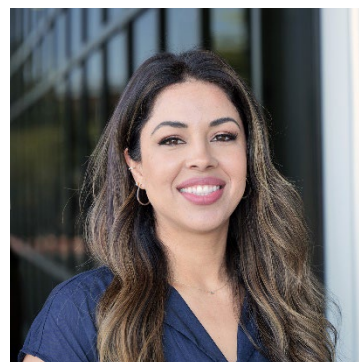
Karen Costa brings over two decades of experience in education, including 19 years as a social science teacher and several years in leadership roles with the Kings County Office of Education and Lemoore Union High School District. Her past roles include serving as a Differentiated Assistance lead, CAASPP coordinator, and director of student services, with experience in LCAP approvals, state and federal programs, and WASC consultation.



Costa holds a Master of Science in Education in curriculum supervision from Walden University and a bachelor's from Chapman University.

Christina Loya – Fiscal Program Development Coordinator

Christina Loya assumed her new role as fiscal program development coordinator having been a valued member of TCOE for over 16 years. She began her journey in the Migrant Education Program as a clerical assistant. Since then, Loya has served in various fiscal roles in Business Services, including fiscal secretary, business technician, and for the past five years, as an accountant in External Business Services.



Loya holds a bachelor's degree in technical management with an emphasis in accounting from DeVry University.

David Jansson – Data and Analytics Coordinator

David Jansson is the program's new data and analytics coordinator. Jansson brings a strong background in education and data systems, having served as an instructional data specialist for Cutler-Orosi Joint Unified School District for the past seven years. Before transitioning into analytics, Jansson taught English at Orosi High School for six years, combining his passion for literacy with his drive to support student success. In his new position, he is looking forward to helping teams across the county use data to serve students more effectively.



Jansson holds a bachelor's degree in English from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and a Master of Science in Education with a specialization in literacy and learning in the content areas from Walden University.

Two seniors from UPHS and La Sierra named in ABC30's Honored Scholars program

Two seniors from both La Sierra Military Academy and University Preparatory High School (UPHS) were selected to be part of the annual ABC30 "Honored Scholars" program. Each year, the station invites schools from throughout the Valley to submit the names of two outstanding students from their senior classes. The students will be featured in promotional spots that air throughout the summer. The honorees were Dennise Escobar and Roseann Saenz from La Sierra Military Academy, and Camila Espinoza and Aden Romero from University Preparatory High School.



From La Sierra Military Academy, Dennise Escobar is the Class of 2025 valedictorian, having maintained a 4.0 GPA throughout her four years at the school. This fall, she will

attend San Joaquin Valley College to pursue her lifelong passion for animals through their veterinary program.

Roseann Saenz is La Sierra's Class of 2025 salutatorian, having earned a 4.0 GPA throughout her four years of high school. Her unwavering dedication to academic excellence has distinguished her as a top scholar and a role model among her peers. Following graduation, she will serve in the United States Navy and plans to pursue a degree in nursing, with the goal of becoming a registered nurse.



Camila Espinoza will graduate from University Preparatory High School with three associate's degrees from College of the Sequoias (COS). After graduation, she plans to complete both her bachelor's and master's degrees at the University of Southern California in accounting and finance. Afterwards, she plans to work for a prominent CPA firm and obtain her license before eventually opening her own firm.

While a student at UPHS, Aden Romero is grateful that he has been able to get many of his general education courses out of the way while concurrently enrolled at College of the Sequoias. After graduation, he plans to stay one more year at COS, then transfer to CSU Long Beach, where he plans to study aerospace engineering.

La Sierra Military Academy and Independent Study students will graduate on Thursday, May 29 at 7:00 p.m. on the school's campus. UPHS seniors will graduate Friday, May 30 at 5:00 p.m. at the Visalia Fox Theatre.

Around the County

Richgrove School named one of the 2025 Best Communities for Music Education



NAMM (The National Association of Music Merchants), the largest global not-for-profit music trade organization, and The NAMM Foundation announced this month the recipients of the 2025 Best Communities for Music Education (BCME) Awards.

From Tulare County, Richgrove School was named a 2025 Best Communities for Music Education recipient. The school's music department is led by Richard Pagalan. On its website, Richgrove School District wrote, "The hard work of the instructors and students has put Richgrove on the national map for music! We are so proud of our students and staff! Way to make Richgrove proud!"

One of The NAMM Foundation's signature programs, BCME is now in its 26th year of recognizing and celebrating school districts and individual schools for their support and commitment to music education and their efforts to ensure access to music for all students as part of a well-rounded education.

For more information about the award, visit www.nammfoundation.org/articles/2025-05-08/namm-foundation-awards-over-1000-schools-and-districts-best-communities-music.

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