

Tulare County  
Office of Education

*Tim A. Hire, County Superintendent of Schools*

news  
galleryweek

May 27, 2026

## TCOE programs begin graduating students this week



Special Services has held two emotion-filled graduation ceremonies this week. Yesterday, 20 students from Visalia and North County AcCEL programs joined their families, classmates, and teachers to fill the Redwood Conference Center. The young adults graduated from various programs, including the Occupational Training Program (OTP) and Community Based Instruction (CBI) classrooms in Visalia, Dinuba, Exeter, and Orosi.

This morning, 12 students from Porterville-area CBIs and the L.B. Hill Learning Center were joined by their parents, teachers, and friends at a ceremony at Burton School District's Burkey Center. At both ceremonies, students were presented with a certificate of completion and an award for the CHARACTER COUNTS! Pillar of

Character they best represent.



Graduations will continue this evening with ceremonies for University Preparatory High School and La Sierra Military Academy and Independent Study Program. The final AcCEL graduation will be held June 9 for Tulare-area programs.

May 28 at 5:00 p.m.

**University Preparatory High School Graduation**

Visalia Fox Theatre, 308 W. Main St., Visalia

May 28 at 7:00 p.m.

**La Sierra Military Academy and Independent Study Program High School Graduation**

1735 E. Houston Ave., Visalia

June 9 at 10:00 a.m.

**Tulare Special Education Programs**

Meitzenheimer Community Center, 830 S. Blackstone St., Tulare

Photos above:

~ Daisy Navarro, a Visalia CBI graduate, celebrates with friends and family following the Visalia and North County AcCEL Program Graduation yesterday. She is pictured with her teacher, Julie Dowlen

~ Porterville CBI teacher Heather Albanez speaks about her graduate, Nicolas Cervantes

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## Migrant Education's Health & Education Fair helps parents focus on personal and family wellness



The Migrant Education Program (MEP) hosted its annual Health & Education Fair on Saturday for Tulare and Kings county families. The event provided childcare for parents who attended, allowing them to focus on breakout sessions and the many vendors who provided information on their wellness and education services.

Simon Silva, an artist and author, was a keynote speaker. His work is deeply inspired by the migratory and farm working life. Silva delivered a powerful presentation to parents and youth, inspiring families to respect and connect with their roots.

Additionally, MEP partnered with Nuevo Comienzo, a nonprofit organization, to offer a unique parent workshop. Attendees participated in a drumming circle facilitated by Maestro Celestino "Tino" Rayos and Maestra Sarahi Ovalle. Titled "Sonidos que Sanan" (Sounds that Heal), the workshop promoted emotional balance, cultural connection, and well-being through rhythm, vibration, and collective drumming.



Parents also attended an informative nutrition workshop led by local pediatrician Dr. Sandhya J. Kadam. Dr. Kadam emphasized the importance of building healthy habits for children and the family as a whole.

MEP appreciates the support of this year's sponsors: Altura Centers for Health, Durango Packing, Educational Employees Credit Union, Anthem Blue Cross, Family Health Care Network, Ruiz Catering, Starbucks, Lower Central Valley Hardcore, Ken Park Promotions, Yecenia Mariscal, and Yanez Party Rentals.

Photos above:

~ Tino Rayos co-led a breakout session on the drumming titled "Sonidos que Sanan" (Sounds that Heal)

~ Artist and author Simon Silva is pictured with Migrant Education Program event staff (l-r) Maria Juarez, Maria Aguila, MEP Director Shantall Porchia, and Evelyn Arciniega Leppke

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## CHARACTER COUNTS! wraps up school year with a celebration of students featured on “Your Character Matters”



Last week in partnership with KSEE24, TCOE's CHARACTER COUNTS! program honored the 24 Tulare County student stories profiled on the station's Your Character Matters series this school year. KSEE24's Emily Erwin, Matt Morse, and the team reported live from the event and served as emcees.

Your Character Matters completed its 11th year with the support of Tulare County teachers who nominate students to be profiled on the weekly series.

Twenty of the 24 student stories that aired this year are available to watch at [tcoe.org/YourCharacterMatters](http://tcoe.org/YourCharacterMatters). The final four stories will be added weekly in June.



Photos above:

~ Emily Erwin, a KSEE24 anchor and Your Character Matters host, poses with the family and teacher of honoree Marilyn Velasco of George L. Snowden Elementary School in Farmersville

~ Members of the Mission Oak High School girls basketball team were also featured in a segment of Your Character Matters for coaching younger players through a summer partnership with the Tulare County Sheriff's Office police activities league.

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