

Tulare County Office of Education

Jim Vidak, County Superintendent of Schools

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For Immediate Release

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Tulare County Office of Education Announces: Math Education Grant Received

Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Jim Vidak is pleased to announce that the Tulare County Office of Education has received a sizable grant from the California Mathematics and Science Partnership. The grant – one of only two given to a County Office of Education in California – will support a mathematics education program designed for teachers in alternative programs as well as general education teachers in 23 Tulare County partner school districts. Co-authored by Tulare County Office of Education (TCOE) Instructional Consultants Faye Johnson and Julie Joseph – with help from Fresno Pacific University – the three-year, \$812,598 grant entitled “Making the Algebra Connection for Highly At-Risk Students,” prepares teachers for math and algebra instruction. Faye Johnson estimates the grant will increase instruction to over 13,000 at-risk students in TCOE's alternative programs and partner districts.

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The reason this grant is so important to Tulare County teachers stems from the recent mandate by the California Department of Education that all students pass coursework in Algebra in order to receive a high school diploma. For teachers in California's court and community, continuation schools and alternative programs, the task of successfully instructing Algebra in a student population with a history of absenteeism, multiple disciplinary referrals and low class credits is challenging.

The key component in this grant is enrollment of up to 30 teachers from TCOE and partner districts in a Master of Arts in Education degree program in partnership with Fresno Pacific University. The grant will cover a significant portion of the degree, which carries a Mathematics emphasis.

"This program will help teachers deepen their understanding of mathematics, in a collaborative setting," says Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Jim Vidak. "Ultimately, we will see this instruction translate into success for bright students, who may have had some problems with discipline. And that can be measured by passing Algebra scores and increased numbers of high school diplomas," concludes Vidak.

Additionally, Instructional Consultant Julie Joseph will provide math mentoring and seminars to teachers not enrolled in the Masters program. These will take place monthly during the next school year and will include content, teaching and learning strategies.

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Finally, School-to-Career Project Director Randy Wallace is assembling a group of engineers, scientists and researchers to bring real-world application of math concepts into the classroom. "We envision these professionals working with the instructors to bring the curriculum to life for students," says Wallace.

For more information, contact Robert Herman, Public Information Officer, at 733-6606.

#TCOE#

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