

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: Theatre Company to Perform *The Secret Garden* at L.J. Williams Theater Next Month Seven Shows July 21-22 and 27-29

Visalia – In July, the Tulare County Office of Education’s Theatre Company will present a major musical production of Frances Hodgson Burnett's timeless novel, *The Secret Garden*, utilizing Tulare County students. Seven performances of this ambitious musical will be held at the L.J. Williams Theater in Visalia — two matinee performances at 2:00 p.m. July 22 and 29, and five evening performances at 7:30 p.m. on July 21, 22, 27, 28 and 29. The production of *The Secret Garden* is the ninth annual show performed by the Theatre Company since its creation by Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Jim Vidak.

The Secret Garden is a Tony Award-winning production of the classic children’s book. The story centers around 11-year-old Mary Lennox, who is sent to live at Misselthwaite Manor, her mysterious uncle's enormous, drafty mansion looming on the edge of the English moors. A cholera epidemic has ravaged the Indian Village in which she was born, killing both her parents

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and the Indian servant who cared for her. Not long after coming to live with her uncle, Mary discovers a neglected, walled garden and releases the magic and adventure locked inside it — changing their lives forever.

“I’ve been excited to do *The Secret Garden* for a long time,” says Theatre Company Director Brian Roberts. “I fell in love with the music when I first heard it and we have been fortunate to assemble an amazing group of singers for this production. I think audiences will be captivated by the story and delighted by the music.”

Currently, Theatre Company students are building the stage sets at the Tulare County Organization for Vocation Education (TCOVE) facility on South Mooney Boulevard, and involved in afternoon rehearsals at the Tulare County Office of Education’s Doe Avenue Complex in Visalia.

“I’m sure the production will delight fans of the book,” says Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Jim Vidak. “Our hope is that it will also inspire parents and grandparents to share this wonderful story with the young readers in their lives.”

Tickets are available for \$8 for general admission seating and \$20 for VIP seating at either Tulare County Office of Education facility in Visalia: 2637 West Burrel (near the Tulare County Courthouse), or 7000 Doe Avenue (north of Goshen Avenue on Shirk). Tickets may also be purchased at the door.

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For information about the Tulare County Office of Education, please call the Public Information Office at (559) 733-6606 or visit our website at www.tcoe.org. For additional information about Theatre Company and the summer musical production, *The Secret Garden*, call 651-1482.

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