Each day, teacher Linda Contreras uses circle time at the Senaida Garcia Child Development Center to engage her preschoolers in discussions. Through books, puppets, art projects or other classroom objects, she draws them into simple conversations that have a deeper purpose. Recently, she led them to talk about the characters in a book. It’s clear from Ms. Contreras’ questions that she is looking for answers that involve the characters’ emotions and actions. “When Katie didn’t want to play with Jasmine, what could Nathan have done to help Jasmine?” Some of the children answer, “He could have played with her.” Ms. Contreras smiles, “Yes, he could have played with Jasmine!”

The curriculum Linda Contreras is using to help the children understand appropriate behavior is called Second Step and it is part of a new partnership between the Early Childhood Education Program (ECEP) and Special Services. Read more at tcoe.org/NewsGallery.

March 2015
“Leadership and Legacy in History” was the theme of National History Day – Tulare County held February 24. Tulare County students participating in the event applied the theme to an impressive array of projects celebrating men and women who, through their leadership, changed history.

With the 100th anniversary of the Armenian genocide approaching, Kings River Union School students Alison Meza, Destiny Meza and Sophia Perez chose to create a group performance on the work of Jakob and Elizabeth Künzler in saving orphans during the genocide. Entitled “The Legacy of Papa and Mama Künzler and the Armenian Orphan Rug,” the girls told the story of how the Künzlers and the Near East Foundation, an American-led relief organization, worked to save thousands of Armenian orphans. With vocational skills training provided at an orphanage in Ghazar, Lebanon, 400 orphaned girls wove a carpet over the course of 18 months and presented it as a gift to U.S. President Calvin Coolidge in appreciation for the nation’s relief support. For their work on the performance, the Kings River students were selected as one of 20 finalists in the competition, making them eligible to compete in the National History Day – California competition May 8-9 at William Jessup University in Rocklin, California. Read more at tcoe.org/NewsGallery. 📸

March 2015
This month, registration will open for the 27th Annual Child Care Conference. The theme of the conference, which annually attracts hundreds of early childhood educators, is “Healthy Lifestyle Choices.” Patricia A. Kimbrell, M. A. will be the conference’s keynote speaker. She will also present several breakout sessions.

Ms. Kimbrell has been working in education for over 32 years. Currently, she serves as a faculty member at San Diego State and Alliant University in San Diego, as well as an educational consultant for numerous agencies, including The Office of Head Start, New York State Department of Health (WIC), California State Department of Health Services (WIC), California Department of Education and California Preschool Instructional Network.

Ms. Kimbrell also serves as an expert in the field of physical development for the California Department of Education. She has written and directed several award-winning physical activity videos and authored early childhood physical activity programs, including Smart Moves!, Quick Play, and S.P.A.R.K. Early Childhood Physical Activity Program. Read more at tcoe.org/NewsGallery.

By 2020, 67% of jobs in California will require a career certificate or a college degree,” said Joy Soares, TCOE’s new College and Career Readiness director in an address to over 150 educators attending the Work-based Learning in Action! Conference February 17. “Our challenge is to overcome the current 31% gap in educational attainment by preparing students to advance to college and career and qualify to apply for those jobs.” According to a 2013 Georgetown Center on Education study, only 36% of California adults currently have an associate’s degree or higher. The difference between the current state of adult educational attainment and the projected certificate or degree requirement is the 31% gap Mrs. Soares cited.

Mrs. Soares also shared from a 2013 study of the National Center for Education Statistics that nationwide, only 59% of students complete a four-year degree within a six-year window, while only 31% complete a two-year associate’s degree or certificate in a three-year window. “As educators, it is our responsibility to affect change in our schools, to ensure that students are prepared for a real world concern – that is the skills gap that is occurring in our workforce,” she said. Read more at tcoe.org/NewsGallery.

High schools within Tulare Kings Linked Learning Consortium plan and share resources

Career academies preparing for future growth

Conference to focus on helping children develop lifelong healthy lifestyle choices

27th Annual Child Care Conference April 25

Patricia Kimbrell will be the keynote speaker at the 27th Annual Child Care Conference at the Visalia Convention Center April 25.

Visalia Unified’s Bill Davis and Theresa Polich share their district’s resources at Work-based Learning in Action Conference February 17.

Read more at www.tcoe.org
For the first time in 14 years, a school outside the Porterville Unified School District captured the championship title in the Tulare County Academic Decathlon. El Diamante High School (Visalia) earned the most points in the ten-event contest to advance to the state competition which begins March 19 in Sacramento. El Diamante was also the large school division champion and winner of the Super Quiz Relay. The El Diamante team, coached by Mikk Jolly, includes Michael Ngo, Jack Perez, Daniel Seyedbrahimi, Joyce Achazo, Kiley Greenwood, Forrest Johnson, Cristian Mascorro, Julia Rodriguez and Mathew Jacobs. The small school division title went to Orosi High School.

On February 25, Sameera Hussain, a sixth-grade student at Westfield Elementary in Porterville, became the Tulare County Spelling Champion. Sameera is the first champion from Porterville in the competition’s 16-year history. The second and third place finishers were also from Porterville. (photo 2) Pictured with Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Jim Vidak are (l-r) Meera Kashyap, a seventh-grade student from Sequoia Middle School who finished third, Sameera Hussain, and second place winner Rojeny Guillermo, a sixth-grade student from Jim Maples Academy in the Burton School district. As part of the Visalia Times-Delta/Tulare Advance-Register’s sponsorship of the competition, Sameera is eligible to compete in the Scripps National Spelling Bee beginning May 24 in National Harbor, Maryland.

On January 30, the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) hosted a special education equipment donation day event. (photo 3) CAC Chairperson Amy McMahon (l) and Parent/School Liaison Stephanie Caldera pose outside the Visalia Elks Lodge which served as a receiving location for the community to bring in equipment that was no longer needed. The CAC reports that they received 14 boxes of medical supplies, along with various pieces of equipment, including a wheelchair. Plans are being formed to host another special education equipment donation day in Porterville this summer. For more information, call Stephanie Caldera at (559) 740-4321, ext. 6528.

On February 13, staff members gathered for the annual Jim’s Luncheon event to celebrate the talents of TCOE employees who shared personal hobbies and interests. (photo 4) Among the highlights of the event, was a hilarious performance by Theatre Company Director Brian Roberts (l) and County Superintendent of Schools Jim Vidak. Assisting with ballet arm movements behind the scene were Human Resources Director John Rodriguez (for Brian Roberts) and Impact Center Supervisor Conan Palmer (for Jim Vidak).

For the third year in a row, Redwood High School has won the Tulare County Mock Trial competition and has earned a spot at the state contest to be held later this month in Riverside. (photo 5) The Redwood team and coach Nancy Nauman (center in black sweater) pose with attorney coach Andre Gaston (front). In the past 12 years, Redwood has produced nine championships teams.
March ‘15

2-6  Young Authors’ Faire
9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Elderwood Rd., 7000 Doe Ave., Visalia
Reception: March 4, 4:30-6:30 p.m., Elderwood Rd.
For information, call Shelley Chappell at (559) 651-3042

3  Anti-Tobacco Challenge Bowl
9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Visalia Holiday Inn, 9000 W. Airport Dr., Visalia
For information, call Adam Valencia at (559) 651-0155

3  IMPACT Intern Program Info. Meeting
6:00 – 7:30 p.m., Aspen Room, 7000 Doe Ave., Visalia
For information, call Marvin Lopez at (559) 624-1035

5  University Preparatory High School Info. Night
6:00 p.m., COS Visalia campus, Room Yukut 9
For information, call Eric Thiessen at (559) 730-2529

6  Region 7 Arts and Education Summit
8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Fresno Convention Center
For information, call Brian Roberts at (559) 651-1482

6 & 20  Planetarium Public Shows
7:00 p.m., Peña Planetarium, 2500 W. Burrel, Visalia
For show and ticket information, call (559) 737-6334

7  Science Olympiad (Division B/C for grades 6-9/9-12)
8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., College of the Sequoias, 915 S. Mooney Blvd., Visalia
For information, call Jared Marr at (559) 651-3047

14  STEM Expo (formerly Science & Engineering Fair)
8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Lindsay High School, 1849 E. Tulare Rd.
For information, call Michelle French (559) 651-3003

16-26  Poetry & Prose On Stage
Sessions at 9:00, 10:15 and 11:30 a.m. daily March 16, 17, 19, 23, 25 & 26, Education Ctr., 2637 W. Burrel, Visalia
Call Nancy Bellin at (559) 733-6734 for the schedule of school performances.

20  Friday Night Live Lip Sync Contest
6:00-9:00 p.m., Visalia Convention Center
For information, call Adam Valencia at (559) 651-0155

24  Math Super Bowl (grades 7-8)
8:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Visalia Convention Center
For information, call Julie Joseph at (559) 651-3641

24 & 26  Administrative Services Credential Program
Info. Meeting
Tier I: Mar. 24, 6:00-7:30 p.m.
Tier II: Mar. 26, 6:00-7:30 p.m.
Teleconference Room, 2637 W. Burrel Ave., Visalia
For information, call Donna Glassman-Sommer or Jesse Coronado at (559) 730-9956

27  Special Education Induction Clear Program
Info. Meeting
4:30-6:00 p.m., Educational Enrichment Center, 2500 W. Burrel Ave., Visalia
For information, call Norma Lovelace at (559) 740-4409

27  Young Artists’ Reception
5:00-7:00 p.m., Education Center, 2637 W. Burrel, Visalia
For information, call Brian Roberts at (559) 651-1482

For more events, programs and meetings, visit our online calendar at www.tcoe.org/CalendarOfEvents

Video entries for the 2015 Slick Rock Student Film Festival are due before midnight March 30. Middle and high school students living in Kern, Kings, Tulare, Fresno, Madera, Merced or Mariposa counties may enter videos in a total of 24 categories. Visit www.slickrockfestival.org for information on film categories, deadlines and the awards ceremony.

Participation in the annual Young Authors’ Faire has reached a record high this year as 325 print and digital books have been produced by 675 Tulare County students. The books will be on display March 2-6 in the Elderwood Room of TCOE’s Doe Avenue Complex. Teachers, parents and members of the public are invited to read and comment on the books daily from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. A reception honoring the young authors will be held Wednesday, March 4 from 4:30 until 6:30 p.m. in the Elderwood Room.

Four TCOE administrators recently received Administrator of the Year Awards from the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA). ERS Mathematics Instructional Consultant Julie Joseph was honored in the category of Curriculum and Instruction Leader, La Sierra Military Academy Administrator Anjelica Zermeño received the top award in the Continuation/Educational Options Administrator category, Credentials and Retirement Analyst Jeanette McDonald was selected in the Classified Leader category, and CHARACTER COUNTS! and CHOICES Prevention Programs Project Coordinator Kathleen Green-Martins was chosen in the Confidential Employee category. The award winners, who were recognized at both the local and regional levels, will represent Inyo, Kern, Kings, Mono and Tulare Counties at the state ACSA Administrator of the Year competition this month.

The 23rd Annual Support Staff Conference is scheduled for Friday, May 8. The conference celebrates the role of school support staff members in shaping the good character of students and coworkers. As an added feature this year, attendees have the opportunity to nominate a colleague for the first Champions for Character Award.

Read more at tcoe.org/NewsGallery.