Teacher Jatinder Kaur of the Fairview Child Development Center in north Visalia launches the camera feature on her tablet and begins to ask individual students playing with connecting LEGOs to identify the colors in their strand of plastic blocks. As Jatinder records, student Jordan Lopez tells her each color of the LEGOs he has joined together. Thanks to software called Learning Genie, this simple video can be saved to Jordan’s student records and labeled to correspond to the individual measures used by TCOE’s Early Childhood Education Program (ECEP) as evidence that he is meeting his learning goals.

State and federal regulations require that teachers collect data that tracks and monitors children’s development during their enrollment with the Tulare County Office of Education program. ECEP utilizes the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) – a developmental continuum for early infancy through kindergarten.

Read more at tcoe.org/NewsGallery.
In 1992, Whitney Houston was on the charts with her megahit *I Will Always Love You*, Tim Allen was starring in the popular TV series *Home Improvement*; and IBM debuted its first laptop, the ThinkPad. That same year, Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Jim Vidak, who was just beginning the second year of his first term, created a new event to celebrate the contributions of Tulare County school support staff. The event was called “Spring Fling” and it provided 75 attendees with professional development training in communications and team building. Retired Administrative Assistant Darlynn Billingsley organized it.

Twenty-five years later, the event now known as the Tulare County Support Staff Conference has grown to be the largest professional development training of its kind in Central California. On April 26, over 650 support staff from school districts and city and county government offices packed the Visalia Convention Center to enjoy the birthday-themed event. School staff members came from districts and county offices of education in Tulare, Kings, Kern, Fresno and Merced counties, while city/county staff members represented the County of Tulare and the Cities of Tulare and Visalia. Read more at tcoe.org/NewsGallery.

Elementary students invited to build performance skills at three-week workshop

Theatre Company to offer June summer camp

Young actors and singers will have an opportunity to bring the story of Simba the lion and his friends from Disney’s *The Lion King* to life through the Theatre Company’s second annual Summer Camp. Open to students entering first grade through those leaving sixth, the Summer Camp program will help young performers develop their stage skills through three weeks of performance training.

“The Theatre Company is very excited to create a summer camp around *The Lion King Kids*,” said Theatre Company Director Bethany Rader. “This show is a favorite of so many and we can’t wait to use it to build a new generation of young Tulare County performers.” Read more at tcoe.org/NewsGallery.
The Migrant Education Region VIII Journalism Project, which began in the fall of 2015 and was unveiled as a newspaper called The Migrant Voice in February 2016, was created as an English language development program. In the first issue third-, fourth- and fifth-grade students from Earlimart, Pixley, Tipton and Tulare City School Districts published 20 articles about California’s drought. Through the process of interviewing people affected by or working to solve the drought, the Migrant students gained confidence in their abilities to research, speak, write and communicate their stories. In April, Migrant Education published its third and fourth editions of The Migrant Voice, expanding participation in the project to 13 Kings and Tulare county districts.

The Migrant Journalism Project was envisioned by Migrant Education administrators and instructional leaders from TCOE’s Educational Resource Services (ERS). Migrant Education Program Administrator Tony Velásquez says that the project was designed to assist students in transitioning from being English learners to proficient in the English language. Along with ERS staff, Migrant administrators worked with language development specialists from Loyola Marymount University’s Center for Equity for English Learners (CEEL). CEEL administrators Drs. Magaly Lavadenz, Gisela O’Brien and Elvira Armas helped design the curriculum and conduct the trainings for the Tulare County teachers who would lead the project.

The Region VIII Migrant Journalism Project has caught the attention of the California Department of Education Migrant Program. In January, Region VIII administrators Tony Velásquez, Shantall Porchia and Gloria Davalos presented the project along with Drs. O’Brien and Armas from Loyola Marymount at the Interstate Migrant Education Council (IMEC). The presentation was made to administrators from migrant programs in 20 U.S. states. This month, the California Department of Education has asked Mr. Velásquez and the journalism project team to present to California Migrant regional directors at a meeting in Sacramento.

“We are pleased that we continue to receive requests from other districts in our region to include them in the Migrant Journalism Project,” said Mr. Velásquez. “The feedback we are getting from our existing districts is that the program has empowered migrant students through their activities as journalists. Teachers and administrators are noticing an increase in our students’ reading, writing, listening and speaking skills.”

To see copies of The Migrant Voice, visit tcoe.org/MigrantEd. For more information, call Tony Velásquez at (559) 651-3035. 

Read more at tcoe.org
In March, the CHOICES After School Program held its third annual cheerleading competition. The event is designed to introduce elementary and middle school students to the activity to increase physical fitness and offer them the experience of working together as a team. Nineteen elementary and middle school teams competed this year. A team from Los Tules Middle School in Tulare won first place in the competition’s varsity category, while a team from Roosevelt Elementary in Dinuba took first place in the junior varsity category. Visitors to the annual Young Authors’ Faire in April enjoyed reading books written and illustrated by elementary and middle school students from throughout the county. Last month, the lobby of the Tulare County Office of Education was filled with over 250 printed and digital books submitted by schools throughout Tulare County. Juana Barragan, a preschool teacher at Early Childhood Education’s (ECE) Woodlake Center, has been named one of seven honorees in First 5 Tulare County’s annual Hands-On Heroes program. Ms. Barragan was honored at an awards ceremony at the Visalia Wyndham Hotel on April 25. ECE Education Program Manager Lorena Davis reports that Ms. Barragan was nominated for her amazing creativity in teaching, particularly the program’s science curriculum. Ms. Barragan is pictured with her supervisor at the Woodlake Center, Sally Dimas. This year, administrators with Special Service’s Intervention Resource Classrooms (IRCs) are integrating Student Resource Officers (SROs) into the program in several communities to build positive relationships with students and increase their understanding of law enforcement’s role. IRCs help students throughout the county who have had behavioral challenges by providing academic and social/emotional tools they need to be successful in school. Program Manager Tiffany Owens-Stark reports that IRC students are now seeing the SROs in respectful and healthy ways. Dinuba Police Officer Nunez is pictured visiting with IRC students at Kennedy Elementary. He checks in with students weekly to let them know he supports them. Students who meet their behavior goals earn the right to play a game of basketball or enjoy lunch with Officer Nunez. Last month, the CHOICES Prevention Programs hosted its annual Friday Night Live Lip Sync Competition. More than 30 elementary and middle school acts performed in the dance, lip sync, novelty and showcase categories. The top prize in the dance category was won by students from George McCann School in Visalia. Performing the song Closer were Ian Arrambide, Sevee Johnson, Thomas Rosa, Johnny Galhandro, Tristen Reimer and Kari Pendegraft. For a complete list of Lip Sync Competition winners, visit tcoe.org/LipSync. Read more at tcoe.org/NewsGallery.
upcoming events

May ’17

2 A Night at the 21st Century Museum (Grades K-12) 5:00 - 7:00 p.m., Visalia Convention Center For information, call Jen Francome at (559) 651-0562.

12 Reading Revolution – Middle School (Grades 7-8) 8:30 a.m. - 1:15 p.m., 7000 Doe Ave., Visalia For information, call Debra Lockwood at (559) 651-3042.

12 Slick Rock Student Film Festival (Grades 7-12) 9:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m., Fox Theater, 300 W. Main, Visalia For information, call Adam Valencia at (559) 651-0155.

17 Tulare County Physics Day (Grades 6-8) 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., Porterville Fairgrounds For information, call Jared Marr at (559) 651-3047.

18 Step Up Youth Challenge Red Carpet Awards 6:00 p.m., Fox Theater, 300 W. Main St., Visalia For information, call Rob Herman at (559) 733-6606.

19 Reading Revolution - Elementary School (Grades 4-6) 8:30 a.m. - 1:15 p.m., 7000 Doe Ave., Visalia For information, call Debra Lockwood at (559) 651-3042.

19 Planetarium Public Show: Wildest Weather in the Solar System 6:00, 7:00 & 8:00 p.m., Peña Planetarium, 11535 Avenue 264, Visalia For more information, call (559) 737-6334.

25 Special Services Graduation (for Visalia and North County area students) 10:00 a.m., TCOE Administration Building & Conference Center, 6200 S. Mooney Blvd., Visalia For information, call Tammy Bradford at (559) 730-2910.

June ’17

1 La Sierra Military Jr. High Academy Graduation 8:30 a.m., LSMA, 1735 E. Houston Ave, Visalia For information, call Anjelica Zermeño at (559) 733-6963.

1 Special Services Graduation (for Tulare area students) 10:00 a.m., Community Based Instruction #1, 948 North H Street, Tulare For information, call Tammy Bradford at (559) 730-2910.

1 University Preparatory High School Graduation 6:00 p.m., Visalia Fox Theater, 300 W. Main St., Visalia For information, call Eric Thiessen at (559) 730-2529.

1 La Sierra Military High School Academy Graduation 7:30 p.m., LSMA, 1735 E. Houston Ave, Visalia For information, call Anjelica Zermeño at (559) 733-6963.

7 Special Services Graduation (for Porterville area students) 10:00 a.m., Porterville College, 100 E. College Ave. For information, call Tammy Bradford at (559) 730-2910.

7 Planetarium Matinee Shows: Earth, Moon & Sun and Perfect Little Planet 12:00, 1:00, 2:00 & 3:00 p.m., Peña Planetarium 11535 Avenue 264, Visalia For show and ticket information, call (559) 737-6334.

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

A record-breaking 657 student-produced films were submitted to the annual Slick Rock Student Film Festival. The films were entered by students from 46 middle and high schools in Tulare, Kings, Kern, Fresno, Madera, Mariposa and Merced counties. Nearly 200 of these films will be shown at the “Premiere Cut” screening May 12 at the Visalia Fox Theater, from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. The awards ceremony, which is free and open to the public, will begin at 6:30 p.m. A schedule of Premiere Cut showings is available at tcoe.org/SlickRock.

On May 18, 19 middle school and 9 high school teams from throughout the county will attend the annual Step Up Youth Challenge Awards to receive grants for their work in developing community service projects. The awards ceremony, which begins at 6:00 p.m. at the Fox Theater, is open to the public. The top five projects in both the middle and high school categories will receive prizes totaling $30,000. The grants are provided by the County of Tulare’s Gang Prevention Task Force and the Tulare County Youth Commission.

For the fourth year, the Tulare County Office of Education CHARACTER COUNTS! Program recognized four high school senior student athletes with a $500 Pursuing Victory With Honor college scholarship for their exemplary character on and off the field. The recipients, who possess exceptional traits in sportsmanship, leadership and initiative, are: Leslie Ontiveros (Granite Hills High School, Porterville), Jazmin Ramirez (Mission Oak High School, Tulare), Krystal Chavez (Orosi High School), and Holden Powell (Mt. Whitney High School, Visalia).

For the second year in a row, the California Department of Education (CDE) will hold its Gold Ribbon Schools Awards for Central Valley recipients in Visalia. Read more at tcoe.org/NewsGallery.