

Creating Conditions

What can we achieve
together
that we can't achieve alone?

expect
more
tehama

2024 STORIES & HIGHLIGHTS

Creating Conditions

What can we achieve together that we can't achieve alone?

Over the past six months we've explored the concept of how our collective efforts shape the environment in which we live and work. Some are focused on creating conditions for a **robust economy**. Others on creating **thriving schools**. Dave Tanner and the McConnell Scholars create conditions that help students persist in college (page 4). Within many spaces, multiple entities work together. Public Health and healthcare providers work to create conditions for a healthy community at the population and patient levels. Though their efforts differ in focus, they share common goals.

At the center are family systems interconnected by economic, health, and educational needs.

Increasingly, we need to operate within frameworks that align and coordinate more closely. A notable example is the Community Schools Initiative. While activities can vary, most local schools are enlisting school staff to connect students and their families to health, mental health and other community resources (page 28). At the regional level, initiatives like the California Jobs First listening sessions, asset mapping and grant programs remind us that we're part of a larger, rural area and what benefits one county, often benefits the others. The program is an example of how communities and regions can work better together to build hope and momentum (page 25).

Expect More Tehama locks arms with a whole host of partners to create conditions for a **better community**. We aim to foster environments that **promote connection and learning**. We believe our kids should be prepared for options beyond a high school diploma and that the community has a role to play in coming alongside education to make that happen. We strive for an informed community, aware of its data and needs. We want to **work together** to solve and dissolve problems.

While everyone desires healthy, safe and successful communities, no single organization, grant or program can achieve this alone. Our relationships, trust and proactive spirit help to create the conditions necessary for Tehama County to flourish, but this is possible only through **collective effort**.

Kathy Garcia

Executive Director, Expect More Tehama

A WORD ABOUT LAUGHTER (for adults)

So many adults have hard jobs that require serious attention. And many workplaces translate serious focus into lack of levity. But for the sake of our physical and mental health and the quality of our relationships, fun and laughter should be a priority.

The average 4-year-old laughs **300 times a day**. The average 40-year-old? *Only four*. On a good day? *Maybe 10-15*. The good news is that you can learn to laugh and have more fun at any age.

Laughter has many proven benefits including **reducing levels of stress** hormones; increasing health-enhancing hormones, neurotransmitters, and infection-fighting antibodies; and **improving blood flow** to the heart. When we laugh with others, we feel connected. Laughter helps us feel more positive, hopeful and engaged.

WHERE TO FIND A GOOD LAUGH

- Hang out with funny people.
- Follow funny social media pages.
- Check out a comedy club.
- Host game night with friends.
- Play with your child.
- Just watch your child.
- Enjoy fun activities in the area:
Bowling, Trivia Night, Bingo, Fun Runs,
Pickleball
- Research and watch funny movies and
tv shows

A LAUGHING CHALLENGE

What makes you laugh? Seeing funny memes about coffee? Friends singing Karaoke? Line dancing? Start a list of what makes you laugh. Are you old school? Then start a list on your go-to notepad. Are you GenZ or a Millennial? Then start a list on your phone. The point is, start a list and revisit it. Add to it. **We challenge you!**

Collaboration

It is my belief that Tehama County is one of the most collaborative counties in the state. Our schools, county agencies, service clubs, and non-profits all work together to do what is best for kids without hesitation.

We have nearly eleven thousand students in thirteen different school districts in Tehama County. The leaders of those districts along with the Tehama County Department of Education staff meet monthly to make decisions that will benefit each student - not just the student that their particular district is responsible for. The egos are put aside and student needs are front and center. I could not be prouder to be part of such a selfless team.

It seems that anytime there is a need for fundraising, sponsorships, scholarships, mentoring or just to brainstorm new ideas, our community organizations are there to support. The Splash Park, the Rodeo, Children's Fair, Farm Day, Career Day, student performances, or individual student needs all are met quickly and efficiently.

Our city, county, and non-profit agencies consistently support students. Strong relationships exist between education and Empower Tehama, Probation, the District Attorney's office, behavioral health, social services, police departments, etc.

Lastly, Expect More Tehama has grown from a simple idea to an integral partner. Their most recent involvement in Career Technical Education efforts has helped propel our county-wide efforts with Shasta College to bring new programs and new experiences to our local schools.

When adults play well together, students benefit!

Rich DuVarney
Tehama County Superintendent of Schools



there is an
occurring



What can we do to create the conditions for more students to enroll and persist in college and training?

phenomenon

The goal of the McConnell Scholars program is to provide student recipients with the resources they need, both financial and non-financial, to succeed in college and in life. The purpose of the McConnell Scholars is the same as the mission of the McConnell Foundation: to help build better communities through philanthropy.

The McConnell Scholar's program is more than a generous scholarship. McConnell Scholars complete college at far higher rates than other low-income students in the state and outperform students of all economic backgrounds. Overall success can only be described as phenomenal, and a recent study proved as much.

Since 2007, the McConnell Foundation has awarded 515 scholarship recipients in Modoc, Shasta, Siskiyou, Tehama and Trinity Counties as well as a small piece of Humboldt and Lassen Counties.

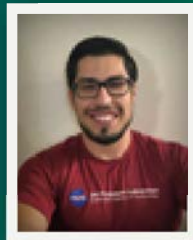
Eighty-eight Tehama County students have been awarded \$2,640,000.

That's 88 students from Los Molinos, Red Bluff, and Corning High Schools who have received a \$30,000 award, along with mentoring and advocacy from McConnell staff, to help them navigate their college careers.

While financial need is a basic eligibility requirement, volunteers from Tehama County select students based on personal qualities rather than grades or test scores, which can sometimes be misleading about a student's true potential for success in higher education. The main ingredient is something they call "other centeredness," or a basic kindness and interest in the well-being of

others that the student already has a record of acting on. They hope to serve and help develop the kind of community leaders who will use their success to lift others up.

In Tehama County, that's already happening! Of the 53 Tehama County McConnell Scholars who have graduated so far, Tehama County has educators, social workers, health professionals, engineers, business professionals, construction managers, psychological counselors, politicians, and others all taking their place and making their unique contributions to a better society.



who has spent time working on the Mars Rover at NASA.

Or Ryan Mekech (Los Molinos High, 2012), who graduated from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo in Agribusiness and has a career with New Belgium Brewing. Able to work remotely, Ryan and his wife Dani now live in Paradise where Ryan serves his community as a Rotarian. This is a special homecoming for him, as he considers his time at Camp Royal, the Rotary-sponsored leadership camp for high school students, with teaching him valuable leadership and relationship skills.



Or Nick Kitchel (Red Bluff High, 2010), who as an undergraduate at UC Berkeley helped put together a caucus of California congress members to address rapidly rising tuition

costs at the University of California. Their efforts stabilized the cost of tuition across the state. Nick went on to serve as a White House Intern and has since worked tirelessly to improve life for all Americans.

The study, conducted over the last several years, examined the secret sauce of why so many McConnell Scholars are successful. Several powerful themes emerged (*see below*) that together, are making a huge difference that colleges, parents, and communities can learn from. At the heart is Senior Program Officer Dave Tanner who continually invests in his own development to provide the best mentor experience he can for the students.

The McConnell Scholars program proves what the folks at Expect More Tehama have known all along – that Tehama is a county rich in human talent, and that Tehama County children deserve every opportunity to develop their talents through education and training. And, given that opportunity along with a little support, Tehama County students can go on to achieve at a level equal to anywhere in the world.

The McConnell Foundation is proud to support the efforts of Expect More Tehama through grants to North State Together. We look forward to seeing the next generation of rising Tehama stars.



“Phenomenology: Delves into the lived experiences of individuals to uncover the essence of a phenomenon, helping us understand the human experience by focusing on the perspectives of the people who are experiencing the phenomenon”

In October, 2024 the McConnell Foundation proudly published *Understanding the Phenomenon: A Qualitative Investigation of the McConnell Scholars Program*. The book begins to tell the story of the McConnell Scholars impact, past, present and future, on our students and communities.

Four themes surfaced as a result of the study:

- Theme 1: The McConnell Scholars is debunking myths – ***even lies*** – embedded in higher education
- Theme 2: The McConnell Scholars is ultimately about improving communities by empowering the community’s students
- Theme 3: Redefining Merit: McConnell Scholars are chosen on “other-centeredness” – their intrinsic desire to think of and help others
- Theme 4: It’s sacred that the community has this choice
- Theme 5: Equity can be learned
- Theme 6: Dave Matters

Stats

- 94 % are graduates from public high schools
- Since 2007, 70 % identify as female / 30 % male
- 29 of the 515 students have been in foster youth
- 52 have experienced homelessness
- 51.5 % identify as white
- 29 % as Hispanic, up to 33 % since 2019
- 7 % Native American/12 % since 2019
- 5 % as Asian and Pacific Islander
- 2 % as African American
- 8 % as two or more races
- 85 % are first generation college students
- Since 2007, 89 % persistence rate / since 2012 – 96 % / since 2019 – 97 %

Graduation rate: since 2007, four-year graduation rate is 91 % compared to 4-year graduation rate at UC (64 %) and CSU (19 %)

GRANT AWARDED TO EXPECT MORE TEHAMA!

Over the last decade, Expect More Tehama has appreciated and learned from CivicLab, a nonprofit institute dedicated to advancing the practice of civic collaboration. CivicLab's approach is to “learn what makes community collaboration work at its best, document these discoveries, and teach and share the practices broadly.”

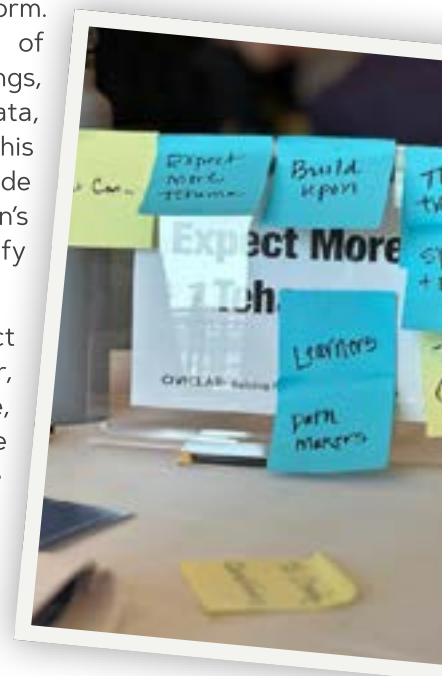
As practitioners in their own community, they understand rural challenges. This year, Expect More Tehama was awarded a CivicLab grant to support the Building Rural Community Systems initiative, aimed at analyzing regional systems to identify key challenges and needs.

The 2.5 year grant provides in person and virtual coaching targeting specific projects. The goal of the initiative is to “support rural communities and regions in their pursuits to improve education and workforce training systems for their residents.”

CivicLab offered the grant with support from Ascendium Education Group and ECMC Foundation.

Through the grant, Expect More Tehama receives a suite of tools and workshops designed to deepen understanding of regional systems and develop solutions. A powerful addition to this toolkit is the Lightcast™ data exploration platform. Lightcast aggregates vast amounts of labor market data, including job postings, skill requirements, compensation data, and other workforce indicators. This data-driven approach will provide comprehensive insights into our region’s labor market, enabling us to identify trends and opportunities.

The grant’s guiding team includes Expect More Tehama, the Job Training Center, North State Together, Shasta College, Resource Conservation District and the City of Red Bluff. They hope to apply the tools to youth apprenticeship models and other local initiatives and to continually expand the collaborative team.



BIG Question

How do we create the conditions for more intergenerational and healthy activities in our community?

GRANDFAMILY Garden Project

Over the last decade Corning's Deb Meents has been inspired by different research and experiences related to intergenerational programs to promote wellness, connectedness, purpose and joy. Moved by the positive outcomes of bringing seniors and infants and toddlers together, Meents was convinced she would someday create something special in Corning.

Meents wears many hats. Farmwife, mom, and Early Head Start Site Supervisor for NCCDI. She holds a degree in Human Growth and Development. She's an aspiring children's book author with a background in music and dance. Soon she'll be a certified infant massage instructor. While she credits her husband and son with being the real farmers, she also finds solace in her plants. Meents is celebrating her mother's successful journey with breast cancer and credits her plants with giving her strength, *"Working in my gardens helped me deal with my grief, sadness, all the worries I had for her. I cried in my zinnias, sang to my roses and meditated with my tomatoes, and I think I had the best crop I've had in several summers!"*

This year, she's moving forward to design and build a Grandfamily Garden, an intergenerational garden in one of NCCDI's gated playgrounds where grandparents and great-grandparents of enrolled children can share their knowledge and skills through gardening activities.

Gardening can improve physical and mental health, reduce stress, and increase life satisfaction. It provides an opportunity to help younger generations learn skills and life lessons, such as responsibility, patience, and accountability. Intergenerational gardening can also help younger generations learn about cultural traditions related to gardening.

Meents' dream is for this to be a year-round garden: *"A place for our families to come and pick healthy produce, herbs, flowers, veggies, etc. to enjoy at home. Nothing is more relaxing and healing than being in nature and forgetting whatever is weighing heavy on your mind or body."*

Meents also sees the Grandfamily Garden as a place where teaching staff and children can go to pick a healthy snack, or pick flowers for a bouquet or art project. A special

place that includes a sensory garden where children and adults with different abilities can also enjoy and immerse themselves in the landscape with elements that stimulate all five senses.

For Meents, this is phase one. Down the road, she'd like to have an intergenerational campus for seniors and infant/toddlers which would expand the garden. The facility would offer high quality daycare for both seniors, infants and toddlers. During the day, grandparents, great-grandparents and attending seniors could join the littles and enjoy music, stories and activities together. Seniors could rock babies, lead an activity, garden with the children and enjoy each other's company.

"This would enrich the lives of so many in our beautiful community," said Meents. *"We would offer art and music therapy. Can you imagine painting or having a quaint event in the gardens?"*

To learn more, contact Tadpoles to Toads Center at 530-586-8085





The future is waiting for them ...

Claim your child's funded college savings account today!

CalKIDS is a program from the State of California that funds up to \$1,500 in free money for eligible low-income public school students to save for college and career training.*



CalKIDS

The first step toward college



To claim your funds, visit CalKIDS.org today!

*Student eligibility is defined by the Local Control Funding Formula.

The California Kids Investment and Development Savings Program (CalKIDS) is a children's savings account program, administered by the ScholarShare Investment Board, an agency of the State of California. CalKIDS will provide eligible participants with college savings accounts, including seed deposits and other potential incentives, to help pay for future qualified higher education expenses. To learn more about CalKIDS or opt out of the program entirely, please see the Program Information Guide at CalKIDS.org. CalKIDS participants may also establish individual accounts with ScholarShare 529, California's 529 College Savings Plan.

Summer CAREER EXPO

RIG Question

How can we create the conditions for more students to see that great jobs exist in Tehama County and the region?

All too often, rural youth and adults don't believe their community has any good jobs, and they have limited exposure to the opportunities waiting for them. This summer, 50 eager Tehama County high school students embarked on an exciting 5-week pilot program which exposed them to high-wage, high-demand career paths. The innovative project sought to address crisis-level workforce challenges in manufacturing, agriculture and natural resources and was led by Job Training Center and UC Davis Gear UP. Called Tehama Career Expo, the pilot focused on answering the important life-defining question: "Are there any good jobs here?"

"Our rural communities have world-class jobs and companies that export goods all over the world with great careers spanning from entry-level to PhD, but our students consistently voice hopelessness for job prospects," said Carrie Ferchaud, CEO for Job Training Center. *"If we want our youth to believe there is a future for them in Tehama County, we need to show it to them."*

The pilot project offered behind-the-scenes tours of local businesses and overlooked training opportunities such as apprenticeships, trade schools, college certificate programs and on-the-job training. The Career Expo used real-world industry and training tours that featured good jobs and in-demand career paths. *"More than ever, youth are questioning the relevance of higher education, and the role work plays in their lives,"* said Ferchaud. *"It's so much more than a paycheck to Gen Z, they want meaning, purpose and work-life balance is non-negotiable."*

Led by Job Training Center staff and career exploration instructors and hosted at the Tehama County Shasta College

campus, the program featured 6 business tours, 3 college tours, 2 trade school tours, 1 union apprenticeship training center tour and weekly courses in career exploration, job readiness, and job simulators. The first two weeks kicked off with a visit to Sierra Pacific Industries and a tour of Shasta College Campus in Redding. The 50 youth toured Bell Carter in Corning and learned about the olive canning process. Staff members also shared personal career journeys and growth opportunities within the company.

Weeks 3 and 4 included a visit to the Resource Conservation District at the Sacramento Discovery Center and the UA Local 228 Training Center in Marysville, introducing students to apprenticeships and trades. Students explored aviation at Glenn County ROP, used flight simulators, and toured medical and sound tech training centers. Week 4 concluded with a visit to Butte College, where students had the chance to ask questions and interact with current students.

In the final week, students learned about Shasta College resources at the Tehama Campus and had the opportunity to register for classes, meet college staff and overcome common barriers to enrollment. The student feedback session and exit interviews were outstanding and the excitement, career insights and new awareness of local jobs and training opportunities was apparent!

Plans for Summer 2025 are underway with Job Training Center, Shasta College and UC Davis Gear UP. If your business or agency would like to host a tour or volunteer to support this project, please contact Carrie Ferchaud at (530) 949-7224 or cferchaud@jobtrainingcenter.org



HELP KEEP OUR COMMUNITY SAFE FROM SUICIDE

Suicide rates in California are rising at an alarming rate, especially among males, with the greatest percentage being white. American Indians & Alaska Natives have the highest overall rates of death by suicide. The most common method of suicide is death by firearm, followed by hanging and poisoning.

THE SIGNS

In most situations, a person who is thinking about suicide will exhibit signs that they are not doing well. Some of the signs may include the following behaviors: giving away prized possessions, saying 'goodbye' to friends and loved ones, hopeless statements, mood swings, withdrawing, looking for the means to suicide, and the list goes on.

RISK FACTORS

When someone experiences a loss of any kind, they can be at a risk for suicide. Think about the loss of a relationship, loss of a job, loss of a loved one, loss of health, loss of a home or finances. Any of these could lead to a loss of hope, which may lead to thoughts of suicide.

TAKE ACTION!

Suicide is one form of death that is largely preventable if we know what to look for and how to step in and provide support. By knowing the warning signs for suicide, we can be more vigilant of the people in our lives. Checking in on them more often, asking them how they are doing, telling them we care about them and are here for them, are just some of the ways to offer support.

WHAT TO SAY?

When talking to someone you are worried about, if they tell you they are hopeless or aren't doing good (or anything along those lines), that is the opportunity for you to ask THE question. Ask them directly, "Are you thinking about suicide?" Asking won't plant the thought in their head, that's a myth. It's either there, or it's not. After you've asked, listen. Let them share.

WHAT TO DO?

If they tell you they are thinking about suicide, that's when you need to get them some help. Anywhere in the US, you can call or text 988, the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. In Tehama County, call the Mobile Crisis Team at 1-800-240-3208. If it's an emergency, they have taken something or are doing self-harm, or if they are unresponsive or unable to engage in a plan to keep themselves safe, call 911.

PREVENTION

With guns and medication being 2 of the more common methods, lock them up. Reduce easy accessibility, especially for the teens in your house. This is especially key if someone in your household is struggling with suicide.

BE PROACTIVE

Increase you and your kids' protective factors. Find out where the resources are to access mental health help. Stay connected to loved ones, work on improving problem solving skills, learn and use healthy coping tools, and find a sense of purpose, there is always a need for volunteers.

BE PREPARED!

Take a class to help you prepare to help someone who's in crisis. Tehama County Health Services Agency, TCHSA, offers free classes year-round.

Know The Signs of Suicide 1 Hour Class

This class is offered monthly and covers the basics to help you know the signs to look for and how to talk to someone and connect them to help.

Mental Health First Aid 1 Day Class

Focuses on mental health and substance use challenges and how to step in with an action plan to provide support.

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training 2-Day Class

Prepares you to recognize when someone is in trouble and how to step alongside them with a comprehensive plan to keep them safe for now.

The below link will take you to all the upcoming TCHSA trainings on Eventbrite:





How do we better understand our region, trends, gaps and opportunities?

NORTH STATE TOGETHER

DATA NEWSLETTER
SPOTLIGHTS THE
REGION THROUGH
A DATA LENS

In 2016, the McConnell Foundation generously approved financial assistance to support five cradle to career county initiatives, including Expect More Tehama, plus a backbone organization. The backbone, North State Together (NST), is housed at Shasta College. In 2022, North State Together received a regional K16 Collaborative Grant funded by the Department of General Services which overnight doubled the number of counties involved. Today, Expect More Tehama is proud to be one of 10 counties represented under NST.

The counties, which work both independently and together, rely on North State Together to provide technical assistance, coordination and overall support to the regional partnership. For Expect More Tehama, the

assistance around data collection and analysis is invaluable.

This year James Crandall, NST's Regional Director of Data Strategies, launched NST's Spotlight on Data, a monthly newsletter which highlights data that's pertinent to the north state region broken down into three sections: Regional, State and National with a regional impact.

"Just a decade ago, solid data about the county was hard to come by," said Expect More Tehama's Kathy Garcia. "Today there is a lot of data, right down to the neighborhood level, but, it can be overwhelming and hard to decipher.

James makes data make sense."

From new platforms available to National Clearinghouse updates and special reports, the newsletter is valuable to anyone involved in education, workforce development and community development as well as data gurus.

To subscribe to the newsletter, visit northstatetogether.org/regional-data



CRADLE TO CAREER DATA INDICATORS

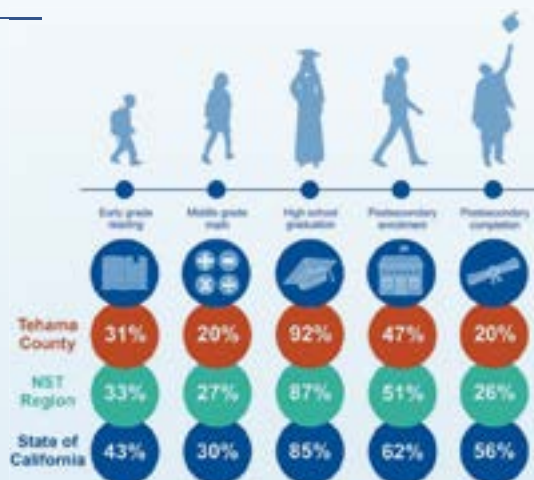
In cradle to career work, there are generally a set of core outcome areas that are consistently used as reliable predictors for a child's educational success. As the backbone organization, North State Together collects this data for the 10 counties. Developing a shared measurement system is essential to collective impact.

Across the counties, programs are free to also focus on other data and indicators that are important to their counties such as chronic absenteeism, prevalence of Adverse

Childhood Experiences (ACEs), public health indicators, poverty levels, etc...

Since last year's report, Tehama County has improved in three of the categories: Early grade reading, middle grade math and post-secondary enrollment (from 44 to 47%). Post secondary completion decreased across Tehama County, NST Region and the State of California. Data shown is for 2022-23.

First two indicators represent the percentage of students who meet or exceeded the measurement.





Spotlight on the North Far North Region

The North Far North Regional Consortium (NFNRC) comprises 15 community colleges serving 22 counties in the largest geographic area of the state, from the Sacramento Metro area north to the Oregon border, and from the North Coast across the Cascade and Sierra Nevada Mountain Ranges to the Nevada border.

NFNRC drives the expansion of career technical education (CTE) in alignment with California's Strong Workforce Program. Focused on increasing degree completion, improving transfer rates, and closing equity gaps, NFNRC connects local workforce needs with high-quality educational programs to prepare students for living wage careers while supporting regional economic growth.

Changes in Student Outcomes

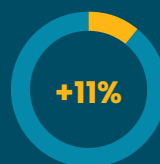
2013/14–2020/21 Academic Years



Attained Living Wage



Transfer to a Four-Year Institution



Employment in a Related Field of Study



Completion of Noncredit CTE or Workforce Prep Course



Students Earning Degree, Certificate, or Apprenticeship Journey Status



INDUSTRIES WE SUPPORT

Advanced Manufacturing
Advanced Transportation and Logistics
Agriculture, Water and Environmental Technologies
Business and Entrepreneurship
Education and Human Development
Energy, Construction and Utilities
Health
IT - Digital Media
Life Sciences - Biotechnology
Public Safety

COLLEGES WE SERVE

American River College
Butte College
College of the Redwoods
College of the Siskiyous
Cosumnes River College
Feather River College
Folsom Lake College
Lake Tahoe Community College
Lassen Community College
Mendocino College
Sacramento City College
Shasta College
Sierra College
Woodland Community College
Yuba College



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How do we create the conditions for all learners, from our youngest emergent readers to our graduating seniors, to provide opportunities to practice, expand, and enjoy reading inside and outside formal education?

IMPROVED LITERACY

The need for improvement is evident. Even before the pandemic, Tehama County literacy rates were concerning.

In the 2022-23 school year, 31.4% of third grade students met or exceeded the standard for reading proficiency compared to 43% at the state level. Of those, only 20.1% of Hispanic and Latino students met or exceeded and just 5.3% of English Learners. 31.29% of 8th graders exceeded or met the standard.

A common measurement for literacy is third grade reading proficiency, but reading development begins at birth and continues far beyond third grade. For older students, literacy is critical for learning, but strengthening reading skills is not the same as for younger children. Teachers aren't as well trained in teaching older students to read and there are often fewer interesting books available at their reading level. And so the problem is exasperated; kids with a lower than age reading level often get frustrated and uninspired to read more.

According to the National Literacy Institute, 60% of behavioral problems occur during reading assignments - group or independently.

Multiple factors contribute to this challenge, including assessment methods, social and health issues, and the emotional needs of students.

Over the past few years, motivated educators have explored these factors, uncovering insights about specific populations that require different or additional support. In the Fall of 2023 conversations in education, community, and families seemed primed to do more in partnering with families.

Education is focused on partnering with families to support reading development by increasing opportunity and knowledge of reading development. Both the community and education are doubling down on fun, motivational events to bring literacy to life.

Events like Bend School's **Night at the Museum Literacy Night** that provided grade level reading presentations and a paleontologist dinosaur dig while sharing simple tips and ways to experience the power of hands on literacy. And literacy celebrations like **Gerber School's Biliteracy Pathway Award Ceremony** that recognize the critical benefit of learning more than one language. The event invites families to celebrate their child's literacy achievement while simultaneously realizing their own adult bilingualism.

Placing literacy at the center of the conversation is critical. And taking time to showcase simple strategies to promote reading - especially for those students who may not gravitate towards reading activities themselves - is essential. Tips like:

- All the reading logs say 30 minutes of reading a day; but if that just won't work, even 10 minutes of sitting and reading with your child or teen makes a huge difference.
- Novels are wonderful. And, if they would rather read directions for how to put a motorcycle engine together, go for it. Reading is reading; and we want them motivated to read.

And some more practical tips like:

- Books must be available. Stash books in baskets throughout your living space. And if you need more books, check out a **Little Free Library** near you, and the **Tehama County Library**. If your child is under 5, visit the **Dolly Parton Imagination Library**.
- Talk to your children/teens about what they are reading. Ask provoking questions like: "What made you laugh in the book?"; "What characters annoyed you?" "What characters reminded you of someone you know?"

This past year, the community came alongside education and partnered to bring reading to life. Tehama Reads was successful in remodeling a horse trailer into a book mobile which increased curiosity and interest at outreach events (see page 14). Ide Adobe State Park utilized their story walk and highlighted literacy in their celebration of California State Parks Week. The Tehama County Library focused on starting to read as young as possible (in the womb) with Literacy Infant Massage and Stay and Play, and they doubled down on teen opportunities to connect with literacy by hosting Dungeons and Dragons and Pokeman Night. Finally Expect More Tehama partnered with First 5 Tehama and the Tehama County Library to offer a pilot program for parents interested in learning more about "how" children learn to read and how parents can help children learn to read. This opportunity kicked off in September and will wrap up in November. If you are a parent or caregiver of a TK through 2nd grader and are interested in learning more, register here to be contacted about the Spring 2025 session.

HOW YOU CAN HELP INCREASE LITERACY

- Provide books for children to read at your business or agency
- Use even limited space to showcase a single book
- Host a message board and invite children and families to write on it
- Read to a child in your neighborhood, apartment complex, family
- Host or sponsor an essay contest
- Join and support Tehama Reads and become a Reading Pal (Contact: Karla Stroman at stromankarla@gmail.com)
- Sponsor a child with the Dolly Parton Imagination Library for \$25 dollars a year (<https://imaginationlibrary.com/usa/> or email abrinkman@first5tehama.com)
- Support (or start) a Little Free Library (Visit to find one near you: <https://littlefreelibrary.org/map/>)



ON THE FRONTLINES

SURGEON GENERAL AND CALIFORNIA'S YOUTH BEHAVIORAL HEALTH TEAM CONNECT WITH COMMUNITIES

In 2024, several special guests made their way to Tehama County to learn more about the rural areas they serve and the challenges we face. They brought great questions and connected with dozens of folks working directly with students and their families.

Surgeon General Champions Trauma-Informed Schools in Tehama County

California Surgeon General Dr. Diana Ramos is continuing the important work around ACEs and trauma informed care championed by her predecessor Dr. Nadine Burke Harris. In February, Ramos spent a day in Tehama County.

The visit came after the launch of a free, online trauma-informed training designed to help educators, school personnel and early care providers respond to trauma and stress in children. The Office of the California Surgeon General collaborated with experts in education, youth mental health and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) research to develop Safe Spaces Foundations of Trauma-Informed Practice for Educational and Care Settings.

During the visit, Dr. Ramos toured Bend School and even read a book to a combo class of transitional kindergarteners and kindergarteners. After the visit, Dr. Ramos presented to First 5's Early Intervention Partnership — a group of administrators and leaders that work to create a coordinated system of prevention support and early intervention services for young children ages 0-8 and their families.

"Tehama County was thrilled to review the newly released ACE screening data and even more enthusiastic to discuss the PCEs (Positive Childhood Experiences) survey data which shows that while we have a high degree of ACEs, we also have the ability to be the anecdote to this stress. Our data shows that a high percent of youth are connected to a caring adult," said First 5's Heidi Mendenhall, who coordinated the visit. *"That's key for healing and building resilience-and it's even more key for our hardworking professionals to realize they are making a difference."*

Why are Safe Spaces Important? Research suggests that ACEs affect student learning

and behavior in the classroom. Children with three or more ACEs are five times more likely to have attendance issues, six times more likely to have behavior problems, and three times more likely to experience academic failure. Trauma-informed environments can play a critical role in enhancing resilience for children impacted by ACEs or other prolonged adversities.

This training was made possible through California's Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative (CYBHI). To date, more than 4,500 individuals have initiated the training. Learn more and take the training at osg.ca.gov/safespaces.

North State Adventure: California's Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative Team Leans Into Rural

In September, Dr. Sohil Sud, a pediatrician and the State Director of the California Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative (CYBHI), spent four days in the North state, including two days in Tehama County, with his 9-person leadership team and policy analysts.

The team attended two community collaborative meetings including First 5 Tehama's Early Intervention Partnership where they listened to local updates and concerns and shared about CYBHI programs and resources. They also attended the Expect More Tehama Leadership Team Meet-Up where they connected with folks representing community schools, public health, CTE pathways, youth peer counseling, workforce development and more. They met with the School Based Mental Health Team at the Tehama County Department of Education where they reveled at the innovative uses of wellness coaches; and they visited schools across the county including Corning Elementary School District (*Rancho Tehama*),

Red Bluff Union Highschool District (*Wellness Center*) and Evergreen School District (*Evergreen Middle School*). And yet, by far the most impactful meeting they had was with 4 teens representing the peer counseling students at Red Bluff High School where they learned about the journey of moving from a mental health advocate club to an official class.

"This group was sincerely interested in the challenges facing their rural counties," said Expect More Tehama's Kathy Garcia. *"They were particularly excited to speak with the high school peer counselors and were curious, empathetic, supportive and encouraging."*

Why is CYBHI Important?

California's Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative (CYBHI) is a five-year, multi-billion initiative that aims to transform the way California supports children, youth and families.

Learn more at <https://cybhi.chhs.ca.gov/>. Multiple agencies in Tehama County are engaging in this needed initiative; a full list can be found here: <https://cybhi.chhs.ca.gov/impact/>. The latest investment comes in the form of a grant awarded to First 5 Tehama. Partnering with the University of California, San Francisco Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Tehama County Department of Education, and Northern Child Development Incorporated, First 5 Tehama will use this funding to strengthen Tehama's early infant mental and behavioral health workforce. This grant seeks to prevent long-term mental health challenges by focusing on the county's youngest residents, offering training and support to promote healthy early social and emotional development.





What can we do to create the conditions for more residents to access services?

IF THEY CAN'T COME TO YOU, YOU MIGHT NEED TO GO TO THEM

Four very different mobile services are ready to hit the road

In rural areas, residents often travel a sizeable distance to access local resources. In Tehama County, this is often the case. Going to people where they are prioritizes accessibility and ensures that everyone can benefit from essential services and opportunities, regardless of their circumstances or location. The idea of going mobile isn't new but is enjoying a current boom in Tehama County. The following are four mobile services coming soon to a school, event or home near you.

TEHAMA READS IS LOADING UP BOOKS

Yee-Haw! Tehama Reads now has a mobile Little Free Library that will be "hitting the trail" to distribute new and gently used books throughout Tehama County! This was made possible through the thoughtful donation of a vintage Valco horse trailer, circa 1952, by original owner Roxy Williams, and re-gifted to Tehama Reads by Chinny Clawson.

Cates Dietz and his talented crew at Dietz Equipment Decalz generously donated their time, effort and materials to completely re-fabricate the trailer - lots of metal, welding, and wiring!

Y'all be on the lookout for the Tehama Reads Mobile Little Free Library Horse Trailer promoting the love of literacy at local community events!

BRINGING PUBLIC HEALTH TO THE PUBLIC

An important goal for Tehama County Public Health is to be part of the solution when it comes to challenges the county faces in accessing healthcare. The Public Health Clinic, located at 1850 Walnut Street in Red Bluff, provides a wide variety of services. These services include testing for various communicable diseases, pregnancy testing and providing a variety of immunizations to prevent disease. They are now able to take these services on the road! Through funding provided by the Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2020, they were able to purchase a fully equipped mobile vehicle. This valuable resource will help bring their services to all areas of the community to better serve our underserved populations. The mobile unit has two fully equipped exam rooms and is wheelchair accessible.

"Access to healthcare in Tehama County is a significant issue of concern, and our ability to bring our services out to people who would not otherwise be able to access them, is a step in the right direction."

– Minnie Sagar, Director, Tehama County Public Health



MIDDLE SCHOOL CTE LAUNCHING TWO TRAILERS!

For the past several years, TCDE has been working with area schools and community partners to build a county-wide middle school career exploration and Career Technical Education (CTE) program. The most recent additions to the program are two 28-foot fully equipped trailers that will spend time on campuses throughout the year. The goal is to provide hands-on learning experiences that will shape the future interests of students long before they enter high school.

The two distinct trailers are designed to cater to diverse interests and career paths. The Trades/Advanced Manufacturing Trailer will be a hub of activity, showcasing the essential skills needed in various trades, including construction, advanced manufacturing, welding, electrical work, and plumbing. Imagine students assembling structures, learning about safety protocols, and even trying their hand at basic plumbing tasks.

The Healthcare/STEM Trailer will focus on the fast-paced and ever-evolving world of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Imagine students programming a robot to navigate an obstacle course or exploring medical simulations with state-of-the-art learning equipment.

Why Hands-On, Real-World Experiences Matters

Engaging students in meaningful ways before they enter high school is crucial for several reasons:

Early Exposure: By introducing students to various career pathways early on, we can help them make informed decisions about their high school courses and future education. This exposure can significantly reduce anxiety and uncertainty about their post-high school options.

Skill Development: Hands-on activities will not only build technical skills but also enhance soft skills like teamwork, communication, and problem-solving—essential qualities for any career.

Empowerment and Confidence: When students actively participate in building and creating, they gain confidence in their abilities. This empowerment can lead to increased motivation and ambition as they transition into high school and beyond.

Bridging the Gap: Our program aims to bridge the gap between middle school and high school by providing resources and support that encourage a seamless transition. By fostering connections between students and local industry professionals, we will help students see the direct link between their education and future career opportunities.

Dispelling the Myth That There Are No Good Jobs Here: Our students today have more opportunities in Northern California for high-wage, high-demand jobs than ever. But they don't know about them. The program allows for connection to the sectors and careers in our region.

TEHAMA COUNTY MEALS ON WHEELS

*Not a new program
but worthy of mention!*

The Tehama County Community Action Agency has been serving the elderly in Tehama County since the early 2000's through the Meals on Wheels program which provides nutritious quality meals to seniors who are at least 60 years old. Each meal is reviewed by a Registered Dietician to make sure meals comply with nutritional guidelines. The program serves approximately **40,000 meals a year** through home delivery and senior centers. Drivers deliver meals to about **90 seniors a day**, who are home bound and in need of at least one nutritious meal. Besides a daily meal, they also provide a safety check to make sure the seniors are doing well. Meals are also served to seniors who are able to come to one of the senior centers while enjoying the companionship of friends.

The drivers are employees (extra help), and they work about 4 hours per day. They have four routes, two of which are in Red Bluff, one is in Corning and one goes to Proberta, Gerber, Tehama, Los Molinos, Dairyville and back to Red Bluff.

Questions? Contact Honey Touvell at (530) 528-4111 for more information.



*Pictured: Karen Schaeffer
who oversees the daily activities of the program and
drives when needed*

THE LIBRARY

where the adventure begins



Libraries are so much more than great places to access books – they are often centers for promoting civic engagement, creating safe spaces, supporting lifelong learning and today, bridging the digital divide. County Librarian Alicia Meyer and her team have actively positioned the Library as a community connector, offering programs and spaces to educate, entertain, and encourage interactions among patrons.

Past

The Tehama County Library has always been a place to borrow books, and that remains true today. This past summer, the Library began a massive "weeding" project, evaluating books that have not been checked out in five or more years, and deciding which should be kept in the collection and which should be given a second life with Tehama Reads for their mobile Little Free Library, or shared with other Tehama County departments for their waiting rooms and clients.

In 2024, the Tehama County Library Digital Archive was created on the photo-sharing website Flickr. Housed in the Red Bluff branch, the Reference Librarian is working to digitize vintage photos and negatives and upload the images so that they are easily searched and viewed from anywhere in the world. To see the ever-growing collection, visit (and follow) them at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/200354592@N03/>

If the digital photo archive inspires you, consider making a Retro Tech appointment where staff will help you convert your own photos, negatives, slides, and movies in a variety of formats to digital media. Not only is this a free and easy way to share your memories with family and friends, but digital copies can be stored in a separate location or in the cloud to provide a back-up copy in case originals are lost or destroyed.



Present

In recent years, libraries have taken on the role of community connectors, offering programs and spaces to educate, entertain, and encourage interactions among patrons. Library staff have introduced new programs such as evening storytimes, Stay & Play, Teen Dungeon & Dragons, Jumanji escape room, infant massage, Crafternoon, science nights, and more, offering programs at all three locations. They are grateful to our community partners who have brought exciting programs to the Library, such as Tehama County Department of Education's play group, First 5 Tehama's Teaching Reading class for parents, programming and robotics led by two Red Bluff High School students, NoRTEC's Access Points Digital Literacy classes, Tehama OUTreach's weekly teen hangout... the list goes on and they are open to more collaborations!

Through collaborations with other local agencies, the Library has been able to add to the Library's workforce while providing opportunities for community members to refresh or gain new skills and experience. In partnership with Expect More Tehama and Shasta College, Stevie Moore spent the summer interning at the Library, gaining hands-on experience with our

Youth Services programs before leaving for Sonoma State to pursue a degree in early childhood education.

The Library is also the youth community service site for Tehama County Probation; hosts a Corning High School work experience student in that branch, and is having immense success with CalWORKs volunteers. In the coming months, the Library anticipates more student helpers from both Red Bluff and Salisbury High Schools, and is hoping to bring on Shasta College CalWORKs students. Additionally, there are volunteer opportunities for community members of all ages to help at all three library locations, and the Friends of the Library groups are always looking for new members.

Library staff is excited to once again receive the California State Library's Zip Books grant in fiscal year 2024-25. These funds allow staff to order books to fulfill patron requests, with the books shipped directly to the patron's address by Amazon. The requesting patron can enjoy the book for three weeks, and then return the book to the library to be added to the collection. Email reference@tehamacountylibrary.org to learn more about this program or request a book that is not already available in the collection. The grant allows \$11,500 to spend by next summer, so please help the Library spread the word.

Future

The Library has been offering programming to support early literacy, and in the coming year they will be expanding to offer literacy programs to all ages. While the data on reading scores for youth in third grade is well-documented, they recognize that there are adults who would benefit from additional literacy support in English or English as a second language. They will be looking for volunteers to train as literacy tutors, and hope that community members of all ages will see the Library as a welcoming and judgement-free zone where they can grow their reading skills.

The Youth Services Librarian is participating in a nine-month program offered by the California State Library called Building Equity-Based Summers (BEBS). Last session, the County Librarian was able to participate, and staff implemented many of the concepts into their

summer reading program. They are excited to keep learning and growing, and to implement changes which recognize and support the beautiful diversity of the county!

In the category of Big Dreams, the Library is exploring the possibility of a community garden at each Library location (with the support and co-design of many community partners, and pending Board approval) and would also love to amass funding to purchase a book vending machine that would allow patrons in remote areas, such as Rancho Tehama, to access library books without needing to visit one of the locations.

Red Bluff Branch
545 Diamond Avenue
Red Bluff, CA 96080
530-527-0604

Corning Branch
740 3rd Street
Corning, CA 96021
530-824-7051

Los Molinos Branch
7881 State Highway 99E
Los Molinos, CA 96055
530-384-2772

Visit <https://tehamacountylibrary.org> for hours, events, and much more!



Exploring Careers in Healthcare with CSUS and UC Davis

For the second year, Expect More Tehama helped chaperone north state students over a multi-day careers in health sciences experience in Sacramento. This year they had hands on activities at California State University, Sacramento's health sciences programs and UC Davis Medical Center's 2-day Fostering the Future Healthcare Careers Camp.



Most departments had engaging activities lined up. They learned about careers in audiology, kinesiology, nursing, public health, recreational therapy and medical school, including the need for researchers. The cohort stayed in the CSuC dorms to have the full college experience. Both universities rolled out the red carpet for the students.

Health Sciences Opportunities at Shasta College Tehama Campus

Earlier this year, Shasta College's Tehama campus introduced two new CTE programs. For the first time, students are able to pursue a Medical Assistant (MA) and a Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA) Certificate in Tehama County.

Medical Assistant

The Medical Assistant (MA) program is presented in a hybrid format, with some classes completed online, and some on-site in Red Bluff. The program requires an externship element where students are placed in medical offices in the area. They receive hands-on experience, with some securing job opportunities at these locations post graduation.



Carissa Rosensteel, Allied Health Instructor for the program, broke down some of the goals and expectations. *"The Medical Assisting Program prepares the student with the knowledge, skills, and distinctive qualities necessary for the medical assisting profession. Such versatility affords graduates the opportunity to find employment in clinics, urgent-care facilities, primary care and specialty physician offices, including podiatry, chiropractic, and optometry."*

Ana Jackson, a member of the first Red Bluff cohort of the MA program, was delighted to learn it would be offered closer to home. Jackson, who lives in Corning and

is a parent to three children, expressed that a longer commute would not be conducive to her goals of working and being as present as possible for her family. She had already earned two semesters' worth of credits in 2023. Jackson was studying Health Information Technology, but she realized she could fill an important need. *"At Shasta College I had already started pursuing an AA,"* she explained. *"I wanted to do more face-to-face work with patients, and there's a need in this area for the Hispanic community. Language barriers and misinformation make people afraid to seek care."*

Jackson will complete the MA program at the end of the fall 2024 semester. She hopes to study to become a Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN) in the future.

Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA)

Two CNA classes have launched in 2024. While both MA and CNA work in healthcare environments, they typically work in different types of facilities. MAs often work in outpatient settings like clinics or emergency rooms, while CNAs typically work in inpatient settings like long-term care facilities. MAs provide more administrative and clinical support to physicians, while CNAs provide direct care to patients. Students can complete the CNA training in approximately 8 weeks and is offered each semester. Visit extedss@shastacollege.edu



Start your career today in **HEALTH SCIENCES!**

**In-person, on-site classes & labs
at the Tehama Campus**

Medical Assistant

- Two-semester hybrid cohort program
- 162-hour on-site clinical externship
- Next cohort: Spring 2025!

Certified Nurse Assistant

- Eight-week cohort program
- Classes offered every semester
- Summer class option

Shasta College is an equal opportunity educator and employer.



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(530) 242-7750 option 4



SHASTA COLLEGE CTE ACADEMIES PROVIDE *Deeper Connection*

In 2021, Jay Davis, faculty member of Shasta College's Welding Technology program asked: How can we better engage and serve more local high school students while providing them with meaningful experiences? The journey to find answers has involved years of collaboration among various stakeholders, including high school partners, faculty, administrators, and students.



What started as a grassroots initiative has evolved into a sustainable and effective recruitment model. Funded by the Strong Workforce Program and led by Interim CTE Outreach Coordinator Sarabeth Angel-Towner, regular 1-day CTE Academies foster a deeper connection to a variety of pathways for high school students in the Far North. Academies are designed around hands-on learning experiences and engage

small groups (10-15) on the main campus with expert faculty. Shasta College's CTE Academy first started with Davis' welding program and now includes the Diesel Technology, Automotive Technology, Machining, and Early Childhood Education programs.

To date, over 640 high school students have participated in over 80 CTE Academies, including students identifying as justice-involved, female, and neurodiverse. In addition, program faculty consistently report recognizing at least two to four prior CTE Academy students every semester in their classes. While Shasta College has quantitative data from student survey respondents, sometimes qualitative data supports the "why" in a more significant way.

What are students saying about their experiences? One remarked, "It was cool to actually do things myself!" Another shared, "I loved how in-depth the teacher was and how he explained everything and was always there to help." High school coordinators and chaperones have echoed these sentiments, stating, "We have loved our CTE Academy experiences! Our students have been exposed to so many amazing pathways," and "I love the hands-on experience and the positive atmosphere. [The faculty] put nervous students at ease and helped them feel capable."

Through these academies, students are creating, problem-solving, and acquiring new skills. The personal connections with faculty, along with the opportunity to see facilities and interact with equipment, help dispel fears and misconceptions about life after high school. Students are actively engaged, asking questions, having fun, and often letting their guard down to discover that college isn't intimidating.

A key message is that Shasta College offers incredible resources, including dedicated staff and faculty, to support and encourage students in whatever path they choose to pursue. Shasta College's CTE programs and faculty will continue hosting CTE Academies each semester, expanding the model and serving the local community and students. The college's career and technical education team's mission includes removing the "either/or" and "less than" narratives around students pursuing CTE pathways and with each CTE Academy, we are showing the students that CTE is for everyone!



Dual enrollment has allowed Tehama County students to have a substantial advantage entering college, both in confidence and credits. While our students accept it as commonplace, not all students in California have this opportunity at their school.

Dual Enrollment in Tehama County: 2024-2025

The Shasta College Dual Enrollment program aims to offer students opportunities to earn college and high school credit at the same time without ever leaving their high school campus. Shasta College offers two types of dual enrollment.

Traditional Dual Enrollment: Defined as a college course, taught by a qualified high school teacher, on the high school campus, during the regularly scheduled school day.

Facilitated Dual Enrollment: Online course taught by a Shasta College faculty member that collaborates with a high school instructor. That high school instructor facilitates the online course work during a specified period during the high school day and the Shasta College faculty member serves as the instructor of record.

Shasta College currently offers Dual Enrollment at the following Tehama County institutions:

- Red Bluff High School (57 sections)
- Tehama eLearning Academy (3 sections)
- Corning High School (17 sections)
- Los Molinos High School (7 sections)

Together, Tehama County schools offer a total of 84 sections* of dual enrollment.

In 2023-2024 there were approximately 1,056 enrollments* in early college credit opportunities across the four Tehama County schools. Enrollments are expected to rise this year with the addition of new courses and increased student support from both Shasta College and Tehama schools.

Subjects offered across Tehama County Schools include:

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| • Computer Science | • Medical Terminology | • Art |
| • Student Development | • Industrial Technology | • Political Science |
| • Math | • EMT Program | • Basic Pharmacology |
| • Business | • Natural Resources | • Psychology |
| • Welding Technology | • English | • Music |
| • History | • Astronomy | • Culinary Arts |
| • Automotive | • Early Childhood Education | |

**Sections- Some courses have multiple sections of the same course (duplicated count).*

**Enrollments- Most students are enrolled in multiple courses. This is the number of enrollments in Tehama County and does not represent the unduplicated number of students taking dual enrollment courses.*

Expect More Tehama Hosts CTE Summit

In March, Expect More Tehama hosted a successful Far North CTE Summit at the Tehama County Department of Education (TCDE). The event was sponsored by Expect More Tehama, Paxton Patterson Labs, TCDE, Tehama County CTE Coalition and North State Together. It was geared to continue a conversation around the benefits of quality CTE training, the connection between CTE training and stable, in demand careers and college attainment; and the ability to marry CTE with career exploration, leadership development and self-discovery.

The two days included CTE teachers, middle school teachers, administrators and speakers from the California Division of Apprenticeship Standards, Paxton Patterson Labs, California Ag Teachers Association, North Far North Regional Consortium, Stockton Unified School District, Red Bluff High School, Tehama County Dept of Education's Teacher Induction Program and CTE Teacher Prep and Healthy Rural California. There were also hands on CTE equipment for adults to try including Virtual Reality Career simulations from TransfrVR and robotics.

Picture of Health Occupations CTE teacher Jamie Montandon with TransfrVR



THE CTE SYSTEMS WORKS TO ALIGN

CTE COALITION

Started in the Fall 2021, a group made up of K12 education, community college, workforce and community organizations came together to explore how to strengthen and align career technical education programs in Tehama County. Discussion involves dual enrollment, CTE teacher preparation and training, youth and adult apprenticeship, community college program planning, county wide visioning, workforce and more. Within this coalition, members have been successful in receiving a \$533,000 Golden Pathways consortium grant, several K12 Strong Workforce Grants and this summer a grant was submitted for the California Jobs First program for a high school manufacturing apprenticeship program. Members toured programs in Modesto and Stockton last January and were involved in the CTE Summit held in March. The Coalition is coordinated by the Tehama County Department of Education.

MIDDLE SCHOOL CAREER EXPLORATION AND HANDS ON CTE

Started in 2022, work continues to provide high quality career exploration and hands on CTE activities to all middle school students in Tehama County. The Tehama County Department of Education and Expect More Tehama have successfully written two K12 Strong Workforce grants that provide project technicians to bring engaging modules into schools covering a variety of sectors. The technicians work alongside the middle school teachers and help coordinate field trips, guest speakers and visits to the high schools. Two themed trailers equipped with more rigorous equipment and projects will visit the schools throughout the year starting in 2025. By the time students start 9th grade, they should be familiar with the high school CTE programs; have increased awareness about their own interests and natural aptitudes; and have a better understanding of solid careers in the region and how to obtain that training.

"By starting their exploration earlier, students should feel better prepared and confident heading to 9th grade," said Patrick Mair, TCDE Coordinator of Career and College Readiness. "It's a great age to explore a whole host of opportunities they have before them."

HIGH SCHOOL CTE

Tehama County High Schools continue to work to build high quality CTE programs that align with Shasta College and industry sectors in the region and have benefitted from robust grant funding. Over the past two years, Corning High School, Red Bluff High School and Los Molinos High School have received K12 Strong Workforce awards:

- Corning High School: Growing Teachers (ECE) Pathway and Medical Assistant Pathway
- Red Bluff High School: Agriculture & Natural Resources; Health Care; Hospitality Pathways
- Los Molinos High School: Animal Science Pathway. In 2024 Los Molinos High School and Corning High School also received new Golden Pathway grants.
- Corning High School for three pathways: Product Innovation and Design; Entrepreneurship and Self-Employment; and Food Service and Hospitality Pathways
- Los Molinos High School: Software and Systems Development Pathway

According to the California Department of Education, the Golden Pathway grant "provides local educational agencies (LEAs) with the resources to promote pathways in high-wage, high-skill, high-growth areas, including technology, health care, education, and climate-related fields that, among other things, allow pupils to advance seamlessly from high school to college and career and provide the workforce needed for economic growth."





How can we create conditions for new teachers to be better prepared?

CLASSROOM *essentials*

This summer, the Tehama Teacher Induction Program and CTE Teacher Preparation Program hosted an engaging two-day workshop, "Classroom Essentials." The event empowered 16 first-year teachers to build essential skills, foster professional connections, and prepare for the exciting challenges of the classroom. The focus was to support pre-intern, intern, and preliminary Career Technical Education (CTE) candidates who are transitioning from industry to the classroom. Pre-intern candidates are those candidates who are not enrolled in a teaching credential program yet and are new to the profession. The program provides them with support and linkages to two local intern programs. CTE teachers are issued their preliminary credentials based on industry experience, and this is their initial training before they begin a two-year sequence of coursework while they are concurrently teaching.

The workshop gathered a diverse group of new teachers from three counties:

- 5 Elementary Teachers
- 3 Elementary Special Education Teachers
- 2 Middle School Teachers
- 6 Career Technical Education (CTE) Teachers

The workshop sessions aligned with California's Teacher Performance Expectations (TPEs) which are the professional standards they will use in their university program, equipping participants with practical tools and strategies from local educators. Key topics included:

- Classroom Management: Creating structured, supportive environments for all learners
- Effective Literacy Instruction: Developing and supporting foundational reading and writing skills
- Lesson Development: Designing engaging lessons to meet diverse student needs

- Developing as a Professional Educator: Reflecting on growth and building professional networks
- Tech Tools for the Classroom: Leveraging technology to enhance learning
- Assessing Student Learning: Using formative and summative assessments to monitor growth

The event featured presentations by Simpson University and CSU, Chico, offering the general education and special education participants pathways to connect with internship programs and further their professional development. A special highlight was hearing from two returning teachers who had participated in the previous year's Classroom Essentials program. These teachers shared insights and lessons learned, offering inspiration and practical advice for those just starting their teaching journeys.

The "Classroom Essentials" workshop exemplifies the Expect More Tehama vision—bringing together community members, fostering relationships, and addressing challenges in education with collaborative spirit. By investing in our educators, especially those new to the classroom, we are laying the foundation for economic prosperity, educational equity, and lasting growth in Tehama County and across the North State.

- **New Teacher Network:** <https://www.tehamaschools.org/Departments/Educational-Services/Teacher-Induction-Program/PIPSTSP-Support/index.html>
- **Teacher Induction:** <https://www.tehamaschools.org/Departments/Educational-Services/Teacher-Induction-Program/index.html>
- **CTE Teacher Credentialing Program:** <https://www.tehamaschools.org/Departments/Educational-Services/Career-Technical-Education-Teacher-Preparation/index.html>

Chico State

Engaging North State Region with a Variety of Initiatives

AMPLIFYING RURAL STUDENT VOICES IN REGIONAL COMMUNITIES

A Conference for High School Students

The North State Student Ambassadors (NSSA), a grant-funded, student-focused initiative founded at Chico State, continue to keep rural student voices, and regional advocacy at the forefront of its goals. This school year, the Ambassadors are hosting a conference for the region's most rural high school students—the goal being to bring students together, and celebrate pride of place, and learn more about why having rural pride is something special. The event *"Amplifying Rural Student Voices in Regional Communities"* takes place on March 7th, on the Chico State campus. The conference, "Roots on the Road", will not only bring the students together to learn more about rural advocacy, and why place is important, but they will also meet guests from regional and national organizations who are focused on those same goals. President Steve Perez; Henry Whitehead, of Rural Schools Collaborative; Susan Schroth, of the GRAD Partnership; and Julia Cunningham, the Director of Rural Engagement at the U.S. Department of Education Office of Communications and Outreach are scheduled to present and support the students during the conference.

GREAT TEACHER PARTNERSHIP

The GREAT Teacher Partnership, funded by a SEED Grant award from the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (US Department of Education), has also been active in the North State. The grant provides assistance to undergraduate, credential and masters students who are looking at teaching as a career.

In October, 89 high school students from Tehama, Glenn, Siskiyou and Butte counties came to Chico State campus to learn more about becoming a teacher. Funded by the grant, the students took part in collaborative activities, toured campus, and had the opportunity to eat in the student dining hall! This is the 3rd semester that this event has taken place, and Chico State looks forward to bringing more students to campus in Spring 2025.

For more information on the NorCal GREAT Teacher Pipeline grant, email greatteachers@csuchico.edu or visit <https://www.csuchico.edu/soel/financial-aid/norcal-great/index.shtml>

ROOTS ON THE ROAD

The North State Roots is an initiative that aims to strengthen the relationship between California State University, Chico and its service region by fostering intentional networks between Chico State students and with their home communities. In October, the Civic Engagement team held their first ever "Roots on the Road" hosted at the Shasta College Community Leadership Center with Susan Schroth, the team convened an education focused session. Regional attendees, led by Drs. Amy Magnus and Karen Schreder and students Tyler Friend and Grace Becker, made connections and explored what was happening and what was needed to support this pathway further in the North State. The next Roots meeting will be online, and the next Roots on the Road will take place in the Spring. Reach out if you would like to host!

For more information, please contact: ammagnus@csuchico.edu or kschreder@csuchico.edu



AN INSPIRATIONAL CTE JOURNEY

Savannah's journey into the world of Career Technical Education (CTE) began unexpectedly during her high school years in Tehama County. Initially, she hadn't considered a path in CTE but found herself drawn to the woodshop class at Red Bluff High School. Her enthusiasm grew under the guidance of a supportive teacher who allowed her to explore more by completing extra work when she finished early.

Her passion for CTE led her to become a teaching assistant in her senior year, where she explored potential careers. To support her educational goals, Savannah applied for numerous scholarships, securing several, including a prestigious local Rotarian scholarship.

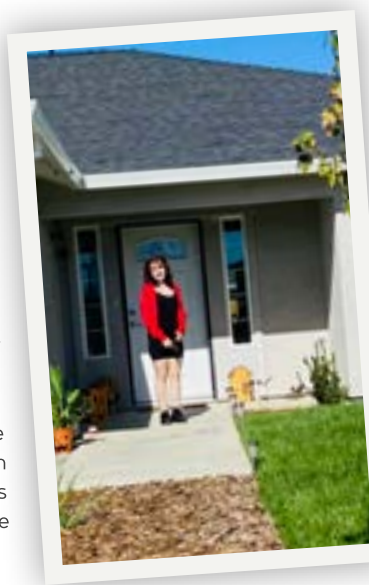
During the summer, she participated in the Career Expo program led by Job Training Center where she confirmed her love for construction and discovered factory work wasn't her preference. This experience solidified her decision to pursue construction management, and provided a stipend that she was able to save for the fall so she could work less while attending her first semester of classes.

Savannah enrolled in Butte College with the aim of transferring to California State University, Chico. Her choice was partly influenced by a personal project: her family (Mom and

Grandmother) were approved for CHIP housing in her junior year. Together they built a house in Corning. While this may not be every high schoolers dream, for Savannah this experience both complemented her CTE interests and prepared her for college. In fact, she was able to use her CTE skillset to build the majority of furniture in her new home (dresser, bedframe, table).

Now in her first semester as a construction management student at Butte College, Savannah's favorite subject is construction graphics. And as one of just a few females in the major, she's doing just fine. "Everyone is very helpful and respectful," said Savannah. "The harder part has to be coming to college so young (17) and not having as much experience as others, but so far being one of the only girls has been easy to handle." Alongside her studies, she works as a childcare provider, sharing her passion for building and problem-solving with young children.

Savannah is committed to her community and plans to continue her career locally. "I most look forward to being able to use my job to help the community," said Savannah. "Being able to provide sustainability, infrastructure and housing."



Pictured: Savannah moved into the family's new house October 4, 2024; and celebrated her 18th birthday one week later.

CALIFORNIA JOBS FIRST

In 2021, Governor Newsom launched the California Jobs First Regional Investment Initiative (Jobs First) to support high-road economic development plans to create equitable access to quality jobs. The Initiative strives to create a regional economic and workforce strategy, create high-road transition jobs, establish climate mitigation best practices, foster continued land stewardship, and inform policy and other legislative actions to support and sustain the North State economy across backbone industry sectors.

In May 2023, Chico State Enterprises North State Planning and Development Collective (*the Collective*) and Sierra Institute for Community and Environment (*Sierra Institute*) were awarded \$5 million to serve as co-conveners for the North State region (*Butte, Glenn, Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Tehama and Trinity counties*). The Collective also serves as fiscal agent.

"It is exciting and inspiring to see the North State embrace regionalism with such intentionality,"

said Courtney Farrell, Program Manager of the Collective. *"Together we are building collaborative partnerships, finding solutions and accessing resources to preserve and celebrate the heart and soul of its communities: our people and our land."*

The North State is one of 13 regions identified to facilitate the CA Jobs First High Road Transition Collaboratives (HRTC) to develop roadmaps, including a strategy and recommended series of investments, for their region. In September 2024, the co-conveners completed the year-long strategy development culminating in the first North State Regional Strategies Plan focusing on agriculture, health, tourism and natural resources with foundational sectors as support. Many were involved in listening sessions that took place in each county.

During the same time, the team worked to establish parameters and scoring criteria in support of distributing \$9 million through the Catalytic Program. A call for projects was

announced in fall 2023 followed by a request for proposals. Project awards are planned for late fall 2024.

The program's implementation phase application round will be announced in early 2025 and operate through July 2026. The implementation phase application process will be managed and awarded through the State of California for a total of \$150 million statewide.

Sierra Institute and the Collective will convene and facilitate the North State region across all participating sectors, jurisdictions, special interest groups and most importantly, those not traditionally included in planning processes. Their skills and abilities will complement each other to ensure that coordination, collaboration and consensus will be the driving motivation for the CA Jobs First activities.

Learn more at [https://www.nspdc.csuchico.edu/#/nspdc/californiajobsfirst\(formerlycerf\)](https://www.nspdc.csuchico.edu/#/nspdc/californiajobsfirst(formerlycerf))

TEHAMA COUNTY

Approximately 50 % of households in Tehama County have an income under \$50,000 per year compared to 30 % of California households, and about 15 % of the population lives below the federal poverty line (\$26,500 for a family of four in 2021). Source U.S. Census Bureau

15,284
KIDS AGES 0-17

Living in Tehama County by
2025 (Kidsdata.org)

Educational Attainment



	<u>% of Population</u>	<u>Population</u>
● Less Than 9th Grade	5.2%	2,353
● 9th Grade to 12th Grade	7.4%	3,312
● High School Diploma	29.8%	13,393
● Some College	27.9%	12,529
● Associate's Degree	10.9%	4,874
● Bachelor's Degree	13.8%	6,214
● Graduate Degree & Higher	5.0%	2,241

Concerning educational attainment, 13.8 % of Tehama County, CA residents possess a Bachelor's Degree (7.3 % below the national average), and 10.9 % hold an Associate's Degree (2.0 % above the national average).

Population Characteristics



Tehama County, CA has 11,879 millennials (ages 25-39). The national average for an area this size is 13,267.



Retirement risk is high in Tehama County, CA. The national average for an area this size is 19,553 people 55 or older, while there are 22,110 here.



Racial diversity is low in Tehama County, CA. The national average for an area this size is 26,831 racially diverse people, while there are 23,213 here.



Tehama County, CA has 4,124 veterans. The national average for an area this size is 3,412.



Tehama County, CA has 5.01 violent crimes per 1,000 people. The national rate is 3.6 per 1,000 people



Tehama County, CA has 22.82 property crimes per 1,000 people. The national rate is 18.22 per 1,000 people.

BY THE NUMBERS

65,574

POPULATION (2023)

Population grew by 1,670 over the last 5 years and is projected to grow by 1,051 over the next 5 years.

22,185

TOTAL REGIONAL
EMPLOYMENT

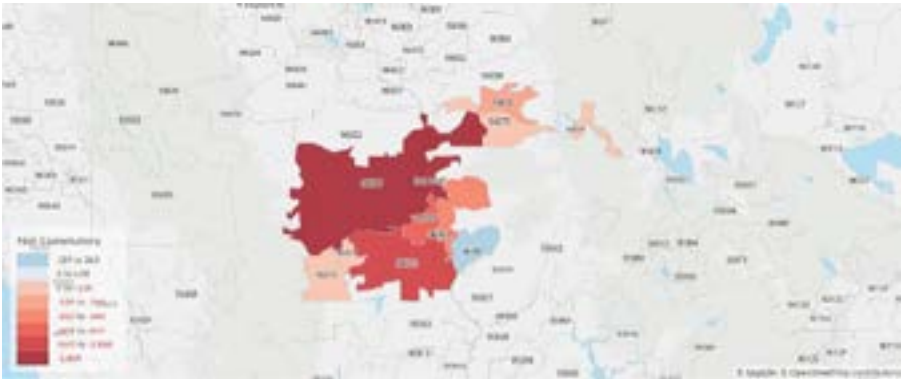
Jobs grew by 1,206 over the last 5 years and are projected to grow by 1,906 over the next 5 years.

\$52.9K

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD
INCOME (2022)

Median household income is \$16.1K below the national median household income of \$69.0K.

Place of Work vs Place of Residence



WHERE TALENT WORKS

ZIP	City	2023 Employment
96080	Red Bluff, CA	11,764
96021	Corning, CA	7,484
96055	Los Molinos, CA	1,317
96035	Gerber, CA	822
96092	Vina, CA	362

WHERE TALENT LIVES

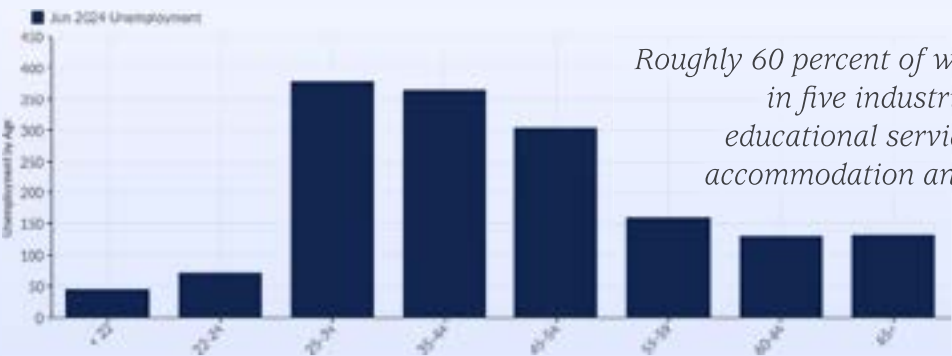
ZIP	City	2023 Workers
96080	Red Bluff, CA	13,634
96021	Corning, CA	8,327
96055	Los Molinos, CA	1,581
96035	Gerber, CA	1,423
96059	Manton, CA	240

Business Size



	Percentage	Business Count
1 to 4 employees	43.5%	1,013
5 to 9 employees	27.7%	646
10 to 19 employees	17.7%	412
20 to 49 employees	9.2%	215
50 to 99 employees	1.2%	28
100 to 249 employees	0.4%	9
250 to 499 employees	0.2%	5
500+ employees	0.1%	2

Unemployment by Age



Roughly 60 percent of workers in the region are concentrated in five industries: health care and social assistance, educational services, retail, public administration, and accommodation and food services. (U.S. Census Bureau)

Community Schools

The concept of Community Schools is not a new one but has re-emerged across the country as a vehicle to increase student outcomes by creating strong connections between schools, local resources and people. It's not a specific program and can look somewhat different school by school and across different communities.

In 2021, the California State Legislature passed the California Community Schools Partnership Act, a historic bill investing in a place-based approach to public education, meaning that local decision-making is at the heart of how these schools operate. And between 2021 and 2022, the Legislature allocated a historic \$4.1 billion in state dollars to support districts hoping to adopt a Community School strategy in their schools, particularly those serving high concentrations of high-need students. The program is funded through 2031 and is the nation's largest investment in community schools.

Throughout the Far North region, nearly 200 schools have received funding to start the process of operating as a Community School, meaning they are adopting partnership-oriented strategies that support the whole child and family. Rosemary Mitchell serves as the Program Director for the Regional Technical Assistance Center for Community Schools, which is led by Shasta County Office of Education but works side by side each of the 13 County Office of Educations in their service region, including Tehama County.

In Tehama County, 15 schools are in varying degrees of planning and implementation. Red Bluff Union Elementary School District received the grant early on, and as a result, opened a wellness center on the Bidwell campus. The wellness center is a space on campus reserved for students to receive services on site to ensure they can participate fully at school without worrying about other concerns. Shawn Martinez is the District's Coordinator and is working to connect school staff and students with resources related to housing and food insecurity, parenting classes, mental health, transportation to appointments and counseling for individuals, families, and small groups. He's part of a team composed of two Clinical Social Workers, a Board Certified Behavior Analyst, and a School and Parent Outreach Counselor. Their primary focus has been on providing mental health, behavioral and attendance support to students, schools and families.

"I have been a teacher, counselor, coach, administrator and grant funded program coordinator," said Martinez. "All roles have been "helping" roles, but this work feels much more like I am helping provide students and families with what they "need" rather than what I think they need."

Red Bluff High School has also received a Community Schools

"Community schooling represents a large shift in how we serve students, what we ask of educators, and how we work together. California has a historic opportunity to democratize schools, community leadership, and service provision while confronting defunct systems, practices, and policies. The community school model allows schools and communities to join in partnership in a way that is deeply embedded in place and responsive to local needs."

implementation grant and opened a Family Resource Center.

"We are excited about increasing our student wellness and the work that we are doing to support our students with a "whole child" approach with integrated focus on academics, health and social services, community development and community engagement," said Coordinator Rachel Bentley.

In year two of the Planning Grant, Corning Elementary staff are excited to shift their focus to the recently released Implementation application.

"My work has taught me that each family has a story that can connect them to culture, values, experiences, school, and community in many ways," said Coordinator Lorette Price. *"By listening to these stories, you not only foster trust but also create a deeper understanding of their perspectives and needs. It's amazing how those connections can enhance community support and enrich the educational environment."*

Other schools, like Flournoy, Gerber and Plum Valley, are still in the planning/getting ready to launch phase.

While Community Schools can look different from school to school, there are some common features, or pillars, which include:

- Integrated student support
- Expanded learning time and opportunities
- Family and community engagement, and
- Collaborative leadership and practice

"Ultimately, the Community Schools movement is an opportunity for our rural communities to come together and co-create the schools we know our students deserve," said Mitchell.

Local districts with Community Schools Grants:

- Red Bluff Joint Union High School District
- Red Bluff Union Elementary School District
- Corning Union Elementary School District
- Corning Union High School District
- A cohort of small schools including: LAVA, Plum Valley, Evergreen Elementary, Flournoy, Gerber and Tehama Oaks. The Tehama County Department of Education serves as their consortium lead.

Another round of funding is currently open for applications, but schools and community partners are encouraged to continue to think broadly about how other funding sources can be used to sustain this holistic approach to schooling.

WHAT DO KIDS SEEM TO NEED THE MOST RIGHT NOW?

Most community members identify Empower Tehama as a nonprofit organization that provides intervention and supportive services for victims of sexual assault, domestic violence and human trafficking in Tehama County. But they're often surprised to find out about the broad menu of prevention and counseling services they provide.

Empower Tehama's mission is to promote healthy relationships and social change. That includes providing robust programming for survivors and early intervention supports for today's youth.

Domestic violence and sexual assault are critical issues that have far reaching implications for communities. Addressing these problems at an early stage, particularly among youth, is essential for fostering safer healthier environments. This proactive approach reduces the incidence of violence and fosters a culture of respect and support. Prevention programs often emphasize healthy relationships, teaching youth about consent, communication and boundaries. These skills not only benefit their personal lives but also enhance community cohesion and mutual respect.

AT SCHOOLS:

Empower Tehama provides school-based prevention programming at Red Bluff High School and Salisbury High School. Their team also provides group supportive services addressing topics such as healthy coping and self-regulation, along with mentoring for students needing supplemental supports.

CAMP HOPE:

Camp HOPE is an early intervention program bringing fun filled avenues of HOPE to the youth. Camp HOPE provides youth with a week-long camping experience along with

monthly "Pathway" events for yearlong engagement. Activities focus on important life lessons including the value of forgiveness, seeing the future is brighter than the past, and accepting that we all need each other. Campers also learn about positive role models who have overcome difficult times and choose to make a positive impact with their lives and within their communities.

EMPOWER *Tehama*

DID YOU KNOW?

Communities that prioritize prevention can experience economic benefits.

Reducing violence leads to lower health care costs, decreased law enforcement expenditures, and increased productivity as individuals are able to focus on their education and careers.

Educating youth about the importance of preventing violence empowers them to become advocates for change. When young people are informed and engaged, they can challenge societal norms and contribute to a more just and equitable community.

CONNECTING KIDS TO COMMUNITY

AND THE FUTURE: Empower Tehama partners with local businesses to spark curiosity for career paths that students and youth may not be aware of. They ask the questions: What is your dream? What is something you are passionate about? How can you turn those dreams into a career that helps better our community? Using meaningful activities, they create an environment where children feel safe, seen, encouraged and valued.

HIGHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES:

At any given time, Empower Tehama is hosting multiple college students seeking in the field experience. They are a certified practicum site for colleges and universities in and out of California including Simpson University, Shasta College, Walden University, University of Nevada, Reno and more. They recruit practicums, interns and volunteers each semester and help students achieve their degree requirements. Empower Tehama is also a 501(c)(3) non-profit social service provider that participates

in the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Programs (PSLF) for student loan forgiveness for employees.

Interested in joining the team? Empower Tehama is always looking for qualified volunteers.

Visit our website www.empowertehama.org to learn more.



What can you do to create the conditions for all students from our most affluent to our most economically disadvantaged; to experience connection, expand and pursue dreams through music, art, history and culture?

Conexión Cultural

A vibrant celebration of music and culture in Gerber is bridging the gap between dreams and reality for local students and families. Spearheaded by local hero Danny Muñoz, special events create opportunities for all to experience the transformative power of the arts.

Muñoz, a passionate community connector and recognized mariachi singer, is dedicated to uplifting his hometown. With roots deeply embedded in Gerber,

Muñoz's journey began when he moved from Mexico to California as a young child. Though he moved away from Tehama County at 19, his heart remains in Gerber, where he regularly supports families and students through music and cultural events.

This Fall, Muñoz's vision took center stage at the inaugural "Al Son De Mariachi | The Sound of Mariachi: A Melodic Journey Across the Border" held in Corning. This vibrant performance was a partnership with Corning Recreation Department as well as many local businesses. This colorful event featured professional talent from across California. Importantly a special performance was held for the local high schools.

"Students were captivated; at first I think they did not know what to expect; and then when the show really got going they were so engaged we didn't want to stop." –Danny Muñoz

His own journey was profoundly shaped by high school mentors (teachers and counselors) who encouraged his love for travel and the arts. He credits Miguel Barriga and Irma Leal with creating opportunities and lessons that allowed him and his peers to dream. Thanks to high school trips to Chico, San Francisco, and San Jose, he got to see what was required to dance Ballet Folklórico professionally.

Experiences like those expanded Muñoz's courage to dream bigger. His musicality coupled with his bilingualism earned him a spot on the George Lopez Bus Tour; as well as his Folklórico enabling him to dance with troupes internationally in places like China.

Muñoz wants the same opportunities for other Gerber kids like himself. His ultimate goal is to establish a brick-and-mortar headquarters in

Gerber, not only offering access to recording studios and graphic design equipment, but also fostering creativity and pride.

Through music, art, and cultural celebrations, Danny Muñoz is helping Gerber students dream bigger and reach higher.

Getting Started

In 1999 Danny Muñoz and Joel Magaña were juniors at Red Bluff High School and were preparing to dance at a whole school assembly. The two had danced as a part of a high school club for years; however, this was the first performance that was on stage in front of everyone.

It was more than a display of Hispanic culture; it was a defining moment that made Folklórico feel undeniably cool to the students at Red Bluff High School. This wasn't just about dance. It was about representation and belonging.

"We chose to wear what was really in style - GAP khakis and loose shirts," said Muñoz. It wasn't a fashion statement as much as it was a strategic move to bridge culture. *"If you asked me as we were planning, I would have said I wanted to make Folklórico appealing and accessible to a wider audience."*

Through dance, Muñoz found a sense of calm and acceptance—a place where he could unapologetically be himself. Magaña credits those experiences and the connection to his counselor Irma for his successful graduation. *"If it wasn't for her support, I truly don't believe I would have graduated."*

More than two decades later, these 1999 Red Bluff High School Folklórico dancers are creating the conditions of belonging for the next Gerber and Red Bluff generation: Muñoz through the arts and history in Gerber, and Magaña through athletics in Red Bluff.

To stay informed about Gerber Events supported by Muñoz visit the website: <https://dannyMuñozmusic.com/non-profit>

To stay informed about the Red Bluff Youth Expansion, visit the website: <https://www.redbluffyouth.com>

Muñoz's dedication to community enrichment is not new. For the past 12 years, he has organized three annual events that embody his passion for music and connection:

- **TOM TOD (Turn On Music, Turn Off Drugs)** - Anti-drug and bullying campaign shared at schools during Red Ribbon Week, inspiring students to choose positive paths.
- **The Gerber Children's Christmas Fiesta** - A heartwarming event offering free music, dancing, Mariachi performances, and gifts to over 100 families.
- **Ice Cream Social** - A family-friendly celebration featuring book giveaways, games, and local resources, all wrapped in Muñoz's message of dreaming big.



HOME IMPROVEMENT

Those who have worked at or attended West Street School in Corning know it was a very old campus being held together with tape and glue. Built in 1888, it was due for improvements over 20 years ago. The students and staff deserved a better campus, but the process to receive money from the state bond program is a difficult and lengthy one. Then in 2020-2021 one-time funding made it possible for the District to launch and complete an amazing amount of facility improvement projects in just 4 years.

When Covid-19 hit, the state's answer to helping schools was one-time ESSER funding. This gave districts the ability to help students with their mental health (counselors and additional behavioral support), provide additional educational services like 2:1 Chromebooks (*one for home, one for school*), help with outdoor seating and the ability to complete some facility work that would allow students to work outside, play outside, and provide better facilities.

By far the hardest challenge was not having a facilities manager. At many rural school districts, the facility work is something that the Chief Business Official handles in their "spare time". For CBO Heather Igarta, this usually would encompass 5-10% of her job. To take on facilities and ESSER projects easily consumed 50% of her time. But for Igarta, the work was incredibly fulfilling.

"We are very proud of the accomplishments. We have been able to secure our campuses with beautiful fencing limiting the access to campus. We have provided Wi-fi services to families that cannot afford these services on their own," said Igarta. "We have built beautiful classrooms and buildings that the students are proud of. It puts a smile on my face every time the district holds an event in the new multi-purpose room at West Street, when a teacher pulls their class to study outside at the Woodson shade structures, or when I see the PE classes running on their new track at Maywood."

There are still projects in the works. They are still in the middle of a district wide solar initiative, and they are fully fencing Olive View and Woodson Elementary Schools. Although ESSER funds are now depleted, they continue to research ways to fund the remainder of the projects.

Corning Union Elementary School District Superintendent Tiffany Dietz is proud of the large accomplishment: *"We are fortunate in our district to have good people and a supportive Board that enables us to accomplish a lot. Heather has done an amazing job of leading our facilities work and ensuring that some of the one-time funding we received was used for projects that would serve our students and community for decades to come."*

Corning Union Elementary School District has made significant strides with the one-time ESSER/COVID funding to enhance educational facilities and improve student experiences. Here's a summary of the key facility projects:

- **West Street Gym**
- **Library Renovation:** *A small multi-purpose room transformed into a vibrant library.*
- **New Multi-Purpose Room:** *Features a full basketball court, kitchen, stage with outdoor access, and dining areas. The design incorporates the school's bee mascot with black, yellow, gray, and white themes.*
- **Kinder Classrooms and Playgrounds**
- **Classroom Upgrades:** *Eight old portables replaced with nine state-of-the-art classrooms.*
- **TK/K Play Areas:** *Three new TK and Kinder classrooms with dedicated restrooms and playgrounds, ensuring safety by keeping all students on one side of West Street. Additional playgrounds were built for other grades.*
- **Maywood Track and Softball Field**
- **Field Renovation:** *A complete overhaul including a 6-lane synthetic track, softball field, and revamped soccer field. The campus is now enclosed with wrought iron fencing for public use after school hours.*
- **Wi-Fi Towers Project**
- **Connectivity Enhancement:** *Four towers providing free educational Wi-Fi, with Chromebooks equipped to connect, supporting 70-80% of families without home internet.*
- **Woodson Parking Lot and Shade Structure**
- **Parking Lot Improvement:** *Two drive-through lanes for efficient student drop-off/pick-up and a solar shade structure with EV chargers will be complete in December of 2025.*
- **Outdoor Learning Space:** *Five pyramid shade structures in a previously inaccessible area, allowing outdoor classes in comfortable conditions.*
- **Solar Initiatives**
- **Ongoing projects at Rancho Tehama, Maywood, Olive View, and West Street to reduce electricity dependence, with completion expected by the end of the 2024-2025 school year.**

These upgrades reflect a commitment to providing modern, safe, and engaging learning environments for all students. The district takes pride in these advancements, ensuring students have access to quality facilities they can be proud of.



EVERETT FREEMAN PROMISE NEIGHBORHOOD

Corning Promise

In 2016, the Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians made history as the first Tribe in the U.S. to receive a \$14 million federal Promise Neighborhood grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The vision of the grant *"is to ensure all children growing up in Promise Neighborhood communities have access to great schools and strong family and community support systems to help them attain an excellent education and successfully transition to college and a career"*. This place-based investment, named the Everett Freeman Promise Neighborhood Initiative in honor of the former Tribal Chairman and education advocate, was designed to impact the cradle-to-college population living in the Rancho Tehama and Corning communities.

Today, the Everett Freeman Promise Neighborhood, or "Corning Promise" carries forward Everett Freeman's legacy, honoring his dedication to community, education, and the promise of opportunity for every child in the region. His work lives on, inspiring a new generation to reach higher, together.

Starting in 2017, Corning Promise partnered with local organizations to align, link, and enhance community services. The collaboration brought together diverse partners, including the City of Corning, Corning Union High School and Elementary Districts, First 5 Tehama, Northern California Child Development Inc., River Cities Counseling, Tehama County Department of Education, and the Tehama County Health Services Agency.

With this strong foundation, the work of creating the conditions for community success began to take shape. *"Our goal is ensuring that all children are set up for success, and that takes true collaboration,"* said Dawna Holiday-

Shchedrov, Corning Promise Director. Jared Caylor, TCDE Assistant Superintendent and former Corning Elementary High School Superintendent, emphasized how aligned resources like dual enrollment and CTE create opportunities for students. *"It's about creating pathways in our schools so every student has a chance to thrive."*

Early childhood education emerged as another cornerstone. *"When we support kids early, we set up the whole community for success,"* said Heidi Mendenhall, Executive Director of First 5 Tehama. Gary Fortenberry from River Cities Counseling connects mental health initiatives to community wellness, noting that programs like play therapy and no-cost school therapy services strengthen relationships and the system.

The focus on "creating conditions" extends beyond short-term planning and goals. As the partners agree, the aim is improving generational economic mobility, ensuring children and families are best situated to thrive. *"This is about more than just programs,"* Caylor reflects. *"It's about shaping the conditions across our schools and community to create lasting success for everyone."*

This commitment to lasting change echoes the legacy of Everett Freeman, whose vision for the Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians went beyond individual gains to a collective strength for all. Everett worked tirelessly to build the sovereign nation and organize the Nomlaki community. His belief in cooperation and mutual support extended to the surrounding communities, creating a foundation for collaboration and unity that still guides Corning Promise today.





How do we create the conditions for new parents and infants to build strong bonds, be supported by the community, and thrive in the first year of life and parenthood?

A note of advice shared from a Tehama County mom who experienced postpartum depression:

"I wish I would have given myself more grace, I wish I would have gone into it with absolutely no expectations for myself, my husband, and my baby. In my head I had painted such a perfect picture. When nothing went as I planned, I felt like I had failed. Above all else, give yourself grace"
-Brooke Hill

Conversations and experiences like the one mentioned were widespread in 2023, and were influenced and reinforced by data provided by Maternal Child Adolescent Health on Tehama County. In May 2024, the Tehama County Early Intervention Partnership group met to discuss new ways to address the challenges:

- Pregnant mothers in Tehama County show a statistically 10% higher rate than the state for dire behavior health and physical conditions such as post-partum depression, hypertension, asthma, and diabetes.
- And conversely pregnant women in Tehama County show a statistically lower than state average access to prenatal care.

This is deeply alarming when we consider the power of this critical time in infant brain development, establishing a secure attachment and fostering optimal development.

The Early Intervention Partnership worked on a possible solution. Considering Tehama's data, they set out to find both a community centered solution. Healthy Families Tehama Supervisor Laura Burlison, Public Health Supervising Nurse Michelle Schmidt, and First 5 Tehama's Executive Director Heidi Mendenhall designed a Circle of Hope pilot program.

Circle of Hope is a safe space for new parents/moms to share how they are adjusting to parenting, stressors, baby blues, pregnancy depression, anxiety and much more. As soon as Corning's Centennial High School learned of the program's success, they wanted to bring it their pregnant teens.

Circle of Hope

Mondays from 10–11:30am
Red Bluff Community Center
1500 S. Jackson St., Red Bluff
Provided in English and Spanish

Learn About the Perinatal Mental Health Certification

There is a shortage in our area of experts trained to work with perinatal mental health issues. These professionals work directly with parents to provide emotional support, and education on perinatal mood and anxiety disorders, concrete coping tools, and wellness strategies.

The Perinatal Mental Health Certification is available for three groups:

- Mental Health / Psychotherapy
- Psychopharmacology
- Prescribers; including all professionals who prescribe medication including Advanced Practice Nurses, PAs and PharmD.
- Affiliated Professions
- Peer Supporters/Peer Specialists, Nurses, Doulas, Lactation, Support Group Leaders, Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists, Dietitians, Community Health Workers, Speech Therapists, and others

Burlison is just one of a few in Tehama County to have earned her Perinatal Mental Health Certification, but the team is hoping to triple the number of those certified and expand it to all professionals in positions providing support to a new parent-- including school based mental health clinicians.

"We often notice when a 4th grader has a significant drop in attendance that there may be a new baby in the home; learning how to help new parents cope absolutely influences TK-12 attendance rates," said Cliff Curry, Superintendent, Red Bluff Union Elementary School District.

With ample support of Corning Promise and fiscal commitments from Expect More Tehama Maternal Child Adolescent Health, this work will expand and exponentially increase in capacity.

If you are interested in learning more, email hmendenhall@first5tehama.com or scan the QR code to be considered for a scholarship for Postpartum International Coursework.

"Perinatal mood and anxiety disorders affect 20% of moms; it's important to reduce stigma and increase awareness around perinatal mental health." -Laura Burlison, Supervisor, Healthy Families Tehama

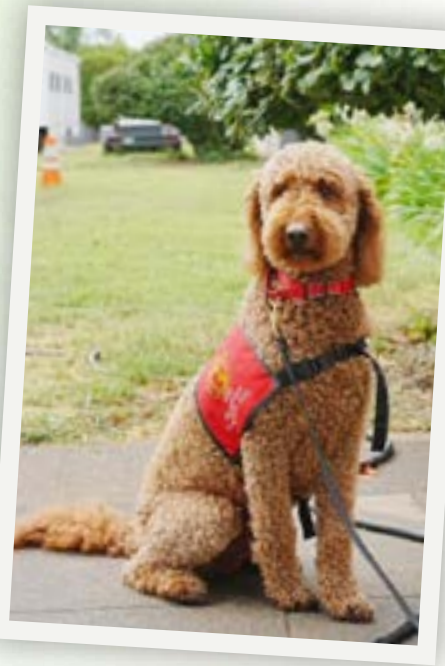


Teddy at Base Camp

In late July 2024, the Park Fire started at Lower Bidwell Park in Chico. The fire devastated the area, burning over 429,000 acres of land across the North State, 376,322 acres in Tehama County. Firefighters from all over California, including teams from as far as Mexico, traveled to assist in combating the blaze.

Loyce Winning, a counselor based at Lassen View Elementary School, knew immediately that her dog Teddy, a six year old Goldendoodle, could help the firefighters at the fire base camps. Teddy works for a group called First Responder Therapy Dogs which has over 300 certified therapy dog teams (dog and dog handler) in 44 states. "Teddy and the other teams that visited the base camp helped those who were away from their families, children and their own dogs," said Winning. "Teddy was hugged and given scratches. He became a morning fixture for so many. We were told that he was their good luck charm, better than a cup of coffee. He even got to FaceTime another Doodle that one firefighter owned."

Winning knew she wanted to integrate the use of a service dog into her work at the elementary school. She became a licensed school counselor



in 2018 and said that from the start, Teddy's main role has been to spread happiness. "There is joy whenever he is on campus. We can walk into a class and they might be having a tough time, and by the time we leave kids are smiling, more focused on their work and they have more confidence. He helps the shy kids smile just by being there. The kids that won't usually make eye contact when I pass them in the hall, will now say hello."

Teddy made an impact on so many people at the Park Fire Base Camp. Winning remembers an individual who was uniquely encouraged by his presence. "As we talked to the crews, if anyone asked for support, they were taken care of immediately. Because of Teddy, a young firefighter asked to talk to the therapist." Winning believes that without Teddy's support, the individual might not have had the confidence to ask for the help they needed.

"Our role is not to be the therapist. Teddy is there to support the crews passively. We were there to smile and offer emotional support through a tail wag!"

be kind to your mind

As mental health becomes a more prevalent topic in our community, Red Bluff High School now offers a Peer Counseling class. Before it became a certified class, the group of students originated as a club on campus, calling themselves Mental Health Advocacy. Red Bluff High School also has a National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Club. While this is a nationally recognized group, Mental Health Advocacy is unique to Red Bluff High School. The students focused on outreach to local middle schools and worked to put on an annual mental health fair at the high school. Sofia Harris and Darbie Andrews serve as advisors for the club, and now co-teach the class on campus as well.

The club still exists as the Mental Health Advocacy. However, this year was the first year that members of the club could take the official Peer Counseling class. "It took us several tries for the school board to approve it," says Lillian Alvey, a senior who joined the club as an original member in 2022. The class is only open to Red Bluff High School seniors and provides students the opportunity to learn professional skills in the

mental health field. Members of Mental Health Advocacy worked together with Harris and Andrews to design the course curriculum.

"We're hoping to make it a CTE Pathway for Psychology," Alvey shared. Peer Counselors help out on campus as much as they can. "We help freshmen learn how to open their lockers in the locker rooms [used for sports and PE classes]. We also meet with newly enrolled students at the high school to give them tours of the campus, and tell them about the opportunities and support available." Peer Counselors make it a point to check in on new students throughout the year to ensure they're acclimating well to their new environment. Alvey is joined in the class by fellow seniors Naraina Yem, Aiden Adkins, Chloe Webb and Grecia Melchor.

The Peer Counseling class focuses exclusively on meeting with students who need assistance on campus. Once a month, the counselors meet as a group with their advisors to discuss their experiences.

Alvey expressed her enthusiasm about the new class option. "It's exciting because it's what we've been working for the last several years. I feel like I'm making more of a difference on campus because of my involvement."

Seniors who want to join the class must complete a summer training, titled S.U.P.E.R. Peer (Students Utilizing Peer Educational Resources).





2024 Classified School Employee of the Year

*Richfield Elementary School's
Kate Johnson*

Kate Johnson wears many hats and was honored for the integral role she holds at Richfield Elementary School. Last Spring, Johnson named the 2024 Classified School Employee of the Year.

According to Richfield Superintendent Jeff Scheele, Johnson has been an integral part of the Richfield team since 2017, and her positive impact on the school is felt on a daily basis.

Her career began as a Kindergarten Instructional Aide/Paraprofessional. Additionally, she performed Yard Duty services before transitioning into the School Health Aide position during the pandemic. Now she holds the title of Classified Library Instructional Aide and Yard Duty Supervisor.

According to Scheele, everything Johnson does comes from a place of caring, consideration, and empathy for students and staff. Both kids and adults gravitate to her for support, understanding and TLC in times of need.

Congratulations, Kate Johnson!

2024 Teacher of the Year

*Reeds Creek Elementary School's
Angela Tucker*

The 2024 winner of the Tehama County Teacher of the Year is Angela Tucker from Reeds Creek Elementary School.



Tucker teaches middle school language arts, as well as being the homeroom teacher for eighth grade. She is known for her dedication to her students and her passion for teaching. According to the nomination, Tucker consistently has the qualities of an effective teacher with well-planned and rigorous lessons.

Growing up, Tucker always knew she wanted to be a teacher. As she finished her credential and master's program, she was subbing in the area. "Never once did I think I would ever be a middle school teacher, but here I was, getting called back repeatedly for them."

Tucker spent 7 years at Vista Preparatory. Although she loved her time and experience at Vista, she wanted to be at the same school as her youngest. She is currently on her third year at Reeds Creek.

Congratulations, Angela Tucker!

The Teacher of the Year and the Classified Employee of the Year are organized through the Tehama County Department of Education. All Tehama County schools are invited to nominate a teacher and a classified employee and a team reviews the applications and visits each site to make a determination.

Glossary

Competency Based Learning: Educational model that grants credit based on a student's proficiency in competency areas versus time in the classroom.

Cradle-to-Career: Guided by a commitment to long-term, large-scale change in an entire community, cradle-to-career systems bring residents, school staff, community leaders, and service providers together to focus their collective efforts on addressing pivotal areas of a child's development from birth to adulthood.

CTE: Career Technical Education

Facilitated Dual Enrollment: Online course taught by a Shasta College faculty member that collaborates with a high school instructor. That high school instructor facilitates the online course work during a specified period during the high school day and the SC faculty member serves as the instructor of record.

Hybrid College Class: A hybrid course is a blend of in-person and online learning. Students might spend one day per week in a classroom and other portions of the week watching an online lecture or participating in some other form of remote learning.

Middle-Skill Jobs: Job that require education or training beyond a high school diploma but less than a bachelor's degree.

Traditional Dual Enrollment: Defined as a college course, taught by a qualified high school teacher, on the high school campus, during the regularly scheduled school day.

Work Based Learning: Work-based learning is an educational strategy that provides students with real-life work experiences where they can apply academic and technical skills and develop their employability. Most occur in the community and may include career exploration, job shadowing, service learning, internships, work sampling, apprenticeships, and paid employment.

Resources

- Career Technical Education
Advance CTE: <https://careertech.org/cte>
- Labor Market Information
Centers of Excellence: <https://coecc.net/>
- North Far North Regional 2023-27 Strategic Plan
<https://nfnrc.org/resources/#regional-plan>
- North State Together
<https://northstatetogether.org/>
- North State Together Data Newsletter
<https://Northstatetogether.org/regional-data>
- Healthcare Links
 - UC Davis AvenueM: <https://avenuem.ucdavis.edu/>
 - Healthy Rural California: <https://healthyruralca.org/>



Expect More Tehama is a broad range of community members engaged in a movement to address local issues in education by convening people, fostering relationships, and discovering community together. We promote educational equity, economic prosperity, and lasting growth.

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