



**TOOLS**

*TALENT*

**TOGETHERNESS**

*Climb aboard! Our progress isn't a solo ride...*

S E V E N T E E N T H

# EXPECT MORE TEHAMA

## *Annual Summit*

Each year, our community gathers for the Expect More Tehama Summit—a place where ideas meet action and where hope for our future takes real shape. On November 6th, 2025, we'll once again fill the halls of Rolling Hills Casino for the 17th annual Summit. What began as a local conversation is now part of a regional movement—one that continues to connect educators, employers, civic leaders, and families who believe in the power of working together.

This year's theme, "Tools, Talent, and Togetherness," couldn't be more fitting. **It reminds us that progress isn't a solo ride—it's a train that moves only when all its cars are linked and heading in the same direction.** Our collective work—whether it's reading with a child, building a career pathway, or mentoring a young apprentice—fuels that forward motion.

We find ourselves at a critical junction. Literacy and Career Technical Education (CTE) are the twin engines driving both personal and regional prosperity. Literacy is the foundation—because a child who reads by third grade is far more likely to graduate, pursue higher education, and earn a living wage. And CTE is the bridge—offering hands-on learning that connects students to real careers in healthcare, construction, manufacturing, and beyond. **Together, they form the track toward brighter, more resilient futures.**

At Expect More Tehama, we hold a simple but powerful belief: if we focus our collective energy on literacy and CTE—and surround our young people with positive, healthy adults who help them feel seen, capable, and connected—many of our community's greatest challenges will begin to shift. **It's not that we need to do everything; it's that we need to do the right things, together, with intention.**

We know extra energy can be hard to find. Burnout is real, and everyone feels the strain. But what if we combined our talents and focused our collective efforts? What if educators, parents, employers, and community members each brought their piece to the table—creating a network of hope, skill, and belonging for our youth?

As you read through this report, you'll see stories of collaboration and innovation across Tehama County and beyond. You'll meet the people behind the progress—the teachers, students, community organizations, retired champions and employers who keep this work on track. **Our journey isn't finished, but every mile we cover brings us closer to a community where opportunity is shared and everyone has a seat on the train.**

*Kathy Garcia*

Executive Director  
Expect More Tehama

In Tehama County, our greatest strength has always been the deep, authentic relationships that exist between our schools, families, businesses, and community organizations. This network of trust is a well-established asset of our county that shapes how we approach every challenge. Whether it's addressing early literacy, expanding post-secondary opportunities, or supporting students in navigating complex futures, the foundation we stand on is our ability to work together with shared purpose and mutual respect.

This past year, that foundation has been especially critical as we've elevated literacy as a community priority. We know that learning to read well by third grade can change the trajectory of a child's life. It opens doors that might otherwise remain closed and allows students to see a future for themselves filled with possibility. The energy around this effort has been remarkable: educators, families, employers, and local partners are aligning strategies and resources so that more children have access to the support they need to become confident, capable readers.

The same sense of unity is shaping how we prepare young people for the world beyond high school. Through the Tehama County CTE Coalition, partners from across education, business, and industry have come together to enhance pathways that lead to meaningful local careers. By identifying priority pathways in health, agriculture, and construction, and setting shared goals for employer engagement, teacher development, resource alignment, and work-based learning, we are making sure that opportunity is built right here at home.

When we talk about literacy and career pathways, we are really talking about the same vision... a community where every young person is equipped to learn, grow, and thrive. Early literacy creates access to learning, and clear pathways create access to future opportunity. The relationships that define Tehama County give us the ability to connect these efforts in ways that are practical, people-centered, and long lasting.

As we look ahead, our county's educators and partners are moving forward with shared purpose and urgency. We're leaning into the strength that sets Tehama apart: real relationships, deep trust, and a community that shows up. Together, we're not just imagining brighter futures for our students, we're building them. This is what lasting change looks like.

*Jared Caylor*

**Superintendent**

Tehama County Department of Education



# Together for Literacy

A COMMUNITY ON A MISSION TO ENSURE  
EVERY CHILD READS WELL BY THIRD GRADE

Across Tehama County, a movement is growing — one rooted in the shared belief that reading well changes everything. Educators, parents, and community members all understand that third-grade reading proficiency is one of the strongest predictors of a child's future success. Yet, too many students are still struggling to reach this goal.

**According to 2024 CASSPP state data, only 33% of third-graders in Tehama County are reading at or above grade level.** These numbers reflect more than just test scores — they tell the story of a community facing challenges tied to chronic absenteeism, teacher preparedness, housing instability, transportation barriers, post-pandemic learning loss, language access, and trauma.

Low reading proficiency is a state and national problem. According to EdSource (October 9, 2025):

California test scores show students still struggle with learning loss five years after the Covid pandemic.

Students improved by 1.8 percentage points in math and English language arts last school year, the largest year-over-year increase since before the pandemic.

**Despite increases, serious equity gaps persist.**

Third grade reading proficiency is the measurement used to predict graduation rates, college enrollment and employment stability. Those with lower reading skills have a higher risk of dropping out; lower employment rates; and increased negative health outcomes.

*"No single organization can solve the literacy crisis on its own,"* said Kathy Garcia of Expect More Tehama. *"But when schools, families, and local partners come together — that's when real, lasting change happens. We*

*believe our community has everything it needs to move the needle for our kids."*

Tehama County school districts have agreed to work together toward this goal, with Expect More Tehama, First 5 Tehama and the Tehama County Department of Education helping to coordinate the broader community response. The effort is being led by a Literacy Guiding Team focused on digging deep to find root cause and the best strategies while mapping out a shared plan to improve outcomes. At the same time the movement must take action by supporting efforts that we know already work.

In September, Expect More Tehama enlisted a professional systems facilitator to meet with a large group of educators, business owners, teachers, administrators and community partners to help design a countywide literacy framework that will measure results, communicate progress, and ensure that every effort — from classroom interventions to community story hours — contributes to a unified goal: **every child reading well by the end of third grade.**

*"We need to move fast on what we know works,"* said Garcia, *"But we also need to move slow to truly understand the problem and develop the best strategies moving forward."*

This movement is as much about community as it is about curriculum. The Literacy Guiding Team knows that literacy is a foundation for lifelong opportunity — for thriving schools, strong families, and a vibrant local economy. As First 5's Heidi Mendenhall shared, *"When we help a child learn to read, we don't just change their future — we strengthen the entire fabric of Tehama County."*

Progress will take time, but momentum is building. From classroom reading corners to libraries, from volunteers working with students to family workshops, the message is clear: **Tehama County believes in its readers.**

# Start at the Beginning

## REWRITING THE STORY OF LITERACY IN TEHAMA COUNTY

The Dolly Parton Imagination Library, launched 30 years ago in rural Tennessee, was built on a simple but transformative idea — that every child, regardless of where they live or what their family earns, should have access to books that spark curiosity and connection from the very beginning.

Through a partnership with First 5 Tehama and the Tehama County Education Foundation, that vision became reality here in Tehama County. Since the partnership seeds were planted, others have come alongside. The Tehama Local Childcare Planning Council, Rotary, Kiwanis, Dignity Health and many independent contributors have aligned to this vision with their pocket books.

In a community where more than 20% of children live below the poverty line and families often face barriers such as long commutes, limited library access, and few early learning opportunities, the Imagination Library removes those barriers by mailing free, high-quality, age-appropriate books each month to children from birth to age five, right to their homes offering critical opportunities for shared reading experiences in home languages.

Since launching locally, the program has served more than 1,400 children — nearly a quarter of all children under five in Tehama County. Families have received over 12,000 books, and 95% of parents who completed surveys report reading more often with their children since joining.

Importantly, 20% of families choose bilingual (English/Spanish) books, ensuring language is a bridge, not a barrier, to early learning.

Access to books at home nurtures one of the greatest gifts families can share — language. When children are deeply and richly exposed to their home language, whether English, Spanish, or another, research shows that all language skills grow stronger. The program's reach is truly countywide: half of all enrolled families live outside the city limits of Red Bluff and Corning, demonstrating the power of this model to connect with even Tehama's most rural families.



"...[DPIL] gives me the opportunity to sit down with my son and read a variety of books with him...he has already had a huge improvement in his vocabulary because of the daily book readings." - Tehama County parent

This program strengthens each of the three building blocks of early literacy:

### Co-Regulation & Conversation

Each book arrival is a shared moment between caregiver and child. Reading together builds trust, communication, and emotional security — the foundation of all learning.

### Vocabulary Growth

Every book introduces children to new words, stories, and worlds. This exposure builds vocabulary and comprehension, key predictors of later reading success.

### Environmental Print Awareness

Seeing their names on mailed packages and recognizing letters or titles helps children connect print to meaning — a milestone that sparks reading readiness.

"Each book delivered is more than a story; it's an investment in our children's collective future." - Heidi Mendenhall, First 5 Tehama Executive Director

### How the Community Can Help

The success of the Imagination Library depends on local commitment and collaboration. Community members can:

- Champion the cause — Share the program with families and advocate for early literacy.
- Invest in expansion — Every donation funds new enrollments and keeps books free for families.
- Volunteer or collaborate — Help reach new neighborhoods and promote family registration.
- Spread the word — Encourage families to sign up at [imaginationlibrary.com](http://imaginationlibrary.com).

Together, we are changing the story of literacy in Tehama County — one book, one child, and one family at a time.



# READING PALS

*Changing Lives One Hour at a Time*

Every week across Butte County, over 200 volunteers are quietly transforming lives—one child at a time. Reading Pals is a community-based reading program built on a simple yet powerful idea: when a caring adult spends one hour a week reading with a child, it can change that child's future.

Reading Pals was born over 20 years ago when a few Chico Rotarians wanted to do something meaningful to help students. Fast forward to today, the program is formally housed under a non-profit directed by Michelle Curran who works with schools to connect elementary-aged students with dedicated volunteers. These "Pals" aren't teachers or tutors—they're neighbors, parents, retirees, college students, and community members who simply believe in the power of reading and connection. With one-on-one sessions held during and/or after school, Reading Pals gives children the extra attention and encouragement they need to build critical literacy skills and self-confidence. And now the program is growing all throughout the North State.

## ***Simple, Supported, and Measurable***

Each Reading Pal is paired with a student and supported by a site coordinator at the school. Coordinators match readers and students, provide a simple curriculum, and offer guidance throughout the year. Volunteers don't need teaching experience or special training. If you can read, you can help a child learn to read.

The program has been in Tehama County at just a few schools for 15 years as part of the SERRF After School Program. Karla Stroman brought the program to Red

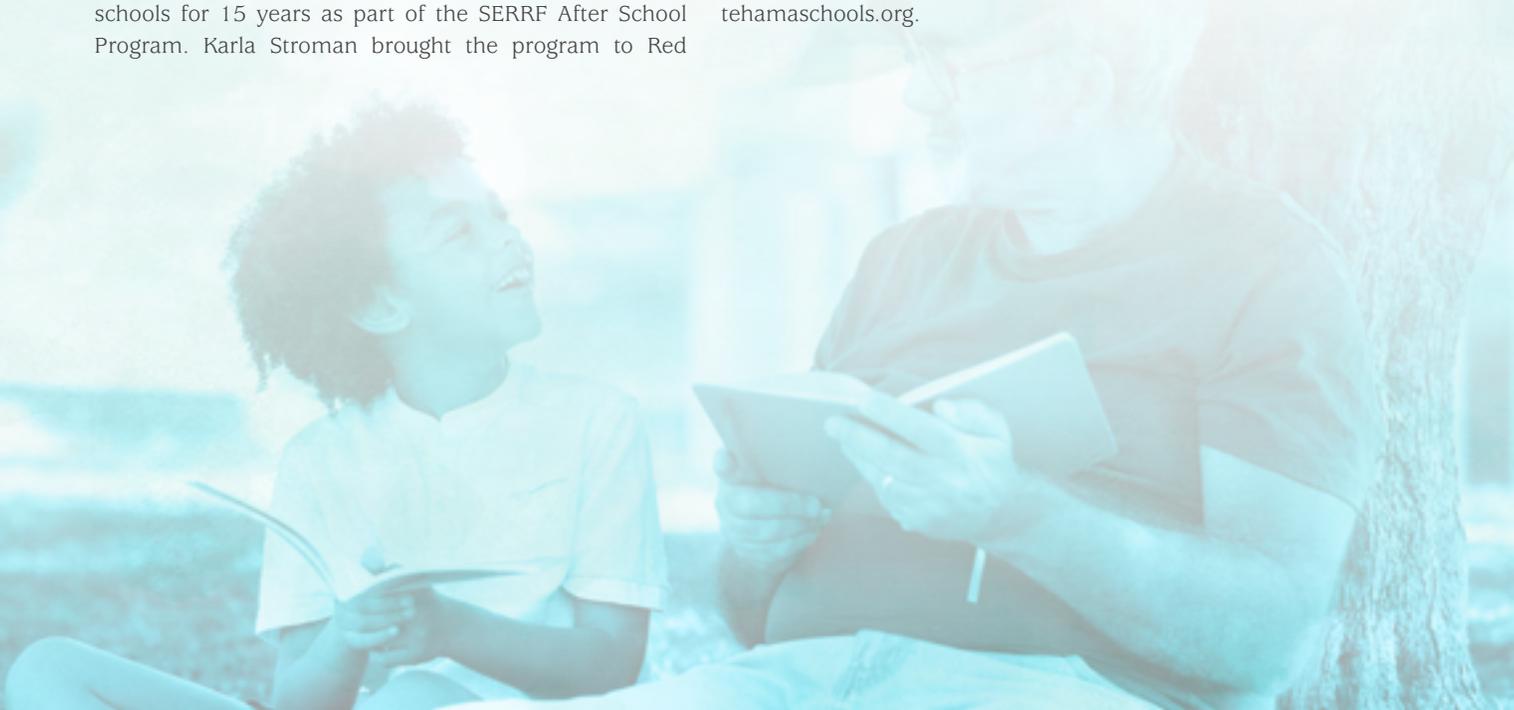
Bluff and is a big believer. *"Academic achievement results in Tehama County have mirrored those positively reported by the Chico Reading Pals Program. Local students participating in Reading Pals have demonstrated an average of 1 year's growth in grade level reading, during a 16 week period, attending two sessions per week"*

Reading champion Kim Clawson and her mom were Reading Pals to students during the pandemic and still persevered via Zoom. *"Students continued to log on using their Chromebooks, wearing headphones so they could read with us during their scheduled time,"* said Clawson. *"We really admired the dedication of the students and the commitment of the schools."* Not only did their students maintain during the pandemic, they gained reading skills.

Using the same reading assessments as the local school system, Reading Pals measures student progress throughout the year and provides volunteers with updates so they can see the tangible impact of their time. The results are remarkable—**90% of Reading Pals students quadruple their reading levels, often maintaining those gains through middle school and beyond.**

## ***Join the Movement***

If you've ever wanted to make a difference but weren't sure where to start, Reading Pals is expanding in Tehama County. No special skills are needed—just your time, your presence, and your belief in the potential of every child. For more information, contact Jordyn Tinsley at the Tehama County Department of Education at [jtinsley@tehamaschools.org](mailto:jtinsley@tehamaschools.org).



# SPREADING LITERACY

WITH THE LITTLE FREE LIBRARY

The Little Free Library movement began in 2009 in Hudson, Wisconsin, when Todd Bol built a small book-sharing box as a tribute to his mother, a teacher and avid reader. He placed it in his front yard with a simple message: "Take a book, leave a book." The idea quickly caught on. By 2011, there were over 400 Little Free Libraries across the country. By 2016, that number had grown to more than 50,000 in all 50 U.S. states and 70 countries. **As of 2025, more than 200,000 Little Free Libraries exist in 128 countries around the world.**

In Tehama County, the first Little Free Libraries were built in 2015, thanks to the efforts of then-retiring Tehama County Superintendent of Schools, Larry Champion. His initiative sparked a local movement, and **today there are over 30 Little Free Libraries throughout the county.** Each one reflects the personality of its builder and the spirit of its community and most are large enough to hold dozens of books. You may have seen the Tehama Reads Book Trailer, an old horse trailer transformed into a mobile Little Free Library, at the Red Bluff Farmers Market or other local events.

Each library is sponsored and maintained by a local steward. If it's officially registered with the Little Free Library organization, you'll see a brass charter sign with its unique charter number. A map of all registered libraries can be found on the Little Free Library website ([www.littlefreelibrary.org](http://www.littlefreelibrary.org)).



## WHY DOES BOOK ACCESS MATTER?

We are facing a growing literacy crisis. **Today in the United States, more than 30 million adults cannot read or write above a third-grade level.** Studies have repeatedly shown that books in the hands of children have a meaningful impact on improving literacy. The more books in or near the home, the more likely a child will learn and love to read. **61% of U.S. children living at or below the poverty line have no books at home.**

Little Free Library book-sharing boxes play an essential role by providing 24/7 access to books (and encouraging a love of reading!) in areas where books are scarce. At the Little Free Library nonprofit, we're working to fill book deserts and grant libraries to underserved communities through our Impact Library Program and other initiatives.

Through Little Free Library book exchanges, millions of books are exchanged each year, profoundly increasing access to books for readers of all ages and backgrounds.

- **72% of volunteer stewards have met more neighbors** because of their Little Free Library
- On average, one book is shared in a Little Free Library every day!
- **98% of people say their neighborhood feels like a friendlier place** because of a Little Free Library

Source: [www.littlefreelibrary.org](http://www.littlefreelibrary.org)

Tehama Reads serves as the unofficial steward of the Little Free Libraries in our area. The program provides new books for the libraries and distributes them at community events. Gently used books are also collected and redistributed. Donations can be dropped off at the Tehama County Department of Education on Lincoln Street.

If you'd like to support local literacy efforts through Tehama Reads, visit our website and complete the Interest Form. Here are a few ways you can help:

**Build a Little Free Library** – Plans and instructions are available on the Tehama Reads website.

**Sponsor a Little Free Library** – Have one placed on your property.

**Request the Tehama Reads Book Trailer** – Reserve a date for it to appear at your school, community event, or gathering.

**Donate Books** – New or gently used children's and adult books are always welcome.

**Support Our Mission** – Make a monetary donation to help us buy books and maintain our libraries.

**Join Tehama Reads** – Be part of a team dedicated to promoting literacy in our community.

Together, we can share the joy of reading—one book at a time.

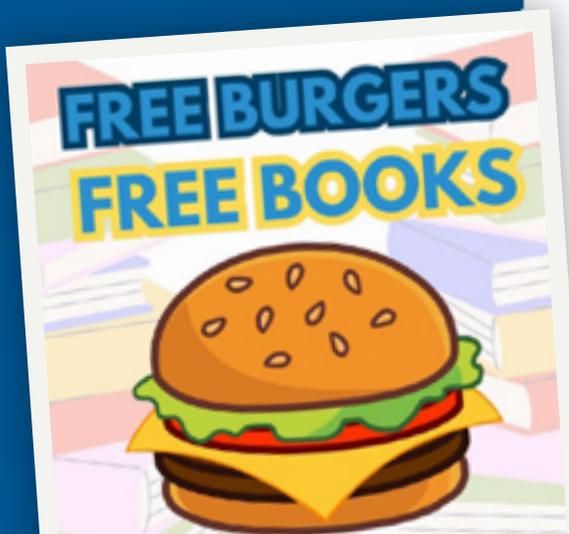
# LITERACY IS EVERYONE'S BUSINESS

Everyone has a role to play in improving Tehama County literacy rates, including our business community. This year, First 5 Tehama partnered with 36 businesses in the Businesses with Books program. Dignity Health Lassen Medical Clinic/Red Oaks and Bud's Jolly Kone are just two examples of businesses getting creative to help our young readers.

## *Bud's Jolly Kone Marries Books and Burgers*

Nearly 200 books — and just as many burgers — were given away on April 24 during a community event hosted by Bud's Jolly Kone. Aimed at kids ages 16 and under, the giveaway drew an enthusiastic crowd and reached capacity by 4pm. The event also featured special guest readers Heidi Mendenhall, Brad Mendenhall, Karla Stroman, Melinda Brooks, and Nancy Vicuna who helped make the afternoon both fun and inspiring for young readers.

The Local Childcare Planning Council (LPC) prompted the idea by releasing mini grants to support National Week of the Young Child activities in April. The LPC has now done 2 years of mini grants to inspire business and community based organizations to host events for kids. Bud's Owner Courtney Grames applied and received the grant, and First 5 Tehama came alongside and helped her to double the number of books.



# If You Hang Around a Library...



There's an idiom that goes, "If you hang around a barbershop long enough, eventually you'll get a haircut." What if we modified this to be, "If you hang around a library long enough, eventually you'll read a book?"

Libraries, once known as quiet places for reading, researching, and borrowing books, have evolved into community hubs. At any of Tehama County Library's three locations (Red Bluff, Corning, and Los Molinos), patrons can borrow books and movies in multiple formats, connect their device to wi-fi or use a computer, attend a meeting or class, use a study room, learn how to use a digital device, get help with resume or interview skills, hear a story, do arts and crafts, collect Pokémon, play games, get out of the weather, connect to local resources, gain work experience through volunteering, research local history or their own genealogy, or simply be in a place where they will feel welcome and accepted. All these experiences are free, and while few overtly focus on reading, there is a case to be made that each of them encourages literacy.

**Why does literacy matter?** So often when County Librarian Alicia Meyer talks with adults, they tell her, "I don't like to read" but the ability to read and comprehend is foundational to both day-to-day and long-term success.

*"Personally, I don't like to bowl,"* said Meyer, *"But if you told me that by regularly slinging a smooth rock down a high-gloss wooden path toward a grouping of somewhat human-shaped objects I would be better equipped to cook, drive, succeed at school or work, vote, navigate healthcare systems, travel, and similarly set up my children for success, I'd immediately start shopping for the most glittery bowling shoes I could find."*

This is where libraries come in. By offering a variety of activities, resources, social opportunities, and edutainment (*education + entertainment*) to all community members free of charge, libraries are inviting everyone to join the literacy league (*bring your own shoes; monogrammed shirt optional*). Reading books is not the only entry point to literacy, just as circulating books is not the only service provided by libraries.

*"Our goal is to offer something for everyone: to spark curiosity, encourage discovery, provide a safe space, develop opportunities, and elevate community well-being,"* said Meyer. *"Each of these functions support and are supported by literacy. Besides, if you hang around a library long enough, eventually you will read a book."*

# more than just **MEDICAL CARE**

At Dignity Health Lassen Medical Clinic and Red Oaks Medical Group, the vision of nurturing a child's physical health while sparking their developing mind through the magic of a story has become a reality through new pediatric literacy initiatives. The clinics have long discussed ways to create an environment where patients and parents feel comfortable, engaged, and welcome—while also addressing the literacy challenges faced by many youth in Tehama County. To meet these goals, two distinct programs are being introduced within the Pediatrics Department to foster learning and development.

The first initiative is the relaunch of a free library program in the waiting room of the Pediatrics Department. A designated bookshelf allows young patients to select a book to take home, transforming moments of nervousness or fear into opportunities for joy and curiosity. This program is made possible through a partnership with Tehama Reads, which provides the books for the department that serves approximately 7,500 children annually.

The second initiative is a partnership with First 5 Tehama to promote Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. Through this collaboration, the clinic provides parents with informational handouts containing a website link and QR code to help them register their children for the program. Once enrolled, children ages 0 to 5 receive one free book each month delivered directly to their home. In addition, Dignity Health Lassen Medical Clinic and Red Oaks Medical Group have committed to

making an annual donation to ensure the program's continued support for early childhood literacy.

*Doctor Danielle Dixon, a pediatrician at Dignity Health Lassen Medical Clinic and a huge fan of Dolly Parton, quoted the country legend, "You can never get enough books into the hands of a child."*

*She further emphasized, "there have been studies conducted that show by 3 years of age there is a 30 million word gap between the children from the wealthiest and the poorest families. It is studies such as these that amplify the importance of the literacy initiatives that are being implemented here."*

Dignity Health Lassen Medical Clinic and Red Oaks Medical Group recognize the profound importance of early literacy and are proud to play a role in supporting lifelong learning for local children. The joy seen on a child's face when receiving a book in the office — or the stories parents share about the positive effects of these mailed books — are deeply meaningful. These moments exemplify the heart of the clinic's mission: to care for both the body and the mind. The clinics remain dedicated to strengthening partnerships that ensure every child has access to the enriching world of books and the foundational skills for future success that reading provides.



*Expect More Tehama believes that we must all work to create the conditions where our youngest to oldest youth can thrive. Across Tehama County, two backpack projects show what's possible when care, connection, and local leadership unite to lift up families.*

# TWO BACKPACK PROJECTS

## *One Evolving Community Spirit*

### ***A Legacy of Giving: The Back to School Project***

Founded in 2004 by local resident Kim Berry, the “Back to School Project” began with a simple mission: to help children start each school year with pride, dignity, and a feeling of self-worth. What started as a small, church-led effort quickly became a countywide tradition. Families gathered at parks and community centers to receive school-clothes, backpacks, school supplies and haircuts for that crucial first week of school — a meaningful response to a real community need. Over the years, the Back to School Project served over 4000 K-12 children.

This year, the Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians fully funded and managed the event for the first time. **During their annual Great Shopping Day, 131 children received backpacks, clothing, school supplies, haircuts, and sports physicals.** The project’s evolution from founder to foundation reflects what can happen when the right conditions are in place — not only for today’s families, but for generations to come.

*“I have loved serving the families of our community and wanted to pass this project to an organization that would love it as I have,”* said Berry.

*“These children are the future of our community, and every backpack, every pair of shoes, every haircut ... is a reminder that they are valued.”*

**TRIBAL CHAIRMAN BRANDIN PAYA,  
PASKENTA BAND OF NOMLAKI INDIANS**

### ***End of Summer Celebration: The Library Event***

Two years ago, a second backpack giveaway originated with Tehama County Children’s Services, led by Tanya Moore, Director of Child Support Services, who recognized the power of giving every child a strong start. As community needs have grown, so has the event—expanding beyond county departments such as Children’s Services, Probation, and the Library to include a wide range of partners like the 20-30 Club, First 5 Tehama, and local businesses such as Driscoll’s.

The event has found its home at the Tehama County Library in Red Bluff. This year’s expanded celebration featured a carnival, adding to a welcoming, stress-free, and inclusive atmosphere.

The second annual End of Summer Celebration brought together 15 community partners, bilingual staff, and a carnival-style environment designed to lower barriers and create

connection. Nearly 400 children received backpacks and supplies — no eligibility required.

### ***Why It Matters***

In a county where nearly 15% of residents live below the poverty line, every act of care matters. These two projects demonstrate that there is no single way to meet a need — only many paths that, together, build a stronger system of support.



# Building Pathways in **HEALTHCARE**

## SHASTA COLLEGE TEHAMA'S SUMMER CNA CLASS

This summer, the Shasta College Tehama Campus welcomed an inspiring group of students to its Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA) program—of the maximum class number of 15, 10 were still in high school. Most had just completed their junior year, making this one of the youngest and most enthusiastic cohorts yet. The oldest student in the class was just 23!

The class, taught by Shasta College instructor Danielle Murr, brought together students from across the county, including Red Bluff High School, Los Molinos High School, and Corning High School. Each student spent the summer gaining hands-on experience and classroom instruction that prepared them to become Certified Nurse Assistants—a critical first step into the healthcare field.

*"I had an amazing class this summer," said Murr. "Most of my students either had just graduated from high school or had just finished their junior year. I love that this program is growing, and the more outreach we can do to surrounding schools, the more opportunities we can create."*

*"I love that this program is growing, and the more outreach we can do to surrounding schools, the more opportunities we can create."*

DANIELLE MURR

This early start gives high school students a valuable advantage toward their healthcare careers, introducing them to patient care, professionalism, and the nature of serving others. Many graduates of the program continue on to nursing or medical programs at Shasta College and beyond.

Outreach efforts led by the Shasta College team are already underway to expand recruitment in 2026, helping more local students access this opportunity close to home.

According to Shasta College's Student Success Coordinator Sherri Poole, all the students from the Summer 2025 class studied hard, got very good grades and every one of them secured their CNA License after taking their State CNA exams.

Poole advises interested students to start the application process a few months ahead of time. The classes fill up quickly on a first-come, first-served basis based on completion of the requirements. The Spring 2026 Nurse Assistant Program starts March 23, 2026.



# NEW DIGITAL LITERACY CLASSES

*Launch This Fall in Tehama County & the Region*

Tehama County residents have new opportunities to gain essential digital skills—and a pathway to confidence in today’s online world. Thanks to funding from the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) Broadband Adoption Grant to North State Together and on to Expect More Tehama, a comprehensive series of free digital literacy classes will begin this fall, serving local residents over the next two years.

## ***Building Digital Confidence— From Basics to Business***

Participants can choose from several hands-on classes offered in English and Spanish, both in person and online (via Zoom). Each course runs for three weeks with two 2-hour sessions per week, allowing flexibility for working adults, caregivers, and job seekers.

The series includes a Beginner Digital Navigation Skills, where participants learn to use computers, navigate the internet, send emails, and use common online tools—with a friendly introduction to artificial intelligence (AI). From there, learners can continue through Intermediate and Advanced Digital Navigation Skills, the latter featuring Wix Studio website design—a chance to build a real, functional website while mastering digital creativity.

Each course offers 12 hours of instruction, and participants who complete their training will receive a certificate of completion. High school students are welcome to enroll, but must be 18 years old by the time of completion to be counted in official reporting.

*“Digital access isn’t just about devices—it’s about confidence, connection, and opportunity. These classes help ensure that every resident, no matter their age or background, can participate fully in today’s digital world.”*

KATHY GARCIA  
EXPECT MORE TEHAMA

## ***Other specialized courses include:***

- ***Money Matters: Digital Finance*** – Practical lessons on budgeting, credit, investments, and financial planning in the digital era.
- ***Digital Health & Wellness*** – Tools for managing health care online, scheduling appointments, and accessing trustworthy resources.
- ***Digital Entrepreneurship*** – A hands-on guide to launching online businesses and using technology to grow ideas into sustainable ventures.

## ***How to Enroll***

Classes begin this fall, with cohorts planned through 2027. A minimum of 20 participants is required for in-person sessions, which will be hosted at community locations across the county.

Interested participants can contact Kathy Garcia for upcoming class schedules, in-person class coordination and enrollment details. Email [Kathy@expectmoretehama.com](mailto:Kathy@expectmoretehama.com). Also watch Expect More’s Facebook page for new class announcements.

After the first 50 residents complete their specific course, Expect More will enter their names into a drawing for an Amazon giftcard!

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## COURSES

### Digital Navigation Skills

- ✓ Beginning, Intermediate and Advanced

### Money Matters: Digital Finance

- ✓ Budget smarter & build credit

### Digital Marketing & Social Media

- ✓ Build online confidence

### Digital Tools for Entrepreneurs

- ✓ Online tools for your business

### AI: Prompting Basic Skills

- ✓ Clear prompts to get results

### Digital Health & Wellness

- ✓ Manage health with technology



For inquiries, call or text:  
**530-526-0831**

Different online classes offered each month.  
In person classes offered in 2026.

# BUILDING FUTURES

## HOW A NEW YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP IS MAKING SOLID CAREERS VISIBLE

In Tehama County, a powerful shift is underway—one that places skilled trades front and center in the future of local youth. Through the Youth Apprenticeship Project, regional leaders are building real pathways from high school into high-demand careers in agriculture, manufacturing, and natural resource trades. These aren't just job "experiences"—they're structured, intentional programs where students earn, learn, and build confidence in themselves and their skills. Whether it's welding, ag mechanics, fabrication, or equipment operations, the focus is clear: create a foundation for meaningful, long-term careers rooted in the local economy.

Thanks to the California Jobs First Catalyst Grant—and with the Job Training Center (JTC) serving as fiscal agent and lead convener—this pilot is reimagining how early workforce training is designed, funded, and delivered.

*"When we design programs like this with both student outcomes and employer needs in mind, we're investing in our region's future workforce. It's a win-win—especially in hard-to-fill trades." — Carrie Ferchaud, Job Training Center*

### **Why Clarity and Visibility Matter for Students**

When opportunities and requirements are clear and visible, students can make better choices about their futures. Too often, high school students feel unsure about what careers exist locally, what skills those jobs require, or what steps will actually get them there. When pathways are made transparent—through visual maps, work-based learning, and clear checklists—students can begin to connect what they're learning today to what they want to do tomorrow.

Visibility also builds confidence. When students can see how courses, certifications, and work-based learning experiences line up with real jobs and wages, they're more likely to engage and persist. They start to recognize their own progress—mastering a tool, or completing a project—as meaningful milestones toward a career, not just classroom assignments.

Finally, clarity helps level the playing field. Students who may not have family connections in a trade or industry gain access to the same information as everyone else. When expectations, pathways,

and employer connections are easy to understand, every student—regardless of background—has a fair shot at discovering their strengths and pursuing a direction that fits them.

### **Education–Industry partnership at work**

At Red Bluff High School, Corning High School, and across the region, Career Technical Education (CTE) instructors are working hand-in-hand with employers to shape the experience.

*"Our students light up when they see how classroom learning connects to real work. These partnerships give them that bridge—and open doors they didn't know existed." — Rochelle Barajas, CTE Coordinator, Red Bluff High School*

*"I'm thrilled to see our schools collaborating across district lines. This cross-county approach sends a powerful message to students and our local employers: we are united in creating career pathways that matter." — Emily Brown, CTE Coordinator, Corning High School*

Together, teachers and employers co-design projects, align safety and quality expectations, and calibrate assessments so students get consistent feedback—whether they're in the lab, on a job shadow, or in a paid placement.

*"This cross-county approach sends a powerful message to students and our local employers: we are united in creating career pathways that matter."*

EMILY BROWN

### **How the youth apprenticeship works**

- **Launch:** Fall 2025, with flagship cohorts at Corning High and Red Bluff High.
- **Structure:** Blended learning that combines classroom labs, employer mentoring, and work-based learning (WBL).
- **Paid Progression:** As students demonstrate competencies, they become eligible for paid placements aligned to employer demand.
- **Support:** Transportation coordination where possible, work-readiness coaching, and bilingual communication with families.
- **Credentials:** Stacked micro-credentials/industry credentials and post-secondary credit where available.

Tehama County is moving from isolated initiatives to a durable culture of opportunity—a shared playbook that lifts hands-on careers, equips students with guided on-ramps to good jobs, and strengthens the regional talent pipeline.

# BUSINESS AT THE TABLE

## INDUSTRY AND EDUCATION UNITE AT PJ HELICOPTERS

In October, more than 35 business, education, and community leaders gathered at PJ Helicopters for the first Industry Engagement Meeting for the Youth Industrial Mechanic Apprenticeship Program—an evening centered on industry insight and in-demand skills.

Guests enjoyed a behind-the-scenes tour of PJ's impressive helicopter hangars and machine shops, where precision, safety, and innovation take flight every day. The visit offered a rare glimpse into one of the region's most advanced operations—and one of many North State companies seeking motivated, trainable mechanics and maintenance staff.

Following the tour, the Tehama County CTE Coalition hosted a listening session to better understand the skills employers value most in today's workforce. Conversations highlighted technical and mechanical proficiency, computer literacy, fabrication and welding skills, and a host of essential "soft skills" such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving, reliability, and work ethic.

These insights directly inform how CTE classes and early workforce programs are designed. Teachers and staff from Red Bluff, Los Molinos, and Corning High Schools, along with Shasta College, appreciated the opportunity to listen to and connect directly with local industry partners.

The Youth Apprenticeship in Industrial Mechanics is a groundbreaking initiative that bridges classroom learning with real-world application, providing students with paid, hands-on experience while building a reliable pipeline of skilled talent.

*"When education and industry sit at the same table, everyone wins,"* said Carrie Ferchaud, Executive Director of the Job Training Center. *"Students gain clear pathways to local careers, and businesses gain the confidence that tomorrow's workforce is being trained with their needs in mind."*

As this work continues, additional opportunities for engagement are planned. Local employers remain key to shaping the Youth Apprenticeship model—ensuring it reflects the real needs, standards, and expectations of industry.



## IDEA and the CTE Wheel Experience

This year marks the 50th Anniversary of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This landmark legislation protects the educational rights of students with disabilities and provides them with access to programs and curriculum that their peers are receiving.

At Red Bluff High School, hands-on learning takes place through the CTE Wheel — a Career Technical Education exploration class designed to give students in special populations a chance to explore a variety of trades and technical skills in a safe, supportive environment. The unique rotating format provides a diverse range of potential careers through rotating classes. This helps students with special needs identify areas where they might have an interest and aptitude, leading to more informed choices about future CTE pathways and education.

This year, 16 students are participating, each rotating through a series of introductory CTE experiences that build confidence, spark curiosity, and open doors to future possibilities.

The journey begins in the fall with general career exploration under the guidance of instructor Mr. Echeverra. From there, students move to the school farm, where they learn about agriculture and orchard maintenance in the school's own olive orchard—an experience that blends teamwork, responsibility, and care for living things.

Next, students head to the auto shop, where they dive into the basics of vehicle maintenance. From changing tires and checking fluid levels to understanding what to do after an accident, these lessons teach both independence and practical life skills that extend well beyond the classroom.

When spring arrives, students take their learning to new levels in woodshop, mastering safe tool use — measuring tapes, hammers, and power tools — and assembling projects from pre-cut materials crafted by Level 3 Construction Pathway students.

The following rotation immerses them in the Fire Fighting class, where they suit up in full gear, learn about fire safety and emergency response, and even earn Stop the Bleed certification.

The final rotation brings creativity and technology together through 3D modeling and design. Students bring their ideas to life using 3D printers and laser cutters — producing tangible, take-home pieces.

*"We are proud to offer Career Technical Education opportunities to all students,"* said Superintendent Todd Brose. *"These real-life project-based learning experiences are critical to the development of our youth, especially those with special needs."*

By year's end, these students have not only gained a toolkit of practical skills — they've discovered their own potential. The CTE Wheel reminds us that with the right guidance and opportunities, every student can find their spark, their confidence, and their future.

# CA JOBS FIRST - REAL WORLD SKILL DEVELOPMENT

The news cycle often spotlights crime or tragedy, overlooking quiet yet mighty work unfolding across our region. Since 2022, the State of California has invested in regional pathway and economic development efforts designed to expand opportunity in every corner of the state. For the rural North State—where residents sometimes feel forgotten in Sacramento’s policy conversations—these investments are more than welcome; they’re transformative.

Ensuring that every region shares in prosperity takes intentional, coordinated effort. California Jobs First, a statewide initiative, was created to support locally led solutions that reflect the character, assets, and ambitions of each community.

Over the past three years, California Jobs First has empowered regional teams to design community-led, regionally driven economic strategies through its Regional Investment Initiative. In our region, this work is led by Chico State’s North State Planning and Development Collective and the Sierra Institute for Community & Environment. In addition, Catalyst grants, **\$9 million for our region, have funded 22 unique projects in 11 counties.** From Modoc to Tehama, meaningful projects are underway.

Tehama County is fortunate to host several projects: Youth Apprenticeship in Industrial Mechanics through the Tehama County CTE Coalition; the Strengthening Environmental Stewardship through CTE and Construction Management (a Tiny House Build) at Red Bluff High School; and the Student and Landowner Education and Watershed Stewardship (SLEWS) habitat restoration partnership between the Resource Conservation District and Los Molinos High School—all powerful examples of California Jobs First in action, creating worker pipelines and real-world skill development for the future.

## Learn More:

- **North State Projects** - <https://sierrainstitute.us/rural-community-development/north-state-jobs-first/>
- **California Jobs First State Economic Blueprint** - <https://jobsfirst.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/Economic-Blueprint.pdf>

## Building a Sustainable Future

### RED BLUFF HIGH SCHOOL'S TINY HOUSE PROJECT

At Red Bluff High School, students are taking construction education to the next level. Through the Tiny House Project, students in the Residential Construction class will construct a sustainable tiny home while learning about environmentally responsible building practices.

The initiative deepens and expands the school’s Construction pathway with a special focus on efficiency and sustainability. Students won’t just learn to build—they’ll learn how to build wisely, exploring how eco-conscious materials, efficient systems, and thoughtful design can reduce environmental impact and support healthier living spaces.

Students will work through all stages of residential construction, guided by teachers, industry experts, and local employers. Along the way, they’ll gain practical skills in project management, framing, electrical, and finish work—while also learning about sustainable materials, waste reduction, and energy-efficient systems.

A key goal of the project is to strengthen ties between education and the construction sector. Local employers and trades professionals are invited to serve as guest instructors, and material sponsors. Their involvement helps bridge the gap between the classroom and the job site—providing mentorship, authentic problem-solving experiences, and direct exposure to career opportunities.

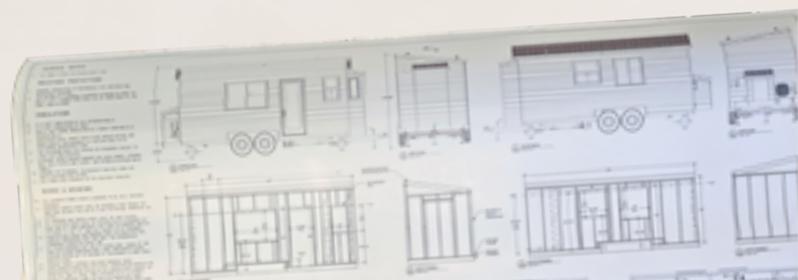
For employers, this collaboration offers a meaningful way to engage the next generation of skilled workers. For students, it’s a chance to connect with mentors, and learn the realities of the trade.

The Tiny House Project is funded through a subgrant awarded to Expect More Tehama from the Educating Future Environmental Stewards in the North State initiative, funded by the CA Jobs First – Catalyst Program in the North State Region.

## Project Timeline

- September-October 2025: Curriculum and trailer purchased; industry engagement begins. Construction begins; industry experts scheduled
- October–March: Industry experts participate in classrooms; tours and progress tracking
- April 2026: Final projects completed; student tour
- May 2026: Evaluation, reflection, and public showcase event. Sale of the tiny house funds the next year’s build.

Ultimately, the Tiny House Project represents more than a build—it’s a blueprint for the future. It connects sustainability, craftsmanship, and education in a way that empowers students to see themselves as builders of both homes and hope.



# SOWING STEWARDSHIP

STUDENTS STEP INTO THE SOIL AT  
LOS MOLINOS HIGH SCHOOL

In a quiet corner of the Los Molinos High School campus, something transformative is taking root.

Thanks to California Jobs First Catalyst funding, a powerful partnership has emerged between Los Molinos High School, the Resource Conservation District of Tehama County (RCDTC), and Expect More Tehama (EMT). Together, they're launching a Center for Land-Based Learning program called Student and Landowner Education and Watershed Stewardship (SLEWS) program.

Their chosen project is designed to connect students to the land—and to each other—through integrating sustainable agriculture, habitat restoration, and youth development into a real-world learning experience.

## ***Phase 1: Planning and Planting Purpose***

The project began with collaboration. Listening to the goals of LMHS staff and understanding the vision for their on-campus farm, RCDTC created a customized irrigation and planting schematic. The design supports the school's production needs while investing in long-term soil health and water conservation. With input from ag teachers and conservation experts, the farm is being transformed into a demonstration site for regenerative practices, including cover cropping and native hedgerow installation.

## ***Phase 2: Building the Team***

The next step is building the team. Teachers hand-pick 20–25 students to participate in the program, while RCDTC recruits and trains mentors—professionals in conservation, agriculture, and land management—who will guide students through each phase. Classroom orientations help students understand their role as land stewards, and mentors prepare to work side-by-side with students to translate knowledge into action.

*"We talk a lot about preparing students for the future—but this project lets them shape it,"* said Megan Weiss, Principal at Los Molinos High School. *"Our students aren't just learning science or agriculture—they're practicing leadership, problem-solving, and how to be stewards of their own campus."*

## ***Phase 3: Learning in Action***

In the months ahead, students will roll up their sleeves and get to work during a series of three Field Days. Under the guidance of teachers and mentors, they'll install drip irrigation systems, plant native hedgerows to support beneficial insects, apply mulch to retain moisture, and implement best management practices to protect soil health. These activities are more than farm chores—they're hands-on lessons in resilience, responsibility, and regeneration.

The final Field Day will culminate in something truly special: a student-led tour, where SLEWS students will introduce younger students to the restoration work and conservation principles in practice at the high school farm—becoming teachers themselves.

## ***Growing More Than Crops***

The outcomes of this project are both tangible and intangible:

- Improved soil health, water efficiency, and native habitat
- Increased awareness of ecological careers and conservation methods
- Stronger relationships between students, landowners, and mentors
- A deeper understanding among youth of their role as environmental stewards

*"This project is proof that when students are trusted with real work, they rise to the occasion,"* shared Brin Greer, District Development & Public Engagement Lead for RCDTC. *"We're not just showing them what stewardship looks like—we're helping them live it."*

With support from the Catalyst Grant, this pilot is planting seeds for something much bigger—student agency, community connection, and a new generation of environmental leaders ready to steward the land they call home.

*The SLEWS Project is funded through a subgrant awarded to Expect More Tehama from the Educating Future Environmental Stewards in the North State initiative, funded by the CA Jobs First – Catalyst Program in the North State Region.*

# FROM CORNING TO CAREER SUCCESS:

Many students finish high school without a clear picture of the career paths available to them. Some options—like “construction”—feel too broad, while others remain almost invisible. For two Corning graduates, Jeremiah Tinker and Cody Norbury, that uncertainty eventually led to opportunity. In 2023, both enrolled in Shasta College’s Heavy Equipment Operations program, completed their training, and launched rewarding careers in high-demand fields where skilled operators are always needed.

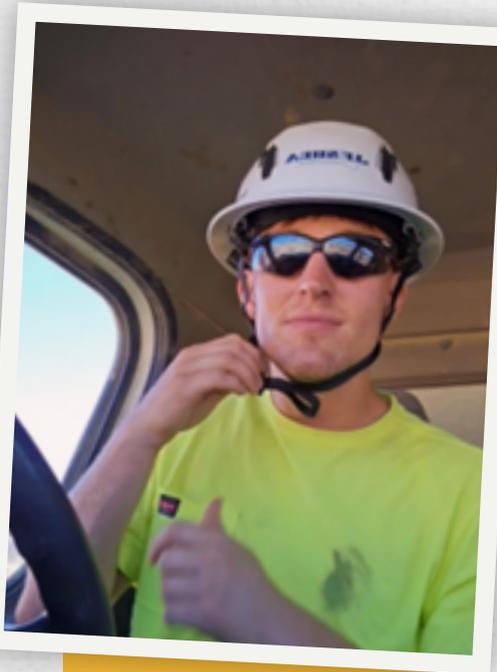
## **A Teacher’s Son Finds His Own Track**

Jeremiah Tinker graduated from Corning High School in 2023. His dad David is a well-known Natural Resources teacher at the high school. At 18, like many young people, Jeremiah wasn’t sure what his future held. Throughout high school, he enjoyed sports and his fabrication and welding classes but hadn’t connected those interests to a career.

*“I knew early on I wasn’t interested in a white-collar desk job,”* Jeremiah said. *“I loved my ag and welding classes—the hands-on work and problem-solving.”* His parents were supportive and tried to expose him to a variety of options. *“I talked to linemen, electricians, firefighters, heavy-equipment operators—anyone who’d tell me about their day.”*

When he learned that dozer operators working with Cal Fire were in high demand, Jeremiah decided to give Shasta College’s Heavy Equipment program a try rather than start a four-year degree and pile up debt.

*“This was my first real introduction to a truly hard day’s work,”* Jeremiah recalls. *“I’d been a lifeguard and worked retail...but this was different.”*



*“This was my first real introduction to a truly hard day’s work. I’d been a lifeguard and worked retail...but this was different.”*

JEREMIAH TINKER

## **A Second Chance, a New Direction**

Cody Norbury’s journey took a little longer. He graduated from Centennial High, Corning High’s continuation school, back in 2012. *“I’ll be honest—I wasn’t fond of high school,”* Cody said with a laugh. *“I liked hanging out with friends, hunting, fishing, playing video games. I was a handful back then.”*

Cody was familiar with construction and logging growing up. After high school, he worked for a decade at Sierra Pacific Windows, then tried other jobs—from mail carrier to Bell Carter—but nothing quite fit. And he now had several small children to think about. Cody was feeling the strain of trying to support his family when his fiancée encouraged him to look into Shasta College’s Heavy Equipment program. He credits Shasta’s Program Coordinator Janice Logan for helping him navigate the enrollment process.

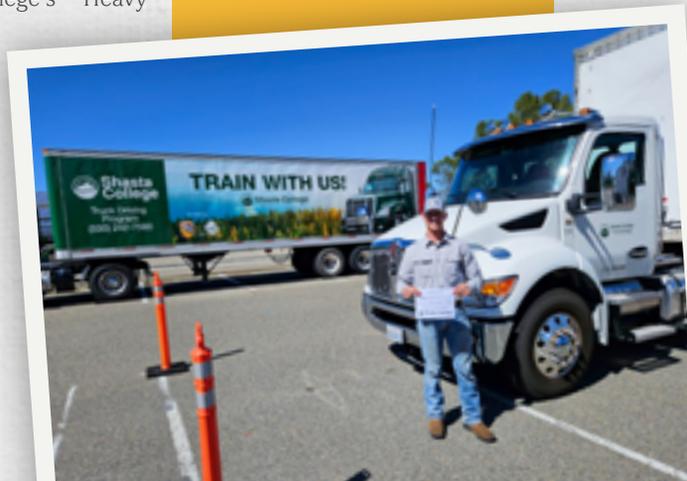
*“I went the first day knowing—this was it,”* Cody said. *“I just had to figure out what direction I wanted to take.”* While Cody went to school full time, his fiancée kept the family afloat.

Just before starting at Shasta, Cody ran into David Tinker at the gym. David was his former summer-school teacher, who connected him with Jeremiah. *“On the first day, Jeremiah showed up in all white—including white Jordans,”* Cody remembers, laughing. *“I said, oh man, we need to take you shopping.”*

## **Training that Transforms**

The program’s field training gave both men exposure to nearly every kind of heavy machinery in the industry. Instructor Troy Towery made a lasting impression on both. *“Troy has a way of making you feel capable—like you belong out there,”* Jeremiah said.

For Cody, that hands-on experience was key: *“Once I got*



# TWO PATHS TO THE DRIVER'S SEAT

*in the seat, I knew. Everything clicked. The training gave me confidence—and real skills employers want.”*

To complete the certificate, both men took classes like Watershed Management and Topcon GIS and welding which opened their eyes to how technical and diverse the industry really is. Jeremiah earned his Class A license, gaining the CDL that opened doors to more advanced positions. Before even graduating from the program, Cody took a position with general engineering contractor Tullis, Inc., a major supplier of aggregates and asphalt products and large construction projects.

One class that helped both was a career preparation class that included resume development, interview skills and guest speakers from the industry. Cody took job search seriously and started early knowing construction ramps up hiring in late spring. His persistence paid off and he was offered the position with Tullis, a union shop. A week later he canvassed the same businesses, this time with Jeremiah in tow. Jeremiah also landed a position but in the private sector. Today Cody is still with Tullis, Inc. as an Operating Engineers Local 3 journeyman heavy equipment operator and Jeremiah is an equipment operator with Eddie Axner Construction which provides commercial sitework, erosion control services, subdivisions, residential sitework and demolition. Both men still live in Corning and commute to work.

Several others from Corning have since followed Tinker and Norbury to Shasta College. Tinker's friend Josh Yee completed the program and also works at Eddie Axner Construction. Norbury's younger brother followed in his footsteps and is now an apprentice in the Operating Engineers Local 3 and works for Stimpel-Wiebelhaus Associates.

The goal is for CTE programs and youth apprenticeships to make pathways like those discovered by Tinker and Norbury visible sooner—helping students see, understand, and prepare for rewarding careers long before they leave high school.



*“Once I got in the seat, I knew. Everything clicked. The training gave me confidence—and real skills employers want.”*

CODY NORBURY

## **Advice for Students and CTE Programs**

Jeremiah often shares one piece of advice with high-school students still figuring things out:

*“Talk to local businesses and ask what an average day in their field looks like. You might think you know what you're getting into, but you really don't until you see it for yourself. Get out into the workplace as soon as you can.”*

Cody warns that “construction” is a broad, vague word that actually encompasses a lot of very different opportunities, from operating dozers on a fire to being a well-paid surveyor. *“A lot of the students, including myself, thought they wanted to run dozers on fires, but there's so much more to consider.”*

Both agree that giving students an opportunity to sit in the seat of the equipment is powerful. They like the idea of simulators and realize safety is a concern on real equipment, but nothing beats sitting in the real seat.

For both Jeremiah and Cody, Shasta College's Heavy Equipment Operations program became more than a training opportunity—it was a turning point. Different ages, different journeys—but the same lesson: **it's never too early or too late to climb into the driver's seat of your own future.**



# CONSTRUCTION BASICS CLASS COMES TO CORNING

In October 2025, Corning Adult School launched a new Construction Basics course taught by instructor Dan Proctor, who also leads the construction program at Centennial. With six years of teaching experience — including time at Corning High School — Proctor seeks to equip his students with practical skills to tackle common home repairs. His goal is to help students save money and gain confidence by learning how to handle basic plumbing and electrical issues on their own.

This Fall's class consists of ten students ranging from their twenties to mid-sixties, and a majority of the students are women. Proctor works with the class in both English and Spanish, ensuring all students understand the course content. The course is four weeks long, with two-hour sessions twice a week.

*Emphasis is placed on workplace safety, proper use of hand and power tools, measurement and layout techniques, and basic construction methods using common building materials. Students develop skills in interpreting simple construction drawings and applying industry-standard terminology. Recommended for adults seeking foundational skills in construction, individuals exploring careers in the trades, and homeowners or hobbyists wishing to gain practical building experience.*

Isabel Gonzalez, a student in the class, says “Although they are short classes and Mr. Proctor was only able to teach us the basics, it’s more than enough to give me the motivation to continue learning. He was efficient and helpful, and opened my eyes to the possibilities of what you can accomplish with knowing carpentry and the basics of electricity. They’re skills that will last you a lifetime.”

Upon successful completion, participants will possess the foundational knowledge and practical abilities required for entry-level construction tasks, home improvement projects, and further study in advanced construction training programs.

# HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATIONS COURSE EXPANDS TO RED BLUFF

For the first time, Shasta College offered its Heavy Equipment Operations & Maintenance class (CONS 46) at the Tehama Campus in Red Bluff, making it more accessible for local students. The class quickly filled all 15 spots ahead of the August 2025 start date.

The course is led by instructor Nicole Dawson and takes place on property provided by neighboring Cedar Creek Corporation, a local civil construction company. Students train on-site, learning both heavy equipment operations and essential safety and mechanical systems.

During a site visit, small groups could be seen running through their safety checklists before operating equipment. “Safety is the most important thing out here,” said Andrew Perreira of Red Bluff. Perreira hopes to combine his skills in machinery and welding.

“It’s all teamwork—there’s not a lot of visibility in the machines, so communication is everything,” he added.

For Kayli McCarley of Paynes Creek, the Red Bluff location made enrollment possible. “I have family in the business, and they’re all men, so I wanted to be the first female to do it,” she said. McCarley is pursuing a Heavy Machinery Certificate with plans to move into logging. “It’s great hands-on learning. I didn’t expect to be greasing or finding fuel filters—but I love how much we learn.”

The course will return to the Tehama Campus in January 2026.



# Shaping Tomorrow TOGETHER

BUILDING THE NORTH STATE'S CTE TEACHER PIPELINE

Throughout California, only twenty agencies are accredited to credential and prepare Career Technical Education (CTE) teachers, and the Tehama County Department of Education (TCDE) is proud to be one of them.

As the northernmost program in the state, TCDE specializes in supporting small and rural districts, providing a vital alternate credentialing pathway for professionals from industry who want to bring their expertise into the classroom. In Northern California, schools rely on CTE teachers not only for their technical expertise but also for their real-world experience, regional connections, and understanding of the strengths and challenges within our communities. TCDE's CTE Credentialing Program offers flexible coursework, local mentors, and personalized support that helps new teachers build instructional capacity in their school settings.

One such example is Brian Combs, a CTE Fire Science teacher at Corning High School and participant in TCDE's credentialing program. After serving as a firefighter, engine captain, and battalion chief, Brian now equips students with the skills and insights only lived experience can provide. His journey reflects the heart of TCDE's mission: shaping tomorrow by transforming local experts into local educators.



*The program is currently developing and supporting 55 CTE educators: 20 CTE teachers in their first year, 20 in their second year, and 15 traditional teachers who are expanding their credentials to include Career Technical Education*



California's 2025 Master Plan for Career Education calls for a strong connection between K-12 education, higher education, and industry. The plan recognizes that CTE teachers are essential to achieving equitable access to quality careers, especially in regions where pathways from education to employment are harder to see. By building a local pipeline of CTE teachers, TCDE is not only implementing the Master Plan's vision - it's localizing it.

Building a local pipeline is more than credentialing - it's a regional investment. The North Far North continues to face shortages in agriculture, manufacturing, public safety, and health science. Developing CTE educators helps meet these workforce needs while retaining skilled professionals within our communities.

*Are you or someone you know interested in exploring a career as a CTE teacher?* Contact Dr. Jillian Damon - Director Teacher Preparation, Tehama County Department of Education at [cteteacherprep@tehamaschools.org](mailto:cteteacherprep@tehamaschools.org) or 530-528-7350.

*Pictured: CTE Fire Science Teacher Brian Combs*

# BRIDGING EDUCATION AND INDUSTRY

## TEHAMA COUNTY'S INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO CAREER AND TECHNICAL LEARNING

The Tehama County Department of Education's Bridge to College and Career Department officially launched the 2025–2026 school year with an exciting new wave of innovation: mobile learning labs. Designed to bring hands-on learning directly to students, these mobile classrooms are redefining what Career and Technical Education (CTE) looks like in Tehama County schools. The Director of Bridge to College and Career, Patrick Mair, highlights: *"The Bridge to College and Career (B2CC) team empowers districts and students by connecting career exploration, personalized college advising, and pathway alignment to real labor market needs—turning curiosity into purpose and education into opportunity."*

The first of the two labs, the STEAM trailer (representing Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math), caters to the creative and curious mind. Inside, students are introduced to the world of robotics through VEX robotics systems that teach coding and problem-solving, while the Glowforge laser cutter turns imagination into tangible creations through intricate wood engravings. For those with an interest in the medical field, the trailer also offers phlebotomy simulators, splint and spine-board training, dentistry modules, and suturing practice, giving students a genuine taste of future medical careers.

The TRADES trailer complements the STEAM experience with a variety of hands-on activities that highlight essential career pathways. A crowd favorite has been the forklift and backhoe simulators, popular among students for its video game-like interface. The trailer also houses advanced tools such as the X-Tool engraver and CNC router, alongside hands-on trainers for plumbing, electrical work, HVAC systems, and masonry.

From equipment purchasing to module installation, curriculum testing, and troubleshooting, these mobile labs have been years in the making. The TRADES trailer has made appearances in a few middle schools, while the STEAM trailer is hitting the road for the first time this fall. Early feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Students are not only excited to explore the simulators, but also eager to express their creativity through technology. Ultimately, the goal is to expose students to a wide range of hands-on experiences, helping them discover their individual interests and talents.

### ***Reimagining Engagement in the Classroom***

One of the greatest challenges facing schools today is keeping students engaged. Bridge to College and Career is partnering with teachers across the county to meet that challenge head-on with a hands-on approach that inspires curiosity and purpose. To help guide students in identifying their strengths, the program integrates YouScience, a career aptitude assessment that matches students to career paths aligned with their natural skills.

*"YouScience doesn't just measure what students like — it measures what they're naturally good at,"* said Kari Dodd, Project Lead for B2CC. *"Interests are shaped by what you've been exposed to, but aptitudes reveal what you're capable of. Once students see how their strengths align with real-world careers, their motivation and confidence grow."* Project Technician Michele Zollars added, *"Kids today want their education to have purpose. If we can give them hope and excitement for a particular career, then they can find their purpose."*

In addition to the mobile labs, the program supports classroom-based "tote activities," that can be used in the classroom. These totes cover a diverse range of topics, from agronomy and engineering to the newest modules in culinary arts, nutrition, and flight principles. A recently introduced 10-week robotics course also allows students to build and code their own robots, putting engineering and programming skills to the test in a fun and competitive way.

One of the program's most popular engineering activities has been bridge construction. Students receive a set budget and a list of materials, then must design and build a bridge capable of holding the most weight. The activity encourages critical thinking, teamwork, and creativity—skills essential for both education and the workforce. *"Students enjoy the engineering projects the most when they can imagine their own designs and make them a reality,"* said Zollars. Teachers have noted the remarkable engagement that follows, with students eager to improve their designs week after week.

### ***Building Pathways, Building Futures***

Bridge to College and Career continues to lead the way in expanding CTE opportunities and aligning education with workforce needs. *"We are continually learning that CTE has room to grow in the education system,"* said Dodd. *"We're committed to keeping CTE embedded in Tehama County's educational system, from middle school through high school. Our focus is on building pathways and career exploration programs that connect education to real-world opportunities, supported by lasting funding and industry partnerships."*

Through its innovative blend of technology, creativity, and career-focused learning, Bridge to College and Career is preparing Tehama County students for success in a rapidly evolving world. By making learning both purposeful and hands-on, these programs are not only shaping the workforce of tomorrow, they're inspiring a generation to dream bigger and build brighter futures.



# GROWING OUR OWN

## TEHAMA COUNTY PROVIDER CERTIFICATION STORY

*"I am grateful for the opportunity to expand my knowledge and serve the community I live in. The sense of fulfillment I feel in giving back to others, regardless of their circumstances, is indescribable. As a first-generation child of immigrants, this work is also fulfilling my family's dream." – Upskilling Tehama Professional*

Tehama County faces significant healthcare challenges. One in ten residents lacks health insurance, with coverage gaps particularly pronounced among American Indian/Alaska Native, Latino, and multiracial populations. Access to care is further constrained by a shortage of primary care providers, pediatricians, and OB/GYNs, making the county a healthcare desert. Families also face limited access to culturally and linguistically responsive care, especially for Latino youth and LGBTQ+ community members. These gaps create barriers to early childhood health, mental health, and family support.

Starting in Fall 2022, First 5 Tehama, in partnership with Promise Neighborhoods and Expect More Tehama, mobilized to address these challenges by doing what they do best: growing our own workforce. Guided by their Strategic Plan, they focused on upskilling local providers—community members with lived experience—so they could deliver culturally relevant, accessible services while advancing meaningful career pathways.

*"Healthcare pathways in high school and post-secondary are critical to better meet needs," said First 5's Heidi Mendenhall. "But they are not the only way to expand opportunities—upskilling local providers is also essential."*

Targeted training, certifications, and community-driven support are helping Tehama County grow a workforce equipped to meet the health and early childhood needs of its youngest residents.

Starting in Fall 2022, providers were offered opportunities to earn certifications in Triple P Facilitator, Infant Massage, Postpartum Support, and Community Health Work. Between Fall 2022 and Spring 2024, **57 advanced-level certifications were partially or fully sponsored by First 5. Forty percent of certified providers were bilingual,** and many completed multiple certifications, expanding their expertise across programs like Postpartum and

CHW. Each certification strengthened not only individual skills but also the professional networks and systems that support children, families, and the broader community.

By June 2025, 22 providers representing 29 certifications shared how these opportunities had impacted their work and lives:

- 68% reported an expanded professional network
- 32% connected with professionals across sectors
- 64% incorporated new knowledge into their work
- 55% offered new or expanded services
- 36% reached new groups of children and families

The real impact is best seen through the eyes of families. Marelly became a mother at 16 and, with guidance from a bilingual family liaison trained in CHW and Infant Massage, she learned about her child's development, accessed postpartum depression screening, and connected with Circle of Hope—a bilingual support program led by a Marriage/Family Therapist. *"Through infant massage, I learned new ways to bond with my baby,"* she reflects. This is a two-generation impact: skills, certifications, and lived experience creating lasting change for both child and parent.

*"These trainings also ripple across the region,"* said Mendenhall. *"By partnering with leaders in unique workforce spaces, we leverage expertise, expand capacity, and create systems improvements that reach beyond Tehama County. Opportunities like this fuel career pathways, support early childhood services, and elevate community health."*

The work continues. Scholarships are available to upskill for the betterment of 0–3 year olds' health and their families.

# 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	6.9%	3,022
9th Grade to 12th Grade	6.9%	3,045
High School Diploma	28.5%	12,567
Some College	27.7%	12,190
Associate's Degree	10.9%	4,806
Bachelor's Degree	13.5%	5,935
Graduate Degree & Higher	5.7%	2,492

Concerning educational attainment, 13.5% of Tehama County, CA residents possess a Bachelor's Degree (8.0% below the national average), and 10.9% hold an Associate's Degree (2.1% above the national average).

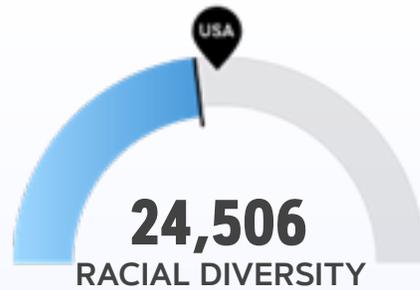
## Population Characteristics



Tehama County, CA has 11,583 millennials (ages 25-39). The national average for an area this size is 13,194.



Retirement risk is high in Tehama County, CA. The national average for an area this size is 19,488 people 55 or older, while there are 21,728 here.



Racial diversity is low in Tehama County, CA. The national average for an area this size is 27,416 racially diverse people, while there are 24,506 here.



Tehama County, CA has 3,612 veterans. The national average for an area this size is 3,196.



Tehama County, CA has 5.94 violent crimes per 1,000 people. The national rate is 3.38 per 1,000 people.



Tehama County, CA has 18.29 property crimes per 1,000 people. The national rate is 16.44 per 1,000 people.

# BY THE NUMBERS

**64,451**

**POPULATION (2024)**

Population decreased by 735 over the last 5 years and is projected to decrease by 122 over the next 5 years.

**22,257**

**TOTAL REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT**

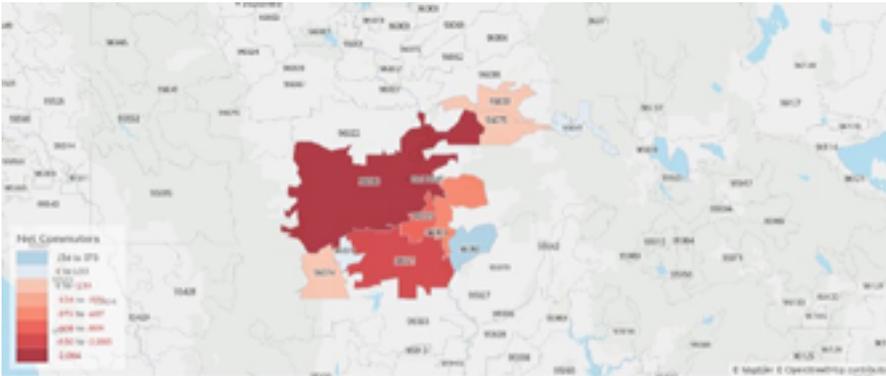
Jobs grew by 1,128 over the last 5 years and are projected to grow by 1,299 over the next 5 years.

**\$61.8K**

**MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME (2023)**

Median household income is \$16.7K below the national median household income of \$78.5K.

## Place of Work vs Place of Residence



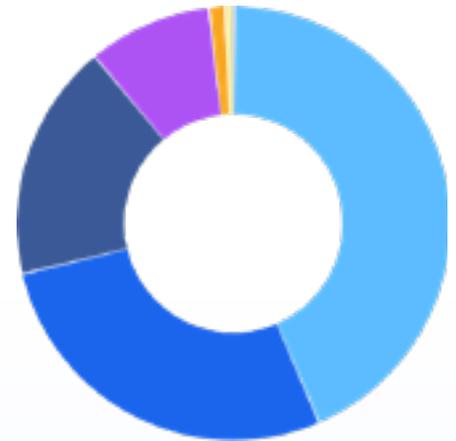
### WHERE TALENT WORKS

ZIP	City	2024 Employment
96080	Red Bluff, CA	11,668
96021	Corning, CA	7,634
96055	Los Molinos, CA	1,323
96035	Gerber, CA	771
96092	Vina, CA	420

### WHERE TALENT LIVES

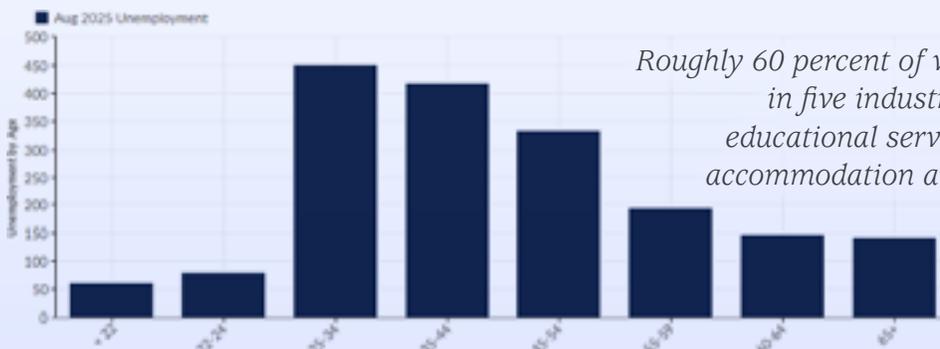
ZIP	City	2024 Workers
96080	Red Bluff, CA	13,672
96021	Corning, CA	8,444
96055	Los Molinos, CA	1,697
96035	Gerber, CA	1,379
96059	Vina, CA	194

## Business Size



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)

# CORNING R FARM HOUSE

*Now Open!*

The Corning High School R Farm House opened this fall as a new hub for local food, crafts, and community. Featuring produce from Rodgers Ranch, student-made goods, and items from regional vendors, the market highlights “grown local, made local” in Tehama County and is operated by Corning High School CTE students.

**Store Hours:**

**M-F from 9am to 5:30pm**

**3840 Marguerite Ave, Corning**

R Farm House is more than a store — it’s a place where students gain hands-on experience in agriculture, business, and customer service while the community gathers to support local enterprise and education.



## *A Week to Remember*

### THE NATUREBRIDGE IN YOSEMITE PROGRAM

Each spring, high school sophomores and juniors in the North State have the chance to take part in something truly unforgettable — a week spent exploring the natural beauty of Yosemite National Park through the NatureBridge in Yosemite Program. Since 1989, The McConnell Foundation has made this opportunity possible for students at public schools in Modoc, Shasta, Siskiyou, Tehama, and Trinity Counties, as well as Hoopa Valley Jr. Sr. High School in Humboldt County and Big Valley Jr. Sr. High School in Lassen County. Fully funded by The McConnell Foundation, the program covers all student tuition, transportation, lodging, and administration, ensuring that eligible students can take part in this life-changing experience.

Led by professional NatureBridge educators, students spend the week hiking through Yosemite’s breathtaking landscapes, studying ecosystems up close, and working together in hands-on science activities that connect classroom learning to the real world. These adventures are more than just a field trip — they are a chance to build confidence, teamwork, and leadership while discovering how science and stewardship go hand in hand. This school year’s trip will take place March 29 – April 3, 2026. Applications are open throughout November at [northstatetogether.org/programs/naturebridge](http://northstatetogether.org/programs/naturebridge).

Students apply online and are selected by their schools to participate. They then must complete eight hours of community service related to the environment to earn their spot. Past participants have volunteered with organizations such as Turtle Bay Exploration Park, Whiskeytown Environmental School, and the Department of Fish & Game, or led recycling and clean-up efforts in their schools and neighborhoods. By caring for their local community areas first, students begin developing the environmental awareness they will expand upon in Yosemite—deepening their understanding of what it means to be stewards of nature.

Now managed by North State Together (NST), the NatureBridge in Yosemite Program aligns seamlessly with NST’s cradle-to-career mission: connecting education to real-world experiences to inspire higher education pathway completion and career attainment. Whether students go on to study biology, forestry, or sustainability — or simply carry forward a deeper respect for nature — the lessons learned in Yosemite stay with them for life.

North State Together is proud to take part in this partnership with The McConnell Foundation, supporting the next generation environmental stewards, scientists, and community leaders. To learn more about the NatureBridge in Yosemite Program, contact Program Director Onica Mello at (530) 395-8532 or [omello@shastacollege.edu](mailto:omello@shastacollege.edu), or visit [northstatetogether.org/programs/naturebridge](http://northstatetogether.org/programs/naturebridge).



# COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

California's schools are in the midst of one of the largest education reform efforts in the country, transforming campuses into community hubs where students and families are supported to thrive. This approach, known as community schools, focuses on aligning academics, health, wellness and family engagement so that every student has what they need to succeed. Schools work closely with families, local organizations, and students to design solutions that make sense locally. Through California's 10-year, \$4 billion Community Schools Partnership Program (CCSPP) grant, schools with the greatest needs are reimagining what it looks like to meet the whole child, right where they are.

Here in the North State, this movement is supported by the North Star Center for Rural Community Schools, which serves more than 200 community schools across 13 northern counties. The North Star team helps rural schools adapt the statewide model to fit local realities. Each county approaches this work in its own way, and the region learns from one another's strengths. Tehama County, in particular, has become a model for its focus on mental health and wellness, standing out as an early adopter of innovative supports and creative use of new funding streams. TCDE plays a central role in the development of community schools across the county:

*"At the Tehama County Department of Education, we're proud to lead a consortium of six schools through the California Community Schools Partnership Program (CCSPP), reimagining how we support students and families. One of the biggest game-changers has been having Wellness Coaches at each site. They provide skill-based training, run wellness programs, and help connect students with the supports they need, both academically and emotionally."* -Sara Smith, Assistant Superintendent, TCDE

Across Tehama County, nine districts representing 19 schools are working together to create stronger, more connected school communities. Through countywide

collaboration, they're linking education with essential health, wellness, and community-based services that support the whole child and family. This work ensures that every student, no matter their zip code, has access to opportunities and relationships that nurture learning, well-being, and belonging:

*"One of the most exciting parts of this work is seeing how we are building bridges for language by offering Spanish classes for staff and English classes for parents. We are also funding counselors for students, hosting family events, and supporting after school programs like Rise Girl. We continue to dream big with our community hub that will soon provide a washer and dryer, a food and clothing pantry, a health office, and more. It's really cool to be part of something that is fostering connection, wellness, and belonging for everyone."* – Karina Garcia, Corning Union Elementary School District ELD Coordinator

The power of this initiative lies in the relationships it builds. Schools are deepening trust with families, expanding partnerships, and creating spaces where students feel seen and supported. As one local leader put it:

*"Community Schools has truly transformed Corning Union High School into the heart of our community. By meeting families where they are, literally being present in the neighborhoods we serve, we've strengthened trust and built meaningful relationships with parents. This connection has helped improve student attendance and engagement, as families feel seen, supported, and valued."* – Leilani Miller, Community Schools Coordinator, Corning Union High School District

To learn more, connect with JoNell Amacker, County Community School Lead at the Tehama County Department of Education, at [jamacker@tehamaschools.org](mailto:jamacker@tehamaschools.org)



## *Corning Schools Unite for Pumpkin Painting Family Event*

Corning Union Elementary and High School Districts teamed up this Fall to host the Pumpkin Painting Family Event and Resource Fair, an afternoon that blended creativity, community and connection. The event was a Community Schools event focused on family engagement.

The districts described the event as *"an incredible success—bringing together families, students, and community partners for a fun, hands-on afternoon."* Nearly 400 attendees joined the celebration, where 300 pumpkins were decorated and even more smiles were shared.

The event highlighted collaboration across the community. Harvest Christian Church set up classic games like sack races and corn hole, while CUESD prepared and served meals for 300 participants. Local organizations — Pneuma Care, New Life Assembly Church, Tehama County Department of Public Health, First 5 Tehama, Partnership HealthPlan of California, Harvest Christian Church, and the Family & Community Partnership — offered resources and information for families.

Volunteers from both the elementary and high schools helped throughout the day, making the event a true community effort. The celebration was made possible thanks to the generous sponsorship of the Corning Rotary, Family & Community Partnership, and the Nomlaki Foundation.



*Pictured:  
Corning Community School Leads  
Leilani Miller and Loretta Price*

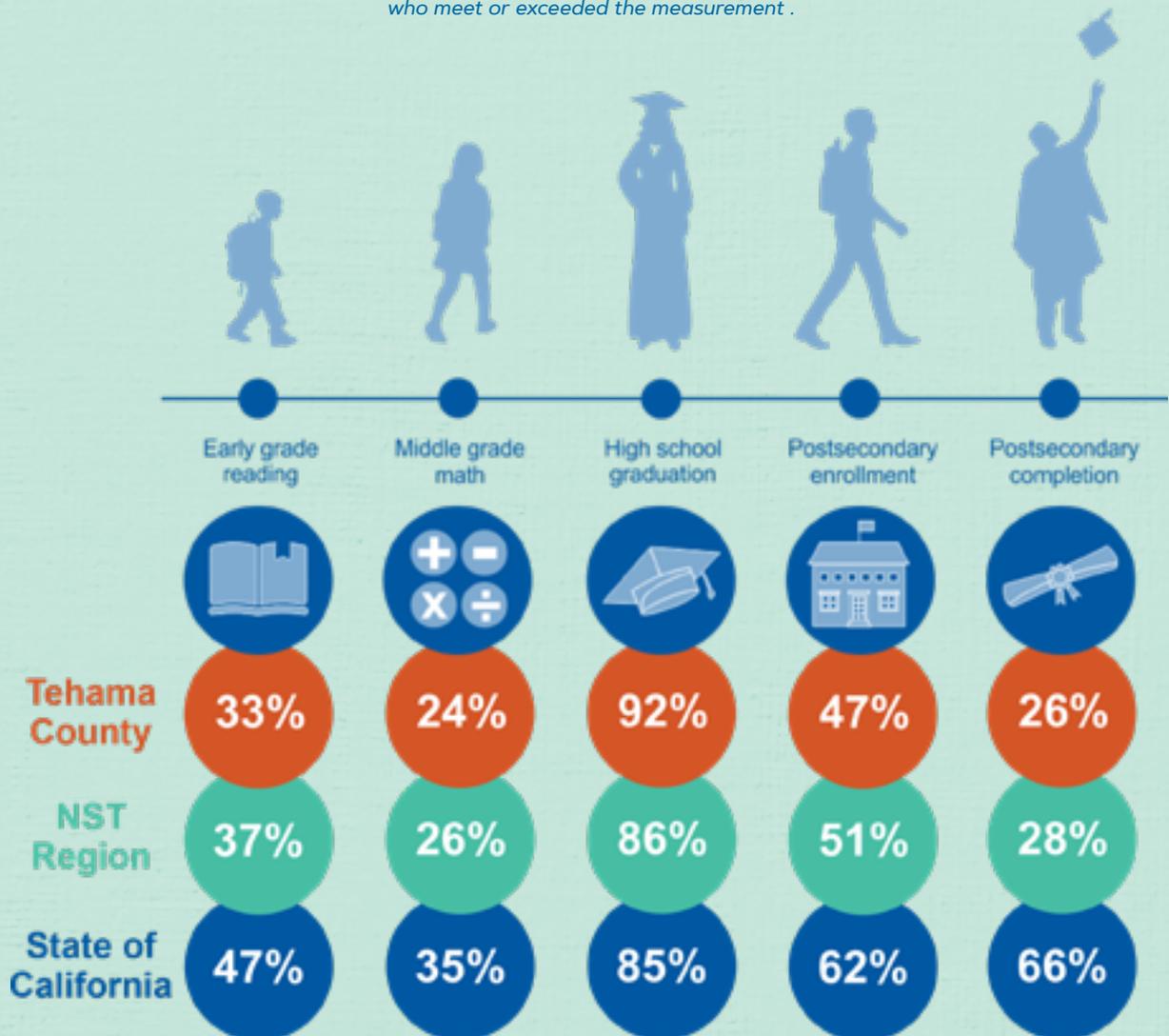
# CRADLE TO CAREERS

## 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 for Expect More Tehama and 9 other northern counties, North State Together collects and shares this data. Developing a shared measurement system is essential.

Since last year's early grade reading increased slightly. Middle grade math increased by 4%. Graduation rates and post-secondary enrollment stayed the same. Post secondary completion increased by 6%. Data shown is for 2023-24.

*NOTE: The first two indicators represent the percentage of students who meet or exceeded the measurement .*



*In 2025, the SERRF Expanded Learning Summer Program reached over 1100 students. The program focused activities around the book *Nim’s Island* and included fishing, geocaching, and hiking. Students explored fish life cycles, built solar ovens, and tried 3D printing. Highlights included trips to parks, pools, museums, and caves, along with guest presentations on outdoor skills and safety. Cindy Haase, the Expanded Learning Administrator for TCDE, describes supervising students on a day trip to Forebay, “It was like yard duty but on a paddleboard!”*



## ELO-P IS A GATEWAY TO INCREASED ACCESS & QUALITY

2022-2023 enrollment data from EdData.org shows that 3.3 million students in California are funded as “unduplicated pupils.” An unduplicated pupil is defined as a student enrolled in a school district or charter school who is classified as an English learner, eligible for a free or reduced-price meal, or is a foster youth. A school’s unduplicated pupil percentage affects how much funding they receive for ELO-P and other funding streams designed to promote equity and access to high quality opportunities for youth.

## REGION 2:

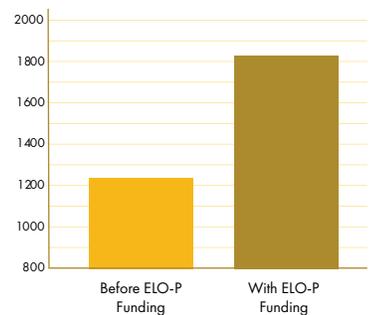
Butte, Glenn, Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, Shasta, Siskiyou, Tehama, and Trinity Counties

### EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES: TEHAMA COUNTY

In Tehama County, the Safe Education and Recreation for Rural Families (SERRF) Program has grown its capacity by over **41%**, increasing from 1,273 to more than 1,800 students, and **nearly eliminating waitlists** for the 2024–25 school year thanks to ELO-P. Five districts also offered programs that were completely free for all their families.

For Summer 2025, all districts offered a fun, mostly 10-hour day to **1146 students** over approximately **23 to 38 days**. Each summer, Tehama Reads in Red Bluff selects a book as the theme; this year, “*Nim’s Island*” was chosen, inspiring weekly activities like camping, paddling, hiking, geocaching, and fishing. Students explored fish life cycles, built solar ovens, and tried 3D printing. Highlights included trips to parks, pools, museums, and caves, along with guest presentations on outdoor skills and safety.

### EXPANDED LEARNING PROGRAM STUDENT ENROLLMENT



“ While I was supervising students during our trip to Forebay (It was like yard duty but on a paddleboard!), I witnessed a student who had been struggling with confidence in a kayak. It took her some time, but she managed to push herself and successfully maneuver her kayak!

CINDY HAASE,  
EXPANDED LEARNING ADMINISTRATOR,  
TEHAMA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



# growing our WORKFORCE

## CRECEMOS RURAL BILINGUAL TEACHER RESIDENCY PROGRAM

### ***Cultivando Rural Bilingual Educators: A Consortium of Educators for Multilingual Opportunities in Northern CA Schools***

This year has been an exciting one for strengthening teacher support across Tehama County. From innovative induction programs and preservice meetings led by TCDE – to competency-based early childhood degrees offered through Shasta College, local partners are working together to build a strong and sustainable education workforce. Among these collaborative efforts is the Bilingual Teacher Residency Program, championed by Liz Lurie, English Language Development (ELD) Consultant at the Tehama County Department of Education.

Funded through the CTC (CA Commission on Teacher Credentialing), the California State Teacher Residency Grant Program provides teacher residents a living stipend as they earn their teaching credential by learning alongside experienced mentor teachers. Tehama and Glenn districts participating include Hamilton Unified School District, Orland Unified School District, Gerber Union Elementary School District, and Corning Union High School District. The grant currently supports 11 residents enrolled at California State University, Chico. These teacher residents are working toward their Bilingual Authorization, which prepares them to teach and support students in dual-language and culturally responsive classrooms.

Tehama County, like the rest of the state, has identified a need for increased bilingual-credentialed educators. The CTC reports that the number of bilingual authorizations issued in 2023-24 increased by nearly 35% compared to the previous year. At the same time, a statewide teacher-workforce study names bilingual education among the most acute shortage areas. In Tehama County, where nearly 2,000 students (18%) are classified as English Learners, the demand for bilingual and culturally responsive educators is especially pressing. By advancing the Bilingual Teacher Residency Program, we are responding not only to the statewide policy direction, but also to the local real-time needs of our teaching workforce and youngest learners.

The most powerful evidence of this work comes from the teachers who are living it — those inviting the new workforce into classrooms, balancing teaching and service, and shaping the next generation of educators and learners.

*“This really is how teaching should look — two adults working together in the classroom, reflecting, tag-teaming, connecting with students, and supporting one another. When one leads and the other helps students regulate, everyone benefits. It creates a stronger, more positive experience for all our students. I’m so grateful to be part of that at Gerber.”* –Joana Campos, 3rd Grade Teacher, Gerber Elementary School

This success is also a testament to the administrators who recognize the immense value of hosting residency teachers. Their commitment to making time for mentor teachers to plan, collaborate, and provide ongoing support ensures the program’s success; and, most importantly, enhances the learning experience for students.

Unique to the North State approach, many of the residents come from local high schools — Red Bluff, Corning, Shasta, and other northern communities. This “grow-your-own” approach not only deepens their understanding of the students they serve but also strengthens community ties and builds a sustainable local educator pipeline. As these

residents continue to shine and move toward full credentialing, Tehama County looks forward to welcoming them as the next generation of bilingual educators — committed to equity, reflection, and the rich linguistic diversity of our region.

The impact of this grant was accomplished alongside everyone’s regular responsibilities. The planning grant was secured in January 2025; the implementation grant followed in April 2025; and by August 2025, residents were already placed in classrooms. This rapid timeline reflects the strong relationships, collaboration, and trust built among districts and partners across the region. This work exemplifies the power of human connection, mentorship, and leadership, creating lasting, cyclical impacts that will extend far beyond the current group of residents.

*“I am so proud of the timelines we met, and even more grateful for the partnership and support from staff committed to this work at Hamilton Unified School District, Orland Unified School District, Gerber Elementary School, Corning Union Elementary School and Corning High School as well as California State University, Chico.”* – Liz Lurie, TCDE ELD Consultant/Title III

*“This really is how teaching should look — two adults working together in the classroom, reflecting, tag-teaming, connecting with students, and supporting one another.”*

JOANA CAMPOS  
GERBER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



# PATHWAYS TO THE FUTURE

The Golden State Pathways Program (GSPP) is helping Tehama County strengthen local career pathways in Agriculture, Healthcare, and Education, three of the most critical sectors supporting community well-being and regional stability. Through braided funding with the Job Training Center and California Jobs First, Tehama County is ensuring students gain early exposure to real-world careers while connecting classroom learning to high-demand local industries. These partnerships are expanding access to hands-on career exploration, mentorship, and postsecondary alignment.

A new Work-Based Learning pilot in Agricultural Mechanics is at the center of this effort, providing students with the opportunity to develop technical, problem-solving, and employability skills in welding, fabrication, and equipment repair.

*“As the Region 2 Technical Assistance Lead, we are leveraging partnerships and innovative ideas from across the region and state to bring some of the best opportunities and proven practices to Tehama County, ensuring local students benefit from regional expertise and collaboration,”* said Patrick Mair. *“This model, built in partnership with local employers and community colleges, serves as a foundation for future expansion across all pathways — including healthcare, education, and STEM — so that every student in Tehama County can explore meaningful careers, gain valuable workplace experience, and take confident steps toward a living-wage future.”*

The Golden State Pathways Program is a California initiative established in 2022 to create high school programs that align with high-wage, high-skill sectors like technology, health care, and education. The program funds initiatives that connect rigorous academics with real-world experiences like internships and apprenticeships, helping students gain skills and enter competitive fields.

## Welcome Home

### NEW LEADERSHIP AT LOS MOLINOS HIGH SCHOOL

Los Molinos Unified School District welcomed a new superintendent this summer, Stan Mojsich. When school is in session, he can be found walking the school hallways of Los Molinos, chatting with students as they head to class.

When Mojsich began to job search, he was looking to work in a smaller district like LMUSD. Mojsich is originally from Yuba City and wanted to work in this part of the state. *“I spent most of my career across the river from Sacramento, but I really wanted to be up in Northern California. This part of the state is really familiar to me.”*

When asked what stands out to him most about LMUSD, he says the district consists of *“Hardworking, very nice, honest people. The kids and the people I’ve met so far are just wonderful.”*

Mojsich felt excited by LMUSD while searching for a role in the north state. He felt the district was already working toward a higher standard of excellence. *“Just because we’re a small district does not mean we can’t be an excellent district. I want to be a part of that. I felt there were some foundational pieces here and some people already in place that could help us get there. So, it felt like I was a part of something that already had great potential. I could help it go even higher.”*

Mojsich’s vision for the district emphasizes building relationships to foster connection and trust among staff and students. *“Having grown up in Northern California and studied just down the road at Chico State, I feel deeply connected to this region and the values that shape it. This community matters to me, and I am committed to working alongside all of you to support every student, every classroom, every day.”*

# North State

## AMBASSADOR PROGRAM



*The North State Student Ambassadors are a team of students attending Chico State University who work to share what the rural northern communities have to offer, and learn more about how to enhance connections and support between their communities and Chico State. Veronica Ulloa represents Tehama County as an Ambassador.*

### ***What was your connection to the program before joining?***

I commuted from home during my first year, and the couple of months that I wasn't an Ambassador, I felt isolated. It was hard for me going from a small high school to Chico State, with larger class sizes and not a single familiar face. Karen Schreder, our faculty mentor, previously worked with my dad (Gary Ulloa) at my grade school, and recommended I get involved with the program. I remember feeling hesitant about becoming an ambassador—like a lot of rural students, I didn't have the most positive view of my community right after high school.

### ***How did becoming an Ambassador shape your experience as a student at Chico State?***

Becoming an Ambassador changed everything. At meetings we would talk about the experiences we had moving from small towns to Chico State. This is my fifth semester being an Ambassador. We do research, outreach at community colleges and high schools, and attend conferences all around the U.S. We asset map our communities, a way to shine light on the positives our hometowns have to offer. These discussions helped change my outlook on my home community. The most rewarding piece of community outreach is when we talk to high school students. Talking to students who may be unsure about attending college, or offering them different perspectives on their home community is extremely gratifying. For the past year I have been working on researching the belongingness of Queer individuals based on my own experiences, and the experiences of other individuals in rural areas.

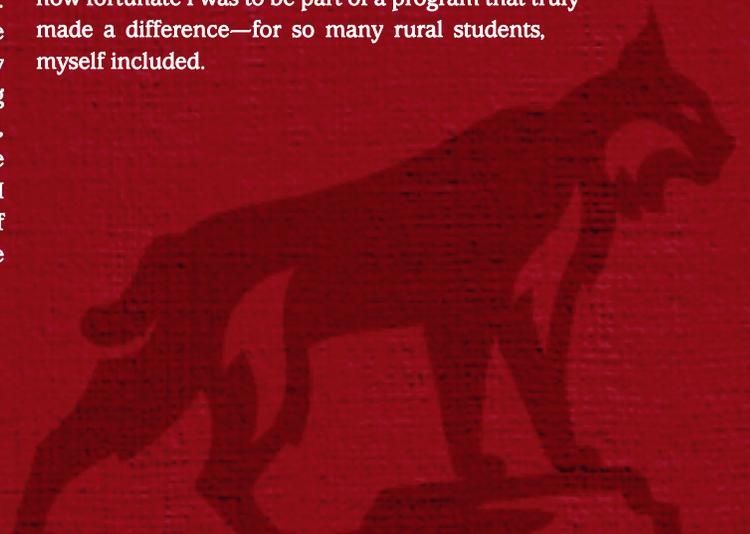
### ***How has this program connected with your future career goals?***

Over the summer, I was invited to speak at the Rural Schools Collaborative Summit in Minneapolis, Minnesota. At this event, we met rural teachers throughout the United States. This meant a lot to me, as teaching is a career goal. With my work as a North State Student Ambassador, I've become more passionate about returning to my community.

### ***Hope and Advice for the Program and Future Students?***

I hope that the Student Ambassador program continues to grow! Being with a group of people who have had similar experiences is crucial to the college experience. I hope we can gain students from each county in the North State to join the program.

To students wanting to become North State Student Ambassadors, make connections! Chico State is so supportive of our program, which in turn encourages rural community members to choose Chico State. When I look back on my time as an Ambassador, I'll remember how fortunate I was to be part of a program that truly made a difference—for so many rural students, myself included.



# Alli's Story

## FINDING BELONGING THROUGH SERVICE AND CONNECTION

Books were everywhere—piled on the floor and waiting to be packed for outreach. Amid the quiet hum of preparation, Alli sat labeling bilingual board books, her steady focus revealing both care and confidence. What started as a typical day became something more—a glimpse into how one young person's connection to community can shape her path forward.

This was Alli's second summer interning with First 5 Tehama. The first year, she came through a local connection—Nancy Vicuna, a Head Start social worker and translator who believed exposure to community work could help Alli discover new possibilities. She was right. Alli translated materials, assisted at events, and helped ensure families left outreach tables with both resources and a sense of welcome. When asked what she learned, she shared: "Honestly? I think it was learning about CalKIDS. I didn't know there was money for college just for being born in California. I've already told a bunch of my friends."

By the next summer, Alli reached out on her own, asking if there was another opportunity. Now 16 and eligible to be paid, she returned with

renewed confidence—helping with library events, mentoring under new staff, and continuing to grow her communication and leadership skills. At Adobe Story Day, she proudly represented both her culture and her internship, performing with her Folklorico group in her traditional dress before returning to staff the outreach table.

During one afternoon of sorting books, Alli shared more of her story—how she moved from Mexico at age seven, learned English in ELD classes, and found comfort through one friend who helped her feel at home. She's since become a high-achieving bilingual student, scoring a 5 on her AP Spanish exam and exploring new career ideas. After taking a CTE Health Careers course, she's now enrolled in Medical Assisting and considering nursing school.

Alli's story reminds us that growth doesn't always follow a straight line. Sometimes it begins with relationships, small opportunities, and someone willing to listen. From labeling books to leading outreach, Alli is building her future—and strengthening the community around her.

## *A LEGACY OF LEARNING AND LOVE: REMEMBERING JODY BROWNFIELD*

When the community reflects on the educators who shaped generations of students, one name shines brightly

— Jody Brownfield. For more than two decades, her work at Red Bluff High School touched countless lives. Her impact lives on in the classrooms she enriched, the programs she built, and the people she inspired. Sadly, Jody lost a fight with cancer last Spring.

Jody's path in education began at her alma mater, Red Bluff High School, where she would later return as a teacher, administrator and grant writer whose vision transformed opportunity into reality. Colleagues recall her as a force of both kindness and determination — someone who could balance compassion

with an unshakable drive to make things better for students and staff alike.



*"Jody's impact on Red Bluff High School and the community is profound. Her career at the Red Bluff Joint Union High School District spanned from a CTE counselor to site administrator. Her legacy includes district advancements in Career Technical Education, Behavioral Health, Special Education and educational leadership. Many of the programs that are in existence today are a result of Jody's fierce*

*belief in project-based learning and that all students should be provided the opportunity to find success. That fierceness kept programs alive during lean budget years which enabled the CTE programs to flourish into what they*

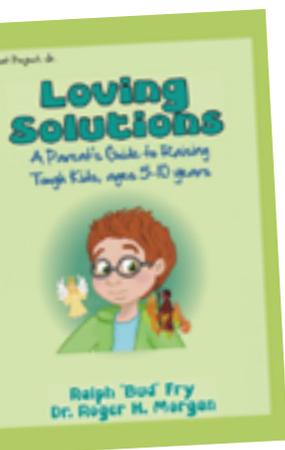
*are today. Finally, her amazing grant writing abilities allowed her to genuinely connect resources to the district and enhance services to all our students. Simply put, Jody Brownfield is and always will be the ultimate SPARTAN."* – Superintendent Todd Brose

Beyond her administrative duties, Jody took on the monumental task of grant writing—to ensure that local schools had the resources they needed to thrive. Over the years, her efforts helped secure tens of millions of dollars in funding for Red Bluff High School and districts across Tehama County, strengthening classrooms, technology access, and Career Technical Education programs. Those who worked alongside her often said, "Jody's money made good things happen."

She cheered for her students' successes, mentored her colleagues, and modeled what it meant to serve with humility and grace. Whether writing late into the night to finish a grant or standing at the edge of a field watching students shine, she gave her all.

# Offering Loving Solutions

For years, the Tehama County Probation Department has led an impactful family support effort — offering the Parent Project and Loving Solutions programs free to the community to help parents build stronger, healthier relationships with their children.



The programs were created by retired police supervisor Ralph “Bud” Fry and Licensed Psychologist Roger Morgan, Dr. of Psychology. The trainings are based on the books “Changing Destructive Adolescent Behavior” and “Loving Solutions” which have been around for more than thirty-five years and focus specifically on giving parents the tools required to address risky and detrimental behaviors.

The program utilizes the UCLA small group method as a strategy of building community between participants and increasing learning for all attendees. Weekly topics of discussion include school performance, gang association, runaway behavior, and

general defiance. These topics are presented by the facilitator and discussed within the large group. Activities for each of the sub-topic(s) are written into the curriculum to complete in the smaller groups. After completion, the subject matter is returned to all participants allowing each smaller group to provide their findings to the larger group so everyone can benefit from the discussion and learn from each other. All participants are encouraged to provide their personal insights, share their personal experience, and use real life scenarios they have encountered to practice and prepare themselves for situations they know they will encounter again.

In Tehama County, classes are held weeknights over a ten-week period, and typically last two-three hours per night. Dinner and childcare are often provided. The Probation Department has recently started partnering with the Red Bluff High School and Elementary School Districts to offer classes on school sites as a means of breaking down common barriers and increasing parent engagement.

The agency has celebrated more than one hundred and fifty successful program completions by parents in one of the two offered programs. Their successes and the connections they have made with their fellow classmates are a wonderful reminder that with hard work, consistency, and constant displays of love and affection, no family is unable to experience significant and lasting change.

If you would like information about the program or if you would like to be referred to attend one of the class offerings, please reach out to Danny Gallino, DPO IV, Tehama County Probation Department at 530-527-4052, ext. 3068.

## Standing Beside Every Child

### *The Role of CASA Volunteers in our Community*

CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) connects trained volunteers with foster youth, ensuring that every child’s voice is heard and their needs are met in the complex child welfare system. From courtrooms to classrooms, CASA volunteers walk alongside children through some of the most uncertain times of their lives, helping them navigate legal, educational, and emotional challenges with care and consistency.

CASA volunteers work hand-in-hand with judges, attorneys, social workers, and educators to ensure that foster children’s rights are protected and their needs are prioritized in all areas of life. By bridging these systems, CASA creates a network of stability and understanding for youth who often face uncertainty and change. According to Daniel Jewell, CASA Advocates Supervisor, there are currently around 50 youth on their waitlist across Butte, Glenn, Shasta, and Tehama Counties. In Tehama County they have about 15 youth waiting for CASAs.

### *Who Can Be a CASA Volunteer?*

Becoming a CASA volunteer doesn’t require a background in law or social work—just compassion, commitment, and the willingness to learn. Volunteers must:

- Be at least 21 years old
- Pass background clearances
- Complete 40 hours of standardized training
- Commit to serving for a minimum of one year

### *Get Involved*

If you’ve ever wanted to make a real difference in the life of a child, CASA offers a powerful way to do it. To learn more or sign up to become a volunteer, visit [nvcss.org/casa](http://nvcss.org/casa) or call 1 (844) 254-CASA.

Someone from the CASA team will be happy to connect with you and answer your questions.





## 2025 Teacher of the Year

*Antelope Elementary School's  
Nicole Burroughs*

This Fall, Nicole Burroughs, a third grade teacher at Antelope Elementary School in Red Bluff, was named the 2025 Tehama County Teacher of the Year. Nicole Burroughs is celebrating her 30th year of teaching at Antelope Elementary School. Fifteen years ago, she embraced the Whole Brain Teaching methodology after recognizing the need to adapt her approach to meet the needs of a new generation of learners.

When she's not teaching or tutoring, Nicole enjoys spending time with her very supportive family. Through Whole Brain Teaching, she continues to find inspiration and hopes to carry her love of teaching forward for many more years to come.

*Congratulations, Nicole Burroughs!*

## 2025 Classified School Employee of the Year

*Lava Charter School's  
Shelli Woolery*



Shelli Woolery is a dedicated Para Educator/Office Assistant at Lava Charter School whose commitment to student success and school improvement shines through in everything she does. She plays a key role in the school's MTSS Tier 3 program, providing targeted small-group instruction in math and English to help students overcome academic challenges. She leads major fundraising and community engagement efforts, maintaining strong partnerships with local businesses and coordinating events like the Color Run and 8th-grade graduation. Her ability to balance instructional support, event coordination, and even secretarial duties with excellence makes her an invaluable asset to both the school and the wider community.

*Congratulations, Shelli Woolery!*

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

*"We live in a world in which we need to share responsibility. It's easy to say 'It's not my child, not my community, not my world, not my problem.' Then there are those who see the need and respond. I consider those people my heroes."*

MISTER ROGERS

## 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

*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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