

FREE

School News

Education + Communication = A Better Nation

Covering the Tehachapi Unified School District



Volume 2, Issue 5

April 2021



**Academics, Athletics and Art...
TUSD students demonstrate resilience,
achievement and creativity!**



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If you need help covering expenses, want to consolidate debt, or finance a large purchase, consider a personal loan.

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Brianna G.
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SUPERINTENDENT



**Stacey
Larson-Everson**

It is hard to believe that we are already in the home stretch for this school year. This certainly has been a year full of changes and challenges for students, staff and families. At this time, we are ramping up to recognize and celebrate all our students have accomplished and achieved throughout this year. We are grateful to be able to plan for a return to in-person ceremonies for our students' 8th grade promotions and high school graduations!

As we plan for these special milestone events, our District team is also in the process of mapping out summer academic programs as well as the official launch of the 2021-2022 school year. When August of 2021 arrives, we will not only be anxiously awaiting students' return to the classroom, but also ready to implement a variety of strategies at all schools.

Many strategies will be in place, which will be aimed at supporting students in their academic achievement and

overcoming learning challenges that may have emerged due to the pandemic. As our team prepares for the new year, we hope parents and guardians will take an active role in the development of our plans. In California, each school district creates a Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP), which is a tool for school districts to set goals, plan actions and leverage resources to meet those goals to improve student outcomes. The LCAP describes how the District intends to meet the needs of all students and how District funds will be spent in connection with identified goals and actions. Stakeholders from throughout the District, including parents, guardians and community members are invited to review and provide input for the LCAP. Each TUSD parent will receive an LCAP survey. Please take a few minutes to complete the survey. Your feedback is important to us and will assist us with the development of our District's plan. The more information we receive from TUSD families, the better we can create a plan that is responsive to our students' unique needs.

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Be sure to include reading among your activity choices this summer.

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Kay Coop
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School News

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Finally, there seems to be light at the end of the tunnel.

The Superintendent's message on page 3 brings you up-to-date on celebrating milestones and plans for the next school year.

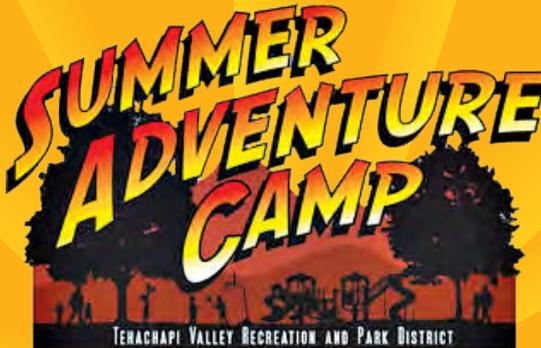
In this issue you will read articles about electronic sports, inspirational murals, the Extended School Year

(ESY), a new appreciation for school, and so much more.

Thank you for including *School News* among your reading choices. Be sure to enter the word search contest on page 12 (open to all ages). Our next issue is October 6.

Have a fun summer!




JUNE 7 – AUGUST 6
Ages 5-12

Location: Stephen Shy Activity Center

Prices:
9:00am- 3:00pm
Daily **\$33.50** Weekly **\$126.50**
(In district discount) Daily **\$25** Weekly **\$95**
Extended: 6:00am-6:00pm
Daily **\$38.50** Weekly **\$157.50**
(In district discount) Daily **\$30** Weekly **\$120**

Register by calling **661-822-3228** or
go to the Park District Office at **490 W D St.**

**Registration
Opens May 3rd
(Spaces limited!)**

***Sibling Discount \$10 -
(For Weekly option only)**
***Military Discount 10%**

**Lunch provided by TUSD
summer meals program.**

**Tue & Thurs
pool / water play days.**

**Camp Shirt included to
be worn on Fridays.**



Business Services

300 South Robinson St., Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2100



Hojat Entezari
Chief Administrator

Fees Can Help!

It seems as if every purchase comes with an additional tacked-on fee or tax—some small, some large—that can make you feel taken advantage of as a customer. While Business Services can't explain why online ticket sellers charge a "convenience fee" to print your own tickets at home, we'd like to highlight the benefits of a fee that many California drivers pay: smog abatement fees.

If you drive a car that is less than 10 years old, you likely paid \$20 for a smog-abatement fee when you registered your vehicle, but where does this money go? These fees are collected by the state of California and distributed to fund several clean-air incentives. Through the Eastern Kern Air Pollution Control District's (EKAPCD) Bus Replacement Program, Tehachapi Unified School District has been able to replace older diesel-fuel buses with newer, cleaner buses thanks to the smog abatement fee. A new school bus costs about \$175,000, but with the bus-replacement program, the District will be able to purchase a brand-new bus at the much more affordable price of \$67,000.

The Business Services Department shares your frustrations when it comes to unauthorized and ambiguous charges, but hopefully, this information brings you satisfaction in knowing these fees go toward good causes. Even without the smog-abatement fee, we would still be required to replace buses since transporting students is an essential school service, but the resources would have to take away from something else. Taxes can be a good thing when used properly, and we work diligently in this department to ensure that the communities dollars are spent effectively and responsibly.

District Nurse

300 South Robinson St., Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2100



Jenna Burgess, RN
District Nurse

Immunization Information

One of the many roles that the District Nurse, health staff and school office staff serve includes following and enforcing California school immunization laws. We work together to receive immunizations from parents before entry into school, maintain immunization records of all children enrolled, and submit reports to public-health agencies. In recent years, the State has

developed the [California Immunization Registry \(CAIR\)](#). Schools can access this site to verify some students' records for parents or guardians who do not have a copy of them. Students are mandated to have all required immunizations before enrollment. However, some children can be enrolled without all doses if their next vaccine dose is not yet due or they have a temporary or permanent medical exemption for a shot or shots. Students enrolled without all their doses completed are on conditional enrollment status and are required to submit the next appointment date for the missing shots.

Beginning January 1, 2021, Senate Bills 276 and 714 have required that new medical exemptions be issued using the state database and a standardized medical-exemption form. The website is called the [California Immunization Registry—Medical Exemption \(CAIR-ME\)](#). Schools can only accept exemptions in this format when students enter the next grade span—kindergarten or seventh grade—when the requirements are due.

Before sixth-grade students begin seventh grade, they are required to have a Tdap booster shot and their second varicella shot. Spring is when we begin encouraging families to complete this requirement. August is usually a very hectic time for everyone, and we can see this year being even more challenging. Please contact the District Nurse or Jacobsen Middle School if you have a sixth-grader and you have specific questions related to your child's immunization status and what he or she may need for seventh grade.



Food Services

300 South Robinson St., Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2100



Hortencia Tapia
Supervisor

We have Good News!

It's hard to believe that this school year is almost over. As we near the end of the school year, food insecurities may be something that parents with young children are concerned about. We have good news! Various waivers that allow us to continue serving multiple meals in one day in a non-congregated setting have been approved. The waivers received provide extra funding from the Department of Defense Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program which allow us to continue serving meals to the community, free of cost to all children 18 and under. The extra funding also allows us to serve bulk fruits and veggies like 5 pound bags of potatoes, baskets of strawberries and avocados.

The TUSD Food Service Department with the help of our wonderful Transportation Department is distributing 7 days of meals on Wednesday's from 6:45 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. at the following



locations: Tompkins Elementary, Golden Hills, Cummings Valley, Jacobsen Middle, Sand Canyon, Brite Valley and Stallion Springs. We hope to see you there!

Student Services

300 South Robinson St., Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2100



Dennis Ferrell
Director

Want More School? Consider ESY 2021

In this year of COVID-19, students have missed being on campus and receiving consistent in-person instruction for nearly a year. Now more than ever we want to share that many students who are eligible through their IEPs can attend and receive additional instruction and support during Extended School Year (ESY) 2021.

Dates have not been finalized, but ESY will be a minimum of 20 extra days of school (usually a modified day), with the anticipation of students attending in-person instruction on a school campus. ESY normally runs during the months of June and part of July.

In the past, Tehachapi Unified has held ESY at Jacobsen Middle School (JMS) for all grades beginning with preschool students. Students attended five days per week for four hours per day, and received transportation, which was also determined by their IEPs.

Curriculum and instruction for summer school is academically based, and most of the classes offered are taught by the district's special education teachers who work during the regular school year. ESY teachers are supported by many of our regular para-professionals in the classroom who also work during the regular school year.

ESY is not only an option for students with special needs, it is required by the Ed. Code:

The California Code of Regulations (CCR §3043) states: "Extended school year services shall be provided, in accordance with 34 C.F.R. section 300.106, for each individual with exceptional needs who has unique needs and requires special education and related services in excess of the regular academic year."

If you would like for your eligible child to continue the 2020-2021 school year, consider having them attend ESY 2021. More information will follow, so keep an eye on the district's website and Parent Square as we approach the summer months of 2021.

Instructional Services

300 South Robinson St., Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2100



Scott Heitman
Chief Administrator

The Importance of Relationships During Virtual Learning

Creating and fostering positive relationships with students is vital to ensure student learning. A growing amount of research indicates that students do not learn if they do not feel safe. Many students have been exposed to some sort of trauma or adverse childhood experiences at some time during their lives. It is thus vital that

teachers are aware of these various concerns as they begin to cultivate positive relationships and lead students as they learn.

A number of strategies can be employed by teachers and staff to help this process along. These strategies include, but are not limited to, employing thoughtful actions, being specific about relationship building, promoting predictability and consistency, giving supportive feedback to reduce negative thinking, and fostering a feeling of safety.

Employing these strategies can pay dividends with student learning, and promote a safe and supportive classroom environment. The results of a Tehachapi Unified School District social-emotional learning survey administered in the fall of 2020 indicated that more than 80 percent of students in grades three through twelve had supportive relationships in the classroom, at home with family members, and with same-age peers. Students reported having a staff member at school that they can count on in any situation.

Given the timing of this survey, while students have been engaged in virtual learning since the Spring of 2020, these results were still very encouraging. With this data, administrators and staff members will be providing support for students in areas of need like emotional regulation and self-efficacy.

The TUSD also administered a spring social-emotional survey in March. District leaders met in April to review the data from the spring survey and began collaborating with site leaders to plan lessons and interventions aimed at supporting our students social-emotional learning.



Jennifer Butler
Elementary
Academic Coach

Taking Care of Our Students

As many of us go back to in-person learning on our school campuses, we must create opportunities to care for ourselves and others. Tehachapi Unified School District educators and students

must physically take care of ourselves by wearing masks, washing our hands, and staying home when we feel sick or have a fever. Additionally, we must also pay attention to our social, emotional, and academic well-being.

In the fall, our third- through fifth-grade students participated in a survey to see how well they understand and manage their emotions. After reviewing the data, it was wonderful to see a strength in supportive relationships. Students in TUSD feel supported by friends, family, and adults at school. Our District will continue to foster these positive relationships in the school community.



District and site leaders are diligently working on identifying the best ways to support our students socially, emotionally, and academically. Teachers are participating in professional development to add strategies to their toolbox and continue to support students both inside and out of the classroom. We are also working on ways to foster well-being and resilience in our students, such as establishing safe environments, building connections, taking brain breaks, and focusing on the positive.

Schools will also discuss and model the pillars of good character. They will continue to foster positive behavior, interventions, and supports for the students in their care.

As a district, we have surveyed TUSD students again this spring to see how we can continue to provide support. There may be tough days ahead, as we are all still in the middle of these challenging times. We must continue to extend grace to one another and work together for our students.

Technology

300 South Robinson St., Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2100



Ryan McKay
Director

Chromebook for Every Student

The chromebooks the district ordered last March were delivered at the end of November. By January we had offered chromebook checkouts to every student in the district. We currently have checked out 1,970 chromebooks to students.

Students have started to move back to the classroom with blended learning, and



Total Chromebooks Checked Out

technology is pivoting to support both on premise and off premise technology requests. Our new ticket system has been extremely successful. At the time of this writing, our department has been issued and completed nearly 3,500 tickets since the ticket system's introduction late March 2020. Our department has been busy preparing classrooms for in person instruction. Teachers and technology staff have been working together to ensure the room will be ready for in person instruction.

Transportation

401 East H. St., Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2115



Robbi Miller
Supervisor

The Wheels On The Bus Go Round And Round Again

It has been a long road bringing our students back to school. With new guidelines and protocols, transportation has been gearing up to meet these demands. Before students board a TUSD bus, staff ensure they are wearing a mask and complete COVID 19 screening. Included are general health questions and temperature checks.

Everyone is required to wear a mask. After each route, all vehicles are cleaned and sanitized before another group of students are transported. Buses are stocked with necessary supplies, gloves, wipes, masks, shields, even hand sanitizer, all to keep everyone safe. Routes have been designed with student safety in mind. Finally, we see all the smiles return, as the wheels on the bus go round and round.



Cummings Valley *Elementary*

24220 Bear Valley Rd., Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2190
www.teh.k12.ca.us/Domain/11



Traci Minjares
Principal

Math Master

If you are driving around Tehachapi and see one of these signs in the front yard, take note: A Cummings Valley Math Master lives here!

Students in first through fifth grades are learning their basic math skills in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Those who test with a 75 percent fluency of the math skills in their grade level qualify to have a special lunchtime Zoom session

with Mrs. Minjares. Those who score 100 percent are certified Math Masters and receive this great yard sign acknowledging their accomplishment, for all to see! Nine students qualified for the sign in February, and we hope to have many more in the months to come.



The Math Mastery Program is the latest in a series of programs at CVS to make an effort to recognize students and to encourage pride in their academic achievements.

Golden Hills *Elementary*

20215 Park Rd., Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2180
www.teh.k12.ca.us/Domain/12



Kendra Bailey
Principal

Until it's Gone

The saying goes, "You don't know what you've got until it's gone." As a mother of four, I remember mornings when my own kids pretended to be sick to get out of school. We all love snow days and holidays, but in slowly coming out of this pandemic, there is a new and profound appreciation for school. Welcoming our students back after a year is exciting and emotional. Students can't wait to come and aren't ready to leave when

it's time to go. Parents are smiling and happy to see their children returning to their classrooms. Teachers and staff whose purpose is educating and inspiring young people report that they are overjoyed to have students back on campus. School has always been important; that goes without saying. This is different. I think being at school will be cherished by all in a lasting way. Welcome Back Eagles!



Jacobsen *Middle School*

711 Anita Dr., Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2150 • www.teh.k12.ca.us/Domain/10



Sharon Heitman
Principal

Inspirational Murals

Over the years, JMS students have provided input on ways to improve our school climate. One consistent desire has been to add encouraging and motivational messaging around campus. Posters and banners don't last, so our JMS Associated Student Body (ASB) Club has helped make this request permanent. During recent Zoom club meetings, ASB members unanimously voted to spend a portion of their budget on inspirational murals to be added across campus. We recruited local mural artist, Lyn Bennett to do the job. Lyn designed school color themed murals for the boys' and girls' locker rooms, our cafeteria, and north hall. Topics include sports themed messaging on grit and determination, success, kindness, and pride. We hope our students feel heard, supported, and reinvigorated when they see the new additions.



We are proud of these contributions, and look forward to sharing their messages with current and future Bulldogs for years to come!

Tehachapi *High School*

801 S. Dennison Rd, Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2130 • www.teh.k12.ca.us/Domain/8



Cristina Libatique
Principal

Electronic Sports

Esports (short for electronic sports) is simply competitive, organized video gaming in which two teams face off within the constructs of a certain game. THS has competitive teams organized to compete in Rocket League, League of Legends, Overwatch, and Super Smash Bros. Ultimate, but many other games are available for students to pursue, build, and facilitate.

Esports is not just a fancy excuse for students to play video games, it has exploded into a billion-dollar industry and has a viewership just under 500 million per year. Many cities have built Esports arenas and over 175 colleges and universities are members of the National Association of Collegiate Esports (NACE) and offer official varsity esports programs. These schools have coaches and offer partial or full-ride athletic scholarships. Additionally, our THS teams compete in the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) sanctioned league and the student athletes are subject to all CIF rules and guidelines.

Interested? Contact Coach Dees - gdees@teh.k12.ca.us



Tehachapi *Adult School*

400 S. Snyder Ave., Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2112 • www.teh.k12.ca.us/Domain/567



Natalia Moessner
Adult Education
Coordinator

Inspiring Their Best

Very often we concentrate and applaud the achievements of our students, and rightly so. Choosing to come back to school to finish your diploma is not an easy decision to make, and many times there is not a lot of outside support and so it has to be all self-driven. However, adult education students can always count on their teachers to push them to the finish line. For this reason I have decided to put the spotlight on our adult

education teacher, Mrs. Sandy Ransom.

Mrs. Ransom has been in our district for 31 years and has a real passion for the profession. It is not easy to keep some of the adult education students engaged, but she sure works extremely hard to do so. She motivates our students

to continue to do their work and put their best effort into it. She even contacts them every day via email or text to get them to set up an appointment to work with her.

The one-on-one time that our students have with her is extremely valuable to them, and she makes sure they understand the material before they move on. Some of our students have been out of school for more than 30 years, and yet Mrs. Ransom helps them get back into the rhythm of learning within a few days or weeks. Even when they start to give up on themselves she doesn't give up on them, and she always knows how to talk with them through their insecurities.

Unfortunately, we cannot help everyone, but every time a new student comes into our building to register Mrs. Ransom gets excited because she knows that it is a chance to help another person reach their educational goal.

Tompkins *Elementary*

1120 S. Curry St., Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2170 • www.teh.k12.ca.us/Domain/13



Rebecca Castellanos
Principal

Welcome Back

In early March Tompkins Elementary School welcomed back General Education students in Kindergarten through second grade back to campus for hybrid learning. It's hard to believe it's been a year since we've had students on campus, and

school has definitely felt weirdly quiet without them. Classified staff lined the sidewalk along Pinion Street greeting students arriving by car to their first day on campus. Temperature checks and screenings were conducted, and then students lined up by class with their teachers. Everyone had smiles on their faces, which we could see in their eyes even with their masks on. Students then went to their classrooms to learn in-person and spend some time having some distanced fun with classmates. At the end of the day, everyone's hearts were filled to be working with students face-to-face instead of through a screen. We are delighted that third, fourth, and fifth graders have now joined us on campus as well.



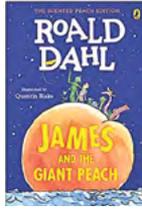
Kailani's Review



Kailani T.

Whoa, a Giant Peach!

James and the Giant Peach is a classic children story written by Roald Dahl. The story is about James, an orphan boy who was forced to live with his wicked aunts after he lost his parents in a horrible rhinoceros accident. One day,



James received a bag of magic crystals from an old man. The man said these crystals would change his life forever. James accidentally spilled the crystals on his aunts' peach tree. The peach fruit kept growing bigger and bigger. It grew big enough for James to fit inside. From that point on, his adventure began.

The story is magical and suspenseful. Reading this book taught me the importance of friendship and having hopes and dreams. I recommend this book for anyone who loves magic and mystery. Since this book is not very warm and fuzzy, it may be best for kids who can separate facts and fiction or younger kids to read with parents.

Kailani is a 3rd grader who loves to read. When not playing with her baby brother, Kailani likes to color and draw. She started taking Spanish lessons while sheltering-in-place. Horseback riding and skate boarding are the new activities she enjoys. Hope everyone stays well and healthy.

David's Review



David H.

Funny Mystery Book

Title: *The Boxcar Children #157 – Science Fair Sabotage*
 Author: Gertrude Chandler Warner



Would you like to read a funny mystery book? If so, you should read *Boxcar Children #157 Science Fair Sabotage*.

The main characters are siblings Henry, Jessie, Violet, and Benny Alden. Henry is calm, Jessie is curious, Violet likes photography, and Benny loves food.

Jessie is doing a science fair project on pollution and finds that the stream she's studying is shrinking but can't figure out why. The plot is tricky but the kids work together to solve the mystery. You have to pay attention to the story and details, but if you do, it's worth it because you get to solve the mystery and feel good about yourself!

I liked the book because the author wrote the book in a witty and funny way that makes you feel like you're right there with the Alden kids.

If you love puzzles like I do, this is the book for you!

David is in third grade and he loves to read and play piano. He likes math and outdoor activities such as rock climbing, tennis, and basketball.

Road Trip–Word Search Contest

Rules! One word in the list is NOT in the word search.

When you have completed the word search, one word will be left and that word you email to: Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com Please put Tehachapi in the subject line.

MAPS	SUNGLASSES
BLANKET	WATER
GPS	SUNSCREEN
PILLOW	CLOTHING
MOTEL	CELL PHONE
HUMOR	RADIO
HOTEL	MONEY
CAMERA	FLASHLIGHT
CAR GAMES	CREDIT CARD
BOOTS	SPARE TIRE
SNACKS	

Entries must be received by July 15, 2021
 From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win a \$20 gift card to Barnes & Noble!

C	E	L	L	P	H	O	N	E	R	V	S	L	H
I	R	W	W	B	H	X	Y	Y	G	E	G	O	D
P	U	E	O	M	B	L	A	N	K	E	T	F	B
H	H	O	D	L	O	R	I	G	R	E	W	A	P
L	T	H	G	I	L	H	S	A	L	F	W	J	W
S	S	R	D	Z	T	I	S	P	G	I	H	D	X
L	Z	A	F	O	U	C	P	C	A	P	S	H	A
K	R	R	L	P	A	Y	A	R	W	M	M	I	K
V	G	C	E	S	E	R	R	R	Q	Q	K	E	P
K	W	S	T	N	G	Z	E	O	D	F	J	F	G
W	R	P	O	A	N	Z	T	M	M	V	V	K	J
Q	D	M	M	C	N	S	I	U	A	N	N	E	Q
O	K	E	U	K	O	D	R	H	T	C	D	C	Z
I	S	U	N	S	C	R	E	E	N	Y	B	M	G

Congratulations to

Laura Burdick

Winner of our January Word Search Contest!