

School News

Education + Communication = A Better Nation

Covering the Tehachapi Unified School District



Volume 4, Issue 11

April 2023



TUSD Students and Staff Building Skills and Making Memories!



A young boy with dark skin and curly hair, wearing a yellow sweater and a green backpack, is walking outdoors on a paved path. He is looking off to the side with a slight smile. The background shows shadows of trees on the ground.

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

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As Superintendent of Tehachapi Unified School District, I am proud to share District updates and celebrations with you.

This year, our Tehachapi High School athletes are hitting new heights! The Lady Warriors Varsity Basketball team recently had an excited crowd cheer them on in a CIF Division III state playoffs home game. It was fantastic to see so many students, families, and community members show up to support our talented Lady Warriors who ended their

season with the most wins in one season in school history (26), a South Yosemite Mountain League Championship, a CIF Central Section Division II finals appearance and a CIF State playoff appearance. Congratulations to our Lady Warriors Girls Varsity Basketball!

In the South Yosemite Mountain League championships for the winter season, Tehachapi High School teams that won league titles include Varsity Girls Basketball, JV Girls Basketball, Varsity Girls Soccer and JV Girls Soccer. Combining both the fall and winter seasons, that brings the THS total team league titles up to 12 overall in the 2022-2023 school year! In the fall, THS won titles in Varsity Boys Football, JV Boys Football, Frosh/Soph Boys Football, Varsity Girls Volleyball, JV Girls Volleyball, Varsity Girls Golf, Varsity Girls Tennis and JV Girls Cross Country. Our cheerleaders also recently competed at Nationals in Anaheim and represented Tehachapi with pride!

I also want to share updates with you regarding school safety. TUSD recently purchased and implemented LifeSpot, a new school safety app, and has already completed training with more than 150 staff members. LifeSpot builds on other safety measures in place including the Raptor System for screening visitors to all TUSD campuses, campus security cameras, window tinting, and regular safety drills for fire, earthquake and other emergencies. Every TUSD campus and classroom is equipped with updated emergency supplies and equipment. Student and staff safety remains a top priority, and TUSD continues to be focused on providing safe and secure learning environments for our students.

TUSD's implementation of Capturing Kids Hearts (CKH) is another focus area that we are continuing to strengthen and build on. CKH is a collection of specific strategies meant to help school staff and students build meaningful and productive relationships as well as foster safe and effective environments for learning. We want all students to feel welcome, connected, engaged, and successful in school. To that end, we are continuing to provide CKH professional development and link CKH with other programs and services district-wide.

Finally, I want to express my deep gratitude to TUSD educators, staff, students, families and community members for your dedication to student success. We are committed to elevating our students' academic progress and social-emotional well-being. We share a common desire for all students to thrive in and out of the classroom. We want our students to enjoy being at school and engaging in the unique learning and developmental experiences provided through TUSD. "Petit a petit, l'oiseau fait son nid", comes from a french proverb that translates to "Little by little, the bird makes its nest". Together, day by day, in the classroom, on campus, and on our athletic fields and courts, we help to build our students' futures.

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Special Education Services

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Dr. Solomon DeFrancis
Director

From Preschool to Post High School

The Tehachapi Unified School District's Special Education Department is thrilled to share our enriched programs. Services in TUSD start with Preschool and end with the Transition to Adult Living and Lifestyle (TALL) program. The Tehachapi Unified School District's Special Education model is comprised of preschool classes to deliver early intervention services. Our elementary school sites offer tailored services with a

Resource Specialist Program (RSP), Special Day Classes (SDC), or an Autism class. At the junior high school, we provide a Resource Specialist Program (RSP), Special Day Classes (SDC), and a Behavior Intervention class. Tehachapi High School services include a Resource Specialist Program (RSP), Special Day Classes (SDC), an Emotional Disturbance (ED) class, and a Transition to Adult Living and Lifestyle (TALL) class. These services enable learners with unique needs access to the curriculum at their level while providing a continuum of placement best suited for each student. We continue to strive to ensure all learners' needs are met.



Caroline Robison Optometry

Is your child having trouble in school because they need glasses or eye exercises? We can help!



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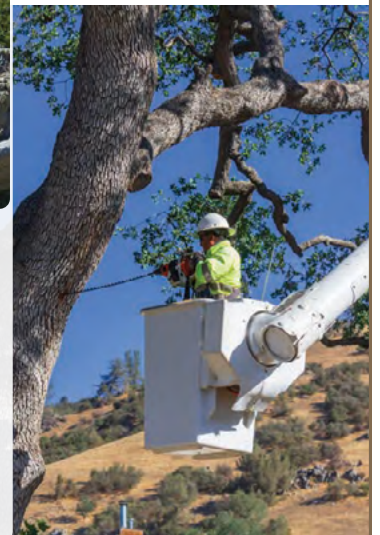


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SALES MANAGER

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District Nurse

300 South Robinson St., Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/979-6596



Jenna Burgess,
RN BSN
*Credentialed
School Nurse*

Creating Healthy Habits

Parents can help kids create healthy habits that last a lifetime. Incorporating more fruits and vegetables at meals, adding a walk around your block after dinner, and setting firm bedtime routines with kids can be small changes that have a big impact over time.

According to the CDC, proper sleep contributes to students' overall health and well-being by increasing focus and improving concentration and academic performance.

Children 6-12 years old need 9-12 hours of sleep per day, and 13-18 year olds need 8-10 hours per day. Parents should promote good sleep behaviors within the household by setting regular bedtimes and rise times. Dim lighting and media curfews are key too. Technology use should be regulated as it keeps kids and adolescents up late and the blue light adds to sleep disturbance.

Healthy eating and weight management in childhood and adolescence is vital for proper growth and development, it also prevents many health conditions that stem from obesity. Health staff at our schools find that many students in high school and junior high do not eat before school, please encourage your students to eat breakfast at school as an option if they don't have time in the morning at home. Breakfast and lunch are offered at all of our schools at no cost. Breakfast at our secondary sites can be eaten before school or during break (mid-morning).

Exercise is another critical piece in keeping kids healthy, studies show that active students are better learners. 60 minutes or more of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity is recommended daily for 6 to 17 year olds. Regular physical activity improves cardiorespiratory fitness, builds strong bones and muscles, controls weight, reduces symptoms of anxiety and depression, and reduces the risk of developing other health problems. Please join me in making a small positive change we can all be positive role models for our kids!

Business Services

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



Hojat Entezari
Chief Administrator

Proposition 28

When I was in middle school I transferred to a school that was known for a strong music program. I possess the musical talent you would expect from an accountant so while my school peers excelled in music, I did not. Nonetheless, I acknowledge the benefit I experienced from the musically rich culture engrained into my learning environment. Thanks to

the newly passed Proposition 28, your child's education will be richer in art and music which is known to improve cognitive function and support academic performance. If you haven't already heard the good news, Proposition 28 is the state's new arts education initiative that will dedicate one percent (1%) of the State of California's education budget into a guaranteed annual funding stream for music and arts education. In recent history, public education has shifted its focus towards addressing learning loss and social emotional learning, but the value of music into a child's education should not be understated.

From a fiscal perspective, this is a meaningful amount of funding that will be put towards exposing students to arts and music at a young age. The state legislature found that California lagged behind other prominent states with only 1 in 5 schools having a dedicated full-time music teacher while New York had 4 in 5. Tehachapi USD has emphasized the arts by establishing a dedicated elementary music teacher as well as adding a band director at Jacobsen Middle School and an additional band director at Tehachapi High School as well as expanding electives including art, drama, and music courses. This new initiative will take arts and music from being an "extra" to a critical component of childhood development. Funding from the state is typically formulaic or focused around a problem, but we are looking forward to adding to our arts program offerings here at TUSD with these new funds.

Personnel Services

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



**Dr. Roxane
Romero**
Chief Administrator

Celebrating Our Big-Hearted Staff

It is with great pride and honor that we celebrate all our employees that have made 2022-2023 an amazing year. Your GREAT BIG HEARTS have inspired many little and young hearts to do their best. We thank all our employees for their hard work and dedication to ensuring our students get all the support they need to be successful. Our students are privileged to have such great employees going above and

beyond to support their academic and social-emotional learning.

As we look forward to the new school year we are always excited to add to our TUSD team. If you know dynamic people who have a passion for working with students, please have them visit our link on Edjoin at <https://www.edjoin.org/tusd> or view the jobs posting board in our reception area at the District Office for the 2023-2024 School Year.

"Serving Students is the profession that teaches all other professions."- Unknown

Instructional Services

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



Andrea Paxton
Chief Administrator

Early Childhood Education Expands

Each year, California is adjusting the age requirement for enrollment in transitional kindergarten. Children who turn five between September 2, 2023 and April 2, 2024 will be eligible to enroll in transitional kindergarten for the 2023/2024 school year. Each subsequent school year, the birth dates for students to be eligible for transitional kindergarten will continue to be rolled back until 2025/2026, when students who turn four years old by September 1, 2025 will be eligible for transitional kindergarten. Early education plays a pivotal role in the academic success of students, which is why California has prioritized creating a two year academic kindergarten program, transitional kindergarten and kindergarten, for students. Students enrolled in transitional kindergarten and kindergarten engage in tactile learning experiences that resemble play time to help students build foundational learning skills,

strengthen relationships with peers, and develop a love of learning intended to serve them in their future school years. However, we know that not all young students are ready to transition from being at home with a parent to being in a school environment full time. For families that are interested in an alternative program, the Tehachapi Independent Learning Academy (TILA) provides a hybrid program that includes transitional kindergarten and kindergarten in addition to grades first through eight. Students enrolled in the TILA program attend school two days a week with an optional third day to engage in enrichment programs. When students are not on campus, they engage in their academics at home with a parent or guardian with the support of a credentialed teacher. Our elementary school sites will be offering informational meetings in April to provide site specific information on the transitional kindergarten and kindergarten programs offered at each school site. For the exact date and time, please call your school office or the district office at (661) 822-2100.

Food Services

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



Hortencia Tapia
Supervisor

Summer Feeding Program

It's hard to believe that this school year is coming to an end. With that being said, we are happy to share that Tehachapi Unified School District will be sponsoring the Summer Feeding Program which is available to any child 18 years of age and under. This summer, the program will take place at the Tehachapi High School cafeteria and at Tompkins Elementary School. From June 13th through July 26th, the cafeteria will serve breakfast and lunch. We would also like to send good wishes to Christi Gilbert as she plans on retiring soon. Christi has worked as a Cafeteria Worker I since August 1990 (33 years). Christi is one of the most positive persons we know, she never lets anything bother her because as she always says "Life's a redo". She will be hanging up her apron and enjoying retirement at the end of this school year. Thank you Christi, we will all miss you at the Central Kitchen.



Professional Development

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



Jennifer Butler
*Coordinator of
Instructional Support
and Improvement*

Rain or Shine, PE all the Time

Active in all types of weather, students in Tehachapi Unified School District (TUSD) are engaging in engaging activities to stay fit. Our teachers are using a research based inclusive physical education program to support students. PE teachers from the high school, middle, school and elementary school are helping students workout together as they work on social skills, teamwork and building relationships. Students are having fun together and becoming physically fit.

Tehachapi Unified School District 5th, 7th, and 9th grade students are currently participating in physical fitness testing (PFT). We have three elementary physical education teachers and three PE paraprofessionals working with our 5th grade students at each elementary

site while Jacobsen Middle School and Tehachapi High School PE teachers will conduct the testing at their own site.

Students are assessed on upper body strength and endurance, aerobic capacity, muscular strength, core strength, and flexibility. According to the California Department of Education, the main goal of the test is to help students in starting life-long habits of regular physical activity. Physical activity offers a degree of defense against diseases that come from inactivity.

Dan Sward, one of the PE teacher states, "Students seem to really enjoy pacers! Many students performed well above the expected fitness level for their age." Pacers are 20-meter lap to measure aerobic capacity. Physical Fitness testing is a great way to evaluate fitness for Tehachapi students. It helps us determine where to focus our future instruction. Dan says, "PE is awesome!"

Student Services

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



Dr. Bonny Porter
*Director
Student Services*

TUSD School Safety

TUSD is committed to providing a safe school environment. On a yearly basis, school sites update their Safety Plans that detail how school staff will promote safety and respond to an emergency situation. The plans are reviewed by a representative from the

Tehachapi Police Department, the Kern Fire Department as well as the TUSD School Board.

An important part of school safety is preparing for an emergency. Emergency drills such as fire, earthquake, and lockdown drills are also practiced on a monthly basis for TK-8th grade students and quarterly for high school students. TUSD sites also have a fully stocked bin that contains items to help school staff respond to an emergency. In the event that students need to remain on campus for an extended period of time, supplies including; water, cots, blankets, and first aid kits are also stored in the emergency bins. Safety is a priority at TUSD!



TILA students practice a fire drill.

Technology

400 South Snyder, Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2100



Ryan McKay
Director

Focus on Communication

Tehachapi Unified School District utilizes ParentSquare for District and school communication to parents. The sign-up process is automatic when a student is enrolled in the district. ParentSquare syncs with our student information system, Aeries. Pulling contact information from Aeries and using that information to populate contact information in ParentSquare. This is one

of the reasons the district strives so hard to keep parent contact information up to date.

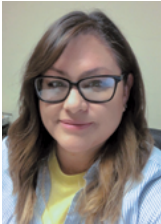
ParentSquare allows the district and schools to message student families directly or en masse. Parents can interact with their student's teacher(s) directly through the chat feature. Important information such as weather delays and school events from both the district and schools are sent out regularly through a feature called "posts". Parents are able to comment and react to posts and see them on the ParentSquare website, <https://www.parentsquare.com>

As parents, you have the ability to determine how you receive posts from the district. If you have downloaded the ParentSquare app, you can get notifications directly from the app. Otherwise, by logging into ParentSquare's website you can ensure that you are set up to receive post notifications either by text message or email. You can enable or disable any of the notification types in your profile settings, meaning you get complete control over not only the notification type but the frequency. If you worry about getting too many notifications in the day, you can change your notification from "instant" to "digest", which will send you all of your communications together at 6pm as one notification. Do not worry about missing emergency notifications with the digest feature. The district can force urgent and emergency communications to bypass the digest feature.

If you have not had a chance to sit down and look at ParentSquare, we highly encourage you to do so! If you have any questions about ParentSquare please feel free to reach out to the District IT team, or your child's school.

Transportation

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



Denise Berry
Supervisor

Home-to-School Transportation Plan

California has been the least funded state for school transportation in the U.S. based on per capita student enrollment. According to the Federal Highway Administration, only 9% of California students ride school buses. In June 2022 governor Gavin Newsom passed a record breaking state budget, with \$170 billion dedicated to supporting the California public school system, one of those being school transportation.

The California Home to School Transportation Plan allows school districts to receive a 60% reimbursement of their transportation costs. Districts must develop a plan that describes how they will provide transportation services to their students, prioritizing low-income students and those in transitional kindergarten through sixth grade. The reimbursement is going to be a great benefit to the TUSD. With today's rising expenses, that means more money for the classroom versus in the general fund for transportation costs.

The Transportation Department would also like to recognize one of our Bus Drivers. Ms. Merryl Trapp has been a Tehachapi Unified School District bus driver since 1994. This year would make 29 years of service with the School District. Merryl has decided 2023 is the year to retire and hang up the bus keys for the last time.

When asked what she enjoyed most about her job she answered "I don't know, I just have fun doing it." She continued to say she enjoyed the relationship she had with the students, parents, and co-workers. Everyone that has met Merryl knows her as a hard-working woman, who always took pride in her job.

Merryl, enjoy your new adventure, happy retirement. We truly wish you the best.



Cummings Valley *Elementary*

24220 Bear Valley Rd., Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2190 • cvs.tehachapiusd.com



Taylor Marquesen
Principal

Safe and Fun Space

Cummings Valley School students are having an “out of this world” experience when visiting Area 31, a safe and fun space for students to socialize under the leadership of CVS Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Mr. Steven Huecker.

Twice weekly, four students from every class are given passes to visit Area 31 to play games, do a craft activity and interact with others from their grade level. Teachers give the passes to students as a reward, or to those who may be having a hard week and just need a boost. Kids love the opportunity to unwind in this alternative setting with their buddy, Mr. H!

CVS is very lucky to have Mr. Huecker on staff. He also leads Social Emotional Learning classes each month, encouraging students how to talk about their feelings, manage their emotions and learn strategies to support healthy relationships and conflict resolution.



Golden Hills *Elementary*

20215 Park Rd., Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2180 • ghe.tehachapiusd.com



Kendra Bailey
Principal

The Eagle Academy

The Golden Hills Eagle Academy intervention program serves approximately 150 students in grades 1-5, providing intervention in the academic areas of Reading and Math. Every 6-8 weeks, teachers recommend students for the program

based on their academic needs as determined by assessment data and classroom progress. The intervention staff provide targeted teaching of the specific skills students need. The focus areas for Reading include Phonics, Comprehension, and Fluency, while Math includes Number Sense, Operations and Fact Fluency. Writing is another area of focus. Students in the program recently completed a seven-week Expository Writing session focused on composing a great essay. The goal of the program is to meet students

where they are at and move them forward. The staff works hard at building confidence, while filling learning gaps, so that the students can be successful in the classroom. The Eagle Academy is where scholars come to soar!



Jacobsen Middle School

711 Anita Dr., Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2150 • jms.tehachapiusd.com



Eric Loe
Principal

School Site Council

School Site Council plays an important role in the functioning of any school, and certainly performs an important function at Jacobsen Middle School (JMS). I would like to take the opportunity to explain a little bit about the structure and function of School Site Council (SSC), as it is often not well understood.

The membership of the SSC is equally distributed between JMS staff members (5), and family/community members (5). Members are chosen to serve through self-nomination and a voting election by the group they will represent. Staff members are elected by a vote of the JMS staff, while family/community members are elected through a vote of JMS Parents. SSC members typically serve for two years.

The function of the SSC is twofold. First, the SSC is tasked with participating in the forming, reviewing and approval of the School Plan for Student Achievement, the academic goals and plan for the year, as well as the School Safety Plan, which details the steps and structures designed to protect the safety of students and staff.

The second function of SSC is to allocate and approve the use of Title 1 funding, if the school qualifies for such funding. Title 1 funds are allocated to schools to assist economically disadvantaged students. At JMS, the SSC uses this funding to support students with both supplemental staff and programs. SSC pays for the Instructional Math Paraprofessionals that help students in our Math classes, our site Math Coach, and several programs designed to enhance and supplement the district provided curriculum in our classrooms.

School Site Council is one of the many groups of people working to support and provide for our JMS Students.

Tehachapi High School

801 S. Dennison Rd, Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2130 • ths.tehachapiusd.com



Cristina Libatique
Principal

Why Alternative to Suspension?

When students choose Alternative to Suspension (ATS) over home suspension, they have the opportunity to keep up with and catch up on classwork, reflect on their actions, make amends, and explore replacement strategies to help change the behavior that resulted in their suspension.

In ATS, students have access to Chromebooks, textbooks, class handouts, communication with their teachers, and the ability to take exams and finals, making the transition back to their classes smooth. Teachers are notified when one of their students will be in ATS and are asked to send/email daily assignments to the ATS teachers. The teachers at THS, go above and beyond by coming to the ATS classroom to give their students personalized instruction on assignments.

Students also have daily ATS assignments. They begin with a short essay explaining why they are in ATS, what they have thought about since the incident, and what other consequences they are facing. They end their stay in ATS with an exit plan that includes identifying an adult support mentor on campus, and realistic replacement strategies.

Choosing ATS as opposed to home suspension ensures that students are supervised during the school day instead of being home alone. In ATS they are asked to keep their phones at home or in their backpacks, they are not allowed to interact with other students, they are escorted to the restroom, and they are required to participate in campus beautification. ATS is intended to provide students with increased support and intervention.

School News

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Covering the
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Tompkins *Elementary*

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Clair Rhea
Principal

Congratulations to Our Winners

Tompkins Elementary students participated in the Oral Language Festival on March 8, 2023. Students memorized their interpretation of a published literary work written by a known author then presented it in their class. Presentations were 3-5 minutes in length with grades 4-5 competing separately. Categories of competition are Verse Choir, Humorous Interpretation Solo, Humorous Interpretation Duo, Serious Interpretation Solo and Serious Interpretation Duo. Classroom winners then moved on to the site level competition. The winners in each category advanced to the Regional competition on March 29, 2023, at the Air and Space Port in Mojave. Please join us in congratulating the following students who are category winners at Tompkins Elementary,

Serious Solo: Skylar Sulack

Humorous Solo: Andrea Navarro

Serious Duo: Austin Ketcheside and Sean Bahash

Humorous Duo: Sophia Smith and Zemira Howell

Verse Choir: Rigby Colby, Paige Hickman,
and Jaclynn Swanson



Serious Duo winners Austin Ketcheside and Sean Bahash

Tehachapi *Independent Learning Academy*

400 S. Snyder Ave., Tehachapi, CA 93561 • 661/822-2266 • tila.tehachapiusd.com



Dr. Bonny Porter
*Director
Student Services*

The Elementary Classic Model

TILA offers a TK - 5th grade classic instructional model. Students enrolled in the program meet with their teacher in class daily via Zoom. Zoom lessons are supported with work packets that students complete at home.

The packets mirror the adopted Tehachapi Unified School District (TUSD) curriculum and pacing guides

used in traditional TUSD classrooms.

TILA has two Classic Program elementary teachers. Mrs. Delgadillo works with TK-2nd grade students and Mrs. White works with 3rd-5th grade students.

Remote learning can be challenging, however, Mrs. Delgadillo and Mrs. White are experienced TUSD teachers who deliver rigorous virtual instruction. They are able to provide academic support that is tailored to individual student needs. Additionally, Classic students have the opportunity to connect with each other.

Teachers facilitate virtual student collaboration as a whole class, in small groups, or with partners. Through these virtual interactions, students are exposed to important socialization. TILA is proud to offer families a high quality alternative to traditional schooling.



Mrs. White Zooming with her students.



Weekly Themes

- Week 1 🌸 June 12-16 **Summer Sensations**
- Week 2 🌸 June 19-23 **Harry Potter**
- Week 3 🌸 June 26-30 **Myth Busters**
- Week 4 🌸 July 3-7 **Rockin Road Trip in the USA**
- Week 5 🌸 July 10-14 **Halloween**
- Week 6 🌸 July 17-21 **Splishy Splashy**
- Week 7 🌸 July 24-28 **Color Wars**
- Week 8 🌸 July 31- August 4 **Summer Nostalgia**

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Times

Camp 9:00AM-3:00PM
AM 6AM-9AM
PM 3PM-6PM
Tots 9:15-2:45 only

For more information email
Adventurecamp@tvrpd.org
call 661-822-3228
or
come in District Office
490 W D St

