

School of the Year Finalist

Tuolumne Elementary

County	Student Signups	Student Active Days	Other Signups	Bonus Active Days*	Total Student Comp.
Stanislaus	722	76959	20	678	722

Student Enrollment	% Student Completions	% Free/Reduced Lunch	Minority %	Front Runner School?
722	100.0%	91%	93%	No

Commitment to Promoting Healthy Eating on Campus

Tuolumne Elementary School is one of the 23 elementary school in Modesto City School District. The district has adopted a healthy nutrition plan that has reduced fat and calories in every meal. The monthly menu that is sent home to parents lists the daily breakfast and lunch meal. A nutritional chart is also shown that states the percentage of total fat, saturated fat, and total carbohydrates that approximates each meal.

Tuolumne teachers discuss the importance of eating healthy meals. Students know that food fuels the brain and gives their muscles energy to think and grow. Our school has implemented a breakfast program that ensures all students have the opportunity to eat breakfast in their classroom daily. Breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Our children understand how a healthy breakfast helps them get ready for the important learning that will occur in their classrooms.

The snacks that are sold at Tuolumne are also limited to healthy items that are low in fat, sugar, and calories. We have even limited the nature and number of classroom parties so that healthy foods are encouraged. Only food bought at a store can be brought to school, so teachers have the opportunity to discuss nutritional charts found on most packaged food items. Teachers discuss the impact of too many empty calories. Foods that have little nutritional value will most definitely lead to extra weight and possibly obesity.

Research has shown that students that eat healthy meals and are more active have a higher probability of doing better academically. The Tuolumne staff members are committed to providing the best opportunities for the students to learn to live a healthy life style, by eating the right types of foods and the correct portion size.

Support of Student's Physical Activity and Fitness

Tuolumne Elementary School is highly committed to physical activity. We have a wonderful PE program that the Modesto City Schools District has implemented throughout the elementary schools. "Game Day at the School" is a program that slowly builds the student's stamina and understanding of how to play a variety of games. The gradual process makes it easier for students to learn basic skills before they are required to integrate those skills into a competitive, fun game. The best part about the program is that the teachers love it and they often collaborate with each other so that one to four classes will be exercising on the playground at one time. Every day there are classes outside for PE.

Initially, exercises are introduced with stretching and calisthenics, which many classes can perform together. The next step may be to practice a game or a portion of a game, so the classes may break apart, depending on the number of children needed. Finally, the students end their program with a cool down period. The benefit of learning social skills and sportsmanship is a component that benefits all of American society.

Our After-School Program has partnered with the Boy Scouts to offer soccer on Saturday. Parents have volunteered to coach the students. First grade through 5th grade students are able to participate in this program. They will be competing with other After-School program students within the Modesto City School District.

Tuolumne school has playground equipment that provides a variety of activities for recess. Jump ropes, tetherball, soccer, football, basketball, foursquare, hopscotch, hula-hoops, and more. We have a small rock-climbing wall, many climbing forms and balancing beams.

The sound of Tuolumne children laughing and enjoying the physical activity brings pleasure to one's heart.

Need for a new Fitness Center

Located in the part of Stanislaus County that is known as “No man’s land”, Tuolumne School is an island of safety for our community. Though there is a park a few blocks away, students are afraid to use the park because of gang activity. The only other open space for students to play is the school. Due to the location and high poverty level, students do not have access to community recreation activities, available to other students in the community.

Tuolumne School is a multi-track, year-round, K-6 elementary school with over 700 students. All teachers provide organized, regular, physical education using the Game Day curriculum. However, during the summer heat, temperatures over 100 degrees and poor air quality preclude any outdoor physical activity. In addition, during rainy days, the cafeteria is used for a breakfast program, morning and evening parent meetings, assemblies and a lunch period that extends from 10:40 am to 1:10 pm. The after school-program uses the cafeteria from the close of school until 6:00 pm. Because of lack of free time in the cafeteria, teachers are forced to come up with creative ways to have P.E. in the crowded classes.

The Tuolumne staff is committed to reducing the obesity epidemic in our youth. A fitness center would provide staff a location for additional P.E. equipment and a place to conduct indoor activities when weather or air quality prevents instruction. The facility would also be used by students in the after-school program.

Tuolumne School has partnered with three community organizations to conduct physical activities for our students and their parents on Saturdays. The fitness center would be used for these events. This facility would truly make a difference to reduce obesity by allowing our students to be more physically active at all times.