



**Lisette Estrella-Henderson, Superintendent of Schools**

5100 Business Center Drive, Fairfield, CA 94534-1658

707.399.4400 ★ [www.solanocoe.net](http://www.solanocoe.net)

### NEWS – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Date:** February 25, 2019  
**Organization:** Solano County Office of Education  
**Contact:** Gillie Miller, Director of College and Career Readiness  
**Telephone:** 707-372-8603  
**E-Mail:** [gmillier@solanocoe.net](mailto:gmillier@solanocoe.net)

### **Phoenix Spark Challenge Open to All Solano County High School Students**

The Solano County Office of Education in partnership with Travis Air Force Base (TAFB) is once again excited to launch the Phoenix Spark Challenge! High school students throughout Solano County are encouraged to register for the 2019 competition that will be held at TAFB on Tuesday, May 7. "We are very excited about this opportunity for high school teams to compete in such an inspiring event. Solving real-life problems is an excellent way to get students engaged in math and science while learning the valuable 21st Century skills necessary to prepare for the jobs of today and the future," says Solano County Superintendent of Schools Lisette Estrella-Henderson. "We are very thankful for our partnership with the TAFB Phoenix Spark Innovation program for helping students develop valuable skills, such as collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking, that will serve them well throughout their lives."

The three challenges for this year's competition are: (1) M8 Paper Bot - build a self-contained device that can detect changes in the color of M8 Paper, (2) Continuous Process Improvement Pre-Event Kit – build a system that can collect and transmit meaningful workflow data, and (3) Heritage Center VR Experience – create a virtual reality experience for an aircraft tour and a flight. To register, contact Gillie Miller at [gmillier@solanocoe.net](mailto:gmillier@solanocoe.net) or 707-372-8603.

Students will be judged on product design and feasibility, cost analysis to include initial startup costs, and one-, five-, and ten-year long-term analysis. Students will also be required to present a 3-5-minute presentation along with visual aids.

The goals of the Phoenix Spark Challenge are to provide students with fun, interesting, and challenging real-world problems to solve; introduce a challenge that advances both the high school's academic goals and TAFB's mission; and to tap into a pool of innovators that can bring a novel solution and perspective to the issues being presented in the challenge.

Concepts are infused throughout the competition to advance student skill levels in science, technology, engineering, and math. Through this challenge, students gain an understanding of the principles of teamwork, communication, and problem-solving. Each student has an opportunity to work as a team member and present work in a forum that is modeled after workplace practices.

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