

## ABSTRACT

### THE AIR QUALITY FLAGS PROGRAM IN THE SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

This research project was conducted to evaluate the impact of the Air Quality Flags Program within the school environment through policy and curriculum implementation. The main goals of this study were to evaluate the extent to which the Flags Program is associated with modified school policies, teacher curriculum on air quality and outdoor activities for students, teachers, school administrators, and parents. This study also sought to identify the barriers to implementing the Flags Program as well as challenges with associated policies and curriculum at schools and to evaluate whether schools were implementing the Flags Program by using the air quality information provided to their sites by the San Joaquin Valley Air Quality Control District. The study population was administrators at elementary schools and middle schools across six counties: Tulare, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Mariposa, and Fresno. There were 29 participating and 28 nonparticipating schools in this study. A questionnaire was used in the interviews and all findings derived from open-ended responses and direct quotations.

A case study qualitative analysis was conducted to evaluate the Flags Program's impact on asthma advocacy and social change within San Joaquin Valley communities.

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