



FROM THE DESK OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

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March 8, 2023

Dear MJUSD Community,

Last night we started our school board meeting with so many celebrations! Students, staff, parents, and community partners are being recognized for their contributions and talents. Mr. Robert Summa, Editor of the Appeal Democrat, and Mr. Dan Peterson, Director of Public Works for Yuba County, were both recognized for their ongoing service to the community and its impacts on the school district. We also recognized students in the Honor Band and Choir, MCAA students who won statewide arts awards, and the LHS Mock Trial Team.

Last week I enjoyed watching the MHS Boys and Girls basketball teams play their hearts out. I am so very proud of our students and our coaches. I also watched the LHS Mock Trial Team and the District Choir concert. This week I am looking forward to the District Spelling Bee on Thursday and District Band Concert on Wednesday. During Read Across America Week, I joined students at Cordua, Browns Valley, and Linda elementary schools. This was a tremendous opportunity to read with our little ones.

Now, I'd like to discuss an important action item from last night. The Board voted to approve the MJUSD Middle College Academy, which will be a small high school located on the Yuba College campus. We will start informational sessions soon to share about this unique program where students will be able to complete six years of schooling in four years, access college courses during the day and earn credits for 4-year college transfer and/or a certificate for immediate job placement after graduation. The school will be designed as a mini college, with support from high school and college counselors. These students who complete the program will receive their AA degree while in high school.

There were students and staff at the meeting who were not in support of this program for several reasons, but the following three points were the major factors:

- It would impact the existing AP programs;
- The money required to set up this school would be better spent on wellness centers and other supports needed in our current schools for students; and
- The money should be spent on music and the arts.

All of these and other comments voiced are extremely valid, but I would like to expand on how we are already investing in these key programs and initiatives and intend to continue supporting them in the years to come.

- For the arts and music component, the State just provided separate and ongoing funding through Proposition 28 and that information has been shared with our school principals and staff.

- Wellness for students and staff has been a priority area of focus and several actions have been taken and are continuing to be supported. We will send an updated informational item on wellness to the community very soon. I have also included a letter from Wellness Director Rob Gregor with more information.
- As far as impacting AP classes, the presentation given last night about the Middle College Academy shared data showing that both AP and college courses are designed for college-readiness and are equally rigorous. However, we believe that students should be provided a choice of both. So we shouldn't look at this as one vs. the other.

As we continue to focus on our students' success, we believe that they need options for other high school models, similar to what has been created with the Marysville Charter Academy for the Arts, which is a fantastic model for our creative students who are interested in the arts. The Middle College Academy is designed for a unique group of students who find the traditional high school campus too restrictive for their personal learning styles. Our goal is to continue to provide options so that all students will be best prepared for this ever-changing world.

Here are some of the highlights from the March 7, 2023, Board of Trustees meeting:

- Principal David Jones presented the school site plans for the alternative school programs.
- King Consulting presented the 2022-23 demographic analysis and enrollment projections. Director Zach Pless also spoke to the financial impact of interdistrict permits, which is resulting in over \$7 million in fiscal losses each year.
- The Board approved a Financial Literacy course for summer of 2023. This course has been requested by our students and we are very happy to make it possible.
- The Board approved the Lindhurst High School security fencing project.
- The Board approved the creation of a Middle College High School Academy on the campus of Yuba College, which will start serving students in the 2023-2024 school year.
- The Board authorized the Covillaud Modernization Project at a cost of \$20 million.
- The Board approved the 2022-23 Transportation Services plan.

Last month, we started a parent chat series called **Let's Connect!** This time is set aside for parents - you get to share your concerns, suggestions and ideas with me. We serve your students so I invite you to tell us what we need to do better. Last month, I was able to connect with 35 parents. Many concerns were shared and actions have been taken as a response. So please join me on Monday, March 13th. I look forward to seeing you there!

Sincerely,



Fal Asrani, Ed.D.
Superintendent