



## Madera South High School

December 2023

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### A Message From The Principal

Dear Madera South High School Families,

There are so many things to celebrate as we close out the 2023 calendar year. This month is incredibly important as we near the end of our 1st semester. Please be sure to check AERIES grades frequently in these next few weeks so that you all may stay apprised of your student's academic progress. We ask that you make a point of reaching out to classroom teachers directly or through ParentSquare should you have any questions related to missing assignments, attendance, etc. We also have additional resources to help including our counselors, student advocates, Child Welfare & Attendance Liaisons, and our administrative team. We are committed to working together to ensure the semester closes on a successful note for all students. We know that we are stronger when we work together to support students and maintain open communication.

Thank you for your continued support throughout the year. We wish you and your family a safe and festive holiday season.

Warmest regards,

*Jon Steinmetz*

### Coming Soon

- December 5: School Site Council Meeting, 4-5 PM, MSHS Room 102/103
- December 8: Choir Holiday Dessert Theatre, 6-8 PM, MSHS Cafeteria
- December 7: Madera FFA Meeting, 5-7 PM
- December 9: Winter Formal
- December 11: No School for Students, Teacher Collaboration Day
- December 12-16: Stanley's Season of Giving
- December 14: Visual & Performing Arts Winter Showcase
- December 20-22: Semester 1 Finals
  - Wednesday: Finals 1 & 2
  - Thursday: Finals 3 & 4
  - Friday: Finals 5 & 6
- December 23-January 16: Winter Break, No School

### Seven Period Day

We are excited to share that starting next school year, all high school students will have the opportunity for students to take additional elective courses within the school day due to the expansion from a six period day to a seven period day. This will not change the school start time or end time and is built into the existing school day.

In an effort to share the elective course offerings with your students, counselors will meet with them beginning December 4th and will continue through early February. Following the presentation, students will be asked to select their top elective choices. Courses are based on availability at each site and student elective choices will be considered and prioritized. It is our hope that the presentation will help provide your student with insightful information so they can choose the elective courses that they are most interested in. We encourage you to speak with your student about their elective courses for next school year so the best choice is made for your child. If you have any questions or need support please contact your child's school counselor.

## Student Safety-Crossing Streets



As the safety of our students is our utmost priority, this is a reminder of the importance of instilling safe practices when it comes to crossing streets. With the increase in traffic around Madera South, especially on Stadium Road, it is crucial that our students are equipped with the knowledge and awareness to navigate roads safely.

Here are some key points to discuss with your child and reinforce the importance of road safety:

- Use Designated Crosswalks: Emphasize the significance of using marked crosswalks and pedestrian crossings. Encourage your child to always choose the safest route when crossing streets.
- Obey Traffic Signals: Teach your child to obey traffic signals and to wait for the green light or walk signal before crossing. Remind them that these signals are in place to ensure their safety.
- Look Both Ways: Instill the habit of looking both ways before crossing the street. Remind your child to be vigilant and make eye contact with drivers when possible to ensure they are seen.
- Avoid Distractions: Instruct your child to put away electronic devices and headphones while crossing streets. Distractions can compromise their awareness and reaction time.
- Walk, Don't Run: Encourage your child to walk, not run, when crossing streets. Running increases the risk of accidents and makes it more challenging for drivers to anticipate their movements.
- Buddy System: If possible, suggest that your child walks with a friend or group when crossing streets. There's safety in numbers, and it ensures that they are more visible to drivers.
- Lead by Example: Model safe road-crossing behavior yourself. Children often learn best by observing the behavior of adults.

Your collaboration in reinforcing these safety measures is crucial for the well-being of our students. By working together, we can create a community that prioritizes safety and looks out for one another. Thank you for your attention to this matter, and please feel free to reach out if you have any questions or concerns.

## Health and Wellness-Cell Phone Usage



In an age where technology plays a significant role in our daily lives, it is crucial to be mindful of the impact it can have on our children, particularly with regard to excessive cell phone use. While we acknowledge the educational and communication benefits that smartphones offer, it's important to strike a balance and be aware of potential negative effects on physical and mental health.

Research indicates that prolonged screen time, especially on mobile devices, can contribute to a range of issues, including:

- **Eyestrain and Disruption of Sleep Patterns:** Extended use of screens can lead to eyestrain, headaches, and difficulty falling asleep. The blue light emitted by screens can interfere with the production of melatonin, a hormone that regulates sleep.
- **Posture Problems:** Excessive use of cell phones may contribute to poor posture, as children often spend extended periods hunched over their devices. This can lead to neck and back pain, as well as musculoskeletal issues.
- **Reduced Physical Activity:** Excessive screen time may discourage physical activity and outdoor play, contributing to a sedentary lifestyle. Regular exercise is essential for maintaining overall health and well-being.
- **Social and Emotional Impact:** Excessive use of social media and messaging apps can lead to increased stress, anxiety, and a sense of social isolation among children. It is important for parents to be aware of their child's online activities and foster open communication.

To promote a healthy and balanced lifestyle, we encourage you to set reasonable limits on your child's screen time, establish technology-free zones, and engage in open conversations about responsible device use. Additionally, consider implementing the following practices:

- **Establish Screen-Free Times:** Designate specific times during the day when screens, including cell phones, are not allowed. This can include family meals and a wind-down period before bedtime.
- **Encourage Outdoor Activities:** Promote physical activity and outdoor play to ensure your child maintains a healthy level of exercise and social interaction.
- **Model Healthy Behavior:** Children often learn by example. Demonstrate responsible cell phone use by limiting your own screen time and being present during family activities.
- **Stay Informed:** Stay informed about the apps and social media platforms your child is using.

Encourage them to share their online experiences, and address any concerns they may have.

We believe that by working together, we can create a supportive environment that encourages responsible and balanced technology use. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to me or any member of the school staff.

Thank you for your continued support in fostering the well-being of our students.

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## Staff & Student Highlights



## Student Highlight | Mia Garcia



Mia is a current Junior and ASB Leadership Student, Theatre Star and CSF member. She enjoys reading and planning “Boofests of the Century”. Her most recent project was helping with the ASB Leadership Boofest Booth.

## Student Highlight | Julian Martinez-Rodriguez



Julian is the HOSA President and recently helped plan the blood drive as well as the on campus health fair. He is also an ASB leader.

## Staff Highlight | Tiffany Garza, Permanent Substitute



Tiffany is a permanent sub for us at Madera South High School. Additionally, she is a class advisor for the Class of 2025. She is active in many student extracurriculars and has formed many solid relationships with students from the multitude of classes she has covered.

***What is your most memorable student support experience?***

My most memorable student support experience was being able to pick students for awards last year. It gave me the opportunity to show the selected students that I see that they're trying their best and working hard. Also when students went out of their way to invite me to their award ceremony and graduation. I enjoy that they know they could count on me to be present for their accomplishments.

***What is your most memorable learning experience?***

My most memorable learning experience would have to be learning the different ways to build relationships with students and staff. Everyone is different and being able to adapt to who I am helping/working with has helped me build my character.

***What hobbies or interests do you enjoy?***

A few hobbies I have include cooking, traveling, watching movies, and spending time with my family and friends.

***What is a goal you have for the 2023-24 school year?***

My goal for the 2023-2024 school year is to build better relationships with students along with be a helping hand for all the Stallion staff!

**Staff Highlight | Eddie Cortez, Permanent Substitute**





Eddie has been a valuable member of the South team for several years as a trusted substitute teacher as well as a wrestling coach. As a permanent sub, he has done very well in long-term positions filling in for a number of different courses. Eddie does a great job of reaching our difficult students through strong relationships.

***What is your most memorable student support experience?***

My most memorable student support experience was helping one of my wrestlers, who was an ELD student and had only been living in the States for a few years prior to high school, reach her goals of not only going forward with attending college but achieving her goal of reaching the California Interscholastic Federation State Championships her junior year.

***What is your most memorable learning experience?***

It would have to probably be the times I have created relationships with students that might be challenging at times, and understanding their home background to better communicate with them.

***What hobbies or interests do you enjoy?***

I enjoy camping and bow fishing with my family, and of course, coaching wrestling throughout the year.

***What is a goal you have for the 2023-24 school year?***

One goal I have for this year is to finalize my preliminary teaching credential to obtain a position in physical education.

## Staff and Student Highlight | FFA National Convention



***Congratulations to Morelia Vieyra (MSHS Class of 2024), 2023 National FFA Champion Equine Placement Proficiency, pictured along with FFA Advisor and teacher, Julie Luxon***

Madera South High School represented California well at the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana last week. Morelia Vieyra and Juan Rojas both received recognition on stage at Lucas Oil Stadium as proficiency winners for the state of California with Morelia winning a national title for Equine Sciences. Our Meats Evaluation Team received a Gold Award for their performance in the national competition and Oswaldo Montes, Caleb Fant, and Mathew Machado all received Gold Individual Awards. Anita Giron received a Silver Individual Award.

This year our chapter had twenty members earn their American FFA Degree, an honor less than one percent of FFA members earn. We had four of those members travel to the National Convention where they received their degree on stage.  
Congratulations Madera FFA!