



# Monterey County Office of Education

*Leadership, Support, and Service to Prepare All Students for Success*

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*Dr. Deneen Guss  
County Superintendent of Schools*

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to the 2020 - 2021 school year! The classes in the south county area have been open for approximately one month now and the opening of this school year is like no other we have seen in the past. Starting last spring we have had to find a new normal for teaching and learning due to COVID-19 pandemic school closures. While normal is a simple word, our new normal of distance learning is not simple. It is the goal of all MCOE employees to not only find our new distance normal, but to use this time as a learning experience that will forever impact the learning environment of our students, families, and teaching staff when we return to classrooms and offices. Our fall opening may not be "normal," but our learning will not only continue, but it will thrive.

As of August 1, MCOE staff have been able to enter buildings with restrictions such as masks, daily wellness checks, frequent sanitizing, and social distancing. I am excited to be back in the school building and look forward to finding solutions to the challenges that COVID-19 restrictions have placed on student learning.

There are also new staff with us this year as we navigate the COVID-19 normal. Miriam Green is a preschool teacher at the Greenfield Children's Center. She is not new to MCOE, but has changed positions from a classroom para-educator to that of a special education teacher. She is doing a wonderful job and students are excited to meet with her online. Another new teacher to south county is Kate Dorto. Ms. Dorto was a teacher for an MCOE classroom located at ABI prior to this year. She took up the mantle of our Gabilan preschool Room #4 classroom and continues to share her expertise with our students. Also, after a year away from Rose Ferrero, Valerie Parker, returned to the Rose classroom at the start of ESY. She has said it feels like she is home again. Teacher Jennifer Wright, who served as the Chalone Peaks teacher last year, is now the teacher for the Gabilan School, Rooms #1 and #3. She is setting high expectation for students to become as independent as possible and has great ideas on how to make this happen. The teaching position left by Jennifer at Chalone Peaks was filled by substitute teacher, Susan Hayes. Susan has been doing an exceptional job as we search for a permanent teacher for this classroom continues. I am excited to have all these fine teachers working in the south county area.

The Greenfield and King City School Districts, as well as MCOE, have provided several students with devices that will allow students to participate in online learning. There will be one additional day of device distributions taking place later in September. More information will be provided to parents if you need an iPad or Hot Spot for your student.

My hope is students will be able to return to an on-campus program of some type in the near future. In the between time, teachers and staff are working very hard to provide quality services through distance learning. However, distance learning cannot take place without the help and support of parents, family members, and relatives. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for all your extraordinary efforts. We are excited to work closely with you to ensure the success and well-being of all of our students.

Respectfully,  
Faye Eastman  
Principal