

October 15, 2020

Dear Marchus and Mauzy Families,

First, I hope this message finds you and your families healthy and safe.

I sincerely apologize for not reaching out earlier, but the last three weeks have been packed with trying to learn about the schools I will lead and the County Office of Education's plans on reopening school to face to face instruction.

My name is Dr. Patrick Gaffney and I am excited and honored to be working with both the Marchus and Mauzy school communities. I have been in education since 1992, have been a school site principal since 2005 and in Contra Costa County since 2012. Supporting special populations of students has been a passion of mine since college which is why I hold a Master's Degree in Marriage, Family and Child Counseling and a school counseling credential along with my Doctorate in Leadership and Organizational Development.

It has been quite the three weeks of "what ifs" and hypotheticals. County office and site leadership would start to make decisions, only for county and state officials to give us more guidelines to consider. Obviously, the education of your child is paramount, but when it comes to the health and safety of our students and staff, much must be considered and prioritized. Hence, the roller-coaster of logistical planning.

Teachers are committed to providing both synchronous and asynchronous learning opportunities for your child each week as well as providing them relevant grade level appropriate instruction aligned to the common core standards. Teachers will use the shortened Wednesday time for professional development, collaboration and to support individual students when possible.

There are many questions that still need answers and new systems and processes that will need to be created. To stay updated, I encourage you to continue to read the communications from the county office and check their website often. I am also planning to develop a more robust communication system as well, which is currently in process and communications will be sent when ready.

As your new principal, I need to build honest and trusting relationships with all the stakeholders in the community, but especially you, our partners in education. The job of a parent is a hard one as you love your child so much and want them to have every advantage they deserve, including their education. As a single parent of a special needs child I want that too! In these difficult and unique times, we will work to create a culture of excellence, a strong commitment to rigorous and relevant academics and social-emotional health. Together, this year we will be discovering new ways to connect, listen and learn from and with one another.

Your partner in education,

Dr. Patrick Gaffney