

THE SIGNAL

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Santa Maria Joint Union
HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Staff,

I hope this message finds you doing well, as we wrap up the busy month of March and head into a well-earned Spring Break. To begin, I'd like to highlight several points of pride involving our students and staff.

Congratulations to Delta HS staff for being reaffirmed as a CA Model Continuation High School. This is the 4th time in a row, since 2014, that Delta has earned this 3-year designation. Additionally, two of Delta's three Robotics teams that placed at the Vex State Robotics Tournament qualified for the World Championships in Dallas next month, where they will compete with some of the best teams from the US and 40 countries.

Congratulations also go to Pioneer Valley HS Varsity Winter Sport Coaches for all qualifying their teams for a bid in the CIF Playoffs. This is the first time in PV's history that both men and women's wrestling, basketball, and soccer teams accomplish this feat.

Seven of fourteen Migrant students from Righetti, Santa Maria, and Pioneer Valley secured 1st place in different categories at the Regional Migrant Speech and Debate competition. These students now advance to the State Tournament in Monterey in May. Congratulations to the Migrant school advisors and speech/debate coaches.

I also want to thank our ELA and Math Teacher Teams for their dedicated work this year as part of our Curriculum Alignment Project. As a result of their collaboration, we now have focus standards selected and a plan for district wide assessments for next year. These teams will continue to build on this work next year with Data Reflection Sessions. I am also excited to have our guidance teams start joining in on this work in the upcoming weeks, as well as our Science and History teams beginning the process in the fall.

At the February board meeting, the board adopted a District Facilities Implementation Plan. The plan reviews the district's educational initiatives, establishes educational specifications, assesses the facilities needs at existing sites and plans for a new high school. The plan proposes facility improvements with estimated costs and a finance plan to fund the program. One of the primary goals of the planning process is to establish a facilities program that will reduce overcrowding at our existing schools. In addition, there are improvements planned at all campuses. The next step is to conduct a voter opinion survey to evaluate the feasibility of a new bond program. A summary of the results will be presented to the board to guide the decision to call an election. A big thanks to staff and admin who are a part of leading and supporting this process.

I am grateful to all our colleagues across the district, for your commitment to the learning and well-being of our students. I hope you make time for some rest this Easter and Cesar Chavez holiday weekend, and into next week. As we head into the last months of the school year, let us finish strong, and expect the same of our students. Thank you for all that you do on their behalf at SMJUHS... where greatness grows!

With much gratitude,

Antonio Garcia
Superintendent



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Righetti High School senior Raya Pina-Lee doesn't let yesterday get in the way of today.

While Raya was in 8th grade, life changed drastically for her. Her grandmother became her caregiver through foster care after she was removed from her home because her parents – who are both deaf – were reportedly involved in drugs, gangs, and domestic violence. Sadly, her adversity wasn't over with her change in home life. Raya's older sister died from substance abuse a year ago .

"I don't think my family is bad," she said. "They did it for the money, to survive, to get through. They didn't think of others. That's why I want to help others who might have been in my situation."

Raya, who is proficient in American Sign Language (ASL), continues to pursue her own path to success. She applied to a dozen UC and CSU institutions, having now been accepted to four universities, but continues to wait on her first choice, UC Irvine.


"I have decided that because of my background, I want to pursue a career in criminology, hopefully with the FBI," said Raya, who has a 3.2 GPA and plays basketball for the lady Warriors. "I've always liked those crime shows and movies where people piece things together in order to solve a crime! My back up plan involves becoming a therapist, psychologist, or sign language interpreter."

Raya admits that she's lost a lot of things in her young life but concludes, " Being negative isn't going to get me anywhere. I'm not wasting any time on that."

In addition to sports and school, Raya works at Splash car wash. She says that she uses her sense of humor to, "continuously crack people up!"

It's obvious that she's not only a survivor but continues to find her way and pursue her own successes and happiness!





BBQ TUESDAY 2023-24	
Date	Site
4/16/24	CTE
4/30/24	SMHS
5/21/24	DELTA
6/7/24	SSC

STAFF SPOTLIGHT – MEET OUR SROs



SMHS School Resource Officer - Tim Trefts
Santa Maria Police Department

What HS did you graduate from and when? Righetti, Class of 2004.

What is your favorite food and hobby? Pizza, wings and baseball (watching and coaching).

What is the best part about being an SRO for you? The schedule is nice to be around my family.

RHS School Resource Officer - Michael Reynoso II
Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office

What HS did you graduate from and when? I graduated from Ernest Righetti High School, Class of 2011.

What is your favorite food and hobby? My favorite food is pizza. I also have a sweet tooth so any sort of candy I usually can't say no to. My hobbies include collecting sports cards/trading cards, completing home improvement projects and spending time with friends and family.

What is the best part about being an SRO for you? The best part about being an SRO is being able to return to the high school I attended and give back by helping students and staff with anything I can. I also get a bit of nostalgia watching the students go to school events (football games, dances, rallies, etc.) throughout the school year and make lifelong memories they will cherish forever.



PVHS School Resource Officer Michael "Nick" Sanchez
Santa Maria Police Department

What HS did you graduate from and when? St. Joseph High School, Class of 2004.

What is your favorite food and hobby? - Bbq and spaghetti. Hobbies are going to the gym, playing basketball, football, and softball.

What is the best part about being an SRO for you? Impacting and mentoring the youth and building the relationships between students and their families along with school faculty and staff.



SCHOOL SPOTLIGHT



Delta named a Model Continuation High School

Delta High School was recently designated a Model Continuation High School (MCHS) for 2024, making it one of thirty-one in the state.

The school retains the designation for three years and will be recognized for creating various opportunities for their students to pursue academic and social success at the California Continuation Education Association (CCEA) State Conference in Burbank, April 25-28.

"It's a privilege to work with staff who are willing to go above and beyond and provide an exemplary education for our students, so I'm pleased that the state has again recognized Delta as a great place to learn.'" – Principal Nate Maas

Delta has won the award continually since 2014.

The school's attendance is about 378 students. There are more than 430 continuation schools in the state serving about 51,000 students.



READING CORNER

Six Ways to Boost Student Agency

Please take a few minutes to read an insightful article where Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, Dr. Krista Herrera, shares ways to boost student agency. The tips were published in Tech & Learning Magazine. She recently received the Innovative Thought Leader Award during the publication's Innovative Summit.

[6 Ways to Boost Student Agency | Tech & Learning \(techlearning.com\)](https://www.techlearning.com)



SMHS NEW SOFTBALL FIELD

A ribbon cutting ceremony celebrated the new SMHS softball facility before the Saints played their opening game of the season on March 18.

The event began with Athletic Trainer Kenna Pearce cutting the red ribbon. Grounds crew member, Jordan Markstone, threw the first pitch.



“As you can imagine, a lot of planning, hard work, and money went into this project and there are a lot of people to thank. First, we would like to thank the SMJUUSD for putting together a plan that would provide SMHS such a wonderful softball field. Edwards Construction for working hard to make sure this field was ready for this school season. We would like to thank the school's Administration for supporting Athletics and for allowing Athletics to have a say in the design of this facility. Finally, I would like to thank Danny Sheridan, SMHS Plant Manager, for his support and our wonderful grounds crew for their contributions in the construction of this wonderful facility.” – Saint Athletic Director, Dan Ellington.

The project, which began last July and was completed this month, cost about \$3.3 million, according to Gary Wuitschick, Director of Facilities and Logistics.

The Saints beat Valley Christian Academy 11-0.



Class of 2024 Graduation Schedule

June 5, 2024

4 p.m. – DHS @ RHS Warrior Stadium

June 6, 2024

9:00 a.m. – SMHS @ Dave Boyd Field

11:30 a.m. – ERHS @ Warrior Stadium

2:00 p.m. – PVHS @ PVHS Stadium



WELLNESS TIPS

Hello SMJUHS D Team,

I would like to begin by thanking all of you for everything you do for our students daily. Your work is truly appreciated! As I speak to different people, I hear similar experiences that they feel stress has overtaken them. Stress is everywhere and it is important to find healthy ways to de-stress.

I wanted to share some tips I found on the following website, <https://www.claremonteap.com/mindfulness/>

If you are experiencing stress, try some of the activities. I would love to hear if they were helpful to anyone.

Thank you,

Jose Pereyra – Director of Wellness Services



Here are a few tips to help you cope with stress:

Make Self-Care a Priority. Exercise daily, get plenty of rest, address your own needs and feelings regularly, and make an effort to eat healthy.

Start a Mindfulness Practice. Mindfulness can help develop self-awareness and the ability to cope with feelings of stress. Pay attention to the present moment with openness, slow down, connect with your breath to relax your mind and body.

Create a Resilience Routine. Take a proactive approach to dealing with stress. Make exercise, meditation, yoga and other relaxation techniques part of your daily routine.

Make Time For Activities You Enjoy. Read a good book, watch a comedy, play a fun game, or make something—it doesn't matter what you do, as long as it takes you out of your worries.

Remember to Laugh. Laughter is the best medicine and it's free. Laughter can reduce the pain you feel, both body and mind, and help to minimize the issue at hand.

The Human Resources Department is still recruiting for multiple positions. Please check our website for vacancies and send the link to others you know that may have the skills we are seeking.

<https://www.applitrack.com/smjuhsd/onlineapp/>

