

Jack G. Desmond Middle School



March 2021

A Message From The Principal

Longhorn Families,

As a community we are making great progress in bringing our COVID positivity case rates down, which is fantastic because it brings us closer to being able to provide more opportunities for our students at Desmond and in our district. Due to the drop in positive COVID cases Desmond has been able to bring back two small cohorts of students who were in need of additional support. We are looking forward to expanding opportunities for all students to be more engaged with school as we continue to trend in the right direction. We truly appreciate all our families continue to do to support their students at home while in distance learning.

Carry Gassett, Principal

Upcoming Events

03/3/21 11:00am-12:30pm
Food Distribution

03/10/21 11:00am-12:30pm
Food Distribution

03/17/21 11:00am-12:30pm
Food Distribution

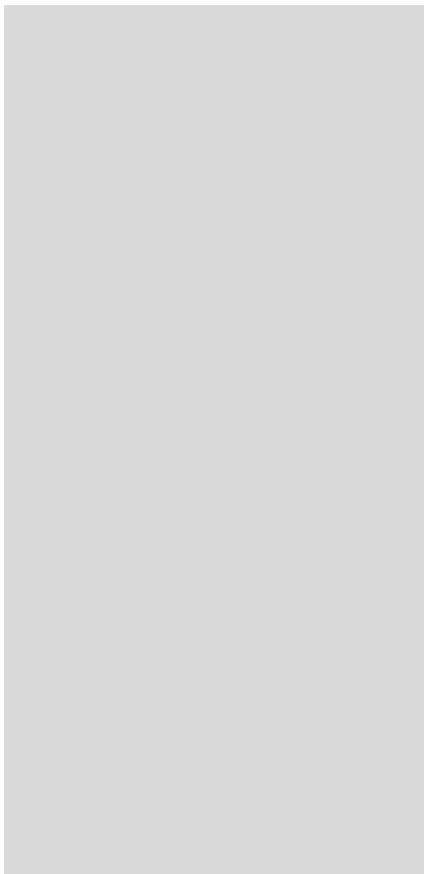
03/26/21 Quarter 3 Ends

03/29/21 Spring Break - No
School

Event Highlight

Bonner Awards Recipients

Desmond was announced as a winner of the 2021 Bonner Character and Civic Education Award! The Bonner Award is offered through California State University, Fresno. The award is presented to schools who are exemplary in demonstrating character and civic education. Desmond is the first school within Madera Unified School District to earn this award. Huge Shout-Out to our teachers, staff and PBIS team who have worked together to create systems to reach our students through distance learning! We also wanted to thank the parents, students, teachers and staff who were a part of our site visitation on February 3rd. The panel stated they could feel the heart and passion that our teachers and staff pour into the students of the Desmond Community!



Athletics

We are so excited to finally be able to bring our Middle school students of Madera Unified an opportunity to compete in athletics. As a result, we need to gather some information so we can plan our 2021 Spring sports season according to how many students are interested in participating. At this time, we are planning on beginning games and tryouts after Spring Break. We would also offer some voluntary workout opportunities the 2 weeks prior to Spring Break. Please be on the lookout for a survey that we ask you to complete to help us plan for the upcoming season. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to our Athletic Director, Nick Burns at nickburns@maderausd.org.

PBIS

After winning the Bonner Award our PBIS Team has worked on redefining some of our reward systems. Our staff, and families have been providing us feedback on how we can improve our system. Our PBIS Team is working on creating a PBIS Reward Luncheon to honor all students who received P5s for the week prior. The luncheon will be weekly on a Wednesday. Here students will get to come to the Zoom and play games, watch movies, or interact with their

peers. Our first luncheon will be on March 10 from 11:30-12:15. Please have your child check their email every Friday for an invitation. We are looking forward to celebrating your child!

ELD Students - ELPAC Testing

The Summative English Language Proficiency Assessments for California, or “Summative ELPAC,” is the test used to measure how well students understand English when it is not the language they speak at home. Information from the ELPAC tells your child’s teacher about the areas in which your child needs extra support. Students in kindergarten through grade twelve who are classified as English learners will take the Summative ELPAC every year until they are reclassified as proficient in English. The ELPAC summative assessment-testing window for Desmond is March 19th and March 22nd.

The district is moving forward to schedule individual appointments with each student to administer the speaking portion of the Summative ELPAC in person. The assessment will be administered at Desmond Middle School and will take approximately 30 minutes. All health and safety protocols will be in place to ensure the well-being of each student and staff member. You will receive a phone call from our school in the coming days to schedule the Summative ELPAC assessment.

Parents are an important part of their child’s education:

- Have your child read at least 30 minutes per day
- Provide your child with opportunities to use language outside of school.
- Talk with your child’s teacher about your child’s listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills to help support their progress.

After School Program

If you would like to have your child be a part of After School Tutoring please check out their website [After School Program Website](#). If you have any questions, please feel free to contact josebarrigamagdalenom@maderausd.org who is the ASP site lead for Desmond.

Quarter 3

Quarter 3 ends on 3/26. If your child has missing assignments, they still have time to complete them. Please have your child show you their Google Classroom missing assignments and work out a plan to complete a few each day. This would mean they would need to complete their daily work...and then a couple of the missing ones. Many of the assignments are completed together in class, so if your child is following along with the teacher, they should be able to complete the daily assignments. It will take some extra work after they get off of Zoom to finish the assignment they have not completed.

Counselors

- On February 10th, we held our 2nd quarter honor roll drive through ceremony! We had just under 300 students who made honor roll. We rewarded them with popcorn, Valentines candy and their honor roll certificate.
- Counselors are conferencing with 8th grade students who are at risk of not promoting. Students must have a combined middle school grade point average (GPA) of at least a 2.0 to be eligible for promotion. A 2.0 average is a C average. We are making home visits to communicate with parents, as well as communicating through phone calls and Zoom meetings.
- Counselors are working with our academic groups of students who are struggling academically. Student Advocate Mrs. Barajas, Ms. Attendance Liaison Perez and our Safety Officers Lewis, Macugay and Nires are partnering with us to run the groups. We are encouraging identified students to attend all 6 sessions!
- Counselors are currently working to make sure all Desmond students are scheduled into classes for the 2021-2022 school year. They are working hard to ensure all students are placed in the correct classes for the upcoming school year!

Student Health Wellness

Optimism

As we near the milestone of a year of remote learning, it is important to remember the words of Kahlil Gibran who once said, “No matter how long the storm lasts the sun always shines behind the clouds.” The only way we can get through the past is to look forward, and that is exactly the message that parents should share with students.



Talk about the positives that came out of this time of learning remotely, or practicing a new skill, or more time with family, and realizing we don't need to constantly be GO GO GOING are all important pandemic lessons. We have had the gift of time these last several months and we can use what we learned to be even better moving forward.

Encourage your students to share things they learned during this time. Have a discussion about the new habits they established, or skills learned and express your own optimism for the future.

We may be working from a distance, but we are still here for our students and our families. We are available to help in any way we can~GO LONGHORNS!