



COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Supporting Whole-Child Success
Across the Central Valley

March 2026



The Dream Team:
The People Behind MCUSD's
Student Support Work

Mariposa Momentum: First Steps to Stronger Family & Student Connection



Nestled in the Sierra Nevada foothills, **Mariposa County Unified School District** serves 1,700 students across 1,450 square miles, where travel between school sites can take more than an hour. As a one district county, MCUSD sits at the center of its rural community and is using the Community Schools model to bring people closer together, strengthen support systems, and expand access to opportunities for students and families. In a place where distance is real and resources can feel spread thin, MCUSD is showing what is possible when a district leads with relationships, trust, and coordination.

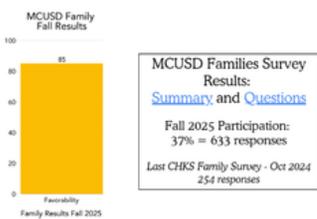
The Impact

This work is paying off in concrete ways that matter for students. Chronic absenteeism has dropped from 43.5% in 2023–2024 to 29.8% at the midyear point in 2025–2026, and suspension rates continue to move in the right direction. These gains reflect more than improved numbers. They point to stronger connections between schools and families, more consistent support for student needs, and a growing sense that school is a place where students feel seen, supported, and expected to succeed.

Data Driven Connection

Engagement begins with listening, and MCUSD is making it easier for families to be heard and valued. Through the CalHOPE Grant, the district transitioned to Kelvin Family Surveys to strengthen how it gathers feedback. In Fall 2025, 633 family members participated, a 149% increase over the previous year, with an 85% favorability rating. This empowerment extends to the classroom, too; through Community Schools leadership, students and teachers at five schools now have experience diving into their own SEL data to celebrate wins and design a better student experience.

MCUSD SEL / Climate Family Results



Resource Integration

To bridge the gap between need and access, MCUSD launched a comprehensive Family Resources web page so staff and families can find local services in one place without duplicating efforts. CS funding provides dedicated Counselors, Behavior Specialists, and SEL/Behavior Aides, increasing targeted student wellness support in classrooms and enabling increased personalized collaborative family engagement. MCUSD also invests in parent learning through workshops such as Positive Parenting and Raising Resilient Children, giving families practical tools while reinforcing that schools and families are working together. Mariposa is proving that when a district leads with listening, strong partnerships, and coordinated support, students and families thrive across every mile of the county.



MARIPOSA STRONG: PARTNERSHIPS THAT SHOW UP

Mariposa County Unified School District's partners are showing up across school sites in visible and meaningful ways. This year, the district has already recorded 53 partner engagements at school events, nearly matching last year's total of 56. That steady presence builds familiarity and trust, and it makes support easier to access when families need it. It also helps schools shift from one time events to ongoing relationships that families count on.

Basic needs and extended learning are key parts of the partnership network. In collaboration with **Mariposa Heritage House**, the district provided 523 food boxes to 91 families across seven sites last year, helping ease pressure at home so students can stay focused in school. Thank you to the **MCUSD Education Services Department** and our longtime partners, including **Mariposa Safe Families**, the **Mariposa County Arts Council**, **Sierra Foothill Conservancy**, and **County Parks and Recreation**, for years of expanding after school and school break opportunities that keep students safe, connected, and engaged. These partnerships bring added enrichment, mentoring, and real world experiences that make school feel more engaging and supportive for students.



SPOTLIGHT: SOWING SEEDS AT SPRING HILL HIGH SCHOOL



At **Spring Hill High School**, Mariposa County Unified School District's continuation high school, the Community Schools strategy comes to life through wellness, enrichment, and belonging. In Fall 2024, SHHS and community partners created hands on learning spaces that students can take pride in. With fencing installed to protect the area from local deer and garden boxes built by a local farm, students are now actively sowing seeds and building something that will last. The garden has quickly become more than a project. It is a place where students can reset, connect with trusted adults, and see their effort turn into something real.

When students were asked what they wanted the garden to become, their answer said everything. They want to grow food to donate to community members in need. This is whole child support in action: students learning, contributing, and stepping into leadership. By listening to students and creating a culture rooted in authentic engagement, SHHS has strengthened school climate in a measurable way. **Suspension rates dropped from 19.3% in 2023 to 4.8% in 2025**, showing what can happen when students feel connected, supported, and part of something bigger than themselves.



Keep Your Team Connected!

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