



# **AGED 539 Report and Documentation**

Presented By: Felipe Barrientos

Cal Poly San Luis Obispo

Masters of Agriculture Education

# **Master**

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## **Section 1: Agriculture Incentive Grant Quality Criteria Reflection**

### **Quality Criteria 1: Curriculum and Instruction**

The Madera Unified School District (MUSD) houses one of the top Agriculture Programs in the state of California. For years the Madera South High School Agriculture Program and FFA chapter has created a quality curriculum and instruction for all of their students while embedding FFA and SAE's in all of their courses. The district believes that all students are capable of learning and by supporting their teachers and believing in them they can make a true difference in the lives of their students. This is why the district has adopted their slogan "We Believe", which encompasses all students, teachers, staff, and other stakeholders in the district.

This year the MUSD has decided to expand their Career Technical Education (CTE) program in depth to all their middle schools, specifically the 2020-2021 8th grade class. This year I am in year zero of creating an 8th grade agriculture program for the 8th grade level at MUSD. Since there are no official standards for 8th grade agriculture in the district or for the state of California, I have been working with the Madera South High School Ag. Program, the Director of College and Career Readiness, Madera TEC administration, and Madera TEC staff to develop a cross curricular agriculture curriculum that will be rolled out and implemented at Madera TEC in the Fall of 2020.

The agriculture program at Madera Technical Exploration Center or Madera TEC (MTEC) will be a non-traditional program to say the least. Currently, the high school agriculture program for MUSD has six different career pathways. The 8th grade agriculture program at MTEC will not be part of any one pathway, nor can it have a pathway of its own since it only serves 8th grade students. Instead it will serve as a discovery agriculture class that touches on all the different pathways that the high school agriculture program has to offer.

The 8th grade agriculture program at MTEC or the Ag. Lab as it is referred to will consist of a classroom that can sit 38 students, a science lab that can sit 90 students, a large agriculture mechanics shop, and a small school farm. These facilities will be used to instruct a total of 150 students at the MTEC site. Students will be divided into a morning cross curricular cohort of 75 students and an afternoon cross curricular cohort of 75 students. The cross curricular cohorts will be in a block setting of 75 students for a three hour block under the instruction of 3 teachers at the same time. The three teachers will consist of an agriculture teacher, an 8th grade science teacher and an 8th grade English teacher, all working collaboratively and individually to serve the students.

The curriculum will be CTE based and taught through the scope of agriculture with 8th grade english and science standards embedded into the main projects. There will be one overarching project per quarter that deals with one or more traditional agriculture units of study with individual smaller lessons taught daily in one or more of the different subject areas (ie english and science). This year-long course will cover units in Introduction to Agriculture Science, Animal Science, Plant Science, Agriculture Mechanics, and FFA History and Traditions. Each student in the Ag Lab will be required to participate in FFA leadership activities and have a SAE project as part of their course grade.

The Ag Lab and its curriculum is designed to be highly engaging, collaborative, and with a high level of hands-on instruction. In the Agriculture Lab at Madera TEC “We Believe in Learning by Doing”. The curriculum was also designed with elements of Project Based Learning (PBL) in mind and the newly developed MUSD Graduate Profile. The curriculum was designed so that every major project has PBL elements baked into the instruction and process. Each project is set up to be authentic, challenging, personalized, collaborative, applied, and public, as well as always related to an issue in the agriculture industry. The assignments, instruction, and climate of the Agriculture Lab is also structured to develop the habits of mind that the MUSD has identified in their Graduate Profile. We strive to develop our student’s skills in critical thinking, collaboration, communication, adapting to new challenges, producing quality work, and contributing to their communities.

### **Quality Criteria 2: Leadership and Citizen Development**

Madera TEC is scheduled to open for its inaugural class in the Fall of 2020. The FFA will be a part of the Agriculture Lab and will be part of its curriculum. Students will be expected to participate in the FFA organization at the local level as a portion of their overall grade. Ten percent of the students overall grade will be determined by their participation in FFA leadership activities. Students will be required to participate in a minimum of 3 approved FFA leadership activities per semester.

During the development and planning of this agriculture program we had many discussions as to what would be best for the students regarding how students will integrate into the FFA organization. Initially, the discussion was about the pros and cons of Madera TEC chartering their own FFA chapter or simply joining the Madera South High School FFA chapter. Conversations were held between stakeholders of the programs and community members. This included myself, the Madera TEC principal, the Director of College and Career Readiness for the MUSD, the San Joaquin Regional FFA Advisor, the Madera South High School FFA advisors, Madera South High School Agriculture Advisory Committee, and some parents of current and potential students in the program. Some major factors that were considered when making the decision were transportation requirements for FFA events, cohesiveness between the two schools, unity of the community, and the transition between the middle school and high school programs.

The main concern between the MTEC and MSHS FFA members is the logistics of transporting students around. MTEC proposes a unique challenge as it is a half day program within MUSD. Students come to MTEC for half the day, either AM or PM, and spend the other half of their day in their home site or regular middle school program. Due to this, MTEC students do not have any time before school, lunch, or after school to spend at MTEC because they will need to get on a school bus to return to their home site. Therefore, holding before school, after school, or lunch time FFA activities became an impossibility. There were also concerns of creating a rivalry between the two programs if MTEC were to charter its own chapter. This led to parent concerns about maintaining the unity of the community. The few parents that expressed an opinion on this issue expressed the desire for Madera to only have one chapter under the Madera FFA banner. Another major concern was making sure that the transition between the middle school program and the high school program was as seamless as possible for the students. After all of

these factors and concerns were discussed the inclination became to have the MTEC agriculture students be a part of the Madera FFA joining the high school program.

There is no current Program of Work (POW) available that includes the future MTEC FFA students. However, the future Madera FFA officers will be creating the POW for the 2020-2021 school year over summer. They will be taking into consideration the addition of 150 8th grade FFA members for the upcoming school year. Additionally, through the inaugural year we will be keeping track of events and activities that lend themselves better to the 8th grade students with minimal logistical issues. Currently, in the West Fresno-Madera FFA section 8th grade students are allowed to participate in the agriscience fair, parli pro contest, opening and closing contest, creed speaking, and BIG competition. Numerous fundraising and community service opportunities will also be available to students by the Madera FFA and MTEC programs. Further discussions need to occur to detail the way in which 8th grade students will be allowed to participate in Career Development Events (CDEs). California FFA has only allowed for middle school FFA programs to exist since 2017, therefore much of the rules and regulations have not filtered down to the sectional and local levels. We are also planning on adopting Discovery FFA officers, which would serve as the leadership for the MTEC site. This would also align with the Discovery degree students in FFA can receive for participating in the middle school agriculture and FFA programs.

### **Quality Criteria 3: Practical Applications of Occupational Skills**

The Madera Technical Exploration Center is designed to be a hands-on, project based learning site, with an emphasis on authentic industry problems for students to solve. We place a high value on authentic occupational skills and experiences for students to explore the different facets of the agricultural industry.

The Agriculture Lab at Maderat TEC will require their students to conduct an SAE project as part of their overall grade. Five percent of the student's overall grade will be based on their SAE project and their record keeping through the Agricultural Experience Tracker (AET) system. Students will be introduced to the different types of SAE's in the first half of the school year, along with how it can help them earn awards in FFA. In the second half of the school year, students will be expected to conduct and develop their own SAE project outside of class time.

There has been much discussion around the subject of equity for students and access to resources for SAE projects. Madera TEC due to its location and size, was not designed for large animal livestock projects to be housed on the school site. Although there is a school farm, most of that land has been designated for small animals and different types of plants. The school farm was structured for a small shade house, school garden plots, some crops and small animal facilities housing animals like rabbits and chickens. However, the bigger issue is logistics for the students. MTEC is a half day program with students starting their day at their home site, getting bussed to the MTEC site, then getting bussed back to their home site again for either lunch or leave school for the day. There is no time for students to work on the school farm before school, after school or during lunch as these times do not exist at MTEC. Students who have the ability to be transported by their guardians to the school site might have the opportunity to do an SAE project on the school site, otherwise, they will need to conduct these types of projects at home. Of course not all students have the resources to raise animals or tend to gardens at home. This is why for the 8th

grade level we will be focusing much of our time in developing the exploratory types of SAE projects. We will try to align these SAE projects with the agriscience fair contest so that students will be able to enter the agriscience fair contest using the practical skills they have developed in their SAE project. We believe that these two activities will coincide nicely with each other and fit well with the 8th grade science portion of the class as we will have an 8th grade science teacher designated for the lab. Of course the traditional SAE projects will still also be allowed and encouraged. Students who have placement projects will be able to conduct them as normal, as well as students who want an entrepreneurship project. Students who want to raise large livestock will need to either do it at home or off site. We have spoken with the agriculture department chair at Madera South High School and have come to an agreement that under specific circumstances an 8th grade student may be able to house their livestock project on their school farm. The details of which still need to be discussed and decided.

It is crucial for our program to follow the motto of “learn by doing” and to teach occupational skills. The Madera Technical Exploration Center from conception was meant to be a career technical education facility as it is expressed in its name. Therefore, it is of paramount importance that the labs be hands-on and collaborative and follow strict industry standards for students to learn and maximize their learning.

#### **Quality Criteria 4: Qualified and Competent Personnel**

In the Agriculture Lab at Madera TEC there will be 3 teachers teaching in the agriculture program. However, only one (myself) will be an agriculture teacher. The other teachers in the Ag Lab are a designated English teacher and an 8th grade Science teacher. All 3 teachers have the appropriate cleared credentials for their subject area. Being the agriculture teacher, I possess the California Agriculture Single Subject Credential and a Cleared Specialist Credential.

This is my first year with MUSD and we are in year zero of planning a new school, therefore, there are no previous records to show that an instructor teaching at least half time attended a minimum of four professional development activities. However, during this year of planning the new school and agriculture program I was hired on as a full time agriculture teacher and did attend a minimum of four professional development event activities including regional meetings, summer CATA conference and the Agriskills sessions. During our planning time with the district’s CTE coordinator we agreed that there will be money allocated for future professional development events so that I would be able to attend and keep up with the skills and content knowledge needed for our profession.

This year I have been working closely with my Agriculture Lab team meeting daily to discuss the planning, development and execution of the agriculture curriculum and program at Madera TEC. Next year when students are on site we have two days a week, Wednesdays and Fridays, set aside specifically for collaboration time within our lab group. Additionally, we have a common prep that would allow us to further collaborate in our Small Learning Community (SLC) almost on a daily basis. We will use this time to discuss department relevant information such as farm issues, address any program concerns, figure out logistics for upcoming events, collaborate on common assessments and calibrate lab projects.



Since I will be the only agriculture teacher in the Ag Lab criteria 4D may not directly apply to me. However, we will hold department meetings which will discuss operational decisions, budgetary decisions, and any other items applicable to the running of the program. These written minutes will be kept in the Ag Lab's program plan electronic files and submitted to the Director of Career and College Readiness for the district. We may also submit a copy of our minutes as needed to the high school agriculture program as needed for their budgeting purposes.

Reimbursements are possible with MUSD for personal expenses acquired during FFA, SAE, or CATA activities if proper procedures are followed and proper paperwork is submitted and approved. If expenses are expected it is best to submit paperwork for these expenses ahead of time and get them pre-approved for reimbursement. With all reimbursement, the proper paperwork must be filled out and submitted along with receipts as back up documentation for the expense.

### **Quality Criteria 5: Facilities, Equipment and Materials**

The groundbreaking for the Madera Technical Exploration Center was held in September of 2019 and is set to open its doors in the Fall of 2020. The agriculture program at Madera TEC is set to have a classroom that can sit 38 students, a science lab that can sit 90 students, a large agriculture mechanics shop, and a small school farm. These facilities will be used to instruct a total of 150 students at the MTEC site. In addition the school was intentionally designed for the students to be able to spread out and overflow into hallways and other common areas so that they may have room to work collaboratively in groups.

The laboratory space will be equipped with hard top science tables with the table legs being closer to the center than traditional tables to accommodate students in wheelchairs. There will also be dissecting microscopes stored in the lab along with all other science equipment, materials and supplies. The classroom space will be used for pull out groups that have a much more narrow focus or need in their instruction. It will be set up like a regular classroom with tables and chairs on casters so that the furniture can be easily rearranged to form breakout or focus groups for specific intervention needs. In this classroom four virtual welders will also be housed for students to use. The agriculture mechanics shop will be equipped with ten multi process welders with individual welding stations. It will be equipped with industry grade equipment for woodworking, welding, and a variety of other facets of a shop program. The school farm is small but will be used efficiently. It measures roughly 111' x 50' in one area and 180' x 31.5' in another. Although not as big a traditional school farm students will have access to a large planting area, shade house, and small animal structure.

The agriculture facilities were designed to have built in storage cabinets in both the laboratory space and the classroom space. The allocated storage space is sufficient to house all material and supplies needed for the agriculture program. The shop has its own built in storage areas. The shop will have it's own tool room with the addition of a supply room for storage and a wall of lockers for students to use.

Quality criteria 5C poses a challenge for the Agriculture Lab at Madera TEC. Students will be required to have an SAE project and there are opportunities for students to use school facilities for their SAE

projects; it will not be in a traditional way. The first obstacle will be access and transportation. Being that MTEC is a half day program, students are only there half of the day and the other half at their home site. Students will not be on campus before or after school unless dropped off by a parent or if they live within walking distance. Secondly, the school is built in the city of Madera next to an elementary school surrounded by housing and business buildings. Space was a limiting factor when designing the school. Therefore, the school farm at Madera TEC was not designed for the housing of larger livestock animals. Animals such as sheep, hogs, cattle and other large livestock are currently not permitted at the sight. We do have permission to house smaller livestock such as rabbits, poultry, specialty animals, and small goat breeds. However, students will have access to the growing areas and shade house on the school farm, which can accomodate most plant based SAE projects. Students may also use the mechanic shop to build pre approved projects as part of their SAE.

The Agriculture Lab as well as the whole MTEC site has email and internet access. We can all communicate with each other long distance if needed via email to coordinate any matters at hand. The district provides all teachers with laptops so we may work remotely from home and communicate with our department members.

The school will open in the Fall of 2020 with brand new facilities and equipment. It stands to reason that the facilities and equipment will start off in a neat, clean and orderly condition. However, it will be the goal of the teachers in the agriculture lab to maintain a neat, clean and orderly working and learning space for all students. As a new facility and experimental program within the district we are sure to have many visitors coming in and out of our facilities on a weekly basis. Those visitors will find our facilities in pristine condition at all times.

Through the efforts of the teachers in the Ag Lab, district maintenance personnel, and industry supporters the equipment and facilities will be maintained in proper working order until they are outdated or broken beyond repair. If equipment becomes broken beyond repair or irrelevant it will be replaced with the latest industry level piece of equipment needed.

### **Quality Criteria 6:Community, Business, and Industry Involvement**

At the Madera Technical Exploration center there is currently no advisory committee. The reason there is no advisory committee is because we currently don't have an official FFA chapter or agriculture program because the school is not scheduled to open until the Fall of 2020. However, Madera South High School has a very strong agriculture program and advisory committee. There are plans once Madera TEC is up and running for the agriculture department at Madera TEC to partner up with the Madera South High School's Agriculture Advisory Committee.

The Madera South High School Agriculture Advisory Committee is extremely strong and are very supportive of the impact agriculture and FFA can have on students' lives. The committee is composed of businesses, industry professionals, and post secondary representatives. District administration and site administration are also always in attendance.

The advisory committee meets twice a year with the whole committee and each industry sector has smaller meetings throughout the year as needed. However, the official meetings in which minutes are recorded are the whole committee meetings that occur twice per year.

The advisory committee serves to help direct the program's direction and also helps with special events as guest judges, speakers, and spokesmen on behalf of the agriculture department at Madera South High School. They also played a supportive role in the expansion of the agriculture program in Madera to the middle school level, which led to the creation of the Madera Technical Exploration Center and its Ag Lab.

During their bi-annual advisory meetings upon check in, advisory members are asked to sign in and update all of their contact information as well as indicate what industry sector they work in. This ensures that all contact information is updated twice per year.

### **Quality Criteria 7: Career Guidance**

The Madera Unified School District has two high schools with a third high school opening in the Fall of 2020. Madera South High School is the only high school of the three that has an agriculture program. The agriculture program at Madera South High School has seven different career pathways available to students. MUSD also has three traditional 7th-8th grade middle schools and four country schools that are K-8th. At the 7th-8th middle schools counselors work hard to inform students of the career pathway classes available to students at the high schools. In the K-8 schools counselors from the high schools come to the sites and do presentations to the 8th grade students about what the career pathway classes and other things to expect in high school. MUSD has made great efforts to promote the agriculture career pathways along with other CTE pathways. Starting at the 6th grade level students complete IMAGO lessons which deal with six different CTE courses, agriculture being one of them. At the 7th grade level students have the choice to enroll in the “wheel” class which is a rotating class of six different CTE pathways with agriculture being one of them. In the Fall of 2020 Madera Technical Exploration Center will open to 8th grade students where they can choose to attend this half day program in order to take one of six CTE classes with agriculture being one of them.

The students in the Ag Lab at Madera TEC will need to fill out an R-2 form through the [calaged.org](http://calaged.org) website. We will use the student data sheets to track their career interest from their 8th grade year to the end of high school. We will use their 8th grade data sheet to help inform their choice when it comes to selecting their career pathway at the high school level.

Currently there are no articulated classes between the Madera TEC and the Madera South High School agriculture programs. There have been conversations about revisiting this idea at the end of the first or second year of the school. Since students will be completing introductory units in several of the different pathways at the high school there are concerns that some students may be too advanced for the freshman level class at the high school. This would mean that they could possibly skip the introductory class at the high school level and go on to the second year class in the pathway. However, this will need to be revisited to see if students are too advanced or simply very well prepared.

## **Quality Criteria 8: Program Promotion**

Program promotion is especially important for the Madera TEC programs as it is a school of choice. Students must elect to sign up for our school for the half day program. We are currently in year zero of planning and developing the school. Students will start attending our school in the Fall of 2020. In order to recruit students to the program we collaborated between labs to create program brochures, flyers, posters, magazine, school website, and google slide presentations to show students and parents. All these items were made available to all 7th grade students. Flyers were sent home with students along with information on how to access the website and social media platforms, brochures and magazines were made available at the parent informational meetings, and posters and google slide presentations were displayed at the student presentations that were held with the feeder schools.

The agriculture program at Madera TEC will make every effort to help students overcome financial barriers so that they may participate in the different program activities relating to FFA, SAEs, and leadership activities. Although Madera TEC was not designed for large animal SAE projects assistance is available for them in this area. I will be looking into the Madera Farm Credit Union for possible livestock loans. The agriculture department at Madera South has also expressed they would allow housing of larger animals on their site for 8th grade students in the agriculture program. There will also be some department owned projects that students can participate in, which include agriculture mechanics, plant projects, and small animal breeding projects. Students will also have the opportunity to participate in program fundraisers to help with finances.

The Ag Lab at Madera TEC participated in several recruitment events this year. Among those we presented to the 7th graders at the three traditional 7th-8th grade middle schools and all the 7th graders at the four country schools, which are K-8 schools. Since this is year zero of Madera TEC we do not have any students to help with recruitment, however, Madera FFA sent a few of their younger FFA members to help promote the FFA portion of the program. We also participated in several parent informational meetings where parents were allowed to ask questions about the Ag Lab. In the future we will continue to do similar recruitment activities with our feeder schools, but incorporate current students and alumni of the program.

## **Quality Criteria 9: Program Accountability and Planning**

The Madera Unified School district has 3 high schools, but only one, Madera South High School, has an agriculture program. Madera South has a comprehensive program plan filed with the regional supervisor. Madera TEC does not have a comprehensive plan on file because it will not open until the Fall of 2020. Once Madera TEC does open it will most likely be affiliated with the high school's program.

Currently the Agriculture Lab at Madera TEC has started a 5 year equipment acquisition schedule. Our first step was to create a wish list of everything we feel we could use if money was "no problem". For our first year we are currently waiting to know how much funding we will be receiving to buy our equipment. We have prioritized what equipment we will want first, but we are unsure of how much equipment we will be able to purchase our first year. Once we know what we will have our first year we will complete

our 5 year list with a proper equipment acquisition schedule. In the Agriculture Lab we will have 3 teachers on staff, however, I will be the only instructor with an agriculture credential. The FFA and SAE responsibilities will fall on me to oversee for the first year. There have been conversations about the other instructors helping out with some of those responsibilities, but first they will need to learn a bit about the FFA organization. Once the school opens up the Ag Lab at Madera TEC will join up with the Madera South Agriculture Program and be affiliated with their advisory committee.

There is no graduate follow up system at Madera TEC that gathers information for the agriculture program. We do hope to eventually keep track of our program completers and see how many go on to follow the high school CTE agriculture pathway. We will use this information as a gauge on how well we retain students, not in our program, but in the agriculture pathway as a whole.

The agriculture students at Madera TEC will fill out the R2 forms that will be entered online and will be affiliated with the California FFA as part of the Madera FFA chapter. Since Madera TEC is a middle school program we are not eligible for the AIG and therefore will not have an expenditure report to submit.

#### **Quality Criteria 10: Student Teacher Ratio**

The agriculture program at Madera TEC is not a traditional program. There will be 150 students enrolled in the agriculture program for the Fall of 2020. The students will be divided into a morning session and an afternoon session. There are no class periods; instead students are put in a block schedule where 75 students are together for a 3 hour session among three teachers simultaneously.

The Ag Lab will consist of three teachers, one agriculture teacher, one english teacher, and a science teacher. All three teachers will be housed within the same laboratory area, which consists of a 90 seat lab space, 35 seat classroom, a mechanic shop, and a small school farm. All teachers will be in charge of all 75 students at the same time. Technically, we do meet the student teacher ratio of 1:25 and 1:20 for shop classes. As the agriculture teacher I have the flexibility to change my numbers as needed on any given day. One day I can work with a small number of students out on the school farm or shop, while the other two teachers tend to the other students. On another day myself and the science teacher can co-teach 50 students in the laboratory setting, while the english teacher pulls out 25 students into the classroom to help them on their english assignment.

Since first year students in agriculture courses count as 0.5 for determining the total count and all the students at Madera TEC will be first year students we meet the student-teacher ratio of 75 students per agriculture teacher. The agriculture program is capped at a total of 150 students in the agriculture program, 75 in the morning and 75 in the afternoon session. This means that we are at the maximum allowed number, but do meet the 10B criterion.

### **Quality Criteria 11: Full Year Employment**

Currently, I am the only credentialed agriculture teacher with the appropriate credentials to teach the agriculture curriculum at Madera TEC. For at least the first year I will not have a 12 month contract nor a summer contract or stipend. Although SAE projects and CDE teams will be a part of the program expectations there have been no conversations about financial compensation for the additional work this will require. The main reason for this is because no other lab school at Madera TEC will have a student leadership organization established the first year. An exception was made for FFA at my request since we will be able to affiliate with the Madera FFA chapter. We hope to discuss options in the future as the need arises.

There is no SAE period planned in the schedule at Madera TEC at this time. Moving forward the possibility of having an SAE period is unlikely. The way the Madera TEC schedule was designed there are no periods. The school consists of two 3-hour block sessions. With instructional time split between three teachers simultaneously the ability for the agriculture teacher to have a specific amount of time designated for SAE visitations would not work with the system currently in place.

### **Quality Criteria 12: Program Achievement**

Agriculture programs are measured by certain key indicators that measure how well a program is currently performing. Each of the areas in criteria 12 are performance based factors and by meeting them can indicate that your department is performing at a high level. Since Madera TEC is a middle school program we do not qualify for the AIG or have the ability to complete all the criteria involved. However, many of the areas that do overlap with the AIG are planned to be exemplary and high quality.

The Ag Lab at Madera TEC is an 8th grade program and therefore has no UC approved courses. However, the curriculum is designed to be engaging, rigorous, and cross curricular. Every major project was designed for students to work collaboratively, communicate daily, think critically, and use creativity. Above all else the curriculum was designed to be hands-on with an authenticity to the industry related problems being addressed in the overarching project for the quarter.

Students in the Ag Lab will be expected to participate in Leadership and citizen development activities throughout the year. Through the FFA organization students will be given ample opportunities to participate in FFA approved leadership activities as well as community service activities. Participation in these activities will be a graded portion of each student's individual grades. Middle school programs are limited on the types of above the chapter activities they can participate in, however, the Ag Lab will be able to participate with the Madera South High School Agriculture program on joint activities throughout the year and we will have a large focus on community service activities.

Students in the Ag Lab will be required to conduct and develop an ongoing SAE project. It will be a graded part of each student's individual grade. Since Madera TEC is a middle school program the time spent by students on their SAE project will not count towards their FFA degree, as of now. The purpose at

the 8th grade level is to educate and help students explore all of their SAE opportunities so that they are ideally set up to start at the beginning of high school.

It will be an expectation for all teachers in the Ag Lab at Madera TEC to participate in district or state wide professional development activities so that they may stay current in their field of focus for the lab. As the only agriculture teacher in the Ag Lab it will be my goal to always attend above the minimum of in-service opportunities during the academic year. As I will be teaching units in several different areas of the agriculture industry it will be crucial for me to stay up to date on several different industries and their trends.

The agriculture program at Madera TEC will be joining the agriculture advisory committee at Madera South High School. Madera South is the only high school in the MUSD that has an agriculture program. It was decided that the high school and middle school agriculture programs will be affiliated and overseen by the same agriculture advisory committee as they are based in the same community and would most likely have much overlap anyway, if it was decided to be done separately.

## **Section 2: Project - Curriculum and Instruction**

### **1. Purpose**

- a. The purpose of this project is to give students access to integrated curriculum in the subject areas of Agriculture, English, and Science for 8th grade. Lessons and projects will be designed to meet all three standard content areas as much as possible with a Project Based Learning model in mind. All standards taught including English and Science will be through a Career Technical Education Lens of Agriculture.

### **2. Objective**

- a. The main objective is to create four projects (one for each quarter) that incorporate English standards such as argumentative writing, Science standards such as forces and motion, and Agricultural standards such as basic woodworking skills. All projects should push students to develop their skills in the Madera Unified Graduate Profile (Adapt, Collaborate, Communicate, Think, Contribute and Produce). Each project should also fit the Project Based Learning (PBL) Framework (Authentic, Challenging, Personalized, Collaborative, Applied, and Public). This will be accomplished through collaborating with my team consisting of English teacher, a Science teacher, and myself. Regular all day training must be attended to understand PBL put on by Theron Cosgrave, a consultant hired by the district to help with the integration of curriculum.

### **3. Timeline**

- a. This project will take much of the school year and should be completed no later than June 3, 2020 so that it may be implemented in the Fall of 2020.

### **4. Reflection**

- a. The Madera Technical Exploration Center is not a traditional school. It is a half day program with a Career Technical Education focus. The Agriculture Lab is one of six different pathways taught at Madera TEC. The purpose of the school itself is to be a collaborative environment for both teachers and students. Since the Agriculture, English and Science class were all going to be mixed and integrated into one big class the curriculum would have to be integrated as well. Currently, there is no official middle school agriculture curriculum, only high school standards for the state.

In order to develop the agriculture curriculum I had to dissect the high school agriculture standards and strip them down to its very basic levels. Much collaboration occurred between myself and the two other teachers in my lab to help me understand the level of rigor that would be appropriate for an 8th grade student. We also had to take into consideration which agriculture lessons we would choose to teach. To decide this many factors were taken into consideration. We thought about what classes and pathways are offered at the high school level, what lends itself to PBL, and what agriculture standards match up with current 8th grade science and english standards.

At the beginning of this project I thought that with a year of planning time and three experienced and idealistic teachers we would come up with the ideal curriculum that would allow us to fit all the puzzle pieces together. However, this was not the case in all areas. It was a true collaborative effort. We found that agriculture standards didn't always



match up with 8th grade science standards perfectly. There were some areas like space and the solar system that couldn't be tied together neatly with a bow. To my surprise I found english to be the most flexible of all three subjects with its standards fitting in nicely in all our planned projects. As the year progressed and more of our planning fell into place we decided that it is okay to not have all standards match up perfectly. Some standards on both the science and agriculture side would need to be taught independently of each other. We coined this time, "eat your spinach days". Meaning it's good for students but really doesn't go with the more integrated curriculum.

As part of the curriculum development for the Ag Lab at Madera TEC we created project outlines, project rubrics, and graduate profile element rubrics. Also taken into account were pre-existing strategies in the district for middle school students that could help guide our students' thinking. Thinking Maps were also taken and adapted to help outline our students' habits of mind. Madera TEC is a unique program and will be the first of its kind in California. This dictates that the agriculture program will be a non-traditional program, but will still have the foundational values and some of the traditions of the high school agriculture and FFA programs in California. For this reason we feel that these documents will be living documents and constantly changing, adapting, and evolving.

5. [CTE Pathways](#)
6. [CTE Anchor Standards](#)
  - a. See page 6
7. [CTE Ag. Course Descriptions](#)
8. [Project Outlines](#)
9. [Project Rubrics](#)
10. [Thinking Maps](#)
11. [Applying Learning Strategies](#)

### **Section 3: Support Material**

1. **Student Data Sheets**
  - a. Currently Madera TEC is in year "zero" on planning and does not have any students. Next year when students are present for the first year students will be filling out their data sheets through the online process.
2. **Agriculture Student Files**
  - a. Records of all of the Ag Lab's operations and functions, policies, CATA meeting information, site budgets and student information will be kept on site in a binder in a secure area not accessible to the general population of the school or students. With most of the records for student's R2s, record books, and financial summaries being online there will be no need to keep a hard copy of these documents in the binder. However, a back documentation of these documents should be filed. It has not been decided if that will be a digital copy or hard copy.
3. [Course Outlines](#)
4. [Grade Book and Policy](#)

- a. See page 9
- 5. [SAE Supervision Form](#)
  - a. Currently there is no supervision form specifically designated for SAE projects. A form was developed as a “Home” visit that has an SAE planning portion. Once the school opens and students begin planning their SAE projects a supervision form specifically designated for SAE projects will be developed.
- 6. [SAE Requirement Reference](#)
  - a. See page 6
- 7. [FFA Requirement Reference](#)
  - a. See page 6
- 8. [FFA Program of Activities](#)
- 9. [Recruitment Program](#)
- 10. **FFA Chapter Scrapbook**
  - a. Currently Madera TEC is in year “zero” on planning and does not have any students. Next year when students are present for the first year they will be able to start collecting photos and composing a scrapbook.
- 11. **FFA Summer Calendar**
  - a. Currently Madera TEC is in year “zero” on planning and does not have any students. Next year when students are present for the first year the 8th grade class will become part of the Madera FFA and will have a summer calendar of activities that will involve them.
- 12. **Graduate Follow Up Survey**
  - a. Madera TEC is an 8th grade program that feeds into Madera South High School’s agriculture program. It is only a one year course for 8th graders in the Madera Unified School District and therefore does not have a graduate follow up.
- 13. **Graduate Follow Up Survey Results**
  - a. Madera TEC is an 8th grade program that feeds into Madera South High School’s agriculture program. It is only a one year course for 8th graders in the Madera Unified School District and therefore does not have a graduate follow up.
- 14. **Comprehensive Program Plan**
  - a. Currently Madera TEC is in year “zero” on planning and development with no students. A Comprehensive Program Plan will be an ongoing document that will be created through the duration of the first year of Madera TEC. This document will be updated annually making changes to the advisory committee member’s list as needed, five year acquisition plan, chart of responsibilities, and program of activities.
- 15. **Advisory Committee Agendas**
  - a. Currently Madera TEC is in year “zero” on planning and does not have any students and its building is under construction. Next year when the program is up and running the Madera TEC Ag Lab will be integrated into the Madera South High School Agriculture Advisory Committee.
- 16. **Advisory Committee Minutes**
  - a. Currently Madera TEC is in year “zero” of planning and does not have any students and its building is under construction. Next year when the program is up and running the

Madera TEC Ag Lab will be integrated into the Madera South High School Agriculture Advisory Committee.

**17. [Advisory Committee's Constitution and By-Laws](#)**

- a. Currently Madera TEC does not have an advisory committee because we are still in year “zero” of planning the new program. Next year the Madera TEC agriculture program will be joining the Madera South High School Agriculture Program. We will be guided by the same group. The Madera South agriculture program does currently have a constitution and by-laws that governs that committee. Unfortunately due to the breakdown in communication due to the COVID19 situation I was unable to acquire the document. I have contacted the department chair via email and text messages and he stated he will get the document to me as soon as he can. I did reach out to the head of CTE for the district and was able to acquire a document that the district uses to layout the format for all CTE pathways and their advisory committee. This document is linked in.

**18. [Proficiency Standards](#)**

**19. Credentials**

- a. [Clear Single Subject](#)
- b. [Clear Specialist](#)

**20. [Department Calendar of Activities](#)**

- a. See page 98

**21. [List of Professional Growth](#)**

**22. R2 Report**

- a. Currently Madera TEC is in year “zero” on planning and does not have any students. Next year when students are present for the first year they will be able to enter their R2 information online for the department files.

**23. [Travel Request Documents](#)**

**24. [CATA Membership Card](#)**

**25. Report Submitted to Admin after Professional Development**

- a. Currently Madera TEC is in year “zero” on planning and all travel in the first semester was planned by the administrative team. Due to COVID 19 all travel in the second semester was cancelled. Next year if travel is permitted a report form will be developed to submit to admin for professional development upon its completion.

**26. [Five Year Acquisition Plan](#)**

**27. Operating Budget for Agriculture Department**

- a. Currently Madera TEC is in year “zero” on planning and does not have any students. Since we were in the planning and developing phase this year we did not have a department budget. Next year when students are present for the first year the department will be informed how much it will be receiving from different sources and that will make up our operating budget. A form will be developed by the Ag Lab in order to plan its spending.

**28. [Description of Budget Process](#)**

**29. Department Chairperson Responsibilities**

- a. Currently Madera TEC is in year “zero” on planning and development with no students. A chart of responsibilities including the department chair's responsibilities will be an

ongoing document that will be created through the duration of the first year or two of Madera TEC. This document will outline the department chair's responsibilities as well as the responsibilities of the other teachers in the lab. This document will cover the department's operations, meetings, budget, record keeping, CDEs, FFA, and SAE responsibilities.

### **30. Chart of Responsibilities**

- a. Currently Madera TEC is in year "zero" on planning and development with no students. A chart of responsibilities including the department chair's responsibilities will be an ongoing document that will be created through the duration of the first year or two of Madera TEC. This document will outline the department chair's responsibilities as well as the responsibilities of the other teachers in the lab. This document will cover the department's operations, meetings, budget, record keeping, CDEs, FFA, and SAE responsibilities.

### **31. Substitute Procedures and Plans**

- a. Currently Madera TEC is in year "zero" on planning and development with no students. There are no official substitute procedures and plans in place at the moment. Madera TEC is not a traditional program, which makes the need of substitute teachers are rare occurrence. The Ag Lab will consist of three teachers sharing multiple spaces and 75 students at the same time. The work done by the students will be cross-curricular and often comprises more than one subject and its standards. If one of the three teachers happens to be gone by personal necessity, illness, or school business the other two remaining teachers will be able to continue to coordinate the day's work for all students. In the near future an official substitute procedure policy will be created and adopted school wide.

### **32. Description of Program Completer**

- a. Madera TEC is an 8th grade program that feeds into Madera South High School's agriculture program. It is only a one year course for 8th graders in the Madera Unified School District and therefore does not have a description of a program completer as it is only a one year course. Once Madera TEC opens in the Fall of 2020 and it is affiliated with the high school's program it will be decided if Madera TEC's agriculture program will merit its own description or simply be incorporated into the existing program completer description from the high school.

### **33. 2+2 Agreement**

- a. Madera TEC is an 8th grade program that feeds into Madera South High School's agriculture program. It is only a one year course for 8th graders in the Madera Unified School District and therefore does not have a 2+2 agreement. There have been discussions around 8th grade students that successfully complete the agriculture course at Madera TEC to get high school credit for introductory shop classes or introductory agriculture science classes.

### **34. [Reimbursement Process](#)**



# **AGED 500 Report and Documentation**

Presented By: Felipe Barrientos

Cal Poly San Luis Obispo

Masters of Agriculture Education

# Master

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## **Section 1: Reflection of Project Objective**

### **1. Purpose**

- a. The purpose of this project is to create and implement a plan and materials to inform students about the Madera Technical Exploration Center and the Agriculture Program. Students will learn what classes they can take at Madera TEC and what they will be learning in the Agriculture Lab.

### **2. Objective**

- a. Recruitment materials will include brochures, a magazine, videos, and website development. I will be setting up photo and video shoots to add to a compilation of others. Along with these materials, I will attend parent informational meetings to talk about the school and the Agriculture Lab. I will answer questions for parents in both English and Spanish relating to the Agriculture Program and FFA chapter. There will be 4 different parent meetings scheduled. I will also attend student presentations for recruitment at the three middle schools and the four K-8 schools in Madera on separate dates.

### **3. Timeline**

- a. This project will take much of the school year and should be completed no later than February 28, 2020 in time for students to register for their 2020-2021 classes.

### **4. Reflection**

- a. The Madera Technical Exploration Center or Madera TEC is a school of choice. Meaning students must elect to come to our school but it is not required. We are currently in year zero of starting a brand new agriculture program and opening a brand new school. During year zero we have no students and no building to use for recruiting. Recruiting was a challenge this year because there was nothing tangible for students and parents to see. Therefore we had to attack recruitment in a very different way than already existing programs. As a staff we set up several parent meetings and student presentations to get the information about the different programs at Madera TEC. Along with these informational meetings we created videos, a website, bios, brochures, and a promotional magazine. These items took time and much thought to develop. Due to our limited time frame and shared space in the brochure and magazine I had to be very intentional on what aspects of the agriculture program to highlight.

In order to create the recruitment brochure we had to have photos to put into it. However, this year we do not have students or even a building. I reached out to the high school agriculture program and asked if I could use their agriculture facilities and some younger looking students for a mock photo shoot to create promotional material that we would be using to create a variety of different promotional material. Since the agriculture students at Madera TEC will feed directly into their pathways they were more than happy to help. The idea behind the mock photo shoot was to show a version of what the first students at Madera TEC will be able to do. Since the brochure space was limited and shared between the six different pathways at Madera TEC I had to be very strategic in the image that I showed on there. In researching the interests and trends of Madera Unified students I

discovered two things that stood out to me the most. First the most popular pathway within the agriculture program was agriculture mechanics. Madera South High School specifically concentrates on developing their welding pathway. Secondly, the most popular pathway outside of agriculture is robotics. Therefore, for the agriculture photo in the brochure I chose to go with a photo that showed students working on a virtual welder. I felt this combined the student's interest in welding and technology very well. Along with the photo the English teacher and I collaborated on writing a brief narrative for the Ag Lab at Madera TEC. In that narrative we explained that students would be learning in the areas of animal science, plant science, agriculture mechanics, and leadership skills through the FFA organization.

The promotional magazine was a promotional item that was created and distributed to parents at every parent informational meeting we held. Just like the brochure the magazine was a collaborative effort between all six pathways and therefore had limited space in it. However, unlike the brochure we were able to expand a bit more on each lab school. For the agriculture lab we were able to put in an additional photo and expand on the narrative explaining to students what they can expect in the agriculture lab. For the magazine we decided to add in a photo of students working with the type of small animals they would have access to. We chose to highlight rabbits for the small animal photo. In addition to highlighting our virtual welders and small animal aspect the magazine also used a photo of two students one in an FFA jacket standing in an orchard listening to an instructor speak to illustrate the hands-on nature of the school. I also collaborated with my English teacher to write a narrative that was different from every other lab in order to make us stand out. We wrote our narrative in a storyteller voice rather than an informational voice that most labs used.

The purpose of the promotional video was to show students what the hands-on portion of the pathway would look like for them. It was to be shown at the student presentations during our recruiting trips to the different middle schools around the district. Later it was also decided to link the video to our school website. Much like the brochure and magazine the video was a collaborative effort between all six pathways. Each pathway was in charge of creating a highlight reel of their labs in action. The agriculture lab chose to use the footage we shot at the high school instead of creating a brand new video. This decision was made because the high school's agriculture facility is the only one in the district and to reshoot another video would be redundant. Additionally we felt that the original footage captured the four main areas of the agriculture lab we wanted to highlight. Those areas are small animals, plant science, agriculture mechanics, and the FFA. Unlike the brochure and magazine the district team had much more creative control over the video. We simply submitted the footage of our mock students working in an agriculture setting with an instructor, but the district cut and edited the videos and came up with the narrative to voice over it without much consultation.



Much like the promotional video the district had much of the creative control over the website. When it came to the layout and aesthetics of the website only a few members of the staff had input because they had a background in that area. However, the instructors in each lab created all of the source material to display on the website for their particular pathway. On the homepage of the website we have a looping reel of pictures showing students working with small animals, out in an orchard, working with virtual welders and to represent the FFA there are students wearing the FFA jacket. When students click on our lab school "Agriculture" it will take them to a page that has a photo of each of their instructors in that lab and a short biography about them. Also if students hover over the professional picture it will show them a funny picture of that instructor. As a staff we felt it was important to show both students and parents a more human side of the staff in an effort to be able to make more personal connections with the students and the community around us. In the future we hope to update the website with other links to student resources, have photos of students working collaboratively and hands-on, and student presentations to community members.

Parent informational meetings and student presentations were a critical part of the recruitment process. Since Madera TEC is a school of choice both students and parents needed to make the decision that this was a good choice for the student to attend. The difficult part was to paint an accurate picture of what the school and the pathway would be like since it was so drastically different from the traditional classroom structure. We intentionally set up the student presentations to align with the parent informational meetings. Most parent meetings were held the evening of or the day after a student presentation. Our hope was to get students excited about what they saw and heard and get them to go home and tell their parents so that the parents would come to the informational meetings. This strategy proved to be very effective with fifty to sixty parents attending the meetings that were held after a student presentation. According to veterans of the district it is difficult to get those types of numbers to show up to a voluntary meeting. There was one parent informational meeting that was held before the student presentation due to scheduling conflicts. That parent meeting only had about twenty parents in attendance. For the student presentations each lab set up a booth for the students to visit and explore some of the things that they would experience in the lab during the school year. The student presentations started by our principal Mrs. Rocco going through a brief Slides presentation with all the students about the school. Students were then divided into six groups and rotated through each station with about five minutes per station. At the agriculture booth students were introduced to some of the small animals that they would get a chance to work with such as rabbits and chickens. They also had the chance to try out the Lincoln Electric virtual welders. Each student was also given a small goodie bag with the FFA emblem on it which contained some Madera TEC stickers, FFA sticker, candy and a small succulent cutting for them to take home. During their time at the agriculture booth students were told about the benefits of being at Madera TEC in general and some unique things about the Ag Lab and what the projects for the year would look like. Our primary goal was to get students excited about attending

Madera TEC and secondly get them excited about our individual lab. This was something that was very unique to a traditional recruitment presentation. As a staff we promoted the school itself and even talked up other pathways first, then encouraged interest in our own lab. We felt by presenting a united front students would fall into the best choice for themselves and not just be persuaded by a good sales pitch. The parent informational meetings followed a slightly different format. With students our principal did very little talking and most of the time was devoted to teacher-student interactions. With parents most of the time was devoted to informing parents about the details of the program, how transportation will work, and what the benefits of our program are versus what a student may need to give up in order to attend. Towards the end of the parent meeting, parents were given time to go and speak with the teachers of any specific lab if they had any further questions. One of the major challenges during parent meetings was the language barrier. Madera has a high volume of parents that only speak Spanish. We had to figure out a way to translate everything for parents effectively and in a timely manner. The district has professional translators on the staff that would translate for district meetings using the Whisper system. This is when the district translator speaks into a small microphone and parents wear a headset that allows them to hear the translator speak. This was the most time efficient option, however, not the most effective in our experience. The most common problem was technology failures. Not all the headsets worked or stopped working mid translation. Another problem was translation versus interpretation. The district translator had difficulty explaining what was being said because not everything translates directly from English to Spanish. Since our program is different from traditional school programs the translators had no context to draw from to interpret what was being said. Lastly, speed of the speaker was an issue. Since the Whisper system is used in real time, the district translator has to listen and speak simultaneously to keep up with the speaker. At times our principal would speak too quickly for the district translator to keep up. As a result of this Spanish only speaking parents did not get all of the information they needed. I noticed this was a big issue as I had many Spanish speaking parents come up to me after the meeting, knowing that I was bilingual and asked many of the questions that were covered in the presentation. To resolve this issue we decided to change the format of the meeting to a dual presenter format. Our principal would present in English and one of our bilingual instructors would translate. We have six out of eighteen teachers that are bilingual and three of those six felt comfortable translating in front of parents. I was a strong proponent of this format because it ensured that all parents were getting the same information. In addition I proposed that a teacher from the school be the one translating and not a district translator. As a teacher from the school we had a great deal of knowledge about the school and the way it is supposed to run, having made many of those decisions ourselves. Of the seven parent informational meetings held a district translator translated three of them, I translated for two of them, another teacher translated for one and one meeting did not need any translator.

Overall our recruitment efforts were very successful. Each lab maxed out their numbers with one hundred and fifty students each. Madera TEC was able to accept a total of nine

hundred students from all over the district. Out of fifteen hundred 7th grade students over one thousand applied to Madera TEC. Since Madera TEC can only accept nine hundred students, a lottery was done to see who would be able to attend. Once the nine hundred were randomly drawn they were sorted into their lab of choice. Every student in the agriculture lab selected it as either their first or second choice.



# **AGED 580 Report and Documentation**

Presented By: Felipe Barrientos

Cal Poly San Luis Obispo

Masters of Agriculture Education

# Master

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## Section 1: Reflection of Project Objective

### 1. Purpose

- a. The purpose of this project is to research and implement practices to create a Professional Learning Community within our staff and ideally the district as a whole. PLC's allow for the collection and interpretation of student data that help drive teacher's conversation to come up with and agree on best practices to meet student achievement centered goals.

### 2. Objective

- a. I will be reading Learning by Doing by Richard and Rebecca DuFour. I will be creating a small Google slides presentation on several key chapters and present it to the staff. I will also lead and or participate in each chapter discussion. I will also be making contacts with the Madera South High School agriculture program teachers in order to align curriculum and instruction between the 2 schools. I will meet with some of the agriculture teachers and get to know what procedures and protocols they have in their program. We will try to develop best practices that can be applied to both school sites to make for an easier transition for students when they go from one program to the other. I will create a list of program policies and procedures to start off the upcoming school year.

### 3. Timeline

- a. This project will take much of the school year and should be completed no later than May 1, 2020 so that it may be implemented in the Fall of 2020.

### 4. Reflection

- a. When I first started this project I thought I had a good grasp on how a Professional Learning Community (PLC) worked and what its function was. As I progressed through the project I learned I had some misconceptions regarding what a "true" PLC was and the impact that it can have. I realized that what I had been calling a PLC was in fact a SLC or Small Learning Community according to Richard DuFour. In order to properly map out and implement a "true" PLC we as a staff would need to start small and build a bigger learning community than we were used to. Our staff including everyone in the Ag Lab chose to start with a professional reading to educate ourselves on the PLC system and how to implement it properly. We worked on getting our staff on the same page from the start before we ever tried to expand our PLC to the high school level in order to connect with our corresponding pathways. We started by creating a friendly atmosphere among our staff through icebreakers and team building activities. This paved the way for honest and deep discussions as we moved forward with the process; creating a mission and vision statement for our school, the norms we would operate under, the school culture we envision for our staff and students, and what our collective core values would eventually become. The plan was to then reach out to our high school pathways and with a firm foundation as to what the Madera Technical Exploration Center or Madera TEC is and try to align best practices and procedures that would best serve future students.

To lay the foundation as to how we would create a PLC from our agriculture lab, to the entire staff at Madera TEC, to the high school, and eventually the entire district the entire staff did a book study on Learn by Doing by Richard and Rebecca DuFour. This book

was the basis that we used to model our PLC system and to mold our staff as we developed into a cohesive team. The book contained ten chapters each one dealing with a different aspect of building a productive staff that will focus on student centered results and culminating in the implementation of a district wide PLC. Every member on the staff committed to reading one chapter per week. In addition staff members partnered up, presented and led a discussion on a particular chapter of the book. Every staff member took part in the discussion and potential implementation of that chapter's topic at our school. The chapters that stood out to me the most from this process were chapters *2:Defining a Clear and Compelling Purpose*, *3:Building the Collaborative Culture of a PLC*, *9:Addressing Conflict and Celebrating in a Professional Learning Community*.

Chapter 2 in Learn by Doing explained the importance of a team, whether it be a specific lab pathway or school wide, to establish a clear and compelling purpose, establish shared values, and agree upon a common mission and vision. These three items were critical for my lab team and the staff at Madera TEC to achieve if we hope to achieve all the ins and outs of developing a new program from the ground up. Our whole staff set out to accomplish these goals to develop a unifying purpose, values, mission and vision for our school.

Chapter 3 entitled *Building the Collaborative Culture of a PLC* dove into the paramount importance of a team being able to Collaborate in order to help students achieve. The chapter is best summed up in a single quote, "A collection of teachers does not truly become a team until members must rely on one another to accomplish a goal that none could achieve individually". In my lab all the instructors regardless of their content focus would have to be advocates for the other two subjects in the lab. We will all need to act as agriculture, English, and science teachers. As a lab team and as a whole staff we would only be able to achieve our goals and maximize student potential if we rely on each other for support and strength.

Chapter 9 entitled *Addressing Conflict and Celebrating in a Professional Learning Community* gave the most to our staff to think about. The chapter dealt with how damaging it can be to a team to ignore conflict and the importance of taking time to celebrate victories within the team as well. By design Madera TEC and each lab within it is set up to be collaborative and intradisciplinary at every level. Our school promotes authentic, hands-on projects, that allow students to work collaboratively with each other, but also with industry professionals and members of the community. Along with that teachers are also expected to be highly collaborative and work together to cross curriculum in order to best serve the students and the purpose of the school. Whenever you have multiple people working closely together for any period of time, it is natural that conflict will arise. We knew that conflict or disagreements were not a matter of "if" but of "when". Allowing us to acknowledge the fact that conflicts will arise allows us to develop norms and practice proper responses to these situations. Along with these guidelines and taking time to celebrate each other's small victories throughout the year it

has allowed the Ag Lab and the whole staff to work fairly efficiently without much delay due to conflicts caused by differences in professional opinions.

One of the first crucial pieces we had to put in place was the mission and vision we as a staff had for our school. A clear mission and vision would guide the rest of the work in our lab pathways for the rest of the school year. At first it seemed easy to come up with a mission and vision for the school, or so we thought. The process started off with each lab team brainstorming their thoughts on what the mission and vision of the school should be. We then presented our ideas to the whole staff and looked for areas of similarities. We began to isolate key concepts that seemed to appear in each statement. This process of discussion and edits took place over several weeks and was delegated to a small committee. For several weeks the committee would collaborate on the notes from the whole staff and come up with a version of the mission and vision statement until there was an acceptable version to take to the school board. Once the first final draft was submitted to the school board there were some minor suggestions that the board had that we work shopped and incorporated. After the second submission to the board the mission and vision was approved. This was our first big win for our staff in realizing our plans for our new school.

The first small but important item we had to collaborate on and develop was the working norms for our group. This would become the standard we set for ourselves for behavior and our mindset when discussing difficult topics in the future. We set up our norms by everyone adding their own set of rules to what became a giant list of regulations. We then narrowed the list down by combining norms that were similar in nature. We then broke up into our lab teams and selected which ones we thought would be the most important. Once we had the list down to about a dozen norms we tried combining a few we felt went well together and finally eliminated those that we could simply live without. This process also helped lay out a road map to successfully achieving many of our goals that we would use continuously throughout the school year. From norms we moved on to the mission and vision process, which was then followed by developing an idea of school culture.

Developing a common agreement of what our school culture should be was a much more complex endeavor than I imagined. One issue may have been that the both school culture and the shared values were separated into two different committee groups and developed simultaneously. This was done to save time and in an attempt to accomplish all of our goals for the school year on time. If we had the time to first figure out what our shared values are and then proceeded to develop the school culture it would have been a much smoother process. However, most programs don't have much time to plan and even less get an entire year, therefore it was understandable why things needed to be done quickly in order to get everything done. This process started off by assigning a committee to develop a school culture plan with the direct instruction that all eighteen members of the staff would have input on it every step of the way. Through several weeks the committee presented ideas from other model schools in our district and the United States



that had achieved success through their school culture. As a staff we watched youtube videos that highlighted schools across the nation that attributed the high level of achievement of their students to their school culture. There was much discussion on what could or could not work at our future school site. The committee set out to define school culture with the input of the staff. There was a survey developed for the staff to fill out and add their input. From that survey the information was extrapolated and the committee presented to the whole staff what we felt defined school culture for us. Once we had a common understanding of school culture and a sense of what we wanted it to look like at our school there were subcommittees made to address behavior, discipline, tardy policies, achievement, and support for students. For all the committees and subcommittees there was usually one member from each lab to represent the lab. This allowed for all voices to be represented and have input on every topic. This prolonged the process but it allowed for the final product to be a true collaborative effort and something the entire staff could champion. Many of the final documents will be compiled into a student handbook over summer that will be distributed to students the first week of school.

The values committee met and guided the development of the shared values for the school at the same time the school culture committee was trying to develop their vision for the school. Fortunately the values committee was able to attain a consensus much quicker than the school culture committee was able to achieve their overall goal. The creation and agreement upon the staff's and school's shared values gave direction to the school culture committee to continue and make headway in their work. As a member of the values committee we decided to define what the terms values meant before we approached the whole staff for input. Much like the process for our other committees we defined the term, allowed all lab pathways to write out what they believed the most important values a school should have are, we consolidated similar ideas, and voted on the top values the staff had come up with. We felt this was the most efficient way to achieve our goal. Although it took a bit longer than expected to come to a consensus we were able to condense the values to a short concise set of statements to continue to guide our work.

Opening a new school and starting a brand new agriculture program has been a long, exhausting, but rewarding process. We as a lab team and as a whole staff have accomplished much over these last few months. We attribute much of our success to the culture we have begun to build within our staff from day one. Team building, ice breakers, and culture building activities were established as normal routine from the first day on the job. Following the leadership of our principal we worked diligently at getting to know each other, finding common ground and similar interests. As the year progressed we started and ended the week with activities designed to bring us closer as a team, or learn from one another, or to simply reflect on the work of the week we completed together as a team that week. Each teacher would take turns designing or developing an activity that all can participate in and that might even be helpful in the classroom once we have students. Even as the pandemic restricted our ability to be face to face we still took

time to check in with each other and talk about our weekend so as to not lose the work we had done throughout the year to become a team.

The pandemic has restricted our ability to collaborate and finish some of our work. However, we understand that many of our final documents that have not been finished are living documents that would have needed to be amended after the first year or even semester. Furthermore, our opportunities to reach out to the high school pathways were almost eliminated once the schools closed. Many of the high school teachers had to put all of their focus on creating virtual lessons and materials for their students. All the focus shifted to the here and now, which did not leave much room for planning the future. We know that as an agriculture program we will need to expand our professional learning community to include the high school agriculture program. This step is crucial, but will need to wait until the fall of 2020 or possibly later as things normalize. Our continued goal is to change education in Madera and to do this it will need to be a district wide professional learning community all working together for the betterment of all students and the community.