



## Manuel F. Hernandez Elementary

2133 N. Leila St  
Visalia, CA 93291  
(559) 622-3199

Sonya E. Joyner, PhD, Principal  
Sabrina Flaws, Assistant Principal



Monday, August 11, 2025

### Good Afternoon Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to the 2025–2026 school year!

I hope this message finds you well. My name is Dr. Sonya Joyner, and I am honored and excited to introduce myself as the new principal of Manuel F. Hernandez Elementary School. I am deeply committed to the success of every child and thrilled to join a school community known for its dedication to excellence.

A little about me: I have been married to a wonderful man and am the proud mother of two adult sons. I've spent the past 39 years in education, with 25 of those in administrative roles. Throughout my career, I've worked at various grade levels and in several school districts, gaining valuable experience that I bring with me to this role. This is my ninth year in the Visalia Unified School District, and I can genuinely say—I love this district and the work we do here.

I'm also pleased to introduce our new assistant principal, Mrs. Sabrina Flaws. Many of you already know Mrs. Flaws through her previous roles at Manuel F. Hernandez, where she has served as a classroom teacher and an instructional coach. Like me, she is also married with two adult sons and brings over 20 years of experience in education. Mrs. Flaws is enthusiastic about beginning this new chapter in school leadership, and we are fortunate to have her step into this important role.

We are both excited to work alongside the amazing students, staff, and families at Manuel F. Hernandez Elementary. Our goal this year is to continue building on the wonderful foundation already in place while identifying opportunities for growth and improvement.

While our students are performing well in Reading and English Language Arts—just over half are consistently meeting or exceeding expectations—we recognize that we have room for improvement. In Math, around 41% of students are meeting expectations, so this will be an area of focus for our site. To address these areas, we have built time into the daily master schedule specifically for intervention and enrichment in both ELA and Math. This dedicated time allows us to support students who may need extra help, while also challenging those who are ready to go further.

We believe that student success is a shared responsibility. That's why we encourage and welcome your involvement. Please consider joining us at School Site Council, English Learner Advisory Committee, and PTA meetings. Additionally, we will be hosting monthly "Koffee-Klatch" sessions—informal gatherings where you can enjoy coffee and pastries with the administration, share your ideas, ask questions, or simply connect with us.

We are excited about the year ahead and are genuinely looking forward to partnering with you to make it a successful and enriching experience for every student.

Partnering with you in education,

*Sonya E. Joyner, PhD*

Principal

Manuel F. Hernandez Elementary School

# MFH School Year 2025–2026: Pick-Up and Drop-Off Procedures

## Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to the 2025–2026 school year at MFH! We're excited to start a new year and want to ensure that all families are informed about our drop-off and pick-up procedures to help create a safe and smooth transition for all students.

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## First Two Days of School

On **Thursday, August 14th, and Friday, August 15th**, parents will be allowed to walk their child to his/her classroom.

- **Please note:** After August 15th, parents will no longer be permitted beyond the gate during morning drop-off.

Staff members will be stationed with class rosters to assist families in finding classrooms. While teachers will be present to welcome students, they will not be available for extended conversations, as they will be focused on managing a smooth start for all.

We understand that some students may find separation from their parents or guardians difficult. In our experience, once parents depart, students usually adjust quickly and settle into class.

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## Morning Drop-Off

- **Campus opens at 7:30 AM.**
  - All students (except State Preschool) will enter through **Gate 3**.
  - **Cafeteria breakfast is available** from 7:30 AM to 8:05 AM. Breakfast is free for all students.
  - Please **use the drive-through lane at Gate 3** to drop off students. If you need to walk your child in on the first two days or assist with a car seat, please **park in a designated space**.
    - **Do not park along the front office curb**—this causes traffic congestion and delays.
  - **Only the State Preschool students** should enter through **Gate 1**.
  - **School bell rings at 8:07 AM.**
  - **Students are considered tardy after 8:10 AM.**
  - Instruction begins promptly at **8:10 AM**.
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## Afternoon Pick-Up

- **Dismissal is at 2:30 PM.**
  - Students will exit through the following gates:
    - **TK & Kindergarten** – Gate 1
    - **1st & 2nd Grades** – Gate 2
    - **3rd Grade** – Gate 3
    - **4th Grade** – Gate 4
    - **5th & 6th Grades** – Gate 5
  - **Bus Lane Access:** Parents of 4th through 6th-grade students may use the bus lane to pull through and pick up their children.
  - **Important:** Please **do not park in red zones or along restricted areas** around the school. These zones are enforced to keep students safe and ensure smooth traffic flow.
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## Siblings and Pick-Up Arrangements

Older siblings are permitted to meet their younger siblings at the younger child's designated exit gate—as long as they are respectful, responsible, and follow all rules.

If an older student:

Runs or plays, doesn't follow adult directions, fails to keep their hands to themselves, etc...  
Then, **each student must be picked up from their designated gate going forward.**

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## Late Pick-Up Policy


Please be prompt for pick-up:

- Children **not picked up by 2:40 PM** will be taken to **Gate 3**, and families will be contacted.
  - Due to limited after-school supervision, it's critical that students are picked up on time.
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## After-School Program


The **Expanded Learning Opportunities Program (ELOP)** offers after-school care and activities from **2:30 PM to 6:00 PM**.

For more information or to enroll, please contact the ELOP Office at:

 **(559) 931-8062**

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If you have any questions or concerns about these procedures, feel free to call the school office at:

 **(559) 622-3199**

We appreciate your cooperation and look forward to an amazing school year ahead!

**Sincerely,**

*MFH School Administration*

*Dr. Joyner & Mrs. Flaws*