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# School News

Education + Communication = A Better Nation

Covering the Palo Alto Unified School District



Volume 3, Issue 7

November 2020–January 2021



## School Days Begin





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## A New Year of Learning for All of Us

Educators often use the phrase “life-long learners” to describe our own quest to continue acquiring new skills and techniques over time. Entering this year, I believe we can all agree that our opportunity to grow as life-long learners has been tested! I have faith in our school district, our families, and our entire community. We will continue to learn, evolve, and serve our students safely.

At the time of this publication, we have welcomed back roughly 2,000 elementary students for in-person instruction. It is a complicated process with many considerations. Ultimately, we believe that offering an in-person option for families was essential and in alignment with the Public Health Department. Families selecting distance learning are also served at the highest-possible level. We are fortunate to have a team of professionals dedicated to serving all students, regardless of the model selected by families.

I would like to recognize our Board of Education for their leadership in the face of changing conditions, complex negotiations, differences of opinions, and passionate pleas on all ends of issues. They have taken input and made thoughtful decisions in the interests of serving students and providing choice where possible. Our professional associations have worked diligently to advocate for our employees, including safety measures benefitting everyone. Our site and District administrators have worked tirelessly to meet the needs of all stakeholders, while also leading in a time of discomfort for many.

We have hard work ahead and conditions may change. We will remain nimble and open to revisions that improve our outcomes. For the first time in many months, we have great reason for optimism. If nothing else, we can celebrate our role as ambassadors of hope!



**Donald B. Austin, Ed.D.**  
*Superintendent of Schools*

## Un Nuevo Año de Aprendizaje Para Todos

Los educadores a menudo usan la frase “estudiantes de formación continua” para describir nuestra propia búsqueda de aprendizaje de nuevas técnicas y habilidades con el paso del tiempo. Entrando a este año, creo que todos podemos coincidir que, ¡se ha puesto a prueba nuestra oportunidad para crecer como estudiantes de formación continua! Confío en nuestro distrito escolar, nuestras familias y nuestra comunidad entera. Seguiremos aprendiendo, evolucionando y sirviendo a nuestros alumnos de forma segura.

Al momento de esta publicación, le hemos dado la bienvenida a aproximadamente 2,000 alumnos de primaria para instrucción presencial. Es un proceso complicado con muchas consideraciones. Básicamente, creemos que el ofrecer a las familias una opción presencial era esencial y compatible con el Departamento de Salud Pública. Las familias que seleccionan aprendizaje a distancia también son atendidas al máximo nivel posible. Tenemos la fortuna de contar con un equipo de profesionales que están dedicados a servir a todos los alumnos, sin importar la modalidad seleccionada por las familias.

Quiero reconocer a nuestro consejo educativo por su liderazgo ante condiciones cambiantes, negociaciones complejas, diferencias de opinión y llamamientos vehementes de todas las partes. Han considerado los comentarios y tomado decisiones reflexivas en aras de servir a los alumnos y brindar opción dentro de lo posible. Nuestras asociaciones profesionales han trabajado diligentemente para abogar por nuestros empleados, incluyendo las medidas de seguridad que benefician a todos. Nuestros administradores escolares y distritales han trabajado incansablemente para cubrir las necesidades de todos nuestros participantes, mientras lideran en momentos difíciles para muchos.

Tenemos mucho trabajo por delante y las condiciones pueden cambiar. Permaneceremos flexibles y abiertos a las modificaciones que mejoren nuestros resultados. Por primera vez en muchos meses, tenemos una gran razón para mostrarnos optimistas. Por lo menos, ¡podemos celebrar nuestro papel como embajadores de la esperanza!

### 我们崭新的一个学年

教育家们常常用“终身学习者”来描述那些随着时间的流逝不断追求习得新技能与技术的人们。今年，我们成长为终身学习者的机会已经通过了考验，我相信我们都认同这一点。我们对我们的学区、我们的学生家庭和我们整个社区充满信心。我们将继续学习和成长，并且安全地服务于我们的学生。

截至这次发表时，我们已经迎来了大约 2000 名小学生回校接受面对面教学。这是一个复杂的过程，需要考虑很多因素。最终，我们认为有必要为学生家庭提供面对面教学供他们选择，这也符合公共卫生部门的要求。同时，我们也为选择远程学习的学生家庭尽可能提供最高水平的教学。幸运的是，无论学生家庭选择哪种模式，我们都有努力为全体学生提供服务的专业团队。

我想向我们的教育委员会表示感谢，感谢他们在面对不断变化的条件、复杂的谈判和意见分歧时展现出的领导力，感谢他们为解决所有问题提出的热切请求。为了更好地服务学生并且尽可能为学生提供选择的机会，他们付出了不懈努力，做出了周全的决定。我们的专业协会一直致力于为我们的员工争取利益，包括惠及每个人的安全措施。我们的网站和学区管理人员都在为满足所有利益相关者的需求不懈努力，这一过程也给他们中的许多人带来不便。

未来我们将面临艰苦的工作和不断变化的条件。我们将对这些改变保持敏锐和开放的思维，以提升我们的成果。这是好几个月以来第一次，我们有充分的理由保持乐观。至少，我们可以庆祝我们充当了“希望的使者”！

## Board of Education



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## Full Distance Learning

<https://www.pausd.org>



**Nikole Manou**  
Principal

### A New and Innovative Program

The Full-Year Distance Learning (FDL) is a new and innovative PAUSD K-5 program that includes over 200 students from all 12 Palo Alto Elementary Schools. This program was created to give those families with concerns about returning to school in the hybrid model an option to continue schooling with PAUSD. It provides a way to make new friends and commit to

expanding the community of PAUSD learners without losing touch with their home site. The class lists were created to include home school community cohorts, encouraging opportunities to stay connected with the home school community.

My name is Nikole Manou and I am excited to be the facilitator and point person for the new Full-Year Distance Learning Program. I am proud to be part of this newest “evolution” in education. I have been in education for over 22 years, with the last 17 years in PAUSD. My roles have included being an Education Specialist, a teacher of multiple grade levels, Summer School Coordinator, Multi-Systems of Support (MTSS) Coordinator, and a Districtwide Elementary Instructional Coach for all 12 elementary school sites in Palo Alto. This role included

working with all PK-5 grade-level teachers and working towards best practices and deepening the understanding of grade-level curriculum. Last year, I completed my Administrative Credential in preparation for this next new challenge in education.

This year, I am eager to get to know the children and very excited to work with each teacher in this new online program. The FDL teachers are veteran PAUSD teachers who volunteered to participate in this new program. They come from Barron Park, Nixon, Fairmeadow, Hoover, Escondido, Briones, and Ohlone. Our primary emphasis will be to support all students academically and social-emotionally throughout the year given this new paradigm.



**The Full-Year Distance Learning Staff**

# School News

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Covering the  
**PALO ALTO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**FOUNDER/PUBLISHER:** Kay Coop  
562/493-3193 • [kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com](mailto:kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com)

**ADVERTISING SALES:** Leslie Rawlings  
714/856-9884 • Fax: 562/430-8063

**CONTENT COORDINATOR:** Barbra Longiny

**GRAPHIC DESIGNER/PRODUCTION:**

Emily Ung

**COPY EDITORS:**

Lisa Brock, Kate Karp & Anna Zappia

**SOCIAL MEDIA:** Nancy Lueder

**Netragrednik** by Neta Madison



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**Kay Coop**  
Founder/Publisher



Welcome back to another school year. This is our 3rd year publishing the Palo Alto Unified School District *School News*. There have been many changes throughout the years; however, I think we all agree this is the most challenging. Americans are innovative and educators are at the top of the list. Zoom has taken on a whole new meaning to this generation of students. Fortunately, students and educators were proficient with technology to help with the seamless

transition to distance learning. Families stepped up to the challenge. We have collaborated with the district to provide digital issues and they have been well-received.

Thank you for continuing to include *School News* among your reading choices.

Be sure to enter our word search contests on pages 7 & 12.

Our next issue is February 3, 2021. In the meantime, have safe and healthy holidays.



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## Addison *Elementary School*

650 Addison Ave., Palo Alto, CA 94301 • 650/322-5935 • addison.pausd.org



**Amanda Boyce**  
*Principal*

### Excited Starting 7th Year

I am very excited to be starting my 7th year as Principal of Addison Elementary School. Before Addison, I served one year as an Assistant Principal and two years as a Principal in Cupertino Union School District (CUSD). My greatest passion in education is teaching early literacy as I spent most of my teaching career in 1st grade and serving as a District Reading Specialist in CUSD.

Along with teaching early literacy, I am committed to the Response to Intervention (RtI) process to ensure every

child has the appropriate supports whether they are being served in the general or special education setting.

Outside of school, I enjoy spending time with my husband and two daughters who are attending 8th and 4th grades. As a family, we spend time traveling, hiking, biking, jogging, playing softball and golf, and chasing adventures! Our 4th grade daughter attends Addison and the 8th grade daughter is an Addison alumna so each day, I am deeply grateful for this supportive, vibrant, warm, and inclusive community that has enriched our lives greatly!

## Barron Park *Elementary School*

800 Barron Ave., Palo Alto, CA 94306 • 650/858-0508 • barron.pausd.org



**Eric Goddard**  
*Principal*

### Hello Everyone!

I am Eric Goddard, principal of Barron Park Elementary. This is my 4th year at our wonderful school and I certainly feel quite fortunate to be a contributing member as part of an outstanding faculty and school community. This is my 26th year in public education and 2020-21 is a much different start than the previous 25 years. Zoom, Schoology, SeeSaw, scheduled pick-up of student instructional materials, and supplies

are all part of our regular practice now. The teaching staff continues to be outstanding with the distance learning instructional model. Students and parents have really stepped up for quite some time making sure their

child(ren) are prepared to take advantage of the learning opportunities provided to them each and every day.

In the coming weeks, we are gradually bringing students back on campus for the first time since March. I want to thank the entire staff for the tremendous work they have put in to support the continued overall success of each child through distance. Families, we know this has not been easy. Thank you for your patience and support while we navigate these complicated times and please know all of you are much appreciated.

As we approach this next transition back to school campus, let's continue to work together closely and be supportive of one another for all of our Barron Park Bees. I can't wait to welcome them back and see them on campus again.

## Duveneck *Elementary School*

705 Alester Ave., Palo Alto, CA 94303 • 650/322-5946 • duveneck.pausd.org



**Leslie Crane**  
*Principal*

### Happy 2020/21 school year!

This is my 2nd year as principal of Duveneck School. I started my career in the Los Altos School District (LASD) where I taught Physical Education for 10 years at Egan Junior High School. I also served as principal at three schools in LASD, Oak Avenue School, Covington School, and Blach Intermediate School. In 2012, I left LASD and started working for the Redwood City School

District (RCSD). During my time there, I was the principal of North Star Academy, Director of Human Resources, and the principal of Clifford School. After seven years in

RCSD, I am now blessed to be working for PAUSD and the principal of Duveneck School – Go Dragons!

This year, our staff is focused on creating and delivering a rigorous educational program to our students in distance learning as well as when we move into the hybrid model of teaching and learning on our campus. We take safety very seriously and we will do everything in our power to keep our students safe and healthy. We also want to create and maintain effective learning environments that promote community, friendships, engagement, positive culture, and connections with one another.

On a personal note, I live in Sunnyvale with my partner Cameron, my twin boys, Carter and Wyatt, and our crazy Airedale Terrier, Yoder.

# El Carmelo *Elementary School*

3024 Bryant St., Palo Alto, CA 94306 • 650/856-0960 • elcarmelo.pausd.org



**Danaé Reynolds**  
*Principal*

## The Hidden Gem in the Heart of Midtown

I am proud to begin my 6th year as the instructional leader of The Hidden Gem in the Heart of Midtown, El Carmelo Elementary School. This is also my 21st year as an educator in the Palo Alto Unified School District. Prior to my tenure at El Carmelo, I spent four years as the Principal of Escondido Elementary School. While in

PAUSD, I have served as, a Coordinator at the District level, a Teacher on Special Assignment, and a Reading Specialist. My career in education began as a primary classroom teacher in grades K, 1, and 3 in the Central Valley and the East Bay.

I am passionate about equity in education, literacy development, mathematical problem solving, early intervention, English Language Development, teacher collaboration, professional learning, student engagement, and parent involvement. As your Principal, I work to

weave each of these areas into our school. The diversity of El Carmelo's student population reflects the world our children will grow into as adults. Our students deserve to be members of an inclusive school community where they experience that all races, ethnicities, cultures, languages, and abilities are honored. I am heartened by our exceptional faculty and staff who work in concert with families to cultivate this environment for our students.

I am married to a brilliant educator, Milton Reynolds, who is a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consultant. We live in the East Bay near green space where we enjoy observing the wildlife, reading (fiction for me, informational for him), fly-fishing (he is extraordinary, I have incredible luck), hikes, museums, plays, and listening to "This American Life" on NPR. Over the summer I spent time practicing yoga, knitting, and discovering the myriad of content on Netflix. I am looking forward to resuming one of my favorite hobbies, trying out restaurants recommended on PBS's Check Please Bay Area.

## Kitchen Items—Word Search Contest

**Rules!** One word in the list is NOT in the word search.  
When you have completed the word search, one word will be left and that word you email to: [Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com](mailto:Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com) Please put PALO ALTO in the subject line.

**Entries must be received by December 15, 2020**  
From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win  
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FAUCET	FLOUR
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POTS	SALT
PANS	



## Ellen Fletcher *Middle School*

655 Arastradero Rd., Palo Alto, CA 94306 • 650/856-9810 • fletcher.pausd.org



**Melissa Howell**  
*Principal*

### Welcome to Our New School Year

As the proud Principal of Ellen Fletcher Middle School, I am excited about welcoming you all to our new school year. We can all agree that this has not been the traditional start to school that we have all been used to in the past. Distance Learning is definitely a change that we are all adjusting to. However, we have amazing teams that are all extremely enthusiastic about another incredible and productive start of the school year. Fletcher administrative and counseling teams include Principal, Melissa Howell; Assistant Principal, Pieter Dolmans; 6th and 7th grade counselor, Michele Chin; and 6th and 8th grade counselor, Jovi Johnston. Our experienced and

devoted teaching and support staff began planning for the new 2020-21 school year over the summer and at the start of the school year around our focused school and district goals of High-Quality Teaching and Learning (Modern Pedagogy for all Modalities.) To support this goal, our entire Fletcher faculty and staff participated in our district PAUSD Summer Professional Learning course. As well as strengthening these components together as an entire staff, spending two full days of professional development at our welcome back staff training days. The Fletcher staff, together is committed to continuing the targeted work this year. Please visit our website ([www.fletcher.pausd.org](http://www.fletcher.pausd.org)) for more school information.

Go Tigers!

## Fairmeadow *Elementary*

500 E. Meadow Dr., Palo Alto, CA 94306 • 650/856-0845 • fairmeadow.pausd.org



**Iris Wong**  
*Principal*

### A School Year Like No Other

In the field of education, no school year is ever the same, and August 17th was no exception. Opening a school year online with distance learning is something new we all got to experience together in August. We all definitely missed seeing our students in person on the first day of school, however, the first day of distance learning launched as smoothly as could be. The feelings of excitement, joy, and first day jitters were still apparent through our screens. I've been in the field of education for 15 years, starting out as an elementary school teacher in a neighboring bay area district. Having taught in grades 2nd through 5th and mentoring new teachers for several years, I always strive to put my "teacher's hat" on when making site decisions as an administrator. This is my 3rd year as principal of Fairmeadow Elementary, and prior to Fairmeadow, I was next door at JLS Middle School for three years as an assistant principal. I am very fortunate to be a part of such a wonderful community, full of supportive and thoughtful parents, and I couldn't be more proud to lead such a strong and dedicated group of educators here at Fairmeadow. All of my staff continue to do amazing work that supports our students, and they continue to provide a quality education, even through an online platform. At Fairmeadow, our motto is, "Learning is a team sport," and this couldn't be more evident during these times.





# Escondido *Elementary School*

890 Escondido Rd., Palo Alto, CA 94305 • 650/856-1337 • [escondido.pausd.org](http://escondido.pausd.org)



**Marcela Simoes de Carvalho**  
*Principal*

## Escondido Friends Around the World

Welcome to Escondido! This year marks my 27th year in education. My experience in education spans many settings, grade levels, and administrative positions serving the educational needs of diverse multiethnic and multilingual students and high-achieving accelerated learners.

I'd like to share with you some of my priorities for our school. My primary goal is to ensure that all children are safe, happy, ready, and engaged to learn and have the best possible educational experiences while at Escondido Elementary. I follow a collaborative and team-building approach and believe that differentiated, rigorous, and developmentally appropriate and relevant instruction is key to achieving this goal. I base every decision I make on what is best for students. In the spirit of building a strong school team, I look forward to working with staff, parents, and students throughout the year to identify areas for improvement in student social-emotional well-being and academic achievement, school climate, and communication.



**Escondido Kinder student excited for her first day back at school!**



**New Classroom Settings**



**Abigail Mata, Kinder Spanish Immersion and Ambassador of Hope**

As I think about the staff, students, and parents who make up our community, I can't help but conclude that this is a wonderful place for learning. I look forward to spending time with students, getting to know their personalities, learning styles, and interests.

I know that together we will make this a wonderful year full of meaningful and joyful memories!



**Amanda Dungan welcomes Superintendent Austin and Director of Student Services Jason Krolikowski as they visit her classroom.**

## Greendell School

4120 Middlefield Rd., Palo Alto, CA 94303 • 650/856-0833



**Shannon Coleman**  
Principal

### Dear Families,

As I entered my 4th year as principal of Greendell School and my 15th year as an educator, the 2020-21 school year started like no other year before. Our staff participated in extensive professional development virtually as we prepared for the arrival of our students in our distance learning classrooms. On our first day of school, I greeted our students and their families on Zoom from the Greendell office. And it is in those familiar moments, like the first day school excitement, that we realize just how different our experiences are due to COVID-19.

Despite the differences, I have been so heartened by our school community. Our teachers, staff, and families have all worked together to make distance learning a fun, engaging experience for our youngest students. Each time I visit our classroom meetings, I see the progress the children are making and the relationships that are developing, even in an online environment.



**Our Greendell Goslings**

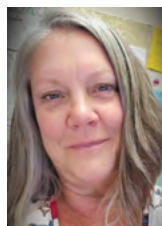


**Getting Ready for School**

This week, we had children returning in-person to campus in our Learning Centers. On the first day, I heard one of the sweetest sounds ever: children's laughter from the playground. I could see the children from my office window riding tricycles, wearing masks, and laughing together. Learning through play is a great way to learn!

## Frank S. Greene Jr. Middle School

750 N. California Ave., Palo Alto, CA 94303 • 650/494-8120 • [greene.pausd.org](http://greene.pausd.org)



**Valerie Royaltey-Quandt**  
Principal

### Greene Middle School, Showing Up Strong!

One of the most gratifying elements of starting this incredible school year has been the coming together of all of the various teams associated with Greene. Our teaching teams help to make a large school smaller and more personalized by connecting with designated teams of students, and also support students in their daily academic and social-emotional connection to the school community. Our department teams have been working diligently and collaboratively on new and innovative instructional strategies for distance learning and have demonstrated tremendous fortitude and flexibility while shifting their decades of teaching experience to the online format. Our classified teams have helped with everything



from student materials check-in, tech support, food distribution, and whatever needs to be done! And our administrative team has worked tirelessly to continue to connect students, parents, teachers, and support staff with the communication, materials, and information they need to move forward in our effort to care for our middle school students. Our parent teams have been incredibly supportive with PTA, PiE, and Special Education parent groups reaching out and helping us connect with our communities.

Now in my fourth year as the Principal for Greene Middle School, I am exceptionally proud of the level of support and collaboration of all of our school teams. We are showing up strong!

# Henry M. Gunn *High School*

780 Arastradero Rd., Palo Alto, CA 94306 • 650/354-8200 • gunn.pausd.org



**Wendy Stratton**  
*Principal*

## Welcome Wendy Stratton

Meet Wendy Stratton, Gunn's new principal! She's originally from Connecticut, but has lived in Marin and Chicago.

She loves animals and has 2 dogs and Phil, the cockatoo.

She enjoys competitive sports, word games, and puzzles. She manages stress with Peloton workouts, running, biking, and mountain biking. She loves the outdoors.

Wendy is a National Board Certified teacher who has taught one year in Special Education, five years in Middle School, and 15 years in high school (PE and English). She has also been an Athletic Director and Assistant Principal. In addition, she was awarded the Golden Bell Teacher of the Year award in 2014.

When she's not organizing distance learning at Gunn, she's working on her PhD dissertation in Organizational Leadership.

# Herbert Hoover *Elementary School*

445 E. Charleston Rd., Palo Alto, CA 94306 • 650/320-8106 • hoover.pausd.org



**James Sherman**  
*Principal*

## Hoover Proud!

Welcome, everyone! I am Jim Sherman, and the principal at Hoover Elementary School. This is my 3rd year at Hoover and in PAUSD, and I can't be happier. I love our kids and community so much, and I am so proud of them! These past several months have been quite an experience for all of us. Distance learning, block schedules,

Zoom, Schoology. Whew! We have learned so much about technology, collaborating and working online, and maintaining focus in less than an ideal situation. Through all this, our Hoover community has been strong!

When March came and we moved to a distance model, our Hoover teachers went into action. Though it wasn't what they wanted or expected, they made it with tremendous success. It shouldn't have surprised me as Hoover teachers hold themselves to a very high standard, but I was and am so proud of them.

Rachelle and Kathy in the front office have been incredible through all of this. They have been back in the office solving problems like replacing devices, getting supplies and materials to families, working on budgeting issues, organizing and issuing PPE to teachers, and just keeping it all together for us. We appreciate them so much, and our entire community benefits from the amazing work they do.

Nestor and Vincente, our custodians, continue to impress me with the ramped-up cleaning and disinfecting and moving and reconfiguring furniture to allow us to be physically-distanced. They work extremely hard and with integrity, and we are so lucky to have them.

I really want to thank all of our parents who have been incredibly flexible in this crazy time. The kindness and support for our teachers that you have all shown, the understanding of the need for so much attendance checking-in, and your kind words of encouragement and



praise have made this all much calmer for us all. We know what you are going through with job assignments and locations changing while having your children at home with you. Your teaching skills have no doubt improved substantially, the importance of organization and time management has risen to a new level, and the way you have managed to keep the anxiety level under control is commendable.

It's not easy, and please remember that we are a team. We are all here for each other. Most important of all, we need to keep our lines of communication open. Thank you for always doing what is best for your children and for supporting them. Children with supportive families around them are successful and happy. It's a fact. Your children are so lucky to have you!

I'm so proud of this community and as things get even more interesting, we will need each other even more. We are always here for you and for your children!

# Jane Lathrop Stanford *Middle School*

480 E. Meadow Dr., Palo Alto, CA 94306 • 650/856-5188 • jls.pausd.org



**Chris Grierson**  
*Principal*

## 2020-21 JLS Panther Pride

With the launch of the new school year, JLS Middle School is a strong team of teams! Chris Grierson, JLS Principal, and the JLS Admin Team (left to right: Chris Grierson, Adam Nelson, Amy Sheward, Hanisi Accetta) are excited to get JLS students, families, and staff into a groove

with distance learning. Chris is starting his 19th year in PAUSD and his second year as JLS Principal, and as a parent of a current 5th grader and 7th grader, Chris is especially thoughtful around how our distance learning approach impacts students' experiences and connections to school. Having a true sense of belonging and membership is critical during this challenging time, and so is being able to stay flexible and positive. Please visit our school website ([www.jls.pausd.org](http://www.jls.pausd.org)) for more information, and reach out to any JLS team member if you would like to learn more about our Community of Panthers!



## Toy Store Items—Word Search Contest

**Rules!** One word in the list is NOT in the word search.

When you have completed the word search, one word will be left and that word you email to: [Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com](mailto:Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com) Please put PALO ALTO in the subject line.

**Entries must be received by December 15, 2020**

From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win \$20 gift card to Barnes & Noble.

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| BLOCKS   | BALL GLOVE |
| KITES    |            |



**Congratulations to Yara Rawashdeh**  
**Winner of our last issue Word Search Contest!**

## Juana Briones *Elementary School*

4100 Orme St., Palo Alto, CA 94306 • 650/856-0877 • briones.pausd.org



**Katy Bimpson**  
*Principal*

### Welcome

Welcome to Juana Briones, my alma mater! I feel fortunate everyday that I was given the opportunity to return and support the school where I developed my love of learning from Kindergarten through 6th grade. As a product of Palo Alto Schools and having taught in PAUSD for 20 years before becoming an administrator, I am proud and honored to return to this exceptionally caring, supportive, student-centered community.

The pandemic has left indelible impressions on our schools, communities, and planet, changing the face of teaching, learning, and how we live our lives. Through it all, the Briones community has shown grit, flexibility, and determination to assure that all of its members have what they need. The connection, generosity of spirit, depth, and longevity of relationships, and welcoming of new families as sources of additional strength makes this community a uniquely special place for students and adults to learn and grow.

## Lucille M. Nixon *Elementary School*

1711 Stanford Ave., Stanford, CA 94305 • 650/856-1622 • nixon.pausd.org



**Mary Pat O'Connell**  
*Principal*

### A Shared Touchstone

How do we build a school community in this year of schooling distantly? How do we stay connected when taking care of each other in this pandemic requires us to be apart? Here is what we have been doing at Lucille M. Nixon School.

### Develop a Shared Touchstone

We took advice from renowned education researcher, John Hattie, to develop symbols and artefacts that model connectedness in a time of crisis. Nixon librarian, Laura Lajeunesse, led students and staff in selecting a slogan for our situation – “Whatever the weather, dolphins swim together!” She encouraged staff and families to take pictures with the slogan and turned it all into a beautiful photo montage with music. This is definitely our motto!

### Accomplish Something Together

When people come together to accomplish something, we build comradery and feed our need to be productive. Nixon teachers were determined to get print books from our classrooms and library into the hands of our students quickly this year. Nixon 5th grade teacher, Chris Nosek, came up with the idea of “Book Fairies” to deliver books from the teachers and librarian to families within Nixon neighborhoods. We have had over 50 parents volunteer to serve as Book Fairies and deliver books every two weeks. We have not only achieved the purpose of getting print books into the hands of our students, but we have connected Nixon families to each other in our neighborhoods. It is a major team effort involving teachers, librarian, classroom aides, our office team and parents, and it is a total win!



### Share Some fun

Those Book Fairies snuck cute little kits for making s'mores into the book bags one week. The next evening, our PTA held a virtual S'mores Sing-a-long. Nixon music teacher, Robin Smith, led the singing and kindergarten teachers, Susie Foster and Stephanie Han led games. PTA parent planners extraordinaire, Linzi Lee and Tami Nguyen, have the next family fun escapade underway. It is a virtual Fun Run and scavenger hunt in which families complete kid-friendly challenges across several weeks, earn points and prizes, and keep track of it all on a phone app!

I am the very fortunate principal who gets to lead this wonderful community!

## Ohlone *Elementary School*

950 Amarillo Ave., Palo Alto, CA 94306 • 650/856-1726 • ohlone.pausd.org



**Dawn Yoshinaga**  
*Principal*

### **Grateful**

My name is Dawn Yoshinaga, and I am the lucky principal who gets to call Ohlone home. My husband and I have two sons, one who is full-grown (mostly!) and one who is in 8th grade at JLS. My oldest works in banking and is an aspiring stockbroker/rap artist. My youngest is settling into online learning and enjoys cooking warm lunches for himself each day.

This is my 3rd year at Ohlone. It is a beautiful and special place and a direct reflection of our school community. My background as a school psychologist drew me to Ohlone because of its respect and regard for child development and the individual process by which all children achieve inner greatness. Our students respectfully question the why and demonstrate empathy and care for others and the environment. Social-emotional learning is at the heart of everything we do here. This sings to my inner core. I am grateful to be a part of this marvelous place!

## Palo Alto *Adult School*

50 Embarcadero Rd., Palo Alto, CA 94301 • 650/329-3752 • paadultschool.org



**Dave Hoshiwara**  
*Principal*

### **Wearing Many Hats**

Dave Hoshiwara, Principal of Adult School and Secondary Options, has been with PAUSD for an official 25 years in various roles, including past career highlights such as Career Technical Education Coordinator and Summer School Principal.

In addition to managing his current responsibilities in Adult Education and Secondary Options, Dave has recently

taken on the new role of Principal of the Lucile Packard Children's Hospital School, which includes the Hospital and Ronald McDonald House Classrooms.

He indeed wears many hats. He is especially proud of creating Secondary Options, which helps special needs students gain valuable work experience. Collaborating with the VA Palo Alto Health Care System and the PAUSD VA team, Dave is dedicated to refocusing career aspirations for high schoolers who might normally be recommended for housekeeping or food service work. Now they can also develop important social skills. Read all about it on the [VA website \(https://www.paloalto.va.gov/features/secondaryoptions.asp\)](https://www.paloalto.va.gov/features/secondaryoptions.asp).

## Palo Alto *High School*

50 Embarcadero Rd., Palo Alto, CA 94301 • 650/329-3701 • paly.pausd.org



**Brent Kline**  
*Principal*

### **Demonstrating a Belief in Students**

It is important that we create schools that continually demonstrate a belief in their students, including providing opportunities for input and design of school systems and student expectations. If you really want to know what is going on in your school, you need to pause and ask the students their perceptions and opinions. Most often, they are usually spot on! There has been

an intentional focus this year at Paly, to increase the opportunity for students to provide their input on the climate and culture of their school.

The focus of raising student voice and participation at Paly started in June through a variety of student forums, interviews, and survey opportunities. The information that has been gathered so far, has been helpful to help understand the student climate, perceptions and needs of the entire student body. What was clear is that students

wanted increased opportunities for open dialogue and input with their administrative team.

A specific opportunity for students to provide input this school year was the creation of the Principal's Advisory Committee (PAC). The purpose of this group is to provide a selected group of students an opportunity to have regular meetings with the principal, in order for students to provide ideas and goals for increased student voice and involvement at Paly. We had 60 students apply for this year's PAC and narrowing it down to four representatives from each grade level was extremely difficult. All 60 of the students completed applications and participated in brief interviews, concluding with the selection of this year's PAC. In our first meeting held during September, the focus of our conversation was looking at opportunities to increase student connectedness during our current distance learning experience, including a specific focus on improving the transition and support for our incoming 9th graders.

## Palo Verde *Elementary School*

3450 Louis Rd., Palo Alto, CA 94303 • 650/856-1672 • paloverde.pausd.org



**Annora Lee**  
*Principal*

### **A Community of Connectedness**

As a site leader, it is my pleasure and responsibility to highlight the good people and accomplishments of my school site. So, when asked to share an introduction of myself, I didn't know quite where to begin.

I am a teacher. I am a mother, a wife, a daughter, and sister. A maker. A musician, a daydreamer, and an ever-optimist. And, a little over a year ago, I had the great honor of adding elementary school principal to that list.

Being principal at Palo Verde Elementary affords me the opportunity to merge many of my identities and interests. I am charged with serving children of limitless potential. Their creativity, energy, and optimism for the world fuel my passion for providing the best educational experience we can possibly offer. The teacher in me delights in working alongside some of the best professionals there are in the field of education. The mother in me tries to see experiences from the eyes of parents in our community. The child in me feels like a kid in a candy store.

If not for the programs and people that I had access to as a child, my current reality would be dramatically different. My experiences as a child of immigrants still resonate when I think about cultivating a community of connectedness and care. I feel such gratitude for the families at Palo Verde



who work so generously to support not only our students, but each other.

So, onward we go through another school year like no other. Despite its challenges, it is a privilege to lead our school through this time in history. Our teachers, families, and students have all displayed such strength and compassion for one another. We are resilient. We are proud. We are together. We are Eagle Strong!

## Walter Hays *Elementary School*

1525 Middlefield Rd., Palo Alto, CA 94301 • 650/322-5956 • hays.pausd.org



**Mary Bussmann**  
*Principal*

### **Dear PAUSD Families and Friends,**

I am honored to be the principal of Walter Hays Elementary. It is my 22nd year in PAUSD, 13th year as principal, additionally I served 3 years as JLS Assistant Principal, and 6 years as an Ohlone Grade 4/5 teacher, all of which have influenced my leadership.

What has been the most rewarding for me as Head Teacher, as well as Classroom Teacher is the importance of making

connections and building relationships with students and families. I have had the opportunity to make a difference in children's lives by supporting their social and emotional development through the Walter Hays Core Values, as well as collaborating and guiding our teaching staff with instruction and management. Building parent partnerships, welcoming every child and family with a place at our school have been key. Together, we as students, staff and parents, have built a rich culture and inclusive community.



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