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Covering the Palo Alto Unified School District



Volume 7, Issue 20

February 2025

Journey of Continuous Improvement





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In education, there is no finish line. At PAUSD, we embrace a journey of continuous improvement, always striving to create better opportunities for our students, staff, and community. It is one of the many things that makes PAUSD such a special place.

Over the years, we have made significant strides, from strengthening academic programs to enhancing mental health supports and streamlining our priorities to focus on what truly matters. Improvement is not a destination. It is an ongoing process of reflection, innovation, and action.

Looking ahead, we will continue to challenge ourselves. We will sharpen our focus on priority areas, including revisiting our PAUSD Promise after collecting more stakeholder input. We will invest in our people, celebrate progress, and make bold decisions when necessary.

The future of PAUSD is bright because we are never satisfied with “good enough.” We are a community that believes in the power of education to transform lives, and together, we will push forward with purpose, determination, and a belief in what is possible.

Thank you for being part of this journey. Our best work is still ahead of us!

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Addison *Elementary School*

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



Jeff Downing
Principal

Continuous Improvement through MTSS at Addison

The journey of continuous improvement at Addison Elementary highlights the school's commitment to innovation, collaboration, and student success. Over the past few years, the school has implemented thoughtful strategies to address the evolving needs of its learners. Central to this progress is the Multi-Tiered System of Support

(MTSS), a comprehensive framework designed to help students achieve academic, social, and emotional growth.

At Addison Elementary, MTSS is the foundation of our efforts to create meaningful change. The process begins with using assessments that help identify each student's strengths and areas where they might need extra support. Using this information, teachers craft lessons and strategies that meet students where they are. Tier 1 ensures all children receive engaging and high-quality instruction in the classroom. For those who need more help, Tier 2 provides extra support in small, focused groups. Students facing the biggest challenges

receive personalized, one-on-one attention through Tier 3 interventions.

What makes this journey truly special is the collaboration between teachers, administrators, and families. Regular team meetings bring everyone together to review progress and make thoughtful adjustments to ensure no student falls through the cracks. Professional development opportunities give staff the tools and confidence to meet their students' unique needs. This shared commitment has created a school community where everyone feels valued and supported.

The results of Addison Elementary's dedication to MTSS and continuous improvement are inspiring. Students are thriving academically and growing into confident, resilient individuals ready to take on the future. More importantly, the school has become a place of hope and possibility, where everyone works together to make a difference.

As Addison Elementary continues this incredible journey, our mission remains clear: to nurture every child's potential and provide them with the tools to succeed in school and in life.

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Barron Park *Elementary School*

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



**Dr. Judy Jaramillo
Argumedo**
Principal

Continuously Improving

At Barron Park, we're continuously improving, working to make our school more fair and inclusive for everyone through staff "equity groups" and school wide read alouds.

Teachers and staff routinely get together in small focus groups for important talks about race, bias, and how to make things better for all students. These consistent groups allow staff to get to know each other more deeply, create community, and thus provide opportunities to openly share thoughts and ideas. Our equity groups allow us to learn from each other about how to create a better learning environment for all students, especially those from different backgrounds. They help us understand and address any barriers that might be holding some students back.

We also have regular assemblies where students are enjoying exciting books with different themes like diversity, empathy, and what it means to be fair. Through engaging stories, they're learning to see the world from different perspectives and understand the importance of respecting everyone. These assemblies aren't just fun; they spark important conversations about inclusivity and kindness, and because the books are read across all classrooms, they open up a common language for us to relate to each other.

These programs are just a few of the ways that we're truly committed to continually improving ourselves as a staff to make sure all students have the best possible learning experience. By involving both staff and students, we're creating a whole-school effort to make our school a more equitable and welcoming place for everyone.



Duveneck *Elementary School*

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



Brittany Gardner
Principal

Expanding Black History Month

Duveneck Elementary School is taking its Black History Month celebrations to new heights this year, building on the exceptional work directed by Kwanza Price in 2024. She once again leads the school efforts to honor Black history and culture, as we continue our journey of continuous improvement and community engagement.

This February, Duveneck will welcome Black medical students from Stanford University for the second year, who will share their journeys and inspire students with discussions on healthcare, perseverance, and representation. In addition, jewelry designer Nia Tahani will lead a hands-on workshop, giving students a chance to explore the art of design and creative expression.

Parent volunteers will read Black History-themed books in classrooms throughout the month, fostering meaningful conversations about history and identity. This year's expanded lineup of visitors also includes a fashion designer and graphic artist.

As an exciting new initiative, Ms. Price is starting a Parent Book Club, featuring *Before You Suffocate Your Own Fool Self*, a collection of short stories by Daniel Evans. The community will gather to discuss the book's themes of identity, family, and self-discovery.

To cap off the month, Duveneck is adding a Hip Hop extravaganza evening, a family movie night, and an assembly featuring the vibrant Kuumba West African dancing and drumming troupe. This diverse mix of events is designed to offer students a rich, multifaceted experience of Black culture, history, and creative expression.

Duveneck staff is excited to once again celebrate Black History with Ms. Price at the helm.



Mathematician and UCSF Professor Emille Lawrence engaged 4th graders last year in creative math problem solving during Black History Month.

El Carmelo *Elementary School*

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



Leonel Argumedo
Principal

Journey of Continuous Growth

Schools are places of discovery, growth, and community, and at El Carmelo, our team is committed to nurturing every child's academic success and overall well-being. Over the past several months, our teaching staff and support professionals have embarked on several initiatives to create a more robust learning environment that caters to our students' needs.

Central to our approach is the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), a framework that enables us to identify and address the unique requirements of every student. Recently, we've expanded the MTSS team to include a range of specialists, teachers, and support staff. This group provides both Tier 1 (universal classroom strategies) and Tier 2 (targeted interventions for students needing additional support). By collaborating closely with classroom teachers, they aim to enhance academic performance and promote social-emotional growth across all grade levels.

To tailor instruction more precisely, we have been using our CAASPP and iReady assessment data. Analyzing these results allows us to pinpoint strengths and areas in need of development, particularly in language arts and mathematics. This data not only shapes our classroom instruction, allowing us to tailor instruction and interventions precisely where they are needed most, but also informs our Professional Learning Community (PLC) discussions, ensuring that teacher collaboration remains focused and deliberate.



Shirley Jou, Maria Mathia and Marci Hakeman at a conference.

In addition, our teachers have been investing time in professional development by attending Response to Intervention (RtI) conferences. There, they learn evidence-based strategies in math and literacy—approaches proven to help students close learning gaps. The teachers share their new insights at staff meetings, fostering a culture of continuous improvement. By learning together, our educators bring best practices to every classroom.

By working and learning together, we remain committed to providing a supportive learning environment for every student, ensuring that every child receives what they need to succeed.



Staff presenting at a staff meeting.



Melissa Howell
Principal

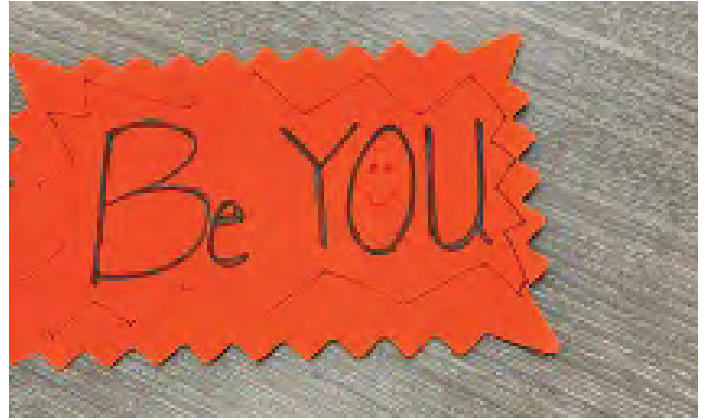
Our Journey of Continuous Improvement

At Fletcher, we are dedicated to the journey of continuous improvement, ensuring the growth and success of every student academically and socially. We're excited to share some of the initiatives we've implemented to help our students thrive.

Academically, we've introduced targeted reading and math interventions to support students during the instructional day. These interventions utilize both push-in and pull-out classroom models to provide personalized assistance tailored to each learner's needs. Additionally, our team-taught Social Studies classes in grades 7 and 8 include a strong literacy focus, allowing students to build essential reading skills while exploring history and current events.

Socially, we're fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment through our WEB (Where Everybody Belongs) program. This initiative pairs 6th-grade students with 8th-grade WEB leaders who mentor and support them throughout the year. The program begins with a 6th Grade Orientation—held the day before school starts—and continues with monthly luncheons to strengthen connections and ensure every student feels a sense of belonging.

These efforts reflect our unwavering commitment to creating a school community that prioritizes academic excellence, collaboration, and inclusivity. By working together as educators, families, and students, we can equip every Fletcher student with the tools, confidence, and relationships they need to succeed.



Escondido *Elementary School*

890 Escondido Rd., Palo Alto, CA 94305 • 650/856-1337 • escondido.pausd.org



Leslie Crane
Principal

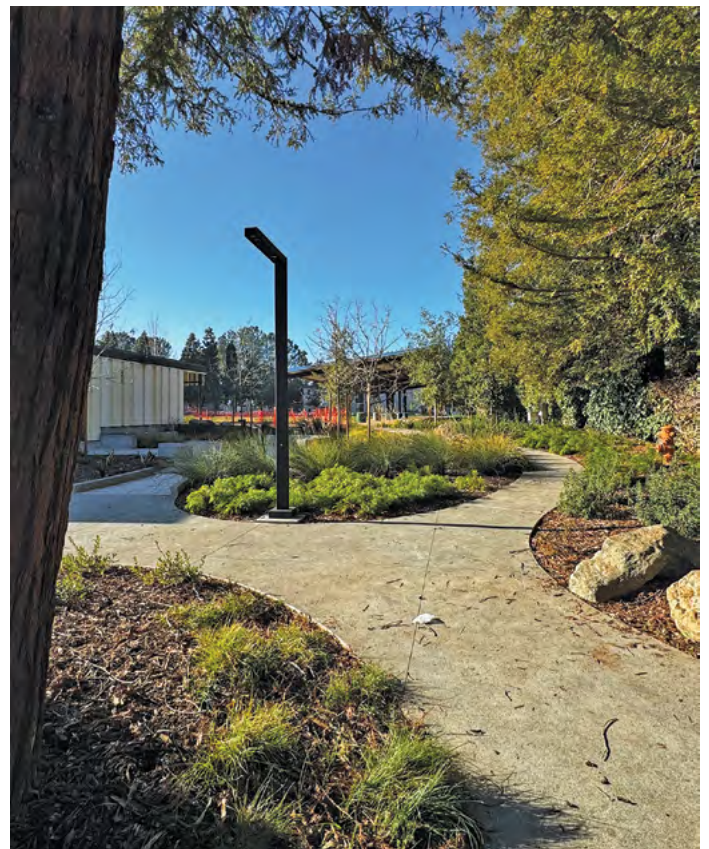
Escondido Elementary has a New Look!

The construction project at Escondido Elementary is finished. The school has a new look! When you walk on campus, you will see a beautiful new front office. Teachers now have a great work room and a space to relax and work together. There is a big new multi-purpose room that can be used for school meetings, student shows, community events, and students eating lunch. Our cafeteria also

got a big improvement. It has a new kitchen, and soon we will be offering food made from scratch to our students. Don't forget, we also have special rooms for art and music that were built last spring and all of these buildings are connected by beautiful outdoor spaces where students can learn in different ways.

If the building improvements weren't enough, there is a fantastic new athletic field for people who like to play sports. This is a great addition for a campus full of active students.

Living and learning through several years of construction has not always been easy. But the Escondido community has shown patience, flexibility, and resilience throughout the process. We are excited about these improvements and can't wait to see how they will make Escondido campus life the best it can be!



Fairmeadow *Elementary*

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



Trebor Winslow
Principal

The Firebird's Flight

At Fairmeadow, the journey of continuous improvement is central to everything we do. This quarter, we've seen our commitment to equity, excellence, and the overall development of our students come to life in meaningful ways. One of the highlights was our Children's Theater production of *Treasure Island*. Over 100 students from 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades participated, stepping into new roles and thriving in a creative environment. The performance not only showcased their talents but also highlighted the power of extracurricular activities to support both academic and personal growth.

In the classroom, our staff continues to focus on equity and excellence by enhancing our intervention blocks. These targeted efforts are designed to ensure that all students, regardless of their starting point, receive the

support they need to succeed. Teachers are working hard to differentiate instruction, meeting the diverse needs of each learner and fostering an inclusive environment where every student can thrive.

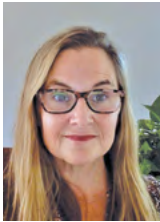
Additionally, we have launched our next noon sports activity, which promotes physical fitness, teamwork, and leadership. These activities complement our academic focus by providing students with opportunities to develop resilience, collaboration, and community spirit. We believe that the wellness of our students—both physical and emotional—is just as important as their academic success.

As we continue our journey, we remain dedicated to improving every aspect of our school experience. Our goal is to provide a comprehensive education that supports the academic, social, and emotional growth of each child. Thank you for being part of this journey, and we look forward to the continued growth and success of our Fairmeadow community.



Greendell School / Herbert Hoover *Elementary School*

4120 Middlefield Rd., Palo Alto, CA 94303 • 650/856-0833 • greendell.pausd.org/ 4120 Middlefield Rd., Palo Alto, CA 94303 • 650/320-8106 • hoover.pausd.org



Nikole Manou
Principal

Innovating for the Future!

The Hoover and Greendell Innovation Lab is on an inspiring journey of continuous growth, evolving to better serve our students and ignite their full potential. As we prepare for its exciting transition into a dedicated space at the new Hoover School, we are reminded that innovation is not just about creativity—it's about building a brighter future. By aligning with students' interests, we are integrating their passions into a broader focus on career exploration, paving the way for meaningful growth and discovery.

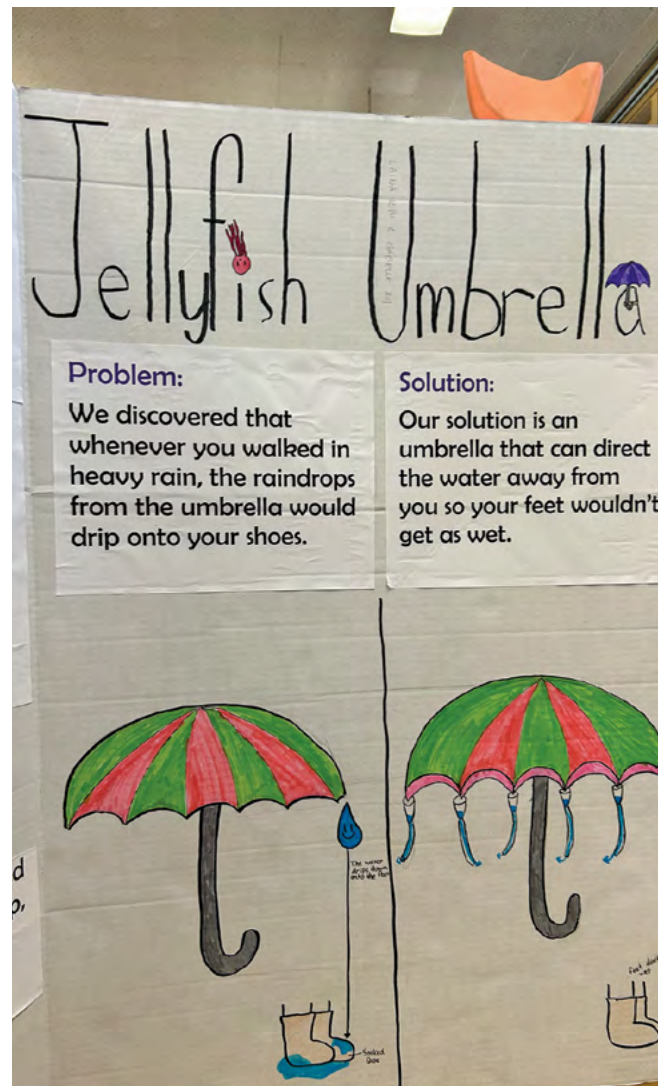
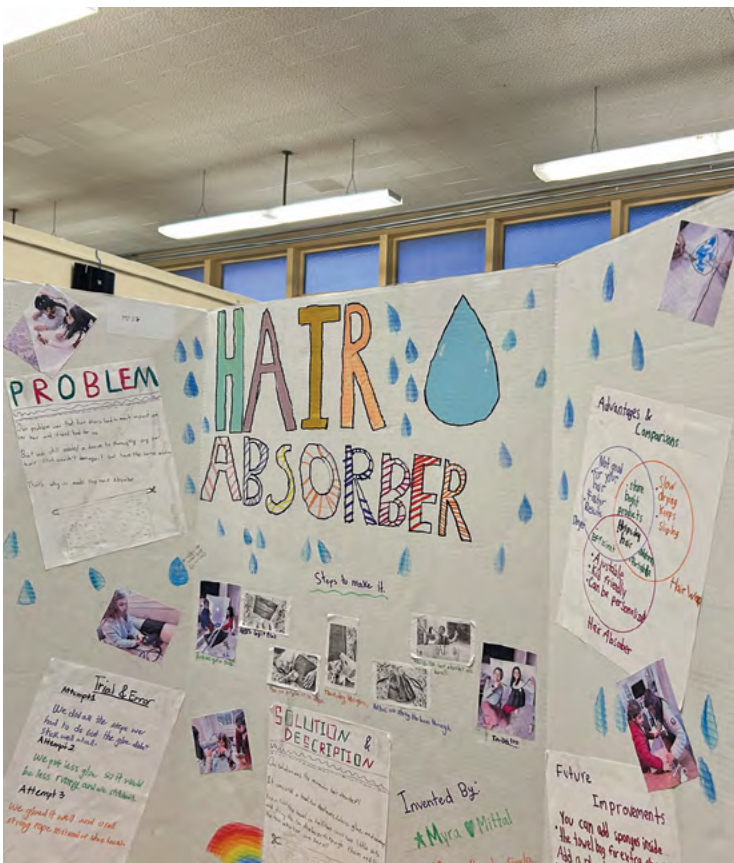
The Innovation Lab focuses on themes that inspire students to explore fields like Architecture and Engineering, Business and Entrepreneurship, and Design and Visual Media Arts. These themes encourage hands-on learning and foster critical thinking as students engage with real-world concepts.

A cornerstone of the Innovation Lab's programming is our annual Invention Convention, a school-wide event that sparks excitement and creativity. This event allows students to showcase their ideas, solve meaningful challenges, and apply their skills to real-world problems.

The grand finale is a community showcase, where students present their inventions and share the scientific process that brought their ideas to life.

The Innovation Lab and the Invention Convention remain hubs of discovery, experimentation, and hands-on learning. This year, we are expanding our mission to help students think critically about their futures. By connecting their innovative ideas and skills to real-world careers, we empower them to envision their impact and provide the tools they need to turn their dreams into reality.

This evolution reflects our unwavering commitment to growth and progress, ensuring our students are prepared for an ever-changing world. We invite you to explore the exciting themes planned for the Innovation Lab and join us in celebrating the preparations for the Invention Convention. Together, let's nurture a future filled with boundless possibilities!



Frank S. Greene Jr. *Middle School*

750 N. California Ave., Palo Alto, CA 94303 • 650/494-8120 • greene.pausd.org



**Courtney
Carlomagno**
Principal

Transforming Outcomes through Support

At Greene Middle School in the Palo Alto Unified School District, we believe that “Demographics do not determine outcomes.” This principle drives our efforts to ensure every student has the support needed to succeed academically and socially. Our staff is committed to making this vision a reality through diverse, targeted programs.

Wellness and Counseling Programs

We’ve established wellness and counseling groups led by dedicated counselors and staff. This year, we are hosting two workshops—Coping with Stress and Anxiety and Social Skills: Making Friends and Building Relationships—offering practical, real-life skills. Additionally, we introduced an Attendance and School Engagement group to support students struggling to connect with school. These spaces provide opportunities for emotional growth, connection and resilience.

Academic Support Programs

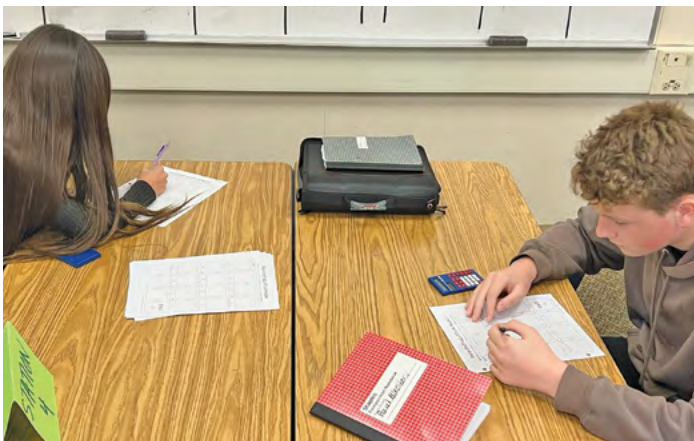
To meet students’ academic needs, teachers Joleen Roach and Bonnie Finato have spearheaded the Algebra 1 Support Opt-In Morning Group and After-School AVID Office Hours. These programs not only offer academic help but also provide snacks, emotional support, and a trusted adult presence, creating a nurturing learning environment.

Literacy and Math Intervention

For students performing below grade level, we offer specialized literacy and math intervention programs. Staff members Diane Darrow, Bonnie Finato, Patricia Malone, Trevor Diven, and Vanessa Wong work daily with these students, closing learning gaps while addressing emotional needs. Their dedication and joy in supporting students are transforming lives.

A Holistic Approach to Success

By embedding these programs into our school culture, we’re fostering student growth and resilience. Through tailored academic, emotional, and social support, we empower students to overcome barriers and achieve their full potential.



students getting help in Math Workshop.

Henry M. Gunn *High School*

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



**Dr. Wendy
Stratton**
Principal

Champion a Titan!

At Gunn High School, we believe in the power of connection. Renowned educator, Rita Pierson, famously said, "Every child deserves a champion." The "Champion a Titan" program, created by assistant principal Erik Olah, Literacy Coordinator Nicole Menache, and Intervention teacher on special assignment, Kristen Owen, was designed to ensure that every student has someone committed to support them socially, emotionally, and academically. This initiative is rooted in our ongoing efforts to create a school community where all students experience belonging.

Why do students need a champion at Gunn? Many of our students face challenges beyond grades. Some may struggle with attendance, a lack of connectedness, or feeling invisible in the crowd. Having a champion who takes the time to get to know them and show that they care can make all the difference in turning these challenges into growth opportunities.

What does championing a student look like? The "Champion a Titan" program invites teachers and all

classified staff to participate by selecting a student to champion for the third quarter (January through March). This is a system-wide deliberative effort to foster meaningful, supportive relationships. Champions take time to learn about their student's experiences in school by occasionally shadowing them in a class, and engaging in weekly conversations. The goal is to connect with the students in order to understand their interests, challenges, and goals.

Additionally, champions will implement strategies to support their students' success using Multi-Tiered System of Support ("MTSS") tools. These tools provide tailored support for students' academic and emotional needs that will be used routinely.

At the end of the quarter, our MTSS team will check in with all champions to reflect on their connections and offer the chance to continue supporting their student into the fourth quarter.

This initiative is about more than academic success—it's about ensuring that every Titan feels known, valued, and connected to their school community. We are eager to see the impact we can collectively make on our school community, student by student.

"Every child deserves a champion: an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection and insists they become the best they can possibly be."

- Rita Pierson, Educator



Jane Lathrop Stanford *Middle School*

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



Christopher Grierson
Principal

JLS = Continuous Improvement

At JLS Middle School, our students, staff members and families are highly aware of “the middle school journey” and how important it is for us to have a culture of continuous improvement to help students reach their full potential.

Our teachers, administrators and students alike embrace a mindset of constant learning and growth. In pursuit of high academic growth and achievement, this year we have designed and implemented new systems to improve

our delivery of interventions and supports for students. To celebrate our community and inject more opportunities for social connections, we have increased our Club offerings by 150% and have launched new team-building events through Spirit Assemblies. Across our community and in all areas, we practice resiliency, embrace challenges, nurture curiosity, and understand that mistakes are opportunities for growth.

Additionally, JLS strives to create an environment where input and feedback are valued, and efforts are recognized. This approach cultivates a self assurance in students so that they not only succeed academically, but so they develop the skills necessary for future success.



Students sign up for one of the 48 Clubs offered during Semester 2



**Kathryn
Bimpson**
Principal

Continually Honing our Craft at Briones

The journey of continual improvement is not about reaching a final destination, but about constantly evolving to meet the needs of every student. It's a cycle of growth, where each step builds on the last, and the focus shifts from what teachers are teaching to how students are learning.

The Briones staff is learning about and developing Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) structures. We are working to create a framework for ongoing collaboration between teachers and specialists so that they can answer four key questions that guide the process:

- **What do we need students to learn?**

This refers to the core concepts or “essential standards” that all students must understand.

- **How do we know they are learning it?**

Teams develop assessments—both formative (ongoing checks for understanding) and common formative assessments (shared tools across the school or grade level)—to monitor student progress.

- **What do we do for students who are not learning?**

When students struggle, intervention plans are put in place to provide targeted support.

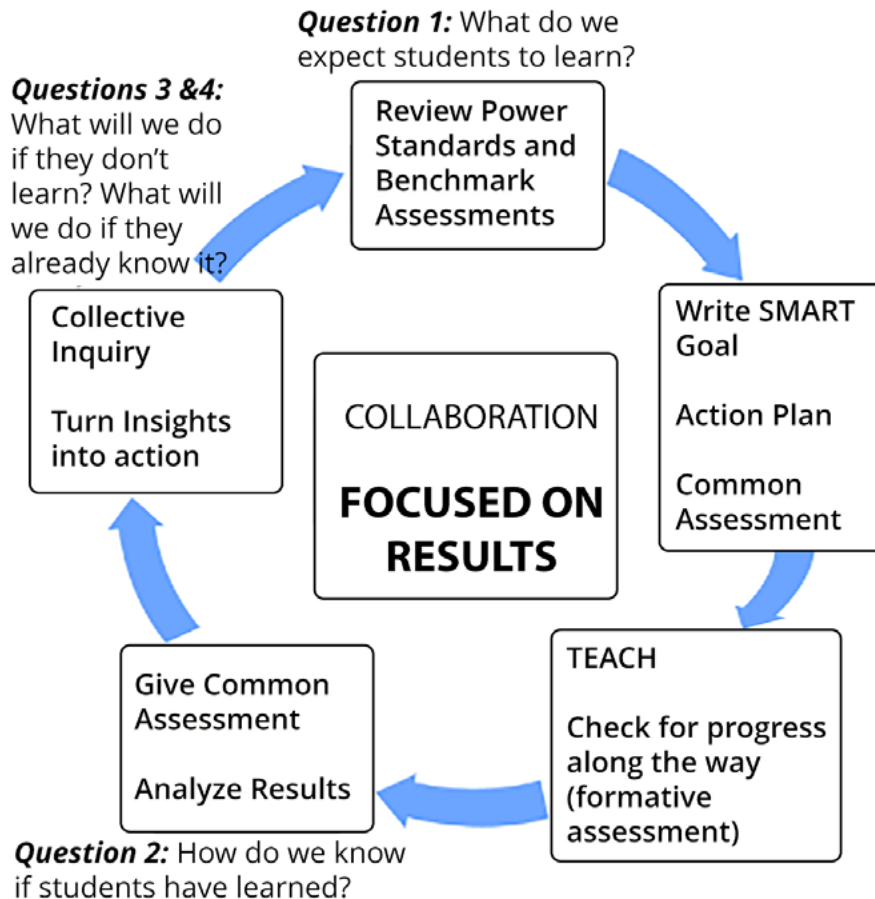
- **What do we do for students who have already mastered the concept?**

Enrichment activities are designed to challenge and deepen understanding of concepts.

The work doesn't stop at any one of these questions. Instead, it's an ongoing cycle of inquiry where teacher teams and specialists continuously adjust their approach based on what the data is telling them about how students are learning. They collaborate to refine their instructional practices, clarify and calibrate essential standards, and adjust the support given to students. This cycle allows for flexibility and collaboration in responding to the varied learning styles and needs of each of our students.

Ultimately, this process is about creating a dynamic, supportive environment where learning never stops—neither for students nor for the educators working to help them succeed.

PLC Cycle



Lucille M. Nixon *Elementary School*

1711 Stanford Ave., Stanford, CA 94305 • 650/856-1622 • www.lmnixon.org



Amy Sheward
Principal

Evolving Every Day

As we embark on a new calendar year, I want to take a moment to celebrate our Nixon school community and the progress we continue to make together. We are proud to be a top-performing school academically, thanks to the hard work of our students, the dedication of our teachers, and the unwavering support of our families. But as a school, we know that child development is not limited to academics and excellence is not a destination—it's a journey.

We are committed to evolving and improving outcomes for every student. Our teachers and staff are continually refining their teaching strategies to ensure that all learners thrive. Whether it's through innovative classroom practices or professional development, we're focused on equipping students with the skills they need to succeed both in and out of school.

Beyond academics, we recognize that fostering a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment is vital to student success. Our collaboration with families and community partners remains a cornerstone of this effort. Together, we are building a culture where everyone feels valued and welcomed.

We are also prioritizing mental health as a key area for growth. PAUSD has supported this work with resources to help students navigate challenges and build resilience. Whether through our mental health counselors, social-emotional learning programs, or community partnerships, we are committed to ensuring the well-being of every child.

Thank you for being part of this journey. Your partnership and input are invaluable as we work together to help our students achieve their fullest potential. Let's continue to evolve - striving for excellence, together!



Fourth-grade students share their thoughts and perspectives on their reading.

Ohlone *Elementary School*

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



Elsa Chen
Principal

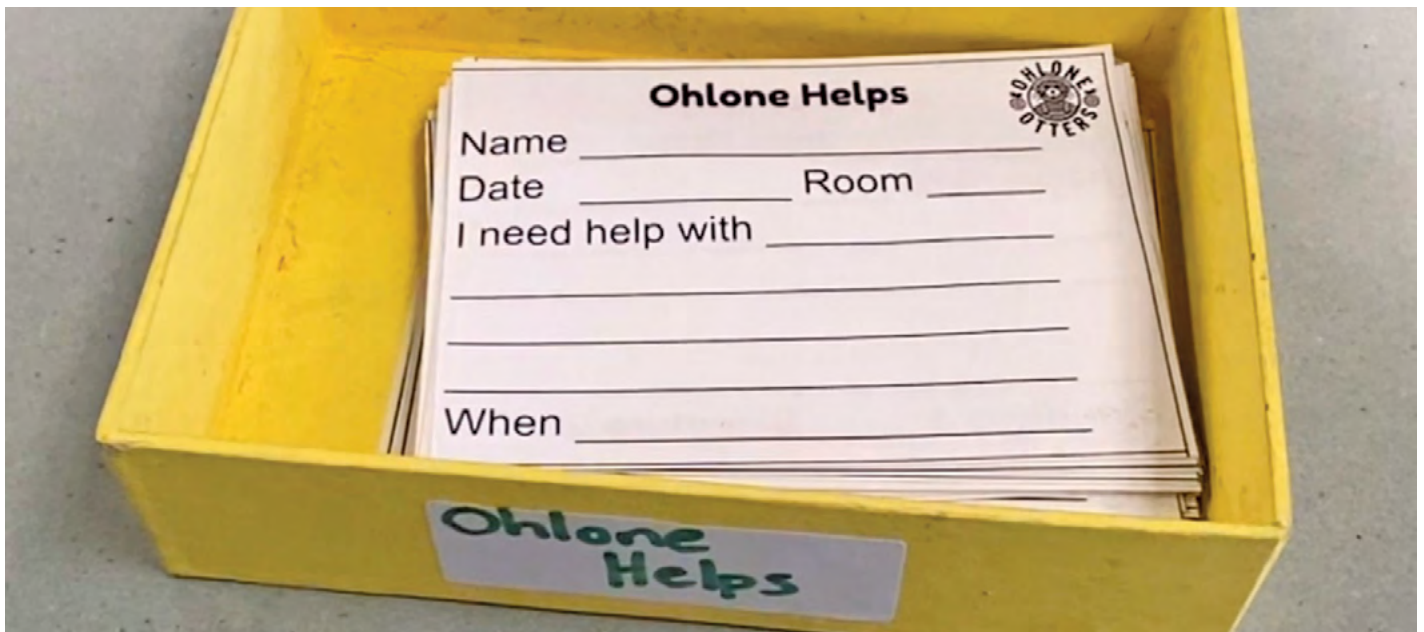
Ohlone Helps!

One of the main tenets here at Ohlone Elementary School is citizenship and community, which aligns with the PAUSD Promise to serve and celebrate others! It is something that is instilled in our students from the beginning of kindergarten and remains with them long after they have left our campus. Students can be found helping each other in a variety of ways each

day, whether that is helping a peer read a challenging word, bringing a friend to the office who isn't feeling well, brainstorming solutions to a problem, or simply saying hello to another student in the morning.

To build off this solid foundation, the Ohlone 5th graders began a program in 2024 called Ohlone Helps. This program is designed to allow students to extend their support even farther than their classroom or grade level. Using small tickets, any student or Ohlone adult may post something they need help with. Then, another student may collect the ticket if they think they can support that person with their area of need. Students have stepped up to help a peer learn how to tie their shoes, to teach how to draw a dragon, and the help extends to helping the office team label Spirit Day items for the entire school.

Ohlone Helps demonstrates something that has long been believed to be true; the understanding that we all have strengths and areas of growth, and if we help each other and learn from each other we all benefit. As we move past the 100th day of school, it is exciting to think about what new knowledge and skills the students may share within our community. With 460 students contributing every day, there is no limit to what we can achieve here at Ohlone.



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



Palo Alto Adult School is dedicated to enhancing the educational experience for our incredible community. A key part of this commitment involves following the guidelines set forth by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC),

Palo Alto Adult School's English as a Second Language (ESL) classes equip adult learners with essential language skills, allowing them to engage more fully in their personal and professional lives. We regularly assess student progress and gather feedback to refine our curriculum and teaching methods, ensuring we meet the diverse needs of our learners. We identify job growth areas within our community and the greater job market which helps us provide programs and pathways to match those needs.

By actively seeking input from participants in our Community Education classes, we adapt our offerings and introduce new subjects that resonate with the



In PreSchool Family, parents develop skills to support their children's growth, fostering a nurturing environment for families. Our parents become advocates for children, often taking leadership positions in schools after they leave our program. Staff utilize a cycle of inquiry model and parents provide feedback that allows us to adjust to needs in real time.

Palo Alto Adult School is committed to fostering a culture of excellence through ongoing evaluation and adaptation. By adhering to WASC standards, we strive to enhance educational opportunities, empower our students, and strengthen our community as a whole.





Brent Kline
Principal

The Tower Learning Center: A Hub for Continuous Student Growth and Support

The Tower Learning Center (TLC) provides a safe, supportive space for mentoring, tutoring, and skill-building as part of Paly's Student Wellness Program. Dedicated to fostering curiosity, joy in learning, and individualized academic support, the TLC partners with local

organizations to enhance resources, broaden perspectives, and advance student success.

At the heart of the TLC's approach is its commitment to students' continuous growth. Students work in a focused environment with peer tutors who offer consistent, tailored support. The Scholar Progress History Spreadsheet tracks each student's academic journey, allowing tutors to document session activities, plan for future sessions, and monitor progress. Additionally, the TLC hosts skill-focused workshops during Prime that teach effective study habits and time management. These sessions include follow-ups to reinforce and evaluate the impact of the skills taught.

Collaboration amplifies the TLC's impact. By partnering with the Wellness Center, SaFE staff, AVID, Academic Planning classes, and the counseling department, the TLC reaches students who may have limited time for extra preparation or after-school sessions. These partnerships ensure students receive comprehensive academic and emotional support.

Students praise the TLC for its welcoming atmosphere, consistent tutoring relationships, and the trust built within tutor-student cohorts. Looking ahead, the TLC aims to grow its offerings, further tailoring its programs to meet the evolving needs of Paly students, solidifying its role as a vital resource for academic and personal growth.



Palo Alto Middle College *High School*

12345 El Monte Rd., Los Altos Hills, CA 94022 • 650/849-7955 • mc.pausd.org



Emily Garrison
Principal

Journey of Continuous Improvement

In its first year, Palo Alto Middle College (PAMC) has been continually improving, and this process has been significantly enhanced by preparing for our first accreditation cycle through the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). Through this rigorous process, which involved gathering feedback from staff, students, and parents/guardians, key areas for growth within the school became evident. Furthermore, the goals for school improvement aligned with existing PAUSD Promise Goals, which allows the school to support the clear and purposeful vision of the Palo Alto Unified School District.

As PAMC expands to include grades 9-12 in 2025-2026, priorities include expanding student recruitment and support. This includes increasing outreach, refining policies for a larger student body, and strengthening the partnership with Foothill College to ensure college readiness skills and appropriate course options for

PAMC students, aligning to the PAUSD Promise Goal of Innovation. The school also recognizes the importance of equipping students with the literacy skills essential for success in college courses and future careers, and wants to focus on supporting student literacy, a PAUSD Promise Goal for all district schools. To enhance student well-being, PAMC hopes to implement a school-wide Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS), Restorative Practices, and Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) programs to monitor student progress and foster a positive school climate. This addresses the PAUSD Promise Goals of Mental Health & Wellness and Equity & Excellence. Finally, PAMC is dedicated to deepening staff understanding and capacity to fully implement Evidence-Based Teaching and Learning (EBTL) practices, contributing to the PAUSD Promise Goals of Equity & Excellence and Innovation.

By addressing these areas, PAMC aims to foster a supportive and effective learning environment for all students, especially as we expand our student body to all four grade levels of high school.

Palo Verde *Elementary School*

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



Annora Lee
Principal

Honoring the WHOLE Child

One look at the PAUSD Promise, and it will be abundantly clear- we strive to see the entirety of every child we serve. Our efforts are grounded in the belief that high expectations, combined with targeted instruction and *lots* of heart, lead to meaningful growth for every child.

It Starts with Belonging

We utilize ongoing data collection and analysis to guide our instructional and community-building decisions. Our students are surveyed to help us understand their personal feelings about our school climate. That, coupled with teacher/staff observations and collaboration, help us plan personalized interventions to support their well-being. That data is also carefully disaggregated to help us determine which school-wide programs and activities we offer throughout the year.

Data-Driven Instruction Through regular assessments and real-time feedback, our teachers design lessons and interventions aimed to challenge and engage every learner. We hold high expectations for every learner, while embedding support structures to help them feel successful.

Fostering Success Through Collaboration

Our focus on community spirit also plays a key role in fostering student success. Through our weekly assemblies, we look to celebrate student achievements big and small, individual and group. We honor children who went out of their comfort zone, and even invite families to join the fun. By building a strong sense of connection among students, teachers, and families, our entire community thrives.

At Palo Verde, we are immensely proud of the progress we've made, but we remain dedicated to keeping that momentum going. With still the second half of the year to go, the possibilities are endless.

Walter Hays *Elementary School*

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



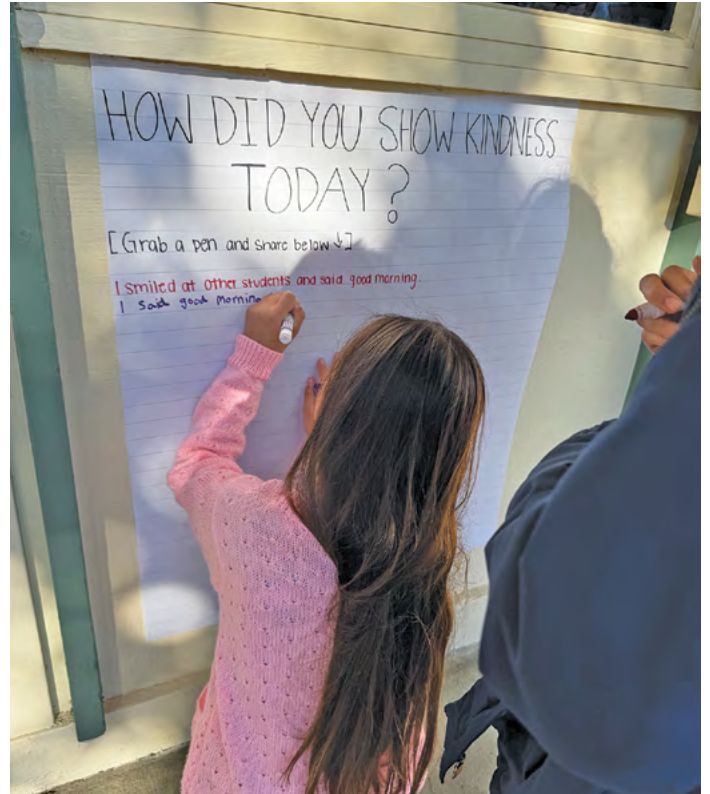
Iris Wong
Principal

Continuous Improvement

At Walter Hays Elementary, we are dedicated to continuous improvement within and beyond our classrooms. This school year, we've focused on enhancing our programs while staying true to our Core Values and Promise. Our goal is to provide every student with a high-quality education in an environment that fosters the whole child.

Students now have more opportunities to engage with our community and support staff outside the classroom. We've enriched recess programs by offering lunch clubs and activities, including access to the library, mindfulness, Community Service, and Maker's Space Clubs. Additionally, we introduced student council-led Activity Carts stocked with drawing materials, puzzles, and board games. To further enhance playtime, we've supplied new sports equipment for every classroom, including soccer balls, basketballs, and bouncy balls.

Through collaboration, reflection, and a shared commitment to excellence, Walter Hays Elementary continues to evolve to support the academic, social, and emotional growth of every student. Together, we are creating a brighter and supportive future!



Lunch Time Activities for Wildcats

Note-ables



Kate Karp

Magic Beans

"Once upon a time, there were magic beans thrown away onto the dusty ground" begins the poem in Magic Beans' liner notes. That's the spirit of this collection by songwriter/musician Eric Herman and his spunky backup band, the Puppy Dogs, aka Dave Pettey and Ben Macy.

The songs are a riotous take on being a young person or the parent of one, especially an opinionated, annoying, know-it-all and downright likeable youngster with a fertile imagination and a knack for getting into trouble. He puts "Google Eyes" on everything from European landmarks to dad's laptop—"I mean, it said Google, right?" Did you unfailingly trust your older sibling no matter how much trouble it got you into? "My Brother" will hit a chord.



"Stinker," which this child certainly is, tosses out contradictory statements about behavior: he won't be afraid of the dark if you put on the light, he'll be patient if he doesn't have to wait.

The songs aren't all about shenanigans. "Merry-Go-Round" is a metaphor for life and the planet, both of which go round and round and up and down. "Remember" tells how the same child helps his beloved grandma go through dementia. "Go" tells where your imagination can take you if you're in a bad mood or a rut, which is the point of the collection.

The melodies are catchy and as imaginative as are the lyrics, which you can find, along with videos and other goodies, [right here](#).

Remember, there's no ground too dusty for planting and growing our Magic Beans!

Kate Karp is an editor for *School News Roll Call* and a freelance writer and editor.

Constellations 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 (Please put PAUSD in subject line)

Entries must be received March 31, 2025

From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win a \$20 gift certificate redeemable at Barnes & Noble.

AQUARIUS	CASSIOPEIA	PISCES
AQUILA	GEMINI	SAGITTARIUS
ARIES	HERCULES	SCORPIUS
AURIGA	LEO	TAURUS
BOOTES	LIBRA	URSA MAJOR
CANCER	LYRA	URSA MINOR
CANIS MAJOR	ORION	VIRGO
CAPRICORNUS	PEGASUS	ZODIAC
	PERSEUS	

S O U T H E R N C R O S S N U
R U L H P O O M S R V A C W Q
M N N E W E J E F Q L Q I G K
N O I R O J A M A S R U E Z O
L J M C O R M O S U S A G E P
F K E U Y C S P A U U R Q U M
V L O L R U I S I J I I O O C
W E S E E S N R E K P U T Q G
V A A S C Q A I P T R S P J S
U S R E R T C M O A O T N Z Q
W E S B T E O I I C C O D O A
P I I I I D C M S N S O B D P
H R G B N L Z N S S O G R I V
X A Q U I L A K A G I R U A S
S U R U A T N E C C A M D C K

Congratulations to Elise & William Fellows
Winners of the November Word Search Contest!

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