

**FREE**

# School News

*Education + Communication = A Better Nation*

**Covering the Palo Alto Unified School District**



Volume 2, Issue 5

November 2019–January 2020

## A Day in the Life of a PAUSD Student



**Spectra Art Lesson**



**K/1 Students at Ohlone Learn About High/Low and Loud/Soft Sounds**



**Bagel Thursdays!**



**3rd Grade Bike Rodeo**

## Core Beliefs

I often hear the analogy of pendulum swings when people discuss education and attempt to innovate. While examples certainly exist of fads and passing phases, many of the foundational core beliefs are relatively unchanged from the time we attended school.

I would argue that our parents expected many of the same things we strive to provide for our students today. The PAUSD Promise is a comprehensive plan to identify goals, align actions and resources, measure outcomes, and inform future decisions. Our core beliefs, however, are basic and slow to change:

- Attendance matters and students should prepare for future careers by showing up daily.
- Students with us for a period of time should perform at or above grade level.
- Our students should exit our schools advantaged for post-secondary options.
- Demographics should not be a predictor of success in our schools.
- Students should feel physically and emotionally safe while at school.

My parents had the same expectations of my schools in the 80s. They expected me to attend class in the hope of performing well and opening doors beyond high school. As a parent of three, I worried about their safety and cared about support services. The way we address our core beliefs now may look different, but the goal is still the same. Through this edition of *School News Roll Call* our leaders will share their thoughts and plans regarding specific elements of the PAUSD Promise. We hope you enjoy learning more about our commitment to your children and invite you to learn more about our plan at [promise.pausd.org](http://promise.pausd.org).



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

## Creencias Fundamentales

A menudo escucho la analogía de la oscilación del péndulo cuando las personas dialogan sobre la educación e intentan innovar. Si bien existen ejemplos de modas y fases pasajeras, muchas de las creencias fundamentales básicas no han cambiado relativamente desde el momento en que nosotros asistimos a la escuela.

Yo diría que nuestros padres esperaban muchas de las mismas cosas que nos esforzamos por proporcionar a nuestros alumnos hoy. PAUSD Promise (Promesa del Distrito Escolar Unificado de Palo Alto [PAUSD, por sus siglas en inglés]) es un plan integral para identificar metas, alinear acciones y recursos, medir resultados e informar decisiones futuras. Sin embargo, nuestras creencias fundamentales son básicas y su cambio es lento:

- La asistencia es importante y los alumnos deben prepararse para futuras vocaciones presentándose diariamente.
- Los alumnos con nosotros por un período de tiempo deben tener un rendimiento al nivel de año o superior.
- Nuestros alumnos deben egresar de nuestras escuelas con ventaja para las opciones postsecundarias.
- La demografía no debe ser un indicador de éxito en nuestras escuelas.
- Los alumnos deben sentirse física y emocionalmente seguros mientras están en la escuela.

Mis padres tenían las mismas expectativas de mis escuelas en los años 80. Ellos esperaban que yo asistiera a clase con la esperanza de tener un buen rendimiento y abrir puertas más allá de la escuela preparatoria. Como padre de tres hijos, yo me preocupaba de su seguridad y me importaban los servicios de apoyo. La forma en que abordamos nuestras creencias fundamentales ahora podrá parecer diferente, pero la meta sigue siendo la misma. A través de esta edición de *School News Roll Call* nuestros líderes compartirán sus pensamientos y planes con respecto a elementos específicos de PAUSD Promise (Promesa del PAUSD). Esperamos que disfruten aprendiendo más sobre nuestro compromiso con sus hijos y los invitamos a conocer más sobre nuestro plan en [promise.pausd.org](http://promise.pausd.org).

## 核心理念

当人们在讨论教育和尝试创新时，时常听到不同意见摇摆反复。虽然各种观点肯定存在热议或过时的时候，但是相对来说，许多基本的核心理念从我们上学时起至今就未变动过。

我认为我们的父母的期望与我们今天努力要为学生提供的教育不谋而合。“PAUSD Promise”计划是一项确定目标、协调行动和资源、衡量结果和为未来决策提供信息的全面计划。然而，我们的核心信念是基本的，变化不大：

- 每天都要面对出勤事务以及如何帮助学生为其未来职业发展做好准备的问题。
- 学生在校学习期间应达到或超越的年级水平。
- 我们的学生在离校时，应具备的优势，以做好高中毕业后的选择。

- 人口统计数据不应成为衡量我们学校成功的预测标准。
- 学生在校时应感到身体和精神上安全。

我父母在上世纪 80 年代对学校有着相同的期望。他们希望我去上学，在校表现好，能在高中毕业后有更广阔的发展。作为三个孩子的父母，我担心我孩子们的安全，关注他们能获得的支持服务。今天我们实施核心理念的方式可能看起来不同，但目标仍然是一样的。通过这期“School News Roll Call”（校讯点名册），校领导分享了他们的想法，规划了“PAUSD Promise”计划的具体要素。我们希望您进一步了解我们对孩子的承诺，特邀您访问 [promise.pausd.org](http://promise.pausd.org) 网站了解更多详情

## Board of Education



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Over the past year, our administration has worked tirelessly to build the PAUSD Promise. The long-term goals haven't changed (High Quality Teaching & Learning, Equity & Access, Wellness & Safety, and District Office Operations), but our staff spent a year detailing specific strategies and metrics for measuring District success. As this school year began, site leaders shared these strategies and metrics with their respective staff, who provided their perspective and expertise to help determine what these plans will look like in day-to-day student experiences, student-teacher interactions, site supports, and family communication.

If you haven't already had a chance to look over the Promise, I encourage you to do so here: <https://promise.pausd.org/home>.

The Promise includes a model of continuous improvement in areas from homework load to standards-based instruction to emergency preparedness and safety. We are also taking a multi-pronged approach to better supporting our historically underrepresented students in all areas of school life.

We are so grateful to work in a community that places a high value on our schools and educating the whole child. As always, you can write to the members of the school board anytime at [board@pausd.org](mailto:board@pausd.org), or come to our meetings to speak at open forum (<https://www.pausd.org/events/board-meeting>). Thank you for your commitment to supporting a high-quality education for all students.

过去一年来,我们的管理人员孜孜不倦地推动 PAUSD Promise (PAUSD 承诺) 计划。我们长期发展目标保持不变(即高品质教学、平等机会、健康与安全 and 校区办公室运营),但我们的工作人花了一年的时间详细地确定了衡量校区成功的具体策略和指标。本学年伊始,场地负责人与各自的员工分享了这些策略和指标,他们提出了自己的观点和专业知识建议,以帮助确定这些计划在日日常学生体验、师生互动、场地支持和家庭沟通中的执行情况。

如果你们还没有机会查阅“Promise”计划,我建议你们前往以下网址查看:<https://promise.pausd.org/home>。该“Promise”计划包含一个不断改进的模式,覆盖从家庭作业到基于标准的指导,再到应急准备和安全措施等方面。我们还采取多管齐下的方法,在学校生活的各个领域更好地支持我们以往忽略的学生。

并且,我们为能在一个重视学校发展和全人发展儿童教育的社区工作深表感激。一如既往,你们可以随时写信至学校董事会成员[board@pausd.org](mailto:board@pausd.org)或参加我们的会议,在公开论坛上发言(<https://www.pausd.org/events/board-meeting>)。感谢大家对全面培养高素质学生教育所作出的贡献。

En este último año, nuestra administración ha trabajado incansablemente para desarrollar PAUSD Promise (Promesa del Distrito Escolar Unificado de Palo Alto [PAUSD, por sus siglas en inglés]). Las metas a largo plazo no han cambiado (enseñanza y aprendizaje de alta calidad, equidad y acceso, bienestar y seguridad, y operaciones de la oficina del distrito), pero nuestro personal pasó un año detallando estrategias y medidas específicas para medir el éxito del distrito. Al comenzar este ciclo escolar, los líderes de sitio compartieron estas estrategias y medidas con su respectivo personal, quienes proporcionaron su perspectiva y experiencia para poder ayudar a determinar cómo se verán estos planes en las experiencias diarias de los alumnos, las interacciones entre los alumnos y maestros, los apoyos del sitio, y la comunicación familiar.

Si aún no han tenido la oportunidad de repasar Promise (Promesa), los alentamos a que lo hagan aquí: <https://promise.pausd.org/home>. Promise (Promesa) incluye un modelo de mejora continua en áreas desde la carga de tareas hasta la instrucción basada en normas, y la preparación y seguridad ante emergencias. También estamos adoptando un enfoque múltiple para poder apoyar mejor a nuestros alumnos históricamente subrepresentados en todas las áreas de la vida escolar.

Estamos muy agradecidos de trabajar en una comunidad que otorga un alto valor a nuestras escuelas y en la educación del niño completo. Como siempre, pueden escribirle a los miembros del consejo escolar a cualquier momento en [board@pausd.org](mailto:board@pausd.org), o asistir a nuestras reuniones para hablar en el foro abierto (<https://www.pausd.org/events/board-meeting>). Gracias por su compromiso de apoyar una educación de alta calidad para todos los alumnos.



**Kay Coop**  
Founder/Publisher



*Neta Madison*  
**Netragrednik**

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This is our second year publishing *School News* covering the Palo Alto Unified School District. Thank you for continuing to include *School News* among your reading choices.

Superintendent Dr. Donald Austin

begins this issue with his message about the PAUSD Promise. As you will read each principal's article you will see their commitment to every student and the PAUSD Promise.

Our next issue is February 5, 2020.

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**from the School News staff!**



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## Addison *Elementary School*

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



**Amanda Boyce**  
*Principal*

### Teacher Leadership

There are a variety of initiatives, programs, and practices that Addison Elementary School is implementing to fulfill the PAUSD Promise. One of the areas that has consistently been strong at Addison is distributive leadership. Our staff demonstrate leadership in a number of different ways so that there is shared ownership of our vision and outcomes.

Each spring, we come together to discuss what internal committees should be formed in order to maintain a strong site infrastructure. Some of these committees are created to ensure that we are carefully analyzing and improving our practices and other committees help us grow professionally and personally. This year, staff members have joined the following site committees: Emergency Preparedness, Site Council, PTA, Project Cornerstone, Student Connections, Playworks, Social Committee, Green Team, Math Academy, Health and Wellness, Family Reading Club, Student Council, and Book Clubs. Most of these committees meet monthly and share their work with the greater staff and/or students at our weekly assemblies.

In addition to the Site Committees, our staff members participate in the following District Committees: Safe Routes to School, Reading Intervention, Science, and Technology. We feel grateful to contribute our ideas and participate in the larger PAUSD and City of Palo Alto communities.

Finally, our Teacher Leadership Team meets monthly to plan Staff Development Days, problem-solve concerns that have arisen on campus, and assist in making decisions regarding our curriculum and programs. Our Leadership Team has one representative from each grade level and a Specialist Teacher who collaborate with the Principal on how to improve site programs and practices.

At Addison, we ask ourselves, "How does my work impact the 'part', 'whole', and 'greater whole' of the communities we serve?" I can say with great pride that the skills, strengths, and talents of our staff are positively impacting the students, school, District, and city in many different ways. We feel inspired by each other and the work we do each day.

## Barron Park *Elementary School*

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



**Eric Goddard**  
*Principal*

### Progress Reports

Raising academic achievement levels for all students continues to be our number one goal at Barron Park. Our dedicated group of educators have been exceptional with their efforts assessing current achievement levels these first weeks of school. This important data assists with charting a curricular course to meet and exceed the learning opportunities our students deserve. Barron

Park educators are a very talented faculty committed to engaging in high quality professional development that allows us to be our best for our students each and every day. An example of this is our excitement to be participating in a second year of professional development with trainers from the Teachers College in Columbia Reading and Writing project. Our trainers first visit will be right after the first progress reports later in November.

For 2019-20 and beyond, to further support school site and District goals, we are implementing new strategies to make sure all students have positive attendance patterns. Instruction begins promptly at 8:15 a.m. and we are working closely with families to make sure their children are well-rested, have eaten a healthy breakfast, and are on time each day allowing us the opportunity to maximize instructional minutes and learning time. Barron Park takes great pride in having a before school breakfast club that opens up at 7:30 a.m. every day and this is one example of what is available to support positive attendance patterns.

We are now half-way through our first grading period. Outside of school hours, families should continue to look at how much reading and math practice you are supporting at home consistently throughout the week. Often the more practice that takes place outside of school, the more likely that will translate to improved academic gains for students. Keep up the good work at home. We look forward to checking in at report card time to review progress with you.

**Use these six words on pages 6 & 7 to make a sentence...**

**of                      learning                      is**

## Duveneck *Elementary School*

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



**Leslie Crane**  
*Principal*

### **Reading is the Foundation of Learning**

At the beginning of the school, the Duveneck teachers reviewed the PAUSD Promise. As we delved deeper into the Promise, from the 'T-shirt' to the 'Handout' to the 'Binder' version, we took stock in what we were already doing, what we were starting to do, and what we needed to do to support our students to successfully achieve the goals in the Promise. We ended

our meeting by identifying two important areas to focus on and grow this year: Dyslexia and Responsive Classroom practices.

Reading is the foundation of learning. Elementary schools have the ultimate responsibility to ensure that all students can and will read at or above grade level before they matriculate to middle school. Although many of our students are reading at or above grade level, we have students who are not there yet. All of our talented teachers are committed to learning the skills and strategies to support our underperforming readers. Our teachers are also very adept at differentiation and understand that one way of teaching does not fit all learners in their classroom. To that end, three of our K-2 teachers attended the Orton-Gillingham training this summer. We have also implemented phonics instruction in all of our K-2 classrooms. Finally, Duveneck benefits from our Tier 2 Reading Specialist who works with targeted groups of students in every grade level.

Duveneck teachers have also successfully implemented Responsive Classroom strategies to support Social Emotional Learning (SEL) growth and development at our school. These strategies and techniques comprise a set of research, and evidence-based practices designed to create safe, joyful, and engaging classrooms and school communities for both students and teachers. Students have responded very positively to this program and formal referrals to the office for inappropriate student behavior have been almost non-existent this school year.

## 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**

There are many little ways to enlarge your world. Love of books is the best of all.

—Jacqueline Kennedy

El Carmelo's continued focus on growing readers started with the majority of our teachers attending summer and fall reading institutes to deepen their instructional practices in teaching reading. To grow proficient readers, teachers are providing

explicit and meaningful instruction based on formative reading assessments. Our fourth year as a Teacher's College Lab School, implementation of the Units of Study, small group strategy lessons, conferring, multisensory instruction, and guided reading, along with a suite of Tier II reading intervention programs, work in concert to address the PAUSD Promise goal: increasing the percentage of students scoring at or above grade level benchmark, on the Benchmark Reading Assessment System.

Growing readers includes a dedication to increasing reading volume. Reading stamina charts in classrooms demonstrate independent reading goals. To facilitate reading outside of school, we have committed to providing books for students to read at home. Our classroom libraries and school library must reflect our diverse community of learners. Our work this year will include providing books as mirrors, in which students can see themselves, and windows, where they learn from those who are different. We are providing books in a series, high interest text, including fantasy and graphic novels, to reach every reader.

In September, over 150 parents and children participated in Family Reading Night. Educators led parents in interactive read-aloud, listening to children read and summarize. Parents learned about the power of reading volume and how reading ten more minutes per day can increase a child's vocabulary.

Our commitment to growing readers, will make a significant difference in the lives of each and every student. Happy Reading!

**then see page 15 to enter the contest!**

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## Ellen Fletcher *Middle School*

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



**Melissa Howell**  
*Principal*

### Participating Teachers

As the proud Principal of Ellen Fletcher Middle School, I am thrilled about welcoming you all to a new school year! The Fletcher MS Tiger staff are all extremely excited about another incredible and productive start of the school year. Our skilled and devoted staff began planning for the new 2019-20 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 (assessment and grading alignment).

To support this goal, Fletcher teachers had a strong participation at our District summer PAUSD - PA-'You'-SD Teacher Professional Development academy. We also had an amazing team of teacher leaders attend the Solution Tree Annual Summer Assessment and Grading Conference in Austin, TX, as well as, married these components together as an entire staff, spending a full day of professional development at our welcome back staff training day. Our staff together is committed to diving into 'our' work with these goals. We will continue this laser focused work this year. Go Tigers!

## Escondido *Elementary School*

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



**Marcela Simoes de Carvalho**  
*Principal*

### The PAUSD Promise

The work our teachers do every day is focused on providing learning opportunities that will lead to amazing outcomes for students. Across all grades and classrooms at Escondido, the staff is committed to being intentional and connected to the core values of the PAUSD Promise. This year, our school plan aligns to the following indicators of the Promise:

- Demographics do not predict excellence.
- The alignment of efforts creates shared ownership of vision and outcomes.

Building a positive and inclusive learning environment where children feel supported is a priority at our school. One way to achieve this goal is to increase the level of connection between students, staff, and the school community. An example of how Escondido is working to increase schoolwide connections is by purposefully including student voices at our weekly Monday morning assemblies. Students have talked about the Green Team; Zero Waste Campaign; presented information about the Mexican flag and Independence Day; and performed a typical folkloric dance from Mexico. The 2nd grade mini fair is another example of an event that engages the whole school. Students from all grades rotate through each 2nd grade room to learn about special collections, passion for cooking, rock climbing, or how to care for pet chickens.

Teachers at Escondido articulated their hopes and dreams for the year after identifying which aspects of the PAUSD Promise resonated the most with our school goals. I know you will be inspired when reading some of their thoughts:

*Be a good mentor to my new colleagues. Inspire, invest, be intentional. Have fun with students and grow together. Encourage curiosity. Build up the confidence and love for learning of all my students. Have students leave each day with a smile on their face.*

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## Fairmeadow *Elementary*

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



**Iris Wong**  
*Principal*

### **SROs Support School Safety**

One of the many goals Fairmeadow Elementary is subsequently working on is creating a physical environment that promotes student and staff safety through established protocols/procedures, appropriate internal and external security systems, and routine emergency preparations.

Our first step has been to establish close working relationships with the Palo Alto Police Department (PAPD), more specifically the School Resource Officers (SROs). PAUSD is fortunate to have a partnership with the PAPD wherein officers work with and support schools across our District. Our SROs have been working with the District for the last few years and are specifically trained to support students and staff across our campuses. In addition to providing training to our teachers and staff on emergency preparedness and safety, they also facilitate and manage Parent Project (parent support and network program for parents with strong-willed children), and provide support to all school sites regarding school happenings, including interacting with students across campuses during recess, lunch, free play, etc.



**Our SRO, Brad Young in action!**

The SROs have become a familiar face on Fairmeadow's campus as they visited with our Firebirds during lunch time and played basketball, rounders, and even jump roped with our students! The interaction between them and students are always such a fun and positive sight to see, especially when students gather around them to ask for their autographs. We also had SROs at our planned student assembly where they did a presentation on what it means to be an upstanding citizen, why we have rules and laws, and most importantly students have been officially introduced to another safe adult on campus.

## Greendell *School*

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



**Shannon Coleman**  
*Principal*

### **Importance of Attendance Begins in Pre-K**

Welcome back to school! Our Greendell School Goslings greet our students and their families each morning with a message that welcomes families as they arrive at school. We believe that engaging our students and families in their education builds and strengthens our school community. One of the core values of the PAUSD Promise is: Preparation for college and career begins with attendance and appropriate behavior.



**Greendell Goslings Greeting Friends**

Greendell School serves PAUSD's youngest students and we are focused on nurturing their life-long love of learning. This begins with children attending school and participating in the rich educational experiences each day: in their classrooms, on the playground, with their peers, and provided by their teachers. Missing school may not seem like an issue for young students who are learning through play. However, children who miss school regularly, even in the early years, may have more difficulty reaching developmental milestones and meeting benchmarks in school. We want all of our students to be present and learning. We are committed to partnering with families to ensure that they are engaged and feel connected to their school.

## Frank S. Greene Jr. *Middle School*

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



**Valerie Royaltey-Quandt**  
*Principal*

### Challenge Day

*By Magdalena Fittoria & Valerie Royaltey-Quandt*

Greene Middle School has fresh energy around the collaborative practices so important to a middle school; creating a sense of belonging and respect, and continuing to build systems around students that support, intervene, and teach. One of the biggest events for our 7th graders is Challenge Day. As outlined in the PAUSD Promise, Students: Actions & Behaviors – Performance – Options: Preparation for college and career begins with attendance and appropriate behavior. Challenge Day is part of our efforts to “Develop model for consistent Social Emotional Learning (SEL) instruction across all levels.”



Founded in 1987, this program was developed to combat bullying, truancy, violence, and other harmful symptoms faced by youth, believing that these stemmed from the problems of separation, isolation and loneliness. Today, Challenge Day is promoted as a tool for

“Creating the School of Your Dreams.”

The morning involves music, games, and silly dancing interspersed with authentic conversations. The facilitator stands in a 12x12 square on the floor and describes how this represents our typical “comfort zone,” which can be small and limiting. He challenges students to look to this day as an opportunity to step out of the comfort zone.

Trained facilitators deepen the conversation, creating the emotional safety for participants to connect with each other in small groups to share more about their feelings and experiences of joy, pride, pain, and/or sorrow. Participants share “If you really knew me...” and the experience of being listened to with compassion is transformative for many.

The day proceeds with continued dancing and fun connections. Notes are written to a person who has been meaningful and supportive and there is a “speak out” opportunity when students and adults take the microphone to express their commitment to continue the connections that the transformative day has launched.

As school staff, we notice that our participants leave this experience at the end of the day feeling closer and more connected as a community than when they started. We are proud to offer this for students, staff, and parents every year at Greene!

## Henry M. Gunn *High School*

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



**Kathie Laurence**  
*Principal*

### Grading Smarter Not Harder

We are excited and committed to the PAUSD Promise. The staff started the year off during the professional learning day with an overview of the Promise. This led to our first staff conversation regarding assessment and some initial thinking on the topics around standards-based learning and grading. As a staff, we are reading *Grading Smarter, Not Harder* by Myron Dueck to spark ideas and strategies we might use to continue to improve and make Gunn an even better experience in learning for our students.

A second area of focus for this year is having all of our students perform at or above grade level. Our Math and Literacy Teachers on Special Assignment (TOSAs) are creating a system of identification and intervention for students who are not yet meeting proficiency standards. The TOSAs will be supporting teachers with instructional strategies that support all students and they will also do some individual work with students.

We are also focused on post-secondary opportunities for students. To that end, we are developing a Business Pathway and exploring more areas that lead to dual enrollment opportunities with the local community colleges. Dual enrollment allows students to earn high school graduation credit and also, start their college journey.

Attendance is an important indicator of student success. It is called out in the Promise and it is critical that our students and families understand the importance of being in class on a regular basis. The staff is working on interventions for students who struggle with attendance.

We hope that your children have had a great start to the school year!



# Herbert Hoover *Elementary School*

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



**James Sherman**  
*Principal*

## The PAUSD Promise

Our teachers in PAUSD are absolutely amazing, and Hoover has an outstanding team in place. The Promise speaks to distributive leadership and collaboration, and we strive to have all staff pulling in the same direction with everyone playing a critical role. Site Council, Book Clubs, Leadership Team, and grade level planning are just a few ways to see this distributive leadership

and collaboration in action. At Hoover, you'll see classroom rotations, common themes, and common language being used throughout our campus. When meetings take place between and among teachers, the conversations are focused, specific, and consider all types of learners in our classrooms. Decision-making at Hoover comes from hearing all voices, collectively putting plans into action, and then analyzing the results.

Each of the teachers meet with the principal to develop goals for the year. The goals are based on our school vision, overall site goals, and reflect the needs of our school and

the Promise as well. Making sure ALL students perform at or above grade level, that ALL are prepared for the next grade and the future, and that ALL students will be successful drives everything we do. Our goals and vision go hand in hand with what PAUSD expects for all of its students.

Of course, the reason we are all here is our incredible students. Each day, they come to school ready to learn, often with a backpack full of books from the library. That focus they have on strengthening their minds at every moment is what really sets them apart. Hoover students take every opportunity to learn, and we provide them a safe and nurturing climate in which to make that happen. Our classrooms are busy places with children working at a variety of levels. Once outside, we provide them with a safe space and rules that apply to all children. There are also many different activities to engage in outside including library, games, Legos, sandbox, and of course, our popular play structures. The physical and emotional needs of our students are foremost in all of our decision-making, ensuring that Hoover is a wonderful place for all children!

# Jane Lathrop Stanford *Middle School*

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



**Chris Grierson**  
*Principal*

## Panther Camp

At JLS, we are starting our new school year with an emphasis on teamwork and Social Emotional Learning (SEL)!

In my first months as JLS Principal, something that I have been both impressed and inspired by is our school's shared responsibility for the growth and success of all students. One example is our annual Panther Camp, where 8th grade counselors led our 6th grade students through a wide

variety of team-building activities, specifically designed to help students feel comfortable as they meet and get to know others and become familiar with a new, bigger place. This aspect is also true as I get to know the JLS students, staff, and families. Something that I am very excited about is our commitment to SEL, and our community's shared interest in making sure all JLS students know they have a good number of adults they can go to for help.

At our middle school "Kindness is the Norm" and I am looking forward to building on our strong legacy of working in collaborative teams and having fun. Here is to a great year!



**During the first week of the school year, 350 6th grade students participated in Panther Camp 2019. Panther Camp is an orientation to help all students feel a strong sense of welcome, acceptance, and belonging.**



**Katy Bimpson**  
*Principal*

### A Promising Year

Students, families, and staff are being engaged as learners as we start the year with growth and collaboration in mind:

**Identify and scale up impactful instructional practices:** Learning is happening across all staff levels as structures are being put in place. These structures allow teachers, specialists, and behaviorists to meet regularly to share

best practices that support **all** students. Teachers are participating in Grade Level Team Release days, where they spend time looking at student data, aligning “power” standards for academic units, and sharing best instructional practices to ensure that each student is able to meet those standards. Additionally, specialists are providing workshops for paraprofessionals that cover a variety of topics including strategies for supporting students who display characteristics of dyslexia.

**Alignment of efforts create a shared ownership of vision and outcomes:** Staff members are learning about the Professional Learning Community (PLC) process. The PLC process is an ongoing process in which educators work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve. Professional learning communities operate under the assumption that the key to improved learning for students is continuous job-embedded learning for educators. We are working with Jennifer Abrams, author of *Having Hard Conversations*, throughout the year to deepen our collaboration skills and are developing a vision for our school from which all of our goals and inquiry will stem!

Families are also being invited to learn more about available resources and receive school updates through principal’s coffee and English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC) events. Additionally, parent leadership teams from across the site including PTA, Site Council, Partners in Education (PiE), and the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) will be collaborating and aligning initiatives to best support our students through quarterly leadership meetings.

Here’s to a wonderful year of learning ahead!



**Mary Pat O’Connell**  
*Principal*

### Who Will Keep the Promises?

Our school District is making a set of promises to our community and more specifically, our students. We have identified the ways in which we would like to grow and improve so that all of our students mature across their years of schooling into healthy, capable, confident learners ready for the post-secondary challenges of their choice.

“All students” truly means each and every child. As principal, I am tremendously proud of the commitment of every Nixon staff member, certificated and classified, to the success of every child in our school community, however long they happen to be with us, whatever strengths and challenges they happen to have. We have just completed our “Kid-by-Kid” meetings for the start of this school year where we reviewed the academic and social and emotional progress of each Nixon student. We do this work in grade level teams with support from our reading specialist, English Learner specialist and Ed specialist. Working together, we have set goals for groups of students in areas that we want to help them make progress over the coming six weeks. We know that we are most effective when we do this challenging work together.

The skills of our teachers in the areas of reading and writing have notably progressed across the last seven years as we have learned to implement strategies to limit whole class instruction to brief, specific lessons and instruct more of the time to small groups or individuals. This ensures that more of the instruction that a child receives is targeted to his/her specific needs. We began using a new, research-based phonics curriculum last year at kindergarten and 1st grades and are excited to extend this fully into 2nd grade this year. This work aligns precisely with the PAUSD Promise in the areas of High-Quality Teaching and Learning and Equity and Excellence.

Nixon School is not working in isolation. Our PAUSD elementary schools share curriculum and best practices. Our Professional Learning Day, on October 11, was filled with teachers and Special Education staff sharing their successful strategies with each other. It is through our efforts to work together within and across schools that we will keep the promises we are making to the children.



## Ohlone *Elementary School*

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



**Dawn Yoshinaga**  
*Principal*

### Junior Staff Members

Part of the PAUSD Promise includes preparing students to exit our school district advantaged for post-secondary opportunities. We want students to discover and pursue their areas of passion and to explore diverse pathways. So, where does this preparation begin? In elementary school, of course!

At Ohlone, we celebrate student agency and the pursuit of personal passions and interests. As part of our Goals of an Ohlone Education, we support students in their development of self-awareness, independent thinking, and creative risk-taking.



**Jr. Staff members, Dannelyn and Sophie, are out on the playground leading the fun!"**

We are excited about our newest endeavor! This year, we are introducing a way for students to contribute to their community by creating positive play experiences. Students in 4th and 5th grade have the chance to serve as junior staff members during recess and lunch. Junior staff members receive training and lead games and activities for their peers. They also provide conflict resolution (sometimes it's as simple as Rock, Paper, Scissors). Our students are engaged and are active contributors to their school community!

## Palo Alto *Adult School*

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



**Dave Hoshiwara**  
*Principal*

### Employees are our Focus

The Palo Alto Adult School is different in many aspects from our PK-12 family.

Our charge is not legally mandated like K-12. Adult school students are not required to attend school, so the emphasis and focus are not the same, though learning is an essential part of all our classes.

Our funding is different in that the financial health of the school is related to a balance of class size, staffing, and fees collected. Funding comes both from students and also from grants and state assistance.

Finally, our students are all in class by choice and because of self-motivated interest. Therefore, the focus for our PAUSD Promise is primarily on our employees. Alignment of efforts creates shared ownership of vision and outcomes.

At our Back-to-School event, the staff all worked on providing input for our class evaluations. Hopefully this collaborative effort to give input will help foster ownership of vision and outcomes. These evaluations will help structure our classes and give feedback as to whether they continue or need adjustment.

From recruitment through retirement, employees evolve, grow, and promote.

We look within our current staff to find and promote individuals who are interested in growing and developing our Adult School. We are fortunate to have a current teacher in a TOSA position. This position will assist with our Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and California Department of Education (CDE) Review projects in this upcoming year.

## Contest!

This chicken is somewhere in this publication. When you find it, email the **page number** to:



**Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com**  
(Please put Palo Alto in the subject line)

Your entry must be received by January 15, 2020. From the correct entries, we will draw a winner to receive a \$20 gift certificate redeemable at Barnes and Noble.

## Palo Alto *High School*

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



**Adam Paulson**  
*Principal*

### High-Quality Teaching & Learning

I have been working with my entire staff on finding their personal connection to the PAUSD Promise to ensure that there are touch points schoolwide. The broad goal that resonates with my administrative team the most is High-Quality

Teaching & Learning. Under this goal our administrative team is focusing on Instructional Practices to help teachers implement aligned, research-based, instructional practices to teach students challenging, rigorous curriculum.

Our team will be focusing on assessment practices in our daily walkthroughs. The picture here shows an example of High-Quality

Teaching & Learning through a project-based lesson that culminated into a “Cool Calculus Conference” that was held at the Quad. Students set up tables to share their various projects related to Calculus concepts. It was a very hands-on and invigorating experience for all who attended.



**Students showing off their projects at the Cool Calculus Fair**

## Palo Verde *Elementary School*

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



**Annora Lee**  
*Principal*

### Student-led Design Work

The spirit of the PAUSD Promise beats loudly within the walls of every Palo Verde classroom. Our campus is teaming with caring adults who are committed to the safety and growth of every child. We are not only passionate about helping children become the best they

can be, but also helping students find out what they want to be. When students leave our school for the next step in their educational journey, their excitement to be leaders of their own learning is our greatest pride.

Whether it be our youngest friends in kindergarten, or our oldest ones in 5th grade, every child at Palo Verde has a voice to be heard and valued. We are teaching children how to self-advocate, reflect, and dig deep. Our teachers plan with an intention and purpose. They work closely with one another to develop strategies and lessons that honor the individuality of each student.



**In Room 20, Genius Hour is a protected and treasured time for our learning community. For about an hour a week, students pursue learning projects of their own design, driven by their passions, and curiosities. It allows students to go deep into a topic that excites and inspires them. Pictured is a student-created noise canceling pencil sharpener case.**

At any given moment, one can find student-led design work such as Passion Projects and Genius Hour taking place. Student-run class meetings, conferences with the teacher, and other projects are also treasured practices. Our children are pushing their thinking in a compassionate and caring setting. They are practicing how to be and preparing for opportunities to come, and have a blast while doing so!

# Walter Hays *Elementary School*

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



**Mary Bussmann**  
*Principal*

## The Promise

Our staff is vigorously prioritizing the work of

### 1. High-Quality Teaching and Learning by:

- Implementing the new Teachers College Units of Study Phonics Curriculum, grades K-2 supporting emerging and developing readers. This focus will strengthen students' ability to effectively and efficiently decode and fluently read text.

- Continuing to build decoding skills of more complex vocabulary grades 3-5, by transferring current knowledge, to fluently read and comprehend text, as well as to more effectively communicate their thinking in writing.
- Increasing the volume of all students' reading. Recent research has demonstrated that the more reading students do each day, the better their reading skills will progress, which also results in increased confidence in their learning. We ask families to engage in reading together and by providing time for their children to read at home every day! Reading is the gateway to all learning.

### 2. Equity and Excellence by:

- Assessing students at the beginning, middle, and end of the year to determine what skills they possess and target best instructional methods to support, as well as evaluate student learning.
- Identifying students that might be struggling with learning concepts or skills and providing needed intervention support. This involves on-going assessment and evaluation of student progress, while supporting students' confidence and positive outlook in this process.

### 3. Wellness and Safety by:

- Supporting positive, respectful, inclusive, and safe conduct and experiences schoolwide. Students participate in Responsive Classroom activities, Core Value Meetings, Michelle Garcia Winner Social – Thinking Classes, Mindfulness Practices and Restorative Justice Practices.
- Reviewing District audit of safety procedures and practices with staff, Site Council, and PTA to implement recommendations during the school year.

We are proud of our community's collaboration as we embark on this new school year!

## Contest!

On pages 6 & 7 are six words that make up a sentence.

When you know what the sentence is, email it to:

[Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com](mailto:Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com)

Please put Palo Alto in the subject line.

Your entry must be received by January 15, 2020.

From the correct entries, we will draw a winner to receive a \$20 gift certificate redeemable at Barnes and Noble.

**Congratulations to Vaishnavi Janapati**  
**Winner of our May Word Search Contest!**



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