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Volume 3, Issue 9

May 2021



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Superintendent of Schools

Looking to the Horizon

As this year comes to a close, we are turning our attention to August of 2021. This year will never be forgotten, but most will be happy to restart in the fall. I recently read that experience is what you get when you don't get what you want. To that end, we ALL received a healthy dose of experience since March of 2020.

We expect a full return to in-person instruction in the fall. That is exciting and welcome news for our students, staff, and families. It should also mean a return to live performances, normal athletic seasons, lunch-time activities, assemblies, hands-on electives, sharing with friends, and feeling more safe and secure in our daily routines. Yes...we are all optimistic about our future together.

I would like to thank everyone for getting through this patch together. There was tension, frustration, and disappointment. That is true here and everywhere across the country. We will come out of this stronger in time. Future students will learn about the pandemic in history classes. It is our hope that those students will also read and learn about resiliency, grace, and humanity. We started the year as Ambassadors of Hope in anticipation of our ability to navigate tough circumstances. Despite some bumps and bruises, we got through it together. We are intact and poised for a strong year. Thank you to everyone for remaining on our team!



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

Mirando al Horizonte

A medida que se acerca el cierre de este año, dirigimos nuestra atención a agosto de 2021. Nunca olvidaremos este año, pero muchos estarán felices de recomenzar en el otoño. Hace poco leí que la experiencia es lo que obtienes cuando no obtienes lo que quieres. Con ese fin, TODOS recibimos una dosis saludable de experiencia desde marzo de 2020.

Esperamos un regreso total a la instrucción en persona en el otoño. Esas son muy buenas y bienvenidas noticias para nuestros estudiantes, el personal y las familias. También debería significar una vuelta a las actuaciones en vivo, temporadas normales de atletismo, actividades a la hora del almuerzo, asambleas, optativas prácticas, compartir con amigos y sentirnos más seguros y protegidos en nuestras rutinas diarias. Sí... todos somos optimistas sobre nuestro futuro juntos.

Quiero agradecerles a todos por haber atravesado esto juntos. Pasamos por momentos de tensión, frustración y decepción. Eso pasó aquí y en todas partes del país. Vamos a salir de esto más fuertes con el tiempo. Los futuros estudiantes aprenderán sobre la pandemia en las clases de historia. Esperamos que aquellos estudiantes también lean y aprendan sobre la resiliencia, la gracia y la humanidad. Empezamos este año como Embajadores de la Esperanza en anticipación de nuestra capacidad de navegar circunstancias difíciles. A pesar de algunos golpes y moretones, superamos esto todos juntos. Estamos intactos y listos para un año sólido. ¡Gracias a todos por seguir en nuestro equipo!



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寻找地平线

今年已过近半，我们正将注意力转向 2021 年 8 月。今年将永难忘怀，令大多数人为之欣慰的是，我们将在秋季迎来全新的开端。我最近读到一句话，当您得不到想要的东西时，您得到的就是经验。为此，自 2020 年 3 月以来，我们所有人都获得了健康方面的经验。

我们期望在秋天完全恢复面对面教学。对于我们的学生、职工和家庭来说，这是令人无比振奋的喜讯。这还意味着现场表演、正常的运动季、午餐时间活动、集会和动手选修课均将恢复，与朋友分享以及在我们的日常工作中我们会感到更加安全。是的……我们都对未来抱有积极乐观的态度。

我要感谢大家一起努力共度难关。紧张、沮丧和失望的情绪遍布全国各地。我们将从困难中坚定地走出来。未来的学生将从历史课中了解到这一大流行事件。我们希望这些学生也能阅读和学习到我们的坚韧、优雅和人性的光辉。我们在希望大使的殷切期望中开启了今年，他希望我们努力克服艰难困苦。尽管遇到了一些挫折和失败，我们还是共同度过了难关。我们安然无恙，蓄势待发，迎接强盛的一年。感谢大家继续坚守在我们的团队中！



Kay Coop
Founder/Publisher

As this school year comes to an end in many ways it feels like the beginning. It is wonderful to see a bit of normalcy returning to our lives. Zoom took on a whole new meaning to children as they spent hours in front of a computer screen instead of in a classroom. There are many milestones in a child's life, but none of us were prepared for anticipating the next milestone of not wearing a mask. That will be a happy day.

Superintendent Dr. Austin begins this issue with his message of optimism for beginning the new school year with a full return to in-person instruction. Also, in this issue you will read articles



Netragrednik

from the principals as they reflect on this unusual year.

Congratulations to Neel and Ria Satyavolu, winners of our Seek 'n Find contest in the February issue. Sorry, we didn't have space for a contest in this issue.

Our next issue is November 3rd.
Have a fun summer!



**Congratulations
Class of 2021!**

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Nikole Manou
Principal

Culminating a Remarkable Year!

As we begin to culminate the 2020-21 school year, we should take time to reflect on the Full-Year's Distance Learning (FYDL) experience. From day one, all 13 FYDL teachers strived to carry out the program's mission of creating a classroom community that was stable, academically rigorous, and an emotionally safe environment for our learners that needed to remain at home as a result of the pandemic. FYDL had an incredible year! From whole school Spirit Days, Project Cornerstone parent volunteers, Jr. Museum Science Lessons, whole school assemblies, to our upcoming Virtual Field Day, we conclude our virtual year as proud members of a caring and supportive school community.

Now, we must shift and look to the horizon. We know that students will all transition back to their home school sites and resume relationships with school friends and their school community, but there will always be a part of our hearts that will remain with our online FYDL friends. The FYDL teachers are preparing for the end of the year by thinking of activities to celebrate and memorialize this time together. They are asking questions such as: How can we stay in touch? How can we capture our time together? How do we say goodbye knowing that many of our students will return to different sites? One way we plan to archive this unforgettable school year is by creating a "2020-21 FYDL Learning Journal." In partnership with PAUSD's Innovation and Agility Department, a memory book is in the works to provide students and staff closure to this remarkable year.

As our students move forward, we hope this keepsake will serve as a reminder of all the great successes and life skills practiced this year. Life skills such as perseverance, digital citizenship, empathy, friendship, and growth mindset. We must celebrate that our students made history this year by becoming members of the first-ever Full-Year Distance Learning program in Palo Alto.



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Addison *Elementary School*

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



Amanda Boyce
Principal

Looking Out on the Horizon

As the school year comes to an end, there is a deep sense of relief, pride, and anticipation. The staff, students, and families have navigated uncertainty and frequent changes this past year and were able to flourish through innovative thinking and open dialogue.

Our FDL teachers continue to find new and engaging ways to deliver content while our in-person programs have been able to successfully bring back 245 students five days per week.

In May, we are planning to bring back some beloved Addison traditions including the 5th grade Talent Show, Field Day, and Promotion. With each new opportunity, staff has to creatively consider how to adapt these events to follow current health guidelines. Each time we successfully plan and execute a program or event, it helps give us the confidence that no matter

what is ahead, we will rely on each other and can get through any challenge. Congratulations and THANK YOU to the Addison staff and community for your amazing work this past year. I am so honored to be able to learn from you each day!



Welcome balloons on April 26, 2021, the final transition day for full-time in-person instruction

Barron Park *Elementary School*

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



Eric Goddard
Principal

Focused on Better Days Ahead

I recently reviewed some prior end-of-the-year articles that schools often send to their communities in May or June. There is much reflection, celebration, large events, and thanking many people who contributed so much to make the past year special. Throughout these past 14 months, it can be challenging for all of us to remember what a typical conclusion to a school year looks like. Many important restrictions and guidelines

have been in place for quite some time to keep everyone safe and healthy. Multiple learning models has made it challenging for all of us to stay connected and enjoy the elementary school experience which is such a special period of time. Throughout all of this, there is reason for hope and optimism as we plan for all students to return five days per week this fall.

While the year certainly had challenges, it also highlighted some incredible work to support our students under these very complex times. Our dedicated educators worked tirelessly and received immediate professional development to implement new learning models in a very short period of time. The classified staff including the office staff, custodial staff, and classroom aides adapted quickly as well, and their work is observed and appreciated each and every day. Our PTA was so supportive and put on special virtual events under the same restrictive guidelines that were quite creative, valued, and appreciated. We are proud of our students for stepping up and continuing to be their best each and every day.

May is the time to complete planning for the next school year and you can feel the enthusiasm and focus on better days ahead. School will return to some form of normal and likely will improve with each passing month in 2021-22. It's going to be a special time to welcome everyone back in August. I know this is a day we all look forward to.

Duveneck *Elementary School*

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



Leslie Crane
Principal

Looking to the Horizon

In order to look to the horizon, it is important to understand your past. This year of teaching and learning has been like no other! Distance learning, hybrid learning, five days/week learning, and everything it took to make these transitions work seamlessly for our community. Our teachers and staff deserve all the credit and accolades for this hard work. Our students have built

new skill sets that might not have occurred so strongly in elementary school — perseverance, resiliency, flexibility, and grit. Finally, a huge thank you to our families and community who have sacrificed and became their child's teacher during distance learning and asynchronous learning days. The Duveneck village was able to weather all the changes that came our way with courage, grace, and a 'can do' attitude.

We are proud of what we have accomplished this year and we are excited for the future! We are eager to have students back in school next year. We are also prepared to take what we have learned from this year and apply it to our past practices. Teaching and learning will forever be transformed to the benefit of all students in our school.

We know we have work to do around reconnecting with one another and building a strong and positive school culture. The social/emotional wellness of our students is very important to us. As Dr. Bruce Perry so eloquently states:

"The more healthy relationships a child has, the more likely [he/she/they] will be to recover from trauma and thrive. Relationships are the agents of change and the most powerful therapy is human love."

Have a wonderful, safe, and relaxing summer. We look forward to seeing all of our 'Duveneck Dragons' back in school on August 12!



El Carmelo *Elementary School*

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



Danaé Reynolds
Principal

New Horizons

By the publishing of this piece, El Carmelo will have a new Principal. Here is a sneak peek of my letter to my successor.

Dear Fortunate One,

You are about to embark upon a journey to a Hidden Gem in the heart of Midtown Palo Alto, a unique elementary school that will bring you joy each day. Since the school closures of March 2020, El

Carmelo educators continued to demonstrate a clear and unwavering commitment to their student's academic, social, and emotional growth, which has been inspiring. They focus on the positive and powerful aspects of distance and hybrid learning to ensure their students continue to receive high-quality instruction.

Your dedicated, diverse, and reflective educators take their craft seriously. The teachers engage in courageous conversations about race, diversity, and inclusion. They actively engage in professional learning opportunities to grow their instructional practices. Fierce advocates for their students, El Carmelo educators collaborate with their

colleagues and work in partnership with parents to develop their learners.

When you walk through classrooms, you will see caring adults who thoughtfully cultivate communities that celebrate and learn from each students' language, ethnicity, experience, and background. Teachers use seamless accommodations and implementation of inclusive practices to ensure students with special needs access grade-level content. You will delight in the richness of ideas as students share their mathematical problem-solving in different ways: independently, in groups, orally, in pictures, using equations, or with manipulatives. Books read during interactive read-aloud, or Reader's Workshop, are reflective of the people who make up the world your students will inherit. To learn more about your students, on the walls, you will read informational books at the primary level and essays at the upper grades, based upon well-known and researched topics of high interest to our students.

These educators are the GEMS of The Hidden Gem. They are excited to grow El Carmelo in new ways. You are about to have the time of your professional life as an instructional leader. Enjoy!

Ellen Fletcher *Middle School*

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



Melissa Howell
Principal

Wrapping Up a Unique Year

Spring is here, school campuses are reopened for all students to attend, and exciting culminating year-end events are being planned. It is an electrifying time to plan a celebration – promotion, in-person for our staff, students, and community

to participate. It has been a little while since we have had the opportunity to celebrate together and in-person.

As we begin to wrap up this unique school year, remember to be kind and take care of yourself and others (academically, social-emotionally, and physically). We applaud the growth of all of our students, the hard work of our staff, and the support of our community.

Maya Angelou wisely said, “*The horizon leans forward, offering you space to place new steps of change.*” We are thrilled about our future together on campus in the fall. Welcoming our incoming 6th-graders, as well as bringing back all of our rising 7th and 8th grade students. It is bittersweet, as

well as exciting, to prepare our 8th graders for the next academic journey to high school.

We are Fletcher Middle School! Go Tigers.



Fairmeadow *Elementary*

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



Iris Wong
Principal

Looking to the Horizon

As this unique and ever-changing school year comes to an end, I am sure we are excited to close this chapter in our lives and focus on looking towards the horizon as we plan for the 2021-22 school year.

With every challenge and crisis, brings new opportunities and celebrations. While not minimizing the struggles we still face, I challenge us all to look towards the horizon

and move beyond our adversities to get through to better days ahead. Let's remember to bring with us the numerous and unexpected benefits from this past year. Despite all the events and gatherings we all missed out on, hopefully you can look forward to all of the positive outcomes and changes that may be here to stay.

We've all learned to be more patient with loved ones and gained more empathy for others. I hope we can all continue to find the joy in the simpler things in life, such as taking outdoor walks, finding ways to play creatively, and sitting

near a window to birdwatch and admire blooming flowers. Let us all continue to remember to appreciate our amazing and hard-working teachers and staff, public servants, and essential support workers such as truck drivers, grocery store and restaurant staff, cashiers, custodians, and health care workers. These are just a few of the millions of people who continue to make our lives a bit better each day.

This experience has definitely created a whole new appreciation throughout Fairmeadow as well as our amazing and supportive community. It is my wish this experience instills within each of us even more resilience, creativity, and determination that sticks with all of us. Our world, especially in the field of education, has become more robust and creative as we all had to pivot and adjust our lives in order to maintain safety all while trying to maintain a sense of normalcy as much as possible. Let's all look towards the horizon, maintain our hopes for a beautiful journey ahead, filled with nothing but kindness, love, and care for all.

Escondido *Elementary School*

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



Marcela Simoes de Carvalho
Principal

An Intentional Focus - Building Community and Student Well-being

Escondido started a new tradition this year, school-wide morning Yoga, taught by Teacher Sheila. Yoga is an effective pedagogical approach that increases school students' mindfulness, emotional regulation, and positive

behaviors. At Escondido, yoga is an opportunity for students, parents, and staff to connect, whether online or in-person. A strong community and emotional balance prepare us to take on whatever awaits on the horizon.

The 2020-21 school year will be remembered as one of loss, disruption, change, constant adaptation, innovation, and hope. I want

to take a moment to celebrate the resiliency of our students and educators who have demonstrated their ability to rise to the challenges of new ways of teaching and learning and are a constant source of optimism. Despite the challenges of the year, the Escondido community remains strong and connected. We are genuine friends around the world!



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Greendell School

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



Shannon Coleman
Principal

Looking Forward to Next Year

As we wrap up our school year at Greendell, we begin to reflect on all the challenges we have faced and how much we have learned. We mastered new skills, discovered new ways of teaching and learning, and focused on keeping everyone safe, all during a pandemic. The young learners at Greendell showed us how incredibly resilient and flexible they are by adapting to the changes while still having fun learning. It has been a joy to have children return and fill our school with play and laughter.

We cannot wait for the day we welcome families back to our school campus. The importance of partnering with families has never been clearer than during distance learning. Families made online learning possible and provided their children with the support they needed to access their education. Greendell School has a long history of parent participation and involvement, and this year it has been especially crucial for our students. We are very grateful for our incredible school community and we look forward to greeting families in the new school year!



Hands-On Learning at Greendell School's PreSchool Family Program

Frank S. Greene Jr. Middle School

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



Valerie Royaltey-Quandt
Principal

Katie's Place

Despite the overwhelming challenges of 2020-21, I am so proud of what our students and teachers have had the courage and fortitude to accomplish this year! We have focused more on the health and well-being of our students, families, and school staff, allowing flexibility, understanding, and care to lead our decision-making and interactions with each other.



A significant new project at Greene during the 2020-21 school year will help us center our care for students on well-being and mindfulness. Due to a generous donation in memory of Katie Rutledge, a beloved Greene teacher, we have been creating a wellness center for students informally called "Katie's Place." Katie's Place will give students a respite, allowing for mental health breaks, counseling support, and additional resources if needed. This beautiful mural was created for Katie's Place by the muralist Morgan Bricca, who has created other works of art in PAUSD schools. When Greene Middle School opens fully for the 2021-22 school year, we will have a beautiful and welcoming new addition for our students!



Henry M. Gunn *High School*

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



Wendy Stratton
Principal

Mental Health Awareness Month

May is Mental Health Awareness Month and as we prepare to say goodbye to our Seniors and welcome our new 9th-grade class, we will continue to focus on building community and reducing mental health stigma through directive and collective wellness activities!

Throughout the month of May, the Wellness Center will be hosting a series of lunchtime activities, including a wellness scavenger hunt, a week-long “De-stress Fest” (which features a “Planting Seeds of Hope” activity), and the “Mind Out Loud” student mental health conference featuring Big Sean.

These activities were designed and driven by our “Gunn Together” community spirit and reflect our holistic approach to learning.

We want our senior class, who has experienced an untraditional end to their high school journeys, to create memories, share time and space with one another, and leave their imprint in the fabric of our community.



Herbert Hoover *Elementary School*

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



James Sherman
Principal

The Finish Line.... and Beyond

As this very strange year comes to a close, I think back on all the hills our families and teachers have climbed. I am so proud of how everyone has handled the unknown in this

unprecedented school year.

Hoover teachers and staff have done a remarkable job delivering a high-quality curriculum to all of our amazing students. Maybe even more importantly, they have helped our students to feel joy and happiness. They have taught the importance of self-care, the benefits of exercise and being outside, and of keeping a focus on social interactions.

Hoover students are doing well, and we are excited to have them finish the year strong. As we bring back students five days a week, it's feeling a lot more like what we expect school to feel like. Laughing and smiling kids make me happy, and we've had a lot of them lately. Our students have



developed a deeper appreciation for social contact, and many new friendships have blossomed. As usual, our Hedgies are inclusive, kind, and positive, and when times are tough, character really shows.

Conveying the feeling I get seeing these children interact is hard to communicate in writing, but it gives me goose bumps. There is nothing better than watching a child stop their game, walk over to someone who is sitting alone, and invite them to play. I see this

every day at Hoover. They have modified their own games and even created new games that allow them to be socially distanced. In class, they seem to be complimenting each other more, listening more intently, and truly enjoying each other's company.

As we prepare for next year, we are hopeful, excited, and focused. As always, our staff and students are determined to do their best for themselves and for each other. We can wait to welcome ALL of our Hedgies back! It won't be long now!

Jane Lathrop Stanford *Middle School*

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



Chris Grierson
Principal

"New Normal"

In early March, JLS staff and many JLS students returned to in-person learning with the goal of establishing another "new normal." We adjusted the order of periods in our schedule, and all of us quickly adapted to new protocols and procedures. Now, as we approach the end of our school year, we are excited to have approximately 45% of all JLS students physically on campus four days per week. We are confident we can rise to any new set of circumstances based on our agility, our teamwork, and our determination.



As we look to what the future holds, we are excited by the possibilities for many more students to return to in-person learning experiences. We hope all students and families are staying safe, healthy, and able to finish this year strong. We are looking forward to celebrating our 8th grade students as we promote them to high school, and soon, we'll welcome a new group of 6th grade students into the JLS family. Go Panthers!

Juana Briones *Elementary School*

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



Katy Bimpson
Principal

Hope on the Horizon!

It has been a challenging journey through this pandemic for our students, families, and staff, and it is through life's most challenging experiences that we build and strengthen skills that will better equip us to learn together as we look toward the horizon.

The ancient Greek philosopher, Plato said, "Necessity is the mother of invention." When I think about how creatively and resiliently students, staff, and families have collaborated and persevered through countless programmatic changes and learned more about how to learn remotely and safely at school in 15 months than would be expected over

the course of years, I am inspired, hopeful, and excited about what is to come. Through it all, there are regularly occurring moments of joy, creativity, and discovery that are appreciated in a wholly new light.



Students greet DL friends during Friday Fun Day



Students break into spontaneous dance when The Cupid Shuffle is played during Friday Fun Day.



First-graders line up for class safely.

Lucille M. Nixon *Elementary School*

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



Mary Pat O'Connell
Principal

What Can We See Ahead?

As the strangest, most challenging school year in my 38-year career comes to a close, we are trying our best to see what is on the horizon for next year. Will all of the students be back for in-person learning? Will we be able to come together for assemblies? Will the children from different classrooms be able to mingle on the playground? Will we re-open the staff lounges so teachers can interact in person? Will vaccinated parents be able to come in and volunteer? Will families and staff gather for school picnics? We are hopeful, but truthfully, the horizon remains a bit cloudy as I write this in April. The tumult of the last 15 months has taught us that this virus is not easily defeated. We will have to get closer to the start of school to know the safest course into next school year.

Also visible as we look to the future, is the growing momentum to consider issues of social injustice, their history, and their impact in our schools and communities. This work will lead us into examination of our practices with students, among adults, and with our community. We welcome all partners in this important work.

A new principal will lead Lucille Nixon Elementary School into the 2021-22 school year as I am retiring at the end of June. I will take this opportunity to share my immense admiration and appreciation for the outstanding staff and community at Nixon. We have worked together through the uncertainties and the sheer exhaustion of the past 15 months. We have managed the varied expectations, the many hurdles, and the head-spinning changes in order to support and teach the children of this school. Good cheer and genuine care for each other have carried us along! I know with confidence that this excellent work will continue well into the future – beyond the horizons visible to us now.

Ohlone *Elementary School*

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



Dawn Yoshinaga
Principal

Community and Connection

An essential part of growth is reflection. As we look back over the past school year, it is Ohlone's love of community that shines through so beautifully. Our staff and families worked together to create meaningful opportunities for connection both in and outside of school. Throughout the local and global challenges that we have experienced, our core values and goals of an Ohlone Education have remained strong and relevant. In fact, there has been a renewed sense of validation of our philosophy of teaching and learning.

Our school and family partnership has grown stronger. Ohlone students are continuing on their trajectory of developing into well-rounded global citizens who consider the perspectives of others and celebrate learning about each other. Our classrooms build connection, inspire creativity, and celebrate individuality and critical thinking. This will only blossom further when we return to school for in-person learning in the fall.



Planting in the African American Heritage Bed

Ohlone has always held social-emotional development as a priority. We understand that our students will be rejoining school from different learning environments. Student connectivity will be an area of focus for us as we welcome all students back to campus in the fall. Cultivating joy and a love of learning happens when students feel connected to their school. Antiracism and equity work is another area of focus for our community as we ensure that all students feel seen, understood, and celebrated.

This has been a year of flexibility and resilience. We are hopeful for the return of the hustle and bustle of our busy school campuses again – when parents were sprinkled across the blacktop and in classrooms supporting students and staff. While the future may be hard to predict, the strength and solidarity of the Ohlone community is certain. We can handle anything if we handle it together.

Palo Alto *Adult School*

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



Dave Hoshiwara
Principal

Looking to the Horizon

When I think of the “Looking to the Horizon” topic for this newsletter, I think of that distant line out over the ocean. At the end of the day as the sun drops below the edge of the world, I see a horizon line. Or early in the day, I see the peak of sun as it begins its trek across the early morning sky, another horizon line.

I think both images are appropriate for this time of the year. We’re looking at a new horizon as we anticipate opening schools this fall. PAAS has its own little peak of light with a few classes meeting in person this month - a couple of Upholstery classes, a PreSchool Family class, and a Yoga class, all under strict COVID protocols. I am excited with this new beginning, even though it is also

the end of the school year. We’ve had a few bumps in the road, but this is all new territory, and a new trail is never without some dips along the way.

The image of the sun dropping beyond the horizon is also appropriate since this is the end of my time here at PAUSD. I will be retiring at the end of June. So, with this new peak of light, I look forward to new adventures on the horizon during retirement!



Palo Alto *High School*

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Brent Kline
Principal

Development of Data Dashboard

This semester, Paly joined the ongoing literacy work at the other secondary schools in the district, and we’ve made significant progress this semester. Using a browser-based screening tool that seeks to determine how a student best likes to read, almost 95% of our students have been screened for literacy challenges. This screening provides us with the means to build a framework

to better understand which students may benefit from additional support in all content areas from their English courses to those in social studies, science, math, and career technical education. Moreover, this month, teachers, students, and their families will receive these screening results.

Most recently, our efforts have focused on the development of a data dashboard that includes a number

of data points ranging from our screening work, Semester 1 grades, CAASPP scores, and current CSU/UC eligibility. Partnering with counselors and school psychologists in the Guidance Department, our librarian, and several classroom teachers, we are building their feedback into a final version of this dashboard in order to meet our students where they are when the school year begins in August. The best part of this work is the growing understanding of a student’s learning profile that will support their progress and provide classroom teachers with additional insight.

Consequently, we have scheduled these literacy screenings for the first part of September. These efforts will take place for 9th and 10th grade students in their PE classes, while 11th and 12th grade students will be screened in their English classes. Should a student miss this first offering, a make-up opportunity will be available late September.

Palo Verde *Elementary School*

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



Annora Lee
Principal

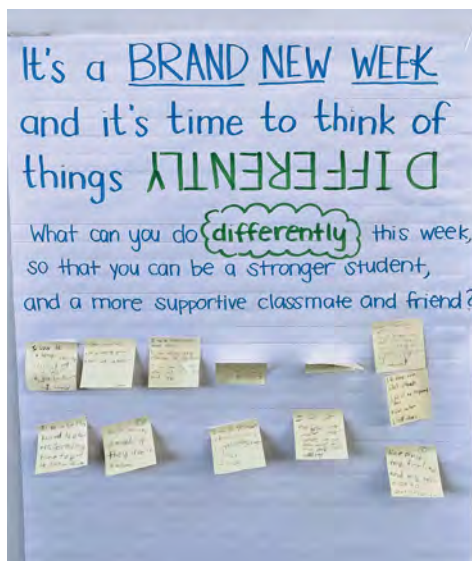
Excited for A New Beginning

What a difference a year makes! Our doors abruptly closed on a beautiful Friday last March. We filled backpacks with books, passed out computers, and hoped for a reunion after Spring Break. How could anyone have predicted the rapid succession of events that

would occur thereafter, and how it would dramatically alter our ways of educating students?

Today, our campus proudly houses full distance and in-person learning programs. Children engage in thoughtful, challenging work. They utilize technology tools with a level of sophistication and understanding that have surpassed all our expectations. Our parents continue to dutifully complete screeners and read important communications. Our new “normal” requires us to practice every safety precaution, but we have found creative ways to stay connected, whether it be through virtual magic shows or cupcake decorating events.

As we bid farewell to the 2020-21 school year, I remember the people who walked alongside me on this journey—the teachers and staff, but also devoted District



maintenance, food-safety, and transportation workers—who doubled shifts and duties to deliver for our kids. I am reminded of the parents who snuck messages of support and care packages to lift our spirits. No matter the challenge, kindness always found a way to emerge.

What awaits us in the Fall, you ask? A lot. Already, planning has begun to welcome our students back in as safe and supportive a setting as possible. We're studying data, collaborating with colleagues, and configuring our learning

spaces. We're excited for the new beginning, and hope you are too. After a year of shifts and uncertainty, every student will know that Palo Verde is where they belong.

So, the journey continues. Looking ahead, there will be twists and turns, and of course a few bumps in the road. But “doing hard things together” isn't new to Palo Verde. We are a strong, resilient community, and whatever the future holds, we're in it together.

Walter Hays *Elementary School*

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



Mary Bussmann
Principal

Earth is Our Home

I take a quiet breath, thinking about what the pandemic has taught me.

It revealed our remarkable capacity to adapt, to face fears with action, and to consider, “What will I do with the time I have? What matters?” As the Apollo 9 Astronaut Rusty Schweickart said of his view of Earth from space: “You realize that on that little blue and white thing there is everything

that means anything to you, all history, music, poetry, art, death, birth, and love, all of it, on that little spot out there you can cover with your thumb!”

Earth is our home. It is a place of tremendous opportunities for all. Each child that comes to Walter Hays is worthy and deserving of the best education we can offer. We stand strong in this commitment. Our goal is to instill enthusiasm, hope, kindness, safety, and a strong and solid ability to read, write, solve problems, and think critically! We build empathy, inclusion, initiative, perseverance,

resilience, responsibility, integrity, cooperation, as well as respect for each other and ourselves!

Why? Because nurturing and engaging children is the most vital work on this precious Earth. It launches children into strong and confident people ready to live a life of freedom and taking advantage of opportunities before them. This work enables children to develop their own voice, advocating for themselves and others. We develop leaders, who listen and serve others that do not yet have the opportunities they deserve!

The world has not yet acknowledged that all people are entitled to an equitable life. We stand here to say, “Yes, it is time, and this is the work before us.”

Children are counting on us. One book I have read to students says it all:

“We're part of a community.

Our strength is our diversity.

A shelter from adversity.

All are welcome here.”

All Are Welcome Here, by Penfold & Kaufman



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