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Covering the Palo Alto Unified School District

Volume 7, Issue 21 May 2025



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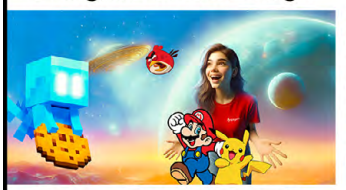
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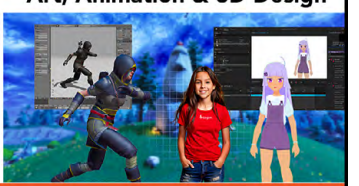
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Dr. Donald B. Austin
Superintendent of Schools

Reflections on the Year

As we reach the close of another school year, our students prepare to move on to the next chapter of their lives. What began with anticipation and new school shoes has now given way to summer break, outgrown clothes, and the clearing of desks.

This time of year offers a natural moment to reflect. For students, it's a pause before the next challenge. For staff, it's a chance to reset, recharge, and prepare. And for some, it marks a meaningful transition. At our recent retirement celebration, I was reminded of just how many individuals have dedicated decades, with some nearing 40 years of service to our students and schools. Their contributions are deeply appreciated and will leave a lasting mark.

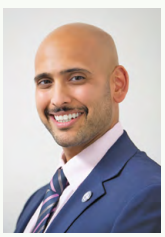
One of the unique things about school communities is their built-in opportunity for renewal. Each year brings a fresh start. People can grow, improve, and redefine their roles. The same is true for organizations. Palo Alto Unified has much to be proud of, and we are never done getting better. That's the challenge and promise of our work.

To those moving on: thank you. To those returning: rest up. This is a special place, and together, we will continue to move it forward.

Board of Education



Shana Segal
President



Shounak Dharap
Vice President



Rowena Chiu
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Alison Kamhi
Member



Josh Salcman
Member

By Shana Segal, President

In recent months, we have engaged in a thoughtful examination of the next iteration of the Promise. Through this process, a refined conceptual model was introduced, illustrated as a Venn diagram, with the PAUSD student at the center. Surrounding this core are four essential pillars: Foundational Skills and Knowledge, Future Readiness, Well-Rounded Experiences, and Social-Emotional Learning. These are supported by cross-cutting themes vital to a modern education: Civic Engagement and Social Responsibility and Climate Sustainability. In addition, a renewed and elevated focus is placed on Special Education, ensuring that every learner is seen, supported, and empowered to thrive.

This evolving framework deepens our understanding of what it means to prepare students not only for college and career, but for life. It challenges us to provide rigorous, engaging instruction for all learners while ensuring that our most vulnerable students receive the support they need to meet—and exceed—core learning goals.

We envision a learning environment where every student is equipped to think critically, act compassionately, and contribute meaningfully. By fostering a culture of challenge, inclusion, and service, our entire community is strengthened.

Thank you for your continued trust and partnership. The Promise is not just a document—it is a shared belief in the unlimited potential of every PAUSD student.

School News

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25 YEARS

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Jeff Downing
Principal

Final Thoughts for the 24/25 School Year

As the final bell of this centennial school year at Addison Elementary in Palo Alto draws near, a profound sense of pride and reflection washes over our classrooms and hallways. This year, marking our 100th anniversary, has been an especially remarkable journey of growth, not just in terms of academic achievements, but in the personal development of each and every one of our students, building upon a century of learning and community.

We've witnessed young minds blossom with curiosity, tackling new concepts in mathematics, science, and literature with enthusiasm. From mastering multiplication tables to crafting compelling narratives, our students have demonstrated remarkable progress in their learning, adding to Addison's long history of academic excellence. But beyond the curriculum, we've also seen profound personal growth.

Friendships have deepened, collaborative spirits have strengthened, and a greater sense of empathy has flourished within our school community. Students have learned the value of teamwork, resilience in the face of challenges, and the importance of kindness towards one another, echoing the values that have shaped Addison for a century. They have discovered new passions, built confidence in their abilities, and matured into more thoughtful and responsible individuals, ready to carry forward the legacy of Addison.

The laughter echoing in the playground, the thoughtful discussions in the classroom, and the supportive environment fostered by our dedicated teachers and staff have all contributed to this holistic development, a testament to 100 years of commitment. As we prepare to bid farewell for the summer, we celebrate the remarkable strides our students have made, knowing they are ready to embrace new adventures with knowledge, confidence, and compassion, grounded in a century of learning and growth at Addison Elementary. The memories and lessons learned here, especially during this milestone year, will undoubtedly serve as a strong foundation for their future endeavors.





Dr. Judy Jaramillo Argumedo
Principal

Barron Park Social Justice School Wide Land Acknowledgement

At Barron Park Elementary, our commitment to social justice learning continues to grow through meaningful, student-driven initiatives.Barron Park has implemented a Social Justice Literacy Plan for the past four years, which was launched by the book Water Protectors by Carole Lindstrom. Our students and staff have deepened their understanding of the history, culture, and ongoing contributions of Native Americans through Principal Read Alouds. Through classroom discussions, collaborative projects, and reflective learning, students explored the importance of land acknowledgment and the value of honoring Indigenous voices.

As a result of this powerful learning journey, the Barron Park community came together to create a collective statement pledging to honor the Muwekma Ohlone and to protect the land we share. This statement reflects not only our respect for the Indigenous community but also our dedication to nurturing a culture of inclusion, responsibility, and awareness. We are proud of our students for leading with curiosity and compassion, and we will continue to build on this work in partnership with our broader community.



The 2023-24 fifth grade class gifted a Land Acknowledgement plaque to the school, which will be put up in May. The following is the statement on the plaque:

"Barron Park Elementary school is committed to Social Justice and understanding how our actions and words create meaning that live on for generations. Our school sits on the ancestral land of the Muwekma Ohlone People. We acknowledge the land and the people and the continued kinship. The Barron Park School would like to thank the Muwekma Ohlone people for their past stewardship of the land before colonization. As our community learns, plays, and uses their ancestral home to educate young children we would like to honor the Muwekma Ohlone by caring for Barron Park Elementary with respect and dignity.





Students doing a variety of projects:



Brittany Gardner
Principal

Community Connection

As the school year draws to a close, the Duveneck Elementary community reflects with pride and gratitude on a year filled with learning, growth, and togetherness. One of the greatest strengths of Duveneck is its strong, connected community—and this spring has been a shining example of just that.

Our recent Open House and Volunteer Breakfast was a wonderful celebration of the heart and soul of our school. Classrooms buzzed with excitement as students proudly shared their projects and learning with families. The whole school joined together on the blacktop for a musical thank you performance put together by music teacher Lisa Sinclair. The morning ended with a heartfelt breakfast honoring the many volunteers who give their time and energy to enrich our students' experiences. It was a joyful moment of appreciation, and a reminder of how much we can accomplish when we work together.

Another highlight this spring was our Earth Day Picnic, our second family picnic of the year. Families gathered on the field, sharing lunch and laughter while celebrating our shared commitment to caring for the planet. Students were encouraged to bring earth-friendly lunches, sparking thoughtful conversations about sustainability and responsibility. These picnics are more than just a fun break in the day—they are a reflection of how we intentionally build community and model values that extend beyond the classroom.

As we look ahead to summer, we carry with us the spirit of Duveneck: a place where children grow not just academically, but as thoughtful, engaged members of a vibrant community. Thank you to all our families, staff, and volunteers for helping to make this year so meaningful. We look forward to finishing strong and welcoming a new year with the same sense of connection and purpose that makes Duveneck such a special place.



Duveneck students perform a thank you song for parent volunteers



Second grade students show their parents around the classroom during Open House



Leonel Argumedo
Principal

School Year at a Glance

As we approach the end of another incredible school year, I want to take a moment to reflect on the progress we've made and express my heartfelt gratitude to our amazing school community.

I am incredibly proud of the work our staff has done this year to support the academic growth and social-emotional learning of our students. Through intentional instruction, relationship-building, and thoughtful classroom practices, our teachers have created warm, welcoming environments where students feel safe, supported, and ready to learn. Their unwavering dedication, creativity, and compassion have helped our students thrive in and beyond the classroom.

We are seeing tremendous growth in reading, as reflected in our recent iReady scores and we anticipate similar gains in math as the year wraps up. None of this progress would be possible without the commitment of our educators, who bring passion and care into their classrooms each and every day.

Our school's commitment to implementing the new MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports) framework introduced by the district will continue to next school year. Our teacher's efforts in this area, along with a strong focus on improving student literacy in writing, have moved us closer to our collective goal of ensuring every child receives the support they need to thrive academically, socially and emotionally as outlined in PAUSD's Promise.

Our school community wouldn't be the same without the continued partnership and generosity of our PTA. From organizing lunch activities, welcoming cultural guest performers, and hosting the student talent show, to many other enriching events, the PTA has played a vital role in celebrating our rich diversity. These collaborative efforts have helped foster a greater sense of inclusion, belonging, and school pride.

As we close out the year, I want to thank the families, staff, and students for the heart and energy you bring to El Carmelo every day. Together, we've made this a memorable and meaningful year, and I look forward to building on that momentum in the year ahead.

Wishing you a joyful and restful end to the school year!





Ellen Fletcher *Middle School*

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Melissa Howell
Principal

Finishing Thoughts of the Year

As we come to the close of another incredible school year, I want to take a moment to reflect with immense gratitude on the journey we've shared. We are beyond fortunate to spend our days with such amazing students, dedicated staff, and supportive families. Together, we have created a community that is vibrant, caring, and committed to learning and growth.

Each school year is bookended by special moments, and this one has been no exception. From the excitement of the first day to the anticipation of year-end celebrations, we have filled the months in between with rich experiences that will leave lasting memories. We kicked off the school year with 6th Grade WEB (Where Everybody Belongs) Orientation and right into 6th grade Tiger Camp. All our students have explored the world around them through field trips to outdoor overnight science education camp in the Marin Headlands, the Academy of Sciences, the San Jose Technology Museum, and numerous college campuses alongside our AVID, Focus on Success, and Academic Planning teams.

Our school spirit has shone brightly in every event, from ongoing student and staff spirit events, Special Olympics, including soccer, basketball, and track and field. These moments brought students, staff, and families together and connected us with other school communities in powerful ways.

As we approach the final stretch, we're excited for the big events that mark this special time of year. Our 8th graders will celebrate their accomplishments at promotion, enjoy their trip to Great America, and cap it all off with an unforgettable end-of-year party. Our current WEB leaders will soon pass the torch to the next group of student leaders, ensuring our legacy of mentorship and community lives on.

While we look forward to the joy these celebrations bring, we also recognize the bittersweet nature of saying "see you later" to students and staff moving on to new adventures. We wish them well and thank them for the memories they've helped create at Fletcher. Go Tigers!



WEB Leaders - 2024



Special Olympics



Outdoor overnight Science Camp



Tigers

Escondido *Elementary School*

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



Leslie Crane
Principal

A Year of Progress and Community Engagement

As the school year draws to a close, it's a good time to look back on all that we've accomplished. This year brought the successful completion of our construction project, providing students with a wonderful new performance space that has already enhanced their learning experiences.

We were also pleased to host a variety of community events throughout the year. Our Multicultural Fair offered a chance to celebrate the diverse cultures within our school, while Unity Day promoted understanding and connection among students. We also enjoyed a meaningful Dia de los Muertos celebration, engaging field trips that broadened classroom learning, and class performances that built teamwork and confidence. The talent show, held for the first time in our new performance space, was a fantastic showcase of student abilities.

Beyond these special events, we also implemented low-waste lunch protocols, encouraging responsible habits among our students.

Throughout the year, our focus remained on student growth in all areas. We saw continued progress in literacy and math skills, alongside the development of important social-emotional competencies. It's been rewarding to see our students feel increasingly connected and comfortable within our school environment. This year has been a productive one, and we appreciate the contributions of our students, families, and staff.





Escondido students and staff wearing orange to celebrate Unity Day.



Trebor Winslow
Principal

Firebirds on the Rise

As we wrap up this school year, it's a great time to reflect on all the amazing experiences that made this year special at Fairmeadow. From a new logo and a fresh start to the many events that brought our community together, it has been a year full of growth and excitement.

Our students had the opportunity to engage in a variety of activities, including the Walk-a-Thon, ice skating party, and memorable theater performances. Clubs like the Student Council, Garden Club, Walking Club, Noon Sports, and Student Art Club, as well as programs like Spectra Art, Reading Club, and PE, gave students the chance to explore their passions. Highlights like the 3rd-grade Bike Rodeo, 4th-grade Gold Rush Day, and 5th-grade science camp allowed students to experience hands-on learning in fun ways.

One of the most inspiring moments was our students' participation in the Special Olympics, where athletes from our three learning centers shined. These events truly captured the heart of Fairmeadow—celebrating diversity, inclusion, and teamwork.

Parent involvement grew significantly, with our PTA and School Site Council thriving, and Project Cornerstone fostering a supportive environment for all.

Looking ahead, we're excited to welcome new staff members next year and continue strengthening our school community. Over the summer, we'll also be making facility improvements to enhance the learning environment for all students. These updates will help us continue building on the positive momentum we've created this year.

This year, we've witnessed the incredible talents and dedication of our staff and the remarkable growth of our students. We look forward to another year of success as we continue to build on these achievements and make Fairmeadow an even better place for learning.

Here's to another great year ahead!









Nikole Manou
Principal

Celebrating the Journey

As this incredible school year comes to a close, it is important to pause and celebrate the amazing journey we've taken together. Every student at Hoover and Greendell has grown in remarkable ways, and their curiosity, courage, and joyful energy have shaped a vibrant school community.

Wrapping up our second successful year at the temporary Greendell site marks a significant milestone in the shared story of Hoover and Greendell. This unique chapter has offered an opportunity not only to learn and grow together, but to build a sense of family. Together, staff and students have created a supportive environment rooted in care, collaboration, and connection.

One of the most powerful aspects of the year has been the development of a respectful and inclusive community. Students consistently demonstrated what it means to treat others with kindness, to listen with empathy, and to support one another. A recent example of this was seen during the celebration of Young Athletes Day, where Hoover students enthusiastically cheered on and supported Greendell preschoolers in this special education event. These everyday acts of compassion and respect have made the school more than a place of learning—it has become a place where everyone feels seen, valued, and safe.



This year also brought a deepening sense of community among staff and students. Student-led clubs have expanded from five last year to an impressive fourteen, including the Kindness Club, Crochet Club, and Origami Club. This increased engagement reflects a stronger sense of belonging and initiative among students. Additionally, the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) survey showed a 2% increase in students feeling safe and connected on the temporary campus, further underscoring this positive growth.

The year brought change, challenges, and countless opportunities—and each was met with creativity, resilience, and kindness. Students embraced new ideas, formed meaningful friendships, and discovered the strength within themselves to shine. A highlight of the year was the introduction of monthly All-School Assemblies, where grade levels performed skits, sang songs, and celebrated one another in a spirit of unity.



The success of this year is a direct result of the collective efforts of both staff and students who turned a temporary situation into a thriving and nurturing environment. Looking ahead, a significant transition awaits, as Hoover prepares to return to its newly rebuilt campus. While this change marks the beginning of a new chapter, the memories, friendships, and collaborations formed during this shared experience will continue to shape the journey forward.





Courtney Carlomagno
Principal

Beyond Academics: 180 Days of Student Growth

Across the nation, students from kindergarten through 12th grade spend their days in school. While academics like reading, writing, and math are central, the learning that unfolds over 180 days extends far beyond textbooks. Students acquire life skills ranging from the practical, like opening a combination lock, to the interpersonal, such as resolving conflicts with classmates. The student experience varies significantly by grade level, and as this year at Frank S. Greene Jr. Middle School draws to a close, I'd like to share a glimpse into what that journey looks like for each grade.

Our 6th graders embark on a journey of discovery, learning the rhythms of middle school – mastering lockers, Chromebooks, and the flow of classes. They dive into electives through the Wheel program and experience the energy of their first Spirit Rally and school dance. This year is all about navigating a new environment and finding their place.

7th graders return with confidence, quickly realizing the increased academic rigor. They develop crucial skills in essay writing, scientific experimentation, and, most importantly, build a strong support system with peers and adults to manage their workload effectively. This year focuses on academic adjustment and strengthening interpersonal connections.

Finally, our 8th graders start the year strong, navigating the familiar campus with ease. As the year progresses, their focus shifts to the future, learning to articulate their anxieties and navigate the high school registration process, leaving them prepared for their next adventure. This year is a bridge, connecting their middle school experiences to the exciting possibilities ahead.



6th Graders at Spirit Rally in Fall 2024



Dr. Wendy Stratton
Principal

Ending the Year on a High Note

As the 2024–25 academic year draws to a close, Gunn students are finishing strong, showcasing their talents and dedication through a series of enriching experiences over spring break and the subsequent weeks.

Musical Achievements

During spring break, Gunn Choir traveled to New York City to participate in the WorldStrides/Heritage Performance Festival. Their exceptional performances earned Gold Ratings for all three choirs, with the Concert Choir receiving the highest score, winning the Choral Sweepstakes award. Simultaneously, the school's orchestra and band toured Southern California, engaging in workshops at UCLA and performing at Disneyland, providing students with invaluable real-world musical experiences.



250 Instrumental Music Students attended a showcase at UCLA and toured the campus.



The Gunn Choir shines in NYC!

Academic and Cultural Endeavors

Our Japanese Level 2 and 3 classes competed in the 33rd National Japan Bowl in Washington, D.C., securing both first and second place in their respective levels, a testament to their hard work and dedication. Meanwhile, several of our Chinese language students participated in the 2025 United Nations Chinese Language Day Celebration and won awards at the National Chinese Talent Contest, showcasing their linguistic prowess and cultural understanding.

STEM and Health Sciences Engagements

The Gunn Robotics team demonstrated their engineering prowess by competing in Boise, Idaho, and engaging with peers nationwide. In the health sciences, students participated in the HOSA State Leadership Conference in Sacramento, marking the school's inaugural involvement in this prestigious event, which is designed for future health professionals.



Gunn Robotics Team (GRT) before they competed in Boise, Idaho!

Theatrical Exploration

Gunn Theatre students embarked on a transformative journey to Ashland, Oregon, to attend the 90th anniversary of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. They experienced a diverse lineup of performances, including Shakespearean classics and contemporary plays, which enriched their understanding of the theatrical arts and broadened their horizons.

These diverse experiences not only highlight the students' academic and extracurricular dedication but also reflect PAUSD's emphasis on holistic education, preparing students to excel in various fields and fostering a vibrant school and district culture.



50 Gunn Theatre students attended the Oregon Shakespeare Festival.



Japanese Class students, accompanied by Sensei Hall and Ms. Briana Gonzalez, take on the Japan Bowl in Washington, DC!

Jane Lathrop Stanford *Middle School*

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Christopher Grierson
Principal

What a Year, 2024-25!

As the final bell echoes through the JLS hallways, a wave of exhilaration and nostalgia washes over us. The year's electric energy softens into a quiet hum of reflection as lockers empty, mirroring minds preparing for a break. We recall several classroom triumphs: the "aha!" moments in Algebra, the achievement of a persuasive argument essay in English, the completion of a presentation in French, the satisfaction of ROPEs projects, and the collaborative spirit of group work and standing up to explain one's thinking. Witnessing our students articulate complex ideas with growing confidence has been truly inspiring - especially when they are our newcomer English Learners!

The year's soundtrack included the incredible talent showcased in Band, Orchestra, and Choir concerts, each solo a moment of pure awe. Beyond academics, spirited 3v3 basketball games and hilarious "Name That Tune" competitions added vibrant threads to our JLS memories. We also acknowledge the challenges faced, the assessments that stretched us, and the valuable lessons learned from those moments. Each experience, big or small, has enriched our middle school journey.

Friendships have deepened over laughter-filled lunches and through shared passions in clubs. Sporting events ignited our school spirit, forging connections that bind us together. As we look ahead to 2025-26, we bid farewell to our graduating 8th graders and eagerly anticipate welcoming a new class of 6th graders to our fully reunited campus. The completion of our construction project signals exciting new opportunities.

Our accomplishments would not have been possible without the helpful partnership of our parent community; our PTA's generosity have resulted in several field trips, curricular enhancements and numerous community-building events. Our collective JLS PRIDE has never been stronger. JLS is truly an amazing place to be. Here's to many more adventures in the years ahead at JLS!

Panthers Respect, Include, and Depend on Each other.



Student Council led 3v3 Basketball Tournaments during lunch times



Kathryn Bimpson
Principal

Celebrating a Year of Growth and Community

Education is a uniquely human endeavor—one that shapes not only our children's futures, but our society and world. As the year comes to a close, I'm incredibly proud of the growth our students have made, thanks to their hard work and the daily dedication and heart shown across our Briones community.

Each day, I see our staff—across all roles—going above and beyond to support student learning and well-being. From thoughtful instruction to collaborative problem-solving and relationship building, their commitment creates the foundation for student success.

Our parents and guardians are true partners in this work, showing up in countless ways—from volunteering in classrooms, programs, and at recess to supporting programs and events through PTA and PiE. Together, we've built a nurturing, connected, and inspiring environment for our kids.In our Family-School Connection survey, with responses from half of our families, 98.5% reported feeling included in the school community, 96.8% said their children feel like valued members of the community, and 99.2% believe that Briones is a safe place for their students.

As we wrap up a year of meaningful learning, it is important to celebrate the collective effort, growth, and joy that made this school year such a success and continue our collaboration in refining and improving our programs to meet the ever-changing needs of our beautifully diverse community.

Summer Fun 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: SchoolNewsKay@gmail.com (Please put Palo Alto USD in the subject line)

Entries must be received by July 15, 2025
From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win a $20 gift certificate redeemable at Barnes & Noble.

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Surfing
Swimming
Vacation
Volleyball
Water
Wave

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

Congratulations Cindy Wee winner of the February Word Search!

Lucille M. Nixon *Elementary School*

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Amy Sheward
Principal

Dolphins Swim Together

Whatever the weather, Nixon dolphins swim together! As we approach the final stretch of the school year, I want to take a moment to reflect on the incredible journey we've shared as a school community. It has been a year filled with growth, support, and unity—and I couldn't be prouder of what we've accomplished together.

Academically, our students have made tremendous strides. From our youngest learners discovering the joy of reading to our older students tackling more complex challenges, we've seen meaningful progress at every grade level. This success is a true testament to the dedication of our teachers, the hard work of our students, and the ongoing support from our families.

We've also continued to prioritize mental health, ensuring that both students and staff have access to the resources they need to thrive. Our mental associates, wellness programs, and social emotional learning curriculum have made a positive impact, enhancing the caring and supportive environment for all.

None of this would have been possible without the unwavering commitment of our PTA, our Partners in Education, and our many parent volunteers and donors. Your time, energy, and generosity have strengthened our school in countless ways, and we are truly grateful.

As we look ahead to the final weeks of the school year, let's finish strong together - united in our shared mission to support every student. Thank you to our community for being an essential part of our school family. Together, we've built something special, and I can't wait to see what's next.



Kinder dolphins celebrate acts of kindness.

Ohlone *Elementary School*

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Elsa Chen
Principal

Our school year consists of 180 days. While that seems like a lot, it truly goes by in a blur. And while some people will look back over summer and notice the state standard scores, or end of year celebrations, what they will miss are all of the little things that go into making those 180 days as valuable as possible for each and every student.

Some of those little things start at the top, with administration doing their best to learn each student's name, or trying to give teachers the resources they need to creatively teach the many subject areas they must cover. Some of the small things come from teachers, as they strive to tweak lessons so students can better understand a concept, or as they say goodbye each afternoon and tell their students they can't wait to see them tomorrow. And some of the minute details are covered by staff many people don't know, such as the aides, secretary, clerk, custodian, and lunch servers. This support extends to our parent community who make an intentional effort to show up for all students, not just their child.

However, the majority of the little things come from our students. Their ability to persevere, to tackle challenges, to adjust to change, their positive attitude and optimism; all of which they bring to Ohlone on a daily basis. Even as we draw ever nearer to the end of the school year, when they could be thinking more about their summer break plans than the task in front of them, Ohlone's students have shown that the small details matter. In the past month alone, we have had students independently create and give school-wide presentations about cleaning up our environment, being kind to all community members, and the importance of time management. They have continued to push us all to be the best we can be, regardless of what time of year it is. It is truly a privilege to (re) look at the world through our students' eyes, and to be there to support them in their learning and growth.



Football 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: SchoolNewsKay@gmail.com (Please put Palo Alto USD in the subject line)

Entries must be received by July 15, 2025
From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win
a $20 gift certificate redeemable at Barnes & Noble.

Clipping
Coach
Conversion
Cornerback
Defense
Field Goal
Flanker
Goal Post
Interference
Kicker
Linebacker
Loss of Down
Offsides
Personal Foul
Possession
Quarterback
Roughing
Safety
Scrimmage
Special Teams
Super Bowl
Tackle
Tailback
Touchdown
Yardage

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



Jim Sherman
Principal

Spotlight on Chag-Hee Lee: Violin Instructor Extraordinaire

At Palo Alto Adult School, we're incredibly proud of our program—and it's our amazing staff that makes it so special. As the school year wraps up, we'd love to shine a spotlight on one of our outstanding instructors: violinist Chag-Hee Lee.

A native of Seoul, Korea, Chag-Hee began her musical journey at YeWon School and Seoul Arts High School. She earned her degree from the Korean National University of Arts and Music, followed by a Master of Music from Indiana University and a Doctor of Musical Arts from the University of Maryland. Her training includes study with renowned teachers such as Nam Yoon Kim, Sung Ju Lee, Ik Hwan Bae, Jonathan Carney, and Dr. Gerald Fischbach.

Chag-Hee's artistry has taken her to prestigious stages, including a debut recital at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall in 2006, sponsored by Artists International. Her performance was praised as "focused and pure" by the New York Concert Review. She's performed as a soloist with orchestras in Korea and the U.S., including the Seoul and Indiana University Symphony Orchestras.

She has also participated in music festivals like Aspen, Banff, and the National Orchestral Institute, and played with the Baltimore Symphony as a substitute violinist. In the Bay Area, she performs with Symphony San Jose, Nova Solisti Chamber Orchestra, and serves as concertmaster for the Mission College Symphony.

In addition to performing, Chag-Hee teaches at Mission College and the College of San Mateo, and regularly serves as a competition judge for young musicians.

At Palo Alto Adult School now since September 2023, she teaches beginning and intermediate violin with passion and care, inspiring students with her deep musical knowledge and love of teaching. We're honored to have Chag-Hee as part of our community.



Violinist Chag-Hee Lee



Congratulations Class of 2025! from the *School News* Staff.



Brent Kline
Principal

Finishing the Year with Celebration and Connection

As we approach the end of the school year, it's easy to focus on the finish line—finals, graduation, and the long list of last-minute tasks. But this spring, one event at Palo Alto High School reminded us all to pause and appreciate the journey: our first-ever Cultural Celebration.

The event brought together students, staff, and families in a powerful display of our school values—*Learn, Connect, Respect*. Held in early April, the celebration featured a vibrant assembly of student-led performances that highlighted traditions from around the world through music, dance, and spoken word. It was the first time our school has hosted a cultural assembly of this kind, and it left a lasting impression.

Following the assembly, the celebration continued in the quad with a Spring Fling food festival, where the PTSA and Paly families generously provided cultural dishes and treats for the entire student body. The atmosphere was festive and welcoming—students connecting with peers, learning about each other's heritage, and expressing genuine curiosity and appreciation for the diverse community we share.

What stood out most was the pride and authenticity with which students shared their cultural identities. Whether on stage or through food and displays, our students embraced the opportunity to teach, to represent, and to celebrate. Staff and students alike walked away feeling more connected—and reminded of the richness that diversity brings to a school community.

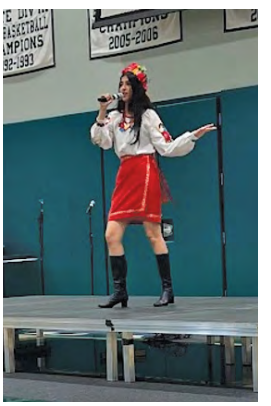
As we close the year, it's moments like these that ground us. They remind us that beyond the academics, the schedules, and the pressures of high school, our role is also to nurture belonging and respect. This celebration wasn't just a day of performances and good food—it was a meaningful reminder of who we are when we come together.

I'm proud of our students for leading this work, and grateful to our families and PTSA for making the celebration possible. As we reflect on the year's challenges and accomplishments, I hope we carry this spirit of inclusion and community forward—not just at the end of the year, but into every season.













Paly Cultural Day

Palo Alto Middle College *High School*

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



Emily Garrison
Principal

Finishing Thoughts for the Year

As our inaugural academic year draws to a close, one word resonates deeply: gratitude. Here at Palo Alto Middle College High School, we have so much to be thankful for!

We extend our sincere gratitude to our new PTSA, established just this year. Parents, guardians, and students have worked tirelessly to build this unit from the ground up. In partnership with PTAC and the local Sixth District PTA, our PTSA has quickly become exceptional. Their dedication has enriched our students' experience with numerous exciting school events and fostered a strong sense of community.

We are also incredibly thankful for our dedicated staff. Though small in number, we are mighty in spirit! Our teachers have embraced significant initiatives, from the school-wide implementation of Evidence-Based Teaching and Learning (EBTL) to forging collaborative relationships with our college colleagues. Their commitment to learning, student support, and approaching new challenges with positivity is truly commendable.

Finally, we would not be the outstanding school we are without our remarkable students. These academic pioneers willingly joined a new school, taking a calculated risk in pursuit of academic excellence and personal growth. We are immensely proud of their achievements this year. Overwhelmingly, our students have excelled in their college courses, often performing so well that professors have taken the time to commend the PAMC staff. Furthermore, PAMC students have demonstrated maturity and consistent kindness in their interactions and care for one another within our community. Our current students will be instrumental leaders in welcoming our new PAMC students in August, as we open for grades 9-12.

Thank you to everyone at PAMC who has made our first year a positive and unforgettable experience. We eagerly anticipate year two as PAMC continues to embody our school slogan and enjoy the journey of learning.



Teachers Tatiana Martinez and Steven Shirley helped set everything up for students and serve pie!



The Mardi gras celebration took place as part of our Black History Month supported by guidance counselor Rachel Dial.



Finally, students can now enjoy the new Wellness Center at Foothill College.





The Pi Day celebration gave students a chance to play math games and puzzles while eating pie provided by our PTSA.



Annora Lee
Principal

Finishing Thoughts for the Year

You're reading this message in May, but I'm writing it towards the end of March. It's difficult to reflect on the work of this year when so exciting work remains to be done. Every day, in every classroom, rich learning continues. Students are engaging, extending their knowledge of grade level content, and building agency through projects that promote choice and critical thinking. They're learning the stories of others, while practicing how to share their own. There's a synergy throughout campus that's hard to describe, but impossible to overlook.

It's gratifying to think back at all we have already accomplished since August. Over the span of a few months, we've held a school play, Walk-a-Thon, celebrated plenty of Spirit Days, and hosted some exciting assemblies. Our teachers have engaged in professional development aimed to deepen their work around The PAUSD Promise. Our work's sole purpose has been to ensure that no matter their grade, teacher, or circumstance, all students feel they can thrive.

The work continues. Before our year comes to a close, treasured traditions will make their return. Before promotion, 5th graders will host Eaglesberg for the community, a hands-on simulation of colonial times. Author celebrations, student Ted Talks, and so much more are already filling the calendar. And let's not forget our amazing PTA, who never disappoint with International Fair, our online auction, and our Parent Appreciation Picnic. With the little time we have left, I encourage you to ask your child about what fun memories are being made at school. Better yet, reach out to their teacher to see how you can get involved!





Iris Wong
Principal

Final Reflections on an Incredible Year

As we wrap up an amazing school year at Walter Hays Elementary, I want to take a moment to reflect on all we've accomplished together. This year marked my first year as a Wildcat, and I truly enjoyed getting to know our wonderful students, dedicated staff, and supportive families. I remain committed to fostering a safe, welcoming, and fun learning environment while maintaining our school's tradition of academic excellence and Core Values Mission. I am inspired every day by our students and hard-working staff and teachers.

We celebrated many long-standing Walter Hays traditions that continue to bring our amazing community together—Fall Festival, Library Open House, Community Dinner, Winter Lodge, and Oceans Week were just a few of our memorable highlights this year! These events not only enrich our students' experiences but also strengthen our Wildcat school community.

As I look ahead, I remain committed to providing a nurturing space where every child flourishes. Thank you for making this year so special—I can't wait to see what the next year brings!





