



NIXON NEWS

Nixon PTA Newsletter—Vol. 2006-2007 Issue No. 1—August 25, 2006
The L.M. Nixon Elementary School, 1711 Stanford Ave., Stanford, CA 94305 (650) 856-1622 <http://www.nixon.pausd.org>

CALENDAR

Tues. Aug. 29
6:00 - 8:15 p.m.
Back to School Night
Adults Only

Mon. Sept. 4
No School (Labor Day)

Tues. Sept. 5
No School
(Staff Development Day)

Fri. Sept. 8, 8:15 a.m.
PTA Executive Board
Meeting

Mon. Sept. 11, 8:15 a.m.
Volunteer Orientation

Mon. Sept. 11, 9:15 a.m.
PTA General Meeting

Mon. Sept. 11, 2:40 p.m.
Site Council Meeting

Tues. Sept. 19
Nixon Night Out at Boston
Market

NEXT PUBLICATION

DATE: September 15

DEADLINE:

Thurs., Sept. 7 at 5:00 p.m.

Principal: Barbara Welch

PTA Presidents: Jan Rossi
and Leslie Fiedler

Editor: Vicki Dempsey
Layout: Liz Fendorf

Principal's Corner by Barbara Welch

Dear Nixon Families,

A very special thanks to all the PTA parents and staff who provided registration, the First Day Coffee, the First Day Packets, made school supplies available for student purchase, recruited classroom and library volunteers and launched our Enrichment classes. Teamwork is what makes Nixon such a wonderful place.

We have just had another successful first week back at school. The highlight of the week was our all school assembly on friendship where each class pledges to help one another through the year and students and staff sing. Back to School Night (BTSN) is next Tuesday, August 29th. This is an event no parent will want to miss. This year the kindergarten through second grade will meet with their teachers in their child's classroom from 6:00-6:45 p.m. At

6:50 p.m. all parents will meet in the theater to meet the new staff and I will briefly share this year's focus. Our annual back to school family picnic with your teacher and classmates will be Thursday, September 28th.

There are several new faces at Nixon. Kevin Stevens and Kristina Hayes will continue with us while Britt Brown and Sandra Fujii stay home this year with their new children. Marie Legrande is joining us in the Special Day Class and Kim Bossi brings a wealth of experience to the kindergarten. Smita Kolhatkar will be working with Suzie Deutsch while Martha Waterhouse is out this fall. All of these teachers spent a large part of August designing their classrooms and preparing standards-based lessons.

Continued on Page 2

PTA Presidents' Message by Jan Rossi and Leslie Fiedler

Welcome Nixon Families from the PTA!

The PTA has finished its first tasks of the year: Registration *Day* and the *Welcome Back Coffee*. Ellen Waxman led the Registration Day effort along with committee members Poornima DeBolle and Madvi Raya. This team spent weeks preparing and organizing to assure that the Nixon community experienced a successful Registration Day. A special treat were Nixon students leading campus tours from the New Families Table organized by Barbara Zhang. Once again, Brenda Liu provided us with a perfectly enjoyable *Welcome Back Coffee* on the first day of school. The Nixon Community sincerely thanks you, Ellen, Madvi, Poornima and Brenda, along

with the many volunteers who helped make for a successful beginning to the school year. Thank you all for volunteering your valuable time on these two very important days.

Regarding PTA meetings, please know that all parents are welcome and encouraged to attend Nixon PTA meetings. This includes the Executive Board meetings and the General PTA Membership meetings. The *Executive Board Meetings* will be held on the first Friday of each month in the teacher's lounge. *This* September, the meeting will be held on the second Friday, September 8th, from 8:15-10:00 a.m. The *General Membership Meetings* will be held on various months at 11:45 a.m.-1:00 p.m. on the

Principal's Corner *continued from Page 1*

Who Makes It Happen

As I will share with you at BTSN we will receive \$111,300 from the foundation, Parents in Education (PiE) this year (our allotment is based on enrollment). The money will be used to provide support personnel in reading, math, computer technology, Spectra Art and two classroom aides. PiE funds are our primary source for supplemental personnel salaries. PTA money cannot be used for that purpose. Any donation that you make to the foundation directly supports Nixon students. For the last two years we have received substantially more money than we have contributed as a community. I believe one reason for our low percentage of families contributing may be that parents are not fully aware of the limited resource areas that schools may use for personnel. Without PiE funds we would **not** have math, reading, computer and art support. If you have any questions about the process please contact me. Contribute what you can. Any amount makes a difference.

School Improvement Plan

Site and PTA budgets are based on the School Improvement Plan (SIP), which is developed each spring from staff, Site Council and District input. The first of November, an assessment of last year's plan, and this year's School Plan and budget are presented to the PAUSD School Board for approval. Below is an outline of the goals of the 06-07 plan. These are the broad goals only. If you would like to look at the plan in greater depth, it will be available after November 8th in the office. The full document includes not only the goals, but also the activities to support the goals and the assessments used at the end of the year to evaluate it. Each year the primary job of the Site Council is overseeing the implementation of the plan and the approximately \$32,000 in categorical funds that accompany it. All Site Council meetings are open to the Nixon community and the meetings are on the first Monday of each month from 2:40-4:10 p.m. This is another excellent way to see the plan in action.

Goals of Nixon's School Improvement Plan for 2006-07

Reading, Math and Writing

- Ensure academic growth and achievement and an appropriate level of challenge for all students.
- Close the achievement gap among students in different racial/ethnic groups as measured individual student gains on multiple measures.

Meeting the Needs of Special Education Students

- Provide identified students with a variety of strategies to access the core curriculum.

- Provide communication between the school community and families of special education students.

Meeting the Needs of Gifted, Talented and High Achieving Students

- Identify, support, and challenge the gifted and talented student within the classroom.

Meeting the Needs of English Language Learners

- Improve ELL ability to access the curriculum in English.
- Integrate ELL and their families into the school-wide community.

School Climate and Learning Environment

- Foster social-emotional health and resilience in every student as measured by improved student attitudes and behaviors.
- Support opportunities for the staff and families to work together to build a strong, mutually respectful community.
- Provide diverse avenues for student success, which honor the unique talents and abilities of each student.

As you can see these goals are written with a broad stroke. The essence of the plan is in the activities to achieve them. Using these goals as a springboard, the Nixon teachers will focus their staff development this year on: 1. Implementing the new writing materials developed last year to support the six-traits of writing and a variety of writing genre. 2. Developing and revising math assessments at each grade level which were written this last summer. We will continue to explore several teaching strategies to differentiate our math curriculum in order to support and challenge all students.

Additionally, we will be supporting the "whole children" by focusing on more comprehensive playground supervision and student based activities. We will also address three more Lifeskills through direct classroom instruction, student activities and assemblies.

Have you modeled for your children today?

In my opening column I am *challenging* each of you to find one volunteer opportunity at Nixon. There are a variety of jobs for parents who work. We all know how important it is to show our young people that being a caring community member is important. Here are some suggestions to consider: our garden could use some TLC; clerical work for the

Continued on Page 3

Principal's Corner *continued from Page 2*

classroom teachers can be taken home and done there. The Pumpkin Festival, the Book Fair, Family Fun Nights, Math Night and the annual community activity in the spring are all one-time commitments. All of these are family activities, which don't take you away from your children, but allow them to participate in community activities. Thank you for considering these options.

As always, thank you for ensuring that our children will have a meaningful year at Nixon.

Barbara

PTA Presidents' Message *continued from Page 1*

Monday after the Executive Board meeting, in the Nixon Theater. If you would like to suggest an item for the agenda, please notify us as soon as you can prior to the meeting, and every effort will be made to include your concern on the agenda. The meeting times may be subject to change, and the Nixon community will be notified in advance if the meeting days or times are rescheduled. Our first September meeting will be held at 9:15 a.m. directly following the Volunteer Orientation meeting (at 8:15 a.m.) on Monday September 11th. We invite you to attend to learn more about the Nixon PTA.

Finally, for reference, I have listed the names and email addresses of the Executive Board members and their positions. If there are any questions or comments regarding Nixon, the PTA, or any of its events, please feel free to contact Jan Rossi, Leslie Fiedler, or any of the Board members listed below.

We look forward to a wonderful 2006-07 at Nixon!

Jan and Leslie

President	Jan Rossi	janrossi@megapathdsl.net
Executive VP	Leslie Fiedler	ljfgmm@earthlink.net
VP Student Programs	Leisa Waschura	leisa_waschura@synthesysresearch.com
VP Family Programs	Jo Marcus	jomarcus@sbcglobal.net
VP Communications	Vicki Dempsey	vldempsey@yahoo.com
Treasurer	Yoshimi Munch	ymunch@yahoo.com
Auditor	Brad Cherry	bcherry1@stanford.edu
Financial Secretary	Brenda Liu	brendayliu@hotmail.com
Secretary	Gioia Allegretti	gallegretti@teamcg.com
Historian	Barbara Yu Zhang	byu@us.ibm.com
Parliamentarian	Catherine Matterson	cmatterson@gordonrees.com
PTA Site Council Rep	Suzie Lincoln	slincoln@stanfordalumni.org

Calling All Volunteers

Come September 11th to our annual volunteer meeting!

Your child's class needs parents to plan fun parties, track classroom dollars (be the treasurer), volunteer in the classroom, and coordinate volunteers for the teacher. All of these jobs are great ways to show your child your interest in their education, and some can be done easily from home.

* **Party Parents (also known as room parents):** Plans class parties, usually with teacher input and guidance

* **Field Trip Coordinator:** Coordinates field trip drivers, permission slips, and payments

* **Classroom Volunteer Coordinator (CVC):** Schedules parent volunteers to help in the classroom, mostly at the beginning of the year

* **Treasurer:** Collects money for subscriptions and field

trips and keeps track of expenses

* **Garden Coordinator:** Coordinates parent help for gardening and landscaping projects

You can sign up for classroom volunteer positions at Back to School Night or at our volunteer meeting on Monday, September 11 at 8:15 a.m. in the Theater. The optional volunteer meeting will help you get started with volunteering in the classroom and will explain our upcoming events at school for the year. If you have already signed up to help in the classroom, thank you! If you have any questions, contact Linda Baker.

1st PTA Meeting of the Year Everyone Welcome!

The first general PTA meeting of the year will be held on Monday, September 11, 9:15-10:15 a.m. (immediately following the volunteer orientation meeting), in the Nixon theater. This meeting is open to all interested parents and staff. Please come and find out what PTA has planned for this year.

Extra Computer in the House? Here is a Way to Help Nixon.

We have opened a fourth kindergarten classroom for the 2006-2007 school year. If you have any playhouse furniture (play kitchen, plastic dishes and food, or small table and chairs) that is in good condition, we could use it. We are also looking for wooden puzzles and picture books. Our new teacher would also like a couple of computers to run math and reading software. We can only accept computers with the following minimum configuration:

- 500 MHz CPU
- 128 MByte RAM
- 15 GByte Hard Drive
- CD-ROM
- Network Card
- Sound Card
- Windows 2000 or Windows XP

The operating system doesn't need to be installed on the computer—you may want to protect your privacy by formatting the drive. However, we need a legal Windows Operating systems license (Certificate of Authenticity) with the computer in order to reinstall and run the system at school.

If you have items to donate, please contact Barbara Welch .

Nixon Enrichment Classes for the Fall *A Nixon PTA Sponsored Event*

Extra copies of the enrichment packet containing flyers and registration forms for Fall classes are available at the office if you didn't pick one up at Registration Day or the Welcome Back Coffee. Please note that the fee listed on the F4Ed Math flyer was incorrect; check their web site for the correct information. Also, PAPPА Clay class will begin on 9/7/06 rather than 8/31 as listed on the flyer.

The Schedule: The following table summarizes all enrichment classes. Even though every effort was made to ensure that this table is accurate, please contact the provider for more details.

Day	Class	Start Time	End Time	Start Date	Grades
Monday	Spanish K	11:35	12:05	9/11/06	K
	Spanish Beg	2:20	3:05	9/11/06	4,5
	F4Ed Math	2:20	3:50	10/9/06	all
Tuesday	Spanish Beg	2:20	3:05	9/12/06	1,2,3
Wednesday	Chess	1:40	2:55	9/13/06	all
	Spanish Adv	1:30	2:15	9/13/06	1,2,3
	Art	1:30	2:15	9/6/06	all
Thursday	Music	2:30	3:20	9/14/06	4,5
	Spanish Beg	2:20	3:05	9/14/06	1,2,3
	PAPPА Art Clay	2:20	3:50	9/7/06	all
Friday	After School Hoops	1:30	2:20	9/15/06	1,2,3
	Spanish K	11:35	12:05	9/15/06	K
	Spanish Adv	1:30	2:15	9/15/06	1,2,3
	Spanish Beg	2:20	3:05	9/15/06	4,5
	Science K	11:30	12:15	9/8/06	K
	Science	1:30	2:20	9/8/06	1,2,3
	Science	2:25	3:05	9/8/06	4,5
	Art	1:30	2:20	9/8/06	1,2,3
	Art	2:20	3:10	9/8/06	all

Fees: Please pay the class provider directly. The Nixon PTA has scholarship money available to students in need of financial aid. Contact Barbara Welch, Deb Lipari, Gaile Gordon, or Gabriela Balas for additional information.

Contact information:

Art—Carla Gratta, Alehandra Hermandigner, Care4Art@gmail.com

Basketball—Mike Livingston, mike@1on1basketball.com, www.1on1basketball.com (register online)

Chess—Bela Evans, info@successchess.org, www.successchess.org (register online)

Math—Mike Rauta, mrauta@gmail.com, www.F4Ed.org (register online)

Music—Nancy Kaye, nkaye@pausd.org

PAPPА Art—Mickey Hebarth, bill.mickey@mindspring.com

Science—Karen Miel, karen.miel@cityofpaloalto.org , 650-329-2111

Spanish—Natalia De la Chica, 650-224-2256, nataliadelachica@hotmail.com

Enrichment Coordinators—Gaile Gordon, gaile@alum.mit.edu, Gabriela Balas, ghs@att.net

Sign up for e-News!

Nixon has an e-mail list for parents and staff interested in receiving weekly updates on school events. To subscribe (or unsubscribe) from the list, send e-mail to: majordomo@laki.pausd.org with the words "subscribe nixon" (or "unsubscribe nixon") in the body (not the subject) of the message.

If you have items that should be publicized in e-News, e-mail Linda Baker.

Don't be a chicken... join your friends at Boston Market!

A Nixon PTA Sponsored Event

Save the Date, **Tuesday, September 19th** for the first Nixon Night Out of the new school year! Save yourself some work in the kitchen, eat healthy and support Nixon at Boston Market Restaurant, 3375 El Camino Real, Palo Alto, CA 94306. Boston Market will donate anywhere from 20 to 40% of your tab, dine in or carry out from 4 to 9 p.m.!

Nixon New Families Committee

Is your family new to the Nixon community? Is English your second language? Do you have trouble finding your way around the school campus? Not to worry—the members of the Nixon New Family Committee, are here to help.

The New Family Committee's goal is to ensure that your transition to Nixon is both relaxed and smooth. We understand that children can only learn well in an environment where they feel secure and comfortable. Our work is devoted to helping your family develop friendships and get involved in the Nixon community.

Nixon is a vibrant and diverse school with families from many different ethnic backgrounds. Because we understand that some of you are learning English as a second language, we have many language interpreters at your service. Please see the New Family Committee member list for the contact information of our current interpreters and contact us if your family ever needs an interpreter in your native language. If you don't see your language- we'll find someone.

The Nixon school web site is another great resource for new families. We encourage you to check it out at <http://www.nixon.palo-alto.ca.us/>. Our school site has information about the staff at Nixon, a calendar of upcoming events, an online version of all the Nixon News articles, and much more. It is definitely worth taking a look.

Finally, if you would ever like a campus tour, feel free to contact one of our committee members. We hope your year at Nixon will be a fun and memorable experience.

The Nixon New Family Committee:

Barbara Zhang	(Chinese interpreter)
Ih-Hae Chang	(Japanese interpreter)
Yoo Kyung Kwon	(Korean interpreter)
Eve Scott	(Spanish interpreter)
Kalanit Grill-Spector	(Hebrew interpreter)
Trang Tran	(Vietnamese interpreter)
Madeleine Ekholm	(Swedish interpreter)
Luc Vincent	(French interpreter)

News Flash! Dolphin Sightings in London!

Nixon Dolphin Tee Shirts seen all over the world Summer 2006!

Did you wear your Nixon tee shirt on vacation this summer? Submit your photo to the Nixon News and show your School Spirit.

(Photos and captions have been removed)

***Nixon News* Submission Policies**

Revised August 21, 2006

All submissions must comply with national PTA policies: non-commercial, non-sectarian, non-partisan.

Please be concise, and expect that articles may be edited for spelling, grammar, length, and clarity.

The preferred method of submitting articles is via e-mail. The article can be either typed directly in the body of the e-mail or attached as a WORD document. Please stick to very basic, minimal formatting, as all submissions will need to be reformatted to fit in our layout.

- Bold, underline, and bullets are OK.
- Headers/Footers, columns, borders, boxes, exotic fonts, etc. cause problems.

If you have a photo or graphic to accompany your article, **DO NOT** embed it in a WORD file. Send it separately; preferably as a JPEG file.

The normal deadline is 5:00 p.m. on the Thursday one week before publication, but it may be earlier on holiday weekends. The complete publication schedule for the year, including deadline dates, is posted on the Nixon web site. And page 1 of every issue shows the deadline for the following issue.

Deadlines will be strictly adhered to; however, if you need to get an article in a particular issue but for some reason cannot meet the deadline, let me know as early as possible and I may be able to give you some extra time. I can often (but not always) be flexible if I know ahead of time what to expect.

Items may also be submitted in the form of full-page camera-ready flyers, meaning the page is already formatted and can be photocopied exactly as is; however, I would like to discourage the use of flyers unless there is enough text and/or special graphics to justify allocating a full page. Please don't send me a full-page flyer that has only a few sentences on it. (Every page costs the PTA about \$10. It adds up.) Hard-copy camera-ready flyers should be left in the Nixon News drawer in the main office at school (next to Becky's desk). Please submit on white paper, but you may request that your flyer be copied onto colored paper.

Be aware that flyers are not included in the web-site version of *Nixon News*.

Vicki Dempsey
Nixon News Editor

Join Junior Girl Scouts

Girl Scout Troop 626, Service Unit 1 of Palo Alto, welcomes any girl entering grades 3 through 6 to join us for Junior Girl Scouting. The girls in our troop spend their time learning new things, playing games, making friends, and going on field trips or camping activities. We meet on Fridays after school, 2:20 to 3:20 p.m., in the Nixon Library. Please contact the troop leader, Sandra Nadim.

Editor's Note

Welcome back to school! I begin this year in my new PTA volunteer position as Nixon News editor. I look forward to working with the great team of the communications committees; Linda Baker- e-News editor, Liz Fendorf -Nixon News publication, Gioia Allegretti,- web site coordinator, and Leisa Waschura and Donna Kruep- news distribution team.

I believe the Nixon News is the best way to stay informed of the vibrant and exciting 'happenings' at Nixon as well as keeping us all up to date of important school topics and events. Every one of you can help by lending me your eyes and ears. There's so much going on at our school that I can't keep up with it all. If you know of something interesting happening *in or out* of the classroom, a fun field trip or special project, etc., please let me know. Just a quick note will do—no need to write a full article, unless you want to!

Volunteers who can write an occasional article or snap a digital photo would be much appreciated. The *Nixon News* team also urgently needs people to translate articles into Spanish and help with page layout (no experience required). Please contact me for more information.

Look for *Nixon News* every other Friday, except when holi-

days interfere. The complete publication schedule is posted on the school web site, and instructions for submitting articles appear in every issue.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or suggestions that will help us keep *Nixon News* informative and fun to read. I welcome your comments.

Vicki Dempsey

P.s. While we strive to be as up-to-date as possible, the realities of our publication schedule mean that the hardcopy *Nixon News* can't always keep you informed about urgent matters or last-minute changes. This is where Nixon's e-News service shines. Look for information elsewhere in this issue on how to subscribe.

About Nixon News

Nixon News is a PTA funded newsletter, designed to serve as a parent educational and information resource. It is published every other Friday (except when holidays interfere). Submissions should be sent via e-mail to the editor, Vicki Dempsey. Either type the text directly in the body of the e-mail or attach a Microsoft Word Format file. If your article is on paper and cannot be submitted electronically or if you have a photo or graphic, please contact the editor for instructions. Deadlines are announced on the front page of every issue. They are normally (but not always) the Thursday one week before publication. Articles may be edited for spelling, grammar, clarity, and length. All submissions must include your name and contact information.

Information in this newsletter is provided as a community service. The mention of any business, service, or organization in this newsletter does not imply endorsement by the Nixon PTA or the PAUSD.