



NIXON NEWS

Nixon PTA Newsletter—Vol. 2005-2006 Issue No. 2—September 16, 2005
The L.M. Nixon Elementary School, 1711 Stanford Ave., Stanford, CA 94305 (650) 856-1622 <http://www.nixon.pausd.org>

CALENDAR

Tues. Sept. 20
Nixon Night Out at Chevys
Fresh Mex Restaurant

Mon. Sept. 26
5:00-8:00 p.m.
TB Testing
District Office

Tues. Sept. 27
School Picture Day

Tues. Sept. 27
7:00-8:30 p.m.
Bike Safety Class
Nixon Theater

Thurs. Sept. 29
5:00-8:00 p.m.
TB Testing Read
District Office

NEXT PUBLICATION

DATE: September 30

DEADLINE:

Friday, Sept. 23 at 5 p.m.

Principal: Barbara Welch

PTA President:

Tracy Stevens

Editor: Sharon Dally

Layout: Liz Fendorf

Principal's Corner by Barbara Welch

Dear Nixon Families,

We have just had another wonderful Back to School Night and Back to School Picnic. I know you enjoyed the opportunity to meet your children's new teachers and the support staff that enriches their learning experience, as well as meet families in your child's class while you greet old friends.

At Back to School Night, the PTA and I shared with you that the \$107,000 in funds we received from Parents in Education (PiE) for this year will be used to support personnel in math, reading, technology, art, and additional aide time. PiE distributes its funds based on enrollment numbers. It is essential for you to support PiE in order to continue these programs, since individual donations given directly to the site cannot be used for personnel.

Site and PTA budgets are based on the School Improvement Plan, which is developed each spring from staff, Site Council, and District input. On November 1st an assessment of last year's plan, along with 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 05-06 school 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.

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PTA President's Message by Tracy Stevens

Classroom activities and projects are well underway. There are even some field trips planned in the next few weeks. I am mentioning this because your assistance is needed. At Back to School Night we mentioned the need for volunteers. YOU are the volunteer we are looking for, the one that can make a difference in your child's classroom.

In addition to teaching our children, there are many other tasks that are required to make a classroom run efficiently and provide the best educational experience possible. The teachers could do all of these things, but that would detract from their primary goal, which is to teach our children, observe their progress, and develop a plan that builds on their skills.

Continued on Page 3

Se puede encontrar una edición de *Nixon News* en español en la oficina general de la escuela. Favor de avisar a Sandra Nadim si usted desea añadir su nombre a la lista de distribución.

Principal's Corner *continued from page 1*

All Site Council meetings are open to the Nixon community, and the meetings are on the first Monday of each month, 2:40-4:30 p.m. (except for December and April). This is another excellent way to see the plan in action.

Goals of Nixon's School Improvement Plan for 2005-2006

Reading, Math, and Writing

- Ensure academic growth and achievement and appropriate level of challenge for all students so that every student makes at least a year's growth each year.
- Close the achievement gap among students in different racial/ethnic groups by 20% each year as measured by individual student gains on multiple measures.

Meeting the Needs of Resource and Target 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 students in the school.

Meeting the Needs of English Language Learners

- Improve English Language Learners' ability to access the curriculum in English.
- Integrate English Language Learners 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 that 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. Refining and reflecting on our writing program so that the state standards are addressed and the skills embraced by Six-Traits of Writing and the Elements of Instruction are met.
2. Developing and building student activities that focus on a 'caring community'.

The primary goal for each of these areas is not to create an absolute answer but develop a process that allows continual growth based on needs.

Extending our caring community

Before I close, I want to assure each of you, as I have your children, that the Nixon staff will be doing fundraising for the victims of hurricane Katrina. Our general plan is to fundraise similarly to our appeal last year for the tsunami. Students will donate funds that they and their families raise. The funds will be collected through the classrooms without competition. The PTA will convert our donation to a check. We have not yet officially had a kick-off for the fundraiser because the PAUSD elementary principals, with the help of the District, are looking for ways to personalize for our students our fundraising efforts. We are trying to coordinate a sister-school program with a school district adjacent to New Orleans. These districts are going to be overwhelmed with new students. They will lack materials as well as personnel. This would give our students the opportunity to develop a relationship and work as a team. When I have specific information and a firmer plan, I will share the specifics with you.

Have you modeled for your children today?

In my column in the August 26 *Nixon News*, I challenged each of you to find one volunteer opportunity at Nixon. There are a variety of jobs even for parents that work. Leslie Fiedler would love help with landscaping; clerical work for the classroom teachers can be taken home and done in the evenings; Halloween, the Book Fair, and fall fundraising activities are right around the corner. Many 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.

Barbara

President's Message *continued from page 1*

Therefore we call upon parents and other community volunteers to work with the teachers and their aides so all needs of the classroom can be met as effectively as possible. This is one of the benefits of neighborhood schools, and it is part of being an active community member.

Each classroom should have someone who is the Classroom Volunteer Coordinator (CVC). In this role you will assist the teacher to fulfill their goals. This is primarily a communication and organizational role and can be accomplished mostly through email or phone calls. It is not as ominous as it sounds but provides a huge benefit to the teacher, the class, and your child. Of the 21 classrooms at Nixon, there are 15 without a CVC.

The CVC helps to organize and recruit (if necessary) the other volunteers who administer such tasks as Field Trips, Drivers, Chaperones, Special Events, Class Parties, Library Time, Art Projects, etc. You may want to consider one of these positions.

I would like to say that this is my last request for volunteers, but I suspect that I will come to you again, with a different request. The needs are ongoing from before the school year starts to the day school ends, but right now the classrooms need your help. Every person has some small portion of their time that they can contribute, and it does make a difference. Consider helping with one field trip, one class party, organizing the email contact list, or assisting with one class lesson.

Please contact your child's teacher and see what help they may need. You may find that it is fun and your child will love that you are involved in their class.

Tracy

Helping Katrina's Victims

Nixon parent Tony Alfrey has found a very meaningful way to offer immediate assistance to some of the children who have been affected by Hurricane Katrina.

He has been in touch with Douglass Elementary School in Houston, one of the two schools exclusively set up to receive kids relocated from New Orleans. They told him one thing that they needed was nap mats for their kindergarten students. Tony has shipped 100 nap mats to Douglass Elementary, and they should have been received in Houston by the time you read this newsletter. Not all of the mats may end up at Douglass, because it appears that Houston is opening up another school to handle more kids, but they will certainly all help to make a displaced child feel a little more comfortable in his or her new classroom.

Coincidentally, the Douglass school mascot, like ours, is the dolphin. If you would like to find out if more mats are needed at Douglass Elementary or another school and would like to participate in this particular donation, please contact Tony Alfrey. The cost of the mats is \$10.00 each. This is something that will really make a difference to kids who have been through a lot.

Important for All Parents!!

Due to a printing error on all emergency cards, the parent guardian information did not appear on your child's emergency card. If this information was not corrected on the card, please email the office with work and cell numbers as soon as possible. These numbers are critical to the office for reaching parents in case of emergency.

Thank you,
Becky and Ginny

News From Palo Alto Partners in Education

It's official! – the final merger of the Palo Alto Foundation for Education (PAFE) and the All Schools Fund (ASF) into **Palo Alto Partners in Education** is now complete. As a single organization, Partners in Education provides the platform to raise *significant* funds from individuals, families, corporations, and foundations to augment the PAUSD budget and enhance the education experience at all seventeen district schools. Last year, Partners in Education donated **\$1.8 million** to the seventeen principals, primarily to fund discretionary staffing. This year, the goal is **\$2 million**.

Partners in Education also has a brand new fifteen-member board of directors, comprised of parent, business, and community leaders. Addison Elementary School parent Susan Bailey is president, and rounding out the board are parents with children in nine of the district's schools; seven current or former PTA presidents; two past presidents of PAFE; three recipients of Palo Alto's outstanding citizen/volunteer Tall Tree Award; one former mayor; one former principal;



PALO ALTO
PARTNERS
IN EDUCATION

one former school board president; one grandparent; and six members of the business community!

Dianne Vernon is the Nixon PiE representative this year. Please contact Dianne with questions.

A letter will be coming in the mail in mid-September asking you to donate \$500 per student for the next school year. PiE is encouraging participation from all families but any amount you can afford would be appreciated. You can learn more about Partners in Education by talking with your school's PiE representative, Dianne Vernon, and by visiting www.papie.org.

Thank you for your anticipated support

Free TB Testing for Volunteers

Whether you are volunteering in the classroom, in the library, for special projects, or driving the kids on their various field trips, adult volunteers in public schools must be screened every four years for possible exposure to tuberculosis. X-rays and intradermal injections are the only tests accepted. Tine/patch tests are not.

Volunteers may take the intradermal tests free of charge at the PAUSD district office. The office is located at: 25 Churchill Avenue, Palo Alto.

The first free TB test is being offered at the district office on:

Monday, September 26, 2005 from 5:00–8:00 p.m.
Test must be read on Thursday, September 29 (5:00–8:00 p.m.)

Alternatively, you may wish to get the test done at your expense at your doctor's office. Please be sure to send the results in to the school office.

REMEMBER: You cannot begin volunteering until you have had this test done.

If you have any questions, please contact Daisy Zook.

Noon Art and Noon Science Are Back!

Stop by the theater during lunch recess on a Wednesday, and you will find the room bustling with children busy at work during Noon Science or Noon Art. Offered on alternating weeks, the two parent-run and PTA-supported programs give the children the choice to stop in and join in.

Jan Rossi is running the Noon Science program that she pioneered three years ago. Jan devises fun and interesting hands-on projects that give the children a chance to explore scientific concepts and principles. Past projects have included magnetism, electricity, DNA, and making ice cream.

Artists and parents Teal Derrer and Sukey Bryan will be running the Noon Art program this year. The kids will have the opportunity to work with a variety of art materials in individual and group projects. The goal is for the children to have an open, creative, fun recess break before afternoon class. There will be drawing, painting, dance, collage, clay, and printing, among other activities.

Both programs benefit from the help of other faithful volunteer parents and from the infectious enthusiasm of the children. The year kicked-off with Noon Science on September 14, and Noon Art resumes on September 21.

Enrichment Class Update

Thanks to everyone for making the after school enrichment classes so successful. Most classes are full. In fact, there are only a few openings in two classes. Please see below for details.

After School Art Enrichment Classes - Care4Art

Parents are encouraged to register their kids in our Friday 2:20-3:05 p.m. class. All other times are full. For more information, contact Alejandra or Carla.

Living Spanish

There are few openings in the Tuesday/Thursday Beginner class for 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders. Please contact Natalia Delachica.

Sally Foster Giftwrap Fundraiser

The Sally Foster Fundraiser is here! 50% of all profit goes to Nixon School!! Your child should have brought home the Sally Foster fundraising packet today. If you did not receive a packet, there are a few extras in the office. Inside is a wonderful selection of high quality giftwrap, gifts, and chocolates. Just make your selections, follow the instructions on the sheet attached to the outside of the envelope, and return your order to school. There will be a gift-wrapped drop box in the office. The sale starts today, September 16 and runs until September 30. For questions, contact Susan Nicholls.

L. M. Nixon School and Land's End. A New Partnership.

Our school has a new, additional Spirit Shop provider, which could make ordering easier than ever for you: Land's End.

That's right, we are now a Land's End preferred school. And that means that you have an opportunity to support our school when you buy quality Land's End clothes with the Nixon School Logo. When you buy from the Land's End School Catalog, our school will receive a check for 3% of your net purchases.

You can have the Nixon School logo put on anything in the Land's End School catalog that is our school colors: Cobalt Blue or White. The Land's End School catalog offers quality clothing in both children's and adults' sizes.

To have your purchase count toward the Contribution program, you must mention or include our Preferred School number when placing your order. The Preferred School Number for L. M. Nixon School is 9001-0031-4.

The ordering process is simple and convenient by phone, mail, fax, or Internet. Phone: 1-800-469-2222 or order on the Internet at www.landsend.com/school. Catalogs available in the school office.



Nixon Spirit Shop: Inventory Close Out Sale

Adult White Sweatshirts in M or L for only \$10!
Adult dolphin-colored (gray) short-sleeved tee-shirts for only 5!
Great gifts for Spirited parents, grandparents and teachers!
Offer good while supplies last.
Order forms available in the school office

First Nixon Night Out is Tuesday, September 20th

Please join Nixon families in the first "Nixon Night Out" of this school year. It is at Chevys Restaurant, 2116 W. El Camino Real in Mountain View. Dine in or carry-out for lunch or dinner, and Nixon Elementary School receives 20% of your tab. This is a great way to support our school and have a great Tex-Mex meal instead of cooking. All you have to do is bring the attached flyer to the restaurant. Extra copies of the flyer are available in the school office or you can send an e-mail to Tena Cherry.

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.

Beyond Nixon

Taming the Homework Monster (for children with learning differences)

Monday, September 19, 2005, 7:30 p.m.
25 Churchill Ave., Palo Alto
Board Room

Homework: You hated it as a kid and now you've come to loathe it nearly as much as a parent. In many households, homework can be a real monster. Arguments, late nights, low grades, and tears can result from homework problems, whether the homework monster makes only an occasional visit or drops by regularly. At this program, you will be introduced to a variety of techniques and strategies to employ in taming the homework monster and helping your children be more successful with homework and school. Sponsored by the Community Advisory Committee for Special Education. Questions? Call Tina or Daunna.

ADHD Support Group

The ADHD SUPPORT GROUP meets the 3rd Thursday of each month from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. at 25 Churchill, Room A (except for November and December when it will meet on the 2nd Thursday of the month). The Support group will focus on issues such as how to manage school, organization, time management and study skills, IEP's, etc. The meetings sometimes feature guest speakers. The first meeting is September 15, 2005. Led by Janet Dafoe, Ph.D., Children's Health Council.

Become an Environmental Volunteer Docent

Want to make a difference in your community? Teach kids to love nature and learning. No experience required. Our volunteer training programs provide you with all the skills and materials you need to become a nature docent. Call Hillary or visit our web site at www.Evols.org for details.

3rd Annual Running of the Bulls 5k Fun Run & Walk

Saturday, October 1, 2005
Peers Park, Palo Alto

This premiere neighborhood event brings local Olympians together to mentor and inspire schoolchildren and their families. The morning starts with a 75-minute track and field clinic for kids aged 5 to 12, run by USATF coaches, PAUSD elementary school Physical Education teachers, and Olympic athletes. While the kids learn track and field events, parents can run or walk the tree-lined 5k course, which features Olympians in bull and cow costumes who "chase" participants to the finish (you get a head start!). After the Kids' Clinic and 5k race end, the showcase event begins. The Running of the Calves Races for all kids 12 and under are hosted by the Olympic "bulls" and "cows." Five dollars from each entry is donated to the Bay Area school of your choice, and the school with the most participants gets a trophy (Inspire your school as a TEAM!). There are prizes for finishers of all ages, in all categories, including first Mom and Dad to finish with jogger-strollers! The Running of the Bulls is simply an event like no other, featuring some of the world's fastest athletes and bringing them together with the local community for an event that encourages athletics in children and challenges even the strongest non-professional athlete.

Visit our website at www.bulls5k.com for more details, complete event schedule, and on-line registration or mail-in entry form. General proceeds benefit local schools, The Sports Medicine Institute (www.smiweb.org), The Farm Team, From Our Feet, and the Leukemia Lymphoma Society.

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, Sharon Dally. Either type the text directly in the body of the e-mail or attach a Microsoft Word or Rich Text 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 Friday before publication. Articles will be edited for spelling and grammar and for length, if space constraints require it. 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.