



NIXON NEWS

Nixon PTA Newsletter—Vol. 2006-2007 Issue No. 4—October 13, 2006
The L.M. Nixon Elementary School, 1711 Stanford Ave., Stanford, CA 94305 (650) 856-1622 <http://www.nixon.pausd.org>

To Do List:

- Go Ice Skating
TONIGHT at Winter Lodge!
- Send in your PiE contribution. Page 8
- Turn in those Box Tops!
- Renew eScript. See Flyer

CALENDAR

Mon. Oct. 16
Staff Appreciation Lunch
11:45 a.m.

Thurs. Oct. 19
Vision Screening

Tues. Oct. 24
Nixon Night Out
Chevy's

Thurs. Oct. 26
Disaster Drill, 10:30 a.m.
No Homework Night

Tues. Oct. 31
Pumpkin Festival

Tues. Oct. 31
Halloween Parade
12:30 p.m.

NIXON ANNUAL ICE SKATING PARTY is TONIGHT!

Join your Nixon friends from 5:30 -7:30 p.m. at the Winter Lodge. You won't want to miss this fun-filled Nixon event and the opportunity to support the fifth grade fundraiser bake sale.

Come join your friends, eat some terrific food, exercise your ice skating skills and socialize! Skaters cost \$12.00 and non-skaters are free. All children must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

Please contact Lois or Lori Delp if you can help or if you have any questions.
PLEASE BRING WAIVER FORM AND CHECK DIRECTLY TO WINTER LODGE.

SEE YOU TONIGHT!!!

Principal's Corner by Barbara Welch

Dear Nixon Families,

Staff Development

On Tuesday, October 4th the PAUSD teachers spent their morning focusing their staff development on math. The teachers broke into two groups. The kindergarten, first and second grade teachers were at Nixon. They examined the skills; concepts and teaching strategies that best help children understand place value. Understanding place value is essential to a student's mathematical success. The teachers looked at using assessment and differentiation of their instruction to further students' concept development. The fourth and fifth grade teachers met at Escondido where they used a similar format to take a close look at skill sets and curriculum focal points to develop greater student understanding of multiplication and division.

These teachers looked at student work, new assessment tools, and lessons they are presently using. In the afternoon the Nixon teachers returned to our site to debrief and plan *next steps* in our math instruction.

Math Specialist

While it would be impossible to replace Barbara Klausner, who became a Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA) for the District, she has been continuing to help us develop our program to support math for high achievers at Nixon. She has trained several fifth grade parent volunteers and helped me recruit Parveen Rasheed to do pull-out for second and third grade students. Barbara will be working with our fourth grade teachers to do some flexible grouping when they teach multiplication.

Continued on page 2

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

Principal's Corner *continued from page 1*

Both our specialists and classroom teachers continue to explore, design, and revise curriculum for our high achievers.

We are continuing to look for a math specialist to support high achieving fourth and fifth grades in a pull-out program. Please contact me for more information.

Math Academy

Last year we did some experimenting with an after school Homework Club to support struggling students. This year we will refine our approach. We will continue with the District sponsored Literacy Academy on Monday and Wednesday afternoons. We will add to this a Math Academy for second through fifth graders. It will meet at the same time as the Literacy Academy so students will have access to the EPA bus should they need it. The three classes will be tailored to meet the needs of the specific students attending, but the general purpose is to build skills, help the students with their grade level curriculum and even introduce some math based games to make the experience fun. The funds for developing this program come from one-time state categorical money. Students are selected through National and classroom assessments and teacher recommendations.

Laptop Computers

Last week we took delivery on twenty-five new laptop computers, one for each classroom teacher and several of our specialists. Joe Young helped me put the project together with the aide of the local Apple store. With each computer we received an ink jet copier/fax machine for the classroom. In addition, we can attend workshops and have personal training time from the Apple Corporation. Also, we received a generous donation from a Nixon family this summer when their last child left us for Terman. The money was earmarked for technology and we have spent that money on making all our building pods wireless. Teachers are presently working on software like *Inspiration* and learning to make *imovies* with their classes. Nixon has always had a very strong technology curriculum due in large part to parent support and our computer lab specialist,

Barbara Vana. It is parents like you who made the laptop purchase possible because the funds came from our Enrichment classes' rental fees for the last four years and our summer rental to Jefunira Camp. The staff, students, and I want to thank you for your support in helping us "leap into the twenty-first century."

Locked Gate

Some of you have expressed concern that the gate on the other side of the kindergarten portable classroom is now locked except from 7AM to approximately 8:30 AM. I did this because the staff and I realized that we do not have a clear line of vision to that gate when we supervise children at recess or PE. It is the only opening in the fence that we cannot see. Therefore, it is a child safety issue. The gate will be left unlocked so parents and children have easier access getting to school when everyone is rushing in the morning, but the rest of the day it will be locked. I am sorry if it is inconvenient for some.

Lunch ID Cards

Even the first day went relatively smoothly. Students may still use their tickets or pay cash, but the system will work best when everyone is just using their ID card to draw from their deposited lunch account. Please go to www.lunchdeposit.com to sign up.

Thank you for all you do for the Nixon community.

Barbara

Your PTA Dollars at Work

One of the many things the Nixon PTA provides is funding to teachers to purchase additional classroom supplies not provided by the district. Teachers are presented with classroom mini-funds of \$350.00 each for use to fill necessary supply gaps. The fund goes quickly, as there are always special projects, books, and refurbishments needed throughout the year.

Nixon Night Out is Tuesday, October 24th *A Nixon PTA Sponsored Event*

Come and join Nixon families for our next "Nixon Night Out." It is at Chevy's 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 electronically by sending an e-mail to Tena Cherry or pick up a hard copy version in the school office.

Buen Provecho!

Staff Appreciation Committee Announcement - The Soup Is On!

A Nixon PTA Sponsored Event

On October 16 we are hosting a Staff Appreciation Soup Luncheon for our wonderful teachers and staff. If you would like to participate, please bring your favorite soup or salad to the teachers' lounge before 11:30 a.m. that day. You can e-mail Cheryl to let her know what you are bringing. Be sure to put your name on all the dishes and utensils and pick them up afterward. Thank you for your support!

From your Staff Appreciation Committee:

Karen Yang, Susan Nicholls & Cheryl Wu

Back to School = Back to Fun *A Nixon PTA sponsored Event*

Thanks to all who attended the Nixon Back-to-School picnic on Thursday September 28 and helped to make it a great success! Special thanks to Nancy Fischbein and Karen Wigen for organizing the event and providing the entertainment. They had a hand from Linda Baker and our always-helpful custodians Abi and Willie with clean up.

We had a comfortable balmy evening for outdoor conversation and play. Fabulous food was provided by Nixon's Miyashita and Mann families, as well as our California Avenue Round Table pizza parlor. Our vendors generously contributed 10% of their proceeds to the Nixon PTA. Thank you again.

Many of our children enjoyed a hilarious performance by

Daffy Dave, and laughter rang across the blacktop as Dave shared his antics with the kids. And, of course, we all enjoyed catching up with friends both old and new, as well as visiting with Principal Barbara Welch and many of our wonderful Nixon teachers. We hope everyone will come out again next year to enjoy the party!

Welcome Back!

Bicycle Safety Program a Big Success *A Nixon PTA Sponsored Event*

We are happy to report that the 3rd grade class completed the three-part PAUSD Bicycle Safety Program. On September 22, bicycles were delivered and the students donned their helmets, and put their feet to the pedals. Everyone successfully practiced being safe and predictable cyclists by using hand signals and riding on the correct side of the roadway. They learned to look for traffic - before they came out from a driveway, crossed to a different side of the road, crossed through an intersection, or moved into the street to avoid an obstacle in their path. Our walkers also learned that these are important pedestrian skills, too. Eighty students completed the program—that's a lot of kids on bicycles—and they did a fantastic job!

also stepped out on to the blacktop to lead “stations” during the event! One last thank you to all 3rd grade parents who supported the program by bringing your students to school with their bicycles and helmets. We know this requires special effort, and we thank you for going the extra mile.

Of course, we couldn't have done it without the many fabulous people who generously donated their time to help make this program happen! Many, many thanks to the 3rd grade parents who rearranged their daily routines to help out with setting up the course late Tuesday afternoon, as well as all the parents who helped during the program on Wednesday morning. There are too many names to list here, but you know who you are and please know how much your time and help are appreciated! A big thank you to Leslie Fiedler, who has done an amazing job of organizing this program for the past several years, and who stepped in again this year to lead, coordinate and organize the effort. Thanks also to Kathy Durham who coordinated and planned this program for the PAUSD, as well as the Palo Alto firefighters, the Stanford police, the Stanford Cycling team, Palo Alto Medical Foundation, and Bicycle Outfitters of Los Altos. And last, but most certainly not least, a very special thank you to our incredible 3rd grade teachers—Nancy Kaye, Amanda Gantley, Alison Curtis and Kristina Hayes, who not only seized the opportunity to help our kids understand the benefits of life skills lessons taught in the Bicycle Safety Program in the classroom, but

Finally, we did want to pass on to parents a few safety concerns that were brought to our attention by the professionals helping with this event. Many children were riding bicycles that were either too small or too big for their body size. Some helmets also were not properly fitted or adjusted, so these are things to keep in mind and correct, as necessary, to keep your child safe. We hope that you will talk to your children about what they learned and continue to practice their new skills to reinforce the importance of these lessons.

Thank you to everyone, and safe cycling!

Sharon Stanaway and Shalina Mahajan
Nixon Coordinators for Bicycle Safety

Annual Nixon Pumpkin Festival

A Nixon PTA Sponsored Event

Children: Decorate a pumpkin! Carve or decorate your pumpkin and bring it to school on Halloween morning Tuesday, October 31, starting at 7:40 a.m. All the pumpkins will be displayed in the Theater. What scary, funny, and beautiful pumpkins will Nixon students will make this year? Come and see! Each classroom will tour the fun display of fantastic student creations.

Parents: Join the parent crew from 8:00-9:30 a.m. in the Theater and help write awards for the pumpkins.

Remember to take your child's pumpkin home after school on the 31st! (Pumpkins not picked up at the end of the day will have to be thrown away.)

Questions? Contact Sukey Bryan

Library News

From Janice Mulholland

A Parenting book collection is being created in the Nixon Library! If you have any books on parenting that you have found helpful, please consider donating them to the library for others to share and benefit. They will be stamped and put on the first shelf near the Parents Corner Bulletin Board in the Library. We will use the 'honor system' to check them out and circulate them. This means please help yourself to books that you want to read and then return them to the shelf when finished. Appropriate books would be targeted to children in the 4-12 age groups.

Charge to the AAAG

Report from Ellen Waxman, your Nixon PTA representative of the Area Attendance Advisory Group (AAAG) .

The Area Attendance Advisory Group has been asked to make recommendations to the Superintendent on the following three questions.

- At what point will the District reach a point where current facilities are outgrown and additional facilities should be opened at each of the three educational levels (elementary, middle and senior high schools)?
- Where should a new Choice program for the elementary level be placed (assuming the Board elects to approve a new Choice program)?
- Should the school boundary lines be adjusted so all schools are filled to capacity?

Process and Representation on the AAAG

The Superintendent will then make recommendations to the Board.

The schedule for this recommendation is a tight one. There are 7 scheduled meetings between September 11, 2006 and November 13, 2006. There will be a Board Study Session on December 5, 2006 on these attendance related issues.

In addition to representatives from the District, including some principals, there are representatives from each school in the District.

The Subject Agenda for each meetings is:

Oct. 16, 2006	Elementary Attendance Areas Choice Programs
Oct. 30, 2006	Secondary Attendance Areas
Nov. 6, 2006	Identify Pros/Cons of Recommendations
Nov. 13, 2006	Finalizing Recommendations Preparation for Board Study Session
Dec.5, 2006	Board of Education Study Session

Summary of September 11, 2006 Meeting

The agenda for the meeting on September 11th focused on the following issues:

Variables Used to Guide School Boundary Decisions
Current Enrollment Figures as of 11th Day of School
Projections regarding School Capacity. I have attempted a summary of the significant points from the meeting.

1. Variables for Attendance Determinations

The first discussion item was the list of variables that the District considers in boundary/attendance decisions and whether additional variables should be added to the list.

The current variables are: Safety/Traffic; School Size; Neighborhood Schools; Play and Field Space; Diversity; Special Education; Transition Period; Minimize Overflow Transfers; and Financial Resources.

As a result of the discussion at the meeting, the variable of Peer Streaming was added to the list. Peer streaming means that the District would attempt to minimize splits of an elementary class from a particular elementary from being split between middle schools and minimize splits of elementary schools and middle schools into different high schools.

2. Enrollment Projections

Under current enrollment projections for the **High** forecasts, the District will exceed current student capacities at the elementary level, middle school level, and high school level in 2011. Historically, enrollments have tended to follow the **Medium** forecast; however, there is an exceedingly large Kindergarten class this year. If enrollments continue at the level of the current Kindergarten class, elementary attendance will be closer to the **High** forecast. At the elementary school level, if everyone attended their neighborhood school, there would not have been enough spaces at: Nixon, Palo Verde, El Carmelo.

In general, there is a lack of capacity at Nixon and the schools in the North and South. There is an excess of capacity at Briones and Barron Park. The 20:1 and 22:1 class size ratios result in involuntary transfers from neighborhood districts.

At the middle school level, Terman has reached capacity and has a lower overall capacity than Jordan and JLS. At the high school level, the goal is to keep a maximum enrollment differential of 100 students. This is currently accomplished by allowing for transfers from Gunn to Paly. Fewer students who want to transfer from Paly to Gunn are approved because of the differential policy.

The District's consultant identified the following potential options for consideration:

- Change attendance boundaries, assigning more students to Barron Park and Briones and relieving enrollment pressures elsewhere
- Locate a choice program
- Be more flexible about class size
- Allow more combination classes
- Increase capacity

Questions?

Contact Ellen Waxman.

WANT TO "BREAK A LEG" DURING SKI WEEK?

Nixon students in grades 3-5 have an opportunity to participate in a Palo Alto Children's Theatre All Schools Production rehearsing during ski week, February 16-23rd with shows that weekend. It's almost like a theater day-camp with rehearsals tentatively running from 8:00 a.m.- 2:30 p.m. every day.

All students who participate will be cast and some theater training will be involved making this even more of a learning experience than the school plays. Schools not participating in outreach this year (Nixon, El Carmelo, Walter Hayes and Palo Verde) will have first dibbs on participation, but if initial enrollment is low all PA elementary schools may be able to participate.

IF NIXON IS TO PARTICIPATE WE MUST HAVE A PARENT LIAISON. This person would be responsible for advertising and making sure to get the word out, collecting

the names of all Nixon kids who want to participate, and coordinating the am/pm volunteers to supervise the a.m. check in and p.m. check out. Other than check in & out, no parent supervision is required. Several parents have already indicated a willingness to help, but are unable to be our designated liaison. Are you the parent who might be able to ensure the Nixon children's participation? If so, or if you have any questions, please contact Leisa Waschura. It's your chance to be a STAR.

Parking on Tolman Drive

Please remember that parking is not allowed in the area on Tolman Drive marked with a yellow curb. This is a drop-off/pick-up zone, intended for loading and unloading of passengers only. You may not leave your car in this area while you escort your children to or from their classrooms. Cars parked and left unattended next to the yellow curb may be ticketed by the Stanford police. When using this zone, please pull forward as far as possible and exit the area promptly, so other parents may also safely drop off and pick up their children. Please be considerate of our neighbors when you park your car. And be aware that a parked car blocking a driveway may be ticketed or TOWED.



PALO ALTO PARTNERS IN EDUCATION

PARTNERS IN EDUCATION FIRST NUMBERS ARE IN

Only 10% of the families at Nixon School have donated to Partners in Education so far. If you have not sent in your check, please do so now. Remember this is the **ONLY** money Nixon can use to pay for our much needed support staff, such as our teacher's aide, math and reading, and computer specialists. PIE has received a districtwide total of \$732,500 towards our \$2 million goal. We are excited about our start, but still have a long way to go! Thank you to all who have already given and remember our Above and Beyond Challenge Grant is still going through November 1st.

Donate now by going to www.papie.org.

ANY contribution makes a difference.

Questions? Contact Sarah Sands.

Los Altos Hills School District Reorganization News

Many of you are aware that the Town of Los Altos Hills has started an effort to form a new elementary school district to serve all of the children in Los Altos Hills in kindergarten through the 8th grade.

This is a complex issue with a number of public agencies involved - Los Altos School District, PAUSD, Mountain View-Los Altos Union HS District, the Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE) and its Committee on School District Organization, the State Department of Education, and the City Council of Los Altos Hills - to mention the major players and regulators. The regulatory process involved is also a long and variable one. If you would like more information about this issue we suggest the following web sites for your consideration:

<http://www.pausd.palo-alto.ca.us/community/about/news/DistrictReorganization.shtml>

Press release by districts on preparations for December 7, 2006 public hearing at SCCOE; loaded August 30, 2006.

http://www.pausd.palo-alto.ca.us/community/about/news/downloads/LAH_FAQ.pdf

PAUSD FAQ sheet on LAH reorganization; loaded July 18, 2006 (revised from April issue).

<http://www.losaltoshills.ca.gov/AgendaManager/uploads/public-education-committee/index.html>

LAH Town web site; offering several documents and presentations on public education in the Hills dating from March 2004 to the present.

California State PTA legislation information about PTA positions on the November 7, 2006 General Election ballot is now up on the PTA web site at www.capta.org

The California State PTA has voted to SUPPORT Proposition 86, an initiative measure that would amend the state constitution, imposing an additional 13 cent tax on each cigarette distributed (\$2.60 per pack) to fund various health-related efforts.

The California State PTA has voted to OPPOSE Proposition 88, an initiative measure that will appear on the November 7, 2006 general election ballot. Proposition 88 is a constitutional amendment that must be adopted by a majority of the California electorate. The initiative would add a new section to the California constitution to create an annual statewide tax of \$50 on each real property parcel.

The California State PTA has voted to SUPPORT Proposition 1D, a legislative bond act to construct and modernize education facilities that will appear on the November 7, 2006 general election ballot.

New Nixon HOODIE Sweatshirt - Limited Time Offer*

**(Accepting orders now through November 30, 2006.)*

Pre-order now to get this special Hoodie in time for cold weather!
Makes great gifts for students, families, relatives, birthdays, or holidays!

Youth \$25/Adult \$28, includes school logo.

Sport-Tek 60/40 9oz. Pullover Hooded Sweatshirt with Sleeve Stripe and side pockets.
Extremely soft feel with a comfortable full athletic cut with minimal shrinkage. Colorfast for rich, lasting color.
Circle the sizes you want, indicate quantities for each if more than one. (These run a tad large.)

Youth Sizes: XS(2-4), S(6-8), M(10-12), L(14-16), XL(18-20)

Adult sizes: XS S M L XL 2XL 3XL 4XL

Make checks payable to Nixon PTA

Youth \$25 x _____

Adult \$28 x _____

Total = _____

Deliver to child's classroom: # _____

Your Name: _____

Beyond Nixon

HALLOWEEN HAPPENINGS

From safe trick-or-treating and costumed parades to campfire stories and puppet shows, there's a lot for Palo Altans to do this Halloween season.

by Jim Harrington

If you're looking for some safe and scary fun this Halloween season, there's plenty of ghastly good times to be had in the Palo Alto area. The City of Palo Alto and other organizations are providing a slew of activities for kids and parents who want to have a good time in the waning days of October.

Now here is something that doesn't happen every day--free stuff at Stanford Shopping Center. At 7 p.m. Oct. 31, all 140 stores at the center will open their doors to costumed children and their parents for safe trick-or-treating. It's part of the annual Halloween Haunt, presented by The City of Palo Alto Recreation Department and the Stanford Shopping Center. Children ages 2-10 will enjoy arts and crafts, entertainment and trick-or-treating in the safe environment of the shopping center, 180 El Camino Real, Palo Alto, from 5 to 8 p.m. Carnival games include The Ghost Toss, Pin the Spider on the Web and Tombstone Golf. Magic acts, puppet shows, a Halloween sing-along and juggling are all part of the entertainment schedule. Also, Morticia the Beautician will be on hand to create some bewitching hairdos. It's a free event. For more information, call the Hauntline at 329-2121.

Halloween comes to the California Avenue business district in a big way from noon to 4 p.m. Oct. 31. The California Avenue Area Development Association hosts its third annual Halloween Trick or Treat event for children ages 10 and under. Just look for the orange fliers in the windows of participating businesses. For more information, call 688-6295.

Learn how to carve a pumpkin like a pro at the City of Palo Alto Junior Museum, 1451 Middlefield Road. A workshop on carving will be from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Oct. 29. You provide the vivid imagination, and they supply the pumpkin and carving tools. All children must be accompanied by an adult. There is a \$10 fee. For more information, call 329-2111.

Don't feel like carving a pumpkins this year? Perhaps you should try a glass one instead. The Great Glass Pumpkin Patch, featuring hand-blown glass gourds of many sizes

and colors, is on display through Oct. 27 at the Palo Alto Cultural Center, 1313 Newell Road. And--just in case you see one you like--the pumpkins are for sale. For more information, call 329-2366.

Woof. The Palo Alto Humane Society is hosting a "Howl-oween" walk at the Palo Alto Baylands, at the eastern end of San Antonio Road, from 4 to 6 p.m. Oct. 26. Friendly, leashed dogs and their owners are invited to participate in this easy hike through nature. You and your dog can even dress up in Halloween costumes for the hike. There will be refreshments, goodie bags and prizes for the best canine and human costumes. A \$5 donation is requested per family and proceeds benefit the Palo Alto Humane Society's Dog Days and Animal Rescue Programs. Members walk free. All dog lovers are welcome, but if you plan on bringing your canine, please register in advance by calling 327-0631.

Experience four floors of scary fun in a Victorian-era haunted house. The chills and thrills take place from 6:30 to 9 p.m. Oct. 26 at Westminster House of First Presbyterian Church, 1140 Cowper St., Palo Alto. A \$2 donation is requested and all proceeds benefit Youth Mission Trip '97. There is also an area for small kids. For more information, call 325-5659.

The ghoulish staff at Foothills Park present a fun-filled evening of stories and trivia about creatures of the night. Plus, there will be some Halloween surprises. Come in costume for a Halloween best-dressed contest. All ages are welcome. The program is held from 5 to 7 p.m. Oct. 27 at the Interpretive Center at Foothills Park, 3300 Page Mill Road. Just a reminder, Foothills Park is open only to Palo Alto residents and their accompanied guests. To register, call 329-2423.



If you are a 4th Grade boy and would like to join the Cub Scouts, we would love to have you! Cub Scouting can offer field trips, camping, projects, new skills and new friends!

Search, Discover, Share together with the Cub Scouts.

Contact: Owen Byrd

Sign up for Nixon 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.

NEXT PUBLICATION

DATE: October 27

DEADLINE:

Thurs., Oct. 19 at 5 p.m.

Principal: Barbara Welch

PTA Presidents: Jan Rossi
and Leslie Fiedler

Editor: Vicki Dempsey

Layout: Liz Fendorf

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.

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