



NIXON NEWS

Nixon PTA Newsletter—Vol. 2006-2007 Issue No. 5—October 27, 2006
The L.M. Nixon Elementary School, 1711 Stanford Ave., Stanford, CA 94305 (650) 856-1622 <http://www.nixon.pausd.org>

To Do List:

- Don't forget the Pumpkin Festival. See page 5
- Vote on Nov. 7th.
- Send in your PiE contribution. See page 8
- Picture make up day is November 16. See page 2

CALENDAR

Tues. Oct. 31

Pumpkin Festival, 8:00a.m.
Halloween Parade, 12:40p.m.

Fri. Nov. 3

PTA Executive Board and
General Meeting, 8:15 a.m.

Mon. Nov. 6

Site Council Mtg, 2:40 p.m.

Tues. Nov. 7

Election Day, Kinder
Extended Day Begins
Round Table Pizza Night

Fri. Nov. 10

Veteran's Day
No School

Mon. Nov. 20

Staff Appreciation Luncheon

Wed.-Fri. Nov. 22-24

Thanksgiving Break
No School

Principal's Corner by Barbara Welch

Dear Nixon Families,

Kid by Kid

For the past several years, at Nixon we have utilized a specific strategy to help all students reach their potential academically, socially, and behaviorally. This strategy is a process we call "Kid by Kid." It has helped us provide the necessary services, provided curriculum and implemented strategies based on individual need. Twice a year, the Principal and members of the support staff meet with each classroom teacher to look at his or her class "kid by kid." In the fall we review data, SST notes, and teacher observations, and then brainstorm strategies/interventions and design assessment points to check for growth or behavioral change. We started the meetings last Friday, and they all will be completed

next Monday, except for kindergarten. In March, the format is slightly different. We meet by grade level with the support team present. We are looking for what is working and what we want to revise. This meeting helps us identify "Best Practices" and brainstorm new ideas. The first step of differentiation is knowing where a student is so we can craft a path for them to travel.

Extended Kindergarten Day

Starting Tuesday, November 7th each kindergarten will be staying until 1:30 p.m. Wednesday and to 2:20 p.m. either each Tuesday or Thursday. All parents have received a letter from their kindergarten teacher with specific details. The days selected for each child are based on busing

Continued on page 2

PTA President's Message by Jan Rossi

This message is all about volunteers, and conveying thanks to those volunteers for contributing their time and effort on behalf of all of us at Nixon school.

First, I would like to identify the activities that the PTA volunteers have brought to the Nixon community within the last month so that you are aware of all the events that are PTA sponsored, and more importantly so that I can express thanks to all of the parent volunteers that made these events possible.

Back to School Picnic: Thank you very much Nancy Fishbein and Karen Wigen

for organizing a thoroughly enjoyable beginning of the year picnic that allows us to enjoy friends, food, and entertainment. The evening ended too soon.

Third Grade Bike Safety: Every year the bike safety training session is made possible by the efforts of many, many volunteer parents. Thank you co-chairs Shalina Mahajan Miklos and Sharon Stanaway for making this very important event possible.

Picture Day and Vision Testing: Linda Baker always seems to be there when we need her! Thanks Linda for your leadership

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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*

schedules and the most effective student combinations for the child's learning environment.

Kinder parents, please note that you must either park on Tolman, visitor parking, or down on the lower black top when picking up your kinder on their extended day. Please do not park in the middle of the driveway, bus circle, or staff parking areas.

Halloween

October is a very busy month and we always cap it off with the Pumpkin Festival and Halloween Parade. Remember that pumpkins are delivered first thing in the morning to the theater and must be picked up at the end of the day or they are thrown away. The parade will start at 12:40 p.m. and it usually takes about twenty to thirty minutes. Most class parties immediately follow. A flyer with the details will be sent to your home. Please note that weapons as part of a costume are not appropriate.

Second Harvest Canned Food Drive

Start cleaning out your pantries. The student council is the leadership team for our annual canned food drive, which begins Wednesday, October 25th and ends on Friday, November 17th. Please involve your student in the food selection and help them understand how sharing enriches our humanity.

Lifeskills

On Friday, October 13th students and staff met in the theater to "kick-off" our first session in *Lifeskills* which is Responsibility. The other two this year are *Patience* and *Problem Solving*. The staff has divided themselves in three groups. Each staff group has chosen to develop curriculum wide-activities and an assembly for one this year's Lifeskills. The "Responsibility Players" made us laugh and think.

Barbara

Picture Make-Up Day

School picture make-ups are scheduled for Thursday, November 16, 2005 in the morning. If you did not turn in an envelope or were absent on the first picture day, please bring your envelope with a check to school. You may also do retakes at this time if you were unhappy with the photos taken previously. A reminder notice will go out in the Friday folders prior to this date. Extra envelopes are in the office.

Annual Food Drive Has Begun

The L.M Nixon Annual Food Drive, supporting the Second Harvest Food Bank and organized by the Nixon student council, began October 25th and will last through November 17th. Second Harvest is a non-profit organization dedicated to assisting hungry individuals, families, and seniors in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties. During this period, please send in only non-perishable items with your student. Collection barrels will be set up around the school. Look for your special bag to come home soon and help others out by filling it up!

PTA President's Message *continued from page 1*

in organizing all the volunteers for these events. And thank you to all the volunteers.

Staff Appreciation: Each month Karen Yang, Cheryl Wu, and Susan Nicholls organize a luncheon for the teachers and staff. This month's lunch was a delicious soup and salad offering. Thank you Karen, Cheryl, Susan, and all the volunteer chefs who contributed to show our wonderful staff how much they are appreciated by one and all.

Walk to School Day: Leslie Fiedler, maven of traffic safety, organized yet another event that made a big impression on the kids. Thank you and all the parent volunteers that handed out little rewards to those who walked, bused, scootered, or biked to school.

Ice Skating Party: We had a terrific time! Thank you Lois Hancock and Lori Delp for a bringing us the much loved ice skating night at Winter Lodge. Record numbers showed up to skate the evening away at this favorite annual event.

Finally, I would like to warmly welcome two new members to the PTA Executive Board who have volunteered to serve **as co-VPs of Fundraising: Harriet Roeder and Doron Aspitz.** Harriet is the parent of 3 daughters, a preschooler, a 3rd grader, and a 5th grader. She is a very busy parent, working part-time as a psychiatrist in her own practice in Palo Alto. Doron is the father of 3 children, a high schooler, a middle schooler, and a kinder! He, too, is a busy parent, who works in technology development and design here in Silicon Valley. Many thanks to you both for generously offering your precious time to benefit the Nixon community.

Jan Rossi
PTA President

NIXONAMES DIRECTORY PROOF READERS NEEDED

A Nixon PTA Sponsored Event

We are finishing the data entry for the Nixonames School Directory and Proof Readers are needed to check for typos (especially for phone numbers, e-mail and street addresses) before we can publish. If you can volunteer 1-4 hours (any time would be appreciated), please contact Nixonames Editors Sandra Nadim or Leslie Fiedler.

Election Day is November 7 Don't Forget to Vote!

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 No-

vember 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.

Way2Go, Nixon! By Leslie Fiedler, PTA Traffic Safety Representative

Thanks to all the families who participated in this year's Walk to School (Way2Go) Day at Nixon this year! A survey was conducted in most classes, and showed that over half of the students commuted to school on foot, on bikes, scooters, carpool, or bus on this special day. Mr. McDaniel, Ms. Curtis, and Ms. Haye's classes ranked in the top alternative commuters with 77%, 76%, and 73% participation! Way2Go, 5th & 3rd graders!

PTA volunteers handed stickers out to students who arrived on campus via an alternative commute. All students received "little feet" zipper pulls in class, and some classes completed commuter charts throughout the week or decorated paper feet on which they wrote about how they get to school. The paper feet projects are on display in the library adjacent to the computer lab, so please be sure to stop by and check them out.

More and more Nixon families are embracing the "alternative mode" mission, making transportation choices that support good health, safety, and a cleaner environment. For those who live too far to walk or bike, increasing numbers are sharing the ride...carpooling and riding the bus to school. Alternatively, some families are driving within a block or two of Nixon, parking their car, and walking the

rest of the way to school, which greatly reduces congestion and aggravation in the parking lot.

After more than a decade of partnership in traffic safety education between the City of Palo Alto, the PAUSD, and the PTA, new bikeways and connections are constantly added around schools, and streets are always being evaluated for traffic and safety. *Walk to School Day* is a great time to try out a new way to commute to school, and maybe it just might become a habit!

Thanks to our Nixon teachers and administrative staff, and all of the volunteers (Annie Godfrey-Weber, Jo Marcus, Ruth Ann Daines, Nazila Alasti, and Donna Alkadri) who helped make this event fun and educational for the Nixon community! A special thanks also goes out to the City of Palo Alto Transportation Division, the Traffic Safe Communities Network, the Public Health Department of Santa Clara County, and the PTA for their sponsorship of this educational program.

Your PiE Dollars at Work

Alice Engelmores, Spectra Art instructor, brings real opportunities for art tie-in with classroom teachings. Here are several examples: students working on ancestry projects will use old family photos and documents such as wedding and immigration certificates, to understand the significance of the images and elements. When 2nd graders are learning about Geometry and Symmetry later this year students may work on art projects that include beads of different geometric forms and paint symmetrical patterns. Opportunities to draw from observations are a good tie-in to science projects as well. *Nixon kids love art.*

Save the Dates for the Scholastic Book Fair

November 29-December 2, 2006

Great Prices, Great Selection, Great Cause!

A Nixon PTA-Sponsored Event

***What is the Scholastic Book Fair?**

The Nixon Theater will be transformed into a mini bookstore from November 29 through December 2, 2006. Scholastic, Inc. will send our PTA a huge number of well-priced, high-quality books and gift items to sell, and Nixon will receive 25% of the money earned on sales.

***Great Selection!**

This year's theme is "Reading Rain Forest -- Wild for Books." Students will go wild for books this fall, from award-winners and bestsellers to picture books and favorite series. It is an adventure everyone will enjoy. We will also have books on sports, poetry, and cooking, as well as Klutz™ arts and craft kits, journals, and stationery for sale. Buy your holiday presents early!

***Scholarships**

Every Nixon child will have the opportunity to purchase a book at the fair. As in past years, scholarships will be available through the PTA. Please do not hesitate to contact Ih-hae Chang regarding the scholarship.

***Volunteers Needed -- Get Involved!**

Volunteers are needed to help with advance publicity, set-up and takedown, and book sales. If you are interested in helping the book fair, please contact Ih-hae Chang.

Thanks in advance for your participation.

Ih-hae Chang, Jo Marcus, and Yoshimi Munch
Book Fair Chairpersons

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.

*** School Board Site Improvement Plan Reviews ***

The PAUSD School Board is currently reading through the annual Site Improvement Plan (SIP) for each school, and then the Board will meet with each Principal to discuss their school's respective plan. The discussions are open to the public and are a great way for parents to learn about the School Board's strategic goals, how schools implemented plans last year and performed on standardized tests, and plans for the current year. Comments and/or questions from the public are welcome. The time and date of these meetings will be announced in the Nixon e-News.

The SIP is prepared by each principal (with input from the school's site council) and describes:

How the school:

- Ensures that all students advance their learning by 1 year each year in reading, writing and math
- Works to close the achievement gap in those subjects
- What the school does for:
 - English Language Learners
 - GATE students (gifted and talented)
 - Special Education Students
 - Low Achieving Students

How the school supports:

- Social Emotional and Physical Health and Resiliency
- Diverse Avenues for Student Success

School Site Council

Nixon's School Site Council is an advisory body composed of 12 members. Six are parents and six are staff. Members are elected and serve two-year terms. The Council has the responsibility for developing a school plan and assessment criteria and a budget to support the plan. Meetings are open to everyone and are generally held on the first Monday of each month. The next meeting will be Monday, November 6, 2:40-4:40 p.m. in the staff lounge. Agenda items will include a review of the Area Attendance Committee update, review of the October 26th disaster drill and a discussion of the \$56.00 per student state block grant allocation. These funds may be used for programs including, but not limited to, instructional materials, classroom supplies, arts and music supplies, PE equipment, school and classroom library materials, educational technology, deferred maintenance and efforts to close the achievement gap. Everyone is welcome to attend and an "open forum" will be available for parents to bring up new items of interest.

Attached to each SIP are:

- Current and historic school essay test scores (ERBs) and STAR test scores
- School Financials

The Board Study Sessions will be held at 25 Churchill (they will not be televised):

- For middle and high schools: Tuesday, October 24th (starts at 6pm)
- For elementary schools: Thursday, November 2nd (Probably will start at 6pm. For exact time, check <http://www.pausd.org/community/board/agenda.shtml>, a few days before.)

If you are interested in the SIP presentations, but cannot attend these sessions, you can obtain a copy of the SIP for your school from your principal or at the district office. (Some may be on your school's websites, but may not be posted until after the session.)

If you have any questions or want to highlight programs at your school, you can email your questions/comments to the board before the scheduled session at:

chalowell@aol.com, bmittchell@mac.com,
camillet@aol.com, dana@danatom.com, gprice@pausd.org
(The board will not be able to address all parent comments/questions because of limited time.)

From your Palo Alto PTAC Legislative Co-Chairs,
Lauren Janov and Erwin Morton

It's a Small World After All By Alison Curtis

Last year, many Nixon classes began an experiment called the "Uganda Project". Carolina Maier Albers headed this project with a contagious enthusiasm and much effort. A former student of Carolina's, Lily Hsieh, joined the Peace Corps nearly 2 years ago, and was stationed in a small village in Uganda. The "Uganda Project" was established to help Lily in her efforts to improve conditions in the local schools. The main goal of the project was to learn about Uganda and to open the lines of communication between kids across the globe. We established pen pals with children from two small villages not too far from Kampala, the country's capital. We also managed to collect some money for them to build bookcases and, hence, start their very first library! Finally, the Nixon kids collected supplies (pencils, used books, crayons, maps, etc.) to send to the schools in Uganda. The effort that went into the pen pal letters, collecting the supplies and the excitement from both students and teachers was absolutely WONDERFUL!

In August, last year's project came full-circle as we received a package from Uganda with nearly 100 letters from children in Uganda. Along with the letters were photographs of kids in the villages holding the Nixon pen pal letters. They are beautiful!

Currently, the third grade classes are writing their own letters to kids in Uganda! Carolina came in a few weeks ago to share a wonderful and informative slide show of the students, teachers, schools, and animals in Uganda. We looked up Uganda on a map and discussed some basic geographical information. The students also discussed similarities and differences they noticed between the Uganda students and themselves. The students naturally noticed some of the more apparent differences – short/shaved hair for all children, uniforms and different clothing, no shoes for most kids, buildings with no electricity and sometimes no doors or windows, 100 students per every teacher/class, etc. It was this discussion that really launched our letter-writing. We brainstormed thoughtful questions to ask students in Uganda that would respect our differences and help us find more similarities. We also included interesting information about ourselves, our school, and our community.

Once we finalize our letters and send them off, we will hope to receive letters back! All of the students are very excited. I am thrilled to make this real-world connection, and practice our geography and letter-writing skills at the same time!!! We will keep you posted.

Photo by Carolina Maier Albers

Make Your PiE Donation Today!



P A L O A L T O
P A R T N E R S
I N E D U C A T I O N

Come on Nixon Families, we can do better!! Let's show our true dedication to our wonder support staff: teacher's aides, math and reading specialists, computer lab manager, Spectra Art, etc. Without PiE funding we are in danger of losing some of these people. Please remember the "Above and Beyond" challenge grant from an anonymous foundation ends **November 1st**. All donations over \$500/child will be matched up to a total of \$125,000. Additionally, if we meet the challenge grant, PiE will get an additional \$100,000.

But remember ANY amount is welcome, so please submit your donation today.

Does your employer match your charitable donations? Check out this website <http://www.matchinggifts.com/asf/> to see if your company matches and **DOUBLE** your donation today. Questions? www.papie.org or donations@papie.org

Participation Rates (as of 10/18/06): School Name (Percentage)

Addison (19.2%)	Jordan (15.5%)
Barron Park (12.0%)	Briones (12.8%)
Duveneck (22.5%)	Nixon (14.5%)
El Carmelo (19.0%)	Ohlone (34.1%)
Escondido (17.9%)	Paly (10.0%)
Fairmeadow (15.1%)	Palo Verde (15.5%)
Gunn (8.1%)	Terman (12.4%)
Hoover (15.0%)	Walter Hays (29.3%)
JLS (9.8%)	

Want more information on how your PiE dollars make a difference?

Please join PiE for a special presentation event. PiE has recently completed a benchmarking study comparing PAUSD to five other leading school districts (Scarsdale, NY, Wilmette/Winnetka, IL, Wellesley, MA, Chapel Hill, NC, Edina, MN). Lois Garland, PiE Board Member who led the study, will present key findings. Lois, members of her team, and key district personnel including District Superintendent Mary Frances Callan will also be available for Q&A.

Option 1: Wed 11/1/2006 from 7:00-9:00 p.m. at Jordan Middle School Library
Option 2: Wed 11/1/2006 from 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. at 25 Churchill (PAUSD offices)

Nixon On Ice!

The Nixon ice skating party at Winter Lodge was a huge success! Over 200 skaters came to skate, socialize, and support the 5th grade bake sale and eat Round Table pizza. Skaters of all ages glided on the ice for two hours of fun. A very special thank you to the following people who helped make this special event possible: Thank you to the first 75 skaters who signed up, all the safety monitors who volunteered to help keep the ice a safe place, Lori Delp for making the beautiful posters and recruiting volunteers, Susan Nichols for organizing the bake sale, Joe Young for taking pictures to record the event, Round Table Pizza for providing pizza to purchase, Jo Marcus, Lana Iramanesh, Lee Cu, Alex Burke and Courtney Hancock for being the best check-in crew possible and to the Winter Lodge for providing the venue and courteous staff to support our event. *A very special Thank You to Lois Hancock and Lori Delp, ice skating chairs, for organizing, promoting, and planning the event.*

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: _____

Classroom Happenings

It was such a beautiful day on Wednesday October 18th when first graders went to Webb Ranch for their pumpkin patch field trip. The students had a blast as they ran, jumped, played, and explored the farm. There were so many things to do there! Some of the students' favorite things were going through the haunted house, climbing on the haystacks, and looking at all the different kinds of pumpkins! There were *17* different types of pumpkins at the farm. Students will use their pumpkins to learn about estimating and measuring height, weight, and circumference. Does a pumpkin sink or float in water? *Ask your 1st grader.*

Tuesday Night is Pizza Night! November 7th

Nixon Night Out presents Round Table Pizza Night every first Tuesday of every month of this school year (October through June). Our neighborhood California Ave. Round Table Pizza restaurant has generously agreed to donate 20% of the receipts to support Nixon! This offer is for dine-in or carry-out, but excludes delivery. So, make it Pizza Night every first Tuesday of the month! Thank You Round Table.

Attention Kinder Parents

Extended Day will begin on Tuesday, November 7. If you have any questions with regard to your assigned days, please contact your child's teacher.

Kinder parents and caregivers, when you pick up your child on extended days, please either park on Tolman (the best choice), in visitor parking places, or down on the lower black top. Please do not park in the middle of the driveway, bus circle, or staff parking areas.

UPDATE to the Area Attendance Advisory Group (AAAG)

Minutes of the Most Recent Meeting (and all meetings) can be found at:
<http://www.pausd.org/community/about/news/downloads/AAAGMinutes.pdf>. If you wish to comment to the Nixon representative, please email Ellen Waxman.

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: November 17

DEADLINE:

Thurs., Nov. 9 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.

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.