

# Panther Tracks



Sept 2012  
Volume 2012-2013 Issue 1

The newsletter for Jane Lathrop Stanford Middle School

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## Principal's Column



Dear JLS Families,

Welcome to a new and exciting year at JLS! I would like to thank the JLS staff and parents for all of the hard work that went into preparing for the opening of school. The office staff did an amazing job of handling the logistics required for each student to start school on the first day. The custodial staff worked tirelessly to make sure every corner of the campus was in clean, working order.

The teachers have been collaborating with one another to make sure both the academic and social emotional needs of our students are addressed. And, the parent volunteers have been working to support our efforts to make sure we provide an outstanding, well-balanced program for all kids at JLS. The start of the year has been tremendously smooth and calm thanks to everyone!

The slow pace of summer certainly gave way to the energetic hustle and bustle of school and all that comes with a promising new year. I would like to take a moment to introduce and welcome the following new staff members to JLS:

Jane Lathrop Stanford Middle School  
480 East Meadow Drive  
Palo Alto, CA 94306

Website: [www.jls.pausd.org](http://www.jls.pausd.org)  
Phone: 650-856-5188

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**Sharon Ofek**

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Pier Angeli LaPlace**

PTA Co-Presidents:  
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Ivan Hom**

Elicia Blackford  
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Mary Melnick  
Alicia Servin  
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English  
Student Activities, Public Speaking,  
Video Production  
Mental Health Therapist  
English  
Special Education  
Orchestra  
6th Grade – Math/Science  
6th Grade – Language Arts/Social Studies  
Science  
Special Education  
Special Educations

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Jane Lathrop Stanford (JLS) is a diverse learning community We seek to provide a safe, creative, and inclusive learning environment. We respect and embrace the uniqueness of every individual. We strive for academic excellence, individual responsibility, and lifelong learning. Through compassion, connection, courtesy, complimenting, and community, we support the intellectual, social, physical, and emotional growth of our children.

The mention of any business, service, or organization in this newsletter does not imply an endorsement by JLS Middle School, JLS PTA, or PAUSD.

Submissions to: [panthertracks@gmail.com](mailto:panthertracks@gmail.com)  
Next deadline: **Friday, November 30**

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All of the staff at JLS is committed to continuous improvement and maintaining an open mindset. This year we resume our emphasis on providing a balanced education that allows our students to engage in and develop a love of learning, explore who they are, and participate in a community of thriving adolescents.

In an effort to ease the transitions from grade to grade, the JLS staff successfully implemented activities at each grade level. For the sixth year, 6th graders enjoyed Panther Camp, 7th graders participated in the first ever day of welcome activities organized by team, and 8th graders were exposed to teacher led presentations about common expectations for the year. All in all, our students participated in workshops ranging from fixed versus growth mindsets to online resources to digital citizenship.

This year the Site Council will be converting over from a three year School Site Plan to a yearly plan with specific, targeted goals. As we adjust ourselves to the new template we are working hard to maintain the importance of the more anecdotal and less quantifiable aspects of the JLS ABC's (Academics, Belonging, Creating Wellness). Once our plan has been finalized and approved we will be sure to share it with all of you.

We are continuing to highlight the Developmental Assets model for building positive character traits in our students. Many agencies in Palo Alto, including the City of Palo Alto, have committed to emphasizing these assets as well. At JLS we have been underscoring five assets that we feel we can positively impact. These assets dovetail nicely with our existing work on connectedness, building resilience, and providing an engaging learning experience. The assets are:

- **Other Adult Relationships** – receives support from three or more non-parent adults
- **Caring School Climate** – school provides a caring, encouraging environment
- **High Expectations** – both parents and teachers encourage child to do well
- **Reading for Pleasure** – read for pleasure three or more hours per week
- **Cultural Competence** – has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds

Currently JLS is hosting a class on the Developmental Assets for parents on Thursday mornings. In addition, there is an alumni group of parents who gather regularly to discuss ways to support our work. I encourage you to explore the assets, join the class, and/or reach out to parents who are already familiar with the program.

Additionally, we are making a concerted effort to improve communication within our school community. Based on responses to the Site Council Survey last year, all staff members are using Schoology as their main vehicle of communication to parents and students when

it comes to daily activities in class. Infinite Campus is the district's student information system and is for nuts & bolts things like the annual data update, emergency cards, report cards, attendance, etc. In addition we have an awesome website that we are always working on making more robust. Please be sure to check the school calendar, available subscriptions, and information available under the "For Parents" tab.

In addition to all of our normal daily activity, we have been navigating the impact of construction on our campus. We are off to a healthy start with constructing a new 10-classroom wing in time for next school year, slowly making progress on modernization aspects to the existing campus, and preparing for improved landscaping in the coming summer.

Through teamwork, open communication, and dedication to continuous improvement, our school will continue to be successful in producing happy, thriving children. I am proud to work at JLS and I look forward to sharing in another year of exhilarating experiences with you!

*Sincerely,*

*Sharon Ofek, Principal* 

## PTA Presidents' Column

As we settle into our new school year, the JLS PTA would like to extend a warm welcome to all new and returning JLS families. We'll jump right in and invite you to join our PTA, if you have not done so already, and encourage you as part of our community to stay informed and involved with your student's experience at JLS: <http://jls.pausd.org/default/> for JLS, and <http://pta.palo-alto.ca.us/jls/> for JLS PTA. Joining the PTA gives you, 1) a voice and a vote at our meetings; 2) a window into the great programs we run and the support we offer our teachers and students; 3) a membership into the nation's largest and most consistent voice for adequate school funding and advocacy for children. To the many of you who have already joined our PTA and donated to our direct appeal, thank you! Your generosity and concern for our school at this time is so important.

We were pleased to see so many of you at our back to school pizza social and hope we continue to see you on campus at upcoming events or volunteering at JLS now and then. Staying involved with your kids' educational experience is more important than ever during the secondary years.

For many families, this is our first experience with middle school life, and we are surprised at some of the changes in our kids. Children are searching for independence in ways that may seem perplexing, yet asserting independence at this time is natural. Our children learn from these experiences, and from there, grow and begin to take on new responsibilities. As parents, we need to

learn new ways of relating to our kids and to remain involved in the most meaningful ways we can. Fortunately, we can find help in the Developmental Assets framework that the district and community have embraced. This framework identifies and explains 41 positive values, relationships, skills and experiences that help children and teens thrive and enable them to make healthy choices throughout their lives. Please consider attending one of the six-week Project Cornerstone Take it Personally 41 Developmental Assets study groups being offered this year at various schools throughout the district. The skills and knowledge you gain from these workshops will help you ensure your kids thrive as they navigate middle school and beyond. Many of us have participated and found them to be quite eye-opening, pertinent to our lives, and very helpful. To locate a parent workshop or for more information on Project Cornerstone, visit [www.projectcornerstone.org](http://www.projectcornerstone.org).

In addition, each month the PTA Council shares an 'Asset of the Month' for the school community at large, and this month's asset is 'Parent Involvement in Schooling'. Please take a moment to read the asset article in this newsletter and see how you can apply it to your JLS experience.

Finally, the November elections will soon be upon us, and we will be faced with decisions at all levels, among them the selection of four local City Council members, three School Board members, and a pair of tax initiatives that will dramatically affect education funding in California. We always advocate being an informed voter, so please take the time to learn about the candidates and the issues. To see where the California State PTA stands on some of the election issues, visit <http://www.capta.org/sections/advocacy/legislative-alerts.cfm>

As always, feel free to contact me with questions or suggestions.

*With best regards,  
Nancy Smith, [nssmith@earthlink.net](mailto:nssmith@earthlink.net)*

## 7th Grade Transition Activity

On August 23th and 24th all of the seventh graders participated in a welcome event specifically designed for the transition from 6th to 7th grade. The event took coordination from the entire JLS staff. First, the students took part in a team building event where the entire team got together to play team building games, go over common expectations, and pass out team t-shirts. Next, for the entire school day on Friday, students were split into groups based on their teams to go through a variety of sessions on: organization, technology, growth mindset, library reorientation, digital citizenship and leading a healthy lifestyle. Students and teachers alike found the event to be a positive and effective way to introduce students into 7th grade.

## Music Notes

Welcome Ms. McGuire!

The JLS Music Department would like to welcome our new Orchestra Director Rachel McGuire. Ms. McGuire has taught the past five years at Terman and we are very lucky to have her joining our team!

Jazzing it up: Jazz is up and running at JLS. 7th and 8th grade band students auditioned for Jazz Ensemble and Jazz Band and had their first rehearsal on September 19.

Chamber Music Clubs: If you would like to participate in a small ensemble, come join the Chamber Music Club. The String Chamber Music Club is for students who play a string instrument and meets in room 60 on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings. The Band Chamber Music Club is for students who play a wind or percussion instrument and meets in room 50 on Wednesday morning at 7:45 am.

### Upcoming Events

September 27/28  
Playing/Singing Tests in all music classes

October 4  
Prism Concert at Gunn  
(7th and 8th Grade Choir and Orchestra)

October 10  
Fall Band Festival - Advanced and Symphonic Band

November 28: Fall Choir Concert  
December 5: Winter Orchestra Concert  
December 12: Winter Band Concert

*Angelina Fitzhugh, Band and Choir  
Greg Miller, Band  
Rachel McGuire, Orchestra*

## JLS Students Read Over 5500 Books

JLS students read over 5500 books this summer! That is an amazing number of books. Over 400 students qualified for the Summer Reading Celebrations held September 12th and 19th during WIP. Students celebrated with music and ice cream and got to select a new book to reward their summer reading efforts. Our seventh graders read the most books this year with 1920 good reads and sixth grade was second with 1760. Eighth graders were close with 1736. Thank you to our wonderful PTA for supplying the food and helping with the celebrations.

## COUNSELERS CORNER

### Aravind Arya, 6th Grade Counselor

Hi! My name is Arvind Arya. I am the 6th grade counselor at JLS and am excited and thrilled to have this opportunity to work with you and your student for the next three years. Just so you know a little bit more about me, I am starting my overall 13th year working as a guidance counselor. I hail from southern California, went to high school in Carlsbad and graduated from U.C Riverside with my BA in Sociology. I attended Azusa Pacific University, and earned my MA in education along with a credential in school counseling.

My first experience counseling was at La Cañada High School, in La Cañada, California. La Cañada is a little community that is just outside of Pasadena. I had a wonderful experience counseling with all grade-levels during my tenure there. In the summer of 2006, I got married and relocated to the Bay Area. I worked at Milpitas High School for a year, but decided it was time for a change from the high school level. I love working in Middle School! It is very different from high school, but I feel that children are much more “moldable” and open to learning many new things in life. I enjoy their energy and enthusiasm. JLS is a great school and I am proud to work here. I am starting my 6th year working at JLS. What is nice about the JLS counseling program is that the counselors “loop” with their grade, which means I will be keeping the students I have for the next three years, until they finish 8th grade. This is a great way of getting to know the students and making relationships with them!

I have two little children. My daughter Pria is 5 years old and my son Aarav is 2. In my spare time, (when I have some), I like to watch soccer, and basketball. I'm a huge fan of European Football (Soccer)! I support Arsenal FC and the Lakers! I also enjoy traveling to new places and am known as the “King of the Grill” in my home as I enjoy grilling on weekends.

I have a passion about working with students to help them overcome any obstacles that they may face. This can be academic, personal/ social or just about anything. Setting goals and working towards them is an important life-long skill for all our kids. Seeing children grow into responsible, motivated students is very rewarding to me. Middle school students are a lot of fun!

If you have any questions or concerns, I can be reached at 650-856-5129 and [aarya@pausd.org](mailto:aarya@pausd.org). You can also check out the Guidance Department website for more information. This can be found on the JLS homepage, under the “Parents” tab. All the best this year and I am looking forward to working with you.

*Arvind Arya, 6th Grade Counselor  
[aarya@pausd.org](mailto:aarya@pausd.org) 650-856-5129*

### Ryan Ealy, 7th Grade Counselor

I would like to welcome all of the new families to JLS as well as all of the returning families. Let me share a little about myself. This is my sixth year working at JLS and I have looped with the 6th grade class, moving with them to 7th grade. By remaining with the students for three years, the counselors are able to know the students well, form solid connections, and are better able to support the students.

I went to school at the University of Northern Iowa where I received a bachelor's degree in Liberal Arts. I majored in Communications with an emphasis in public speaking, and minored in Youth Administration. After college I worked at Northwestern Mutual Financial Network as a financial planner. After a year, I decided this was not the career for me. I returned to Northern Iowa where I received a Master's degree in School Counseling. I currently hold an Iowa Counseling License and Pupil Personnel Services Credential.

On April 18, 2009 I became a father. My son, Hayden Michael Ealy was born at Stanford Hospital. Recently, there has been a new addition to my family! On March 28, 2012, my daughter, Peyton Elizabeth Ealy, was born. Being a father is the one of the greatest experiences in the world. Being a parent has provided me with a different perspective on life. I not only have my view as a counselor but as a parent as well. This experience has helped me to grow as a person and has made me a better counselor.

I believe that middle school can be a difficult time for our youth. The changes from elementary to middle school can be very challenging. This is a time of transition and personal growth. Students are attempting to find their place in middle school and learn the skills needed in life to be successful. Traditionally students try to break away from the family and place a greater emphasis on their peer relationships.

The counselor serves a variety of functions that supplement a student's academic career. Much of my work with students focuses on emotional and social needs, academic awareness, developmental needs, and personal growth.

If you have any questions or concerns, I can be reached at 650-856- 5174. My email address is: [realy@pausd.org](mailto:realy@pausd.org). Please also check out the Guidance Department link on the JLS school website. Thank you for your time and have a great year!.

*Ryan Ealy - 7th Grade Counselor  
[realy@pausd.org](mailto:realy@pausd.org) 650-856-5174*

# Who Is Your Counselor?

## What Does a Middle School Counselor Do?

Welcome to the 2012-2013 school year. Our sixth graders are beginning their journey with the first taste of secondary school. Our eighth graders are enjoying being the older, experienced students on campus with an eye on high school. Seventh graders are settling into the middle as they look forward to taking over the reins next year.

I am the guidance counselor for eighth grade this year. The counselors at JLS “loop” with the students following each grade level starting with sixth grade. This enables us to know our students and families and build relationships. This is my 10th year as a counselor at JLS. Before that I was a resource specialist at JLS teaching sixth grade students. I have a Master’s degree in Education in School Counseling. I also hold several teaching credentials.

A question I am frequently asked is, “What does a middle school counselor do?” The answer to this question can be divided into four broad categories: assisting in transitions, development of programs, supporting the social/emotional needs of students and collaboration.

**TRANSITIONS:** At the beginning and end of the school year counselors spend a lot of time ensuring that the schedules are correct, and every student is placed in the correct class. With over a thousand students, this takes some time, but it is a necessary part of the job. Counselors support students in various programs by coordinating meetings between their parents and high school personnel. On the other end of the middle school spectrum, the counselor meets with the elementary personnel to ensure the transition to middle school for students goes smoothly. We try to get to know the incoming students as well as possible as they enter middle school as sixth graders. Visiting the elementary schools is a part of this 5th to 6th grade transition. One important way of getting to know the sixth grade students takes place during Panther Camp when the counselor teaches the character education component to the sixth graders. Being a part of the Panther Camp experience is an instant and positive way the counselor gets to know the children they’ll be working with for the next three years.

**GUIDANCE PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT:** Throughout the years, the school counselors have developed programs or lessons such as “No Name Calling Week”; “Not In Our Schools”; a “Stamping Out Stereotyping” lesson; and character education videos on Forgiveness, Honesty, and Responsibility. Two of the positive recognition programs, the JLS Way recognition lunch and the Positive Panther Performance tickets were developed and continue to be administered by counselors. Four of the programs or ideas developed by the guidance counselors at JLS have withstood the test of time and have been operating for several years. They are: “Not In Our Schools Week”, the JLS WAY school motto, the BeTCha\*\* student advisory group, and a mentoring program. There is more information on these programs on the guidance website which can be found on the JLS Home page.

**SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL NEEDS OF STUDENTS:** The programs mentioned above attempt to reach the entire population of students at JLS, but another important component of our jobs is to support the individual child experiencing distress. We are available as the first level of intervention when a student needs help in the social or emotional area of life. We also work with parents who have concerns or need advice. A parent can arrange a conference with a teacher, but if it is beneficial to meet with the team of teachers, the counselor can set up a meeting and be present. If the child, parent and guidance counselor feel a child needs counseling on a regular, weekly basis, the school counselor can make a referral to our on-site counseling service called A.C.S. (Adolescent Counseling Services). The school counselors also perform a lot of “behind the scenes” support by meeting with the students’ team of teachers on a weekly basis.

**COLLABORATION WITH COMMUNITY RESOURCES:** The school counselors have knowledge of various community resources available to help our students. A couple of these programs are the Dream Catchers, a tutorial program run by Stanford students, and Parent Project, a parenting class. If a JLS student has further needs, and the family does not know where to get the answers, start with the school guidance counselor. The Guidance counselors know people in the district who might be able to help.

**WHY IS A SCHOOL GUIDANCE COUNSELOR IMPORTANT?** Teachers and counselors know that a child’s basic needs must first be met before he or she can learn. Although teachers are sometimes the first to recognize a child’s learning is impeded by an emotional concern, they do not always have the time or privacy to address a situation. Together the teachers and school counselors can partner to bolster and support a child who is experiencing tough times. A school counselor is the resource person at your child’s school that can make the difference. For more information on the Guidance program at JLS, go to the JLS Home page and click on the Parent tab.

I am looking forward to a great year working with you and your child.

*Linda Howard - 8th grade counselor  
lhoward@pausd.org , 650-856-5175*

•• BeTCha stands for “Be The Change”

# MARK YOUR CALENDERS Fundraiser for the Library and Music Department

Please join us at Town & Country Village in Palo Alto on Monday, November 19th, for a special fund-raising evening for the JLS Library and the Music Department. Books, Inc. and Town and Country restaurants (details to follow!) will be donating a percentage of their proceeds back to our school! Also, the JLS Choirs and Bands will be performing at various times throughout the evening. Come to Books, Inc. between 5 and 8 p.m. (and get some holiday shopping done!) and Books, Inc. will donate 20% of all sales during that time back to JLS. You can make an evening out of it by having dinner at Town and Country before or after your shopping and a percentage of your dinner bill will also be donated to JLS. Watch the eNews for more information as to which restaurants are supporting JLS. Thank you in advance for supporting the library and music departments.

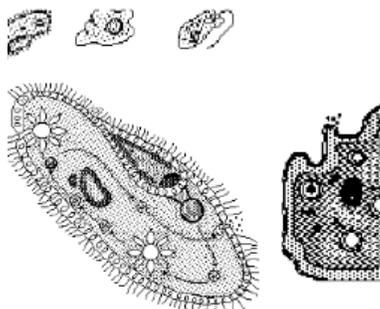


# JLS Concert Calendars

- 10/4 Gunn Prism Concert  
Spangenberg Theatre ~ 7:30
- 10/10 Gunn/JLS Bands at JLS ~ 7:00
- 11/28 JLS Choirs at JLS ~ 7:00
- 12/5 JLS Orchestras at JLS ~ 7:00
- 12/12 JLS Bands at JLS ~ 7:00 & 8:15
- 1/24 JLS & Terman 6th Grade Band Festival at Gunn
- 2/13 JLS Choirs perform at Gunn Choir Staff Musical
- 2/27 JLS Orchestras at JLS ~ 7:00
- 4/12 CMEA Band & Orchestra Festival at Gunn & 13
- 5/4 May Fete Parade
- 5/14 JLS Orchestras at JLS ~ 7:00
- 5/15 JLS Bands at JLS ~ 7:00/8:15
- 5/22 JLS Choirs at JLS ~ 7:00

# Cell Model Projects

The seventh grade scientists will soon be hard at work perfecting their Cell Model Projects. These wonderful projects will arrive at JLS on Thursday October 18. We invite everyone to stop by the Cafetorium to celebrate their creativity and hard work. The Cafetorium will be open from 6:30p-7:30PM.



See you there:

Kevin Lynch

Greg Rice

Linda Luo

Mary Melnick

**CELEBRATE YOUR 8TH GRADER!  
BUY AN AD IN OUR 2013  
YEARBOOK!**

Place your ad online!  
Please go to  
JostensAdService.com and  
search for JLS Stanford Middle  
School.

**Sample below**

**HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?**

1. 1 page in color \$250.00
2. 1/2 page in color \$125.00
3. 1/4 page in color \$60.00
4. 1/8 page in color \$40.00

**Sample below**  
**Sonia Waters**



What type photos can I use? Baby pictures, family pictures, vacation shots, to name just a few (jpeg only)

**Deadline is October  
31st!**

Questions? Email: [tdevers@pawd.org](mailto:tdevers@pawd.org)

Sonia, here are some words to remember. Love, Mom and Dad  
"May god bless and keep you always  
May your wishes all come true  
May you always do for others  
And let others do for you  
May you build a ladder to the stars  
And climb on every rung"

## HELP WANTED

# Sixth Grade Parent Network Wants You!

We had a great first 6th Grade Parents Social on Tuesday morning, Sept. 11th. Our students' councilor, Mr. Arya, introduced himself, the counseling program and answered numerous questions. All the parents attending got to enjoy some coffee, home-baked treats and friendly conversation. The 6th Grade Parent Network has a functioning yahoo group called JLS2015. We will use the yahoo group to inform parents about upcoming opportunities to socialize and as a forum for parents to communicate with each other between meetings. You can join the network group at

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/JLS2015/>. It's a great way to connect with fellow parents. We look forward to meeting you at future events! -

Heather Schultz and Rita Wiseman, 6th Grade Parent Network coordinators

## November Staff Appreciation Luncheon—Help Needed!

The first JLS Staff Appreciation lunch will be held on Wednesday, November 7th, 11:30 a.m. — 1:00 p.m. We invite everyone to help out with this Thanksgiving themed luncheon. Consider bringing a main dish, appetizer, salad or dessert to show your appreciation for our dedicated JLS staff for all of their hard work. We also need volunteers to set up, serve and cleanup. If you can help ahead of time, or on the day of the luncheon, please email our Staff Appreciation Luncheon coordinator, Mary Catherine Williams, [wemcw@mindspring.com](mailto:wemcw@mindspring.com), or Nancy Smith, [nssmith@earthlink.net](mailto:nssmith@earthlink.net).

## JLS Science Fair !

Wednesday and Thursday, January 30th and 31st, 2013 from 6:30 to 9:00 PM

All 6th, 7th and 8th grade students are invited to participate! This event provides an opportunity for students to share their individual or group science and engineering projects with our school community. Last year's fair featured over 400 projects, over 100 volunteer evaluators, and filled the Cafetorium to capacity. Students are interviewed by the evaluators (mostly JLS parent volunteers) in a noncompetitive, informal setting.

Students interested in a more structured, competitive event are encouraged to enter their projects in the Santa Clara County Synopsys Science and Engineering Fair. If your child might be interested, Synopsys Science Fair

is a little more selective in the type of project allowed. This is a list of projects unlikely to be accepted by them: <http://www.science-fair.org/pdfs/Discouraged-projects.pdf>. More information about their science fair and science fairs in general can be found on their website: [www.science-fair.org/](http://www.science-fair.org/).

If you are at all interested in supporting science and engineering at our school, please consider volunteering to help with this event. Previous years' evaluators have always enjoyed talking to our students and were amazed at the wide variety of projects on display. We welcome non-scientist/engineer judges to join the fun! The students really appreciate having a non-parent or teacher spend the time to hear about their project.

Thank you to those of you that filled out the volunteer form and it is, of course, not too late to volunteer! With the exception of those of you who signed up to help with donation solicitation for the prize drawings, I will be in contact with you closer to the event. Thanks in advance for your help, and please contact us if you have any questions or need more information.

Stephanie Youngquist  
Science Fair Chair  
[Yoyo2000@Pacbell.net](mailto:Yoyo2000@Pacbell.net)

## The 2013 Many Faces of JLS Needs You!!

Many Faces of JLS, Wednesday January 16 2013 6-8pm

Don't miss this community-building event that also delights your palate. With the diverse cultures represented by our JLS families, we are going to have a fun evening sampling delicious cuisine of all corners of the world and socializing with other JLS parents/students. We hope you'll even make a few new friends.

We need your contribution to make this a successful event. You can be the organizer of a country table, bring dishes of your own native cuisine, or help with setup/cleanup/purchasing. Please sign up using the online form: <http://tinyurl.com/2013mfjls>. Blank forms are also available in the office.

If you have any questions about the event, please contact one of our co-chairs Cynthia Tham at [cynthia.tham@gmail.com](mailto:cynthia.tham@gmail.com).

We're looking forward to celebrating this wonderfully diverse community with you!!

Many Faces of JLS co-chairs,  
Grace Lee, Dulce Ponceleon, Shanti Srinivasan, and Cynthia Tham

THANKS !

## JLS Panther Camp

*Pier Angeli La Place, Assistant Principal*

Our Panther Camp 6th Grade Transition Program was a great success again this year. Over the three days of Panther Camp our new 6th graders learned their way around our campus, made new friends from many places and reconnected with friends from elementary. They became familiar with the faces and places important to our JLS community, learned about middle school structures and expectations, were introduced to the JLS Way, including our character education, building assets, focus on reducing student stress, and developing student resilience. Despite an unplanned evacuation and pool heater repair needs, students, parents, and staff pulled together, demonstrating flexibility and resilience.

In addition, students participated in team building, technology and environmental activities, and had some fun along the way. We can say with confidence that our 6th graders are excited to be Panthers!

The success of Panther Camp is due, in large part, to the many parent volunteers who, each year, give their time and efforts in support of our students. It would not be possible to list all of the parents who worked during the program, and before hand, organizing and coordinating efforts for Panther Camp. A large team of parents participated in Panther Camp, setting up and supervising activities, helping with clean up, taking photos and creating a slideshow of highlights, providing food for the 8th grade counselor training, and much more.

Our thanks go to all of you who have made such a difference in the 6th graders' transition, helping them to make connections and to feel more acclimated to middle school.

The parents who participated were able to make their own connections, learn more about JLS, and contribute to the success of our orientation program. We would like to give a special thank you to Jeannette Cheng and Hagit Katzenelson, the PTA volunteer coordinators for Panther Camp, for their tireless organization. Another special thanks goes to Butch Garcia for his dedication as one of our photographers; he comes back each year to support Panther Camp.

We want to acknowledge and thank the 8th grade student counselors. They were remarkable role models. Their positive leadership as guides and 'counselors' to the 6th graders is vital to Panther Camp. Our 8th graders stepped into leadership and service, important assets for their growth as well.

The JLS principal, Sharon Ofek, the administrative team, teachers, guidance counselors, and entire staff are committed to supporting the academic, social, emotional, and physical well being of our students, a goal we know we share with you, our parent community.

We are grateful for all that you do to help make JLS a wonderful learning environment. A Panther Camp Parent Survey is posted on the JLS website and is being sent out via PTA communications. We appreciate and welcome your feedback on Panther Camp as we work toward improvements for future years.

With Thanks,

### **The Panther Camp Coordination Team**

Alex Salzman, Leonel Argumedo,  
and Katie Schramm,  
and Pier Angeli La Place (admin. liaison)

## Panther Camp Volunteer Thank You

Hopefully, your 6th graders experienced a smooth transition to JLS. Panther Camp, which is a special orientation program at JLS, is a fabulous way for our 6th graders to start middle school. Instead of jumping right into academics, for three days during the second week of school, our students were able to meet other students and teachers, navigate the campus, learn the JLS way, and get to know 8th grade counselors.

This program was organized by the JLS staff, led by Pier Angeli La Place, Alex Salzman, Katie Schramm, and Leonel Argumedo. They were very creative in making it fun for the children.

When asked what they liked best about Panther Camp, many kids chose the team building activities like the egg drop. The second most popular was Binder Reminder Jeopardy, which went over all the rules that are covered in the kids' binder reminders, like how long your shorts need to be and what the attendance policy is. This game was taught to the kids in a Jeopardy format and the kids got to push a button!

Panther Camp could not have happened without parent volunteers filling over 50 slots each day of the event. Thank you to all who volunteered, especially those of you who took the time to help in more than one position. A special thank you to those of you who showed up and just asked, "What can we do?" After some last-minute cancellations, that kind of spirit was extremely appreciated!

Our thanks go out to:

Aimee Jose, Alan Snyder, Albert Tsoi, Ann Crichton, Anna Linetsky, Anna Thayer, Anne Lin, Anu, Ariane Bertrand, Barrie, Berit Schulz, Cara Silver, Carol Leonard, Daxue Xu, Dharti, Douglas Ha, Ed Lim, Ganka Stantcheva, Geeta, Geetha Iyer, Gloria Cheung, Grace Fang, Grace Ming, Haya Rubin, Hayley Gans, Heather Brownlee, Heather Schultz, Heidi Trilling, Heike Enders, Helena Vincent, Hilary, James Ang, Jeannette Foley, Jenny Ryu, Jerry Karsh, John Wu, Joy

Wu, Julia Jacobsen, Junco Minami, Kathleen Ford, Kathryn Maselli, Kriss Deiglmeier, Kristine Mostofizadeh, Laura Ye, Laurence Mechali, Lili Jouppi, Limor Nirpaz, Linda Duan, Lisa Loewy, Marcia A.de Lima, Maria Hu, Marian W. Feng, Marilyn Keller, Marjorie Sayer, Marlena Lyon, Marsha Quita, Mary Jo Ricci, Mary Rauner, Maya Venkatraman, Mayumi Kikuhara, Melody Shiu, Michal Yaron, Mrinal, Nandini Rajan, Natalia, Nirada, Pak Panitchpakdi, Parissa Mohamadi, Patricia Campbell, Patti Otani, Randy Vinluan, Rita, Rita Sharma, Robin Li, Sarah Nguyen, Saul Sierra, Shalini Kumar, Shan Phillips, Shaun Snyder, Sherwin Wong, Smitha Aiyar, Sonam Soni, Soowon Kim, Subin Im, Sunny Jefferson, Sunyao Wong, Susan Fineberg, Susan Gong, Susan Miley, Swathi, Sylvia Star-Lack, Tais Schmitt, Taly Katz, Tan Toh, Tara Farnsworth, Tatiana Cardoso, Vanessa Mock, Vicky Lu, Victoria Chang, Vivian Tsoi, Wenhao Cao, Xiaohua Zhang, Yanqing Guan, Yuhua Ji, and Yvonne Baur.

An additional thanks to both Peet's Coffee and Hobee's Restaurant for their generous donations of coffee and coffeecake for all three days of Panther Camp!

Thank you,  
Jeannette Cheng and Hagit Katzenelson,

Panther Camp Parent Volunteer Coordinators

## Back To School Pizza Dinner Update and Thank You

Our first family social, the Back to School Pizza Dinner held on Sept. 5th, was a hit. Thank you to all the wonderful parents, staff and the students who came and supported this event to make it successful. I am glad that the construction did not impact our event and everybody worked around it with a good spirit. We had a good turnout of about 700+ people.

This special event would not be possible without a lot of help from our parent and student volunteers. Thank you to ALL the parents who took time out from their busy lives and helped us toss the salad and serve the pizza. Parents who were not even signed up helped out and stayed to clean up. That's what we call a great community. I am proud to be a part of it.

Leadership students did a great job, from check-in, to serving pizza and ice cream. Special thanks also to our Leadership teacher, Jaime Buddle, for coordinating and organizing the student volunteers. A big thanks to Ryan Fletcher for helping us with the administrative complexities and storing our favorite "It's It" ice cream sandwiches. Last but not least, we thank the custodians who helped us enormously with setup and cleanup.

We hope you enjoyed the evening, We surely did.  
GO PANTHERS!

Please feel free to give any input for next year.

Shilpa Singhal, Nancy Smith  
shilpasinghal@gmail.com

## Thank you Volunteers

We are very grateful to all of the parents who give their time and energy to volunteer at JLS. If you are someone who has already helped out with one of our Back to School events or programs, please know how much we appreciate your generous donation of time. YOU help make our school a more enriching place for our staff to teach and our students to learn and a welcoming environment in which parents can get to know each other.

In this space we thank you, and we also warmly acknowledge those parents who took it upon themselves to organize these early fall semester events.

Thank you ALL for your commitment to our school!

This year's organizers:

- Jean Goyal: Back to School Packet Stuffing
- Jeeyoung Kim: August Staff Luncheon
- Nancy Smith: Jump Start Day/Form Sorting
- Jeeyoung Kim: First Day Parent Coffee
- Hagit Katzenelson, Jeannette Cheng: Panther Camp Volunteer Coordinators
- Gini Ali: Latte Cart Brunches
- Shilpa Singhal: Back to School Pizza Social
- Alison Ven Egeren, Kari Sreenivasan: JLS Walk and Roll to School Day
- Charlene Temple, Mary Catherine Williams: Dance Chaperone Coordinators
- Sonya Bradski: Hearing/Vision/Scoliosis Testing Volunteer Coordinator
- Linda Baker: PTA eNews JLS Online Communications
- Rita Wiseman, Heather Schultz: 6th Grade Parent Network Chairs
- Catherine Wytmar, Lisa Barkin: 7th Grade Parent Network Chairs
- Shirley Chin, Victoria Chang: 8th Grade Parent Network Chairs
- Laura Wingard: eScrip School Fundraising Kickoff
- Jennifer Mutz and Lisa Steinback: PiE Chairs, Back to School Campaign

# ideas for parents

## Easy Ways to Build Assets for and with Your Child

### FAST FACTS

#### ASSET #9: Service to Others

*Youth are more likely to grow up healthy when they serve others in the community one hour or more per week.*

**51%**

*of youth surveyed by Search Institute have this asset in their lives.\**

#### What Are Assets?

*Assets are 40 values, experiences, and qualities that help kids succeed. "Service to others" is one of four empowerment assets.*

\* Based on Search Institute surveys of 217,277 6th- to 12th-grade youth throughout the United States during the 1999-2000 school year.

## 10 Benefits of Serving Others

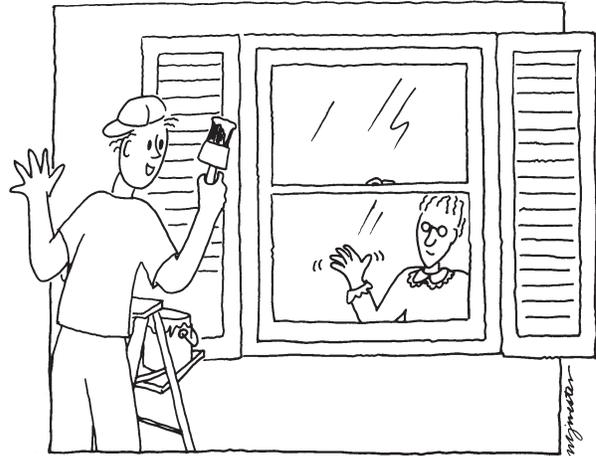
**T**o many children, the world is small. It is made up of their school, their home, their neighborhood. They may assume all schools are like their school. And they tend to think the world revolves around them.

When children start to reach out and help others, their world grows and so does their confidence. Independent Sector, an organization that studies nonprofit groups, surveyed teenagers who volunteer to help others. The young people said that through their volunteer experience they:

1. Learned to respect others.
2. Gained satisfaction from helping others.
3. Learned to be helpful and kind.
4. Learned how to get along with and relate to others.
5. Learned new skills.
6. Learned to understand people who are different from them.
7. Learned how to relate to younger children.
8. Developed leadership skills.
9. Became better people.
10. Became more patient.

By giving their time and energy, many said they received more in return. By serving others, they felt they made a difference in the world.

**Quick Tip:**  
**Be a role model for your children by serving others.**



### talk together

- Questions to discuss with your child:
- What gets you excited about doing things for others?
  - When is it easiest to serve others? When is it more difficult?
  - How can we make a difference in the world? How can we as a family begin?

### time together

Three ways to encourage your child to serve others:

1. Together help a neighbor. Maybe an elderly neighbor would appreciate your mowing the lawn or shoveling snow.
2. Help your child put together a weekly schedule of activities that includes some kind of service to others.
3. Together, think of 10 ways your family can serve others. Choose one idea. Pick a date to do the activity. Afterward, talk about your experience.

## 10 Ways to Serve as a Family

You don't need to volunteer at a shelter or do a large project to make a difference. Together as a family, do 2 of these 10 simple things for someone:

1. Play music at a nursing home.
2. Cook a meal for a single parent.
3. Take a child to a playground.
4. Provide a ride to an appointment or errand.
5. Bake cookies or another treat.
6. Give a "one-hour" coupon that's good for any project of the recipient's choice.
7. Take a dog for a walk.
8. Visit or call someone who can't leave home.
9. Change the oil in a car.
10. Cat-sit. House-sit. Child-sit. Plant-sit.



## Organizations for Kids

Check your phone book or the Internet to see if any of these organizations have chapters near you. Many of these give youth

opportunities to serve others:

- Boys & Girls Clubs of America
- Boy Scouts of America
- Camp Fire USA
- Girls Inc.
- Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.
- Greenwing (or Ducks Unlimited)
- Habitat for Humanity
- Kids Against Crime
- Kids Against Pollution



- Kids Can Free the Children
- Kids for Saving the Earth
- National Network of Youth Advisory Boards
- Students Against Drunk Driving
- United Way
- YMCA or YWCA
- Youth Service America

Also check with local schools, congregations, or community organizations for ways to serve.

## More Help for Parents

**The Kid's Guide to Service Projects: Over 500 Ideas for Young People Who Want to Make a Difference** by Barbara A. Lewis.

From simple projects to large-scale initiatives, this book has over 500 suggestions for young people who want to make a difference. (Published by Free Spirit.)

## Final Word

**"There is nothing to make you like other human beings so much as doing things for them."**

—Zora Neale Hurston

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## Developmental Asset of the Month: Parent Involvement in Schooling

Research shows that youth are more engaged in school when their parents are actively involved, but what does it mean to be 'actively involved'? We see many parents volunteering on campus and attending PTA events, but is this the only form involvement takes? Not necessarily. Every parent, every day can positively affect kids' lives.

The National Network of Partnership Schools has developed a framework to explain how parents can be involved, regardless of whether they volunteer regularly at their children's school:

- Parenting: families provide home environments that support children's learning
- Communicating: families and schools engage in effective two-way communications about student expectations and progress
- Learning at home: families help students with homework and school-related planning and instill a passion for learning, any time, anywhere
- Decision making: parents assist students with school-related decisions, both academic and extra-curricular

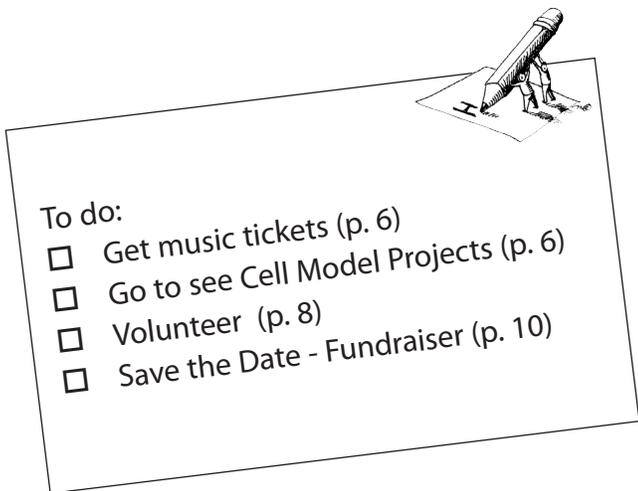
Parents with busy work schedules can always support their children's academic success through parenting, communication, learning at home and decision making. However you can do it, do it.

To learn more: [www.projectcornerstone.org/pdfs/September\\_ParentInvolvementInSchool\\_ResourceKit.pdf](http://www.projectcornerstone.org/pdfs/September_ParentInvolvementInSchool_ResourceKit.pdf)



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## Calendar

### October

5	F	JLS Dance, 7 - 9:30 PM
10	W	Gunn/JLS Band Concert, 7 pm
11	Th	8th grade Hearing Screening 6th grade elections assembly
12	F	End of 1st Quarter
15	M	Site Council meeting, 3:30 pm
18	Th	7th grade Cell Models display
23-24	Tu-W	Vision Screening

### November

21	Th	PTA Executive Board meeting, 8:30 am
7	W	Staff Appreciation Luncheon, Rm 730
8	Th	Parent Visitation Day
9	F	6th grade Wheel 2 ends
12	M	Veterans' Day, NO SCHOOL
13	Tu	6th grade Wheel 3 begins
16	F	"The Jungle Book" musical theater performance, 7 pm
17	Sa	"The Jungle Book" musical theater performances, 2 pm & 7 pm
19	M	Site Council meeting, 3:30 pm
21-23	W-F	Thanksgiving Holiday, NO SCHOOL
28	W	Choir Concert, 7 pm
30	F	Panther Tracks deadline

### December

5	W	Orchestra Concert, 7 pm
6	Th	PTA Executive Board meeting, 8:30 am
12	W	Band Concerts, 7 pm & 8:15 pm
14	F	JLS Dance, 7-9:30 pm
17	M	Site Council meeting, 3:30 pm
21	F	End of 1st Semester District-wide Minimum Day, 12:25 pm dismissal
Dec. 24-Jan. 4		Winter Break, NO SCHOOL

### January

Th	10	PTA Executive Board meeting, 8:30 am
F	11	6th grade Wheel 3 ends Parent Visitation Day
M	14	6th grade Wheel 4 begins Site Council meeting, 3:30 pm
Tu	15	6th grade & small group pictures
W	16	Many Faces of JLS Dinner, 6 pm
M	21	Holiday, NO SCHOOL