

Panther Tracks



March 2015

The newsletter for Jane Lathrop Stanford Middle School

Volume 2014-2015 Issue 3

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Principal's Column



When faced with challenges how do you respond? How did you learn the skills you utilize in the face of adversity? How do you teach your children those skills? Is there one way that is better than another? What are the factors to consider when supporting our children? Their friends? Your neighbors? How do we partner together within our community to help and support each other in challenging times?

These questions, along with so many others, have been the topic of conversation in our community these past few months. Like many of you, I have been both a listener and a participant. Each time I am engaged in this dialogue I am reminded of the African proverb, "It takes a village". I believe it applies in this exact instance and this notion is further supported by research suggesting that strong school communities are created when families, schools and community agencies collaborate with one another. It is said that, "one of the most important, cross-cutting social policy perspectives to emerge in recent years is an awareness that no single institution can create all of the conditions that young people need to flourish, not only in schools, but in their careers and as parents" (Melville & Blank, 1998).

As the world around us rapidly changes, so must the efforts of parents and schools to help young people meet the expectations and demands of the world in which they are growing up. The best way to do this is to cultivate strong partnerships between families and schools in support of creating a safe and welcoming community whether at school or in the neighborhood. Working together we can foster and promote wellness, resilience and empowerment of the kids in our community to grow into thriving, contributing adults.

So, how do we collaborate to improve the experience for kids and families at JLS? At JLS there are many avenues for student voice to be heard and acted upon. In addition to student participation in various groups on campus, we also survey students about their experiences. All students participate in the annual Palo Alto Reality Check Survey (PARCS). All 7th graders in the district participate in Search Institute's survey about the 41 Developmental Assets every five years, and the California Healthy Kids Survey is administered to 7th graders every other year. All of these surveys are web-based, voluntary, confidential, anonymous and, when given, administered in the Fall. In addition, all JLS students also take the JLS

[Continued on page 2](#)

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.

Homework Survey at the end of each school year. All of this data is used to create school-wide goals (which can be found in the SPSA) that target the areas of greatest need.

This process of surveying, analyzing and creating goals is ongoing. While I like having a data driven process in place, I often wonder if there isn't something better we can be doing. I recently watched an on-line video featuring retired Superintendent of SFUSD Carlos Garcia. He said, "If we continue to do what we have always done, we are always going to get what we always got. Is that good enough?" His answer ... "I don't think it's good enough for the 21st century. We need to be the outliers. To try things that have never been tried and see if they work. What are we waiting for?" I agree with Mr. Garcia and wonder what we can do at JLS to be outliers in providing the best possible experience for our middle-schoolers. There is no doubt that caring schools with connected parents produce kids who are able to bounce back from disappointment, be courageous in times of challenge, view their 'failures' as learning experiences, and have academic successes. How do we help our community to cultivate these ideas and support one another? How do we come together to bridge our differences to create a caring community of learners? Middle school is a time filled with many challenges that are often met with angst. Watching kids grow physically, socially, emotionally and intellectually is awe-inspiring. I ask that you join me in thinking about how to help shape JLS lives as our community cares for kids during the phenomenal transition from childhood to adolescence. All of us have an impact and make a difference in the journey!



Sincerely, Sharon Ofek, Principal

From the JLS PTA President

What's Been Done? What's Coming?

The JLS PTA has had a productive last few months! Our resources have been focused on staff appreciation events, such as our monthly Latte Cart breakfasts for JLS staff, and a delicious Indian-cuisine Holiday Staff Appreciation Lunch in December. Many thanks go to Paul Sakuma, Patty Sakuma, Ivan Hom and Liz Dong for their efforts, well-rewarded by the gratitude of the JLS staff! We are also working on community-building projects such as JLS Community Service Day planning,

support for city initiatives such as the upcoming parcel tax measure and Charleston Corridor traffic planning, and high school transition events. Finally, we are working closely with the school and the district to upgrade the sound system in the Cafetorium, which is planned to be completed before the end of this school year.

The PTA has packed many big events into the remaining three months of the school year. Mark your calendars so you can join in the fun - and if you would like to volunteer to make these events happen, please contact Barbara Best at barbarabest@gmail.com.

- March 18 (after school): **JLS Community Service day** (see separate article in this newsletter). Need volunteers to chaperone students
- April 17: **Final JLS dance of the year!** Need volunteers to chaperone students
- April 22: **Walk and Roll Day.** Need volunteers to greet walking and biking students and congratulate their choice of transportation
- May 4-8: **Staff Appreciation week.** Need volunteers to help us with various appreciation activities, including a Cinco de Mayo lunch
- May 4-8: **Book Fair.** Proceeds benefit the JLS library. Need volunteers to set-up and sell books
- May 6 (evening): **"Many Faces of JLS" International potluck.** Need volunteers to bring and/or serve international food
- May 19-21: Support for the **8th Grade Exit Interview** process. Need volunteers to help students on the day of their interview (find portfolios, queue up for interviews, etc)
- June 4 (evening): **8th Grade Promotion Party!!** Need volunteers to decorate room and chaperone students at their final JLS party

We are also planning two Parent Ed event evenings for all parents (no volunteers needed on these, thanks to the amazing PTA Parent Ed team!)

March 11 (7-8:30pm): Matt Severson,
Follow Your Passion

April 22 (7pm): Ana Homayoun,
Tactics for Organizing Teen Lives

We hope you and your family will take advantage of the many remaining opportunities this year to enjoy being an active part of the JLS community! And as always, all parents - PTA members or not - have an open invitation to attend any of our meetings.

Thanks for your support!

Barbara Best, JLS PTA President 2014-2015

Follow Your Passion: An Evening with Matt Severson

Date: Wednesday, March 11, 2015, 7pm

Place: JLS, Rm. 730

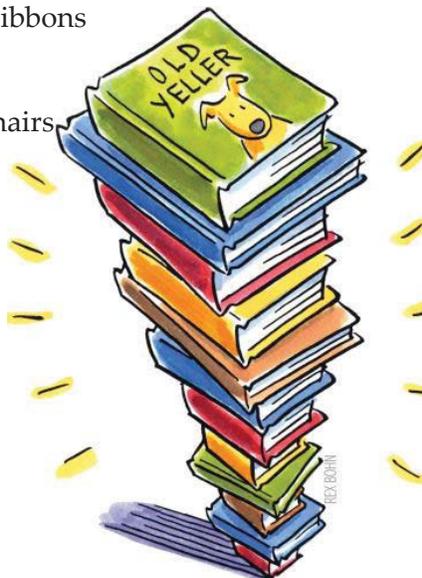
Palo Alto native and founder of the School Fund, Matt Severson will share how he followed his passion for helping others, and how this pursuit led to starting a non-profit organization that provides educational opportunities for under-privileged youths around the world. He'll also touch on his experience thriving in Palo Alto, attending Paly as he dealt with the pressures around him and the support he received from his family and community to achieve his goals.

Students welcome and encouraged to attend with parents/guardians.

JLS Spring Book Fair

This year JLS will partner with local bookstore Books Inc. to bring the Spring Book Fair to the library, May 4-8. The Book Fair will open before and after school, and during lunch and brunch, on Monday through Thursday and before school only on Friday. In addition, the Fair will be open Wednesday evening during the Many Faces/Open House/Portfolio Night. We look forward to having a wonderful event, with the opportunity to purchase brand new titles and old favorites to support the JLS Library! We rely on parent volunteers to staff the fair, so if you are interested in volunteering, please contact Kate Karagueuzian Gibbons (katekgg@gmail.com). We hope to see you there!

Kate Karagueuzian Gibbons
Maria Derrick
Stephanie Compton
JLS Book Fair Co-Chairs



Help Kids Create an Organized Life: Tactics for a Big Impact

Parent Education Speaker--Ana Homayoun

Date: Wednesday, April 22, 2015, 7pm

Place: JLS Cafetorium

Are your kids stressed out from school? Is homework taking hours each night? Are you worried about their organization and time-management skills? In our everyday lives, we are constantly bombarded with little thoughts, photos, messages and content, each of which has the potential for mini-derailment or full on distraction. In this fun, inspiring presentation, noted author and educator Ana Homayoun reveals some of the elements that make our children's lives today different than a decade ago, and provides practical, approachable advice on how small shifts in perspective and behavior can make a big difference in creating an organized life. Ms. Homayoun is the founder of Bay Area based [Green Ivy Educational Consulting](#), a global educational consulting services firm, and the author of *That Crumpled Paper Was Due Last Week* and *The Myth of the Perfect Girl*.

Project Cornerstone Returns!

Have you found yourself asking any of these questions?

- How can I show my child that I support their efforts and dreams?
- What is most important in helping my child thrive in school academically and in life?
- Are enough positive adults in my child's life?

Join Project Cornerstone's parent study group for 2015 "Understanding & Connecting with Your Kids"

This group will focus on sharing:

- Strategies
- Resources
- Research

Dates: Thursday, March 19, 26, April 2, 16, 23 & 30

Time: 8:30am to 10:00am

Place: Room P80, JLS

Cost/Donation: \$20 due at first session. (Scholarships available upon request.)

Questions? Please email Linda Silvius - linda@projectcornerstone.org

Sign up today at <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0945ABA72D6-take>

See you there!

Raising a Resilient Teenager in a Stressed Out Society

By Deborah Sloss, LCSW Site Director, JLS Middle School



Adolescent Counseling Services

As parents, we remember the joy of holding our newborn child in our arms, and the powerful drive to provide for their needs and keep them safe.

As they became toddlers and began to explore the world, we tried to ensure a safe environment where they could grow. We baby proofed our homes, bought safety-rated toys appropriate for their age, and then smiled tolerantly as they took all the pots and pans out of the cabinet and happily banged on them, impressed with themselves for their power and ingenuity.

We watch them expand their horizons and develop new skills, all the while being aware that with each new step comes new risks and new dangers. They run excitedly chasing a new discovery, only to trip and fall. But amazingly, they get themselves up and try again--building confidence, overcoming frustration and developing inner strength. We marvel at their resiliency and determination.

As they begin school, they enter a period of life where their focus shifts from parents being the center of their lives to negotiating the complex world of interactions with peers, teachers and other adults. We help them do homework, give them hugs when another child hurts their feelings, cheer for them at soccer and basketball games. We read stories, tuck them in at night and watch them sleep, all the while feeling thankful that they successfully navigated yet another day in an increasingly complex world.

Fast forward to the teenage years. Now we are spending hours at the mall while they try to find the perfect pair of faded jeans and plead with us to buy electronics and other accessories so they can “keep up appearances” as they head off to school the next day.

Why then, do our teens often express feeling stressed out and dissatisfied? Do we chalk it up to teenage hormones, or is there something more going on?

In her book, *The Price of Privilege*, psychologist Madeleine Levine describes a disturbing trend among the teens she sees in her psychotherapy practice. Despite being raised in an affluent environment with many material goods, these teens are unhappy.

They “describe ‘being at loose ends’ or ‘missing something inside’ and feeling “too pressured, misunderstood, anxious, angry, sad and empty”. Levine continues, “...they don’t seem to know themselves very well. They lack the practical skills for navigating out in the world...” (Levine, p 5) Levine believes that the young people she sees in therapy are failing to develop a strong, confident sense of self. Instead of looking within themselves to define their own values and priorities, they are externally motivated to please parents and teachers. Instead of focusing on *who* they are, they focus on *what* they achieve through school and extra-curricular activities

As a child, I remember spending hours sitting on the swing in my parent’s backyard, looking at the grass under my feet and pondering the meaning of life. Today’s youth are not given the time and space for daydreaming, fantasizing or reflecting. Such times are critical in thinking about interests, values, skills and talents that help clarify how we see our place in the world. According to Levine, “**Parents pressure their children to be outstanding while neglecting the process by which outstanding children are formed.**” (Levine, p 65) While seeming to “have it all”, many teens today have an underdeveloped sense of self that as adults we know is so important to function successfully in the greater society.

Author Wendy Mogel (*The Blessing of a B Minus*), also provides another useful perspective on how our teenagers are getting waylaid. Mogel states:

“It is good for adolescents to be bored, lonely, disappointed, frustrated, unhappy...When we intervene to prevent the pain of tough situations, we create a reflex: Whenever a child feels sadness or confusion, frustration or disappointment, she believes she cannot survive the feeling...If teenagers don’t have the opportunity to recognize their bad feelings or problems and learn to manage them, they go off to college and seek out quick, reliable methods to make the pain disappear.” (Mogel, p 97)

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Mogel goes on to suggest that parents employ the following strategies to help struggling teens build internal strength and resilience:

Wait it Out: An overly anxious response on the part of parents sends the message to teens that they can't handle distress, confusion and poor choices.

Normalize Setbacks: Talk to your teen about times things don't work out for you as planned and how you deal with these situations.

Be Empathetic, Not Entangled: Be curious and kind but not alarmed.

Encourage Them to Advocate for Themselves: They can resolve many issues by talking directly to teachers and other adults in their lives.

Demonstrate Confidence in Your Teen's Problem-Solving Skills: Give your teen the opportunity to demonstrate resourcefulness in handling problems.

When They Create Problems, Let Them Experience the Consequences: When we deprive kids of freedom in an attempt to "keep them safe", they miss opportunities to learn to use good judgment.

It is through such experiences that young people develop the ability to tolerate frustration, delay gratification and regulate their own internal state. They are able to create an internal psychological "safe haven" that provides a retreat when they need to think things through and take care of themselves.

According to psychologist Erik Erikson, the developmental task of adolescence is to successfully navigate the developmental phase of *Identity vs Role Confusion*. During this period, teens ponder the roles they will play in the adult world. It is during this stage that adolescents will re-examine their identity and try to find out exactly who they are. Mastery of this phase results in a successful transition from childhood to adulthood. Failure to establish a sense of identity can lead to role confusion. It was Erikson who coined the term **identity crisis**.

Young people with a healthy sense of self feel more in control of their lives and demonstrate an ability to act in their best interest. They have a budding identity, with hobbies and interests they feel passionate about; they value and accept themselves for who they are.

How can we, as parents, help our children to develop a healthy sense of self? We can remind ourselves, and them, that we support their growth and development by not always jumping in to protect them and solve their problems. We can foster their exploration of who they are. We can support them as they grow into strong, self-confident young adults by being available and ready to listen, providing guidance and believing in their decision-making ability and in their capacity to figure things out.

*Adolescent Counseling Services is a community non-profit, which provides vital counseling services on nine secondary campuses at no charge to students and their families. To learn more about our services please visit the ACS website at www.acs-teens.org or call **Deborah Sloss, LCSW Site Director at JLS (650) 856-5164**. ACS relies on the generosity of community members to continue offering individual, family, and group counseling to over 1,500 individuals annually. ACS provides critical interventions and mental health services, building a better future for tomorrow. If you are interested in helping to support our efforts, do not hesitate to call to make a donation. It goes a long way in helping teenagers find their way!*

Tune Into KJLS!

Do you want to know the latest about what's going on at JLS? Did you know that you can watch the daily KJLS broadcast LIVE or on the internet?

Tune in on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays at 9:13 am for about 5 minutes of JLS Morning Announcements. The morning anchors give their reports at 9:15 am when the second period starts.

Tune into cable Comcast channel 30 or streaming LIVE here. Select channel 30.

Not only will you learn what's happening at JLS, you'll see the variety of skills students learn in this class: journalism; pre-production including planning, logos, jingles, public service and special reports and a variety of production jobs in both the studio and control room. See the results of this collaborative, project-based and technology-oriented real world learning experience!

KJLS is produced by the new semester students of Jaime Buddle's elective class "Broadcast Media". Thanks for watching KJLS.

If you have a news tip or announcement for JLS students for KJLS, contact Jaime Buddle at jbuddle@pausd.org



The Student Store is only open for three more sales days:



Friday, March 27
Friday, May 1
Friday, May 15

To place an online order:
www.tinyurl.com/JLSStudentStore



More information:
JLSStudentStore@gmail.com

The Student Store is run by Jaime Buddle's Leadership Class in cooperation with the JLS administration and several volunteer parents.

YCS Club: Christmas Clothing Drive Success!!

Thanks to all who contributed clothing to the JLS Youth Community Service (YCS) Club Christmas Clothing Drive. The YCS Club collected an impressive 1,535 pieces of clothing for the Ecumenical Hunger Program in East Palo Alto. This far surpassed this year's goal - to collect 1,000 pieces of clothing - and doubled last year's collection of 700 articles!

YCS Club meets during lunch every Wednesday in room 610. The YCS Club is for students who enjoy doing things for other people and learning about people and cultures from other parts of the world. We plan mini service projects and provide opportunities to participate in a variety of community-minded events throughout the year.

YCS Leaders:

JLS 8th Grade Science Teacher: [Linda Luo](#)

Palo Alto Youth Community Services: [Jone Saukitoga](#)



JLS Student Council: Leadership Opportunity

*By Danika Heaney and Anna Allport,
JLS 8th Grade Students*

There are so many things to do at JLS, and being on the JLS Student Council is one of the most rewarding. The Student Council has approximately 75 students, roughly 25 per grade. Each grade has a Student Council made up of elected Board Officers, including the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Site Council Representative. The Board runs meetings and has specific roles such as planning events, taking notes and keeping track of the class funds. In addition, Class Representatives to the Student Council attend council meetings and relay information to their classes to keep all students informed.

The Site Council Rep attends monthly JLS Site Council meetings with teachers, parents and administrators, communicates school issues and activities and reports back to the Student Council. This year in Site Council we have been creating new goals for the school, which is really important and will benefit future students at JLS for many years to come.

This year all three Student Councils are working together to plan a Book Drive to benefit the education of San Francisco area students who don't have easy access to books. The idea initially came from one of the Student Reps and has grown into an all-grades activity with involvement of all of the 6th, 7th and 8th grade councils. In the spring, we will have bins set up in the hallway so all JLS students can drop off their lightly-used books. Then we will sort, organize and ship these books to the Children's Book Project in San Francisco. This is just one of the many activities and drives planned each year. It is fulfilling to see our ideas play out and to watch the whole school participate together in a meaningful activity.

Participating in Student Council is a great learning experience as it develops leadership skills in students and enables creativity and hard work. It is also interesting to learn how a middle school is run and to do work that makes sure the student voice is heard in important school issues. Ultimately it prepares middle school students for high school and jobs later in life. The JLS Student Council is, all in all, a busy and exciting enterprise.

After Spring Break, 6th and 7th grade student will be given information on the election process for next year's Student Council.



8th Grade Promotion Party—Thursday, June 4

In three months, our 8th graders will become freshmen in high school. But first, by JLS tradition, the JLS PTA is throwing a party for them to celebrate their accomplishments. Use the below form to register your student or go to <http://tinyurl.com/JLSpromotionparty> to print it out.

Don't miss this opportunity to take part in your child's last—and very special—middle school event. The Jooners link tinyurl.com/JLSpromotionparty is ready and we would really appreciate parents signing up. We need about 100 volunteers in 1.5 – 2 hours shifts, and we encourage 7th grade parents to volunteer so they can prepare and observe for next year.

Tickets are \$40 per student. Only JLS 8th graders are invited.

We hope all 8th graders can attend this once in a lifetime event.

Questions? E-mail Kristen Lee or Jonake Bose

kristenlee3@gmail.com, firefly@boseahmad.com

8th Grade Promotion Celebration

We want everyone to attend!

Food, dancing, games, and more!

Thursday, June 4, 2015

Starts: immediately after ceremony; Ends: 10:30 pm sharp

Complete the form below and return it with your \$40 payment to Mrs. Scherer in the Guidance Office.

Yes, I want my student _____ to attend.

(Please print student name to attend the Promotion Party)

Parent name/e-mail/phone number: _____/_____/_____

Enclosed is my check for to cover the ticket. Make checks payable to JLS PTA (cash also accepted)

I have included _____ extra funds in my check to be used for student scholarships.

I would appreciate student scholarship support. I have enclosed a check in the amount I can afford.

JLS Community Service Day – A Day Of Service To The Community

Wednesday, March 18, 2015, 1:45-5:00, Meet in JLS Cafetorium

Parents/guardians, JLS students and JLS staff are all invited to participate in the 7th annual JLS Community Service Day on Wednesday, March 18, after school. The JLS Community Service Day is organized and sponsored by the JLS PTA and the JLS Youth Community Service (YCS) Club.

The goal of JLS Community Service Day is to show students the amazing ways they can give back to the JLS neighborhood community. Doing so allows students to gain a sense of their capacity to make a difference on issues that matter to the community, while building social and leadership skills as they serve.

Most service projects are within walking or biking distance of JLS. Parent Volunteers needed to chaperone the student volunteers. Below is a list of possible projects in which students can participate and parents can chaperone.

Abilities United – Helping individuals with disabilities in a classroom setting.

Acterra Plant Garden - Help at a native plant garden at the Science Resource Center.

Ecumenical Hunger Project - Work in the food closet by sorting donations, shelving food or boxing food for families.

El Carmelo Elementary – Working in class garden and classrooms.

Fairmeadow Elementary – Help five teachers in classrooms.

Hoover Elementary – Help spruce up Hoover gardens.

Making food for **Hotel de Zink Homeless Program** - Share your cooking talents and help prepare a full dinner in the JLS Home Economics room for clients of the Hotel de Zink homeless shelter.

Mitchell Park Library - Ten volunteers are needed to help with shelving books. Five students are needed to help with processing library items.

Ohlone Elementary – Work on the Ohlone Farm.

Oshman Family Jewish Community Center – Paint mural in the Teen Center.

Palo Verde Elementary Reading Garden – Help spruce up Palo Verde School’s beloved Reading Garden.

Writing Cards for **Veterans Hospital** – Create greeting cards for veterans and hospital patients at the VA Hospital.

Young Fives pre-school @ Greendell – Clean play sheds and check riding toys.

YMCA recreation center – Play games with preschoolers.

Parents/guardians: please browse this link to help lead or chaperone a service project: www.tinyurl.com/JLSParentVolunteer

JLS students wishing to participate in a service project must be registered by a parent/guardian: www.tinyurl.com/JLSStudentVolunteer

Schedule on Wednesday, March 18:

- 1:00 pm: YCS club and parent volunteers arrive to set up JLS Cafetorium
- 1:45 – 1:55: Students check in, eat snacks and sit with service project groups
- 2:00: Program Overview – JLS Principal Sharon Ofek & PTA President Barbara Best
- 2:10: Leave for service projects
- 4:30: Return from projects, light snacks during Closing Reflection (each group shares)
- 5:00: End of Program and Thank You’s

For more information on how PAUSD partners with YCS throughout the district: <http://pausd.org/community/y/cs/index.shtml>

Please contact us with any questions!

Maria Chow Zajac, Liz Dong, Paul Sakuma JLSPTAemail@gmail.com

By
Heidi Trilling

Resources:

Website:

www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/teens/tips-for-parenting-teens/tools-for-listening-to-your-teen

Podcast:

<http://www.npr.org/blogs/health/2012/01/03/144495483/why-a-teen-who-talks-back-may-have-a-bright-future>

Video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bh2hh3LgDmo>

Book:

<http://www.amazon.com/Our-Last-Best-Shot-Adolescence/dp/1573228753/>

Listen Up: Nutrition is Not Just About Food

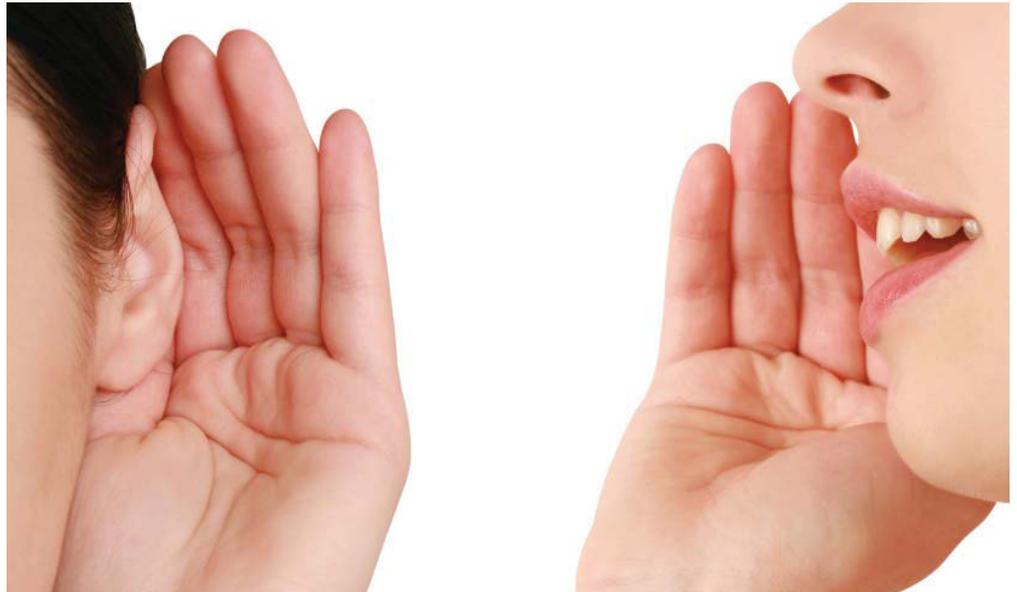


Photo courtesy of K. Dougherty, MS.

Remind yourself that you have something more priceless than a Tesla, a Stanford education, and real estate investments to give to your child: your undivided attention.

What do you think of when you hear the word “nutrition”?

The Merriam Webster Dictionary defines nutrition as: “*The act or process of nourishing or being nourished.*”

Usually, these words make us think of food. But nutrition is more than breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Nourishing conversations count, too. And the main ingredient of a nourishing conversation is *listening*.

Sounds easy to do, right? But let’s take a closer look:

Silicon Valley is the hotbed of tech start-ups, digital media, social media, gaming, smartphone apps—whether we’re wired or wireless, we’re all plugged in. We’re also into multitasking and rushing and being overscheduled, competitive, and busy—even if we don’t want to be.

Listening, however, requires the opposite of all of that.

Truly listening to your middle schooler—and your elementary school pupil and high school student—requires unplugging. Turn off the devices and sit down together and giving your full attention to what your child is saying to you. It might be difficult to hear

what’s on your child’s mind—especially if you disagree with it, or if it goes against your expectations—but let all of that reactionary stuff go. Just *listen*.

What if your child doesn’t want to talk? That’s O.K., too. What’s important is conveying to your children that you are ready and willing to focus—fully—on them. “Being there to listen begins with *being there*: in the moment,” says Dr. Kathleen Dong, psychotherapist and mother of a high school student. “This means tuning in to your child, with eye contact and compassion.”

We are all still recovering from the recent tragedies in our community. Your students may still be struggling with questions and emotions that are confusing and frightening and tough to articulate. Listen to them compassionately and calmly, with patience and love.

Remind yourself that you have something more priceless than a Tesla, a Stanford education, and real estate investments to give to your child: your undivided attention.

Heidi Trilling is a nutrition consultant, Health & Wellness rep for the PTA, and mom of an 8th grader at JLS. Questions? Comments? hetrilling@gmail.com

There's Gold in Them Thar Bills



What to know the easiest way you will ever help JLS? Read on.

It's called eScrip, and it's a great way to get merchants to donate money to JLS while you do your everyday shopping. Imagine: You stop at Piazza's (or Mollie Stone's or Draeger's or many others...) to buy your weekly (or daily) groceries. When the cashier rings up your total of \$100 for what seems like 5 items, you suddenly realize "HEY! I just made \$5 for JLS!" On your bike (or car) ride home, you pick up a pizza from Palo Alto Pizza Company or pasta from Buca di Beppo. BAM! You've just made \$3.10 for JLS.

How can you make this happen?

Register your credit cards and your grocery loyalty cards (e.g. Mollie Stone's, Safeway) online at www.escrip.com and every time you use them, these local merchants will donate a percentage of your total to JLS. That's it. There are no forms to fill out. Done.

School earnings can really add up. The most successful eScrip schools earn hundreds of thousands of dollars per year from eScrip.

Many of you eScrip veterans may not know this, but you can also earn money for JLS by shopping online. Online merchants do not pay JLS based on the credit cards you have registered with eScrip. Instead, you need to be "referred" by eScrip to the merchant. You can do this either by going to the merchants directly from eScrip's online mall or by downloading the AutoEARN (for PCs only) from eScrip, which manages the referrals for you automatically. It literally took me less than a minute to download and install AutoEARN. Imagine...every time you shop online, if you go through the online mall, a percentage of your purchase will go to JLS.

Please sign up at www.escrip.com. Remember, it's FREE!



For those with eScrip accounts, PLEASE check (and re-check!) your credit card numbers. Many of you have expired credit cards so your contributions to JLS have stopped! PLEASE remember to always log into www.escrip.com when you have a new, changed, or lost credit card.

If you have any questions or problems, please contact me at laura_wingard@yahoo.com. We would love everyone at JLS to participate in this program -- it's free, safe, easy and potentially lucrative!!!

Thank you!

Laura Wingard

Interested in Being an Efficient Volunteer for JLS?

Do you value reading the Panther Tracks?

Want to volunteer for JLS, but don't have much time to spare?

Consider becoming next year's Panther Tracks Distributor.

It's only a "4 times a school year" job. Here's what you do: pick up Panther Tracks at the District Office on Churchill Ave, count, bundle and label them, fill out some paperwork and drop off everything at the Main Post Office on E. Bayshore Road.

Including driving time, it's about 4 hours/Panther Track issue.

We will provide training, templates and supplies.

We also need someone who can do layout of the Panther Tracks four times a year.

Interested? Please email Heike Enders heike.enders@gmail.com

El Mundo es un Pañuelo

By Tracy Devers

El mundo es un pañuelo is the Spanish equivalent of: "What a small world." We have found this sentiment to be true in our Spanish classes. In keeping with a global mindset, our students have skyped with Mexico several times this year. We have been working in conjunction with Luis Gonzalez, last year's guest Fulbright teacher at JLS. Since Mr. Gonzalez' return to Mexico City, several of our Spanish classes have had the opportunity to ask about his family and Mexican culture.

One of our fun cultural events this year was our annual Day of the Dead celebration. Our students helped to decorate our classrooms with altars and papel picado (see photo below). We enjoyed pan de muerto (Mexican sweet cakes) along with learning more about this tradition.

In the months to come, we will begin one of our most anticipated projects, our world language iMovies. Students will write, film and direct short skits in Spanish, which they will screen at a mini film festival in May.



French Culture

By Jackie Kandell

On the night of Feb. 16, bilingual student tour guides transformed the Cafetorium into a geography showcase and took JLS parents and other visitors on a tour of Paris as well as of French-speaking (francophone) countries around the world.

French 1A students built models of famous tourist sites in and around Paris and shared their research with friendly visitors who came out in full force to hear about the City of Lights. The Seine River divided the cafeteria into the left and right banks.

While the city bustled in the center of the cafeteria, around the sides were the **French 1B** projects, divided into French islands and European, Asian and African francophone countries. These enthusiastic 8th grade students were experts on their countries and shared food, drink, games and other cultural items with their visitors. Visitors to Morocco were regaled with mint tea as they sat on pillows on the floor and learned about this North African country, while Québec and Belgium finally joined forces so their waffles and maple syrup could be tasted together.

We all enjoyed the evening. **Here's what some students said:**

"The French Cultural Night was a great experience for students and parents. It was very fun to present about my country and to be able to go around and learn about the history and cultures of other French speaking countries." - Kristina I

"French Cultural Night was a very fun event and I learned a lot from it. I saw everyone enjoying themselves and sharing their knowledge of the country they had now become experts on." - Anoushka S

"I really enjoyed the Cultural Night because it helped our parents see our progress in French (compared to last year), and was an interesting way to learn more about the French-speaking world (Paris included). I had no idea

that so many countries had such a rich French history, or that we could give presentations mostly in French, without saying <<Puis-je parler anglais s'il vous plait>> :D" - Sakshi S

"I had lots of fun completing my Paris project on the Opera Garnier, and presenting it to parents. French is an amazing elective that everyone should try!" - Liza K



Tram and Sophia explain the significance of the Arc de Triomphe de l'Etoile on the Champs-Élysées.



Eyal and Luc serve mint tea while their visitors learn about Morocco.

“We had a great time during the French Cultural Night, showing off our Paris projects to our parents and looking at others. I learned a lot about France and its deep culture. French is a very fun class, we do projects and learn songs in French. I hope everyone would consider taking French as an elective.” - Margaret L



Jamie and Jocelyn introduce everyone to Monet's gardens in Giverny.

Coming up in French class

In March all 8th grade French students will be taking the **Grand Concours**, a national French exam. This is an annual competition sponsored by the American Association of Teachers of French as a motivational contest. Around 19,000 level 1 French students across the country will take this exam in the areas of listening, reading, vocabulary and grammar in context.

Students will also participate in the **JLS World Language film festival in May.**

**KEEP
TALKING
ABOUT
MENTAL
HEALTH**

**STOP THE
STIGMA
OF
MENTAL
ILLNESS**

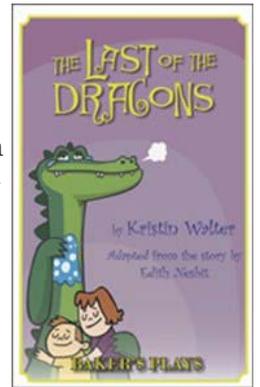
JLS Stigmabusters Walk

Wednesday, March 25 from 12:25-1:05 (lunchtime)

Your mind deserves the same care as your body. Join JLS students, staff and parents in our walk to promote mental health. Meet us at the JLS field (next to Mitchell Park). Sign in upon arrival.

Spring Drama Production: The Last of the Dragons

Adapted from the story by Edith Nesbit, *The Last of the Dragons* tells a tale of bravery, intelligence and unexpected friendship. Kristin Walter's adaptation of this delightful tale brings plenty of laughs with a hesitant prince, a feisty princess, a boisterous king and a bunch of saucy servants.



The JLS stage crew are back to transform the cafetorium into a magical kingdom and to bring to life an even more magical title character.

There will be two showings on April 23 and 24 at 7pm. Tickets are \$3 for students and \$5 for adults and go on sale April 13th. Call [650-856-5188](tel:650-856-5188) for more details.

Chris Mahle
Drama Director
JLS Middle School

6th Grade Home Basketball Schedule

6th Grade Boys

Wed 3/11	4:00 PM	Jordan White	JLS Blue
Wed 3/11	5:00 PM	Bowditch	JLS White
Wed 3/18	4:00 PM	Jordan Green	JLS Blue
Wed 3/18	5:00 PM	Ralston	JLS White

6th Grade Boys B

Wed 3/18	3:00 PM	Tierra Linda Maroon	JLS Blue
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6th Grade Girls

Wed 3/11	6:00 PM	Jordan
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6th Grade Girls B

Wed 3/18	6:00 PM	Ralston Black
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To see the latest scores and schedule:

www.teamsidelines.com

Click TEAM SCHEDULE (In red)

Select State and School Name (CA and JLS)

Click Search

Click the team you are following



The Final JLS Party of the Year is Coming!

Mark Your Calendar: May 6, "Many Faces of JLS" International Potluck!

Sponsored by the JLS PTA

Wednesday, May 6, 2015 (evening): The entire JLS Community is invited to attend the "Many Faces of JLS" International Potluck, to celebrate our diversity by sampling food from various cultures. The "Many Faces of JLS" potluck is one of two large JLS PTA events that bring the community together, and it is the same night as the JLS Open House. So plan to grab some dinner at the potluck before you head to your student's classrooms to review your student's learning and accomplishments.

Sign up now to take part in this fun event! We need volunteers to bring a dish, or to be a co-lead of the table of your favorite country. Sign up here: <http://vols.pt/wbUyoo>

More announcements and opportunities to sign up for serving, set-up, and clean-up will be in the JLS Online eNews; or for more detailed information you may contact Barbara Stroud at stroud5678@yahoo.com.



East Meadow Drive: Safety for All By Maria Abilock and Penny Ellison

Auto congestion on East Meadow Drive has been a growing problem and reflects enrollment increases at schools around Mitchell Park over the last several years. However, parents can reduce congestion and increase safety in at least four ways:

Walk, bike, carpool, or ride a bus or shuttle whenever possible.

To walk or bike independently and safely, review the Safe Routes to School Education Resources page with your student: http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/depts/pln/transit/safe_routes_education_resources/default.asp

Explore whether the VTA 88 or VTA 35 bus routes might serve your student at www.vta.org.

Consider the City of Palo Alto Free Crosstown Shuttle: <http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/news/displaynews.asp?NewsID=212&TargetID=107>

If you must drive, minimize congestion and save time.

Drop your student nearby at a safe location and allow him/her to walk in.

If you're driving from Middlefield Road, *bypass East Meadow* by using the Mitchell Park parking lot for drop-off. Turn into the Mitchell Park Library & Community Center driveway at Mayview and Middlefield, drop off and pick up students only at points where

they can connect directly to park footpaths without crossing parking lot auto traffic. The best place to do this is at the loop in front of the park bathrooms near the Mitchell Park Bowl. Safe walkways from this point cross the park and flow into campus.

Do not use bicycle lanes as travel lanes.

Bike lanes are not for auto through-traffic. Drivers who enter this lane for any reason other than to make a right turn or to access street parking will be ticketed. *Remember:* Always signal 200 feet before making a right turn and LOOK for bicyclists before entering their bicycle lane. Drivers must yield to a bicyclist in the bike lane.

Obeys the vehicle code.

The street system is designed assuming that most people will abide the law. Breaking the law endangers yourself and others and undermines the planned efficient operation of the street.

Thank you for helping to make school commutes safer and more efficient!

Additional Resources:

"Getting to JLS" page on the JLS website: <http://jls.pausd.org/default/index.cfm/getting-to-jls/>

JLS Traffic Safety matters, contact Maria Abilock at gotDNA@gmail.com

The City of Palo Alto's Walk and Roll Map for JLS: <http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/saferoutes>



The Common Core-ner

JLS Classrooms Take on Science and Engineering Practices

By Ann Lorey, JLS Common Core TOSA

Along with the transition to align math and literacy instruction with the Common Core State Standards, the state of California adopted the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) in September 2013. In addition to science content, this new set of science standards emphasize teaching and learning around eight "Science and Engineering Practices." Of these practices, the JLS science department has been making progress to implement "Developing and Using Models" to represent systems, aid in scientific inquiry and to generate data



for making predictions. The department is also having students do more in the practice of "Constructing Explanations and Designing Solutions." For middle school students, this involves applying scientific ideas, principles and models to design, construct, test and revise projects, objects or tools using specific design criteria and constraints. This allows students to experience the process of analyzing and testing design solutions for real-world problems. Students have been involved in wonderful authentic learning experiences such as building a better helmet in 7th grade, designing a device to capture heat, participation in the Physics Olympics in 8th grade and constructing and testing structures to sustain a simulated earthquake in 6th grade. Students are provided with these opportunities in order to experience how genuine science and engineering require them to apply their content knowledge to investigate the natural world and solve meaningful real-world problems. (To learn more about the NGSS or Science and Engineering Practices, please browse <http://www.nextgenscience.org/>).

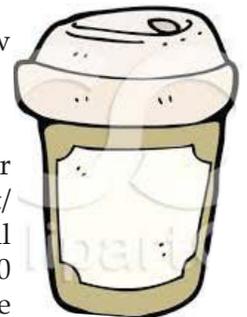
Parent Visitation Day

Tuesday, April 28, is a Parent Visitation Day at JLS. Parents are welcome to visit classrooms and see all aspects of the school. We ask that you follow these guidelines:

- Come to the JLS main office FIRST to sign in, get a nametag, map, bell schedule and teaching schedule.
- Please do not let your visit interrupt the teaching and learning process.
- Please do not talk to the teacher, students or other parents in the classroom (unless the teacher invites you to do so).
- When you have finished your visit, please return to the office to sign out.

Latte Cart Finale! April 2 and May 7

A JLS PTA monthly event to show JLS staff our appreciation



Thank you, JLS parents, for your contributions! Our next Latte Cart/Brunch for JLS Staff is Thursday, April 2. Please bring all items to room 40 (just next to the Staff Lounge outside the breezeway), between 7:15am and 9:00am. To make it more convenient for those who cannot come in the morning, any non-perishable items may be brought to the JLS main office on Wednesday, April 1 and Wednesday, May 6, between 7:30am and 2pm, labeled 'Latte Cart'. Please sign up to bring an item and avoid duplication: www.tinyurl.com/JLSLatte

Questions?

Contact Ivan Hom (ihom627@yahoo.com),
Patty Sakuma (pattyau@aol.com)
Paul Sakuma (psakuma@aol.com)

Palo Alto Council of Parent Teacher Association
Jane Lathrop Stanford Middle School
480 East Meadow Drive
Palo Alto, CA 94306

www.jls.pausd.org

Main Office: 650-856-5188

Fax: 650-856-3248

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Calendar

March

11	W	Parent Ed Night – “Follow Your Passion” with Matt Severson, 7 pm, Room 730
12	Th	End of Third Quarter
13	F	Local Holiday, NO SCHOOL
16	M	Site Council meeting, 3:30 pm
18	W	JLS Community Service Day, 1:45-5:00 pm
18	W	Special Education “Moving Up” Parent Night, 6-7:30 pm
19	Th	PTA Association Meeting, 8:30-10:00 am
25	W	Stigmabusters Walk @ JLS field, , 12:25pm

April

2	Th	PTA-sponsored Latte Cart for staff, 7:30 am
Spring Break – Fri., April 3 to Fri., April 10		
16	Th	PTA Association and Executive Board meeting, 8:30 am
17	F	JLS 6th/7th/8th grade Dance, 7 pm
20	M	Site Council meeting, 3:30 pm
22	W	Walk and Roll Day
22	W	Parent Ed Night with Ana Homayoun, 7 pm
23	Th	Panther Tracks deadline
23	Th	“Last of the Dragons” performance, 7 pm
24	F	“Last of the Dragons” performance, 7 pm
28	Tu	Parent Visitation Day
28	Th	Incoming 6th grade parent tour, 8:30 am

May

4-8	M-F	Book Fair
4-8	M-F	Staff Appreciation Week
6	W	Many Faces of JLS potluck dinner, 5:30 pm Open House/Portfolio Night, 7-8:30 pm Book Fair
7	Th	PTA-sponsored Latte Guy for staff, 7:30 am
7	Th	PTA Executive Board meeting, 8:30 am
7	Th	Incoming 6th grade student tour, 10:30 am
13	W	Orchestra Concert, 7 pm
18	M	Site Council meeting, 3:30 pm
19-21	T-Th	8th grade Exit Interviews
20	W	Band Concerts, 7 pm & 8:15 pm
22	F	JLS Minimum Day, 12:25 pm dismissal
25	M	Memorial Day, NO SCHOOL
27	W	Choir Concert, 7 pm

June

M	1	8th grade Great America trip
Th	4	Last Day of School for students Minimum Day, 12:25 pm dismissal 8th grade Promotion ceremony, 6 pm 8th grade Promotion party following ceremony