

**Kim Diorio**  
**Principal, Palo Alto High School**

**2013-2014**  
**Palo Alto Unified School District**  
**Goals**

**Academic Excellence and Learning**

Create an exceptional learning environment that equitably supports and appropriately challenges all students to reach their potential through a love of learning, mastery of the basics, and cultivation of higher-order skills

***Goal: Partnering with district office, prepare teachers, parents and students for full implementation of Common Core State Standards in 2014-2015. Apply, reflect, refine.***

***Comments*** – *This is one of our two major focus areas for the school year for Paly. All teachers will familiarize themselves with CCSS on or before the October 18<sup>th</sup> PD day. This will help us backward map ways we can modify/tweak our instruction, if needed. Our goal for second quarter is for departments to spend time during Thursday collaborations going deeper into Common Core and talking about what it means for each of their content areas. By third quarter, our teachers should be thinking/practicing ways they can tweak a lesson or two in their current classes. In the spring of 2014, we will field test the smarter balanced assessment with our 10<sup>th</sup> graders. Our tech staff will be busy handling the logistical challenges of administering the test to 480 students. In fourth quarter, once we've concluded the field test, Ed Council will debrief the experience, and we will discuss refinements for 2015. We will also develop and plan summer professional learning work that will fully support teachers for 2014-2015 implementation of CCSS. If any high school can lead the charge and successfully prepare for CCSS, it's Paly!*

*For parents and students, we will work with the district office in finding ways to communicate information regarding CCSS and the work our teachers have done to prepare for 2014-2015. CCSS documents and links have already been posted to paly.net. In Site Council and PTSA Exec board, we've already begun discussion on how our teachers are preparing for CCSS. We will also work with out student journalists and student leaders (ASB) to prepare them for the changes and challenges that lie ahead. WASC Focus Groups and Home Groups, including ones for parents and students, will also be discussing CCSS throughout the course of the year.*

***Measuring our success:*** *By end of the year, all teachers will have a thorough understanding of the CCSS, including the smarter balanced assessment, and identify ways to make shifts in their instruction to support student success with the CCSS rollout in 2014-2015. It is our goal that teachers will be able to tweak a minimum of 3 lessons during the second semester to prepare for CCSS. Our school will also adequately prepare for the technological and*

*logistical challenges of administering the 10<sup>th</sup> grade smarter balanced field test in the spring of 2014.*

Mid-year Report

May Report and Thoughts

***Goal:*** *As part of our WASC self-study process, create a new mission/vision statement for PAHS to guide our future work and help identify our critical areas of need to improve student learning on our campus.*

***Comments*** – *It's been over 13 years since Paly staff created our school's "Core Purpose" and "Core Values." Wow! Think about how much has changed in education in the last 13 years, not to mention, how many current staff members, including myself, who were not here 13 years ago?! Before we can move forward as a school, we need to regroup and work on developing a shared vision for our school. "Who are we? What do we want to be? Where do we want to go? What do we want to accomplish working together? How can we work together to best prepare our students for the future (what skills do they need to be successful later in life)? What do we value and are we willing to work together on making Paly the best high school it can be?" These are the types of questions that are essential for us to answer in order to move our students and the school forward. Without a shared vision and mission, we fail to acknowledge our greater purpose.*

***Measuring our success:*** *By May 2014, we will have created a new Mission/Vision statement, identified our 3 critical areas of need, and completed our WASC school profile as part of our self-study process.*

Mid-year Report

May Report and Thoughts

## **Professional Development and Support**

Support the social-emotional needs of students and celebrate personal growth across multiple dimensions, while ensuring a positive, safe, and healthy environment

***Goal:*** *Paly will pride itself as a safe and welcoming school, both physically and emotionally, as we improve school culture and climate. We will focus our collective efforts on motivation and engagement in our classrooms and building stronger student-adult relationships.*

***Comments*** - *This goal speaks to me not only as a professional educator and administrator, but also as a counselor and parent. More than anything, people need to feel safe in order to learn and grow. I want for Paly what I want for my own children, a place where they feel connected, capable and to know that they count. By focusing our attention on the affective domain inside our classrooms and on our campus, we are demonstrating to our students how important they are and how much we care. This is a powerful message if done right and if done systemically. The first step is noticing students, listening to their "voice" and letting them know that we value ALL students in our classroom communities. Likewise, as employees, every staff member deserves to work in a environment where they too feel valued and care for,*

*personally and professionally. The work we do is not easy and can leave us emotionally exhausted. We need to care for one another on staff, just as we care for our students and our own children.*

**Measuring our success-** *By second semester, we will have created a TOSA position to spearhead our efforts, form a school climate committee, and take actionable measures to improve the overall tone and feel on campus so that every student, staff member and parent feels they are connected, capable and that they count. Our attendance data will improve, D and F list will decrease, and teacher morale will improve. We will see improvement of scores on the California Health Kids Survey. We will have practiced and improved our emergency preparedness procedures and made some strides in improving the physical safety of our campus.*

Mid-Year Report

May Report and Thoughts

### **Staff Development & Recruitment**

Create an exceptional, positive teaching environment by developing, recruiting, and retaining the most talented staff and supporting a culture of professional growth and innovation

**Goal:** *Establish a culture of teacher led professional learning, including peer observations/instructional rounds, student shadowing opportunities (where teachers shadow students for a day), and build leadership capacity among teaching staff by encouraging teachers to take on leadership roles that compliment their strengths, passions, and vision for school improvement.*

**Comments:** *I've mentioned on multiple occasions that a principal cannot do this work alone. I need your help just as every school needs to build capacity and encourage teacher leadership if we want to improve student learning. How are we going to get better? Let's get in each other's classrooms and learn from each other. Let's establish a reflective practice of teaching with our colleagues. Let's spend a day "shadowing" our students to gain a better understanding of the student experience on our campus. Let's meet with our colleagues and truly collaborate on making Paly a better place (not just on lesson planning or discussing nuts and bolts items). Think outside the box Paly. Share and suggest new ideas. We want to hear them. We want you to share them with each other as well. Let's talk about best practices, differentiation, essential questions, project-based learning, flipped classrooms, formative assessments, critical thinking, and instructional practice in our departments and across departments. Let's analyze data and have conversations about how we can use data to support our improvement efforts. Let's design professional development that is a true professional learning opportunity. Let's never stop learning and model this for our students.*

**Measuring our success** – *The number of staff members taking advantage of professional learning opportunities will increase. We will quantify the number of staff members who participate in peer observations and/or student shadowing and spend some time afterwards reflecting on our experience. By late spring, we will have planted the seeds to set-up a more systemic approach to peer observations and/or instructional rounds.*

Mid-Year Report

May Report and Thoughts

## **Budget and Infrastructure**

Optimize use of resources to support student development, and ensure robust long-term plans for physical and financial capacity through prudent stewardship of resources, enhanced public and private support, and strong community partnerships

**Goal:** *Successful and seamless move into new classroom building (math and History/SS) and Media Arts building, prepare for athletic complex and science addition construction, prepare for PAC construction, parking issues and library redesign, begin visioning work for new STEM academy (future career tech building) and seek additional funding opportunities to create additional STEM opportunities on campus.*

**Comments:** *We have several MAJOR facilities projects in the works. There will be many meetings and time spent on figuring out the details. We will get this right. We will be prudent with our spending and proactive with our planning so to minimize disruption for teachers and staff.*

**Measuring our success** – *The FSC will meet regularly and often. They will be responsible for decisions that will need to be made, and as such notes from these meetings will be posted and made public so our community is well informed. The AP in charge of Facilities will take on additional leadership responsibilities in this area as we prepare to occupy 27 classrooms and 9 classrooms late spring/early summer, depending on construction schedule.*

Mid-Year Report

May Report and Thoughts

## **Governance and Communications**

Create a focused, transparent governance process that is a model of informed communication, evidence-based decision-making, and clarity of responsibility between Board, District, and Sites

**Goal:** *Increase communication and transparency regarding decision-making process at all levels (Principals mtgs, Ed Council, Site Council, PTSA Exec. Board, ASB, etc.).*

**Comments:** *Over the past several years, there has been an “information gap” that we need to correct. Because of this, many folks felt as though they were working in isolation or were uninformed of district efforts and/or our decision-making process. It’s our hope that we can improve upon our internal communications so that all staff, parents and students feel confidence again in school governance and leadership.*

**Measuring our success** – School calendar adjusted so sequencing of meetings is purposeful. Teacher leaders and admin team will feel better informed with work that is being done at the district level, as well as site level. Parent and student community will also better understand the decision-making process. Teachers will participate in a survey in January giving Principal and admin team members feedback on their performance.

Mid-year report

May Report and Thoughts

### **Other Areas to Manage / Personal and Professional Goals**

- **If in PAUSD two years or less**, choose an area within the district to expand personal knowledge of issues, content, and personnel.

*Professionally, I need to learn more about budget development and the various sources of funding. Working with Jerry Berkson and Lisa Stone, I'm confident they will bring me up to speed. Fortunately, I understand the certificated staffing piece, which is complicated in our district. Once I understand how much money we have and where it comes from, it is my goal to increase our revenue, either through grant writing, alumni support and/or private donations. I'm committed to finding the resources our teachers need to do their job well. I'm also learning a great deal about athletics this year. Working closely with our Athletic Director has already taught me a great deal about the complexities of leading a competitive and successful high school athletics program.*

*I'm currently working towards my Ed.D. in Educational Leadership and Change through Fielding Graduate University. I anticipate receiving my degree in April 2015, if all goes well. My research topic or "me-search" as someone wise calls it is "Pursuing and Encouraging the Next Generation of Women Leaders in Secondary Education." I will need to occasionally take some time away from Paly to focus on my writing over the next 18 months.*

*Being a working parent and graduate student means I need to carefully organize and manage my time. On a typical evening, from 5-8 pm, I try to focus on my children and not spend time answering emails. Once the kids are asleep, I will use time at night to respond to my daily emails. Once we reconfigure the main office area and Carolyn's desk is closer to my office, we plan on having her assist in the management of my email so response time improves. On the weekends, it's important to have some family time or down time away from Paly. I also want to model the importance of establishing healthy boundaries for staff. Although I occasionally find myself reading email, I will not respond to parents and students on weekends, unless it is an emergency. Finally, I'd like to find time to exercise again.*