



PALO ALTO SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL
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Kimberly Diorio
Principal

August 3rd, 2015

Dear Viking Parents,

Welcome to the 2015-2016 school year! We hope you and your family had a restful and relaxing summer. As you are probably already aware, **Monday, August 17th** marks the start of another exciting year of learning.

While we are eager to see all of our returning students, we would especially like to welcome our new Class of 2019. **Freshman Orientation will be held on Thursday, August 13th, from 4:00 – 7:00 pm.** For all our new students and families, we are confident you will find Paly to be a special place that will become dear to your heart as you settle in and take advantage of everything our extraordinary school has to offer.

Once again, we hope your summer was spent resting and enjoying time with loved ones. On a personal note, I'm proud to announce my daughter Katie (age 6) lost her first tooth (yay tooth fairy!) and my daughter Jane (age 3) now makes excellent "balloon-faces" as she learns to swim underwater. Remember those days?! We had so much fun as a family this summer, but what I appreciate the most is that we took the time to simply rest, reflect, and rejuvenate. As adults, it's important to model this and remember:

"Rest is not idleness, and to lie sometimes on the grass under trees on a summer's day, listening to the murmur of the water, or watching the clouds float across the sky, is by no means a waste of time" – John Lubbock

Hopefully, you all had a chance to recharge over the summer. But if you haven't, there is still some time to lie under a tree and watch the clouds float by.

In addition to resting this summer, Paly teachers spent considerable time engaging in thoughtful discussions and researching best practices that support our school-wide learning goals. They are constantly thinking about how to improve instruction and increase student engagement and learning. Coming off an eighteen-month self-study process that culminated last March, Paly proudly received a six-year accreditation status through the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). Our long period of reflection has resulted in the establishment of the following three new goals, which will guide our staff and school development for the next several years:

- Systems alignment for greater consistency around learning outcomes to reduce undue stress
- Research-based instructional practices that increase student engagement for ALL students
- Innovative school culture promoting global competencies, creativity and empathy

I'm incredibly proud of, and inspired by, all the professional learning that has taken place this summer. Paly teachers are extremely skilled, compassionate and dedicated, which means your students are in great hands.

As a parent, I know it can sometimes feel difficult to stay abreast of all the events and happenings during the busy school year. Therefore, we'd like to provide you with additional tips for how you can keep up to date on your student's high school experience.

- Sign-up for the Paly Link at tinyurl.com/palylinksignup. This is our weekly PTSA sponsored e-newsletter that is published on Sunday mornings and has everything you need to know for the upcoming week or month. Thanks PTSA!
- Follow us on Twitter (@PalyVikings) for real-time updates
- Set-up access to *Schoology* (our learning management system). Instructions for accessing *Schoology* can be found at www.Paly.net (look for "Parents - setting up your access to Schoology"). All of our teachers will use *Schoology* more robustly this year.
- Tune in to our InFocus daily student broadcast, which is played *at the beginning* of 3rd or 4th period and streamed live on the web at www.infocusnews.tv. If you are unable to tune in live, please know episodes are archived on the InFocus website. I'm sure you will enjoy watching them.
- Follow Paly Student Activities on Twitter (@palyasb) or like their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/palyasb.

We LOVE having parents on campus, and we always appreciate your involvement at our school (despite what your teenager may tell you!). Therefore, if you are looking for ways to get involved, volunteer or be more active on our campus, please email our volunteer coordinator Beth Martin (bmartin@pausd.org). She can advise you on how to become engaged with the PTSA, as well as numerous other volunteer activities throughout the year.

Finally, we appreciate the generosity and ongoing support of our entire community of learners. For all of you who have donated to Partners in Education (PiE), joined our PTSA and/or contributed to one of our many boosters organizations or programs... we'd like to give you a heartfelt THANK YOU. Your financial contributions make it possible for us to continue providing a high-quality education to each and every student.

Again, we welcome you to this new school year and wish you and your student(s) a great year ahead. Until then, rest up and enjoy the remaining days of summer. We can't wait to reconnect in a few short weeks. It's going to be a great year!

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kim Diorio". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kim" and last name "Diorio" clearly distinguishable.

Kim Diorio
Principal