



Welcome to Paly

2014-15 School Year

A practical guide for entering Freshmen and New Families to the school district

Getting to Know Us

GETTING TO PALY!

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Welcome to Palo Alto High School! Since opening its doors in 1894, Paly has built a reputation for academic excellence, a diverse and involved student body, a wealth of extra-curricular activities and sports, and a commitment to community service. Every student receives a copy of our extensive Student Handbook, which gives information about all aspects of Paly.

Paly is a high performing, comprehensive, public high school. Our student population is racially and ethnically diverse. We boast strong parent involvement including PTSA and Site Council, and student-centered collaboration. Paly prepares all its students for post-secondary school options, with over 90% of our students going directly to either a two- or four-year college after graduation.

Paly provides a challenging academic environment, offering a wide variety of honors and AP courses and a prize winning, multi-faceted journalism department. Over half of Paly teachers hold at least one master's degree. Paly students typically score six points higher on ACT tests and over 100 points higher on SAT tests than the national mean, and our student body consistently has a significant number of National Merit Scholars.

But Paly isn't all work and no play! We host over 60 clubs, ranging from American Disaster Relief to Young Poets. We produce numerous drama, choral and band performances. We organize Spirit Week, a class-bonding activity that includes theme dress-up days, float-building, and lunchtime competitions between classes—all culminating in the big football game and dance.

PALY TRADITIONS

School Colors:

Green and White

Mascot:

The Viking

Class Colors

Freshmen: Orange

Sophomores: Red

Juniors: Yellow

Seniors: Green

Other Fun Paly Activities

- **Link Crew:** Trained upperclassmen welcome freshman and new students on campus a few days before school starts, with a morning of tours and fun activities. This group becomes a resource for our new students throughout the year.
- **Club Day:** In September, an opportunity for students to establish clubs; recruit members in a festive atmosphere that includes a free lunch.
- **Turkey Festival:** Held the Friday before Thanksgiving, this lunchtime event features turkey and all the fixings served by parent volunteers.
- **Play in a Day:** Traditionally held the first day of winter break, students write, produce and perform short plays—all within 24 hours.
- **Field Day:** A lunchtime activity in May, field day has a carnival atmosphere that can include rock-climbing walls, bounce houses and picnic food for all.

Getting Connected

Paly's location in the heart of Silicon Valley means that we are awash in technology. There are so many ways to "get connected" that it can sometimes be overwhelming. Here's a quick guide to the key websites, email lists, etc. to help ensure that you connect to the important stuff:



Paly.net: Is the "Everything Guide" to Palo Alto High School. On Paly.net you can find a campus map, the academic calendar, bell schedules, the course catalog, a staff list with contact information and just about anything else you want to know about our school. Most of the websites listed below also can be accessed from www.paly.net.

PalyLink: The PalyLink is an email notice of Paly, Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD) and community events and activities, and is distributed by the PTSA on Sundays and Wednesdays. The Sunday version is a complete update of new and old items; the Wednesday version includes only time-sensitive updates or corrections. To sign up for the PalyLink go to: www.tinyurl.com/palylinksignup.

Infinite Campus: This is the district-wide website for information about your student's school attendance, class schedule and grades. PAUSD assigns each family an activation key and allows you to set your own password. You can access from www.paly.net or directly at <https://ic.pausd.org/campus/portal/paloalto.jsp>

Naviance: Family Connection from Naviance is a web-based service designed to help parents and students make decisions about courses, colleges and careers. Passwords are provided to parents and students in their freshman year. You can browse as a guest by going to www.paly.net or directly at: <https://connection.naviance.com/pahs>

Classroom Websites: Are websites that teachers use to provide information to students about class activities, assignments and to submit homework, as well as do research for projects. Teachers make their website preferences known at Back to School Night for parents in September, or you can email the teacher directly. Some examples are: Turnitin, LibGuides, Schoology.

PAUSD Email Addresses: It's easy to connect with staff or teachers at Paly. Just email "first initial last name @pausd.org." For example, to email Selene Singares, ssingares@pausd.org.

Unless noted, you can find all this info and more on Paly.net. It might take some digging, but it's all there - and who knows what else you will discover along the way.

Getting Involved

The quickest way to get immersed in the Paly waters is to jump in! No matter what your student’s interests are, there is bound to be an academic program, club or sport for them. We’ve got clubs for chess, cheese, water polo, theatre and just about everything in between. Regardless of your interest, it’s easy to find your “spot” at Paly. Here’s a quick overview of what Paly offers:

Student Government - Associated Student Body (ASB):

ASB is comprised of both elected and appointed student officers who serve for one-year terms. Elections are held in March and Appointed Interviews are conducted by the newly-elected and out-going officers in April. ASB is responsible for many events, including Homecoming, Prom, and the Winter Rally. Website: <https://sites.google.com/site/pahsasb/>
 Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/palyasb> Twitter: <https://twitter.com/palyASB>

Athletics:

Paly athletics include a variety of sports for both men and women:

Fall Sports	Winter Sports	Spring Sports
Cross-Country		Badminton
Football	Basketball	Baseball
Tennis - Women's	Soccer	Golf
Volleyball - Women's	Wrestling	Gymnastics
Water Polo		Lacrosse
		Softball
		Swimming and Diving
		Tennis - Men's
		Track & Field

Paly has a very active Sports Booster group, a non-profit organization that raises money for ALL non-coaching costs needed to run and manage Paly’s sports programs. For more information about tryouts, rosters, schedules see: <http://paly.net/athletics/> and <http://palysports.olinesports.com/>

Publications:

Paly offers lots of opportunities for budding journalists, with our wide array of nationally award-winning publications, including: **Voice**, our online news service; **Campanile**, our campus newspaper; **Verde**, our literary magazine; **Viking**, our sports magazine; **Madrone**, our yearbook; **[proof]**, our photography magazine; and **InFocus**, our broadcast journalism program.

Community Engagement:

Community Engagement, or service learning, is not a graduation requirement, but many students do volunteer work to pursue their interests and passions, and for some, to find a sense of purpose. For many, these experiences help shape their post-high school plans. Get inspired! Check out the web site: <http://www.paly.net/community-service>

Clubs:

Entrepreneurship, robotics, ukulele and ultimate Frisbee are just a few of the many clubs at Paly. To join or start your own club, visit: <http://sites.google.com/site/pahsasb/clubs> to get all the information you need.

The Arts:

Paly rounds out our academic offerings with these visual and performing arts programs: Choral Music, Band, Orchestra, Film, Painting and Drawing, Sculpture and Glassblowing, and Theatre. For more information: <http://paly.net>

For Parents:

Parents can get involved with Paly by joining the PTSA (<http://www.paly.paloaltopta.org/>) and chairing or volunteering at one of the many events they sponsor. Or by joining the booster club of one of the many extracurricular activities your child may participate in – choral, band, theater, sports, or robotics, to name a few. Volunteer at the College and Career Center or Academic Resource Center, or help in a particular academic or administrative department. Participate in the Parent Network group for your child’s grade to get acquainted and share parenting ideas.

Getting Support

Whether your child is an incoming freshman or your family has moved to Palo Alto from another city, navigating a new school can be challenging. Luckily, Paly has lots of support—academic, emotional and career and college-oriented. Here's a quick reference for all the types of help available.

Guidance Services:

Paly offers a three-tiered model for guidance services. The Guidance Team provides for academic planning, personal counseling and post-high school advising. At the center of the program is the Teacher Advisor Program. The main delivery method is through regular advisory classes on Thursdays.

The Guidance Team providing these services consists of:

There are a host of post-high school options available to Paly students – from specialty schools for career training, to a Gap Year to take a break, to 2 or 4 year colleges. Explore them all at the College and Career Center.

- Teacher Advisors (TAs) and Advisory Period – TAs serve as the **primary** contact person for school/student oriented inquiries for students, parents and staff. Advisory period is held weekly for freshmen and rotates weekly between the other grades. TAs for 10th thru 12th primarily facilitate academic and post-high school planning. Freshmen TAs provide school orientation as well as academic planning.
- Guidance Counselors – work with TAs to identify students requiring extra academic and/or social emotional support, as well as provide guidance to students and their parents.
- Coordinator of Teacher Advisor Program – oversees Teacher Advisor Program.
- College and Career Advisors – meet with juniors and seniors to assist in post-high school planning. The C&CC has a library of resource materials available for checkout.

The Guidance Counselors, paired with an administrator, are assigned by class graduation dates and will stay with their assigned students throughout their years at Paly. These Guidance teams then loop back to the next incoming class as follows:

Selene Singares	graduating class of 2017, 2021, 2025
Susan Shultz	graduating class of 2016, 2020, 2024
Paige Johnson	graduating class of 2015, 2019, 2023
Charles Taylor	graduating class of 2014, 2018, 2022

Additional Academic Support:

Library: The library is open until 5:00 pm Monday through Thursday, and until 7:00pm the week before final exams.

The Academic Resource Center (ARC): located in the library, ARC is open until 4:30 pm on Mondays and Wednesdays, 4:00 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and 2 pm on Fridays. It offers free tutoring, computers and homework help. Students can make appointments for tutors or use it as a place to study.

The Math Resource Center (MRC): located in the Math Department, the MRC is always staffed by a teacher or tutor and is open before, during and after school to provide help with math. Just drop by and ask for help.

Tutorial: is a dedicated time once a week specifically to allow for students and staff to interact on many levels. Students can seek additional academic support, connect with teachers/staff about classes/grades/activities, or connect with other students to work on projects or just socialize.

Additional Emotional Support:

Adolescent Counseling Services (ACS): located in the library building, provides individual, group and family counseling for any emotional issues - both school and non-school related. Referrals are made through guidance counselors.