

PALO ALTO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

*Report
to the
Community
2007-2008*



**Escondido
Elementary
School**

Student demographics, testing and accountability data, class size, staffing and financial information are available in the state-mandated School Accountability Report Cards. These may be found on the PAUSD Web site: <http://www.pausd.org/community/about/sar.shtml> or obtained at your school. Similar information, current and historical, about individual schools and school districts is also available on the California Department of Education Web site: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/>.

**School Description
& Mission Statement**

Escondido Elementary School, one of twelve elementary schools in the Palo Alto Unified School District, has 514 students in grades kindergarten through fifth. Approximately 23% are residents of Stanford University's graduate student family housing in Escondido Village, 46% reside in two nearby Palo Alto neighborhoods: College Terrace and Evergreen Park, and about 31% come from other areas in Palo Alto and East Palo Alto.

Escondido children represent 32 countries and speak more than 25 different languages. Compared to other schools in the district, Escondido has the highest percentage of students who speak a language other than English. The school population includes 199 children who attend the Spanish Immersion Program, currently located at Escondido School.

Escondido emphasizes global awareness and multicultural education. Our staff helps children develop an awareness of and an appreciation for various cultures and holidays through classroom activities, assemblies, guest speakers, music and art.

Our school encourages each child to reach her/his greatest personal potential through a nurturing student-centered environment. Escondido's kindergarten through 5th grade classes participate in the district's class size reduction program and have an average class size of 20. Our average daily attendance is over 90%, and unexcused absences are less than 3%.

We believe it is our responsibility to:

- Provide a curriculum for all children that is rich, challenging and developmentally appropriate
- Develop lifelong learners with self-confidence, motivation, skills and a belief in themselves as valuable contributors to a global society
- Assist children in becoming independent logical thinkers and creative problem solvers
- Create a school environment emphasizing safety, cooperation, respect, and appreciation of cultural diversity

Opportunities for Parental Involvement

At Escondido, we feel parents are their children's first and most important teachers. Many assist in classrooms, the library, and around the school. Parents volunteer more than 6,000 hours of their time per year. The majority of parents belong to our PTA (Parent Teacher Association). Parents provide enrichment activities through sharing aspects of their culture or professional expertise; some work with students in our gardens or provide noon activities. Parents plan and staff a host of school activities such as our Book Fair, Talent Show, Last Day Fair, Staff Appreciation Week, Noon Art and Science, Halloween Breakfast, Science Fair, Meet the Principal Coffee, and school play. The PTA edits and distributes our school newsletter, *The Globe*, and raises funds to support a wide variety of school enhancement and enrichment programs (e.g., special assemblies, parent education, classroom and teaching needs).

Parents also serve as representatives to various district and community committees. Seven parents are members of our School Site Council, an elected group that helps develop the school plan, yearly goals, and budget. Others represent us at district level committees such as the Community Advisory Committee and PTA Council.

Our school is often the focus of educational research carried out by Stanford graduate and undergraduate students. Several retired community members devote many hours per year in our library and classrooms.

School Safety Plan

Escondido School rules are based on respect for ourselves and others, personal safety, and responsible behavior. Specific guidelines are provided to students and their parents during the first week of school. Our playground is supervised by teachers at recess and a minimum of four noon supervisors at lunch.

Students contribute in many ways to our school. Fourth and fifth graders serve on the Escondido Safety Patrol. They help younger children cross nearby streets safely while learning responsibility. Fourth and fifth grade students may serve as "Program Helpers," who work with and support our many organized noon activities, or "Lunch Helpers," who assist kindergarten and first grade classes at their lunch tables. Students at various grade levels participate in a pedestrian and bicycle safety program presented by the Palo Alto Fire and Police Departments.

Emergency preparedness is a priority. We have a disaster plan which includes: storing equipment and supplies, holding regular earthquake, fire and lockdown drills, and discussing with students what they should do in an emergency. Staff members update their First Aid and CPR training periodically.

As prescribed by State law, a Safe School Plan is reviewed annually. The plan is derived from needs that surface during annual surveys to parents, staff, and students and by observations of the principal. Goals, objectives, and activities contained in the plan address the school's physical and social environment, as well as its culture. The plan received an in-depth review last spring by our School Site Council, and was approved in November 2006 for the 2007-2008 school year.

Escondido Elementary School

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Principal Gary Prehn
School Secretary Bella Almanzán
Typist Clerk Judy Pickering
Custodians James Pascual
Paul Frazier
Guadalupe Ponce

Certificated Staff

K..... Amanda Dungan
K..... Amy Hansen
K..... Debbie Scalero
K-Spanish Immersion Lisa Scott
K-Spanish Immersion Angela Vereau
1 Jenna Segall
1..... Shea Singh
1-Spanish Immersion..... Alicia Hernandez
1-Spanish Immersion..... Kristina Sandoval
1/2..... Tiffany Wong
2 Katharine Kobayashi
2 Anita Laughlin
2-Spanish Immersion Claudia Penaloza
2-Spanish Immersion Ana Asp
2/3-Special Education Kristina Buskirk
3 John Brubaker
3 Richard Garcia
3-Spanish Immersion..... Nina Bailey
3-Spanish Immersion..... Kimberly Moore
4 Helena Holmes
4 Keith Libert
4-Spanish Immersion..... Kristina Underdal
4/5-Spanish Immersion Agustina Lodoen
4/5-Special Education Priya Tjerandsen
5 Tamar DeFrancesco
5 Jessica Pineda
5-Spanish Immersion..... Elena Melendez

Support Staff

Resource Specialist..... Mary Straight
Speech/Language Naomi Fanwick
Psychologist Marci Hakeman
Library Media Teacher Joan Hopkins
Annette Hilton
English Language Development Joyce Otsuka
Reading Recovery Teacher Kaisey Hake
Math Resource Kristen Lee

Site Council President

Richard Garcia

PTA Presidents

Micaela Presti
Katie Kinnaman

SIPAPA Presidents

Sandra Tucher
Margarita Quihius

School Programs & Practices That Promote a Positive Learning Environment

A strong rapport exists between Escondido staff, children, and parents. We communicate through a variety of ways including: classroom newsletters, bi-weekly school newspaper, *Escondido Globe*, e-news, e-mail, and conferencing.

We create a positive learning environment by teaching children to celebrate each other's differences, to solve problems, and to listen respectfully to others. Cultural diversity is celebrated through schoolwide special assemblies of art, music, and theatre. Wednesday assemblies help create a sense of unity and support by recognizing children from each class as "Student-of-the-Week." Also at our assembly we model school rules and traditions, and our appreciation for cultural diversity.

We often involve children in groups of mixed ages. For example, younger children may have an older "buddy" to help them read, write, and do projects. In addition, 4th and 5th graders assist younger children during lunch as Lunch Helpers or Program Helpers.

This year, we continue to provide sports, art and science programs at noon.

Schoolwide Intervention Programs

Literacy Support

- Our Reading Recovery teacher instructs individual and small groups of students in grades K-5 who need assistance in reading and writing.
- Our support team provides literacy support in the areas of phonics, comprehension, fluency, and writing for identified students using the programs:
 - Traditional program
 - Phonics for Reading
 - Soar to Success
 - Read Naturally
 - Rewards
 - Spanish Immersion
 - *¡Si Puedo!*
 - Read Naturally

GATE

- Gifted and Talented Education (GATE). Classroom teachers provide classroom-centered experiences for GATE, high performing, and other motivated students through assignments and expectations modified for greater depth and/or complexity.
- A math resource teacher works weekly with identified students in grades 2-5.

Student Study Team

- Classroom teachers, parents, Principal, and support staff work together to develop an action plan to best meet the needs of identified students.

Math Intervention

- District Academy on Saturday.
- SCORE! Teachers recommend students to receive an academic boost of two hours per week at SCORE! of Palo Alto. These students use a computer-based interactive curriculum that focuses on building each student's skill level.
- A math resource teacher works weekly with identified students in grades 2-5.

English Language Development Program

- Our ELD teacher provides intensive English language study to students who have home languages other than English. Students learning English also receive tutorial support in their native languages in their classroom.

Special Education

- Individual Education Plan Team assesses and recommends placement for children in the Speech-Language and Resource programs for students with specific special needs in learning/language disabilities.
- Escondido hosts primary (2/3) and intermediate (4/5) special education classes. Children spend part of their day mainstreamed in our regular classes.

School Instruction & Leadership

Curricula and instructional improvement is an ongoing continuous process in the Palo Alto Unified School District. We use curriculum publications and the PAUSD guidelines, which are based on the State Frameworks, as the basis for our instruction. Escondido faculty members serve on district curriculum committees which discuss standards, adopt materials, and plan evaluation procedures.

Escondido's instructional program, based on developmentally appropriate methods, equips students with the knowledge and processes needed to be successful. In addition to direct instruction, we use cooperative small group learning and peer teaching to increase student involvement. Students are offered art, music, physical education, and health education in addition to the core academic subjects.

Escondido also has a K-5 Spanish Immersion Program. Students begin in kindergarten receiving 90% of their instructions in Spanish, working toward 50% Spanish, 50% English instruction in fifth grade. Curriculum is the same as in non-Spanish Immersion classes.

At Escondido, we believe in providing a balanced reading and language arts program. We continue to focus on expanding our use of the most effective reading strategies. High quality children's literature and guided reading books are important components of our language arts program. The Escondido library is an integral part of the school and has a collection of children's literature from around the world.

Our history/social science program is focused on history, past and present, geographic literacy and active citizenship. We use field trips, primary source documents, biographies, children's literature, and artifacts to make history come alive for children. At Escondido, this is augmented by a strong multicultural program and by speakers and presenters who share their experiences with us.

Our teachers provide students with a math program based on investigations, projects, and meaningful applications of math in everyday situations. Children are taught technology to practice arithmetic and to increase their problem-solving ability through the use of technology.

All science units provide children with in-depth, hands-on experiences in order to develop a strong conceptual understanding of how the world around them works. The life, physical, and earth sciences are explored through modules in the FOSS (Full Option Science System) programs as adopted by PAUSD. In the spring, students have the opportunity to participate in the science fair.

The science lab provides students with additional science curriculum through presentations to students, new and donated equipment, and teaching science units to grades K-5. Special in-depth programs include solar energy, playground fossils, Balls and Ramps, and landscapes for learning.

The Escondido staff is committed to the integration of technology access across all curricular areas. The library, computer lab, and mobile computer carts are available for students' use.

We participate in district art, music, and physical education programs taught by specialists in their field. Our SPECTRA Art program includes hands-on lessons, based on the history, principles, and appreciation of art. SPECTRA encourages children to learn new techniques and experiment with a variety of art materials. Our music program consists of General Music (first through fourth grades), Vocal Music (third and fourth grades), and Instrumental Music (fifth grade). First through fifth grade students also participate in a physical education program.

Gary Prehn has been an elementary principal for 15 years, serving 11 years as site administrator at Escondido. Prior to his elementary tenure, he was a middle school principal for five years and a teacher for thirteen years. Mr. Prehn welcomes the opportunity for input from staff, parents, students, and the greater community toward achieving the school's mission statement and annual goals.

