

November 2006 Newsletter

Greetings!

Welcome to Palo Alto Partners in Education's (PiE) monthly newsletter. This month we will begin a series of articles showing how our schools are using the PiE funds. Our story this month focuses on math education in our elementary schools. In particular the article highlights how PiE funds can help support innovative ways in which our students can be educated.

Over the next few months we hope to bring you many more stories on how PiE funds are being used across our elementary, middle and high schools.

All of us at PiE wish you all a Happy Thanksgiving. We also extend our sincere thanks to all donors who have sent in their gifts for the 2006- 07 year.

in this issue

- [Direct Appeal Campaign Update](#)
- [Math Education in Our Schools: PiE Helps Make it All Add Up](#)
- [PiE Local Business Supporters](#)

Math Education in Our Schools: PiE Helps Make it All Add Up



If you open the door of any elementary PAUSD classroom during math time, you'll see one of many possible scenarios: maybe a teacher and a classroom aide or math instructional assistant engaging the students in small group instruction, maybe a math specialist modeling a lesson and working in tandem with the classroom teacher, maybe a small group of 4th or 5th graders presenting their mathematical problem-solving strategies via the Socratic questioning method.

In the primary grades, students may be working in "math centers," where they engage

Direct Appeal Campaign Update



Thanks to your generosity the PiE Direct Appeal campaign is progressing well. We have now reached over 65% of our 2006-07 campaign goal.

We are happy to report that thanks to your support PiE has met the "Above and Beyond" Challenge Grant. That added \$225,000 to our 2006- 07 campaign.

PiE Announces a New \$150K Participation Grant

For those who have not donated as yet, now you can double or triple the impact of your gift. Starting November 1st, we have launched a Participation Challenge supported by an anonymous foundation. All contributions will be matched up to a total of \$150,000. For those who have never donated to PiE before, your matching will be doubled. So please get your donations in as soon as

in different activities -- led by a teacher, aide, or volunteer -- that may involve manipulatives, games, and/or written problems that all focus on the same math topic. Or primary students may work from a "menu" of mathematical tasks and activities that may require individual, partner, or small group work. Many teachers also conduct "Math Talks," which are problem-based, teacher-led lessons designed to help students think flexibly about numbers and develop fluency in mental computation.

In Palo Alto schools, "teachers are willing to try things to create the best learning for their kids," said PAUSD math specialist Barbara Sih Klausner. "There is a lot of flexibility and thought about how things work in the classroom --and how we can help kids develop fluency with efficient procedures. We're all trying to help kids understand math and mathematical relationships so they have a deep, fundamental understanding of concepts."



Palo Alto teachers seek to provide their students with differentiated instruction -- instruction that is tailored to the individual learning needs and abilities of students. In math, flexible grouping is one avenue for this. Other approaches include the "Problem of the Month," which consists of a packet of related problems that allow students to explore math concepts at different levels of complexity. There are also Math Olympiads, which provide mathematical enrichment and challenges, and district and school site Math Academies, which provide supplementary instruction to students who need extra math help, among other approaches.

Klausner said it would be great if the district had more money for personnel resources. "Letting the math specialists have more time to get into the classrooms, to be there with the teachers when they're teaching and then documenting and sharing the best teaching strategies across the district -- I think everyone would benefit tremendously from that, but like many things, it (this math specialist program) is way under-funded."

Giving to Palo Alto Partners in Education (PiE) is one way you can help your child have access to the best resources in math education. Elementary school principals use PiE funds to help support math specialists, classroom aides, instructional assistants, and vital curriculum support. PiE is the only non-profit foundation dedicated to supporting all schools in the Palo Alto Unified School District -- and the only non-district source for school staff funding. For more information about PiE, please visit our website at www.papie.org.

possible.

Participation Rates (as of 11/15/06):
School Name (Percentage)

- Addison (26.7%)
- Barron Park (14.4%)
- Duveneck (29.9%)
- El Carmelo (26.3%)
- Escondido (23.0%)
- Fairmeadow (21.5%)
- Gunn (9.8%)
- Hoover (19.8%)
- JLS (13.6%)
- Jordan (18.4%)
- Briones (20.6%)
- Nixon (21.6%)
- Ohlone (40.4%)
- Paly (11.7%)
- Palo Verde (30.3%)
- Terman (16.6%)
- Walter Hays (34.5%)

Please join PiE for an encore special presentation event
PiE has recently completed a benchmarking study comparing PAUSD to five other leading school districts (Scarsdale, NY, Wilmette/New Trier, IL, Wellesley, MA, Chapel Hill, NC, Edina, MN). Lois Garland, PiE Board Member who led the study, will present key findings. Lois, members of her team, and key district personnel will also be available for Q&A.

Thu 11/30/2006 from 7-9pm at Conference Room A at 25 Churchill (PAUSD offices)

PiE benchmarking study detailed presentation is now available online at http://www.papie.org/press/benchmarking_presentation.pdf

Join our mailing list!

Pictures:

- 1. Barron Park 4th graders tackling a math problem with the help of a class aide*
 - 2. Nixon 5th grader practicing for Math Olympiad*
- Pictures volunteered by photographer Wendy Hopfenberg*

PiE Local Business Supporters

1. Carl King, proprietor of Mayfield Mortgage, will donate \$300 to PiE for all new mortgage clients, and \$150 for all existing clients, who mention PiE and close a mortgage through his company. For more information and Palo Alto references contact Carl King at 650-494-7470x101 or ck@mayfieldmortgage.com. For more information on Mayfield Mortgage of Palo Alto please visit www.MayfieldMortgage.com

2. Matt Rohrbach at Stanford Mortgage was featured in our October newsletter. We have received requests on how to reach him. Matt can be contacted at matt@stanfordmortgage.com or phone 650- 906-7935.

If you are a local business and would like to become a PiE business supporter, please contact Muneerah Merchant at mmerchant@papie.org or 650- 329-3990

email: mmerchant@papie.org

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