



CARMELETTER

Principal's Letter

August 29, 2014

Dear parents and students of El Carmelo,



We are having a great start to the school year! We've had the New Family Ice Cream Social (my wife, Sharon, was so glad she could attend), our First Assembly (the PowerPoint is on the website), Parent Coffees, the Spaghetti Dinner, Back to School Night, our first Music, Library and PE classes and, of course, our

first full week of classes. What a busy first two weeks!

As I've visited classrooms I am struck by how ready our kids are to learn. You all must have done a really good job giving your kids a relaxing and interesting summer because we are seeing a readiness in so many of our students; a readiness to get all that a student can get out of the whole El Carmelo experience. And the teachers are well-prepared to take advantage of the opportunity to provide great learning experiences.

Part of the El Carmelo experience for 3-5 graders are the Service Clubs. The clubs are: Traffic Safety, Expect Respect, Green Team and Multimedia. There will be forms for sign up as each one of the clubs gets started. The first one, Traffic Safety (5th graders only) has already launched. Many thanks to my colleagues, Mrs. McCoy and Mr. Young, that are partnering with me to run the clubs. Students will be informed as each club launches.

Students of each grade will be able to participate in other programs that you will hear more about, such as the ABC Readers program, the Character Assemblies and in the many fun activities that are organized by the grade level teams. A new focus this year is Service Learning; you will receive more information about this as the year goes on. We are looking forward to a rich educational experience all around the school this year.

CALENDAR



September

- 1 Mon: NO SCHOOL, LABOR DAY
- 3 Wed: PTA Executive Board Meeting, 8:30 am
- 5 Fri: End PIE dollar-for-dollar match
- 9 Tues: Kinder Class Picnic, 5-7pm
- 9 Tues: PTA General Meeting 8:30 am to approve Budget & Calendar of Events
- 10 Wed: Coffee with NEW Superintendent, 8:30-9:30am
- 10 Wed: Staff Welcome Luncheon, 12pm
- 13 Sat: Stanford Football Game & Tailgate (Fundraiser), Kick Off at 2pm
- 15-19 M-F: Scholastic Book Fair
- 16 Tues: Back To School Picnic, All Grades, 5-7pm
- 16 Tues: Milk & Cookies Night, 6:30-8 pm
- 24 Wed: Coffee with the Principal, 8:25 am
- 26 Fri: 3rd Grade Bike Rodeo (tentative)
- 28 Sun: Emergency Prep Fair, a Site Council event

Find the 2014-2015 El Carmelo School Events & PTA Calendar here: <http://elcarmelo.pausd.org>

Find the 2014-2015 PAUSD Calendar here: <http://www.pausd.org/>

Finally, I would like to use this article to welcome our staff new to El Carmelo this year:

- ◆ Joe Young, 5th Grade Room 16. Joe comes to us from Duveneck where he taught 5th grade. Joe has jumped into the El Carmelo community by serving as our Technology Lead teacher.
- ◆ Nadia Mayo is our new counseling intern. Nadia has recently completed her counseling studies and will provide social learning lessons in classrooms as well as counseling support.

Please join me in giving them a warm welcome to our school, and have a great school year!

--Chuck Merritt
cmerritt@pausd.org



PTA President's Letter



Dear El Carmelo Parents and Staff,

On behalf of the El Carmelo PTA, I'd like to welcome you to the El Carmelo 2014-2015 year. This is an exciting time of year for our families, especially those with a student starting Kindergarten! I hope all your children have had a great start to their school year.

I have boy/girl twins at El Carmelo in the 2nd grade. I also have a daughter in 8th grade at JLS Middle School and a daughter who is a junior at Gunn High School. My family has been part of the El Community since my daughter started 5th grade when we moved to Palo Alto three years ago from Austin, TX. We found El Carmelo to be a warm and inclusive community that made our transition to the Bay Area much easier. Thus I encourage you to reach out to new members of our school community and help make them feel welcome.

There are a few things I'd like to encourage all of you to consider doing that will enhance your child's education and improve your experience at El Carmelo.

Participate: Join the PTA and attend General Meetings. Attend some of the great social events we have every year such as the Ice Skating Party or the parents only Auction. Attend an auction party sponsored by El Carmelo families benefitting the school. They are all great ways to get involved and to meet other members of this great community.

Donate: You can donate money or your time or both; it is all important. Donations to the PTA buy technology, school supplies, and fund community events. PiE funds supplemental staff at school such as the classroom aides. Volunteer opportunities abound including helping in your classroom or chairing an event. Attend the auction or help run it. Go to fundraising Restaurant Nights. There are many, many ways to donate and every bit makes a difference!

Advocate: Be an advocate for your child's education. There are many ways to do this. One is to volunteer to be our PTA's Advocacy Rep to the Palo Alto PTA Council. Also, there are 2 Palo Alto Board of Education members being replaced in this year's elections. I've already started seeing invitations to Meet and Greets. I encourage you to get to know this year's candidates, as your vote will have an impact on your child's education for the next 4 years.

Stay informed: We have worked over the summer to improve our methods of communicating what's happening at El Carmelo. Mr. Merritt did a great job updating the school website at <http://elcarmelo.pausd.org>. In addition, check out the PTA's redesigned website at: <http://elcarmelowp.paloaltopta.org>.

We hope you will visit these sites more often now.

In addition, be sure to sign up to receive the eNews and Carmeletter, follow the PTA on our new Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/ElCarmeloPTA>, and follow the school's Twitter feed at [@ElCarmeloSchool](https://twitter.com/ElCarmeloSchool).

And last but not least, read the contents of your child's Friday Folder.

It was great to see so many of you at our beginning of year events such as the First Day Coffee and Spaghetti Dinner. I look forward to meeting many of you and working with you to make this a great year for our kids!

Sincerely,
Kathryn Lamis

El Carmelo PTA President





PiE Welcomes You Back to School!

During the craziness that is Back to School, please consider making a donation to PiE. **PiE is the only non-profit foundation that raises funds to directly impact the educational excellence of Palo Alto schools.** Your donation to PiE provides nearly 100,000 hours of additional adult support and enrichment to our students that would otherwise be missing.

To see your PiE dollars at work at El Carmelo, take a peek inside your child's classroom. PiE donations fund all of the following at our school:

- **100% of the teacher aides;**
- **Spectra Art** instructors;
- 100% of the hands-on **science program** conducted by the Palo Alto Jr. Museum & Zoo;
- **counseling support** for all students.

These caring adults enrich our classrooms for all children in Palo Alto.

Our district is not alone in asking for additional support for schools. PiE's suggested donation of \$800 per student is far lower than is asked by communities surrounding ours, such as Menlo Park (\$1,000), Los Altos (\$1,200), and Hillsborough (\$1,500).

Our schools receive up to *\$10,000 less per child per year* than other high-performing districts on the East Coast and in the Midwest. Our kids compete against those kids for college placement. **Gifts to PiE make up the difference.**

Every dollar matters, and **we welcome gifts of any size!!!** By giving now, you can take advantage of the PiE Back to School Challenge Grant offered by generous PiE supporters.

El Carmelo PiE Co-Chairs:
Medha Nanal, Sarah Cornwell, Mizuho Goto, Yan Sun & Susy Kim (elcarmelo@papie.org).

CALENDAR

October

- 1 Wed: PTA Executive Board Meeting
- 6 Mon: Vision Screening
- 7 Tues: PTA General Meeting
- 8 Wed: Walk N Roll to School
- 9 Thrs: Bike Palo Alto
- 10 Fri: No school - Staff Development
- 13 Mon: Kinder Extended Day begins
- 15 Wed: Coffee with the Principal
- 16 Thrs: Vision Screening K, 2, 5
- 20 Mon. & 21 Tues: Estrellita restaurant fundraiser
- 22 Wed: Unity Day! (wear orange)
- 30 Thrs: Carmeletter deadline
- 31 Fri: Halloween Parade

NEW THIS YEAR: Every donation AND PLEDGE will be matched —up to \$500,000— between now and September 5. <https://papie.org/donate/>

Donations are 100% tax deductible. Questions? Visit www.pappie.org OR email elcarmelo@papie.org



Volunteer Letter

Thank you to these El Carmelo volunteers who have helped us with the start of the school year activities!

Kinder Playdates: Over the summer, groups of kindergarten parents and children gathered at some parks to play with their kids. Thanks to Janet Owen and Ronna Edwards for organizing and hosting these events.

New Family Ice Cream Social: Thanks to Janet Owen, Ronna Edwards, Robyn Reiss, and Rosanna Jackson for hosting this fun event for new families to the school before school started. It was fun to have Chuck Merritt attend with us and greet our new families.

Class List Posting: Thanks to those that helped put the BTS packets together:

Maria Derrick, Audrey and Kathryn Lamis, Medha Nanal, Julia Jacobsen, Devony Taylor, Kori Shaw, Alison Chao, Jen Wiener, Rosanna Jackson, and Janet Owen.

Thanks to Hyunah Lee for providing frozen treats as we handed out the packets.

Janet Owen, Maria Derrick, Rosanna Jackson, Julia Jacobsen, and Kathryn Lamis were there to greet and hand out packets to almost 200 families at the class list posting!

We had yummy treats and got to see our friends we have missed over the summer at the **First Day Coffee**, sponsored by Christine Hodson and Andrea Christensen.

Amy Fong hosted our **Kinder Coffee** on the second day of school to welcome new and returning kindergarten parents.

We had a delicious **Spaghetti dinner!** Thanks to Sarah & Trevor Cornwell and Terry & Greg Anderson for heading up the evening. Thanks also to those that dished up spaghetti and handed out garlic bread.

Thanks to Janet Owen and Ann Holum for getting all the refreshments for our **Back to School nights**.

Thanks to our **PiE representatives:** Medha Nanal, Susy Kim, Sarah Cornwell, Alli Wong, and Mizuho Goto for showing up at all the back to school events to get the word out about donating to PiE. Also thanks to **our eScrip representative**, Grit Denker, for coming to hand out materials and sign people up.

Back to School Supplies:

Thanks to Patricia Campbell, Samantha Lemonnier, Alli Wong, and Susy Kim who bought school supplies over the summer to ensure that all classrooms were fully stocked with the supplies needed on the first day of school.



Spirit Shop: Amy Love for running the El Carmelo Spirit Shop and making sure we all get our Dragon-wear in a timely manner.

The **First Day coffee** (run by Christine and Andrea) was supported by Kate Karagueuzian, Sharon Tobias, Sripriya Kannan, and Susy Kim.

One Check Forms and Volunteer Forms: Thanks to Maria Derrick, our treasurer this year, and Ann Holum, our VP of Volunteer Services, for processing the One Check Forms and Volunteer forms returned by the parents.

eNews: Thanks to Jen Wiener, VP of Communications, for keeping us all informed by sending out our weekly eNews! Thanks also to Jen and Janet Owen for setting up our new **Facebook page**.

Carmeletter: Thanks to Mike Pagan for editing and compiling our monthly Carmeletter and to Yan Sun for distributing it! Also many thanks to Susy Kim who has finally passed the torch to Mike after doing the Carmeletter for many years.

Website: Many thanks to Scott Thomas for all his hard work in redoing the PTA website, as well as to the team that helped him redesign it: Julia Jacobsen, Kathryn Lamis, Erik Jacobsen, and Abby Domine. And a special thanks to Erik Jacobsen for being the PTA webmaster for several years and helping get Scott started as our new webmaster. We'd also like to thank Mr. Merritt for all his hard work over the summer updating the school's website. Both sites look great!

And last but certainly not least, thank you to our office staff, Jennifer Fernandez and Ginny Nagao, for helping us in so many ways each day, and to the teachers for helping us all transition so smoothly to this new school year! Thanks Mr. Merritt for all you do to help El Carmelo be a wonderful school!



Library News

Welcome back to the El Carmelo School Library! The activity is already building at the library during recess and lunch. Class library times and checkouts began on 8/26. The schedule is listed below. For further information, please see the **Library Website** on the El Carmelo Elementary School Website under Teaching and Learning/Programs and Specialists.

Please encourage your children to share their library books with you. Help them to take care of library books and keep them in a **safe place**. Also, remind children to bring books back on their scheduled library day (see below) to either return or renew. Some students get **very** disappointed if they are unable to check out a new book, because of an overdue one.

K/1st may check out one book at a time for 1 week. 2nd-5th may check out 2-3 books at a time for 2 weeks. Any overdue books may be cleared up by contacting the library by email, by note or by phone to let us know that you are aware of the overdue or paying the fine of the book. Students who have continual **overdues** will be limited and may have to keep their books at school.

If your child still has a **Summer Reading Record**, please turn it in to the teacher or library by the end of August. Congratulations to the students who have turned them in!



Parents wishing to make donations to our library may participate in the **Sponsor-A-Book** program. Many thanks to those of you who have already donated. This helps us to keep our library collection cool and current! We also have a great collection of **parent resource books**. Come by and take a look!

Thank you, Mrs. Bell and Mrs. D.

The library class schedule is as follows:

Monday- Closed

Tuesday- Rooms 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 19, 20, and 21

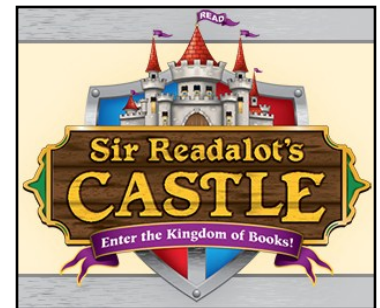
Wednesday- Rooms 1, 4 and 14

Thursday- Rooms 3 and 16

Friday- Rooms 15, 17, 18, and 22

Scholastic Book Fair

Sir Readalot's Castle: Enter the Kingdom of Books, El Carmelo's book fair, runs next month, on **September 15th-19th** in the MP Room. The Scholastic Fair provides affordable, popular titles for our children, immersing them in reading and promoting a life-long love of books. Scholastic also offers many books for parents: come browse and treat yourself to a new novel or cookbook; see what your kids are reading, and don't miss our Award Winners section.



The Book Fair proceeds directly support El Carmelo's library and wonderful librarian, Leslie Bell: funds from the fair expand our collection of books and other library materials. Teachers also have the opportunity to create wish lists that your family can help fulfill for their classrooms; gifts to the teachers from those wish lists expand the selection of books your children use in school on a daily basis.

Book Fair, located in the MP Room
Open before school, during lunch and recess, and after school.
Mon. Tues, Thursday 8:00 am until 3:30 pm.
Wed. 8:00 am until 2:30 pm.
Friday, 8:00-8:30 am.

Unable to stop in during the day?! We are offering a cozy evening of stories, milk and cookies, and shopping on Tuesday, September 16th from 6:30-8:00pm.



The evening of stories coincides with Back to School Class Picnics, so plan to bring your family for dinner, cookies, stories, and shopping! Please also look for the online version of our fair, with an expanded selection: the link will be available at the fair and featured in the e-News.

Many of you have already offered to help: look for emails to sign up for set-up and staffing the book fair. It is always fun helping kids as they choose books and browse new titles. **If you have any questions or would like to help, please contact Kate Karagueuzian Gibbons: or Maria Derrick: wesderrick@mindspring.com.**



Upcoming Events and Helpful Resources

STANFORD FOOTBALL FUNDRAISER

Have fun watching Stanford Football with your El Carmelo friends! Join other el Carmelo and PAUSD families and cheer on the Stanford Football team, of course—and Head Coach David Shaw (an El Carmelo parent!!!)



Who: Stanford vs. Army

When: Saturday, September 13, 2:00 P.M. Kickoff

Where: Stanford Stadium.

Special Price: \$15.00 per ticket

Come early and tailgate with us next to Avery Pool in PAC 12 Plaza: <http://tinyurl.com/PAC12plaza>

To order tickets or ask questions, email parent-volunteer Kori Shaw at: korivan@gmail.com

Tickets are limited. Please order by Friday, August 29th.

Mom's Back to School Brunch

September 11th 11:00-2:00

Tickets still available, \$30.00,

Pre-school aged children are welcome.



Hosted by Ann Holum and Kathryn Lamis

Contact Kathryn Lamis to buy a ticket:

Kathryn.lamis@gmail.com

Margarita Party!!

September 19th, 7:00 P.M.

Contact Kristine Mostofizadeh to buy a ticket:

kgmostofi@gmail.com



Coffee with the Superintendent

September 10th, 8:30-9:30 am

Come have coffee and meet our new Superintendent, Dr. Max McGee

New Websites and Facebook Page

El Carmelo is improving and increasing its online presence. Here are a few new updates:

New El Carmelo Website:
<http://elcarmelo.pausd.org/>

New El Carmelo PTA Website:
<http://elcarmelo.paloaltopta.org/>

Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/ElCarmeloPTA>

Please LIKE our page on Facebook -- you'll keep up to date on the latest PTA activities and events.

Community Links

The Palo Alto Council of PTAs invites you to visit the info pages on the PTA Council website to find information on community sports, parent education and community service opportunities:

Community Sports:
<http://info.paloaltopta.org/sports/>

Parent Education:
<http://info.paloaltopta.org/parents/>

Community Service:
<http://info.paloaltopta.org/service/>

Back to School Picnic, Grades 1-5: Sept. 16, 5-7pm **New format** this year! We are having all grades the same night to make it easier for you to attend if you have children in several grades. Also, we will have some **food trucks** here in case you don't have time to pack your picnic dinner. The Scholastic Book Fair Milk and Cookies night is also this evening, so you can finish up the evening with book shopping, a story and some dessert. Kinder families are of course welcome at this event as well. See you

Have an item to submit to the El Carmelo eNews?

Send an email to elcarmeloPTA_eneews@paloaltopta.org