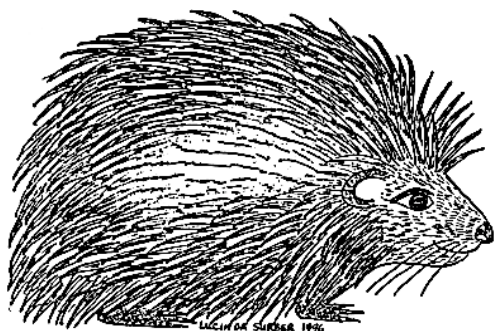


PALO ALTO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

# Report to the Community 2007-2008



## Hoover Elementary School

### School Description & Mission Statement

#### School Description

Herbert Hoover Elementary School is a K-5 alternative school. It is funded in the same manner as other elementary schools in PAUSD and enjoys the same resources as other elementary schools, e.g.: music instruction, special education services, and enrichment opportunities for Gifted and Talented students. In kindergarten and grades 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 class sizes have been reduced, resulting in three self-contained classrooms at each level.

The school program includes the full range of curriculum for elementary schools in PAUSD with special emphasis on the mastery of academic skills, critical thinking skills, and independent study habits. The regular classroom/PAUSD program is supplemented with a writing support program, a math and science support program and an art program for kindergarten through fifth grade students. Hoover staff and parents support a “structured” philosophy of education. Teachers initiate and direct instruction in an orderly classroom environment. Homework is assigned at grade levels 1-5. Academic and social behavior expectations for children are high, and the purpose of any disciplinary action is to help students develop personal responsibility consistent with high standards.

Hoover serves families from the communities of Palo Alto, Los Altos Hills, Stanford, and East Palo Alto. Attendance rates are high; non-excused absences average less than one percent.

Student progress is reported via bi-monthly reports and trimester report cards. These comprehensive reports summarize student progress, including completed homework and areas requiring attention. Parent communications are strongly emphasized to assure students’ optimum learning and development.

Admission to the school is open to all Palo Alto residents. Applications for inclusion in an annual lottery are available in the school office. Parents and other members of the community may visit classrooms during open house sessions held three times yearly.

#### Guiding Principles

We expect staff and parent commitment to and support of Hoover’s Guiding Principles.

#### Academics

- We provide a structured, teacher-directed instructional program, based on state and district-mandated standards. We emphasize the mastery of basic skills, which enables students to build a solid foundation for academic success.
- We provide additional opportunities for students to increase the depth of their learning and the complexity of their thinking.
- We maintain high expectations and utilize proven best practices in order to maximize each student’s potential and facilitate the achievement of academic excellence.

*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/>.*

- We emphasize individual accountability as a key ingredient of a student's academic achievement.
- We promote the development of autonomous learners, i.e. students who have good communication skills and study habits, are organized, and work independently.

**School Environment**

- We provide a quiet and orderly environment with clear academic and behavioral rules and uninterrupted instructional time.
- We emphasize the importance of the social and emotional growth of each child.
- We expect parental involvement in each child's personal and academic growth.
- We expect cooperation, communication, and respect among all members of our community.

**Opportunities for Parental Involvement**

Within a warm, caring environment, we hold ourselves responsible for the opportunity for each child to reach his/her full potential. Hoover takes enormous pride in parent involvement. It enjoys the active involvement of PTA and a School Site Council, with both staff and parents serving as members. Both groups serve in an advisory role to the principal.

PTA has coordinated over 11,000 volunteer hours by parents in service areas, such as the kindergarten classroom, the library, book fair, earthquake preparedness, school newsletter, school handbook, school receptions, after-school classroom help, yearbook, summer reading lists, school receptions, talent show, and traffic safety.

The PTA and Site Council make efforts to coordinate their activities and school support. A Fundraising Committee is organized and run by parent representatives, coordinating their goals with PTA, Site Council, and the school staff.

**School Safety Plan**

With high expectations, clear school rules, and consistent enforcement, Hoover is proud of its safe, orderly environment. An experienced yard duty staff supported by teachers and the principal assists in creating a positive and safe school climate. Our community members believe Hoover provides a safe learning environment for children.

Parents and staff representatives work with the principal to develop safety measures appropriate to the Hoover site. For example, parent and staff volunteers assist in the drop-off and pick-up of students in the morning and afternoon, and with parking lot procedures. Nearly 75 fourth and fifth grade students act as Conflict Resolution playground managers. All visitors to the school must register in the office and staff has been trained to report any strangers to the office immediately.

An emergency preparedness plan has been in effect for a number of years and is currently being reviewed by a team of parents and staff members in conjunction with the PAUSD. Many full-time staff members are First Aid/CPR certified. Hoover's Comprehensive School Safety Plan is available in the school office and at the district office as well.

*Hoover  
Elementary School*

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Palo Alto, CA 94306  
(650) 320-8106 FAX: (650) 493-8130  
www.hoover.pausd.org

Principal ..... Susanne Scott  
School Secretary ..... Betty Odom  
Typist Clerk ..... Nancy Chalton  
Custodian ..... Emilio Da Rosa  
Night Custodian ..... Jose Leon

**Certificated Staff**

K ..... Virginia Quistad  
K ..... Julie Saxena  
K ..... Amy White  
1 ..... Meredith Ekwall  
1 ..... Kevin McAlpin  
1 ..... Robyn White  
2 ..... Peter Lee  
2 ..... Cindy Schwarting  
2 ..... Michelle Thomas  
3 ..... Susie Rigas  
3 ..... Lonnie Spencer  
3 ..... Polly Wingfield  
4 ..... Julie Barnea  
4 ..... Rachel Davis  
4 ..... Susan Shelden  
5 ..... Kim Kwon  
5 ..... George Flath  
5 ..... Stacy Soong

**Support Staff**

Resource Teacher ..... Rachel Milliken-Weitzman  
Speech/Language ..... Grace Lee  
Psychologist ..... Mary Sue Budrow  
Counseling Intern ..... Sharon Gardner  
Library Media Teacher ..... Annette Hilton  
Reading Recovery ..... Margaret Row  
Art ..... Deborah Kotchian  
English Language Dev. .... Roberta Pfluger  
Primary Literacy Assistant ..... Andrea Chase  
Intermediate Literacy Assistant ..... Jackie Collins  
Science Assistant ..... Nancy Chalton  
Primary Math Assistant ..... Joyce Knezevich  
Intermediate Math Assistant ..... Rosanna Lautze

**Site Council Co-Chairs**

Parissa Mohamadi and Robyn White

**PTA President**

Keri Wagner

## School Programs & Practices That Promote a Positive Learning Environment

Hoover has long been recognized for its schoolwide effectiveness and caring learning environment. Efforts to promote a positive learning environment include strong and caring relationships between staff and students, high academic and behavior expectations, and acknowledgement and celebration of student success.

Hoover's school discipline plan is printed in the Hoover Handbook and sent home to each family at the beginning of each school year. The learning environment can be characterized by clean school grounds, organized classrooms, clear rules and expectations, and consistent and fair consequences for the infractions that do occur. For this school year, there have been no suspensions. A Conflict Resolution program, that utilizes fourth and fifth grade student conflict managers, is currently in place serving all grade levels.

## School Instruction & Leadership

Curriculum improvement is a continual process in the district. Major needs, assessments, revisions, and selection of new materials coincide with the statewide seven-year curriculum review cycle. State curriculum frameworks, model curriculum guides and standards, program quality criteria, and local policy serve as planning tools. The district sets a high priority on providing up-to-date textbooks and materials to support each school's instructional program. Hoover has an excellent library collection and an abundance of supplementary materials such as math manipulatives, calculators, science kits, maps, computers, educational computer software, SMART Boards, and video equipment.

Hoover School offers a comprehensive curriculum focused on the knowledge and processes students will need to be successful in school and in the community. Teachers incorporate the most recent developments in learning theory, instructional strategies, best practices, and technology. Reading, writing, listening, and speaking are incorporated across the curriculum. In addition to the core academic subjects, children are afforded experiences in art, music, physical and health education.

Some of the unique features at Hoover that support the teaching and learning are:

- Strong academic emphasis
- Student-centered, teacher-initiated direct classroom instruction
- Single-grade-level, self-contained classrooms
- Supplemental experiences in art provided by credentialed teacher
- Homework to reinforce concepts and skills
- Friday reports with ongoing communication between parents and teachers
- Strong parent/teacher satisfaction
- Report cards, for students in grades K-5, three times per year

- Excellent student conduct and behavior
- Written philosophy and Guiding Principles
- Clear expectations for students
- Parental support for Hoover philosophy
- Enrollment by choice
- Focus in developing good study habits and self-discipline

Hoover's tradition of excellence is made possible by the teamwork of staff, students, parents and the community. Principal, Dr. Susanne C. Scott, is delighted to serve the Hoover School community. The PTA, Site Council, principal and staff continue to work cooperatively to maintain the tradition of excellence and to make every effort to keep the Hoover community informed of district as well as school programs and activities.

Hoover continues to enjoy more applications for enrollment than can be accommodated, which reaffirms the importance of its status as an alternative school in the district.

Hoover offers all of its students support with multiple opportunities in order to be successful. They include: a resource program for children with identified learning disabilities; speech and language assistance for identified children; English Language Development for second language learners; and a Reading Specialist for students reading significantly below grade level in grades one or two. The Hoover teaching staff has recently participated in workshops involving differentiated curriculum to better meet the needs of our "gifted" students. Hoover also supports its students with the Academy program. The program is an after-school intervention program that supports elementary students needing extra instruction in reading, mathematics and study skills. A Student Study Team (SST) composed of support staff, teachers, and the principal, provides assistance to teachers and/or parents with concerns about an individual student.