

Lucille M. Nixon School



From the principal, March 5, 2020

Dear Nixon Families,

Corona Virus: Safety is on all of our minds these days, and Superintendent Austin is sending information to all families regarding our district response to the evolving situation of the corona virus/COVID 19 as new information becomes available. If you are not receiving these emails, please check to make sure that your email address in Infinite Campus is the one that you regularly read. The District is updating FAQs on an ongoing basis, and you can find these at this address: <https://www.pausd.org/news/coronavirus-faqs>. I would like to share information about how we are implementing the PAUSD recommended protocols regarding the corona virus/COVID19 here at Nixon.

Cleaning: Our custodial team is cleaning high touch surfaces in each classroom and shared spaces (such as the library) daily using a disinfectant. Examples of these surfaces include the door handles, push bars and areas around them, all sinks, faucet handles, drinking fountain surfaces, desk/table tops, stair railings, etc. We are trading some of the time usually spent on daily vacuuming in order to increase time for cleaning surfaces with disinfectant. We are now vacuuming each room only every other day. Teachers also have a spray bottle of the disinfectant and a supply of micro-fiber cloths to be used for particular needs in their classrooms. We are fortunate to have a washer/dryer at our school and are able to clean the micro-fiber cloths after use on a daily basis.

Handwashing: Each teacher is having every child wash their hands multiple times per day. We are teaching and emphasizing the importance of lathering hands with soap for 20 seconds before rinsing. (Please share any clever ways that you know to count off 20 seconds. ☺ We've been using the Happy Birthday song x 2. Variety can help!) Hand sanitizer dispensers have been installed at each end of the library/computer lab space and we are having students use this as they enter the common areas of the school.

Cleaning electronic devices and keyboards: We are spraying the disinfectant onto micro-fiber cloths and using the cloths to clean keypads and touch screens. The classroom chromebooks are assigned by number to individual students, so students are not sharing laptops. We are cleaning these with student help. Some of the iPads are shared, so we are figuring out how to clean these between uses by different students. If our IT department makes any new recommendations, we will follow those.

Ventilation: We are trying to remember to open the classroom doors and increase air circulation.

Field Trips: As of the time that I am writing this, all field trips and school events are proceeding as scheduled. However, the District may make different recommendations as new information becomes available.

We are reviewing each planned trip at Nixon and thinking about potential risks. You always have the right to exempt your child from a fieldtrip if you have concerns.

Students' Questions: Children are aware of this issue and they naturally have questions. Our teachers are responding to the children in age-appropriate ways. Our librarian shared a helpful video. I encourage you to talk with your children so they understand the increased emphasis on handwashing and encouragement to avoid touching their faces. There is no need to convey alarm. The good hygiene practices being emphasized are useful in every flu season.

Update on travel quarantines: PAUSD is now excluding all students for 14 days who are arriving from China, South Korea, Italy, Iran and Japan. This includes students already enrolled in our schools as well as those arriving and enrolling for the first time. Please keep this in mind if you are planning international travel.

We are taking these additional measures as part of the efforts across the state and nation to contain the spread of this virus as recommended by those whose job it is to understand the situation. I know you join me in hoping that these shared efforts across our communities will be successful and sufficient to avoid major disruption to our lives. Our district is also working on plans for what we will do if it becomes necessary to close a school. While these plans are not yet fully formed, we take our responsibility to continue educating your children very seriously, and will do our best should that become necessary.

Driver and Pedestrian Safety at Nixon If you drive or walk your children to school, you will have noticed an increased presence by Stanford Sheriff Deputies in the last two weeks. We have asked for their help to improve driver and pedestrian safety around our school.

Teachers, parent crossing guards, and parents waiting in pick-up lines had all noticed a disturbing number of incidents of dangerous driving, poor pedestrian choices and children ending up at risk of injury. A wide variety of people brought examples of their concerns to me, confirming my own observations that **good driving and pedestrian behavior was deteriorating!**

The problems directly observed include speeding through the school grounds in the morning (5MPH signs are posted), U-turns in the school driveway and on Tolman, running the stop signs on Tolman- right through the crosswalks, jaywalking through the middle of the Tolman intersection purposely avoiding the crosswalks, dropping students in the bus circle and the staff parking lot, leaving cars unattended in the drop-off only space on Tolman making it impossible for others to drop off there, driving into the school from Stanford Avenue using the exit lane (as cars are trying to leave) in order to avoid waiting in the pick-up line, (Yikes! You read that correctly and I was the one who observed this!) and more!

For these reasons, we reached out for help to Deputy Pete Posada who is our school liaison officer. Multiple deputies have been supporting us. Deputy Hung Nguyen has let me know that he has been giving out warnings for traffic violations up to now, but he is switching over to traffic tickets for these violations beginning now. If you have a nanny or other person who drives your child, I urge you to share these concerns with that person and convey your expectation that the person driving your child observe basic traffic rules as well as the rules specific to traffic within the Nixon campus.

Everyone is in a hurry and everyone feels stressed. The safety of all of the children needs to matter – not just your own children. We have developed traffic patterns with support from the Stanford Sheriffs to maximize safety for everyone. Teachers at each grade level are practicing with students appropriate pedestrian safety, emphasizing the use of cross walks and the school rules about where students are to be dropped off and picked up. I ask you to model *integrity* for your children and follow the rules. Even when you think no authority is watching, *your children are watching*. You want them to admire you, because I predict that someday you will want them to take your advice about driving and much more.

I hope you enjoy some fun family time during this unique-to-Palo Alto long weekend. Remember that tomorrow, March 6 and Monday, March 9 are school holidays. Take care and be well!

Warmly,

Mary Pat

Mary Pat O'Connell

Need for a Volunteer Crossing Guard We still need to find one or two people to help pedestrians cross safely at the entrance to the school on Wednesday and Thursday mornings between 7:45 and 8:00 am. Would you be able to help us on one or two of these mornings? If so, you can email Mary Pat or let Becky know in the Nixon office.