Welcome by Christina Tudor, MSPA Co-President (MS) and Devon Gold (US)
Welcome to first MSPA MS meeting of the year.

- Our school theme this year is “We Are Menlo”. Our family has found that the more time we give to Menlo, the more we get out of the school. Being present for activities and volunteering allowed us to meet teachers, staff, students and the community. Take advantage of all the opportunities at Menlo and be present - you will get so much out of your time here.

To encourage parents to be present this year, we are starting a new Raffle called 'MUST BE PRESENT TO WIN RAFFLE' at each of our MSPA meetings this year. Tickets will be given out at the start of all meetings. At the end of today’s meeting we will draw a winner for a coveted ‘Back to School Night’ Parking Space.

If you would like to volunteer at Menlo you can find opportunities on Zipnotes, talk to your child’s advocate, reach out to MSPA Council.

- **Upcoming Middle School Events:**
  - **Middle School Back-to-School Night:** Thur, 09/05, 5:00-7:30 pm
  - **Menlo Middle School Preview Day:** Saturday, September 21st, 9am -. Please volunteer if you can, sign up here. More up to date information is available in the weekly Zip Notes.

  - **ValPo Fun Run.** Sunday, Oct. 6, 9:00 am.
  - **Homecoming Tailgate and Football Game.** Friday, Oct. 11.

  - **Fall Holiday.** Friday, Oct. 25. No School.

- **6th Grade:**

  - **Sat, 09/07, 6:00-8:00 pm:** 6th Grade Parent Fall Social – Menlo Dining Commons Patio
7th Grade:

**Thursday, September 19th, from 7pm - 9pm** - 7th Grade Moms’ Night Out, Chandna House

**Wednesday, September 25th-Friday, September 27th** - 7th Grade Outdoor Education trip. Details will be forthcoming.

8th Grade:

**8th Grade Parent DC Information Night.** Tuesday, Sept. 17, 6:00-7:30 pm, Martin Family Hall.

**8th Grade Fall Coffee.** Wednesday, Sept. 25, 8:30-10:00 am, Meeks Residence.


**8th Grade Parent Fall Social.** Friday, Oct. 18, 6:00-8:30 pm, Menlo Dining Commons.

**Than Healy, Head of School**

1. Start of the school year has gone well, feels great.
   - Construction going well, on-time and on-budget.
   - Students off to great start. I’ve interacted a lot with new 6th grade students who are all excited and full of energy. 8th graders now leaders of middle school.
   - Lavinia will introduce our excellent group of new middle school hires.

2. Last week I spoke with Middle School I spoke about habit of ETHICAL BEHAVIOR. I defined ethical behaviour as integrity - hard to define to middle school minds. I said it is “when your set of behaviors and your beliefs match”. The hard part is knowing what you’re doing in some moments and why. The big challenge is: what is the sacrifice you are willing to make to live the life you want to live? Would you sacrifice being popular to stand up for what is right? Would you stop and pick up trash floating across campus? These are big ideas, especially for a middle school student but ideas we want them to wrestle with and think about.

3. Need your help with 2 things:
   - Please listen to Kevin Connor, Director of Sustainability about our need to reduce traffic on this campus. We spend $500,000 on
transportation for students to school - please use it. It is the right thing to do for our campus and the environment. City of Menlo Park will reduce enrollment by 50 kids if we can’t keep traffic numbers down.

- Could also use parent help on partnership between school and families. Mailing went out this summer discussing what you should expect from Menlo School and what Menlo School should expect from families. Three pieces you can expect from our school
  a. You should expect a transformative education experience for your child. They will be different, better people when they leave then when they arrive. Object of middle school is to grow strong, resilient students. We are developing humans.
  b. You should expect a joyful learning experience. Small number of students with focused faculty allows us to support students and be there for them.
  c. You should expect Menlo administration and staff to work hard to foster relationships with parents. We try to be transparent and hope you will be too. You will be respected by us when you come to us with a concerns. Parenting is hard and we understand that.

- What we need from you, our parents:
  a. We love to hear gratitude when things are going well. Tell the teacher when you see/hear something that has gone well. Send an email to the administration. People always quick to connect when there is an issue, but it is nice to hear what is working too.

    B. We also need you to help empower our students. Let your child advocate for themselves. In middle school, this is a challenge because students are not always ready, but it is ok to let them try. Be the calming force but have them do things for themselves.

    C. Engage productively in our school - come to games, plays etc. even when you’re kids are not playing. Be an ambassador for the school. Be proud of Menlo. Please don’t trash the school in front of your children. Hold each other to these expectations - Menlo Administration can’t be part of every parking lot conversation, please step in and speak up.

- We don’t expect instant excellence from parents, please don’t expect instant excellence from us. Perfection first week can’t be the standard. We are committed to always improving.
La Vina Lowery, MS Director
Welcome. This is my 5th year at Menlo.
We take hiring seriously to find people who believe in our cultures and philosophies.
We found some great new additions to our teams this year.

Introduction of New Middle School Teachers
(Please see Menlo website for more details on each teacher)

- **Shanel Daines - Middle School History**
  Came from Summit where taught 9th grade history.
  Teaching is a second career. Shanel worked almost a decade in online marketing. She loves being in a classroom and knows being an educator is what she is meant to be.

- **Kanaki Sumi - Middle School English**
  Very grateful and happy to be part of this community. Faculty, studentts and parents have been incredible.
  Taught 5 years in southern California and came to the bay area last year and taught one year in Mountain View.
  Love teaching 6th grade because the students are very excited to learn.

- **Sean Hyland - Middle School Arts**
  Come from Crystal Springs Upland School when he taught middle and high school arts. Fun fact about him - He is a huge Disney fan and he and his wife named their child Russell after character in favorite movie, UP.

- **Jake Davis - Middle School Counselor**
  Teaching Humans skills here at Menlo
  11th year as school counselor
  Came from Seattle
  Currently working with 6th and 8th grade human skills, please contact at jdavis@menloschool.org with questions or concerns.

- **Priscila Schochet, Middle School English**
  Originally from Mexico.
  Has taught Spanish in both Dubai and most recently in Vietnam.
  Love being in Menlo. Kids are Fearless

- **Vanessa Ortega:**
  17th years working in Admissions.
My primary focus in admissions has been making an independent school education accessible to underrepresented communities in the Bay Area. Most recently, I was the Associate Director of Admission/Financial Aid and the Coordinator of CAP (Connections and Advising Program for Ninth Graders) at the College Preparatory School in Oakland.

- **Roger Zamorra, Associate Director of Admissions and Assoc. Dir. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion for Families**
  Roger is re-joining the Menlo administrative team, this time diving his time between two teams.
  Roger is a graduate of Menlo School and excited to be back working in admissions and helping to shape the newly created Equity and Diversity team at Menlo.

**Familiar Faces**

**David Mugglebee, Middle School Drama Teacher:**
- Elf the Musical - Fall
- Play Version of CLUE - Winter
- All in the Timing - Spring

David loves teaching Middle School Drama. Everyone can participate. First show always the largest, supports large cast and allows something for everyone.

Later in the year casts for shows will be smaller. Real world doesn’t allow everyone to be in cast all the time, but if your child doesn’t make stage cast there is always behind the scenes which is an unlimited number of students.

At Menlo we try to encourage kids to love the art in themselves which is more important than the final product.

Finally, David works closely with athletics department so that if schedules conflict, the children can be supported and do both things without being stressed out.

Any questions? Please contact me at david.mugglebee@menloschool.org

**Courtney Chandler, Middle School Creative Arts and Dance**
- We have a brand new dance room in high school!
Shared a quote sent to her by Joe McDonald which Courtney thinks is so true of Menlo’s philosophies about art “The true purpose of arts education is not necessarily to create more professional dancers or artists," it is to create more complete human beings who are critical thinkers, who have curious minds, who can lead productive lives.” (Kelly Pollack)

We are here to help your children to find the artist in themselves. Your children are being asked to make themselves vulnerable as they grow and learn in middle school arts. They are amazing.

Joe McDonald, Middle School Athletics Director
- We want your students to have fun
- We want to give opportunity to play sports
- We want your students to learn to collaborate, to play together and to be a great person.
- Your student won’t always make the team or get the position they want, but that is ok.
- Always tell your student it is ok to not make A team - keep working hard and don’t give up. Joe shared a story about a student who always made B team for middle school basketball but he persevered, kept playing, worked hard and played varsity Basketball in high school (Jack Gold). Jack is the example for our children.
- Finally, parking is rough here - please park at CARDEN FIELD or in visitor parking on Valpo side of campus when you come to see athletic events.

Beth Bishop, Directory of Admissions and Financial Aid
- Saturday September 21: 8:30 - first preview for middle school families
- Menlo launched Ravenna over the weekend, admissions 2019/2020 is live.
- Maya and Katrina (6th grade parents) have volunteered to be leads on 6th grade admission day. Please consider helping them by serving as tour guides. See zipnotes or contact Beth to help.
beth.bishop@menloschool.org

Kevin Connor, Director of Sustainability
- 9th year at Menlo.
- Need everyone’s help to reduce the number of cars coming on to campus everyday as the City of Menlo Park only allows a certain
number of cars on campus between the hours of 7:00-9:00am and 3:00-5:00pm. Morning is our big issue. There is an underground tracker that monitors these numbers.

- Menlo very close to going over the allowed number of cars - as such they have threatened to reduce enrollment by 50 students next year.
- Please use transportation we have in place - trains, busses, shuttles. Every car makes a difference.
- Kevin can connect you with neighbors to arrange carpools and will work with each family. Please contact Kevin at kevin.conner@menloschool.org so he can help find alternate transportation to school for your child.

**Brief Announcements**

**Julie Floyd**: Took on role, VP Equity, Inclusion and Diversity for MSPA

First meeting is this Wednesday, Gym Room 6. It is for everyone. Great opportunity to see what is important to the school, what the messaging should be. Will be led by Keith Wheeler. Questions or want to get involved? Please email Julie at julie.floyd@gmail.com

**Petra Silton and Flavia Herrod, Co-Chair Menlo Auction**

Menlo Auction in Spring, Raises money for Financial Aid (100%), it is a community builder, it is fun for everyone (volunteers, participants, donors). Please contact us if you can help with the auction. Emails are petrasilton@gmail.com and flavia@gmail.com

First planning meeting will be in October.

Some of last year’s pay to play parties for adults are still available. Please see eNotes for more information on dates and to sign up.

- Moms and Margaritas - This Friday, September 6
- Fine Wine Tasting on September 19
- All School Dias de las Muertas Party November 2 (parents only)

**Valpo Fun Run**

The 7th annual Valpo Fun color run will be held on Sunday, October 6th, 9am

The Run supports Peninsula Bridge (5 week summer program that supports underserved students in our area)

Prizes for various categories.
Please Sign up to volunteer in zipnotes
Sign up to walk/run: active.com and search “valpo Fun run 2019”

RAFFLE WINNER: Parking Spot for Middle School Back to School Night
Tamara Ruth-Betts

Meeting adjourned at 10:00am