

Juana Briones Elementary School

Report to the Community 2000-2001



Introduction

According to state law, the governing boards of California school districts must prepare and issue annually a School Accountability Report Card (SARC) for each elementary and secondary school in their jurisdiction. The main objective of the SARC is to inform the local school community about program performance and existing conditions at school.

OUR MISSION:

At Juana Briones, teachers, parents, staff and students are dedicated to academic excellence. We are a community where diversity is a strength and where we build on the gifts of all students in developing active, lifelong learners. We want Briones students to:

- work with determination to stretch their minds;
- acquire a solid academic foundation;
- solve problems and make decisions;
- communicate effectively;
- develop confidence in their own abilities;
- care about other human beings and respect their differences.

All of us share in the decisions, the responsibility, and the commitment to the vision of excellence. We are confident each one of us has something significant to contribute to our school and the world.

School Profile

Juana Briones is a neighborhood school. There is an extraordinary diversity among our 276 students. The ethnic make-up of the student body during the 2000-2001 school year was:

White	Hispanic	Asian	Black	Other
61.5%	16%	14%	7%	1.5%

We have fully implemented class size reduction in kindergarten through third grade, with no more than 20 students per classroom. Orthopedically and visually impaired students, about 4% of our student population, are mainstreamed into regular classrooms. Students from 13 different countries—who speak 16 different languages—enhance our global awareness and cultural sensitivity.

At Briones decision-making is site based. We are creating a school where each child has an opportunity to succeed. Each child's skills are assessed, and everyone is both nurtured and challenged to progress. This process brings the entire school community together by focusing on a united purpose, by determining and building on strengths, and by coupling empowerment with responsibility.

Instructional Staff

Our faculty includes 17 classroom teachers, three of whom serve the orthopedically and visually impaired students. There is also a resource specialist, a part-time psychologist, a language/speech specialist, two part-time librarians, one English Language Learner teacher, a Reading Recovery/Small Group Instruction Specialist, and one science lab instructional assistant. Instructional aides assist teachers in every classroom, averaging 2 to 3 hours per day. Librarians, music teachers, P.E. teachers, and/or SPECTRA art specialist provide classroom lessons through district programs.

Juana Briones is known for its experienced teachers who pioneer innovative and creative curriculum aligned with district goals and standards. The staff also assumes leadership roles in the district and actively pursues opportunities for professional development.

Learning Environment

We strive to motivate our children to excel to high levels, regardless of their background. We are committed to treating *all* children as gifted and to developing confident, lifelong learners.

Activities such as Students Helping Students, Buddy Program, and Booster Tutoring help students attain their educational goals. Our Science and Math Labs provide hands-on opportunities for students to enhance their classroom learning.

We foster a positive learning environment by teaching children to celebrate each other's differences, to solve problems, and to listen respectfully to each other. In 1999-2000 Juana Briones had 6 suspensions and 0 expulsions.

As their children's primary educators, Briones parents are active in the educational process at home and school.

School Goals

- To enhance the learning environment of all students.
- To have 90% of students who have been in our system at least 3 years reading, writing and doing mathematics at or above grade level.
- To develop a well-balanced math program that challenges all students.
- To continue to implement Juana Briones' Plan for a safe and drug-free campus.
- To enhance classroom science with hands-on science program for all students.

Looking Ahead to 2001-2002...

- Continue development of a balanced math program.
- Study and evaluate possible future instructional uses of technology.
- Identify strategies and resources to improve student writing across the grades.
- Explore ways to differentiate instruction for all students based on academic needs.
- Maintain a safe school.
- Build a new library.

Student Support Services

- Every classroom has a part-time teacher's aide who works individually and in small groups with students.
- A Reading Recovery/Small Group Instruction Specialist supports K-2 students experiencing difficulty with reading.
- Briones hosts special education day classes for visually impaired and orthopedically impaired students. These children spend part of their day mainstreamed in our regular classes.
- The Speech-Language therapist provides screening assessments and remediation of articulation, language, pragmatics, fluency, and voice disorders, and provides Individual Education Plan (IEP) programs for identified students.
- A teacher for English Language Learners provides intensive English Language study to students whose home language is not English. Students learning English also receive some tutorial support in their native language. Forty-one students were enrolled in the ELL program during the 2000-2001 school year.
- A Student Study Team made up of teachers, parents, principal, and specialized support staff work cooperatively to explore teaching strategies for children who are referred for help.
An IEP Team assesses and recommends placement for children in Speech-Language and Resource Specialist programs.
- Booster tutors provide one-on-one assistance to referred students in reading and math. Students meet with tutors 2-3 times a week for 4 week sessions.
- On-site childcare for K-5 students is available before and after school through the Child Development Centers – PAUSD.

- The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program and students from Gunn High School provide learning support.
- Students needing extra support in reading and math attend The Academy after school and on Saturdays.

Instructional Minutes

All elementary schools in the district have a special schedule day on Wednesdays throughout the year. In addition, all schools have at least three minimum days: preceding the Thanksgiving and winter breaks, and on the final day of school. The following table details 1) the minimum allowable instruction minutes mandated by the State of California, 2) the actual instructional minutes at Juana Briones for the 1999-2000 school year, and 3) the projected number of instructional minutes for the 2000-2001 school year.

<u>Grade</u>	<u>State Minimum Yr.</u>	<u>Juana Briones 1999-2000.</u>	<u>Juana Briones 2000-2001</u>
K	36,000	43,380	47,880
1-3	50,400	52,440	53,625
4-5	54,000	54,525	56,325

School Safety

A Safe School Plan is developed each year which is based on a needs assessment involving staff, parents, and students. Goals, objectives, and activities in the Safe School Plan relate to the school's physical and social environment, as well as its culture.

Teachers, staff members, and parents work together to ensure that Juana Briones provides a climate where children feel safe and are safe.

All staff members, parents and children participate in a conflict resolution program called "Talk It Out." Some parents and all staff have received training in this program to help the children use problem-solving as a way to resolve conflicts and encourage them to be responsible for themselves and their actions. Our students receive formal lessons in the classroom to help them learn to respond to conflicts in a positive way. Trained student Conflict Managers provide Talk-It-Out support on the yard during recess. In addition, at the beginning of the school year, each Briones student and parent must read and sign an agreement to be safe, responsible, and respectful at school.

Other regular safety practices include:

- Earthquake preparedness
- Bicycle safety
- Fire drills
- Disaster planning
- Daily yard supervision
- Traffic management

Community Involvement

At Juana Briones, parents are encouraged to be active in the educational process. This home/school partnership is evident in the collaborative atmosphere at school. Parents are involved in PTA, Site Council, district and site committees and in the classroom. PTA is involved in social events, parent education and support programs, and school-wide assemblies. The PTA provides financial support for classroom aides and the Science Lab aides and other programs. The PTA edits and distributes our school newsletter, *The Banner*. Students contribute as peer tutors, cross-age buddies, wheelchair helpers, ballroom monitors, conflict managers, and recycling managers.

Instructional Program

The **curriculum** – what we teach – is based on PAUSD content standards, which are based on the knowledge and skills students will need to be successful in the 21st century.

- Teachers collaborate to articulate the curriculum between the grades.
- A core curriculum ensures a sound educational foundation for each student.
- Teachers integrate the curriculum by incorporating multiple disciplines into daily lessons.

Instruction—how we teach—reflects our efforts to meet student needs and accommodate learning styles.

Instructional strategies are also based on what we know about child development.

Where appropriate, we use:

- Direct instruction
- Small group instruction
- Peer tutoring
- Individual instruction
- Self-paced learning

In **Mathematics**, all students learn numbers, geometry, measurement, statistics, probability, patterns, functions, logic, algebra, and discrete mathematics. Besides pencil and paper computation, we teach problem-solving using calculators, computers, and manipulatives as tools. We connect math units to literature, writing, and other areas in the “real world.” Along with strengthening students’ skills, we’re establishing safety net strategies to make sure that all students acquire a set of core skills. Staff are engaged in ongoing reflection, collaboration, and professional development to broaden and enrich math instruction.

Our **Language Arts** program consists of a broad range of materials and strategies, introducing all students, including those

whose primary language is not English, to high-quality children’s literature. We use a combination of “phonics” for word decoding and “whole language” to teach listening, speaking, reading, and writing in a meaningful context. The writing program includes the study of the writing process: pre-write, draft, revise, edit, and publish. The K-2 teachers continue to focus on expanding their use of the most effective Early Literacy Learning strategies and extending their book collections for classroom instruction. The 3-5 teachers focus on Extended Literacy Learning strategies, such as phonemic awareness and structural analysis. In addition, students participate in literature analysis to enhance comprehension and study skills.

The **History-Social Science** program uses literature to help students develop a keen sense of what it was like to have lived in other times and places. Participatory activities help to highlight aspects of cultural diversity and the importance of civil rights, positive values, and individual responsibility. The themes at each grade level are:

- Kindergarten – Learning and Working Now and Long Ago
- Grade 1 – A Child’s Place in Time and Space
- Grade 2 – People Who Make a Difference.
- Grade 3 – Bay Area: Continuity and Change
- Grade 4 – California: A Challenging State
- Grade 5 – U. S. History and Geography – Making a New Nation

Science education occurs in the classroom, Science Lab, and the Life Lab gardens. The science curriculum addresses the three basic fields of scientific study: physical, earth, and life sciences. Topics include, but are not

limited to, geology, machines, ecology, the food chain, kitchen chemistry, marine science, and flora and fauna of the Bay Area.

Students visit our **Library** regularly to select books and to learn library skills. **Computers** in the classroom and the library provide curriculum enrichment. Students research and write with computers, and play strategy games to develop logical and critical thinking skills.

Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) at Juana Briones consists of differentiated instructional practices in the classroom for students who have qualified for GATE designation. Students who qualify for GATE are usually identified in 4th or 5th grade from standardized test data and teacher recommendation.

Student Assessment

In the Spring of 2000, students in grades 2-5 participated once again in the state-wide Standardized Testing and Reporting (S.T.A.R.) Program with the administering of the Stanford Achievement Test, 9th edition. The SAT 9 is a norm reference test in mathematics, reading, language, and spelling. Scores of individual students are combined and weighted by subject toward the calculation of a school’s Academic Performance Index or API. A score of 800 or better by each public school in California is a state goal. The 2000 API for Juana Briones was 827. Its overall comparative ranking state-wide was a nine out of a possible 10. Briones received a “similar schools ranking” of seven out of 10. The similar schools ranking is based on schools with similar demographic data.

STAR Test Results												
	Reading			Math			Language			Spelling		
Grade	98	99	00	98	99	00	98	99	00	98	99	00
2	67	73	77	84	78	86	75	76	76	64	66	72
3	73	65	75	69	65	77	72	67	74	66	49	73
4	81	68	74	77	61	82	75	65	76	74	60	71
5	74	81	70	74	85	76	71	79	74	67	61	70

School Finance

PAUSD relies heavily on local income sources, primarily property taxes, building leases, and interest income, to fund 80% of its programs. State and federal resources provide additional funds. Budgets are allotted to the schools for instructional programs and for general operating expenses. Each school determines the specific allocation of its budget to meet its goals and priorities.

In addition to basic funding provided centrally by the Palo Alto Unified School district, Juana Briones receives revenue from the state-funded School Improvement Program (SIP), the federally-funded Title I program, and the PTA. Allocation of these funds is approved by the Site Council with input from staff and parents. For the past several years, Juana Briones has targeted much of its discretionary funds to support classroom programs. The basic budget is occasionally supplemented by grants or donations.

Substitute Teachers

The district actively recruits fully-credentialed substitute teachers. We maintain a list of over 150 qualified teachers. To ensure continued quality substitute teaching, we pay one of the highest daily rates in the county and we provide an orientation program and inservice opportunities for our substitutes.

Staff Development and Evaluation

The Board of Education has identified staff development as a top priority. Our curriculum and instructional systems are becoming increasingly complex, and staff must be given the time and training needed to incorporate new content, teaching strategies, and materials into their classroom routines. In addition, teachers, administrators, and classified staff need time to work together on School Improvement Plans. Workshops and courses are available during the summer, after school, and on release time. Three non-teaching days were made available for our staff's professional growth this year.

The PAUSD Board of Education believes that the purpose of a comprehensive staff evaluation program is "improvement of the quality of teaching and learning through the recognition, maintenance, and improvement of staff competency." Permanent certificated employees are formally evaluated at least once every two years. All classified staff members are assessed annually or biannually, depending on their placement on the salary schedule. Employees have the opportunity to share in the setting of annual objectives in determining the methods of assessment. Both scheduled and impromptu classroom and site observations are made by the principal, classified supervisors, and central office administrators, with both written and verbal feedback provided.

Probationary and temporary teachers receive close supervision and support and are formally evaluated every year. They are observed frequently and provided with written feedback. Both groups of teachers participate in the Tenure Support and Assessment Program, which has the following features:

- a three-day orientation program prior to the start of school;
- an on-site new teacher mentor who provides support through observations, coaching, and advising;
- frequent classroom observations and conferencing with the teacher's supervisor;
- four release days to observe other teachers and attend district workshops and meetings focused on new teacher needs;
- optional after-school workshops and curriculum support meetings.

Average Salaries, Budget Percentages, and Expenditures per Student		
1999-2000 Comparison		
	PAUSD	State *
Beginning Teacher Salary	\$36,139	\$31,548
Mid-range Teacher Salary	\$57,783	\$49,405
Highest Teacher Salary	\$73,302	\$60,360
Principal's Average Salary	\$88,043	\$76,993
Superintendent's Salary	\$171,000	\$111,506
Expenditure per Student	\$8,300	—
% of Budget for Teacher Salaries	46.92%	43.07%
% of Budget for Administrators	5.30%	5.47%
* Other Unified Districts between 5,000-9,999 ADA only.		

JUANA BRIONES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
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856-0877 (FAX: 856-3750)
O.H. 856-0834

Administration

Gary Dalton Principal
 Maria Eichler Secretary
 Sharon Fisher Clerk
 Denise Sanders O. H. Clerk
 Jack Younkin Head Custodian
 Melvin Ward, Adalberto Rivera Custodian

Teachers

Grade

Karen Chase/Sandra Nielson (O.H.) Pre-School/K-1
 Suzanne Doi (O.H.) 1-5
 Mary Sue Garcia-Moore (VH) 1-5
 Jill Dinneen K
 Janice Brethauer K
 Kristine Berg 1
 Mariellen Klein 1
 Kim Norgaard/Susie Deutsch 1
 Pamela Dappen 2
 Sue Garadis 2
 Kay Canrinus 3
 Mary Goodkind 3
 Kathie Underdal/Karen Kessler 3
 Halimah Van Tuyl 4
 Amy Krishnamurthy / Dianne Neal 4
 Bruce Antal 5
 Beth Mills / Katie Graham 5

Support Staff

Gale Heringer-Brock, Jane Millman Librarian
 Gail Joslin Adaptive P. E.
 Janet Lynch-Gillespie Resource Specialist
 Jean Mockler Psychologist
 Lee Birdsey English Teacher
 Anna Rempel Reading Recovery
 Amy Gall Speech Language Specialist

Noon Supervisors

María Nuñez, Enedina Salcedo
 Nancy Frazier, Lucia Valencia

PTA President

Debbie Sutherland

Site Council Members

Jean Luc Brouillet – co-chair
 Mariellen Klein – co-chair

Gary Dalton Kate Hill
 Veronica Melero Beth Mills
 Pamela Dappen Lynn Kidder
 Mary Sue Garcia Ruchita Parat
 Lee Birdsey Stephanie Langley