

Dear Families of Vista Verde,

It is my honor and pleasure to welcome you to the new school year. It has been a busy summer break. Staff has been hard at work opening classrooms and organizing materials for instruction. Our PTA and the Foundation members have met several times to plan opening celebrations and family events - their enthusiasm is contagious. We are proud to announce and welcome new staff members to the Vista Verde "family." Beth Dufault is my new Administrative Assistant - what a ball of positive energy and professionalism! Cindy Quillin will be teaching kindergarten, Lindsey Marino will be teaching sixth grade Language Arts, Kyle Murphy will be teaching our new BSLC program, and Robin Awbrey-Smith will be working in our middle school support program. They have each submitted a brief biography, included below. We also made some grade level changes: Anne Marie Madden will be teaching fifth grade this year - she has taught fifth grade before and is welcoming the change including seeing some of her past third grade students. Kate Boyd, once she returns from maternity and child care leave, will be our Middle School Manager working one day a week. Her strong organizational skills and leadership will be appreciated by me and the middle school staff. We are very fortunate to add these wonderful, talented, and student-centered educators to our staff. We were also able to hire several new instructional aides to support larger class sizes in primary, RTI, and math groupings thanks to IPSF and our own PTA.

In addition, our PTA has again sponsored our primary music and art program, additional hours for our LAN Admin, support for instructional supplies, additional hours for our Health Clerk, additional hours for our middle school counselor, and funding for our PE specialist. In addition, as a result of your financial support through our Vista Verde Foundation and PTA, we will be able to provide wonderful cultural arts assemblies, classroom materials support, and Meet the Masters. Our Vista Verde Foundation is planning to open this school year with classroom and family opportunities by participating in our Annual Golf Tournament on September 2. Information will be presented by Back to School Night. Our Foundation has worked hard to have our shade structure finally installed over the elementary play structure this first quarter. Please call me if you would like to know more about these programs.

We are pleased to announce that Vista Verde will continue to implement our school-wide positive behavior system: STAR (Safety first, There and ready, Act responsibly, and Respect self and others). This system supports and teaches positive classroom and playground behaviors K-8. Learn more about Vista Verde's STAR program at the school's district sponsored website, <http://iusd.org/vv/star/indexstar.html>. And, because we value your support and partnership, please review our STAR parent behaviors, including our parking lot guidelines, now available at [VistaVerdePTA.org](http://VistaVerdePTA.org), along with other Welcome Packet documents (the PTA's printed Welcome Packets will be sent home by Friday, but the documents are available for viewing at the website). Our Fit for Life focus continues to be a tremendous success resulting in several program improvements including significant gains in our Presidential Academic Fitness Testing. During my Back to School presentation, I will be sharing our school improvement targets for 2010-2011.

We look forward to seeing you at Back-to-School Night (August 4 for middle school; August 5 for K-5), and during our goal-setting conferences (August 16 - 25). Please mark your calendars indicating that these days will be modified with a 1:30 dismissal.

My early visits to classrooms revealed enthusiastic teachers, hard-working support staff, dedicated parents, and eager students. Numerous parents (past and present) came in prior to our school opening to assist our staff to prepare. It was a wonderful experience to watch classrooms transform into exciting learning environments. In the morning of opening day, I observed and greeted an amazing complement of wonderful young people eager to learn come tumbling through our doors. Staff members have shared with me that they are enjoying their new classes and already very impressed with the caliber of their students along with their positive attitudes.

When the bell rings for the close of the first day, I look forward to watching our students greet their parents with smiles and enthusiasm and will silently thank each of you for sending us such wonderful young minds filled with wonder and excitement for learning. We are very fortunate to have you and your family as a part of our learning community. The staff and I are committed to providing your children an excellent learning environment with a positive climate in partnership with you. I look forward to working alongside our exemplary teachers, talented support staff, and exceptional office staff to ensure outstanding success and care for each and every child who attends Vista Verde.

Educationally yours,  
Dr. Jean Mylen