PTSO Board Meeting Minutes – March 10, 2016

Attendees: Dory Albert, Belen Alonso, Ganga Balebail, Sweeta Belinje, Dinesh Bettadapur, Brian Berkley, Annie Chang, Cynthia Chang, Shelley Chang, LyJune Chang, Katie Chen, Susan Chin, Amy Chiu, Kim Cousens, Janet Chyan, Molly Davey, Lennie Desai, Jaya Dutta, Shannon Edwards, Mary Eschen, Michelle Fan, Susanne Foster, Sheeba Garg, Wendy Hansen, Nancy Highbarger, Yangsong Hong, Carol Hovey, Joelle Huet-Duerst, Sarah Hung, Jane Jin, Sophia Kao, Beth Kingsley, Wendy Lei, Jian Li, Gary Lin, Yuli Lin, Ann Menocha, Yufen Lu, Darrell Miller, Mary Moriarty, Sunny Naderi, Eriko Otsuka, Anita Parson, Jean Poo, Lisa Pousse, Monica Rhee, Yufen Song, Julie Stuart, Sherin Toms, Lennie Traina, Lien Tran, Wendy Wung, Ted Vo, Susan Vukovatz, Rebecca Vandevort, Revathi Vasan, Ted Vo, Yuchi Wang, Gail Weng, Sherry Wong, Sandy Wu, Annie Ying, Emilie Zhang, Emily Zhen

Approval of February 9, 2016 Meeting Minutes, Susan Vukovatz handed out the minutes from last month. Susan Chin motioned to approve and Dory Albert seconded based on correcting Ushua Rao’s name on the nominating committee, adding Jerrold Shapiro on College 102 workshop and correcting the title and author’s name on How to Raise an Adult book by Susan Lythcott-Haines. All approved.

Treasurer’s Report: Michelle Fan passed out list of check #s1454–1471 to be ratified. Ann Menocha motioned to approve check ratification and Susan Chin seconded. All approved.

Principal’s Report: Paul Robinson reported the CCS Girls Basketball finals at Santa Clara University were streamed for MAP students driving to LA. Nina Nelson sang the national anthem.

Parking changes – Paul spoke of the upcoming parking changes with the Music building construction.
- All the final drawings have been completed, contractors walked campus Tuesday to begin bidding process and contractors will be selected at end of this month.
- The west side of campus will be completely blocked off.
- The bus lane will be taken away for staging and construction work.
- Changes to parking lot will happen during Spring break, with a new traffic flow pattern.
- Paul will send us a map on how to flow in and out campus.
- Church offered us to borrow some parking spaces, to be used for construction workers.
- Students will get pushed down towards field end.
- SHS has stopped issuing parking permits. If they have space will issue more.
- Construction will start in April 2016 and done by Fall 2017.

New surveillance videos around campus. Had some incidents in summer. Can be monitored from any computer on campus. Can go back and check if there is an incident. No one will be staring at it all day. There are cameras at Sports Plaza and MacAfee to monitor entire parking lot.

Guest Speaker: Bay Area Children's Association (BACA) Ranjana introduced the speakers from BACA. They are a local organization specializing in psychological and emotional support for young adults, since getting through to them is difficult.

Dr. Thakkar was born in India and did her medical school in India.
- Children in the Bay Area are going through stresses.
- Perfection is what everyone talks about.
- Children don't talk and they don't understand.
- How do parents handle their stress?
• There are resources available out there.
• Why is this a big topic? In Palo Alto there have been 4-5 suicides due to academic stress.
• Kids are judged by their friends, they are finding their identities, related to your peer pressure, society, and parents.
• Half of all mental illness begins before age 14.
• Typically there is an 8-10 year delay in treatment.
• For ages 5-24, 2nd leading cause of death is suicide.
• Stress is a state of mental or emotional strain, it is not bad, and striving us to do better.
• Stress level is important for performance.
• When stress goes up we all like control and start having stressful internal dialogue.
• The stress hormone cortisol helps you make those decisions.
• Causes of school stress is school work, peer pressure, over scheduling, parental expectations, death, moving, changing schools, divorce of parents, negative thoughts, sexuality or body image, illness or severe problems in family.
• Most kids are not home on weekends.
• People don't rest anymore. Quiet time is important.
• Most teenagers say bored and do not know what to do.
• The Ivy League school is what everyone wants for them.
• Social society affects their thinking, hard to find their own identity, gender identity disorder, don't feel like going to be accepted and hard to make friends when move.

Physical Symptoms of Stress - Aches, pains, headaches, diarrhea, constipation, nausea, dizziness, chest pain, rapid heart rate, etc.

Cognitive Symptoms of Stress - Memory problems, inability to concentrate, poor judgment, seeing negative only, anxious or racing thoughts, constant worrying, etc.

Emotional symptoms of Stress - Moodiness, shorter temper, inability to relax, feeling overwhelmed, signs of loneliness and isolation, depression or general unhappiness, suicidal thoughts (this is when we see patients). When we ask parent when started they say 2 months ago, while a child says since 6-8th grade, but hasn’t been expressing themselves. We need to listen to them

Self harm - History of cutting, a coping strategy and a cry for help.

Stigma - Why don't kids ask for help? No one wants to look different. Hard to say I’m different
• Parents don't help; "get over that" is what parents say.
• Everyone needs resume to be buffed up.
• Parents need to talk about it too.

Teen stress management - Sleep, eat and exercise. Sleep is important.
• Cortisol is important, at 8 am is high and decreases at midnight. Cortisol helps you to wake up 8-10 hours of sleep is ideal for teenagers because they are learning.
• Caffeine increases anxiety.
• Some teens self medicate with alcohol, drugs, marijuana, and/or tobacco making them calm
• Practice relaxation techniques with deep breathing.
• Practice being assertive.
• Make tasks smaller to increase self esteem.
• Parents should focus on their child’s achievements.
• When we talk negative, then they talk negative.
It is not enough to be perfect. Take a break from stressful situations. Sit in front of TV and watch it if want to.
How many teenagers are outside these days? Kids spend less than 1 hour outside.
Build a positive network of friends.

Watch for signs of stress increase, which increases stigma.
Talk about mental health.
Ask for help from school. Seek professional help.
Medications are the last resort in treatment.
If child wears long sleeves in hot weather, their behaviors will tell you a lot.

**Virginie Goldstein** has 2 master degrees from France and is a Licensed Marriage and Family therapist. How do parents handle their own stress projects on your child and communication?

- Daily maintenance is important. Need to sleep well, keep active with work, school, exercise, and social time.
- Eat 3 meals a day, breakfast, lunch, and dinner.
- Show right behaviors to child.
- Eat at home, not in front of TV.
- Do healthy activities 3x per week.
- Stress piles up. How do you excel toxins? When start sweating triggers good chemicals to brain.
- Social life is important.
- Parents need to have a balanced life.
- Kids need time after school.
- Family meals everyday sitting together and talking is good.
- Main goal is to be attuned to your child every day. Spend time together.
- Involve your child in decision making process on activities together.

Managing stress - Practice breathing techniques every day, so body will be more relaxed. Take a break; focus on positives with child

Kids spend time on electronics late at night. Approximately 9 hours spent on electronics not counting the homework. Usually have 3 hours homework. Nutrition important, keep breakfast food in back pack, and prepare lunch together. With no food in stomach, it is hard to focus.

Electronics monitoring of kids. Study done correlating electronics with mental health.

- Kids spend too much time on electronics.
- Need to rest 45 minutes before going to bed by reading a book.
- Kids don't call each other anymore as a way to socialize but do it via text instantly.
- These kids were born with a phone in their hands and parents need to put limits and rules in place.
- Other ways are to control access is to change the wifi password or block router.

Kids need to slow down. All kids want to get A's. Should talk to counselor about class schedule.

- Social life is important.
- Sometimes kids need accommodations.
- Missing school is a sign. Don't wait too long until things fall apart.
- Communication at home is important.
- Spend time with your kids every day. Sit together and discuss things, avoiding judgment.
• Repeat what they say, “Okay, you don't want to go to school tomorrow”.
• Sometimes they don't want advice. Listen, saying you understand.
• Don’t provide solution to them. They might just want to cool off anxiety.
• Ask them permission if they what help. Ask them later if need help, solutions, options, if no solution, bring a few options and figure out what is best direction.

Resources - Don't wait. Get help.
• Guidance counselors at school. We have CASSY, through BACA work with them.
• Hotline crisis 408-379-9085, mobile crisis program at EMQ can help on phone and good.
• Want to avoid hospitalization: it can come to that if situation is really bad.
• Can go to Stabilization Crisis Unit for 23 hours 59 minutes (408) 364-4083
• Parents Helping Parents (408) 727-5775
• BACA (408) 996-7650 has intensive outpatient program, www.baca.org

Questions: What about watching Netflix on electronics? Really need to shut electronics off as it affects melatonin (the electronic blue light). It is a coping skill of teenagers, watching TV. Need to teach other coping skills to take a break from electronics. It is the blue light thing and what it does to cortisol and the sleep wake cycle. When there is a blue light coming onto face it is a 45 minute time lag to help you get routine of bedtime.

What about doing homework in bed? Bed is not for homework; body doesn't understand, reading is okay in bed, but brain needs to rest.

Normal teen emotional stuff, how to distinguish between normal moodiness over stress related behaviors? Hard to understand for everyone. The functioning of your child matters. If functioning goes down, then it is stress. The more you listen the better. Ask more questions, treat them as your equal, and ask them what they want from you.

What about kids listening to music on their phone? Okay to listen to music to fall asleep, but with no screen. Teach time management. Goal is for them to be responsible. Trust them. BACA has long waiting list and working on hiring more people.

CDC coming to investigate Palo Alto

What can parents do to help? Need help with advocacy. Need more parents to talk about mental health issues. In the Bay Area there is a deficit of psychiatrists. There are not even hospitals for child psychiatry with the nearest one in Fremont, with no beds for kids. Hospitalizations are for major ones which are mental illness.

Are there any classes on self esteem? Parents Helping Parents has great classes

Does BACA do EFT tapping? Emotional freedom technique is not used by BACA

The presentation by BACA will be available on the PTSO website.

Respectfully Submitted by:
Susan Vukovatz
PTSO Secretary