**SHS Parent Teacher and Student Organization (PTSO) General Meeting Minutes**

**Date:** Nov 10, 2016  
**Location:** SHS Cafeteria

**Attendance:** 50 = Total number present, including the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Executive Board</th>
<th>Wendy Lei</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Kalpana Ramakrishnan</th>
<th>Y</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lisa Busse</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Yufan Lu</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Carter</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Ranjana Sivaram</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashley Chao</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Susan Vukovatz</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah Hung</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Annie Ying</td>
<td>Y</td>
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Staff: Brian Safine (Assist P)  
Guests: Kelly Sumner (CASSY), Saya (SHS Sr.), Heath Roca (LGSUHSD Chief Student Support Services)

PTSO Members & Guests (apologies for any misspelling): Ann Sun, Anu Minocha, Emilie Zhang, Helen Park, Jane Jin, Janice Wong, Jenny Jun, Jill Martin, Joelle Huet-Ducrot, Lorette Mah, Michelle Ma, Rita Cao, Shannon Wu, Shaomei Chu, Serin S, Sonali Desai, Susanne von Stern, Suzanne Green, Thierry Doyen, Tulika Tyagi, Sunny Wang, Yugin Yang, Shankari P., Fariba Mirpour, Helen Zhang, Vandana Pawar, Ganga Balebail, Karen Sherman, Michelle Halteman, Robin Massey, Darrell Miller, Janet Stimson, Amy Chiu, Rebecca Vardetts, Hana Chen, Janet Galvin

**Agenda:**
1. Coffee  
2. Parent Education Series Presentation - CASSY  
3. General Meeting - PTSO Business  
   - Approval of Minutes - Susan Carter  
   - Financial Report – Sarah Hung  
4. SHS Update - Brian Safine

At 8:45 am, Ranjana addressed the crowd. This month, the order of the agenda was reversed. Instead of doing PTSO Business first, we started with the Parent Education Series Presentation. This was done to start our business portion of the meeting during Tutorial so teachers are able to attend.

**Call to Order:** The General Meeting was called to order at 9:45 am by President Ranjana Sivaram.

**Motions:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item for Approval</th>
<th>Moved by:</th>
<th>Seconded by:</th>
<th>All approve?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minutes from General Meeting on Oct 12, 2016 -with 1 spelling correction</td>
<td>Thierry Doyen</td>
<td>Heidi Magner</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratification of checks # 1518 - 1527</td>
<td>Susan Vukovatz</td>
<td>Ranjana Sivaram</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PTSO:**
- Financial report – Budget status presented. $11 K behind in Just Do It donations. $2 K behind in PTSO Memberships. Reviewed checks from October.  
- Membership – Directories have been given to teachers, so you should get it from your kid. It will include a great magnet. We also have bags/magnets for sale.  
- We are only at 55% members, vs last year 60%. Reminder to join PTSO and donate to Just Do It (JDI). PTSO membership is $50 per family and suggested JDI donation is $100 per SHS student. Online payment option is available at our website: [http://www.saratogahighptso.org/index.html](http://www.saratogahighptso.org/index.html)

**LGSUHSD Update:**
Heath Rocha was introduced. He is new to the district as Chief Student Support Services. His background is special education and he previously worked in Carmel/Monterey. He came here due to the district’s commitment to Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), and agrees with the improvements made recently - the later start time and break between classes are really important. Stress is a big focus. Some stress is good & healthy stress. He’s working to bring in a speaker to address this.

**School Report (Safine):**
- Going full speed ahead, 1 person down in the office. School is Paul’s primary hobby. He is recovering and missing his hobby!  
- Week at a glance – Real highpoint community service - MAP JRs went to 4 different organizations, Sacred Heart, Loaves & Fishes, City Team and Salvation Army – made 1200 enchiladas, cut 900 pieces of raw chicken, sorted
School Felt lots of significant changes, Went through Saya Issues: Teen Stress to get support. Many think you need a crisis or huge event to seek counseling. Try to build a student's ability to cope and handle stress on their own. They think “I should be able to deal with this.” Rebound not as quick, more tired, disengaged? Encourage student to get support.

Announcements:
- The next PTSO General meeting will be December 8, 2016, at Noon in the SHS cafeteria. Holiday potluck starts at 11:30.

Adjournment: The PTSO business portion of the meeting was adjourned at 10:05 am by President Ranjana Sivaram.

Guest Speaker: Ranjana introduced Kelly Sumner - CASSY – Counseling and Support Services for Youth - Partnering with Parents to Promote Student Wellbeing – Improving Communication with Your Teen

Speakers:
1. Kelly Sumner – Counselor for over 15 yrs. CASSY’s 5th yr at SHS. Her role – program manager, licensed therapist, oversees 5 schools.
2. Saya – Sr. at SHS, President of Common Roots group– promoting discussions with trusted adults, positivity campaign

Kelly - CASSY is a nonprofit agency that partners with schools to provide counseling services to students in their academic setting. Mission is to destigmatize mental health services, normalize supporting social and emotional well-being. They are hoping to get our kids more resilient and want services to be available to all students. They partner with each school to tailor the program to meet the unique needs of each school. They hire and train professional therapists and post graduates working to gain their hours to get their license.

Key points of today’s session: CASSY overview, recognizing signs of stress/distress in your teen, understanding family connection as a primary supportive factor, discuss and practice strategies for improved communication with your teen.

SHS – high level of stress. Top presenting concerns: 26% anxiety symptoms, 24% academic stress, 16% depressive symptoms, 13% communications with parents, 11% peer relationships.

Many think you need a crisis or huge issue to seek counseling. Try to build a student's ability to cope and handle stress on their own. They think “I should be able to deal with this.” Rebound not as quick, more tired, disengaged? Encourage student to get support.

Teen Stress – Stress in America, survey from 2014 - 78% say school work is stressful!

Research shows that kids who have supportive relationships with their parents do better across many areas of life.

Issues:
- Kids try to hide their mental health from their parents
- Kids don’t want to disappoint their parents
- Some parents think the signs are normal teenage behavior
- We see the kid every day, so we don’t see the changes happening
- Some things are bid deals for kids, they think parents minimize that
- If parents don’t take care of themselves, or share vulnerability, or ask for help, our kids may also think they need to do it themselves.

Saya – Have great parents but, we have struggled with communication.

Went through withdrawal from family, lackluster attitude. Would skip meals every now and then, not snacking – watch for this type of change, not just extreme changes in eating. Felt lots of stress and overwhelmed – no eating – went straight to room – skip dinner – keep working – push off parents

School – room – school – room – lost interest in talking to parents and friends.
Mental health is not just serious issues, it’s also are you comfortable with friends, family.

Didn’t want to disappoint parents. Other kids, older siblings – see them achieving, not working that hard. Unrealistic for me, but I thought I wasn’t good enough. I had to learn not to set a goal too high for me.

I kept asking “Why can’t I do what they are doing – all the APs, all the extra curricular’s– need to stop comparing yourself to others.

Issue with Dad – when he lectures, I shut down. Now, we have conversations. He listens. He engages and makes sure he sees my side.

Remember what it was like when you were your kids’ age. HS is not always easy, it can be hard, and having a parent who empathizes with that really helps.

Treat your teen like an autonomous adult, and they will feel freer to talk to you.

My mom started talking to me about her emotions, feelings…it then became easier to share with her.

You (parents) are your (teens) biggest role models. Seeing a parent express feelings is the best example for us.
Talk, have a conversation. Don’t always ask questions. Talk about something other than school, grades, and college apps.
Start with a positive. Ask open ended questions.

Remember, you (parents) are your kids’ greatest support and are always useful, even though your kid may not admit it.

Kelly - Kids are afraid to go to Tutoring Center, Tutorial due to peer pressure, don’t want to look like they need help – Need to help kids understand that it’s OK to get help. Many teachers can serve as mentors for your kids - tutorial is not just always for academic, can get other support, high five, help organizing binder, etc.

Where is CASSY located? In portables behind main office.

How do people get help from CASSY? Guidance Counselors can refer students. More and more kids bring their friend or kids walk in on their own. Parents can call CASSY – Kim will reach out to student through Guidance Counselor. Kids over 12 can get help without parents support. Some come in once, some come in once a week, and some they’ve been seeing for some time.

Has CASSY seen any changes in students since the new schedule went in? – Yes, break btwn classes really helpful, kids getting more sleep with late start time, seeing less kids stressed about school work.

Currently working on concrete coping and resilience – going into freshman classes to talk about what are the strengths we already have and discussing how we can fall back on those strengths.

Parents are the most important person in a teen’s life – talk to your kids every day, let them know you will be there for them no matter what, give them time to find their identity.

Slides will be posted at PTSO website.

Respectfully submitted by,

Susan Carter
Recording Secretary