

SHS PTSO General Meeting  
Thursday, October 14, 2010  
DRAFT

Meeting called to order at 8:37 am by Teri Kasik in the SHS Teacher's Lounge.

**District Budget Update – Cary Matsuoka**

The California State budget has been passed in theory but I have a lot of doubts of the stability of the budget. We may be safe but we have some local challenges. SHS is one of the best high schools in the state even though we do have some comparable high schools but, we are truly amazing. We provide a well-rounded education. From our budget 84 percent goes to teacher's, librarians, career college counselors, and academics. Only 6 percent is spent at the district office to run it. Here's a snapshot of what we're looking at for the school budget: 2012/13 – deficit of 1.9 million, 2011/2012 – deficit 1.0 million, 2010/2011 – deficit/cut \$3 million, 2009/2010 – cut 1.2 million.

For this year we made budget adjustments and cuts. We froze salaries and tried not to cut items that would impact the students and their classes. The class sizes did increase. The district technology budget is at bare minimum. Summer school was cut way back; we only had 8 classes to support those students who were missing credits. To understand the extent of the budget cuts to our school district we used to get \$2.5 million in SIP funds, this year we're getting \$320,000. Until the state of the economy returns we have no don't know when things will improve. Budgets for text books, guidance counselors, maintenance, safety dollars, and more, we have very little budget if anything. The board of trustees is considering a parcel tax would help retain teacher's s and keep class sizes down. The state can't touch the parcel tax but the big challenge is the 2/3 majority, 66.7 percent. The spring election is an all mail ballot. If you have any questions please feel free to call Cary at any time at his office.

**Parcel Tax Update – Shinku Sharma, Cathie Thermond**

Running this campaign is an all volunteer effort. Our team becomes operational in February and March of 2011. We'll need a team of volunteers to pass out flyers, go door to door, and phone residents. We need \$150,000 just to run the campaign. We're looking at mailers to target seniors. Shinku and Cathie are working with consultants to help run the campaign. The consultants are highly regarded and help Los Altos run a successful campaign. It is going to be a difficult campaign and a lot of work but the money is needed. It is clearly a bad time for the schools and last year the board worked well together but you can only ask the teachers to take cuts and forgo pay increases for only so long. We're doing another poll to ensure our success because this parcel tax is extremely important. The Los Gatos Elementary School District already has a parcel tax for that passed at a cost to homeowners of \$298. In this campaign we're hoping to pass a parcel tax for less than \$100. It's easier to get parcel tax for elementary schools than high schools. There may be a senior exemption and deadline/expiration for this parcel tax. The expiration may be 5 to 6 years, it can be easier to extend it later once property owners get used to it. We're still polling and on December 11<sup>th</sup> there will be a meeting to discuss it. Why are we not also including the elementary schools? Cary said is that most districts will use their reserves until they run out. The parcel tax will help us stop using those reserves. The elementary school is using reserves and they are at a point of making teacher cuts. But asking for money for both districts will not pass. The elementary/middle schools do have SEF to help out. Sixty percent of the voters are in Los Gatos versus forty percent in Saratoga. How do we determine where the money goes if it gets approved? It is a board discussion and decision and it requires a vote by the community on where to spend it so it will take a few years to decide. The funds collected by Los Gatos property taxes stays in Los Gatos High School and the same with Saratoga, all money from Saratoga taxpayers stays in Saratoga High School. It costs \$60,000 to do a November district election versus \$460,000 to do the spring election. The view of our consultants is that if we're in a smaller election that we have a better chance to get it passed. Our community is very anti-tax in Saratoga. We also need parents to help to run the campaign and we can't do that

over the summer but, we will have help during the school year. Some parents will be upset to know how much we're paying to get this on the ballot in the spring but the goal is to be successful.

### **Drama Department – Cathie Thermond**

The fall play is opening this weekend with *OUR TOWN*. It's a wonderful play and the students are doing a wonderful job. This was the play of the first senior class that graduated from Saratoga High school. Try to come and see it on October 16, 17, 23 and 24. The play is set in 1900's and how little things are really changed. There is a reason why it's the most produced play.

### **President's Report - Teri Kasik and Katherine Tseng**

We have a new program starting for boys who may be having difficulty in school. We started with 6 boys last week and the boys talk about anything they want to. It's difficult to get boys to talk so we hope to capture them why they're willing to express their feelings. We hope it continues to grow. PTSO is funding it and it has worked in Los Altos. Catherine reported on proofing the directory. Thank you so much volunteers! We should get them back in a few weeks. On the 19<sup>th</sup> we have a comedian coming to talk about doing community service and this will be held in the library. The film Race To Nowhere was sold out and there was a small panel discussion afterwards. Saint Andrews will show this film for free on October 26<sup>th</sup>.

A motion was made to approve the minutes from last month by Shinku Sharma. Seconded, Sushama Takkar. Carried.

### **Membership – Happy Ho and Diane Hoe**

In the past few weeks we've had a few ladies making phone calls to families to get them to join PTSO. The number of families that are members are 796. That is 84 more families than last year. We are near 67 percent participation and we would like it higher. The number of staff members that have participated has doubled to 65. \$98,237 dollars given by families, \$1,045 from staff, and the total is 99,284.00. We did not charge for the newspaper this year so the total number is a little lower.

### **Treasurers Report - Sushama Takkar**

Please review handout (expenses/checks are on the back side.) There's not a lot of activity due to it still be early in the year.

### **Grants – Katherine Tseng**

A handout of the grant applications presented by the teachers was distributed. One of the large items is funding for the online database. We came up with a three way split between the school, PTSO and the Saratoga Foundation to fund it. The total amount requested by the teaching staff was \$19K, but we're looking at spending \$40 to \$45K so we will send out a mid-year grant opportunity in January. What is a lockdown kit? It is a kit in each classroom that is a survival kit so if we are in a code red situation each classroom has water and a small amount of food. There is some safety money in the district to contribute.

A Motion was made to approve the Grant distribution by Alice. Seconded, Shinku Sharma. Carried.

### **Principal Report – Jeff Anderson and Karen Hyde**

Homecoming went well. Quad day was fun. We need to find a better way for everyone to see the activities in the quad. The football game went well and the dance was uneventful which is a good thing. There was not a lot of inappropriate stuff happening at the dance.

Project Cornerstone survey was done last week. Some kids don't take it seriously but that's typical but we still get good results. It may take a while to get the results and we'll have a parent meeting when we get the result.

The film "Waiting for Superman" is in the theatres. It would be politically difficult for a principal to promote it. Some observation to make about all these films is that some of the message is valid and some are not so be careful. All these guys are looking to make money.

With categorical funds going away we need help. As far as the grants go we need text books because we don't have the funds we've had before. We used to have a class set so that kids can leave them at home and not get them so worn out but with cuts we can't get the kids home books. The database for the library is a subscription and requires payment every year. Some are as expensive as \$13K a year. The databases are great for the kids and the kids coming back from the universities are more prepared if they have these tools now and they know how to use them.

PSAT is this Saturday. We are tapped into the universal scholarship form. Last year we had 20 kids that used it and this year we have 160 students who have already filled it out. It is on the website. This is for seniors.

We are focusing on struggling students identified by the star test. During collaboration our teachers have identified and discussed these students so we can watch and get them help. In math they let the kids know about their score so they are aware. Next week we are working on focusing on the D and F kids. This is the focus now during Teacher Collaboration. We are talking about only a few students not like other districts that are talking about 40 percent of their students.

The teachers loved the day off in October to catch up on things. It sounds like the students liked it too.

Karen reported that club day was great. We have about 50 clubs. We are making sure that the clubs are really meeting. Colleges called and said we have too many clubs. So ours have to be up and running and meeting.

Homecoming went well the touching part was the diversity. Most of these kids probably don't know each other but they were out there working together. The senior event to build a house was wonderful and we had custodians help them. The seniors did Candy Land and the grad night will take it and reuse it. We had over 750 kids at the dance; we went through 4,000 paper cups.

### **School Board Report - Cynthia Chang**

Please go to our school district web site. The board meeting is next Tuesday. We will be approving a single plan for student achievement for students. This was developed by school site council.

The board has decided to continue to give \$21k to the school site council for Saratoga and Los Gatos. We used to get SIP funds around \$100K but no more.

The board is talking about the district calendar for next year. We are seriously discussing draft b where the first semester ends before winter break. It looks like both schools will approve ending the semester before the holidays. Please look at draft B and give feedback to PTSO president. There are approximately 15 days difference between semesters. August 22nd will be the start date for next year.

### **Media Arts Program Booster – Joanne Makeever, Katie Shinnick President of MAP Booster**

This booster group was formed recently and they have funded the beautiful building. When Joanne was looking at places to move the multi-media program was what caught her eye and impressed her. We need to keep this program going so it is important to fund it and we need parent help. We recently purchased 35 new Macintosh computers. We need to pay for annual software licenses. We have a speaker series with NBC reporter and all the speakers volunteered their time. The next one will be on January 13<sup>th</sup>. During break our map students have the opportunity to go to Universal Studios and see what's going on behind the scenes. They do have hands on workshops. Recently the kids went to Walden West for a team building and collaboration session. You can read more about it in the student's newspaper. There were a total of 280 students.

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 am with the opportunity for interested parents to tour the new MAP building.

Respectfully submitted by Laura Tillett