Upper St. Clair High School PTSO Meeting – Remote
May 4, 2023
9:30am – 10:30am

meet.google.com/anm-nhxw-ezt

Call to Order

The meeting on May 4, 2023, started at 9:33am virtually via Google meet. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and the meeting was called to order.

Staff Delegate Reports

Janine Despines – Teacher Representative

As many of you know, as you are facilitating study breaks, Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate testing is going on right now and will end on May 19th. Keystone testing will take place May 17th and 18th.

Nominations for the High School Halls of Fame are being accepted now through May 31, 2023. The Halls of Fame honors alumni and former staff members and volunteers in the academics, the arts, or athletics at the high school, collegiate or professional level. Nominees may be alumni who graduated or worked five or more years ago.

Upper St. Clair is offering numerous summer program experiences for students at all grade levels. There are reading and math labs, STEAM and robotics camps, leadership academies and summer wellness opportunities. Review the offerings and register on the district's website.

The High School Black Student Union (BSU) hosted a month-long celebration in February that included a school-wide trivia contest, performances and a leadership workshop to commemorate and celebrate Black history. One activity included a collaboration with Chartiers Valley High School students who visited USCHS. During this day, students participated in a variety of unity-building exercises.

In March, High School students earned 3 third place finishes at the 23rd annual Three Rivers German Day competition hosted by Washington & Jefferson College. 35 Upper St. Clair students participated from German Club, Passport to German, IB German 4, and IB German 5 classes.

The Speech and Debate team was crowned Pennsylvania High School Speech League State Champions. This marks the Panthers' fourth state title since 2017. The tournament was held in March, at Bloomsburg University. 28 students will go to the NCFL Nationals a in Louisville, KY at the end of this month.

Four teams of STEAM students from Mr. Peskorski's Honors STEAM Innovation & Consulting course went to Eaton Corp in Moon Township to present their work to a team of corporate executives. They presented solutions for a variety of challenges, from environmentally friendly packaging improvements to creating a demonstration wall that features interactive media.

Thanks to the PTSO for co-sponsoring the Listen, Lucy program on Monday, March 20, 2023. Other co-sponsors were the Stand Together organization, the No Place for Hate committee, and the PTC Wellness committee. Owner Jordan Corcoran CORE CO RIN shared her personal struggle with generalized anxiety disorder and panic disorder and offered strategies and hope to our students and staff.

Teachers and staff really enjoyed the Staff Luncheon that the PTSO provided on April 27th. Thank you for the thank you!

The environmental club hosted a successful tree-planting event on Earth Day.

Student leaders Noa Shimshi, Harini Sakthivel and Theeya Chen organized the event. 54 trees were planted in the community, including 5 at the elementary schools.

As a reminder, the Upper St. Clair School District grounds are limited to school activities while school is in session and when school athletic/band practices and games are occurring. Stadium and Boyce Field hours are posted on the district's website.

The High School chapter of the National Honor Society inducted 187 new members during its annual induction ceremony on Wednesday, April 19th.

The World Language Department recently earned a 2023 Golden Globe Award from the Pennsylvania State Modern Language Association. This is the highest level of recognition.

Shannon Dressler, a district school psychologist was recently recognized as the Association of School Psychologists of Pennsylvania's March Monthly Member Spotlight recipient.

The District will host its second annual USC Robotics Showcase and STEAM workshops from 6-8 p.m. tonight here at the high school. The event helps to kick-off the Southwestern Pennsylvania Remake Learning Days.

The annual District Kennywood Day is scheduled for Tuesday, June 20, 2023. Discounted tickets must be purchased online at www.kennywood.com.

For the eighth year in a row, the district has been named among the nation's Best Communities for Music Education by the National Association of Music Merchants Foundation. Our music program ranked 15 out of the 123 Pennsylvania programs.

Student Council was recently honored as a 2023 National Gold Council of Excellence by the National Student Council. It's the third year that our Student Council has earned this recognition.

Students Ujal Gautum, Arya Patel, Yog Trivedi, and Shubham Patel were among the top performers at the recent Pennsylvania Future Business Leaders of America State Leadership Conference and have advanced to the national competition which will be held in Atlanta in June.

Community Day 2023's theme is U Belong and will be held on Saturday, May 20, 2023.

Congratulations to those of you who have 2023 graduates! It's been a pleasure being their school librarian. I wish them well in their post high school plans. If college is in their futures, I created a "How to utilize your college library" brochure and posted it on the library canvas page. The college library provides valuable resources and services, and I encourage your graduates to use them to their advantage.

Thanks for your time and attention. I also wish you and your families a wonderful, safe summer!

Brooke Tarcson - Student Council/Student Activities

- Caps and gowns were passed out in April. If your student is still in need of their cap and gown, they are available in Mrs. Tarcson's office.
- Sweatshirt/t-shirt day to show off after high school plans.
- Student Council working on Community Day.
- Prom is scheduled for June 4th.
- Graduation is scheduled for June 8th.

Jennifer Kirk - Counseling Department

- AP Testing is currently taking place. 750 tests being given. Testing will be available on other dates in May.
- May 16th – Awards Night
- May 18th – Juniors will meet re: summer to do list. Sophomores are currently working on their to do list.

Dr. Daniel Beck - Assistant Principal

- No Place for Hate endorsed Three Field Trips. Students signed up via this form: Link and info included here
- Leadership Academy, Phase 3 Students, attended a two-day retreat with Teacher-Facilitators as they began planning for this summer's experience.

Ms. Cara Senger - Assistant Principal

- AP and IB tests are going on now.
- May 17th and 18th - Keystone exams
- June 13th – June 16th – STEAM Week Field Trips. STEAM Pathways hours can be accomplished by participating in the STEAM Week.
- STARS event was last Friday. Next year Ms. Senger will do a rainbow.

Executive Board Reports

Kelly Powell – PTSO President

- The updated PTSO organizational documents have been approved and are on our website. The Bylaws, Standing Rules, and COI. Thank you to those of you who contributed suggestions for those updates.
- We have candidates for all three of our open Executive Board positions - VP, Secretary, and Membership Chair. Thank you to those of you who expressed interest! More information to come as we finalize the details on that.
- Please send your notes from this meeting to Bridget Gaussa for our meeting minutes
- As we come to the end of another school year, there are a few people I would like to recognize:
    - Anju Saggi and Bridget Gaussa - who have served on this PTSO Executive Board for 2 years, and whose terms are expiring. THANK YOU for your time and effort and all that you have done to support this PTSO. I am so grateful for you both.
    - And to the rest of the Executive Board, the faculty, administration, school board, and families in our community - THANK YOU for the time you take out of your days to support the PTSO and all that you do to help make this group so successful. We have been able to do so many wonderful things this year because of you, and for that I am tremendously appreciative.

- I would like to close this meeting by wishing each of you well as we sprint to the end of the school year. Have a happy and healthy summer, and we'll see you in August!

2nd Vice President and Principal - Dr. Tim Wagner

- USC School District's collaboration with NASA and a live NASA downlink with the International Space Station (ISS) to be held on May 23, 2023. We will connect with astronaut Woody Hoburg, brother of HS teacher Mr. Russ Hoburg.

Vice President – Leria Miles
No report

Treasurer – John Biedrzycki
No report

Secretary - Bridget Gaussa
No report

Membership – Anju Saggi
No report

Standing Committees

School Board Member – Daphna Gans
I would like to express my gratitude to Kelly and the entire PTSO board for your leadership.

The school board has been working on reviewing the proposed 2023-2024 budget. This proposed budget is available on the district website. The district superintendent, Dr. Rozzo, and the administration will continue to make adjustments to the budget until it is finally approved in the school board meeting in June, as required by law. The challenge with balancing the budget is always significant, but even more so this year with the continuing cost increases. Our district's main revenue source is residential property taxes. We do not have a lot of commercial real estate compared to neighboring districts, so the burden, so to speak, falls on us, the residents. Please check out the proposed budget if you are inclined to, and I am always happy to answer any questions.

This past few months the district administration has been actively working on two strategic initiatives. These initiatives have address two scheduling issues that have been discussed for many years.

The first is start time change. This is an evidence -based decision to change the start time to a later time to improve the health and mental health of students. This is very exciting. That said, it is a very big undertaking particularly, mainly due to transportation and after-school activities. There is currently a forum for parents to provide feedback, and we will vote on it in our upcoming meeting in May. We appreciate that this change may affect families in different ways, including child care issues. But ultimately, we believe it's the right decision for our students.

The second initiative had to do with band/orchestra and music scheduling. The district did not present a recommendation yet, but we expect this in the next few months. This is an attempt to mainstream the scheduling of these activities, so stay tuned.

As always, please feel free to reach out with any questions/comments.

Staff Appreciation – Michelle Mandler and Stephanie Ioli
Thank you to families that generously donated to the staff appreciation luncheon.

Wellness Committee – Libby Mascaro

- May is Mental Health Awareness Month
    - Spring sport "Green Out Games"
    - Mental Health Awareness Week- May 15th through the 19th

PIE (Partners in Education) – Katherine DelGrande-Zesch/Elizabeth Cochran
- The movie night was a huge success.
- Thank you to the Best Buddies group of students.

Upcoming Dates:

Next PTC Meeting: June 7, 2023 - 9:30 am - virtual

May
10: USCHS Pop Choral Concert, 7 p.m.
12: USC Jazz Festival (gr. 7-12), 7 p.m.
13: USCHS Theater Club Spring Cabaret, 7 p.m., LGI
15: School Board meeting, 7 p.m.
16: USCHS Junior Book Awards, 6:30 p.m., LGI
16: USCHS Awards Night, 7:15 p.m., theater
17: USCHS Band Concert, 7 p.m.
20: USC Community Day
24: Orchestra Concert (gr. 5-12), 7 p.m., USCHS theater
25: Senior Banquet, 5:30 p.m., Valley Brook Country Club
29: NO SCHOOL – Memorial Day

June
1: MYP Certificate Ceremony, 6 p.m., Boyce theater
2: Last day of school for seniors!
5: Graduation Practice for seniors, 9 a.m.
5: School Board meeting, Curriculum @ 6 p.m.
6: Red Carpet & Prom
7: Parent Teacher Council meeting, 9:30 a.m.
8: Baccalaureate (seniors only), 5 p.m., USCHS
8: USCHS Commencement, 7 p.m., USCHS stadium
9: Last day for students / Fourth Quarter Marking Period Ends
9: EARLY DISMISSAL (HS-10:55 | Elem-11:30 | MS-11:55)
12: Teacher-in-Service
19: School Board meeting, 7 p.m.
20: Kennywood Day
23: Fourth Quarter Report Cards (K-12)

Adjournment 10:25am