

**Upper St. Clair High School PTSO General Meeting  
January 15, 2020  
9:30am - 11am**

**Call to Order**

The meeting on January 15, 2020 started at 9:35 am. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and the meeting was called to order. Minutes from the meeting from October 2019 were approved.

**Executive Board Reports**

**President Report ~ Deonna Dreher**

Deonna thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. The annual SHIM food drive collection will take place from February 1-28. The PTSO is looking to involve student organizations with food collection. Stay tuned for more details.

**1st Vice President ~ Beth Thomas**

The executive board met with Dr. Wagner over Winter break, and has decided to pilot a mini-grants program to distribute excess funds from the budget. Any HS club club can apply for a grant.

**Treasurer ~ Priyanka Sharma**

The USCHS PTSO treasurer records for 2018/2019 are currently under audit as required by our by-laws. Denise Henning, CPA and parent volunteer is conducting the audit. Results will be posted on the website under Treasurer Resources as soon as as available. As of now, income is \$13,968.85. This report can be found on the PTSO website.

**Secretary ~ Amy Zahalsky**

No report

**Advisor ~ Shannon Gallagher**

A nomination committee will form in order to fill positions for the board for next year. In addition, Maria Cedar volunteered for VP and Prema Sridharan for Treasurer.

**School Board Member ~ Daphna Gans**

School Board Report - High School

There are several wellness initiatives that will be forthcoming in the Spring.

We are looking forward to the beginning of the new strategic plan process. You may remember that we engaged in this process five years ago, and many parents were involved. Our current strategic plan lasts through the end of 2020, so we still have time. But, preparations are underway to develop the new process, so stay tuned. We would like to see more student involvement and continued high parental involvement.

There is a new substitute program for the district which provides training to individuals interested in becoming substitute teachers. Subs are paid \$100/day (M-Th), and \$120 (Fridays).

There is currently one vacant spot on the School Board as Dante Plutko has resigned in order to accept a new position as Commissioner. Jennifer Schnore has applied for the position. A final decision about the position will be made in the upcoming weeks.

On January 27, 2020 the Board will have a presentation about student achievements with regards to the Keystones, PSSAs, and other standardized tests. The meeting is at 7pm.

As always, please feel free to contact Daphna with any questions/comments.

### **Standing Committees**

#### **Membership ~ Bhagwati Subramaniam and Aarthi Sriram**

There are 496 families who have joined the PTSO. This is the first year that an online PayPal payment choice was offered and 24% of people took advantage of this option. The PTSO also supports the Counseling Support Fund by giving a \$1000 donation at the start of each school year. Parents can continue to donate to the fund during the year. It was suggested that the HS PTSO coordinate with Amazon Smile as another way to collecting donations. Report attached.

#### **Music Department ~ Julie Halpner**

##### **Theater Department**

Rehearsals and preparations are underway for the *Shrek, The Musical*, which will be performed March 6-8 and March 12-14. Tickets will be on sale beginning in February. This is a family friendly, fantastic show, so please consider coming to support the students!

##### **Music Department**

Congrats to our students who have been selected to participate in PMEA Honors festivals.

##### **PMEA Concerts**

January and February are busy times for students who have advanced to the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) district events. Congratulations to the following students who will be representing USC:

- District Chorus, January 15-17: Kaitlyn Clougherty, Isabela Couoh, Hannah James, Ben Lang, Maddie Nolen, Joe Phillips and Hannah Rieger
- District Orchestra, January 30- February 1: Paige Copenhaver and Steven Halpner
- Honors Jazz, February 7-8: Jacob Bernstein, Nick Pacella, Ben Wasson
- District Band, February 13-15: Phoebe Chen, Eliza Glunt, Steven Halpner, Matt Hornak, Justin Pacella, Nick Pacella, and Henry Zou

### **USC Combined Band Festival**

In March, students from the Boyce, Ft. Couch, and High School Bands will have the opportunity to work with composer Paul Murtha. Students will participate in clinics with Mr. Murtha and a combined concert will be held on March 18.

### **Caring and Sharing ~ Daphna Gans**

No report

### **Staff Appreciation ~ Michelle Mandler**

Staff appreciation will take place on February 17, 2020.

### **Counseling Support Fund ~ Counseling and Board**

No report

### **Faculty Delegates**

#### **Tanya Chothani ~ Teacher representative**

1. AP Bio classes had a guest speaker, Andrea Abt, on Dec. 5. Ms. Abt is the pre-med/pre-health advisor at Pitt, working with students planning to go to medical or dental school. She discussed the college to career track for students in the AP Bio classes, many of whom are interested in the medical fields. Ms. Abt also met with interested students in the library for individual guidance.

The Holiday Hoops tournament on Dec. 21st raised \$2,992 towards a wish for a Make a Wish kid. The required amount to grant a wish is \$4400.

Ms. Mostowy, Bio Teacher

2. On Tuesday, Jan. 14, the Integrated Women's Studies class held a "Pants PAARty" during lunch mods. Any student who brought in a pair of new sweatpants was invited to attend the party with music, cookies, coloring and more. The sweatpants were donated to the Pittsburgh Action Against Rape (PAAR). The Integrated Women's Studies class takes action on a social justice issue each semester, and the party was the culmination of this semester's class project.

Daniella Buccilli, Women's Studies Team Teacher

3. Junior Mentors head to Boyce to do a Kindness Activity on Valentine's Day.

Tom Marquis, Counselor

4. Dan Kistler, nuclear engineer from Westinghouse Electric Company, will speak to the AP/IB Environmental students and interested IB Physics

students on January 29. Dan has worked for Westinghouse for 15 years and is a Principal Engineer in the Nuclear Instrumentation Systems division. His presentation will include how nuclear energy power is produced and current issues in the nuclear industry.

Dr. Fred Zelt, retired Exxon Mobil geologist, will speak with the AP/IB Environmental and IB Physics students on February 4 to discuss issues in the energy industry and other geology related topics. Dr. Zelt has presented at USC in the past and comments that our students are his favorite classes as students always have such great questions. In addition to his vast knowledge of the geology and the energy industry, Dr. Zelt also does tremendous work for the Multiple Sclerosis Society, having bicycled across the U.S. twice and currently is planning an 11,000 mile bicycle ride to raise funds for the organization.

Lynn Kistler, Physics and Environmental Science Teacher

5. The French-American Cultural Exchange (F.A.C.E) needs host families for the upcoming April exchange. Students from the private school Saint-Marc in Lyon will visit USC for two weeks starting after spring break. The students are 15 /16 years of age, and their English is usually very strong. Interested USC students will have the opportunity to visit their French exchange student in Lyon, France in the summer. Students will also visit Paris as part of the trip. The Exchange to France began in 2006 and takes place every two years. For more information or to sign-up for the next exchange, please contact [bchase@uscscd.k12.pa.us](mailto:bchase@uscscd.k12.pa.us).

Cephus Moore, French and Spanish Teacher

**Mrs. Kirk ~ Counseling Department**

No report

**Dan Zelenski ~ Assistant Principal**

No report

**Brooke Tarcson ~ Student Council/Student Activities**

This Friday, the activities office will host an End of Finals party during lunch mods. Popsicles will be passed out along with a DJ playing in the cafeteria

Safari Sadies will be held on Saturday, February 8th. Doors open at 7:30pm. Kids must arrive by 8:30pm. Dance is over at 10pm.

Letters will be going out next week to senior parents who still owe class dues or haven't submitted their senior's height, weight, diploma name, or yearbook name. Cap and gowns will be ordered in the next two weeks and will be distributed to the senior class in early May.

Yearbook club photos will be taken next week, make sure to remind your kids to look for emails from their club sponsor and the schedule will be posted around the school and in the weekly StuCo newsletter.

We are partnering with our local election folks to have high school kids work the polls during our primary and general election this year. Any student 17 years and older can sign up in the Activities Office before March 20th to work the April 28th primary.

Senior Class officers Matt Hornak & Joey Ioli announce prom venue - Carnegie Museum Music Hall Foyer in Oakland on June 2, 2020

**Dr. Wagner ~ Principal and 2nd Vice President**

The next PAC meeting is Wednesday Jan. 22 at the Snyder home. It will be an open forum.

This is finals week. The school is committed to helping kids reduce stress during this time by offering opportunities for fun and calming activities. Pickle ball, a relaxation room, and DJ lunch mods are just a few of the things going on this week.

There will be more positive programming coming this Spring in connection with the No Place For Hate initiative. There will be a speaker on Feb. 21st - Kate Fitzsimons. On March 27, the Air Force Band will perform along with another NPFH activity. On May 27, Chris Herren will give a 1.5 hour presentation to the entire HS about positive, healthy choices. Mr. Herren will also speak to the community at Boyce in the evening.

**Dan Beck ~ Assistant Principal**

There are lots of upcoming Wellness activities this Spring. The High School students will help Streams kick off a fundraising program called Horses for Hope in addition to NAMI awareness programming. Youth Steering and PTC Wellness are excited to bring the movie "Screenagers" to USC. There will be two showings on Feb. 18 and on March 10th. Screenings will be at 10am and 7pm. Location TBA.

**ADJOURNMENT** - The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 am

Respectfully submitted by Amy Zahalsky