

**Menlo-Atherton High School
Shared Decision-Making Site Council**

12/11/25

Unapproved Minutes

Approved on: Jan 22, 2026

Members in attendance:

Mr Giambruno, Tricia Barr (parent for PTA, Pablo Beramendi), Mica Podaly (student), Amy McGaraghan (parent), Taylor Bentley (student), Erin Walsh, Randy West, Stephanie Cuff-Alvarado, Celine Sanie (parent for Foundation), Karl Losekoot, Michelle Breen (3:51pm), Nephertytie Gutierrez (student), Ashley Mobley (student representing Avid), Shionda Nickerson (3:55pm), Irene Gil, Valeria Lorenzo, Angelica Rodriguez, Mitzi Ulloa, Eric Wilmurt

Absent: Tomiko Fronk, Monica Corona

Guest: Bill Flaherty (music/mariachi); Cat Burton-Tillson; Emily Rigotti (4:05pm)

22 total attendees today - 19 voting members.

Opening: The regular meeting of the SDMSC was called to order at 3:30 pm.

Minutes by: Tricia Barr

- **Reviewed minutes from previous meeting, 11/06/25**

- Motion made by: Celine Sanie

- Seconded by: Randy West

- Approved #: 17

- Opposed #: 0

- Abstention #: 0

- MOTION :3:40pm

- **Open Forum:**

- Leadership - Canned food drive - 17,000 cans!

- Taylor question to teachers: does finals focus put stress on your curriculum?

- Mr G: Last week is always going to be stressful for teachers. Some teachers teach new content until end of semester; some teachers use the week to review.

- Stephanie: 'finals focus week' is more about not having outside activities.

- Erin: it's also different year by year

- Amy shared: ELD Thanksgiving festivities - Culinary class really stepped up and helped deliver it!
 - Erin Walsh: re: Finals week... they are in order from 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 with classes that are double-blocked. Some students have 4 hours, which is a really long time for students and teachers. English Intervention is an example of double-blocked classes. There are approx 6 double-blocked classes (definitely less than 10).
 - One possible solution is to make sure a support class is never a 1-2, 3-4, 5-6. All acknowledge the master calendar is complex.
 - Nephertyie: Academy classes - they have to close a section sometimes, usually has to do with # of students. It's disruptive and difficult for students. That's happening now (this late into the school year).
- **Final Review and Approval of Summer Collab - Fall Collab Announcement**

Motion to Approve Fall Collab with Revisions

Motion made by: Stephanie Cuff-Alvarado

Seconded by: Amy McGaraghan

Approved #: 18

Opposed #: 0

Abstention #: 0

MOTION : 3:57pm

NEW COURSE PROPOSALS

- This SDMSC body does not make approvals; this body provides recommendations.

Mariachi Band - Bill Flaherty

- Goals are historical development of mariachi music, high quality music program, lifelong appreciation, performance skills (singing and playing)
- Performance-based class
- Q: do we think this will pull students from Guitar (John Jordan)?
 - His classes are full, so not an issue.
- Q: any pre-reqs for students?
 - Students need to audition. Multiple levels of students.
- Q: have you considered working with clubs or events?
 - Yes, were just talking about Bifolklorico

- Cesar Chavez already has a mariachi band class so there's interest.
- Irene (Counselor): students have specifically asked for this
- Is there a class that's going away if this were to added? No

Motion to recommend Mariachi Band

Motion made by: Michelle Breen

Seconded by: Stephanie Cuff-Alvarado

Approved #: 18

Opposed #: 0

Abstention #: 1

MOTION : 4:11pm

BioTech 3/4 - Dr Rachel Richards

- Dr Richards not present (personal emergency)/ Mr G was aware and prepared to provide overview.
- Dual-enrolled.
- Will count as a D elective for UC/CSU A-G.
- Will count as a CTE (and be part of CTE pathway).
- Currently 2 non-Academy sections; and 2 Academy sections of BioTech 1/2.
- Rigorous option for kids who may (or may not) being interested in taking AP; AP Bio is not a pre-req

Motion to recommend BioTech

Motion made by: Michelle Breen

Seconded by: Erin Walsh

Approved #: 18

Opposed #: 0

Abstention #: 1

MOTION : 4:19pm

Tongan II-Heritage Speaker - Cat Burton-Tillson

- This is not on the District course catalog yet.
- Language course.
- How to write presentations, etc
- San Mateo County has a high concentration of Tongan students

- Start with Tongan II. For students to enter, they would need to have an understanding of Tongan. There would be an assessment.
- Q: would this somehow be aligned with the Service Tongan trip?
 - It could be.
- It would only be for Tongan native speakers.
- Q: what about Tongans who want to learn Tongan?
 - It wouldn't start with this. Students would need to have Tongan language skills.

Motion to recommend Tongan II - Heritage Speakers

Motion made by: Michele Breen

Seconded by: Valeria Lorenzo

Approved #: 17

Opposed #: 0

Abstention #: 2

MOTION : 4:37 pm

CTE Career Explorations - Foundations in Career Exploration & Technical Literacy - Mr Rubin

- The teacher was not present to explain it.
- Not intended to be in the Academy
- Envisioned as 3-year pathway: Intro, more into tech, data systems, is there room in students' schedules for a 3 year pathway?
- Sector: IT; Information & communications technologies (ICT)
- Q: This seems like something going on in different courses.
- Q: This would help with our school's CTE goals
- Would like to hear more from teacher himself
- Could it potentially be more technical.
- Who is 'student audience' for this? What does he have in mind?

Motion to recommend CTE Career Explorations (level 1)

Motion made by: Stefanie Cuff-Alvarado

Seconded by: Celine Sanie

Approved #: 11

Opposed #: 0
Abstention #: 8

Motion doesn't pass.

- **Phone Free School Presentations**
 - Cancelled. Will be on a future agenda.
- **New Name: M-AAC , Menlo-Atherton Advisory Council**
 - Re-naming Shared Decision Making Site Council to Menlo-Atherton Advisory Council.

Motion to by-laws amendment to change SDSMC to Menlo-Atherton Advisory Council

Motion made by: Mr G
Seconded by: Michele Breen
Approved #: 18
Opposed #: 1
Abstention #: 0

- **New Member Language for Students:**
 - **Motion to change by-laws to proposed language about student selection.**
 - "Four students, with selection coordinated among on campus classes and groups, like Leadership, AVID, Academy, etc. Student selection may be based upon teacher recommendation, and rooted in securing more diverse representation."
 - Motion made by: Mr G
 - Seconded by: Valeria Lorenzo
 - Approved #: 19
 - Opposed #: 0
 - Abstention #: 0

Adjourning meeting at 4:57 pm:

Motion made by: Valeria Lorenzo
Seconded by: Randy West
Approved #: 19
Opposed #: 0

Abstention #: 0

MOTION PASSES: 4:57 pm