

**SHS PTO**  
**Coffee with The Principal**  
**March 30, 2017**  
**Notes**

Co-president Donna Miller opened the meeting at 7:03 p.m.

40 parents in attendance as well as Superintendent June Chang and SHS Assistant Principals Lorena Dolan and Nick Steffner. (Director of Guidance Laura Kaplan could not attend.)

**Donna reported:**

Final PTO meetings coming up. This is the last Coffee with the Principal. May 19 is the date for the last General PTO Meeting – we will vote in officers and report how we spent PTO funds.

Sophomore Coffee in April – date to be confirmed  
Senior Coffee – May 9

Senior Parents: applications for a PTO Scholarship are due tomorrow – please encourage your senior to apply.

PTO's Pilot Teacher Grants Program – we have distributed approximately \$9,000 through this program. Some teachers will be at the May 19 General Meeting to share details about their programs for which they received funding.

Shout-out from a parent: The SHS PTO website looks great. Kudos to the PTO Communications Team of Leah Griffith, Diane Carlson, and especially to Michelle Morrissey, Website Manager.

**Principal Stacy Grimaldi**

**Report of Information**

Latino Festival tomorrow night, Friday, 3/31  
International Foreign Films Festival tomorrow afternoon

Sports season opened yesterday and we've seen good success already; some teams could not start yet because of wet fields.

**PARCC** Testing is next week 4/4 – 4/6 for math.

If student's parents have refused for them to participate the PARCC test, the student must report to the SHS Auditorium for a study hall during the testing sessions. Spring break is the week of April 10 and then PARCC Testing resumes 4/18 – 4/20 for English. Students should charge Chromebooks ahead of PARCC as they will use them for PARCC.

### **Responses to Questions Received in Advance:**

**Mrs. Grimaldi:** I received a question about **electronic cigarettes**. [Mrs. Grimaldi presented a juul cigarette to those gathered.] This can be filled with nicotine and is smoked and does not create a vapor. It can also be filled with THC liquid. It is considered a tobacco-based product. This is vaping. It is being used in SHS bathrooms. The Assistant Principals and Security officers are checking bathrooms regularly.

By law, you may not purchase nicotine products until the age of 19. Some school districts are handling this as a drug violation. At this time, we are treating it as tobacco product issue, but we will be discussing the matter as an administration and in consultation with the Police Department to determine how best to handle it going forward.

**Q:** Have you addressed staff about it? – I've heard students are charging them in the classroom.

**Mrs. Grimaldi:** Teachers are aware that there is an issue. On our Professional Development Day in May, we are going to share such devices to inform teachers of what's out there, how accessible it is, and what to be on the lookout for.

### **Appeal Process for AP & Honors Placement Decisions**

Decisions are made following 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter. End of 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter is April 7, so decisions will be sent in late April, following Spring break. A teacher recommendation had to accompany the appeal.

We are also in the process of determining sectioning for courses – this begins in-house over Spring break.

**Q:** About the arts program specifically, are we helping students to prepare/develop portfolios for college admissions process?

**Mrs. Grimaldi:** Yes. Ms. Wright and Ms. Scozzari and Mr. Standing handle this. The portfolio preparation is part of the AP curriculum. We are working in a collaboration with the Visual Arts Center in Summit.

**Q:** What's the story with music being played over the intercom during school hours?

**Mrs. Grimaldi:** This was a proposal from Student Council and it was carried out by Student Council. It was well-received by students and staff. Students said it was a great way to get pumped-up for class.

There are some logistics to work out – the playlist and the volume, but it will be continued on some schedule to be determined.

**Q:** What is the policy on making up missed work?

**Mrs. Grimaldi:** Students have 1 day to make-up for each day they are absent. Students are to contact the teacher to coordinate make-up work. If a student has an extended absence, typically, the counselor gets involved to help coordinate the make-up work.

### **Questions from Parents Present**

**Q:** Have they been doing practice PARCC tests in classes?

**Mrs. Grimaldi:** Yes, some of the classwork has involved preparing for the test by giving students questions that resemble PARCC test questions. They would not necessarily receive such work as homework.

**Q:** Can you please explain PARCC?

**Mrs. Grimaldi:** Up until 3 years ago, all students were required take the HSPA in order to graduate. State of NJ chose to switch to PARCC, but since PARCC is new, the State has offered multiple options to fulfill the testing requirements for graduation.

We do not report PARCC results to colleges.

We don't look at PARCC for placement. We use the results to inform our process of assessing how we teach the curriculum and determine what we may need to modify.

We want our students to sit for the PARCC tests and to do well because it is used to compare Summit to other high schools. It can impact colleges' decisions when assessing applications from Summit as they refer to the overall reports of testing and high school rankings. Summit's scores are good compared to other schools, but we need students to take the tests when administered in order to maintain that.

Both course requirement and testing requirements must be fulfilled in order to graduate and the testing requirements are different depending on the grade of the student.

The State requirements for testing are attached to the Minutes.

Other test options: Accuplacer is used by community colleges and there is a military test option that we do not administer at Summit because we don't have many students

pursuing the military at this point.  
Or, can do portfolio appeal process.

For this year's freshmen, in order to take advantage of an alternative assessment, they must take the PARCC. And then if only having taken the PARCC over the course of their high school years, can they go the route of a portfolio review, if necessary.

Beginning with this year's 8<sup>th</sup> graders, they must have passed their ELA and if they don't pass those, the only way that they can do a portfolio appeal is if they sit for every single PARCC test.

I tell the students that Summit has a great reputation because of all that people who have put in their all at Summit in past and that present students should uphold that and pay it forward.

Know that if a parent informs me that their student is opting out of PARCC, I am checking the student's graduation testing requirement to see if they are complete and if not, I am requesting a conversation with the parent.

**Q:** Does students opting out hurt school funding?

**Mr. Chang:** it's been a threat. Federal funding is impacted but we don't yet know what those parameters are. We have not yet been affected to date.

**Q:** When there are clubs after school, are they monitored by a member of the staff?

**Mrs. Grimaldi:** Most of our clubs are established and maintained by the interest of the students. There is a staff member who serves as an advisor.

**Mr. Steffner:** The majority of our clubs are student-led and therefore there is not a stipend for an advisor. Every club has an advisor, so if there are concerns, by all means reach out to the advisor or to me.

**Q:** If a parent is interested in it being a stipend supported club, can that be done?

**Mrs. Grimaldi:** It would depend on the sustainability of the club and the budget process as well.

**Q:** With respect to reaching a teacher, there are no phone extensions listed in the directory.

**Donna Miller:** That was a PTO decision to leave that info out because teachers don't answer the phone number – calls go directly to voicemail since teachers don't have their own classrooms.

**Mrs. Grimaldi:** Teachers have to find private places to return calls to parents. If you send a teacher an email to ask for a phone call, you can coordinate availability for a phone conversation via email.

**Comment from parent:** Can't get extensions on District site either.

**Response from another parent:** You can call the main number and then dial 9 for the staff directory or you can call the main office to get the extension or to be transferred.

**Q:** How many courses do curriculum coordinators teach?

**Mrs. Grimaldi:** 2- 3 for 9-12 supervisors, K-12 supervisors do not teach classes.

**Comment from parent:** I would just like to share something about the Lacrosse team's opening game this week again Seton Hall Prep. It was a beautiful moment at Brendan P. Tevlin Memorial Field named in memory of the SHP alumnus who was killed in West Orange as they had a dedication ceremony ahead of the game since it was the first game to be played on the field. And Summit's late Coach Kerr's son is a player on the SHP team. The Summit players stood side-by-side with the SHP players for the ceremony. It was a moving experience.

**Mrs. Grimaldi:** The Senior packet will be mailed out over Spring Break. This includes dates for graduation rehearsals, etc. The dates are tentative as we await the final determination on the last day of school.

**Mr. Chang:** We will make that call in late April.

**Q:** What's the policy on cell phone use?

**Mrs. Grimaldi:** Students can not use a cell phone in class. They can have a cell phone out in the hallway and at lunch.

Some teachers do allow use of phone in class for class-related work.

During Study Halls, students may use them to listen to music.

Meeting adjourned at 7:55

Respectfully Submitted by:

Maureen Prout Alvidrez

March 31, 2017