

**SHS PTO  
General Meeting  
September 23, 2016  
Minutes**

Co-president Donna Miller called the meeting to order at 9:03

**Principal's Report**

**Mrs. Grimaldi** opened her remarks sharing that the school year is off to a good start – it's her first start of a school year as principal, but her 15<sup>th</sup> year at SHS.

Mrs. Grimaldi introduced the new **director of secondary education, Donna D'Acunto**. Donna D'Acunto is responsible for all academics in grades 6-12. She specifically mentioned:

- data analysis
- curriculum instruction
- program development
- to provide them 21<sup>st</sup> century skills that will be relevant to their future

Mrs. Grimaldi continued her report:

SHS is up for **Middle States** Accreditation this school year by the Middle States Consortium

This is a great opportunity for students, staff, and parents to help me to take a look at how we are doing. SHS' self-assessment is the first step in the process.

**PARCC** Scores have been mailed home recently – scores are up compared to last year. Mrs. Grimaldi will be presenting about PARCC scores at October Board of Ed meeting.

As of August, the State of NJ has changed the **testing requirements that must be met for high school graduation**. PARCC impacted this change

Mrs. Grimaldi distributed a hand-out that outlines the requirements for each class that is currently is high school as well those for the Class of 2021 and beyond.

There are multiple ways to meet requirements via testing and if can't do it that way, can do via a portfolio assessment.

The Guidance Department is attentive to these requirements and where each student stands, particularly during the course selection process, with respect to fulfilling the requirements. (There are course requirements in addition to testing requirements.)

Mrs. Grimaldi introduced **Laura Kaplan, Director of School Counseling**.

**Guidance Department** is currently compiling a list now of requirements of some seniors.

In response to question to Laura Kaplan:

Colleges do not see PARCC scores.  
Any scores to colleges may only be sent by student.

Parent Q: Are students to accompany their parent to the events of the Parent Wellness Series? Response from Laura Kaplan: Not necessarily – it is for parents. It is open for you to bring your child. Do whatever works best for your family.  
There are other opportunities for the students to receive same information, including at an event in January for grades 4-8. On the morning of the PSATs (October 19) the freshman class will be getting a workshop on cyber securities

Parent Q to Mrs. Grimaldi: what are you doing to prepare the students for PARCC testing prep? Response from Mrs. Grimaldi: We are not teaching to the test. Our curriculum is aligned to Common Core. Teachers may give a warm-up test. For students who may need extra support, we communicate with parents about this class option. In that class, they may do test prep

Mrs. Grimaldi shared that she has directed her teachers that: PowerSchool can not speak to you ... a grade is not a communication tool ... if there is a concern such as a drop in grade or a behavior issue, communication must be made to parent(s) via phone call.

### **Upcoming Dates:**

Freshman Class Parents Get Together October 4  
Junior Class Parents Get Together October 6  
Coffee with the Principal is October 20

Back to School Night is Thursday September 29. Doors open at 6:30. Activities Fair in cafeteria on that night.  
There will not be a distribution of directories with students' schedules. Each student will prepare his/her own schedule blank to hand to his/her parent(s).

### **PTO Business**

Introduction of all Board members and mention of PTO Leadership (they are listed on PTO website)

[http://summitshspto.com/?page\\_id=381](http://summitshspto.com/?page_id=381)

[http://summitshspto.com/?page\\_id=355](http://summitshspto.com/?page_id=355)

This year, there will be more opportunities for connections via Class Parents

## **Treasurer's Report – Overview and Approval of Budget by Stacy Supran**

Mention of Capital Improvements line item for refurbishing of the lobby area together with SPARC and SMPA.

Mention of new line item: Student Wellness Program to support programs sponsored by the Student Assistance Counselor.

And, another new line: Club Start Up Funds

The PTO will be covering graduation costs – parents of will not be asked for a contribution.

Most exciting new addition: Teacher Wish Fund Pilot Program (\$20K over 2 years)

There is an intentional effort on the part of the SHS PTO to spend this year as there is money there. Funds have not been spent over the past several years and parents have generously supported the PTO.

650 Families have joined PTO to date.

Sue Baier motioned to **approve the 2016-17 SHS PTO Budget**. Sheila Herr seconded. Unanimous vote in favor.

Co-presidents Donna Miller and Alex Queripel continue the report of PTO Business:

Referring to the final page of the meeting packet, Donna addressed the **PTO Goals for 2016-17**:

These were defined based on results of the PTO Survey of last Spring, a number of conversations with Mrs. Grimaldi and the Guidance Department, and the Executive Board.

Boils down to **3 key areas of focus**

- **Engagement**
- **Communication**
- **Smart Spending**

We will throughout the year try to highlight for you why we are doing things

For example, we are attempting to engage Teachers – the T in PTO –  
Feedback from Teachers: is that they are very grateful that we have reached out to them. They are excited about the Teacher Wish Fund grant program and some may involve students when preparing their proposals.

Positive partnering – a more purposeful and intentional connection.

Another example, we've got some work to do on Communications:  
It's not just the PTO. As a parent group, we are confused about what info we are all receiving from various segments of the SHS community.

Alex conducted 'walk-through' for communication:

The **first stop for communication**: District website <http://www.summit.k12.nj.us>  
It is the primary source of info. Use Quicklinks there to get to most-frequented pages.

From the District site, can reach SHS site  
<http://www.summit.k12.nj.us/schools/summit-high-school>

All events, guidance info, Academic departments (summer assignments are here)  
Staff page, and can also reach PTO page from here <http://summitshspto.com>  
SHS Calendar and PTO Calendar is the same. Collapsed PTO Calendar into the SHS Calendar. Also of note, there are Class Pages for each grade level.

Shout out for Diane Carlson for managing the Weekly E-blasts.

Shout out for Leah Griffith who is managing all things regarding PTO communications.

From parents present, the following thank yous/shout-outs were made:

- for Class Letter
- for police officer at High Street
- for improved communications effort

Meeting adjourned at 9:56.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Maureen Prout Alvidrez  
September 25, 2016