



## PSO General Meeting – April 27, 2018

### Minutes

50 people were in attendance.

**PSO President** – Faye Chen opened the meeting at 8:30 am. She reminded the group that this was the last meeting of the school year. She also made the following announcements:

- PSO merchandise (hats, license plates, etc) is for sale!
- PSO memberships and forms to pre-order next year's student planner is available. PSO membership dues support the "Make it So" Grant Program and attendance at PSO meetings is not required to be a member!
- Faye asked for approval of the updated PSO bylaws and made a note that the revisions included a change so that actual months of when PSO meetings must be held are no longer mandated by the bylaws. This will give the PSO more flexibility to work with other guest speaker's schedules. The motion to accept the new changes to the bylaws was made by Faye Chen and seconded by Koren Takata, the motion was approved.
- The 2018-2019 PSO Officers election was held and was approved.

**Spring Grant & Alumni Update** – Koren Takata

Seventeen grants were submitted in the spring semester and \$14,200 was awarded to fund thirteen grants. This brings the total to \$178,000 funded over the past seven years. The "Make It So" Grant Program is funded by PSO membership dues and merchandise sales. This funding gives all OCSA teachers the opportunity to apply for grants in order to go above and beyond to provide additional support and benefits to our students!

Alumni (and alumni parents) are welcome and encouraged to join the PSO. We would love to have their input and support!

**#MSQUAD - Pass the Hat Game (a free will collection was taken of donated gift cards to help support the middle school program)! – Koren Takata** asked middle school counselor, Vanessa Musso, to describe the middle school program, #MSQUAD. "It's all about promoting good behavior!" she said. Students receive tickets from either a staff or administration member when positive behavior, like kindness, is observed. The tickets are returned to a special box in the counselor's office and the students are then en-

tered to win a prize. Winners' names are announced on Art Attack and Mrs. Musso personally delivers a \$5 gift card to them during class.

**Parent Ed Presented: Potluck Breakfast With The Counselors** – Dean Becca Freeland, Dean Sally Lopez, Vanessa Musso, Daniel Hulse, Kara McCann, Ashley Talbert, Rebecca Vance-Freeland, Alexia Younger

- Our wonderful Deans and OCSA counselors joined us to answer all questions submitted by PSO members. (Please see the below for all questions and summarized answers)

**Dean Sally Lopez (Dean of Academics) Presented:**

- Dean Lopez shared current academic and survey results that continue to help guide and shape the direction of our school. *A copy of her presentation is posted in a separate electronic file.* Dean Lopez remained after her presentation for an informal question and answer period after the meeting was adjourned.

**PSO President Faye Chen adjourned the meeting at 10:02 a.m.**

- The next PSO meeting is scheduled to be held during the new school year at the end of August. The date is TBD but will be posted on the school PSO Facebook page.

**PSO on Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/ocsapso>

Contact us at [PSO@ocsarts.net](mailto:PSO@ocsarts.net) if you have any questions or comments.

## **Potluck With The Counselors Question and Answer Session April 27, 2018**

***Please note: for more information and clarification please check with an OCSA counselor.***

1. As a parent, do I get to "weigh in" on my child's schedule for the upcoming year? I'm concerned he/she is taking too many advanced classes. *Ashley Talbert answered: The counselors meet with the*

*students in class and review all class options. Next, the students must return the paperwork with a parent(s) signature. There are also Friday parent meetings offered by grade level prior to the two week deadline.*

2. When you meet with my student, can I weigh in on next year's schedule and other items? *Ashley Talbert answered: Parent meetings by grade level are offered and counselors are always available to answer questions.*
3. When do you suggest students start taking the PSAT or pre-ACT? *Kara McCann answered: (She) recommends students sign up as sophomores to take the PSAT and Pre-ACT. As a junior, take the PSAT for National Merit Scholarships consideration and either the SAT or ACT the spring of junior year. There is a practice test given at OCSA to sophomores during CASSP testing that is a combo test (it includes both SAT and ACT style questions) to help students gauge which test may be better suited for them.*
4. Will 9th graders (ones who have already been attending OCSA) have the opportunity to take a math placement test either before school begins and/or during the first two weeks of school? *Kara McCann answered: Incoming (new) students can take the math placement test tomorrow. Current students will be tested within the first two weeks of school. If the class they are in doesn't appear to be there right placement, the teacher will notify the student and the counselor so that they can discuss further.*
5. Would there be any opportunity for students to move up or down a level based on the results of these tests (if given)? Are there any other factors (such as the SBAC assessment results) that are taken

into consideration regarding movement from one math level to another? *Alexia Younger answered: Yes, it is possible to move levels but the student and counselor must have a conversation regarding test results. Ultimately the counselor and teacher must agree to make a recommendation to do so. All students are required to take Integrated II at OCSA. In some cases, Geometry may be accepted from another school. It is best to check with your counselor first before taking a class at another school. Many local community colleges require counselor signatures before a high school student is allowed to enroll in a class.*

6. If your student would like another counselor, other than the one he or she is assigned to, what is the process, if any, to make that change? *Rebecca Vance-Freeland answered: Students are assigned specific counselors but all counselors work as a team in order to best serve the students. The counselors themselves collaborate and will request additional resources if they feel other counselors have specific expertise or experience that can help support a student.*
7. Should a parent who has recently intercepted some very vile and foul mouthed texts bring it to the attention of the school? Do you have other suggestions, besides blocking the offending student(s)? *Daniel House answered- Yes, OSCA also has a text-a-tip line that should be utilized as well. Anything of this nature should be brought to the attention of the counselor. Block the offending student and limit access to social media. If needed, the counselors may bring the students together to build skills to improve the following years and not just put a Bandaid on the situation.*
8. I'm really confused about the testing. Could you explain AP testing, Cstat? College testing? What do we need and when do we do

it? How many times do we test? Ashley Talbert answered: *The PSAT should be taken in the fall of junior year to be eligible for the National Merit Scholarships. The PSAT can be taken in earlier years as practice. AP classes are college level classes taken in high school. AP exams, which are not required by OCSA, are given in May. If the exams are taken and students receive a grade of 3 or higher, many colleges grant college credit. Once students have committed to a school typically in their senior year, they can look to see if the college of their choice will offer college credit to determine whether or not they would like to take the exam. AP exams are offered at OCSA. AP exam practice is taught within the AP course. SAT or ACT: On average, students take the tests 2-3 times in high school but usually take one or the other. A combo test can be used to help students determine if they like/perform better with the SAT or ACT format. December of Senior year is the latest SAT/ACT test-date accepted by colleges, but it can be taken earlier in the high school years. Many colleges use a holistic review, meaning test scores are but one component of the admissions evaluation. For most schools, the tests are still required. [fairtest.org](http://fairtest.org) has a list of schools that do not require the SAT or ACT and these are known as test-optional colleges. [collegeboard.org](http://collegeboard.org) is a website that lists where the SAT is given in your area. [act.org](http://act.org) lists where the ACT is given in your area. Tell your student to BE SURE TO KEEP THEIR LOGIN INFORMATION because they will need to know this information through their senior year. Test scores are reported to students via the ACT and SAT organizations on their websites. OCSA does not report ACT, SAT, or AP test scores to colleges for your student. These scores must be arranged to be sent (for a fee) from the respective organizations directly to colleges, the same way a grade transcript is ordered and sent from OCSA to colleges. ACT: [act.org](http://act.org); SAT & AP: [collegeboard.org](http://collegeboard.org)*

9. Has OCSA considered having additional ways to recognize academic achievement throughout the six years, such as Dean's List, Honor Roll, etc.? How are our kids doing? *Vanessa Musso, middle school counselor, answered - We are very proud of the students' academic success and realize that social and emotional adjustment is a priority. Rebecca Vance-Freeland talked about the National Honor Society (NHS) and the California Scholarship Federation (CSF). These are both academic clubs available at OCSA. Students must meet the NHS requirements every year but application is by invitation. Once inducted, students do not need to reapply. In order to qualify for CSF, students must apply every semester. Both of these clubs include additional activities that must be completed. Tutoring is available to OCSA students and Miss Foley assigns tutors at OCSA. NHS & CSF students tutor peers in 7th block as one way to fulfill the service component of their membership. More detailed information about NHS and CSF is available on the school website as well as on the NHS and CSF websites.*
10. What is the number one thing that rising seniors don't do during the summer that you wish they would? *Kara McCann exclaimed- "Prepare!" Create a Common App as juniors (end of jr. year) because it can roll over to your senior year. The common app is used for private schools. Public schools have their own application. Ashley Talbert answered- "Reflect." Students should reflect on their own goals and don't get caught up in the mechanics. Reflecting also means students should focus on their own strengths; they will be more confident in the process. As an aside, it was noted that Daniel Hulse, the recently recruited counselor at OCSA, has personal experience working for an international high school. He col-*

*laborates with all the counselors to assist with information on applying to international colleges.*

11. Can a summer health class that fulfills health requirement for Irvine Unified be used to fulfill the OCSA health requirement? *Alexia Younger answered- Yes, but only if your student enters OCSA after 9th grade. Otherwise, all 9th graders are required to take the health class offered at OCSA. She noted that health is a very popular class among students at OCSA.*
  
12. What types of extra-curricular and leadership activities are important for students to have when applying for college? *Rebecca Vance-Freeland- OCSA Conservatories are a great opportunity to promote and talk about in college applications. There are also a other clubs available on campus where students can make their mark. Students should ask themselves what they are passionate about and what they want to do? It's not about how much you do, but what you do. Naviance can help keep track of anything that students do. This includes participation in shows, and any activities in their Conservatory, etc. Good advice: Sustainability is key. Start somewhere and then become a leader within whatever you do. Ashley Talbert added- Getting a summer job and getting paid for it is one example of a potential important activity. Another is traveling that provides a global perspective. She reiterated that whatever the students decide to do, be sure they are passionate about it.*
  
13. We just went on a college tour. What should we be sure to do when we're there? *Ashley Talbert- The best advice I would have is to make sure your child talks to other students in their subject area at the school.*

14. Suggestions for summer activities. *Please see # 12 above.*
15. Can you please explain the difference between the different college testing i.e. PSAT, SAT etc. and when do kids take them and how often? *Please see #8 above.*
16. Can students study abroad during high school? *Ashley Talbert- Yes. The student is responsible for doing this on his/her own. It is only a maximum of 1 semester that is allowed and a student has to take classes from an accredited school and must be sure the classes count toward OCSA high school graduation. Some conservatory directors will want the student to audition again because the student will have to technically withdraw from OSCA in order to study abroad.*
17. If a student enrolls in an honors course but for some reason the course seems too strenuous, how much time, if any, does the student have to change their schedule? What will be reflected on their transcript if a class change is made? *Kara McCann- Within the 1st 2 weeks of the semester is, generally speaking, when changes can be made. Technically, the student has up until the first 6 weeks of the semester, but that can be tough. If the deadline is not met exactly and the first progress report is created, the report card will reflect a WF which is like having an F on a report card.*
18. Discussion ensued over the new AP Capstone courses being offered next year. The counselors were asked how many students were enrolled and if a student could take one but not two of the classes offered this year. *Ashley Talbert and Sally Lopez answered- This coming year, there is one period for each of the 2*

*classes offered. Therefore, only 30 students per period (60 students total) were selected to take the courses. The AP Capstone is a two-year cycle which includes AP Seminar and AP Research. The series could be taken in 10th and 11th grade or in 11th and 12th grade.*

19. Can students be concurrently enrolled at a community college?  
*Kara McCann answered- Yes; students must register online to be admitted to the desired college. A required K-12 form must be signed by their counselor with the choice of course listed. This form is then submitted to the college. A date & time will then be assigned by the college for online course registration. Math and foreign languages require an assessment. The plus side is that the classes are free and can be taken over the summer. No high school graduation requirements can be taken outside of OCSA.*

Todd Davis thanked the deans and counselors and introduced Sally Lopez, Dean of Academics. Please see the the separate link posted for a copy of her presentation. Also, refer back to the top of the page for the remaining agenda items.