

PSO Meeting – North Phoenix Preparatory

We are a community of parent volunteers that provides a support system to enrich students' academic experience. We volunteer our time, sponsor and promote social activities, and provide programs THAT support the faculty and administration IN THEIR EFFORTS TO fulfill the Great Hearts' mission of CULTIVATING the hearts and minds of students in the pursuit of Truth, Goodness, and Beauty.

Date: May 7, 2024, 8:30am

Attendees: Parent Volunteers/PSO: Jessica Nunez (PSO President), Brenna Tedhams (PSO Treasurer), Katrina Cuoco,
NPX Faculty/Staff: Bruce Black, Angie Nelson, Sheila Conner (College Counselor), Michelle Tissot (College Counselor), Helen Herd

Welcome

Meeting called to order at 8:38am, Mission of PSO was read aloud, everyone was welcomed to the meeting.

Update from College Counseling

Introductions made from college counseling to parents present at the meeting and provided their backgrounds prior to coming to NPX. Traditional college events include college reps who visit campus. Students are prepared with an elevator pitch so that they are prepared about what to ask each college representative, and get the most out of each visit, and are encouraged to be curious. Michelle developed a summer enrichment spreadsheet, with lots of ideas for kids. We have been trying to push that where students can elaborate on what they are interested in studying and why, to further drive their college searches. Finding out what a student is interested in, why, potential majors, their experience with it, helps to match the right schools. It is not ideal for students to wait until their senior year to understand what they want to study, so the college counselors support students in really exploring where their interests are to find the right colleges to meet those needs. Parents will hear their freshmen students learning about what they should explore related to their college search, not only building resume, but volunteering opportunities as well. Field trips, every class was brought to a college campus to tour a university, now is the prime time for students to explore, preparing them to do this on their own. It was commented that other schools are not doing this type of thing which is really amazing positive motivation. This activity encourages our students, especially with a rigorous curriculum. NPX really is college prep, so we are really preparing students in many ways, so there is lots of talk about college and how to get ready. Some students do bring up military or a trade, so those conversations are had, so that students are supported in their post-high school plans so they understand what they are getting into, how it is going to help them get where they want to go. They also get resources to understand financially how to get there. Also, this year, starting with freshmen, it is explained what the in-state schools are looking for GPA-wise. It won't help to wait for Junior Year for GPA and test scores, clarity on that is important early. Sophomore year, college counselors are visiting several times, and then junior year they start monthly workshops during class time. In January we have

meetings with the families, then follow ups at the end of the year to prepare for Senior Year. Seniors are met with all the time. Financial aid was a delayed issue this year, so college counseling was really supportive. There was discussion about the delayed financial aid and impact, and how students were encouraged to persevere and have options. Scholarships are promoted, and feedback given on essays and mock interviews. Grants are usually automatic. Ultimately, college counseling encourages and provides resources, but the work and decisions are ultimately up to the students and parents. Naviance has been opened to the younger grades, which is a very helpful resource. This helps find a super match for college, helps find a good fit with lots of search engines. Just contact college counseling for access before Junior Year. Big future is a more basic search available also. PSO can help during career fairs to do lunch and learns, extra advertising to get experts to come in and speak would be great. It was commented that that was a great thing, but expanding that would really help to have more parents share about their careers. Greet the Gladiator could be an opportunity to share what parents do. Thanks to the PSO for ACT snacks. There were discussions about mechanisms to reach parents. There was a suggestion to reformat the PSO newsletter to make it easier to read and design. Community is primed to reconnect and get involved and build the culture of community. It was suggested that since giving is at each event, but also to have college counseling at each event, because it is very important, as it could help retain kids from middle to high school and the value of this feature which is unique to Great Hearts that would not happen at public school.

Contact info:

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Financial Report

Same relative balance in account, between \$10,000 and \$13,000, really great. Bring in just as much as we spend with the lunch program. Noticed that Wednesday snack sales dwindled, due to a fire drill, also considering what to sell and how much, we can simplify and narrow. Want to make it easy to volunteer, so that cash and snacks are at school, this way if someone doesn't show, another person can fill in. Blue Willow is going to change the payment portal to something different.

- Spring Event

Spring event very successful, wanted to break even, but made \$1000, which is great. Majority of sales from tickets and wristbands. Concession sales low, bad location in middle. A lot of great feedback, kids had so much fun. It was really hard to put together, need to start earlier and get more parents to commit early on. Learned a lot. Talk about doing in the fall or spring, make sure a date is put on the calendar early. We need to project in advance and get dates locked down early, book vendors, etc. We are building chair people to get parents to volunteer and own certain positions.

- Pancake Breakfast-PSO only spent \$100, which is great. There were lots of supplies left from last year and donations. Another success and everyone was fed.
- End of year PSO donation gift. We will look at what we can help.

- Challenged a bit financially as it has been hard to get teacher appreciation help from community, on Teacher Appreciation. \$400 so far, so PSO has to spend more. \$2000 spent so far on Tuesday, and the rest of the week is not yet covered. Pita Jungle \$800, Burritos \$500, Snacks, and 3 more days left. Talked about doing a final push, confusing because there were 2 sign ups: one for the meals and one to bring gifts to a teacher. It was asked why there was only 1 slot per teacher. Explained that this was so that no teacher was left out, didn't want 1 teacher to get 5 gifts while others got none.

Ms. Nelson put a bid in for PSO gifts for a refrigerator, dishwasher and new deep sink, currently a tiny sink makes it hard to clean. Not used.

2024-2025 PSO Board Vote

- Katrina Cuoco nominated, Jessica Nunez, PSO President, Bruce Black seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.
- Brenna Tedhams nominated Katrina Cuoco, PSO Vice President. Bruce Black gave second. All in favor. Motion carried.
- Jessica Nunez nominated Brenna Tedhams, PSO Treasurer. Bruce Black second. All in favor. Motion carried.
- Open, PSO Secretary-no nominations, looking to fill this role. Jessica is working with other parents to find a person for this.

Meeting adjourned at 9:13am.