

Langley High School PTSA
General Membership Meeting DRAFT MINUTES
November 16, 2022

(Attached below are notes from the Guest Speakers and Counselor Q&A Session held before and after the PTSA meeting)

- I. Call to Order 9:46 am
- II. Minutes approved from last General Membership Meeting on September 28
- III. Principal's Report – provided by Jim Sykes, Assistant Principal.

Sometime in the winter or over Thanksgiving, Langley will be keeping bathroom doors open, the door to the hallway not the stalls. This is standard procedure around the county/country now given security concerns in high schools. This will be implemented soon, but we wanted to brief the PTSA in advance as important stakeholders in the community.

- (a) We are concerned about vaping in the restroom. Years ago, with pot, it was easier to smell, now vaping is not detected by smell. Besides the fact the people that doing it are violating the rules, students who are unaware are going into the bathroom and being affected.
- (b) We are also concerned with the rise of fentanyl. Staff has been trained about how to handle fentanyl. Ms. Rankin can expand upon that in her remarks. We have concerns about the restrooms, so will have those doors open. If you walk down the hallway and look into the restroom, you might see sinks, but there's a blockage so privacy for the toilets is maintained. Bathrooms were designed this way.
- (c) If there is a student that is uncomfortable with the open door to the hallway, we have restrooms that a student can use, they just need to let a staff member know. Both in the hallways and the main office there are options for students.

- IV. President's Report
 - a. PTSA priorities include communication, support faculty, supply equipment, community service opportunities, performance services, and projects like the courtyard
 - b. Each class has a page on the PTSA website. Also check out archived eNews for more information.
 - c. Please sign up for eNews if you don't receive it; it comes out every Thursday afternoon. Items from the county and the school, if you're aware of events, please submit it to eNews
 - d. Langley HS website also great resource about what's happening
 - e. Things from last membership meeting
 - i. Appreciation breakfast for custodial and cafeteria staff
 - ii. Fall luncheon; teacher and staff appreciation
 - f. Lots of volunteer opportunities. We just had the vision and hearing screening and 8th grade open house. We are looking for a communication tech specialist for virtual live

streaming, also career connections day in February, Ethics Day in March, and Donuts for teachers – all need volunteers to make them successful

- g. Directories (Jessica Carter): excellent pace, it's in the proofing stage, there will 650 directories delivered; sent to PTSA members. We will need help for distribution.
 - h. Ms. Greer came to our last meeting and talked about the vaping issue and some of the security issues they are dealing with. They do have alternate bathrooms. Keep in mind these are just the doors to the hallways, so privacy is still maintained. The Executive Committee of the PTSA who attended the last meeting voted unanimously to support the administration in making this change to open the hallway bathroom doors.
- V. Officer's Reports
- a. Membership and Fundraising – Susan Connery – our number of members is at 84 percent. Encourage your neighbors/friends to join. Staff are at 117; students are at 33. On track for last year. Try to encourage students to join because there are contests and scholarships, they can't participate in without being a member.
 - i. 120% of budget in fundraising; corporate matching has been very helpful
 - ii. Need gift cards, etc., for teachers who are members of PTSA to win in a monthly raffle.
 - iii. Affiliate fundraising – if you shop at Harris Teeter, you can email Susan and she can link your phone number. Amazon Smile also gets a lot of funds for the PTSA.
 - b. Treasurer's Report – Julie DeLong – Great on income; expenditures included tailgate, new family forum, Saxon service, fall luncheon for staff, PTSA also contributes to a fund the teachers collect for staff
 - i. Academic Boosters earmarked funds for academic clubs; the (c)(3) was dissolved, so it is a fund within the PTSA. Still looking for volunteer to take it over, but in the meantime, funds available for academic clubs.
 - ii. Appropriations have been dispensed.
 - c. Appropriations/Professional Development Funds – Julie DeLong
 - i. Description of projects funded, including physics equipment, recording for orchestra concert; fog machine for theater, and professional development to include world languages, thespians, college admissions, and technology
 - ii. Next meetings are January 18, March 15, May 17 of 2023
 - iii. Raised maximum grant amount to \$750
- VI. Committee Reports
- a. ANGP –Connie Colabatistto– Ongoing fundraiser is Wreaths Across America; we have a goal of 300 wreaths to sell; not just for senior parents – can also sign up to volunteer with the Langley group to lay wreaths. Volunteer hours encouraged.
 - b. Reflections Art Contest; Elina Dimitropoulos – the contest is concluded; we had 12 participants, we had 5 winners. The artwork was very inspiring and the judges had a hard time making decisions. Theme was “Show Your Voice.” Winners will be on Langley webpage and eNews.

- c. Career Connections: they have had their first couple of meetings; fair will be in February. It will be some hybrid, mostly in person. Need more volunteers to help. Email Leslie to be more involved.
- d. Courtyard – Amanda Clarke – The 3rd courtyard is no longer ours to support; the county is going to turn it into an outdoor classroom. Ordered umbrella covers so they can be stored in the winter. Initial plans included a native garden, to the tune of \$20k, so we still are selling leaves for the legacy tree to support this effort. We may potentially support the amphitheater as well.
 - 1. Family Network – Clare Bradshaw Family tailgate was a success, worked with the school and boosters. Grateful to volunteers for putting it together. Thank you to student government and leadership class for working with us to make the event a success. Thank you to Jon Paul for donating DJ services.
 - 2. December 2 “Secret to Loving Teens Effectively” webinar at noon. More details on eNews and on the website
 - 3. December 9 – Anna Brown, school psychologist, leading a book talk on “That Crumpled Paper was Due Last Week.” Focusing on helping both girls and boys with organization. There will be a recording of the session.
- ii. New Family Network; Clare Bradshaw – a way to support families who are new to FCPS; about once a month have forums or socials. Upcoming December 3 family holiday dinner at Roots.
- iii. Saxon Service – Julie Hohl – Family Liaison, work with Principal Greer to help families connect with the school. We’ve been doing Saxon Service for about 8 years. It’s an embedded community service during the day. Great volunteer opportunity to see the students in the school. These are hands-on projects, not fundraising. Next is December 8. Please come at 10am if you would like to volunteer.

VII. New Business; None

VIII. Upcoming Dates:

- a. December 1: Senior Parent Forum
- b. December 2: The 5 Love Languages of Teenagers: The Secret to Loving Teens Effectively, By Dr. Gary Chapman (webinar)
- c. December 3: New Family Holiday Dinner
- d. December 8: Saxon Service
- e. December 9: That Crumpled Paper Was Due Last Week: Helping Disorganized and Distracted Boys Succeed in School and Life by Ana Homayoun (Book Talk with Anna Brown)
- f. January 11: PTSA General Membership Meeting
- g. February 2: Career Connections
- h. March 15: Senior Ethics Day

IX. Adjourn at 10:30am; Guest Speakers followed

Guest speakers:

Anna Brown, School Psychologist – adbrown@fcps.edu

Jordan Payne, School Social Worker – jpayne@fcps.edu

We are not back to normal. Compared to last year, students were really struggling, it does seem a bit better, but still struggling. Back to the full day and extracurriculars, they are doing better.

Kids still feel a lot of pressure, struggle with motivation as well.

Strategies – Emotional Management Strategies. Taking breaks, deep breathing, exercise, walking.

Supporting emotional health at home –

1. Have open conversations; listen and validate their feelings
2. Maintain predictable routines
3. Problem solve together
4. practice positive coping/gratitude
5. Model confidence and calm behaviors
6. Support the home/school connection

Behaviors may be your child's way of telling you they are stressed.

Langley Supports for Mental Health and Wellness

Question about politics at school, discussion on what is learning vs political.

Kelly Rankin, Substance Abuse Prevention Specialist

Started on the opioid crisis in 2018 – our role is prevention. The Substance Abuse Prevention team is not monitoring or disciplining. Our role is prevention. Parent presentations. Families reach out to me if they are concerned. Doesn't necessarily mean they are in trouble. Reach out if you are concerned.

Opioids presentation. (see slides shared by Ms. Rankin)

The issue now is fake pills that have fentanyl added to it.

Legalization of marijuana contributed to the problem – dealers looking for another avenue to make money.

Counselor Presentation and Q&A

Braden Peterson, Director of Student Services: we are growing with more resources each year. Iceberg analogy – lots going on underneath the service, lots of staff you won't interact with that are working behind the scenes on SIS and other curriculum support; broad spectrum of student support. Counselors will talk about three big issues. Counselors all have master's degrees.

Three issues that counselors address: academic, social emotional, and college and career readiness. Each counselor will address one of these topics.

Alex Mantel, Counselor, has been at Langley for 8 years; addressing **academics**. We are stewards of your student's graduation. How to tailor your kids' schedule with what they want and what they need to graduate. Balancing the master schedule of last minute course changes, making things work for the whole building. If kids need changes, we are trying to develop academic plans with them. If they are struggling, we create a catch up plan, help them organize. On academic advising, during registration, talk to them about what level courses they want. We also are behind the scenes on SIS, managing testing in the spring (AP), anything graduation related or summer school related, and we talk with students and teachers when there are issues.

Michael Johnson, Counselor, addressing the **college and career** aspect to their jobs:

We just passed the big Nov 1 deadline for college application. Sent out over 2,000 of our transcripts for that deadline. Year round about 3,000 transcripts sent from Langley to colleges. I tell my 9th grade students, the application process begins the moment they walk into Langley. Some of their college options are based on their transcript. We are blessed in Fairfax County to have so many resources, so many college and career center specialists, Ms. Burke. A plus for her, she's only focused on college planning, but she's the only one. Other counselors have 73 seniors but all of the other issues as well.

We use Naviance student – a lot of people just know it for college search process, there's also a big career component to it as well. Kids that don't know what they want to study can utilize that.

Hannah Martenson, Counselor, addressing **social emotional** issues

Counselors here to support students as issues come up. One of the first resources students can go to see that are the next steps, figure out if additional supports are needed, in addition to school psychologist and school social worker. We like to keep parents in the loop when things come up. We all have a lot of communication with parents and have workshops and other resources to build those skill sets. Big part of high school is the high school ball goes rolling quickly – increased stress and anxiety, learning how to manage that. Recognizing what is outside of the typical and when needed extra support.

Natalie Malone, Counselor, is addressing **academics**, and has been at Langley for 5 years.

We are creating executive function workshops, posting on Schoology, and other resources for kids. We hear from kids that they studied hard but didn't do well on a test. Kids need to sign up, during Langley Links. Give them tips and tricks how to do better in those situations. Have your student watch for it. Coming over the next few months.

Academic advising – we meet with every student individually and talk to them about classes.

We get recommendations from teachers, look at their grades, what they need to graduate. Then follow up with all the parents. We recommend they consider balance, teachers recommended these classes, so we do put notes in there for you to consider. At the beginning of the year, students overbook themselves and then want to drop a class, but because of tight schedules, it gets hard to change. Read that email when it comes carefully – it's not just a form email.

Also putting academic one pager on the website in the next few days – it walks through the process and has frequently asked questions about what kids can do if they need to get help.

College – 9th graders anxious about college. They need to do well in high school, get involved, and we will support you through the process in the next four years. Never too early to look at Naviance, but these kids are putting so much pressure on themselves. A good college is one that fits you best. As 9th graders, I'd love to think about clubs, what they are passionate about.

That's what colleges want to see.

Open up for questions -- Counselors are the best first place to ask. Where there's more support needed, they will know where to turn.

January curriculum starts. What should parents do over the holidays?

- December will be the catalog, will go out before the holidays. We know an informed decision is the best. The videos of the curriculum, those are good to watch. You will get an email in December with the links and will break it down, to include the welcome letter, what's needed for graduation, videos, etc. Trust the process. If you don't watch the videos, if you don't submit questions, then you'll come into the 1 on 1 with the counselor not prepared.
- We will have curriculum night, but we also have videos if you can't attend in person. Be prepared for the 1 on 1 meeting with the counselor. A good teacher will push you to do your best or highest level; the counselor is there to help find the balance.
- Watch the videos with your family over the winter break. Use that time to analyze and research before talking to the counselor in the new year.
- We are meeting with every student, so it takes months. Don't need to sign up for counselor session "first come first serve," so no worries if the student doesn't do the counselor meeting until March. Meeting with every student takes months.
- Start having conversations about balance; help the student have a sense of their priorities.

How does counselor recommendation piece work?

- Near the end of junior year, there's a senior packet that goes out, two biggest pieces are a parent feedback sheet and a senior feedback sheet. As much as we like to know our seniors, there's a lot of information we pull from that. They might go to a teacher; the teacher will likely have a questionnaire for them. We meet with each student again; we help you through that process.

- Parents can encourage their students to check their emails. When they see one from the counselor or career center, they need to read it. Read the whole thing.
- Not practical to copy parents on those emails. Encourage your kids to read the entire thing

Mental health of our students is worse since the extended school closures, what are the main issues, are they different than pre-pandemic?

Part of the trickiness with social distancing and interaction. We communicate with our face, and wearing a mask caused kids to lose some of those skills. Civility across the country needs some help. Some of the anxiety is that idea of control. The pandemic showed us we don't have control over things. That caused a lot of anxiety. We hear it in language. I got an A vs. the teacher gave me a B. Need to remember what we have control over vs. what we don't.

Sometimes anxiety comes from peers. Peer pressure on specific colleges; there are thousands of colleges that could be a good fit. Social media only shows the outer shell, not the yolk, so they compare themselves and their "yolk" to others' eggshells – it's a false comparison.

Helping students realize what they see isn't what is.

Focus on individual growth rather than comparison. Social media distorts that.

Deloitte mentoring, governors' school, SECI, we man those programs.

What was the wellness screening?

If you see something, say something. We want to talk about mental health. Do you have less energy than you have before, when you say yes to have these questions, it's good to know what the causes are to those issues.