



# NOTRE DAME

Preparatory High School

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## PARENT TEACHER STUDENT ORGANIZATION

### General Meeting

December 3, 2008

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Approximately 50 people were in attendance. Copies of the agenda and mission statement were distributed.

#### I. Opening Prayer and Mission Statement – Betty Fritcke

- Betty Fritcke, president, opened the meeting with a prayer and invited all present to read the mission statement with her.

#### II. President's Report – Betty Fritcke

- Betty gave a brief introduction about the PTSO and the topics on this evening's agenda.

#### III. Student Organizations

- SADD – Chris Cantoni and Halley Koch, president and vice-president of Students Against Destructive Decisions, reported on the purpose of their club, which is to raise awareness and present facts to students, who are tempted by drugs and alcohol. SADD supports good choices! Chris and Halley also asked parents to help by enforcing rules for their kids. The school can only do so much. Notre Dame Prep is a good environment and teachers and friends care, but parents need to be aware of what their kids are doing. Chris asked parents to not feel they are imposing on their kids and to play their role as parents.

#### IV. Academic Departments

- English Department – Lyn Richmond, Chair of the Department, distributed papers highlighting the education and experience of the 10 faculty members and an outline of the required and elective classes in English. The department is focusing on two main areas: Writing Across the Curriculum, which partners with other departments to improve the writing skills of students, and Reading Comprehension Development, which will help students synthesize, analyze and interpret what they read. The department also is involved in the Word Masters Competition, which involves 60,000 students nationally. Each year NDP students rank in the Honorable Mention status or higher. To help prepare for college applications, juniors are asked to research a college and write a personal narrative as a bridge for their college

essays. Seniors are asked to write college essays in the first few weeks of school.

- Science Department - Linda Pecora, Chair of the Department highlighted the faculty and classes of the department. NDP requires four years of science. Some students take five classes, using one of the classes as an elective. If students are ready to meet the challenge of honors classes, they are encouraged to register for them. Advanced Placement classes can often be used for college credit and can place students in a higher level of science in college. Students may take classes at the regular, honors, or Advanced Placement levels in Physics, Biology, Chemistry, and Environmental Science. AP classes require a minimum of 10 students in order to be offered. An Anatomy and Physiology course is also offered at the honors level.
  
- Physical Education – Gaetano Gianni, Chair of the Department reported that there are four full-time and two part-time teachers. Most classes have been designed for girls or boys only and that seems to have changed the dynamics of the classes. Boys and girls are playing at higher energy levels. There is a strength training expert on campus who is teaching a speed and conditioning class. There is a new teacher for dance and pilates. Several boys are taking pilates, which helps them in their team sports. Gaelic Football has been added in the P.E. classes. The goal of the department is to foster healthy lifestyles. By making P.E. classes enjoyable, students will be encouraged to keep involved in sports or exercise after graduation. One year of P.E., taken freshmen year, is required, as is one semester of Health, which covers the body's reproductive, cardiovascular and respiratory systems. Electives can be taken after freshmen year.

#### V. Surviving and Thriving in the Junior and Senior Years.

Panel – Parents: Dan Hellman, Julie Linker, Shirley Regonini

Students: Kate Murphy, J.D. Ardell, Ashley Montag

Counselor: Jim McConnell

The panel spoke primarily about the issue of college applications, which included college visits, student and parent expectations, importance of keeping focused on grades and standardized testing, essay writing, applying for applications, and working with the school counselor. Students also stressed the importance of getting to know one or two teachers who know you well enough to write a recommendation for you. Some of the recommendations the panel gave were:

1. Start early visiting schools during the junior year of high school.
2. Start early in the fall of senior year to apply for colleges.

3. Meet with school counselor at the end of junior year and as often as needed.
4. Students should be responsible for taking the initiative of starting the college application process. Parents proofread applications and essays.
5. Essays should be written entirely by the student not the parent. Colleges can tell the difference.
6. Go to college fairs that are offered in Phoenix.
7. Apply for scholarships. Be aware that a few schools don't offer merit based scholarships.
8. Encourage students to get involved in their school and community.
9. Communicate, talk and listen, often with your student.
10. Forge a relationship with a teacher.
11. Don't stress out; work, but have fun!

VI. "All About Notre Dame" – David Gonsalves

- Mr. Gonsalves spoke about the need for parents to talk to kids about partying and driving safely. There will be a contract coming in the mail that students and parents are asked to take time to read and commit to.
- Students can not pay their way out of detentions, contrary to rumor. Fees are for dress code and chewing gum violations. Fees collected are divided and given to five student organizations: Freshmen, Sophomore, Junior, and Senior Classes and the Student Government Association.

Betty thanked all for coming and announced that the next meeting will be January 21 at 6:45 in the Cafeteria.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Submitted by,

Ellen Murphy