

Wellesley High School
PTSO Regular Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 14, 2024 at 10:00am-11:30am

Regular Meeting Attendees

Executive Board Attendees: Jamie Chisum, Meridith Edmonds, Melissa Mack, Megan Dyer, Joelle Reidy, Kristen Toffer, Niki Ofenloch, Amanda Turner

Administrative, Faculty & Community Attendees: John Malone, Collin Shattuck, Drew Kelton, Sarah Matloff, Sharon Grey, Meg Walendin, Elisa Morris, Rich Ghiorse, Toni Carlson, John Finneran, Jacqueline Maxwell, Andrew Bennett, Michael Reidy

Parent & Guardian Attendees: There was a quorum of 10+ non-executive board members

Welcome

- Meridith welcomed everyone to the meeting and handouts were provided. A video recording will be available on the PTSO website at www.whsptso.org/meeting-calendar.

PTSO Business

- Kristen presented a brief summary of the FY24 budget vs actuals. Just over 80% of the targeted \$65,000 in annual donations has been collected.
- It was noted more than 10 non-executive board members were in attendance. Amanda Turner made a motion to approve the PTSO Regular Meeting Minutes from 1/24. Joelle Reidy seconded. The minutes were voted on and approved.

WHS Leadership Update, Jamie Chisum

- It's a busy week for students as we approach Feb break, with lots of assessments and sickness to navigate. Winter sports are starting to wind down as teams go into tournaments and our drama kids are preparing for a state performance.
- WHS staff has continued PD efforts and are working to evaluate student understanding and pair instruction accordingly.
- The PTSO sponsored a smoothies/coffee cart for faculty and staff.
- Today's PTSO meeting is the second of two meetings focused on course selection.

Course Selection Overview and Department Presentations

Math: Elisa Morris and Rich Ghiorse

- All Math info is available in the [2024/2025 Program of Study](#). If a student wants to step up to honors level, it is possible to do a summer program to meet honors requirements.
- Next year there will be five Computer Science (CS) courses (an increase from four). CS electives are semester long; AP CS courses are year-long. Students have a good chance of getting into CS classes.
- Algebra 1 ACP is a new offering next year; otherwise all class offerings are the same.

- Math course sequencing gets complicated fairly quickly. Note that Pre-Calc H and Algebra 2 H are prerequisites for Calc AP (AB and BC). Pre-Calc H is designed to prepare students for either Calc AB or BC.
- Calc H covers ~75% of Calc AB (AP) content and doesn't include AP test prep. Meg Waledin noted that WHS has seen some colleges use Calc as a gatekeeper but they don't see colleges distinguishing between Calc H and Calc AB.
- BC Calc (AP) has a pretty high attrition rate.
- AP Stats is very popular and primarily filled with seniors (only 10 juniors this year).

Overview from School Counseling: Meg Walendin

- Counselors talked with 9th graders about course selection in Jan. They talked to sophomores during last week's half day. Juniors are getting the info during seminar right now. After Feb break, we will partner with 8th grade counselors for rising freshmen.
- Course selection will take place March 6-15. March 15 is the deadline (including for course override forms).
- Meg encouraged families to sit down and think about the WHOLE picture, including extracurriculars and non-school commitments. If you have a student who wants to move up a level next year, we encourage them to practice higher level study skills in Q4.
- If a student would like to make sure they have a DR, they should talk to their counselor. The counselor will do their best to accommodate the request, factoring in other requests from the student for core courses and electives.

Library and Innovation: Toni Carlson

- A handout was provided.
- The department offers four classes and will offer a new AP course next year.
- Maker space and design thinking (9-12; semester course). This used to be a single class and the decision was made to break it into two classes so students can go deeper (both are honors level). Students can take the second course multiple times.
- We will continue to offer AP Seminar (10-12). It is a difficult course but really worth it as students learn to research and define thinking. It requires students to be self-motivated. Teachers work with students through November and then students are on their own. Students work in groups and the group chooses the topic.
- AP Research is a year-long course where students dive deeply into a topic of their choosing. They write a paper and have an oral defense at the end of year.

English: John Finneran, Jacqueline Maxwell, Andrew Bennett

- A slide was shared with all English courses that count for graduation credit.
- Senior electives are full year and are for credit. Semester courses do not receive credit.
- For juniors, a new AP class will be offered. The difference between H and AP is generally that H is a continuation of the study of literature and writing essays, while AP focuses on non-fiction works and rhetorical tools. Andrew Bennett spoke about the training teachers have done to prepare for the inaugural class. (Additional detail about AP course content is available in the recording). Seniors will be able to take the AP class next year but no preference will be given. Students currently in ACP English 9 can make

the jump to AP. Teachers are trying to keep the workload and pacing the same as an H class. If students don't take the class, they cannot self-study for the exam as has been permitted in previous years. They will still be allowed to self study for AP Literature.

- There are several elective classes, including Bible & Mythology, Bradford (newspaper), Children's Lit, Creative Writing, Film (1&2), Media Matters, and Shakespeare. All but the newspaper are semester long and require a minimum of 18 students.

Family and Consumer Science: Collin Shattuck

- A handout was provided.
- The three major content areas are culinary arts, business/finance, and child development.
- All offer a chance to build practical life skills.
- There will be a new quarter-long class available next year: The Science of Happiness and Wellbeing (based on Dr. Laurie Santos's class at Yale). It is open to all grades.

Social Studies: Michael Reidy

- A handout was provided that outlines all available courses at each grade level.
- There is a 2.5 year graduation requirement for social studies. We have core classes that are year-long offered at grade level, and then we have electives.
- Several elective classes are offered at H and ACP level (classes are taught mixed level).
- There is no social studies track. Students can move between ACP, H, and AP and there are no pre-reqs.
- In 9th grade, next year we will offer a new level of World History called World History Foundations I CP (followed by World History Foundations II CP).
- In 11th grade, students can take US History at 4 levels, as well as a number of electives. US History in a mandated class with a 2.5 year requirement.
- The difference between US History H and AP is really about pace. In AP, there is a lot of work/reading every night and there isn't much flexibility on when we can give nights off.
- Teachers will have conferences with students to make the best recommendation.
- In 2025/2026, we will replace World Modern History H with AP World Modern History.

Meridith closed the meeting and reminded everyone about the One Love event on Feb 29.

Adjourned 11:41am

Respectfully submitted,
Amanda Turner, PTSO Secretary