

Saratoga Music Boosters (SMB)

A 501(c)(3) organization supporting music programs in the Saratoga Union School District and Saratoga High School

Regular Meeting in-person, August 23rd, 2022: **Minutes**

Attendance: total number of attendees = 18

Executive Board

Dave Holt President	Alicia de Fuentes Recording Secretary	Tim Tang Accounts Receivable/Treasurer	Cecile Cohen-Jonathan Parliamentarian	Vidya Vineet VP Donations
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Music Directors

Isabel McPherson RMS	Jon Jow RMS	Jason Shiuan SHS	Michael Boitz SHS	Beth Nitzan RMS Choir/SHS
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Booster Members

Senthil Krishnamurthy	Dongni Chen	Ramya Vasu	Arnita Proffitt
Rashi Sanghi	Olivia Zhou	Nicole Chang	Sameer Vaidya

Welcome and Introductions presented by Dave Holt

Dave Holt calls the meeting to order at 7:30 pm and requests all present to offer a brief introduction of themselves and he starts with his intro. Dave Holt: I've been at SHS for a long time, I've been here for such a long time that I now have a son who is 35 years old. Tim Tang: I have a senior and I have been here in Saratoga since 2018. Sameer Vaidya: I have a rising Junior and I will be taking over the Winter Percussion from Beatrice who will act as my mentor. Dongni Chen: I've been at SHS since 2015, her youngest is in 9th grade. Senthil Krishnamurthy: I have a daughter starting in 9th grade and a son in 6th grade. Olivia Zhou has a senior in Orchestra and a 6th grader in orchestra. Jon Jow: I was a student at Redwood Middle School (RMS) since my parents bought their home in Saratoga in 1985 and finished my studies here right through high school, in fact, Mr. Boitz was my teacher. I have been teaching at RMS since 2006. Isabel McPherson: This will be my 5th year at RMS. Michael Boitz: I have been in orchestra and band here for a long time. Beth Nitzan: I have been here for 2.5 years and offer choir at RMS. Jason Shiuan: This will be my 7th year teaching at SHS. Cecile Cohen-Jonathan: I have a freshman and a junior and this year I will be the Orchestra liaison and the parliamentarian for SMB. Ramya Vasu: I have a 6th grader and a 3rd grader and I am the RMS band liaison. Rashi Sanghi: Ruchi and I handle all things publicity for SMB and we both have juniors. Vidya Vineet: I am co VP of donation and I have an 8th grader and a senior. Alicia de Fuentes: I am SMB recording secretary and I have an 8th grader and a junior.

June Meeting Minutes presented by Dave Holt

Dave Holt asks all present if there are any comments regarding the minutes. No comments are made then he asks for the motion to approve the June minutes as submitted.

Tim Tang motions for the approval of the minutes, Sameer Vaidya seconds
Motion passes unanimously.

2021-2022 Year End Financials Report presented by Dave Holt

Dave Holt indicates that our total income from last year was \$2,555,510 and our total expenses were \$2,415,953 resulting in a \$139,557 left over which will carry over in this fiscal year as follows: we will allocate \$10,920 to band, \$3,520 to choir and \$26,423 will go to the tour fund.

A parent donated \$25K for SHS music instrument spending only.

With the carryover left after that, plus the parent donation offered to SHS SMB, SMB asked SHS to draw up a wishlist for this coming year. So, the monies are divided as follows: \$55,656 goes to the purchase of Tubas, \$5,500 will go to resurfacing Winter Guard and Winter Percussion Floors, \$1,300 will go to the purchase of canopies, \$1,000 is to upgrade the camera, \$1,100 to care for the Steinway, \$8,000 is for Marching Band amplification system, and \$29,450 is for the purchase of percussion instruments.

So, RMS music directors know we can offer you the possibility to draw up a wish list because we have a surplus of \$21,698.

Cecile Cohen-Jonathan: Why must we not have a surplus?

Dave Holt: We want to maintain the tax exempt status that is why we don't want surpluses. Also, our donors want us to spend the money to keep the music program standards high.

Dave Holt entertains the motion to approve the wishlist.

Ramya Vasu motions to approve the wishlist.

Vidya Vineet seconds.

Tim Tang: How do we pass the motion if SUSD music directors present a wishlist later? This should not affect the budget, I'm not sure?

Senthil Krishnamurthy: Are we leveled with last year?

Dave Holt: My philosophy is 'spend the money this year'. Parents willingly donate for the sole purpose their students will directly benefit from the donation. Our fiscal

planning always leans conservative. In regards to the wish list, I don't think we are spending money we will need elsewhere.

Motion passes unanimously.

2022-2023 Budget Review presented by Dave Holt

Dave Holt offers a general overview of the budget following the end of year financials detailed presentation. Here the expenses are discussed for each rubric highlighting they do consider a conservative program donation.

Budget money is taken from the pool benefactor, cookie dough and pancake breakfast offer program grants. Orchestra does not need the program grant. RMS band and orchestra do not require program support but color guard and choir do need support.

Dave Holt: I feel comfortable with this budget but we are open to discussion.

Ramya Vasu: Can we look to more corporate matching tools to raise more money? There are some schools that have it for PTA, Vernier's software tool doubles the donation, it automatically does the matching for us to avoid the bothersome dealing of corporate matching. You get double even if parents forget it or don't know they can do it. Either way the employee doesn't have to do the work.

Vidya Vineet: Using donation software tools to double the donation is something we investigated for SEF. The free use of the software is to have a toolbar plug-in used to see if the company in question offers company matching donation. The second option is the paid program, where we spoke to neighboring foundations and they shared that the cost is high and the benefit is so low. That is from our investigation from 1.5 years ago. The cost is the software cost and the service fee. The charge was pretty high. It would be good to know who is using that. We spoke to neighboring foundations but did not go with the paying route. We can include the toolbar, there was an upfront cost and I don't know if there was a percentage fee on top of that.

Dave Holt: Do you mind investigating?

Sameer Vaidya: Are you resurrecting jazz cabaret?

Jason Shiuan: There is no weekday time and our weekends are full, generally we think of February as our low time, the challenge is to find the time to do it.

Michael Boitz: Jazz Cabaret was an event on steroids. The manpower to put it together was unreal. The past parents set the bar so high that it intimidated the

following parents, getting the gym and date is tricky but the manpower is hard to get. It's basically a party. We have host fatigue too.

Jason Shiuan: Jazz under the stars was the one weekend we decided to have it in the Quad and it was the one day in May that it rained, so we had to make a mad dash to move it indoors, here, in the music room.

Dave Holt: Returning to the budget, this is the budget we have presented with the input of our Music Directors. Any further discussions?

No further discussions are noted.

Rashi Sanghi makes a motion to approve the budget as presented.

Senthil Krishnamurthy seconds.

Dave Holt: Any further discussions?

None noted.

Motion passes unanimously.

Cheque Approval presented by Dave Holt

Seeking the approval of cheque numbers 15175 through to and including 15199.

Dave Holt: Any motion to approve the transactions as presented?

Alicia de Fuentes motions to approve transactions as presented.

Second Olivia Zhou

Motion passes unanimously

Cookie Dough Plans presented by Dave Holt on behalf of Lily & Meghana as they were absent.

They have met on zoom this past week and they have placed things in motion. Dave Holt will make sure to get a report to present to the board.

Vidya Vineet: Ask them to present the whole list of needs.

Discuss Open Positions presented by Dave Holt

We will use this meeting to confirm the following open positions have now been filled:

Ramya Vasu is RMS band liaisons

Cecile Cohen-Jonathan is parliamentarian and SHS Orchestra liaisons

Remaining Open Positions:

Co-recording secretary

Alumni liaisons: We need an alumni email list so we can send emails to our alumni inviting them to our events, and concerts, etc.

We need all our liaisons in general because they support the program on performance nights, they seek volunteers to offer snacks, help in front of McAfee and directly help our music directors, etc.

There are many openings at RMS.

Rashi: Ruchi and I have been talking about the chatter of informal discussion on WhatsApp groups. Since both of us are marching band parents we do not have access to other groups. We would love to access choir group, color guard, etc. For orchestra we would propose forming a united group for general information pertaining to that group.

Dave Holt: Repeating what I heard - You would like to use the groups that have been created?

Rashi Sanghi: Have a representative from each group to post messages from music on our behalf.

Dave Holt: Take it offline to make it work and use parent networks to fill these roles.

Rashi Sanghi: It would be great to find a person before the cookie dough fundraiser, so we can reach out to communicate this drive.

Dongni Chen: I will discuss possible alumni leads offline

Saratoga Union School District Memorandum Of Understanding (SUSD MOU) Review/Approval presented by Dave Holt

Same legal document used year after year. Hearing no discussion to approve SUSD MOU.

Ramya Vasu motions

Tim Tang seconds

The motion passes unanimously

Informance presented by Jason Shiuan & Michael Boitz

Michael Boitz: Informance is this August 27th, in the past we have only done this for band. So, taking this discussion last year to include choir, orchestra and band to help connect people. Back to school night does it a little bit but not completely. Our plan is to inform what SMB does and how program donations play a super important role.

We have discovered the middle school is hesitant to understand the contribution process, Jon and Isabel have their hands limited by administrators on what they can and cannot do.

Following that if anyone would like to speak from SMB please do. Ideally liaisons would have volunteer sign up tables available around the front lobby of McAfee, orchestra will perform a short number then we will all move to the field field and have visitors sit on the bleachers to watch band and color guard etc. perform. Hoping parents can meet new contacts, welcome new families and friends, nothing is better than someone coming up to a new person to talk to them, that is so nice!

Jason Shiuan: let's be smart about how we organize the sign ups. Make sure you separate marching from orchestra, choir, SMB positions etc

Dave Holt: We will use the entry to the McAfee for orchestra and choir to sign up for liaisons. That way we don't mess up with band sign ups which will be by the field.

Send SHS invite to RMS to join informance.

Summer Music Tour Retrospective

Dave Holt starts the meeting reading from a slide indicating discussion etiquette; explaining to all present that we must be respectful.

Michael Boitz: This tour was the hardest single thing I've done in my life, with covid, war, etc. It's amazing how the tour went off the way it went off. We had travel quarantine rules change on the fly, there were ever changing tour guidelines on testing.

Dave Holt: Thank you to all the music directors and chaperones who went on tour and because of your great planning the tour came off the way it did. All the stuff you did worked.

Yes we had mishaps but congrats and thank you. It gave my daughter an incredible opportunity to travel to the birthplaces of Mozart and Beethoven.

Alicia de Fuentes: As I explained in my email calling for this discussion, I believe that SMB must offer an informed supporting role to our music directors. It makes no sense that one of our very best felt overwhelmed with the work and due to work fatigue compromised sensitive data to the point of almost losing their job. My hope is to understand the processes involved, identify areas where support may be offered and eventually have SMB help in the planning, preparation and processing of sensitive information with guarded care. The plan of initial action is to understand the finance part of the processing of data and work progressively to the final drawing up of the tour itself. Then ensure contingency plans are in place when the tour is live and running to make uncontrollable situations a little more seamless. I do not

believe this discussion starts and ends today, I believe this requires reiterations to ensure thoroughness. Hopefully we may end up with a document clearly indicating the steps required during all instances of tour planning and execution.

Vidya Vineet: First of all, thank you for all the wonderful programs and events you spearhead as the top notch visionary music department in Saratoga. We can't even begin to imagine the amount of hours, sweat, blood, heart & soul you put in to all of this to make it possible!

As parent volunteers supporting you, we feel absolutely privileged to be a part of this and have a strong sense of pride in protecting you and this lovely heritage that you are building with music. It is with this sincere and pure intention that Alicia and I are embarking on this process of gathering feedback on the amazing summer music tour 2022.

We will dive into the trenches for you coz we believe in you. While we bask in the success of the thoroughly enjoyable and unique music tour (I have never been on such a remarkable tour before!), we also want to reflect, internalize and strengthen the SMB organization processes to better support YOU going forward.

However, we simply don't know what we don't know and really need your help to see the full picture.

For the actual tour side: I suggest a brief survey to be sent to the tour participants. I can volunteer to create a simple survey or support whoever else wants to take this up. Something simple that says, Thank you for joining us on this amazing tour through 4 countries and wonderful concerts by our music students. We would love to keep this tradition going and are also looking to provide you the best experience possible. Please take a few minutes to tell us 1. What did you like? 2. What can we improve?"

I can also find 2-3 parent volunteers who will help read through the free form responses and summarize into constructive feedback.

Alicia de Fuentes: We hope to report back our first findings and update on progress for our next board meeting.

Directors' Reports

Beth Nitzan: I'm so glad to be back at school. Choir at RMS will start next week. This year Philharmonic strings has two groups.

Tenors will start at lunch time to bring voices from other groups but we need pizza to get them in the door.

Jason Shiuan: Band is exciting because it starts a week earlier than school. Having a seating chart on the first day of school is important (I forgot). Mr. Ruyan came for the first time to work with students today and said this group is really good, note, this group he mentioned, included the freshman group that have never marched before. We finally have someone leading the guard group, Russell Crowe III. He has accepted to work with our guard. So we are helping him build his team. Elijah Morales has also joined working once a week. I'm trying to have a friend from middle school help Russell.

Michael Boitz: We have another record enrollment for orchestra. We are excited to have informance. Tim kept track of everything. Thanks to Dave and the momentum of this group. Enthusiasm and leadership spreads and thank you Dave for setting the tone. Thanks to everyone on the board and the enthusiasm.

Isabel McPherson: I earned my Master in music and got engaged over this summer. So, it was a busy summer. This year I have 90 kids in 6th grade and I attribute that to the fact that we now have included orchestra in the school day in elementary. Before that change a normal class size would be 40 students.

Jon Jow: It has been a busy start to the school year and even after last year with covid and playing band in the cold I'm happy to report back that turn out in 6th grade is good.

We have over 130 students in beginning band and orchestra at Redwood alone. We are now in the process of having 5th graders considering their option to try learning musical instruments in their music sections.

We will be starting choir and extracurricular percussion next week. We are also hoping to start color guard soon with some hopeful prospective contacts.

We are also excited to be looking at the potential of gradually bringing back our marching band for 8th graders, looking to perform at the Los Gatos Holiday Parade.

We are also looking at potential trips for next semester. We hope to have some more details soon.

Band has moved indoors for now but the canopy is a nice option if covid numbers rise.

Dave Holt: If you guys talk about the vision that would be important too. Brainstorm the communication issue at Redwood in terms of program donations.

Vidya Vineet: It would be nice to participate in city events throughout the year, like we did with RMS Choir for the lighting of Christmas lights for example.

Other Business

No other business was discussed, the meeting adjourned at 9:12pm.

Summary of Motions

Approval of June Minutes

Tim Tang moves, Sameer Vaidya seconds: motion carries.

Approval of 2021-2022 Year End Financials Report

Ramya Vasu moves, Vidya Vineet seconds: motion carries.

Approval of 2022-2023 Budget Review

Rashi Sanghi moves, Senthil Krishnamurthy seconds: motion carries.

Approval of Cheques

Alicia de Fuentes moves, Olivia Zhou seconds: motion carries.

Approval of the Review is Saratoga Union School District Memorandum Of Understanding (SUSD MOU)

Ramya Vasu moves, Tim Tang seconds: motion carries.

Submitted by,

Alicia de Fuentes

Recording Secretary

