



Clayton High School PTO

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CLAYTON HIGH SCHOOL PTO**

Wednesday, September 10, 2025, 12:00 pm

**This Meeting was held on Zoom and in person at the School District of Clayton Administrative Offices, Conference Room B**

**The following board members were present in person:** Co-President Joanna Dinsmore, Co-President Priya Bazzani, Communications Kelley Karandjeff, Secretary Amber Kempf.

**The following CHS Staff, PTO Members, and PTO Committee/Event Chairs were present:**

Dan Gutchewsky – CHS Principal  
T-Shon Young – Coordinator of Sports and Activities for the School District of Clayton  
Emily Whitney – Staff Appreciation Committee  
Amy Wilson – Staff Appreciation Committee  
Bridget McAndrew – Faculty Special Projects Awards  
Alexandra Dunn  
Drew Larson  
Alli Rossini – Senior Class Parent Connections  
Stu Bradley  
Phil Kilbridge – Funds For Excellence  
Laura Deutsch – Funds For Excellence  
Whitney Lorenz  
Melissa Rideout  
Erin Runnels  
Lori Haslauden – Freshman Parent Connections  
David McClendon  
Emily Zou – Senior Class Parent Connections

**The following members and Committee//Event Chairs were present via Zoom:**

Suzanne Whitman  
Jena Shaumburg  
Michela Henke Cilenti  
Emily Zhao – Senior Parent Connections  
Rob Bertman – CHS PTO Treasurer  
Eric Li  
Allison King  
Christina  
Jenny He

Sarah  
Ericka  
S Craig

- **Welcome and Introductions – Co-Presidents Joanna Dinsmore and Priya Bazzani**
- **Long Range Facilities Planning Update – Leo Human, Director, Clayton BOE**
  - Tonight, 9/10/25 at 7 p.m. in the CHS Library - the first of a series of Community Forums will be held to discuss the specific priorities being considered by the District List of priorities are the focus now
    - The list of options for improvements have been narrowed down through a long community engagement process to 3 priorities:
      - 1) Updates and improvements to aging elementary buildings.
      - 2) An addition to CHS that would add a space to be used for CTE (Consumer and Technical Education) programs.
      - 3) Improvements to the athletic facilities. The BOE and the City of Clayton are in talks to possibly do a land swap to give the City Gay Field, in exchange for space in Shaw Park right next to CHS for all the athletic fields to be in close proximity to CHS creating a unified campus.
    - Community input and feedback is wanted to determine which priority will be done first and which priorities will need to be part of a ballot measure to be voted on by the entire City of Clayton community.
    - The BOE encourages the community to vote for and support the bond issue when it is on the ballot so the District can start the work.
    - After community engagement to set the final list of priorities in the order they will be done, the BOE will obtain cost estimates to determine what will need to be funded with a bond issue. The BOE believes right now that at least parts of more than one of the 3 priorities being considered will likely happen.
    - As the 3 priorities have been chosen after extensive community engagement, the BOE encourages folks with any other ideas to come share them at the ongoing community engagement forums as the process proceeds to see if they are already included.
- **President's Report – Joanna Dinsmore Priya Bazzani**
  - There is only one open position on the PTO left for a Co-Chair of the Junior Parent Connections Committee, with Jane Cai. Contact Joanna and Priya if you are interested.
  - All other PTO positions are filled.
  - The CHS PTO Board thanks Laura Deutsch and Phil Kilbridge for co-chairing the Funds for Excellence Committee. They will be working on taking care of fundraising for the CHS PTO.

- Past Events
  - Back to School Bash on 8/14/25 in Shaw Park was well attended. It was noted there was a conflict with Sports Tryouts and College Application Bootcamp. The District PTO will consider these concerns in scheduling next year if they can. It was suggested that a dedicated time during the event for new parents to show up might also be helpful
  - Open House on 9/28/25. The PTO table was a success and the slideshow about the PTO was well received.
  - The CHS PTO has an Instagram Account. Please follow it for updates at claytonhighpto.
  - The Boards goals this year are to:
    - Streamline all processes and document them for future board, committee chairs, and volunteers. Priya and Joanna will be reaching out to all committee chairs for information about what they do and how they go about doing it to make a PTO Handbook to support future members and volunteers.
    - Enhance community engagement. More funds have been redistributed into social events for parents/caregivers, and also have some social community events for the students that will be easy volunteer opportunities for parents/caregivers.
      - A “Cookies in the Commons” event was suggested, where parent/caregivers’ volunteer to help organize and distribute cookies to the students.
      - Please share any ideas you have for easy parent volunteer opportunities to engage more parents/caregivers in volunteering.
  - Current Committee Chairs please reach out to Priya and Joanna if you need information about your current committee position. Joanna and Pryia may have information in the PTO archives that can help you.
  - There is now a flyer up on PowerSchool containing CHS PTO information. Donations came in early from the flyer being included with all back to school forms.
  - Using MySchool Bucks to collect CHS PTO donations has been investigated and has been tabled for now as it was determined to not be compatible with donations are processed under the current systems for the CHS PTO.

- **Treasurer’s Report and Discussion/Vote on the 2025-26 CHS PTO Budget – Rob Bertman**

- Review of 2025-26 Budget
  - The Breakdown of where CHS PTO funds have been spent in the past:
    - Admin Expenses (includes Cheddar Up fees, printing and mailing costs)– 8%
    - General Community Engagement Events – 7%
    - Parent Connections Events – 16%
    - Planners for Students – 7%
    - Teacher Support and Appreciation – 62%

- This year the Board has reprioritized our Budget to better fit our Mission Statement.
    - The Board decided to place more funds into events for community engagement and Teacher Appreciation
  - There is a \$2725 Loss showing in this year's budget. This occurred due to cleaning up the budget from last year after the fiscal year ended. However, our Budget is balanced for starting into the new fiscal year. The CHS PTO Fiscal Year starts on 8/1.
  - The CHS PTO has \$62,000.00 in its account. We are required to have one year of operating expenses always saved in the account. This means we do have some reserves.
  - The 2025-26 Budget is \$30,000 and breaks down as follows:
    - Teacher Appreciation and Support - \$18,600
    - Parent Connections - \$4,800
      - Funds were increased as there are plans to have two social Parent Connection Events per year. The PTO will no longer be hosting a parent meeting with counselors as the second parent event.
    - General Community Engagement - \$2,000
    - Student Planners - \$2,300
    - Administrative Expenses - \$2,300
  - A Motion was made to Approve the Budget, Seconded, and the proposed Budget passed upon a vote of all members present.
  - Rob requested that all Committee Chairs please snap a photo of any receipts that they need to submit for reimbursement and send them to him as an e-mail attachment along with an address where you want your reimbursement check to be mailed.
- **Administrative Reports – Principal Dr. Gutchewsky; Coordinator of Athletics and Activities T'Shon Young**
    - **Principal Dr. Gutchewsky**
      - Everyone is settling in and doing well
      - New State Law banning Cell Phone Use at School
        - The students and staff are adjusting well.
        - Some kids are even sharing that they like not having the phones around all the time.
        - Very few phones have been confiscated. When it happens most of the kids admit they just got the phones out due to habit, not to break the new rule.
      - Work on the CHS Building over the Summer
        - New signage is about 80% up. Some of the Hallway walls are painted different colors now to help first responders to structure an emergency response. The new signage will match the color of the hallways.
        - The new Security Kiosk/Welcome Desk at the door between the Center of Clayton and Stuber Gym is still in process. Soon the door will be manned during school hours by personnel who will monitor and control the door.

- Open House went well. The staff appreciated the dinner provided by the PTO.
- Many wanted to know why Open House was held the Thursday before a day off school for students. This is because CHS and Wydown traditionally take turns swapping Open House nights that week between Tuesday and Thursday so parents can attend both. This year it was CHS's turn to have Thursday.
- The Week of October 13 will be Parent Teacher Conferences. Virtual and in person conferences will be held again. Wednesday October 15 will be the in-person conference day.
  - The Long Range Facilities Plan was reviewed again. Dr. Gutchewsky shared more details that impact CHS.
    - At CHS one of the priorities is a CTE (Consumer and Technical Education Wing). This will provide space for a woodshop, a clean room for 3d printing, engineering programs, FACTS, Journalism, the CHS Robohounds Robotics Team, a new construction and building program using geometry, and the Amped Program which is a business and marketing program using algebra. Students in Amped will make things to be sold in the school store in addition to the spirit wear they are already doing.
    - Upgrade of District athletic facilities. Gay Field was a WPA project and is in desperate need of a lot of work to update it. If we move the athletic fields to Shaw Park we will consolidate our campus, which will lead to better security, more convenience as all sporting events and practices can be at one place, CHS will then only need one trainer on staff for sporting events (rather than the two they must have when dual events are happening at Adzick and Gay for both practices and games), and students won't have to be constantly traveling between Gay field and the CHS/Adzick Field.
    - Elementary School Upgrades will also be discussed
    - Wydown Middle School is considering placing turf on the Wydown field over the parking garage as maintaining grass has been really difficult.
    - Homecoming will be Sept 27, 2025. The timing of Homecoming is limited by the fact it is paired with a CHS home football game. As CHS and Brentwood are a combined team, each team only gets two home football games a year and this year those games for CHS were September 19 and 27. The latest game possible was chosen.
- **T-Shon Young – Coordinator of Sports and Activities for the School District of Clayton**
  - An e-mail with details about Homecoming Weekend has gone out to parents and students.
  - The Senior Class has purchased an actual Golden Greyhound Trophy to be awarded for the Homecoming Games between students and staff which will be held that Friday September 26.
  - The CHS Pep Band will be appearing on the Fox 2 News Pep Zone. The band has a 6:00 am call time on September 26, at the Stuber Gym for filming.

- Tickets go on sale Monday September 22<sup>nd</sup> for the Homecoming Dance.
- Alli Rossini shared that the Clayton Education Foundation is selling tickets for its Homecoming Alumni Lunch (which is for everyone, not just alumni). The CEF Alumni Soccer Game will take place at 5:00 pm after the football game on September 27.

- **Committee Chair Reports**

- **Staff Appreciation – Emily Whitney and Amy Wilson**
  - Reported that the staff enjoyed dinner from Dewey's at the Open House. They appreciate the budget increase for this year.
  - Next on their agenda is the Parent Teacher Conference Dinner on the in-person conference day.
  - Amy and Emily would like to invite any parents thinking of volunteering with the PTO to shadow them this year and consider volunteering for the Staff Appreciation Committee next year. Reach out if you are interested.
- **CHS PTO Book Club – Cara Downs**
  - This is a Faculty/Parent-Caregiver Book Club.
  - The plan this year is to read three books and have three separate CHS teachers then facilitate a discussion on the books.
  - The first book to be read is Stoneward Devotional. English Teacher Ben Murphy has agreed to lead the parent/caregiver discussions at a meeting on Wednesday November 12, 2025, at 4 p.m. in the CHS Library.
- **Parent Connections**
  - In response to a question, the CHS PTO Board reiterated that PTO funds cannot be used to purchase alcohol at CHS PTO Sponsored Social Events due to Clayton School District Policy. Attendees must pay for their own alcohol.
  - **Junior Class Parent Connections - Jane Cai**
    - Jane Cai and the Board are still looking for someone to help her on this Committee.
  - **Sophomore Class Parent Connections – Jenny Abeles and Stephanie Konradi**
    - Have a Social event planned at CJ Muggs in Downtown Clayton on September 25, 2025, starting at 6:00 pm. Food will be provided.
- **Freshman Parent Connections, Lori Haslauden, Jackie Stavro, and Michele Henke and Senior Parent Connections, Allie Rossini, Julie Sandler, and Emily Zhou**
  - They are working to plan their first event and details will be coming soon.
- It was requested that the Parent Connection Event planners to please check district calendars for conflicts with District events and also consider religious holidays. This reminder was appreciated by the CHS Board who asked that Parent Connections Committees let the Co-Presidents know when event dates are chosen so they can put it on the District calendar ASAP.
- **Faculty/Staff Special Projects Awards – Bridget McAndrew, and Kami Waldman**
  - October 1<sup>st</sup> is the deadline for staff applications.
  - There was a discussion of the difference between what is funded by the Clayton Education Foundation, the CHS PTO and the Clayton School District.

- In response to a member question about the difference between the CHS PTO and the Clayton Education Foundation (CEF) the following was shared. Staff Requests for funds at CHS are first addressed by Principals. If not appropriate for the District to fund or they cannot, the amount of the funds requested is considered at CHS by Principal Gutchewsky as to whether the request is then funneled to the CEF or the CHS PTO. Each is a separate entity. The Clayton Education Foundation works closely with the Clayton School District but is not under the control of the Clayton School District. The CEF provides funds to all Clayton Schools. The CHS PTO is a parent/caregiver volunteer organization that is a part of the Clayton School District and subject to its rules and procedures. The CHS PTO provides funds for projects only at Clayton High School.
    - Small amounts (in the hundreds of dollars) requested by staff often go to the CHS PTO to be provided through the Faculty/Staff Special Projects Awards.
    - The Clayton Education Foundation provides funds for large requests (in the thousands of dollars) that involve innovative project requests by staff that cannot be funded by the Clayton School District at the time they are requested.
    - Both entities provide crucial support for staff, students and administrators.
  - **Funds for Excellence – Laura Deutsch and Phil Kilbridge**
    - Expressed appreciation for the donations received from the community so far.
    - Shared that folks can contribute any amount within their capacity and all donations are appreciated.
    - Right now, the committee is working to secure larger gifts and will then turn to reaching out to engage as many community participants as possible so all can invest in the work of the CHS PTO.
- **Upcoming Events/Other Business – None at this time.**

**Next Meeting- Wednesday 10/8, 12 pm in Center of Clayton, Room C**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amber Kempf, Secretary