



**Advisory Council Small Group Lunch
Hosted by Huntington Learning Center
May 18, 2018**

Minutes

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Attendees: (name + organization)

Steve McCoy-Thompson, PPIE
Sarah Baer, PPIE
Mary Hofstedt, Challenge Success
Viji Manickam, Axon Global
Beth McCarthy, PTSA President
Amy Robbins, ROP
Melanie Sadek, Valley Humane Society
Mona Sethi, Huntington Learning Center
Gita Surti, Physician
Jerry Thorne, Mayor, City of Pleasanton
Sylvia Tian, Tri-Valley Asian Association
Shirley Yuan, PLAY and BURN Run Club

Discussion Summary: Discussion centered on student stress and featured two distinct but overlapping perspectives – that of a learning center designed to help students with better achievement in school and an organization dedicated to challenging standard measurements of student success. The dialogue was very constructive and resulted in several positive recommendations.

Steve McCoy-Thompson, Executive Director at PPIE provided an overview of recent accomplishments. This year, PPIE increased donations to Pleasanton Schools by 23% over last year for a total of \$644,000 which funded supplemental staff and teacher/student STEAM grants at all 15 district schools – link to a recent Pleasanton Weekly article is [here](#). In addition, PPIE implemented an Advisory Council recommendation and co-hosted, with Foothill High School's DECA program, a 'speed interview' session in which 100+ students had mock interviews with business leaders from Google, Huntington Learning Center, Intel, Oracle, Robert Half International, StartUp Genius, Valley Humane Society, Wells Fargo and others. The session was quite successful and PPIE plans to expand the program next year.

Mona Sethi, Director, Huntington Learning Center

Huntington Learning Center is a tutoring and test prep center that specializes in working with ADHD students and those who need special attention to feel confident and succeed in school. Mona provided an overview of her client base and distinguished her approach from other learning centers. A key insight was that while parents typically send their children to these centers for different reasons – some to excel and some to address a learning issue – 'success' is usually achieved by finding the student's strengths and infusing the child with confidence in their ability to learn.

Melanie Sadek, Executive Director, Valley Human Society. Melanie provided an overview of Valley Humane Society and their work with libraries, which features a Paws to Read program. The program brings trained dogs to provide a safe reading 'partner' for children age 5 to 12 - you can learn more [here](#). The program has been successful in reducing the stress of reading for many children and is indicative of the positive impact of non-judgmental learning for all students.

Mary Hofstedt, Community Education Director, Challenge Success. Challenge Success is a national organization affiliated with Stanford University that advocates for an alternative definition of educational 'success' and provides training and workshops to promote balance in school and life. Mary provided interesting data on student stress and an overview of Challenge Success programs. Mary reviewed ways for Challenge Success to work in Pleasanton, including options to form student-led Challenge Success Clubs in schools to enable students to redefine success. The group explored ways to promote Academic Wellness in schools and the formation of a Challenge Success Club on a pilot basis.

Below are resources and links from the [Challenge Success website](#) as well as information from prior presentations with Pleasanton schools.

- [Parent Education information](#). from talks at Pleasanton library (2014 and 2015), and Adult Education program 2017, which was supported by PPIE
- [Summer Leadership Intensive](#) - 3 members of Foothill High School's administrative team are currently enrolled
- [Research](#)
- [School Survey](#)
- [School Program information](#)
- [Student Resources](#). Also has guide to starting Challenge Success club

Action Items/Next Steps

- Build on success of 2018 speed interview session for next year – include both DECA and AVID students, and expand to Amador Valley High School
- Continue to incorporate telepresence for the 2018-2019 school year
- Explore pilot program for Challenge Success in PUSD, including formation of Challenge Success Clubs in high school
- NEXT LUNCH – planned for September 28 (location TBD) with founder of Gladeo, online platform to help students explore and navigate alternative career pathways