Good afternoon!

One semester down, one semester to go! We’re halfway through the 2019-20 school year. The students and staff of Saratoga High School should now enjoy a well deserved two week break to enjoy family and friends, read for pleasure, explore the outdoors, binge watch a favorite show, or simply sleep! This Fall semester had it all: fantastic, competitive athletic events, with five of our Fall sports competing in their respective CCS tournaments; mesmerizing, “chicken-soup for the soul” performances from our performing arts departments; spirit filled school rallies, quad-day performances, and school dances; and mind blowing, impressive contributions from our parents and community with regards to donations, volunteer hours, an all-school BBQ and Food for Finals. We also had our challenges: not having power in some of our homes for a number of days; learning how to adjust our tutorial practices so that Tutorial could legitimately count for instructional minutes; and critically analyzing the data in our California Healthy Kids Survey and WASC Self-Study so that we intentionally improve our practices and appropriately respond to the individualized needs of our students.

During my first semester, I met with nearly all of the Saratoga staff, visited a large majority of the classrooms, attended a number of athletic and extra-curricular events, and met with a great group of parents, students, and community members. If there is one thing that I know about Saratoga High School, it is that this school community loves their students. The parents, guardians, and community members literally give what they can to provide for our students. The teachers and support staff invest heart and soul to ensure a learning environment that is rigorous, supportive, and reflective. The students demonstrate an empathy and consideration for their peers.

All of that said, we have work to do. We need to continue to improve our pedagogical practices that evolve from a direct instruction, teacher dependent learning environment to a facilitated instruction, student dependent collaboration. We need to grow our students’ growth mindset, decreasing the urge to commit academic integrity violations, and increasing our students’ capacity to “Just Learn It.” We need to provide interventions and enhancements for our students who need help to attain mastery or our students who are entitled to extensions of their learning. We need to improve our lines of communication so that all stakeholders (students, staff, and parents) have a voice to express their hopes, desires, and intentions.

It has been a fantastic Fall Semester. I feel so blessed to be here and I hope everyone enjoys a well deserved Holiday Break. Here’s an overview for the next few weeks:

**Friday, December 20: (No School)**
- Women’s JV Basketball vs. Evergreen Valley HS, 5pm

**Saturday, December 21:**
- 12/21: Women’s Varsity Basketball at Hunt Memorial Tournament
- 12/21: CoEd JV Wrestling at Carlmont Tournament
- 12/21: Men’s Basketball vs. San Jose HS, JV 4:30pm/V 6pm

**December 23-January 5: Holiday Break**
- 12/26-12/28: Men’s Varsity Basketball at Aptos Tournament
- 12/27-12/30: Women’s Varsity Basketball at West Coast Tournament
- 1/3: CoEd JV Wrestling at Ruppell 2nd Man Tournament
- 1/3: Men’s Varsity Soccer at Fremont, 3:30pm
- 1/3: Men’s Basketball vs. Fremont, JV 3pm/V 7:45pm
- 1/3: Women’s Basketball vs. Los Altos, JV 4:30pm/ V 6:15pm
- 1/4: CoEd Varsity Wrestling at Bianchini Tournament, 9am

**Monday, January 6: (RED Day)**
- Tutoring Center opens (3:45pm-5pm)
- Women’s Soccer vs. Westmont, 3:30pm

**Tuesday, January 7: (BLUE Day)**
- Tutoring Center open (2:15pm-5pm)
- Women’s Basketball at Cupertino, JV 5:30pm/ V 7pm

**Wednesday, January 8: (RED Day)**
- Tutoring Center opens (3:45pm-5pm)
- Men’s Varsity Soccer vs. Gunn, 3:30pm
- Women’s Soccer at Santa Clara, JV 4pm/ V 6pm
- Men’s Basketball at Gunn, JV 5:30pm/ V 7pm
- Women’s Basketball vs. Mt. Pleasant, JV 5:30pm/ V 7pm

**Thursday, January 9: (BLUE Day)**
- Tutoring Center open (2:15pm-5pm)
- CoEd Wrestling vs. Milpitas, JV 5:30pm/V 6pm

**Friday, January 10: (RED Day)**
- Tutoring Center open (3:45pm-5pm)
- Women’s Basketball vs. Los Gatos, JV 3pm/V 6:15pm
- Women’s Soccer vs. Los Gatos, 3:30pm
- Men’s Varsity Soccer at Lynbrook, 3:30pm
- Men’s Basketball vs. Santa Clara, JV 4:30pm, V 7:45pm

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**IN OTHER NEWS...**

**Mr. Safine to Serve LGSUHSD as Human Resources Director**

For the past 17 years, with love, dedication, and an exceptional attention to detail, Mr. Safine served Saratoga High School as Assistant Principal and Guidance Counselor/Department Chair. Beginning January 2020, Mr. Safine’s office will move from Saratoga High School to the Los Gatos-Saratoga Union High School District, expanding his influence to ensure student success and social-emotional wellness as the new HR Director. Mr. Safine has insisted a hundred times how he will continue to be involved with Saratoga High School activities, athletics, and academic programs.

When we return in January, we will interview the candidates who applied to fill Mr. Safine’s position and after the January 14 Board Meeting, we will know the new addition to the SHS Admin Team. Interested and qualified candidates can apply via EdJoin.
Student Receives Presidential Volunteer Service Award

Congratulations to Freshmen Ojas Somani who received the Presidential Volunteer Service Award. Ojas volunteered at food banks to sort and pack food and helped raise funds and create after school curriculum in East Palo Alto schools where school the district rating is between 0-2. Ojas was involved in multiple volunteering activities, totaling between 50-100 hours since the summer

Students Accepted into California All-State Honor Choir

Three Saratoga High School students were accepted into the California All State Honor Choir, which is held in conjunction with the CASMEC (California All State Music Educators Conference) in February. There were over 1800 students who auditioned in the state of California. Congratulations to Uma Phalke, Anjali Phalke, and Ahana Chakraborty.

January 10-12: Redwood Middle School presents "The Lion King, Jr."

Tickets for the show performances are on sale now. Visit http://bit.ly/2020TLKJ to order your tickets.

St. Olaf Band West Coast Tour, January 31

One of America’s preeminent bands, the St. Olaf Band, conducted by Dr. Timothy Mahr, will perform at Saratoga High School's McAfee Center on Friday, January 31 at 8pm during its 2020 West Coast Tour. Founded in 1891, the St. Olaf Band performs the very best compositions and transcriptions for symphonic band, producing an exciting, crowd-pleasing style. Tickets are $10 for general admission, and free for all students. Here is a link to the Facebook Event post.

2019 Fall Semester Evaluation

Please take a moment to complete the SHS 2019 Fall Semester Evaluation survey. I am soliciting feedback from students, staff, and parents regarding our school, our practices, and how I can best support our fantastic community. Over the Holiday Break, I will review the feedback to help direct our actions for next semester and beyond.

Yearbook Sales

To order a copy of the 2020 Talisman yearbook, please bring a check for $100 to the Activities Office. The check should be made out to Saratoga High. If your student already has an ASB package, they automatically get a yearbook. Please order your yearbook now to ensure your student a copy when the books are distributed in late May. Only those who preorder a book are guaranteed to get a copy of the Talisman during distribution.

TEDxSaratogaHighSchool, March 15, 2020

The TEDxSaratogaHighSchool event will be on Sunday, March 15th. For this year’s theme, "It Starts With Us," we are looking for speakers who are taking initiative to promote change in their communities. Please fill out the TEDxSaratogaHighSchool Speakers form if you are interested in being a speaker or have a nomination. This is a big part of making the event happen so all efforts are appreciated!
Here are the results of this past week. If you have news about a winter sport, please send details to Greg Louie at glouie@lgsuhsd.org with the email title “For Friday Letter: ‘Toga Athletics.”

**Congratulation to our Traditional Competitive Cheer Team**
On Saturday, December 14, the Traditional Competitive Cheer Team placed 5th at the USA James Logan Regional event and received a second bid to nationals. Their next events are Saturday, February 1 for their 1st CCS Event and Wednesday, February 11 for a Cheer showcase night in the large gym for students, staff, and families to come watch what we will perform at USA Spirit Nationals, which is February 12-16.

**Winter Sports Updates**
December 16:
- Men’s Junior Varsity Basketball beat Thomas More High School 46-43

December 18:
- Men’s Varsity Soccer beat Cupertino High School 3-2

**Tutoring Center Now Open After School**
Our Tutoring Center is now open, Monday through Thursday until 5pm. We have a couple of community volunteer tutors signed up to help with math and science. Also, if you would like to help peer tutor, please see Principal Louie. If your New Year’s Resolution will be about attending after school tutoring, here is the schedule for the remainder of this semester.

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<th>Monday</th>
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<td>1/6/20: 3:45pm-5pm Supervisor: Mr. Louie Tutor: Jean Su (Math)</td>
<td>1/7/20: 2:15pm-5pm Supervisor: Ms. Mohnike</td>
<td>1/8/20: 3:45pm-5pm Supervisor: Mr. Louie Tutor: Tsing Bardin (Math/Physics)</td>
<td>1/9/20: 2:15pm-5pm Supervisor: Mr. Louie Tutor: Jean Su (Math); Tsing Bardin (Math/Physics)</td>
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**World Language Triple E Fall Awards**
Last week’s list of Triple E Fall Awards recipients neglected to include Kristen Hung for her success in Chinese 5H. Congratulations to Kristen and all of the World Language students who were recognized for their effort, engagement, and enthusiasm during the Fall semester.
Falcon's Nest Special for the week of January 6th is "OVEN BAKED CHICKEN W/ MASHED POTATOES AND GRAVY", $4.50 each. Included in the special is a roll, butter and chocolate chip cookie.

Our themed salad bar is "AMERICANA". A large salad is $5.00 and small $4.00. Add a cup of diced chicken for $.75.

Thank you and Happy Holidays!! May 2020 be your best year yet!!

Sincerely,

Greg Louie, Principal