

George C. Marshall PTSA Meeting Minutes
December 15, 2021

Board Members Present: Althea Benjamin (president), Elizabeth Keegan (secretary), Jeff Litz (principal)

1. Guest Speakers: Karen Prem, Rebecca Glawe, and Carla Goodwin from NovaStar Prep spoke about SAT prep and the future of standardized tests. They spoke of the 3 core beliefs of their company: (1) every student learns differently, (2) every student has potential, and (3) every student deserves the opportunity to increase his confidence. Carla Goodwin, a NovaStar Prep coach, and the assistant director of admissions at George Mason University, discussed the differences between “test blind” and “test optional.” Test optional means that a student can choose whether to submit their test scores. Colleges have seen a significant increase in the number of applications since this change went into effect. Highly selective schools still want test scores. Test blind means that schools will not look at test scores at all. There are currently 86 colleges that are test blind.

To effectively study for the SAT, NovaStar Prep (NP) recommends setting a target score, which should be in the 75th percentile of scores for the schools you are interested in. They recommend taking the test the summer before junior year. Plan to spend generally 50 hours preparing/studying for the SATs. To increase your score by 40 points, study 1-2 months. To increase by 100 points or more, you need to spend significantly more time than that, perhaps up to 6 months.

Regarding NovaStar’s programs, they offer one on one test prep, group prep courses, bootcamps and mock tests. 98% of their students meet or exceed the test score target goal. NovaStar will be hosting an in-person mock SAT at Marshall on February 5th.

2. Principal’s Report: Mr. Litz reported that the holiday break begins on Friday; students return to school on January 3rd. Results of the socio-emotional screening (SEL) taken in October will be sent home in January; another one will be done in April. After break, course registration begins. February 8th is rising freshmen orientation. NHS induction ceremony is January 27th. Covid numbers are increasing rapidly. In three days this week Marshall had 17 students and 2 staff test positive. The new governor plans to make masks optional when he takes office in January.
3. President’s Report: Meeting minutes from October were approved. Eight families attended the PTSA cookie exchange. International Night will be March 31st. Nicole Myers was voted in as the new PTSA Treasurer. The budget is on the PTSA website.

4. Committee Reports: Tara Henigan of Hospitality announced a luncheon for teachers who are PTSA members. Elizabeth Keegan of ANGC said they are half-way to their fundraising goal. Graduation is May 31st.

The next PTSA meeting is Wednesday, February 16th.