



PRESS RELEASE

Poway Unified School District

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Poway Unified Appoints 2022-2023 Student Board Member

Prisha Puntambekar of Mt. Carmel High School will assume seat on Board of Education beginning August 2022



(San Diego, CA) – It is with great pride that the Poway Unified School District announces the appointment of Mt. Carmel High School junior Prisha Puntambekar as the Student Board Member for the 2022-2023 academic year.

A Board sub-committee consisting of the current Student Board Member, Superintendent, Chief Communications Officer, and two Board Members met on April 1, 2022, to interview candidates from high schools across the District. Upon final review, the Board sub-committee members recommended Prisha Puntambekar for the position. The full Board of Education

approved Prisha in an official vote at its April 7,

2022, meeting. “There were a record number of applicants this year, which made the decision extremely difficult. But Prisha really stood out through her application, experience, and especially her interview. Her passion and motivation for serving her fellow students and improving how we are meeting students’ needs is inspiring,” said Dr. Marian Kim Phelps, Superintendent.

Prisha serves as an editor on her school’s newspaper where she gives a voice to her student body and educates them on topics both locally and globally. Inspired by a family member’s struggle with mental health, she is passionate about supporting student mental health as the founder and president of the Mt. Carmel’s Mental Wellness Club, where she provides resources, education, and leads mental health workshops. Prisha thrives academically as a National Honor Society member, Science Olympiad participant, and FIRST Robotics competitor. She is described by counselors, teachers, and friends as “an incredible student with an amazing drive [who] speaks with confidence, class, and is incredibly knowledgeable about worldly events.”

In addition, Prisha holds an internship with San Diego's City Council, where she has developed an interest in policy making and has become aware of her own ability to impact change. She works to keep leaders informed of political developments, and using research, listening, and empathy, provides her own educated input and continually broadens her understanding of different priorities among diverse groups. As the new Student Board Member and through her experiences as a daughter of first-generation immigrants from India, she hopes to "uplift groups of students who are underserved or academically struggling [and] create a bridge between the Poway community and the board, thus allowing all students to be heard."

Prisha's term of office will be the entirety of her senior year. The term will begin with the August 2022 Board meeting and conclude with the June 2022 meeting. The duties of the Student Board Member include providing continuing input for Board deliberations (excluding discipline, personnel, and employer-employee relations), strengthening communications between the Board and students, representing all students in PUSD, and facilitating the discussion of all sides of an issue.

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