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Gustavo Lopez To Be Next Year's Student Board Member *Victoria Wu finishes her term at the May 24th Board meeting*

The Poway Unified School District Board of Education added a seat at the table last year when board policy put in place the addition of a student on the Board of Education. The student is appointed by the Board for a year-long term after an application process in the spring of each school year. The student has preferential voting privileges under California Education Code Section 35012.

Gustavo Lopez, a junior at Poway High School, was recommended by the interview committee to become the 2011-2012 PUSD Student Board Member. The interview committee consisted of the President and Vice-president of the Board and the 2010-2011 Student Board Member.

"The choice of Gustavo as our next Student Board Member was a unanimous decision by the panel," said Penny Ranftle, PUSD Board of Education President. "He will be an outstanding addition to the Board. We are delighted with his selection and very much look forward to working with him."

"I want to serve on the Poway Unified School Board because I am passionate about my education and would like to collaborate with others to improve our schools," explained Gustavo. The first official Board meeting for the 2011-2012 Student Board Member will be held on August 15, 2011.

Gustavo is a member of the National Honor Society, president of the MEChA program, AVID historian, Peer Counselor, track & field athlete, and cross country runner. He is a Poway High School tutor and also gives back to the community at the Homework Club at Valley Elementary School.

“Seven years ago Gustavo had to learn a new language in a new country that is now his home. This was a huge obstacle for him, however he told us that through the support of his ELL and AVID teachers it is now possible for him to succeed and take classes ranging from AP Psychology to Honors Algebra 3-4,” said PUSD Superintendent John Collins. “Not only is Gustavo an outstanding student, he is also involved in school activities, sports, clubs, and community service. He connects with his peers and will provide the Board and the District with a broad understanding of students’ perspectives.”

Victoria Wu, a Westview High School senior, became the first student to hold the position. During Victoria’s tenure she participated in Board discussions and gave reports reflecting student viewpoints and concerns. She developed a student voice website which was piloted by several classes and introduced to a high school where students were asked to participate in a survey and give opinions about school district issues. Victoria also participated in the Poway Heritage Days Parade and Board receptions.

“Victoria has exceeded all our expectations as our first Student Board Member,” said PUSD Board of Education President Penny Ranftle. “She has been an invaluable asset to the Board and her contributions have been significant. She has set the bar extremely high for those who follow.”