

Dale Irving President

List any previous leadership positions or experiences.

Up to now I have served as a senior instructor at my local taekwondo club and as a student leader in GSMST's Science Bowl club.

Why do you want to be a member of Student Council?

After attending the school for three years, not only do I know how stressful attending the school and living up to its expectations can be, but I also am well-acquainted with the student body and the issues that they hold dear to them. Therefore, I feel that this puts me in a good position to serve in StuCo, as I already have leadership experience outside of school and I know what issues are most important to the students. Furthermore, many of my friends have told me how important the events that StuCo hosts are to them and their mental health and wellbeing and I've listened to the many different criticisms and compliments that they had. Finally, many of my friends know me as a kind, understanding, pragmatic, but still optimistic person and I want to prove them right and help to address their concerns with the student council. As to why I chose to be Senior Class President, I already elaborated previously on how important StuCo-hosted events are to the student body and, seen as the Senior President has the most control over the activities that seniors get to engage in, especially during the year of college applications, I feel that serving as the President would help me achieve the goals and impact that I strive for completely.

From your perspective, what is the role of the Student Council at GSMST and in our community at large?

In my opinion GSMST's student council is in place not only to promote GSMST among the community as a school with a vigorous and involved student body, but more importantly, to protect and ensure the student body's mental health and wellbeing. StuCo meets this goal by hosting events like Prom, Class vs. Class sports and leaving kind notes during finals time.

List up to three qualities you would use to describe an effective leader. What leadership skill(s) is your strength? How will you use that skill(s) to benefit Student Council and GSMST?

The best leaders today are open-minded and pragmatic, yet still optimistic. Leaders naturally need to be open-minded to be accepting of new ideas and open to changes because without change, they would never make any progress. If I were elected to serve on GSMST's Student Council, I would aim to always be open-minded and completely hear out other students' ideas, opinions, and criticisms for the student council. Moreover, they must be aware of which changes are both practical and necessary and understand the scope of their power and their position, which warrants the need for pragmatism. As a leader in StuCo I would ensure that I maintain a sense of realism and understand the responsibilities and privileges that being the Senior Class President, and balance that knowledge with the ideas and criticisms of the student body to be the best president I can be. However, the best leaders do not get trapped in their pragmatism and let it prevent them from believing in the promise of the future and hoping that they can achieve their goals and improve what they need to improve, because if a leader does not believe in their own cause, their mentality can spread to other leaders and the people that originally supported the leader. Finally, no matter how practical I have to be as a student council member, I will not let it hold me back and refuse to do things that I think would make the student body happier and healthier if it is within my power to do so.

What would you most like to improve about your own leadership skills to become a better leader?

As a leader I can sometimes have trouble balancing open-mindedness and decisiveness, as it is sometimes hard to make decisions between so many different ideas all at once. However, serving in other leadership positions has helped me improve on this weakness and I plan to improve on it in the future.

Describe an activity for a new event that Student Council could host.

I think StuCo could host events during advisement/guided study to help destress the students. More specifically, if they were to host an event that allowed students to go outside, either to just walk around in a natural environment, or play sports, think many of the students would be extremely appreciative and it would allow them to destress. While some teachers already do this independently, I feel that if StuCo got behind it, they could make it a more regular occurrence and

take the burden off of individual teachers that have to supervise students by allowing the student council and the teachers involved to supervise the activity.

How can Student Council improve its communication with the student body?

Although the student council at GSMST does already have outlets for students to express ideas and communicate with the student council, like their website, I think that student council could increase its transparency and responsiveness to the student body by communicating with students on a more direct level. For example, StuCo could use their Instagram page to receive ideas from the students on themes for different events and even have their members talk to their peers directly and ask them what they would prefer. Furthermore, if StuCo members had more direct talks with students about what themes they should have for different events, it would create an environment conducive to cooperation and productive discussion between students and their council members. In short, I believe that if StuCo were to communicate with the student body through more direct means, like social media and face-to-face conversations, StuCo would reap benefits both in terms of transparency and receptiveness.

What do you think is the single greatest challenge facing our GSMST community and how can Student Council help to resolve this challenge?

I think the greatest challenge facing GSMST students is outlets during school time to destress. Because of the status and rigor of our school, almost all students will naturally build up stress and need to find some way to release that stress. This is partially addressed by the screen breaks that we have at our school; however, not all students prefer to destress by reading and I think student council could help to set up a greater variety of opportunities to destress like time to go outside during Advisement or games in the SRC.