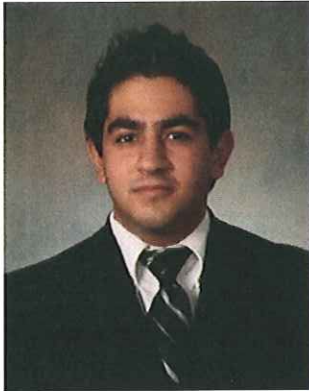


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## Officials seek answers in possible alcohol overdose death of South Pasadena student leader

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Grief counselors will be on the campus of South Pasadena High School after a prominent student leader died over the weekend of a possible alcohol overdose.

The student died after attending a party Saturday night, school district officials said.

"As we deal with this tragic situation, we ask for sensitivity in the form of rumor control," the South Pasadena Unified School District said in a statement on its website this morning. "Any pertinent information will be shared with students and adults as it comes to our

attention."

Students met Sunday evening and set up a memorial for Aydin Salek on the campus.

Salek, who would have turned 18 today, was the student representative on the board of trustees for the 4,000-student school district, as well as a student leader and writer for the newspaper at South Pasadena High.

Details about his death, news of which spread through the community today, were not immediately available. South Pasadena police declined to provide any information other than to confirm they were investigating a death.

The South Pasadena High School website posted the news Sunday, saying: "According to the South Pasadena Police Department, Aydin's death was presumed to be due to an alcohol overdose, not related to driving."

The Los Angeles County coroner's office also said it could not comment on the case.

Principal Janet Anderson said a police investigator told her that Salek had been at a party in Altadena before his death. There was a \$5 cover charge at the party, district officials said.

Salek apparently had been drinking at the party, said school board President Richard Sonner. Those at the party said he appeared fine about 10 p.m. but that he passed out about 10:45 p.m., Sonner said.

Friends were trying to take him home when they realized that he had stopped breathing, Sonner said.

Another student was called to perform CPR, and paramedics were summoned, Sonner said. Salek's parents were present as paramedics tried to revive him, he said.

Anderson said Salek "was a wonderful young man, with a very promising future. He was tenacious when he saw something that needed follow-up."

Salek joined the school board as its student representative in July, said former school board member Don Eggleston, who attended his last meeting last week. "He was very likable ... very energetic, very smart."

"It was very clear he would be successful at whatever he chose," Sonner said. "I find this a complete tragedy."

-- Rich Connell

*Photo: Aydin Salek. Credit: South Pasadena Unified School District*