

NPTO Meeting Minutes

December 5th, 2013

“Strengthening the Nova Community”

Our Mission

Nova Classical Academy PTO is an organization of volunteers engaging families, teachers, and staff in fostering a school community that actively supports Nova’s mission and enriches the students and the school. Any and all current Nova parents and staff are considered members. There are no dues.

Taken by Melissa Hernandez, Secretary

- I. Welcome and Roll Call (Susan Hooge)
 - a. In attendance: Susan Hooge (Chair), Melissa Hernandez (Secretary), Jennifer Johnson (Treasurer), Jane Osborn Farber (Room Parent), Jane Lagerquist (Board Liaison), Robin Cerio (Co-Chair), Beth Hawley (Co-Chair), Brian Bloomfield (School Director), Michelle Granbery (Room Parent), Sara Gunsch (Room Parent), Marlo Corletto (Kindergarten Teacher), Kate Tetmeyer (Scrip Lead, Carnival Chair), Kathleen McClarn (5th Grade Teacher), Diane Rude (LS Math Teacher), Pat Bodenstab (1st Grade Teacher), Mary Corrigan, Sara Knudsen (Kindergarten Teacher), Tanya Olson (Room Parent), Kristin Kelley (LS Director).
 - b. Susan solicited any additional topics that attendees would like to discuss that were not reflected on the agenda.
 - i. Robin Cerio requested some time to discuss the Nova Ambassadors.
 - ii. Jane Lagerquist requested to be moved up on the Agenda.
- II. Minutes Approval
 - a. Copies of the October Meeting Minutes were provided to all attendees.
 - i. Robin moved the Minutes be approved and the Minutes were approved.
- III. Officer Reports
 - a. Board Meeting Update (Jane Lagerquist)
 - i. The calendar for the 2014-2015 school year was approved.
 1. Excepting conference meetings, there will be an entire week off for Thanksgiving.
 - ii. Extra curricular activities were discussed.
 1. Anyone wanting to weigh in should attend the next Board Meeting.
 - iii. The Social Emotional Committee has been established.
 1. Its new name is the School Climate Committee.
 - b. Advancement Committee Update (Kate Tetmeyer & Dr. Bloomfield)
 - i. The committee did not meet due to scheduling challenges.
 - c. Executive Director Update (Dr. Bloomfield)
 - i. Dr. Bloomfield made note of and celebrated the fact that there were so many faculty present at the meeting.
 1. Robin Cerio thanked them all for coming and welcomed them to join the meeting circle as many were seated behind the circle.
 2. Ms. Kelley pointed out that they were all LS teachers.
 - ii. Amazon Smile (w/ Jennifer Johnson)
 1. This is a program that acts as a fundraiser, a way to support not for profits where .5% of “eligible” Amazon purchases made through the website are donated to a designated non-profit.
 - a. It is unclear what constitutes an “eligible” purchase at this time.
 2. The specifics on how the process works are still unavailable despite numerous attempts to solicit that information from the organization.

3. Jenni mentioned that there are several Nova listings included in the non-profit designation field and that it would be helpful to narrow those choices, especially considering some of them are now defunct.
 - a. Dr. Bloomfield replied that there is no way to remove those listings.
 4. Despite the unknowns surrounding the process, Dr. Bloomfield feels it would be a shame not to take advantage of this fund raising opportunity during the holiday buying season and will be including an announcement in the next Nova News encouraging families to make their Amazon purchases via the "Smile" website under Nova Classical Academy.
 5. Jennie suggested a follow up review and discussion take place at next month's meeting to further evaluate the program's efficacy.
 6. Sara Knudsen inquired as to whether her Amazon Wish List would be accessible via the Smile website.
 - a. Dr. Bloomfield responded that the parent would need to review her Wish List via Amazon's website and then log into the Smile site to make his/her purchase.
- d. Treasurer Update (Jennifer Johnson)
- i. There is currently \$61,000 in the NPTO account.
 1. A large percentage of that is from Great Gatherings.
 2. All funds generated this year will finance next year's NPTO budget.
 - ii. Only four Parent Ed nights remain with only one EA providing child care which should help keep that line item within budget.
 - iii. Notice regarding the NPTO Liability Insurance renewal.
 1. The renewal is due in March but Jenni requested to pay it now.
 2. Susan Hooge asked whether the coverage dates would be impacted by an early renewal.
 - a. Jenni replied she did not think so, but would confirm that before submitting payment and would also post date the check as an additional safeguard.
 3. The check for the NPTO tax payment, made earlier this year, has cleared.
 4. The Noodles & Co. fundraiser – carried out in tandem with this year's Barnes & Noble Book Fair – raised \$437.00.
 - a. Ms. Kelley inquired as to how much was raised from the frozen yogurt fundraiser last year.
 - b. Beth Hawley answered that it was only \$89.00.
 5. A communication from the state arrived requesting a renewal of the NPTO registration.
 - a. Robin Cerio confirmed that Jodi Gallagher did, indeed, submit the registration renewal. She was unsure why the state was suggesting that was not the case.
 - i. Jodi suggested the communication was most likely a general, automated solicitation that did not reflect the NPTOs actual status.
 - b. Jenni added she would double check to ensure that was the case.
 6. Checks being issued are, in fact, being cashed.
 - a. This is a big plus for this year's book keeping considered there are several outstanding checks on last year's books.
 - i. Jenni is currently working with Jodi to remedy that.
 7. Checks issued to NPTO personnel and/or Nova families will now be given to the Nova receptionist for distribution.

- a. Anyone looking for reimbursement checks and the like should see Morgan Young in the Main Office.
 - b. Checks issued to teachers will continue to be delivered via their respective mailboxes.
- 8. A teacher grant has been given in October.
- 9. Two Solar Panel gifts have been given in October.
- 10. Great Gatherings participation has increased as a result of credit card payment being accepted.
- 11. The EduKit statement for \$1400 was, in fact, referring to payment made to the NPTO not a bill requesting payment as previously discussed.
- 12. The Nova Treasurer E-mail account should remain open because it used as a general business electronic account that limits outside access to the NPTO's general e-mail communications.
- e. EduKit Update (Melissa Hernandez)
 - i. Several volunteer positions will be added to the process.
 - 1. A Kindergarten liaison to provide representation regarding the specific needs of the Kindergarten staff, classrooms, schedule, etc.
 - 2. Additional administrative support to the Nova staff participating in the school supplies process.
 - ii. It has been proposed the NPTO add an additional \$5.00 to order totals to increase the fundraising potential of the program.
 - 1. The additional monies raised could be used to finance Conference Meals going forward.
 - a. Catering meals would streamline the process as well as provide for increased consistency and quality control.
 - b. Robin expressed concern that any catering provided should consider the dietary needs of the faculty and staff.
 - i. She was reassured that that would absolutely be considered during planning and ordering.
 - c. Robin also inquired as to whether any estimates had been acquired so that the group would have a better understanding around cost.
 - i. Estimates have not been acquired.
 - d. Ms. Kelley added that next year's Parent/Teacher Conferences will take place for all schools from 12-8 over a two day period which would impact meal planning quite significantly.
 - e. Jenni contributed some general catering cost estimates.
 - f. Melissa added that the committee would ensure responsible use of its resources.
 - 2. Most attendees felt expressed a \$5.00 increase would be prohibitive, particularly for families with multiple children.
 - a. Adding \$5.00 to the EduKit totals was not approved.
 - 3. A suggestion was made to use the existing amount raised to cater conference meals and also solicit monetary donations at conference meal time.
 - a. Melissa expressed some concerns around taking that approach. Would families become donation weary? i.e. "How much money do they need? What are the teachers eating?".
 - 4. Mary Corrigan reminded the group that monies could not be earmarked for a particular project, event, etc. according to the NPTO bylaws.

- a. Jenni concurred that earmarking would introduce a number of administrative complications.
 - b. Susan recommended that the Conference Meal budget for 2014-'15 simply be increased with the EduKit funds in mind.
 - i. Jenni also recommended that several catering estimates be acquired in order to more accurately estimate the budget.
- f. Upper School Committee Updates (Jane Lagerquist)
 - i. The name has been changed to the Upper School Parent Advisory committee.
 - ii. The committee's mission statement was approved with minimal discussion.
 - iii. Meetings take place after the NPTO meetings from 5:00 to 6:00.
- g. Co-Chair Update (Robin Cerio)
 - i. Paper products are now being provided to faculty and staff by the NPTO.
 - 1. Staff should be made aware to contact the NPTO to restock the supply when it is running low as the NPTO will not be "keeping track".
 - ii. The NPTO room has been organized.
 - 1. All NPTO materials have been assigned a cabinet and all cabinets have been labeled.
 - 2. It is important to keep children's' visits to the NPTO room at a minimum as there are tools out in the open that could be harmful.
- h. Faculty Update (Kathleen McClarn)
 - i. Teachers are interested in potentially ordering math tools i.e. calculators, protractors and scissors to be used exclusively in the classroom for the 2014-'15 school year.
 - 1. In an effort to not increase school supply costs for families by duplicating some of the items included in the EduKits, as well as ensure students consistently have what they need in the classroom, Ms. McClarn is requesting a donation from the NPTO to equip the classroom with these supplies.
 - 2. Initial estimates indicate an investment of \$350.00.
 - a. Susan inquired as to whether the purchase could wait until "Back to School" time when supplies tend to be reduced in price.
 - i. Ms. McClarn did not have a problem with that and requested that the plan be firmed up so that the teachers knew they would not have to include the additional materials on the supply list for families.
 - 3. Dr. Bloomfield requested a bit more time to discuss and work out some of the logistics with Ms. Kelley.
 - 4. Jennie suggested more research be done around cost.
 - a. Jennie mentioned she has a family member that manages a wholesale business and that she might be able to get a competitive price on the calculators.
 - 5. Melissa made a motion to budget some monies for the classroom supplies.
 - a. The motion was seconded and approved.
 - ii. Ms. McClarn expressed her gratitude to the NPTO for the ELMO the faculty received for this school year.
- i. Nova Ambassadors Update (Robin Cerio)
 - i. Linda LaFrambois has put together an Enrollment Team that carries out any and all activities related to student enrollment.
 - ii. Given the purpose of this new team and the Ambassador's mission overlap to a large extent, would it be helpful to have the Nova Ambassadors become part of the Enrollment Team rather than continue to operate under the NPTO.

1. Dr. Bloomfield expressed concern over having Ambassadors enlisted in Enrollment Team activities and responsibilities given the varying knowledge base and time commitments. Also, he wanted to be sure Linda was not being overburdened.
 - a. Robin clarified that Ambassadors would not be enlisted to participate in other Enrollment Team tasks unless they would like to be.
 - b. She added that she currently manages the Nova Ambassadors and reports to Linda. Therefore, the shift would largely be in name only and not really require any logistical changes that would increase Linda's work load.
 2. Melissa suggested the Enrollment Team be allowed to operate, for this school year, on its own in order to shore up its operations and re-address adding the Nova Ambassadors to the group the following school year.
 3. Dr. Bloomfield also expressed the importance that the Ambassadors remain a parent driven, unscripted resource for families.
 4. Susan suggested we discuss it further at next month's meeting and give the attendees an opportunity to give it some further thought.
- j. Volunteer Update (Susan Hooge w/ Brian Bloomfield)
- i. A reminder was made to all attending the meeting that the hour they attend the NPTO meeting counted toward their service hours and to be sure to register via the NPTO website or hard copy – forms are available in the Main Office.
 - ii. A total 2,500 volunteer hours have been logged so far this year!
 - iii. It was suggested that attendees inquire as to whether their respective workplaces might reward volunteer hours in any way, in an effort to maximize those hours. Many companies do.

IV. Events Update

- a. Winter Treats (Jane Lagerquist)
 - i. Treats will be distributed to, both, the Upper and Lower school the last week of school before the holiday break.
 1. US – Monday, December 16th.
 - a. Treats will be served during lunch, in the mezzanine, during lunches.
 - b. Ms. Kelley inquired as to whether there would any challenges traffic wise considering students would be eating at that time as well.
 - c. Jane reassured her that they have done it in the past without any issues.
 2. LS – Friday, December 20th.
 - a. Third grade families will facilitate the treat prep & distribution.
 - b. They will be taken directly to students' classrooms throughout the school day.
 - c. Last year's serving schedule & planning materials will be provided to Ms. Kelley as well as the 3rd grade Room Parents.
 - i. Jane Lagerquist added that the materials are also available on-line.
 - ii. Beth Hawley reassured the room parents present that they would be contacted and provided any and all information they need to carry out the event. Including links to the materials Jane is referring to.
 - iii. Jane Farber inquired as to whether the Room Parents would need to be present throughout the day.

1. Beth directed Jane to the Sign Up Genius stating the Room Parents were welcome to stay throughout the day but would probably prefer to sign up to serve during one of the time slots.
 2. Jane Lagerquist added that in previous years the Room Parents did stay on campus throughout the day to manage the event.
 3. Dr. Bloomfield suggested that the LS event required a bit more supervision because, unlike the US distribution, the treats were being delivered directly to students' classrooms.
- ii. Treats will consist of Oreo cookies and hot chocolate.
- b. Parent Ed Night (Jane Lagerquist)
- i. The next Parent Ed night is on January 21 at 6:30 PM.
 1. It will be a second level presentation on Singapore Math and will take place in Room 109.
 2. There were four Parent Ed nights in the month of October.
 - a. 110 attended the "Happiness & Organization in the Upper School"
 - b. The Baking Brigade furnished lovely treats for two of the events.
- c. Barnes and Noble Book Fair (Beth Hawley)
- i. The Noodles & Company event raised over \$400.00.
 1. Beth inquired as to whether attendees thought Nova should continue to have a joint fundraiser with "Noodles" during the book fair or whether anyone had another eatery in mind.
 - a. The convenience of the location was mentioned as a plus and a reason to continue.
 - b. The kid-friendly menu was also mentioned as a plus.
 2. Melissa suggested potentially partnering with Bruegger's Bagels for a morning option given the "Noodles" event took place in the evening.
 - a. Beth replied that she would explore it further as a breakfast and/or lunch option.
 - ii. Despite concerns that having the book fair earlier in the year would be a challenge, it proved to be a benefit.
 1. Teachers signed on to participate in the reading a lot earlier.
 2. "Wish Lists" were submitted with great ease.
 3. Not as many school event conflicts.
 4. Additional discounts during Columbus Day weekend encouraged larger purchases.
 - iii. Twice as many books than last year were purchased for teachers and a total \$1800.00 was donated back to Nova.
- d. Conference Meals (Melissa Hernandez & Mary Corrigan)
- i. Meals went well and the NPTO is especially grateful to the Carbone family for the meal they provided on Thursday evening from Macaroni Grill.
 1. Ms. McClarn suggested the NPTO could place something in the Nova News thanking the family for the.
 - a. Dr. Bloomfield stated that the NPTO would need to be cautious about the perception that the group is "endorsing" a particular vendor/retailer due to the possible perception that the NPTO favors one over another.

- i. This would potentially negatively impact donations and/or sponsorships of other Nova events throughout the school year.
 - ii. In addition, as a non-profit, Nova cannot be perceived as supporting a particular for-profit organization without risking its non-profit status.
- b. Mary clarified that the Carbone family donated the food and that Macaroni Grill did not sponsor the meal.
 - i. Melissa commented that the communication Ms. McClarn suggested could be a general one thanking all Nova families for their generosity around Conference Meals with a specific reference to the Carbone family.
 - ii. Dr. Bloomfield confirmed that would acceptable.

V. Meeting Adjourned