

Nova PTO Meeting Minutes
February 2, 2021 6:00 via Zoom
Hosted by Heather Gray

Board Members: Heather Gray, Chair; Vidya Doppalapuddi, Vice-Chair; Isabel Chavier-Geist, Secretary; Lakshmi Narayanankutty, Treasurer; Ginger Gabor, Board Liaison

Our Mission: Nova Classical Academy PTO is an organization of volunteers who actively support the Nova Classical Academy mission and promote community within the school. The NPTO engages families, teachers and staff in fostering a school community that actively supports Nova's mission and enriches the students and the school in a manner that serves to equally benefit or level the playing field for all students, while also supporting the faculty and staff.

1. Welcome and Roll Call

- a. In Attendance (names are as they appeared on Zoom): Heather Gray, Chair; Vidya Doppalapuddi, Vice Chair; Lakshmi Narayanankutty, Treasurer; Ginger Gabor, Board Liaison; Isabel Chavier-Geist, Secretary; Committee Chairs: UpperSchool Parent Advisory Committee, Jane Lagerquist; Volunteer Coordinator, Mary Kluznik; Administration: Executive Director, Dr. Brett Wedlund; Lower School, Brooke Tousignant; Upper School, Michael Pelofske; Kim Dumitrica, Wendy Woster, Estella Mangan, Melanie Guertin, Jeff Yager, Kelly Rogosheske, Crystal Schuweiler, Zane Miles.
- b. Agenda additions : Heather
 - i. none
- c. Minutes and Approval Motion : Isabel
 - i. Seconded by Lakshmi, all in favor, motion to approve passed

2. Officer Reports

- a. Board Liaison Report : Ginger
 - i. Board met on 1/25/21 to discuss revised budget, financial audit and vaccine news.
 - ii. The budget discussion centered around Nova's healthy financial situation given the current situation and Nova's preparedness to weather any state cuts at the moment.
 - iii. Information regarding the recent audit can be found on the Nova website under Board. It was recommended to read page 17 of the report to see the auditor's recommendations and the current balance sheet.
 - iv. Leadership at the Board Meeting recommended staying in Distance Learning mode for the Upper School and to begin moving toward re-opening for the Lower School following state safety guidelines. The move to re-open follows the granting of more vaccines for Nova staff than previously anticipated.
- b. Executive Director's Update : Dr. Brett Wedlund
 - i. Reiterated the great financial news discussed at the Board meeting 1/25 in regards to the budget and audit. In addition, Dr. Wedlund stated that Nova is fortunate to have experienced little of the enrollment and staffing fluctuations troubling other schools. He is optimistic about the number of vaccines allotted for Nova staff that leadership is working to distribute. At the moment, data surrounding safe re-openings is being analysed by leadership who will continue

to monitor healthy learning environment solutions for both scholars and staff. Several questions regarding enrollment numbers for the following year were discussed. Dr. Wedlund assured the PTO that enrollment is on track for nearly full retention of student numbers and some new enrollments as well. Other questions were asked about staff retention in the face of a return to full in-person learning. Dr. Wedlund assured the NPTO that according to a recent questionnaire, the number of staff responding as “not interested in returning” to an in-person learning scenario, has shrunk to 11% from a previous questionnaire that counted almost 29% of respondents “not interested”. He feels optimistic that that percentage could be brought even lower with full staff vaccinations.

- c. Lower School Principal report: Ms. Brooke Tousignant
 - i. Ms. Tousignant said there was not much to add to the already discussed topics. The Lower School leadership is working hard to prepare for the return of K-5 scholars to in person learning.
 - d. Upper School Principal report: Mr. Michael Pelofske
 - i. Mr. Pelofske added that the Upper School is doing what they can to support and help the Lower School move to reopening. In addition, Upper School staff are setting up plans for graduation 2021 given that guidances have changed due to Covid. The ceremonies will most likely take place outdoors. Upper School is discussing logistics and provider availability.
 - ii. Mr. Pelofske discussed upcoming challenges for the Upper School including Semester 2 engagement, PSAT testing and NHS peer tutoring program in the works.
 - iii. School of Rhetoric and School of Logic information nights are also coming soon, Mr. Pelofske reminded the PTO..
 - e. Treasurer’s Report: Lakshmi
 - i. Lakshmi reports that the NPTO has had very few donations until recently when she found several PayPal donations had come through. She asked Jane if there had been any donations for the baskets; Jane said there had not been any.
 - ii. Heather asked if Lakshmi had contact information on the recent donors so a Thank You card could be sent. Lakshmi will forward the information to Heather.
 - iii. Lakshmi mentioned it was time to renew the PTO insurance and agreed to discuss further with Heather via email.
 - f. Upper School Parent Advisory Committee Chair Report: Jane Lagerquist
 - i. The USPAC is collecting money for graduation baskets. Leftover cash will go toward the cost of the celebration. Jane was having microphone issues and signed off.
 - g. Lower School Parent Advisory Committee Chair Report: Ms. Tousignant
 - i. No news to report
3. Action Items: Heather
- a. none
4. Updates and Upcoming Events
- a. Yard Sign Fundraiser Updates (Heather/Melissa Guertin).
 - i. Melissa had shared several design mock-ups with the NPTO prior to the meeting. Heather mentioned that Big Ink, the printing company, will charge \$12 for each sign and suggested the NPTO sell them to Nova families for \$20 to generate some revenue and cover the fees for using PayPal. The size of the

signs was reported to be around 23.5" x 19". Several weighed in on pricing and design choices. Heather agreed to send out the options once more for general discussion and will work on an order form for parents to use.

- ii. Estella brought up another fundraising opportunity through Apex Fun Runs and will connect with Heather to forward more information.
 - b. Parent Coffees via Zoom (Jane Lagerquist, Mary Kluznik, Kimberly Dumitrica)
 - i. Kim shared some details and highlights from the Parent Coffees that took place last week. She mentioned that one time slot was better attended than the other. There was some discussion about optimal time slots for more attendance and access. Ginger and Jane both added that the Coffees were nice, casual conversations and that they felt parents appreciated the opportunity to connect.
 - ii. They agreed that the next Coffee would be 2/11 at 7pm and that a reminder would be posted in the Facebook parent page.
 - c. Parent Distance Learning Forum (Ginger Gabor)
 - i. Heather suggested that the Forum project may have to be tabled for a while because of the return to in-person learning. Ginger agreed and felt some of the positive connection that came out of the coffees could be shared in the Forum as a way for support and encouragement during the Covid times. Ginger continues to work on the Forum project.
5. Discussion Items
- a. Restaurant Fundraisers
 - i. Several NPTO members made calls to local restaurants to see if they would be interested in fundraising partnerships with Nova. Davanni's responded they would be on hold until Spring. Chipotle and Panera directed members to fill out an online application, Parkway pizza and Papa Murphy's could not be reached. Vidya offered to call Jersey Mike's and Jimmy Johns. NPTO will do fundraising in the spring. The project is ongoing.
 - ii. Crystal mentioned the store Five Below also does fundraising partnerships, and that it may be worth looking into. She will share the information with Heather.
6. Public Comments, ideas or feedback
- a. None
7. Adjourn
- a. Heather moved to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Vidya.