

Nova PTO Meeting Minutes
May 4, 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: Upper School Parent Advisory Committee, Jane Lagerquist; Volunteer Coordinator, Mary Kluznik; Administration: Executive Director, Dr. Brett Wedlund; Lower School, Brooke Tousignant; Upper School, Michael Pelofske; Jesse Prins, Patty Mathews, Ann Weber, Stephanie Herschbach.
- 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 April 26th and started with discussion of consent agenda and public commentary on inclusion issues. A subcommittee was proposed to discuss the proposal.
 - ii. Also discussed logistics of reopening plans for Fall 2021. After public commentary, the budget was reviewed. Further discussions centered around proposed revisions to the Handbook with input from HR specialists.
 - iii. The next meeting will be May 24th. Zoom link and agenda will be posted on the Nova website in the About Us section.
 - iv. A question was asked about the Budget. Ginger answered that Nova is in a strong place financially according to the Auditor and Finance committees.
- b. Executive Director's Update : Dr. Brett Wedlund
 - i. Dr. Wedlund reiterated that the Board Meeting discussions around finances were encouraging.
 - ii. In addition he mentioned that Nova enrollment numbers were up and that was also good to see.
 - iii. Leadership acknowledged that shifts between learning models during the 2020-2021 school year were helped by keeping vigilant watch on infection rates. This caution helped Nova maintain in person learning and avoid having to implement a hybrid model. The administration will keep watching for the next few weeks as

- the school year comes to an end.
- iv. Other discussion during the Board meeting covered the current Branding effort. Dr. Wedlund said that the Branding committees are working with consultants and reaching out to current families and prospective families. In addition, there was discussed a refunding plan to take advantage of the current low rates.
- c. Lower School Principal report: Ms. Brooke Tousignant
 - i. Ms. Tousignant asked Dr. Wedlund how many students were currently on site learning. It was reported that Lower School had 379 students, School of Logic had 78 on site and School of Rhetoric had 53 scholars who participated in a Wednesday only enrichment program. Dr. Wedlund reinforced that while Nova has had some Covid positives, the school remains within the recommended number of cases to stay open.
 - ii. Ms. Tousignant thanked the NPTO for the Teacher Appreciation week snacks.
 - iii. The Lower School is currently planning for the Summer Boost program that will be an invitation-only interventional program in July and August..
 - d. Upper School Principal report: Mr. Michael Pelofske
 - i. Mr. Pelofske reported that week three of onsite learning for the 6-8 graders was going very well. With some predictable adjustments, the kids are enjoying being back in the building.
 - ii. Upcoming events for the Upper School include planning for Graduation which will take place June 6th on the Athletic Field. The attendance will be capped at 250 which means only Seniors and parents and some select staff will be able to take part on site.
 - iii. In addition, plans are being worked on for Senior Day; a celebratory way to give students closure and send off. The day typically includes a graduation rehearsal, distribution of caps and gowns and a special gift basket from Nova.
 - iv. Mr. Pelofske reported on the recent MCA testing saying that scores for the tests are embargoed for some time. A thank you to Missy Johnson for all the hard work scheduling and coordinating around mandated challenges.
 - v. Further upcoming events include: AP testing in the next few weeks, Green Team continues to plan the Garden project, and 8th grade promotion ceremony planning.
 - vi. In conclusion, Mr. Pelofske wanted to send kudos to the School of Logic staff and scholars for winning #2 school in the state. Thanks to all for the hard work.
 - e. Treasurer's Report: Lakshmi
 - i. Lakshmi will discuss the Budget under Action Items. .
 - f. Upper School Parent Advisory Committee Chair Report: Jane Lagerquist
 - i. Jane reports that USPAC was currently working on the Senior baskets with Tammy Krause Cruz and planning to distribute on 5/19 for Senior Day.
 - ii. The last meeting went well and the next meeting will be next Tuesday. Jane mentioned she had been posting surveys to gather monthly topics for discussion and the method is working well.
 - g. Lower School Parent Advisory Committee Chair Report: Stephanie H.
 - i. No report given
3. Action Items: Heather
- a. Vote on the 2021-2022 NPTO Budget.
 - i. Lakshmi asked if there was a need to make changes. In particular moving some funds into Unplanned Expenses from events like Great Gatherings that will

probably be down-scaled next year. This move will allow the NPTO to say yes to more small requests. There followed some discussion around the probability of the event being much smaller. The suggestion was made to also take money out of Carnival and move it into Unplanned Expenses. It was suggested by Heather that the discussion be tabled and moved off-line.

- ii. The Budget will be revised to reflect the discussed changes and voted on at a later meeting.
 - iii. The question came up about the specificity of budget line items. If descriptions could be more general like "Events", perhaps the problem of moving money around wouldn't come up. Lakshmi reiterated that that is one of the reasons she was asking to move money into Unplanned Expenses; she agreed to take the discussion off line with a smaller group to revise.
- b. Treasurer and Vice Chair
- i. The NPTO is still searching to fill these positions. Patty Mathews had shown some interest and Heather will reach out to discuss with her.
4. Updates and Upcoming Events
- a. Teacher and Staff Appreciation Week May 3-7. (Heather)
 - i. Thanks was expressed to all the families who donated to make the week special with short notice. Heather reminded Ms. T to please submit all receipts for gift cards.
 - b. Parent Coffees (Mary and Kim)
 - i. Kim is not present. Mary reports that recent coffee meetings have had low attendance so they discussed skipping the next time and meeting instead on 5/14.
 - c. Last Day of School Treats
 - i. Heather asked if Last Day treats could happen this year. Ms. Tousignant said that yes, most of the Lower School grades will do their own scaled-down regular events. Outdoor gatherings mostly and certainly not a school-wide event. Heather asked if there were plans in place for the 6-8th graders. Mr. Pelofske mentioned that it would be difficult to plan for all middle schoolers since the actual last day is staggered for them. Heather asked if K-4 teachers were going to request treat donations from parents as before. Ms. Tousignant said no. Heather admits she is leery of the NPTO offering treats to 6-8 and not to the K-5; she asked the group for suggestions. It was mentioned that off-site learners should also be offered something, and that the materials drop off on 6/4 would be the opportunity for that. Heather suggested that the discussion be tabled until the NPTO decides a feasible plan.
5. Discussion Items
- a. Funding Request (Ms. Tousignant) for Teacher/Staff End of Year Picnic
 - i. Ms. Tousignant requests NPTO funds for an end of year picnic to thank teachers and staff for the 2020-2021 school year. She read the request that had been submitted via email for an outdoor pavilion gathering being planned to fully cooperate with recent mandated CDC restrictions. She explained that food and money donations could not be solicited for this party and for that reason hoped that the NPTO could release some funds to cover the expenses.
 - ii. Heather explained the NPTO's reluctance to sponsor or donate to in-person events given the current restrictions due to Covid-19. A question of not only legal liability but of optics. There was further discussion without resolution.

- b. Lower School and Upper School Directories (2020-2021 School Year)
 - i. Discussion tabled due to time.
 - c. Nova PTO sponsored Family Directory (Heather)
 - i. Discussion tabled due to time.
- 6. Public Comment of today's discussion (tabled due to time)
- 7. Adjourn
 - a. Heather moved to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Jane.