

Nova PTO Meeting Minutes

October 2, 2018 4:00pm, Nova Exhibition Room

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 (Catherine)
 - a. In attendance: Catherine Graeve, Chair; Ginger Gabor, Vice-Chair; Angela Penniman, Secretary; Kristen Gonzalez, treasurer; Kimberly Dumitrica, board liaison; Connie Knowles, board liaison; Beth Hawley, parent/bookfair; Heather Gray, parent; Jane Lagerquist, parent, Upper School Parent Advisory Committee, Grapes of Math, carnival; Michael Pelofske, Assistant Principal K-12; Dani Treiber, parent/Great Gatherings; Jailene Butts, parent; Claudine Altunbilek, parent/staff; Brooke Tousignant, LS Principal; Petra Ricoli, parent; Christian Rovn, parent/Activities Director; Dahlia Brue, parent; Sara Knudsen, parent/teacher; Stefanie Herschback, parent/Great Gatherings; Gary Gabor, parent; Laura Peters, parent
 - b. Minutes and Approval Motion (Angela)
 - i. September minutes approved
2. Officer Reports
 - a. Board Meeting Report (Kimberly)
 - i. The big discussion was regarding Development Committee fundraising, which is particularly important for Nova as we receive 50 cents to every dollar compared with other schools in the area. Therefore, strategic fundraising plans are underway.
 - ii. The school is taking back ownership of development fundraising activities with the development committee volunteers there to support the school. This is how it was always intended but in practice the committee had taken on more of a leading role. Volunteers don't have access to school information or confidential parent information. They are there to support school staff as needed. Nova does not have a person hired to do development work. Melissa Guertin was hired for enrollment, but has taken on development too.
 - iii. MCA test results were discussed. Although the scores were good overall and above state averages, Nova did not meet its aggressive goals and is working on plans to improve scores.
 - b. Executive Director Report (Michael Pelofske)
 - i. Strategies to improve MCA scores are being examined.
 - ii. Plans have been discussed for long term employee salary compensation. Because we have less guaranteed funding than other schools, Nova must be careful with planning salaries and facilities.
 - iii. Since Nova is nearing enrollment capacity, it is important to be strategic with the budget.
 - c. Treasurer's Report / Development Committee Update (Kristen)
 - i. While we are currently operating at a net loss for the year due to large order of Spirit Ware and more teacher grants than usual, we have almost broke even for our Spirit Ware giving us the rest of the year's sales as profit. We've had more Edu Kit income this year.
 - d. Upper School Parent Advisory (Jane)
 - i. There are currently 19 parents on the Upper School Advisory Committee.
 - ii. The Fall Ball (formally the Masquerade Dance) dance will be Friday, October 12th.
 - iii. The Lower School Advisory committee will have its first meeting October 29th. There are still many classrooms without room parents or parents to be on the advisory committee.
3. Quick Updates and Upcoming Events
 - a. Great Gatherings (Danielle, Stefanie)
 - i. Great Gatherings is coming up on November 3rd. We are on track for ticket sales, but the number of gatherings is down. The deadline is October 22nd. Help is still needed with billing. Food trucks are secured; desserts will be changing this year. There will be a new game during the event. The silent action is continuing this year, and there will be artwork created by students available.
 - ii. Giving tree did well last year in a better location.
 - b. Book Fair (Beth)

- i. The bookfair is October 6th at Barnes and Noble in Har Mar Mall. This year there will be wish lists for Upper School teachers as well as Lower School teachers. Volunteers are still needed.
 - c. New Family Event Recap (Catherine)
 - i. It was a cold night but a decent turnout considering the weather. Hosting another new family event later this year that includes a pizza party at the school was discussed.
 - d. Upcoming Parent Ed Nights (Catherine)
 - i. Nova will be hosting the 2nd Annual Minnesota Classical Education Conference on October 18th. This is a change to collaborate with other Friends of Education schools through workshops and speakers; last year there were 14 schools in attendance. On the night before the event (October 17th) there will be a Parent Education Night with a keynote speaker on reading strategies in classical education. Baking Brigade is needed to feed approximately 200 people.
 - e. Room Parents Event (Ginger)
 - i. Lower school fall gatherings are hosted by grade parents as a way for families to interact with other families in the same grade. Volunteers for room parents are still needed so these events can be organized.
- 4. Discussion/Action Items
 - a. NovaRun (Catherine)- possibly Kristine Ralston or Chris Rovn
 - i. The Development Committee, who has organized this in the past, is passing the duties over to the PTO. Chris Rovn explained that for the past 3 years the run has generated income. The 10K is too expensive to make it worth it; expenses are \$3,000 for road blocking and police staff. Last year there were more cooperate sponsors than ever, but the smallest amount of participation. It is a lot of work to organize this event, especially for one person. Chris's advice would be to host a small 2-mile trail run instead. If we marked our own distance on the walking paths near the school, we wouldn't have to close streets or hire police, and it would require a lower priced permit.
 - b. NPTO Volunteer Sign-up updates (Ginger)
 - i. There are currently 500 people signed up in Raptor Portal. Ways to better organize and navigate this system are still being worked out. Many people expressed their concerns with the functionality and limitations of this new system.
 - c. Parent Coffee (Catherine)
 - i. Parent coffees will continue to be held on assembly days.
- 5. Public comment on today's discussion
 - a. We can be reached at NovaPTO@gmail.com for further discussion.
- 6. Adjourn

Next Meeting: November 6th, 2018