

## NPTO Meeting Minutes

September 10<sup>th</sup>, 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 Farber (Room Parent), Ellad Tadmor, Jane Lagerquist (Board Liaison), Samantha Fischer (Room Parent), Robin Cerio (Co-Chair), Beth Hawley (Co-Chair), Brian Bloomfield (School Director), Michelle Granbert (Room Parent), Jamie Knippel
- II. Minutes Approval - Meeting minutes were not provided for review and approval. Copies of the minutes taken for June and July will be provided, reviewed, and submitted for approval at the next NPTO meeting, October 3rd.
- III. Officer Reports
  - a. Board Meeting Update (Jane Lagerquist)
    - i. The meeting took place in August (3½ hours long).
    - ii. Public comments should be shared at the onset of the meeting. However, Board Members are unable to respond to said comments due to meeting guidelines.
    - iii. Meeting packets are available on Nova’s Parent Website. One may also request to receive a copy of the monthly meeting packet via Dr. Bloomfield.
    - iv. In order to serve on the Board it is recommended that one serve on one of the many committees active throughout the school year.
      1. Mr. Bloomfield suggested the Academic Excellence Committee which is going to be looking at defining goals of academic and virtue based achievement for students at the school looking at the type of testing data we collect and how we can use it properly and eventually getting into some skill based standards for our entire K-12 program. There are 12 spots remaining.

2. Additional Committee Possibilities
  - a. Finance & Budget Committee
  - b. Governance Committee
  - c. Social-Emotional Committee
- v. Nova has purchased the remaining lot on the block. Bidding has begun on the irrigation and sod process which is estimated to be \$25 to \$35 thousand dollars.
- vi. The Upper School is now on a 7 period day. Students no longer have Joust (study hall).
- vii. The next Board Meeting will take place Sept. 30, at 6:30 in rooms 302 & 304.
- b. Development Update (Dr. Bloomfield)
  - i. The Development Committee has been renamed. Now referred to as the Advancement Committee, the group's goal is to collect \$125,000 in contributions.
  - ii. A one page primer and overview of "giving opportunities" is available on Nova's website and will also be distributed at the Back-to-School night events.
  - iii. Representatives from the Advancement Committee in addition to the NPTO will be present at the events to communicate these giving opportunities in addition to answer any questions.
- c. Executive Director Update (Dr. Bloomfield)
  - i. A survey has been distributed to Nova families in an effort to capture opportunities for improvement in the execution of some of the beginning of the year events and activities. A full summary of the responses will be provided to the board and any approved changes will be implemented in the 2014-2015 school year.
- d. Treasurer Update (Jennifer Johnson)
  - i. There is currently \$41,000 in the working account.
  - ii. Reporting of last year's tax requirements is being finalized.
  - iii. \$400 has been collected and deposited in the "Solar Panel" account of which the NPTO is merely and administrator.
    1. Presently, Susan Hooge has been acting as the "buyer" for the program but Jodi Gallagher has expressed interest in taking on that function.
    2. The group is currently establishing a process that would define what type of gift is given for what type of life event in addition to establishing firmer guidelines for when a gift is given, in order to provide for consistency. Dr. Bloomfield volunteered to work w/ the staff reps to establish those guidelines. Ms. Schlatter and Ms. Schultz are the staff representatives for the program.
    3. Jane Lagerquist suggested a Novawear "onsie" for new babies while Susan Hooge preferred a "First Year Calendar". Additional items discussed: for weddings, and item off of the couple's registry within a pre-determined price range; for a death in the family, a non-flowering plant. It has already been established that all purchases should be within the \$20 range.
    4. Jennifer requested that receipts be submitted to her as soon as the purchases are made.
  - iv. 3 EduKits have been sold.
  - v. Jennifer asked for help in deciphering a money envelope she received after the Open House in the amount of \$91.00. Robin clarified that some Novawear had been purchased in addition to several Nova Cookbooks and that she would provide Jennifer with the details shortly after the meeting.
  - vi. \$300 was deposited in the Uniform Fund.
  - vii. Nine teacher grants have been awarded.
  - viii. PTO financial management software has been purchased.

- ix. An insurance addendum must be purchased for Great Gatherings. Jane and Susan recommended Jennifer work with Karen Bailey and Mary Corrigan to clarify who is doing it and how it is getting done.
- x. Jane inquired as to whether Jennifer felt she needed an assistant. She expressed she did not feel it necessary given that things would most likely “slow down” after the initial activity of the beginning of the school year.
- xi. The Scrip Fundraiser will no longer be managed by the PTO.
- e. Room Parents Update (Robin Cerio & Beth Hawley):
  - i. Some classrooms are still in need of room parents, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades. More recruiting will be done to fill those spots during Back to School night.
  - ii. The orientation for Room Parents will take place after the Back to School events. There will be two scheduled in order to accommodate varying schedules.
  - iii. This year there are two per classroom, in the Lower School, in order to provide for more fluid and productive task management.
- f. Committee Officers Update (Susan Hooge)
  - i. Committees will be assigned to each NPTO officer for oversight.
  - ii. This should take place w/in the next two weeks.

#### IV. Events Update

- a. Back to School Night (Susan Hooge)
  - i. The NPTO will conduct a presentation regarding its role at Nova, encouraging families to participate.
  - ii. The Great Gatherings group will present a video regarding the program.
  - iii. Some logistical items were discussed and worked out in preparation for the events.
- b. Parent Ed Night (Jane Lagerquist)
  - i. The first one is on September 21<sup>st</sup>.
    1. It will be a presentation on the Classical Education Model given by Dr. Bloomfield.
  - ii. Promotion is needed. Particularly around the fact that childcare will be provided.
    1. Dr. Bloomfield will ensure it is included in the next Nova News.
  - iii. Childcare providers need to be recruited.
    1. After some discussion, it was decided that two of Nova's EAs would be recruited for the job, at \$40 each, for two hours of care.
    2. Each family will be charged \$5-\$10.
    3. Dr. Bloomfield suggested it might be helpful to invite some SoR students to participate as well.
      - a. The benefit of which would be two fold. The students would gain some volunteer hours and the EAs would have some additional help.
- c. Barnes and Noble Book Fair (Beth Hawley)
  - i. The fair will take place on Saturday, October 12<sup>th</sup> at the B&N on Ford Parkway in Highland Park.
  - ii. 15% of purchases by Nova families be donated back to the school.
  - iii. Teachers submit wish lists providing families an opportunity to buy books for their child's classroom.
  - iv. Teachers read throughout the day and there will be a special pajama, night reading by Mr. Long and Miss Lund.
  - v. Efforts are being made to bring back the Upper School Drama Team to perform "The Grinch".
  - vi. Noodles and Company is also participating in the fundraiser by donating 25% of meal purchases made by Nova families between 4-9 PM back to the school.
  - vii. Dr. Bloomfield suggested promotional efforts be ramped up fairly quickly as this is the first major community/fund raising event of the year.
    1. Beth assured the group that those efforts had begun and would continue through the event date.
  - viii. Susan Hooge commented on how the event is a great opportunity for parents to get some volunteer hours in.
  - ix. Ellad inquired as to when the teacher reading schedule would be available.
    1. Beth replied that it would be available and posted by early next week.
- d. Great Gathering (GG), (Susan Hooge)
  - i. This is a fun event taking place on November 2nd that includes a food, drinks, a silent auction in addition to sign-up opportunities to participate in fundraising and community building events throughout the school year. "Grapes of Math" also takes place that evening. Adult-only. Additional information can be found on the Nova website.
  - ii. The group will be using an alternate credit card processing company that allows for tickets to be purchased rather easily through various channels.
    1. The new company is more costly up front but does not have many of the hidden, back end fees the previous provider did.

2. Overall, it is a better provider that Karen Bailey is familiar with and vouches for.
  - iii. The GGs group is working on obtaining an insurance addendum in order to serve liquor at the kick-off event.
  - e. Conference Meals (Melissa Hernandez)
    - i. Planning has begun for conference meals.
    - ii. Mary Corrigan will be the lead on the committee.
    - iii. 6 people have signed up to help with the event.
    - iv. Dr. Bloomfield suggested that the families who donate and prepare meals should be asked to label their dishes so that they are appropriately returned.
- V. Used Uniform Central (Robin Cerio)**
- a. There is a website which houses this listing that has not been used or maintained for quite some time.
  - b. While the NPTO does not oversee the used uniform sale there is a link on the NPTO page that routes families to the website. Linda LaFrambois suggested that the link would be superfluous now that the group will be having a sale in the Fall and the Spring. As a result of Linda's perspective as well as some additional research, the link has been removed from the NPTO page
  - c. It was suggested that the Used Uniform page be eliminated.
    - i. Jane Lagerquist preferred the page be preserved just in case the group found they would need to use it again in the future.
- VI. Upper School Committee (Logic and Rhetoric) (Susan Hooge)**
- a. This Committee was formed in order to provide Upper School families an opportunity to be involved with the school's activities, events, etc. to a greater degree.
  - b. It will act as an advisory board, of sorts, that will meet w/ Mrs. Morton after the NPTO meetings.
  - c. Robin inquired as to the NPTOs involvement w/ the committee in terms of oversight.
    - i. Susan and Jane clarified that, unlike the Room Parents in the lower school, the NPTO would not need to oversee this group.
      1. It would be overseen by Mrs. Morton and her team.
  - d. Dr. Bloomfield felt it important to clarify the Committee's mission going forward.
    - i. As he understands it, the group will be a source of support for the Upper School staff in carrying out the Legacy Events throughout the school year.
    - ii. In recent discussions, however, it appears the group will be an advisory cabinet to Mrs. Morton.
    - iii. He feels the purpose of the committee should be further clarified in order to avoid any issues going forward.
    - iv. Susan added that Mrs. Morton stated the group would be more event support than advising but was unsure as to whether that has been communicated to the committee.
    - v. After further discussion it was clarified that the Sign-Up Genius forwarded to families requesting volunteers for the Committee defined the group as one that would act in support of Upper School events.
    - vi. Susan suggested it helpful that she be at the Committee's next meeting to reiterate that purpose.
- VII. Principals at Coffee Time (Dr. Bloomfield)**
- a. Parent coffees take place every Friday.
  - b. Leadership thought it helpful to the Nova community to include each principal and the director in at least one coffee per month, in rotation.
    - i. This would provide an opportunity for families to have an open forum with the principals and/or the director.
  - c. Most everyone in the group was in agreement, and the motion was passed.

- d. Samantha interjected that, as a working parent, she's unable to attend the coffees but would still enjoy an open forum with Nova's leadership.
  - i. Jane Lagerquist to encourage the NPTO officers to create an alternative gathering opportunity for parents who are unable to attend the coffees.
  - ii. Dr. Bloomfield suggested tacking on some time for parents to chat with the principals and himself to the Parent Ed nights.
  - iii. Samantha volunteered to serve as the coordinating point in that effort.

**VIII. Social Media/Website (Robin Cerio)**

- a. Robin has taken over managing all of the NPTO media/communication efforts.
- b. A document archive has been created and requires ongoing maintenance.
- c. NPTO Facebook and Twitter accounts require ongoing attention.
- d. She suggested its management needs to be systematized in order to ensure consistency and reliability.
  - i. Melissa suggested that it be a volunteer role but that the role carries with it a multiple year commitment.
  - ii. This will be discussed further at a future meeting.

**IX. Philanthropic Opportunity (Jamie Knippel)**

- a. This is a local outreach service project opportunity for the Lower School.
  - i. Nova students pack backpacks that are then distributed to needy children at local schools.
  - ii. Recruiting could take place through the Room Parents and the grades would rotate doing the work of the back pack preps from week to week.
  - iii. Pantry items would need to be housed at Nova and the packing would also take place at the school.
  - iv. Seed money would be required in order to purchase the back packs and the initial pantry items.
  - v. Although it has a number of moving parts, the process is incredibly streamlined and would be easy to manage once the initial startup has taken place.
  - vi. After some discussion it was determined that the NPTO was not the vehicle through which a project of this nature could be realized.
  - vii. Dr. Bloomfield invited Jamie to come speak with himself and the principals to explore if and how the Nova community could make this happen.

**X. Spirit Wear (Jane Lagerquist)**

- a. Fall sale in October 1st thru 15<sup>th</sup>.
- b. Homecoming Theme
- c. Jane solicited the group for Novawear ideas.
  - i. Hats and scarves for the Upper School "Houses"
  - ii. Sweatpants
  - iii. Mitten/Glove Clips

**XI. Meeting Adjourned**