

L'Etoile du Nord Parent Teacher Organization
Draft Meeting Minutes, Thursday, December 8th, 2022

PTO Team Members Present: Rebekah LaCasse (President), Colin Nelson-Dusek (Secretary), Breann Tierschel (Treasurer), Malia Caruso (Communications chairperson), Christophe de Campeau (Intern committee chairperson)

Other: Sofia Bossard (school principal)

Absent: Regan Hall Reinerth (Marketing chairperson), Michou Tchoffo (Vice President)

Rebekah opened the meeting at 8:03pm.

Welcome and President's Update: Rebekah presented. She expressed her thanks to everyone for attending during a very busy season.

Rebekah then introduced Sofia Bossard and ceded to her.

Principal's Update: Sofia presented. She expressed her thanks to everyone for welcoming her back to LNFI. During maternity leave, Sofia said that they worked on securing a full group of teaching assistants for the school. She also hired an additional TA for special education students. She discussed Madame Lacey's upcoming retirement, but there will be a new technology specialist on January 3, 2023. She will give updates as they come in.

Sofia said that faculty and staff are working on PBIS (Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support) as ways to support students and improve the sense of community at LNFI. One piece is distribution of prizes and acknowledgement of positive behavior. The other piece is the introduction of assemblies, which should be happening in the new calendar year. LNFI staff is still figuring out how to organize the assemblies. Further updates will be coming. Sofia also mentioned that there will be a focus on National African-American Parent Involvement Day at the February assembly. She also said that there will be a focus on NAAPID throughout the month, not just a single day (Feb. 13 is designated NAAPID).

Sofia discussed the community email blasts that she is sending out and she welcomes feedback on ways to better communicate with every LNFI family. She addressed school tours and ways to involve parents and LNFI community members (as tour guides), rather than just having tours given by the principal or a staff member. Information (such as brochures) on LNFI in languages other than English and French (Spanish and Hmong, for example) is also in the works.

Sofia then opened the floor for questions from meeting attendees. An attendee asked for a further explanation of NAAPID, which was addressed by Rebekah. There will be an assembly on February 13, and Michou and Bobbi Jones are working with Sofia to organize more activities on both the day and throughout the month. There are potentially after-school activities planned,

which could involve the instruction of dancing and songs. There could also be a morning meeting where parents could come to the school.

Committee Reports (Fundraising/Intern/Social/Communications/Marketing): Rebekah presented first. The PTO is planning a fun run, which will be a Glow Run! Fundraising for the event will be from February 6-14, with the actual run taking place on Feb. 14. The PTO will need volunteers for the whole of the fundraising season. This will help us keep more of the profits from the fun run than in years past (when we relied on staff from the fun run company).

We just had a Spirit Gear drive! Orders are in and the apparel will be distributed on Thursday, December 15. Rebekah would like a volunteer to become the Spirit Gear coordinator, to help with creating designs, getting the designs to the print shop, and then helping the faculty with the distribution of gear. There will be another Spirit Gear drive in the spring with updated designs.

Christophe de Campeau presented updates for the Intern Committee. Interns are progressing nicely. The committee just had the first host family orientation for the spring semester hosts. There will be a second session soon. The Host Family Switch Party will be happening at the end of the month. At the party, the interns, fall hosts, and spring hosts get together to celebrate and meet one another.

Christophe also talked about the cultural activities for interns. The committee is trying to organize a group that would allow the interns to participate in Minnesota activities (such as going skiing, visiting state parks and/or museums, etc.). Christophe says the group is in progress, but would be happy to have families participate and involve interns in weekend outings. There was discussion. Sofia mentioned that she is meeting with the Alliance Francaise next weekend, and she thinks that there will be resources at the AF that would be useful to the interns. There was further discussion.

Rebekah updated everyone on the Social Committee. The committee provided two meals during conference week to the teachers at LNFI. Rebekah and Sofia expressed their thanks to everyone who contributed.

Malia gave updates on the Communications Committee. She gave everyone further information on how to access PTO information through the PTO website. She asked that everyone update their contact information on the website (if it is present). Malia gave a book fair update - there was about \$6300 in sales, both onsite and online. There will be another book fair in the spring, also close to the parent-teacher conference dates. Malia said she is seeking a volunteer coordinator to liaise with Scholastic Canada to order French books for future book fairs.

Sofia noted that a lot of LNFI families have French books that their children have grown out of, and she was wondering if the PTO could establish a book swap for the community. There was discussion. Rebekah asked people to email her with ideas about the book swap/exchange.

Rebekah talked about information for the School Choice Fair, which is happening this Saturday, 12/10, at the RiverCentre. She asked people to spread the word about LNFI and discussed what would be happening at the LNFI booth at the fair (which will include brochures, interns, faculty, and LNFI families). Sofia shared some information about the setup of the booth.

Treasurer's Update (financial update/Employer Matching Grants): Breann presented. She introduced herself and talked about her responsibilities as Treasurer. Breann discussed what was approved at the last PTO meeting of the 2021-2022 school year, and then what she forecasted as the actual revenue and expenses so far this year. While she previously changed the expected direct donations (forecast down), this was changed back to the \$20,000 budget due to recent employer match contributions from LNFI families. Breann explained what revenue should be expected from the Book Fair and Give to the Max Day. After summarizing the expenses, Breann projected that the PTO will break even this year, possibly earning a \$1000 profit.

Breann showed the attendees the year-to-date income statement, which details the revenue and expenses so far for the school year. There was discussion. Christophe asked where grants and awards would be placed in the budget. Breann responded that it would probably be listed as income for the Intern Program. Lastly, Breann further detailed the employer matching grants that have been received over the past month. Breann asked attendees to please respond to her if they work for a company that does matching donations. Christophe also asked people to remember Amazon Smile (and contributions to the LNFI PTO) if they are ordering from Amazon. There was discussion. Rebekah expressed her thanks to Breann for her hard work.

New Business - Voting of Social Committee Chair Candidates/French Immersion

Pathways Information: Rebekah presented. We have several candidates for committee chairs that have stepped forward since our last meeting. Present at the meeting are Nicole Kelley and Jessica Hietala, who are candidates for co-chairs of the social committee. Jessica and Nicole introduced themselves and talked about their interest in the social committee. Rebekah and Malia called for a vote to approve Jessica as a Social Committee Co-Chair. The vote was held electronically, via Zoom. Jessica was approved as a co-chair. Rebekah and Malia then called for a vote to approve Nicole as a Social Committee Co-Chair. Nicole was approved as a co-chair. Rebekah welcomed Nicole and Jessica to the PTO Team.

Rebekah discussed the French Immersion Pathway presentation, which will happen at the next PTO meeting. Teachers, staff, and former students will talk about the immersion pathway experience in middle and high school. This topic will cover the entirety of the PTO meeting, which will be held on Thursday, January 12, from 6:00-7:30pm. There was discussion. Christophe noted that, although we just voted on committee co-chairs, we still need volunteers to help plan and coordinate events and programming. We're always looking for help, in every committee that the PTO has! There was discussion about grants and fundraising opportunities.

Sofia added one last bit of information: She discussed a soccer clinic for K-5 boys and girls at LNFI. Further information will be discussed in future meetings, but it potentially would be

twice/week at the school (as an after-school activity). There will be a fee for the course, which would be about \$300 per session, per student. The session would be 10-12 weeks and conducted in French. Sofia asked for approval from the meeting attendees to further explore this activity. There was discussion and Rebekah promised to have a discussion at the next Executive Committee meeting.

Rebekah expressed her thanks to all attendees and ended the meeting at 9:27pm.

Amicalement,
Colin Nelson-Dusek, secretary