

L'Etoile du Nord Parent Teacher Organization
Draft Meeting Minutes, Thursday, November 9th, 2023

PTO Team Members Present: Rebekah LaCasse (President), Colin Nelson-Dusek (Secretary), Malia Caruso (Communications chairperson), Michou Tchoffo (Vice President), Erica Scott (Fundraising chair)

Other: Sofia Bossard (principal)

Absent:

Before the meeting officially started, there was a discussion on whether there will be a yearbook produced this year for LNFI. Sofia Bossard joined the meeting at 8:07pm. She was asked if there would be a yearbook, and she said there would be. It will take a lot of staff and volunteer time. One of the parents offered to volunteer, and there was further discussion.

Rebekah opened the meeting at 8:08 pm. She expressed her thanks to everyone for showing up, especially during a busy time of the year for the school and the PTO.

Principal's Update: Budget season is coming up, and more information should be coming to the principal after winter break. There have already been sessions and community feedback for next year's budget, and she encourages everyone to attend a budget session, if possible.

The dance residency will be coming up soon, and there will be a chance for all the students to contribute. The principal also noted that there are more assemblies that are culturally focused. She said that there will be better communication from LNFI about upcoming assemblies and parents are welcome to attend.

Principal Bossard talked about the curriculum updates, both in reading and in math. She noted that things are progressing well.

Field trips are coming up and parents are welcome to attend, as long as they register in advance. Principal Bossard opened the floor to questions. She then remembered that the France trip will be happening and that it will be open to fifth and sixth graders this year (since there was no trip last year). Mmes Vang and Tran are leading the organization of the trip, and they are the best people to contact.

Committee Updates: Malia began by talking about Communications. The book fair opened this evening and will be ongoing through November 14. There will be opportunities for 2nd-5th grade students to shop the book fair on Monday the 13th. There are some French and Spanish books, but it is primarily the standard Scholastic group of books. Malia said that there is also a used book sale going on, and she expressed her thanks to all of the donations.

Malia said that the spirit gear sale is going on now until November 22. Sales can be made through the PTO website (a link is there). She said that the PTO is open to new designs for future spirit gear drives, and anyone interested should contact her.

Rebekah gave an update on the Fundraising committee. She expressed her thanks to everyone who gave during the Direct Donation campaign. The PTO collected \$10,400, plus \$1400 from corporate matching for the Direct Donation. She also reminded everyone that November 16 is Give to the Max Day, and that the PTO does participate if anyone is interested in giving. The Glow Run will be happening this winter, so stay tuned for more information.

Rebekah also gave an update on the Intern Committee. The committee is currently gathering information to present to the community on what the interns do in class and how they bring their language and culture to the school. Parents should keep an eye out for more information in the coming months.

Rebekah gave information about having a more diverse pool of candidates. The committee is looking into working with Amity, which does recruit interns from Haiti, Senegal, and Guinea. The PTO will continue to work with the French Embassy, but they will be working with Amity, as well as getting advice from M. Andre, who has connections to the University of Minnesota, as well as Mme Nelson, who has a partnership with the Alliance Francaise.

January is intern recruitment month, so please stay tuned for more information on hosting an intern in the coming year. One of the parents stated that they worked with Malia to create an online form for families to invite interns to social gatherings or special events. This is a way for the community to learn more from the interns and to welcome them into new experiences and cultures.

Principal Bossard asked if there was a winter clothing drive for the interns this year. Rebekah said yes, there will be donations. Malia has been working on the clothing drive and she said that she is connecting with the interns to see what they need. Snow pants and gloves/mittens seem to be the greatest need at the moment. If anyone has any gently used gloves or hats, they are welcome to drop them off at the office for the interns' use.

Rebekah said that there have been new parents and teachers joining the intern committee, and anyone who is interested can join (contact Rebekah or Principal Bossard).

Rebekah then gave the update for the Social Committee. Teacher Appreciation meals were offered today, as well as next Tuesday. Open gym time will be offered starting in December (13th), and will be the second Wednesday of every month going forward. The committee has been in touch with the new gym teacher about this event. It is designed to be a space for parents to connect and for kids to play during the winter months.

Finance Update: Rebekah stated that there is an opening for Treasurer, as well as other parents to join in helping in finance. There is also a need for a Social Committee co-chair.

Anyone who is interested should contact Rebekah or Michou and to please do so by NOvember 22 (especially for the Treasurer position).

Rebekah said that next month's meeting will be a special one, since it will be focused on the transition from LNFI to Hidden River and continuing the French track. There are teachers from Hidden River Middle and Central High, as well as former LNFI students, that will be talking about the transition.

The meeting will be on a different day and time than usual, Thursday, December 7 from 6:00-7:00pm. This is to accommodate the schedule of the middle and high school teachers. Spread the word to anyone in the community that would be interested.

Rebekah asked if there were any questions. There was discussion about the pickup process and issues that parents have had with picking up their children.

There was further discussion about how to pick up the spirit gear.

Rebekah ended the meeting at 9:00pm.

Amicalement,
Colin Nelson-Dusek, secretary