

LNS BOARD MEETING MINUTES

September 24th, 2019

Attendees:

- *Present:* Abby Adams, Feyza Marouf, Cynthia Chang, Anique Lebel, Rebecca Blanchfield, Katherine Taunton-Rigby, Victoria Singerland, Kristen Ferris, Jessica Kaplan, Lisa Parker, Mara Rus, Gina Cherco, Grishma Dille, Jessica Callow, Liz Heald, Kerri Schubert, Christine Maggs
- *Absent:* Becky Bermont, Cara Shortsleeve
- *Also Present:* Nancy Fincke, Lauri Bounty

LNS Board:

President: Abigail Adams

Secretary: Feyza Marouf

Vice President of Operations: Cynthia Chang

Vice President of Programs: Anique Lebel

Treasurer: Rebecca Blanchfield

Enrollment: Katherine Taunton-Rigby & Victoria Singerland

deCordova Liaison: Becky Bermont

Strategic Planning: Cara Shortsleeve & Kristen Ferris

PR & Communications: Christine Maggs & Jessica Kaplan

Room Parents: Lisa Parker (B), Mara Rus (Y), Gina Cherco (P),
Grishma Dille (R)

Staff Search & Development: Jessica Callow

Welcoming & Social: Liz Heald and Kerri Schubert

President, Abigail Adams:

Welcome

Board Goals 2018-19

Community service goals: Discussion of LNS staff and family participation in climate strike, Mothers Out Front led by three LNS families.

LNS 75th anniversary celebration (Gala): we have an honorary chair facilitating some of the details, expecting about 200 people including 100 alumni.

Enrollment: towns represented at LNS this year: Lincoln 33% Concord 21%, Wayland 13%, also Belmont, Lexington, Maynard, Needham. We are grateful as it means full school, but needs wider social media marketing plan. We need a more strategic way to share information consistently, including social media. Facebook led 5 families to our Open House last year who hadn't heard about LNS otherwise.

Anique Lebel voted onto board by consensus.

2. Secretary, Feyza Marouf:

Approval of June 2019 minutes.

3. Director's Report, Nancy Fincke:

Nancy Fincke and Lauri Bounty described their visit to the Opal School last summer. Opal is a Reggio based Portland school, also in a children's museum, that has added a charter school to its preschool. The preschool is not a co-op but parents are very involved. The school has to make things very visible because they are getting grants every year. The charter also requires they do professional development.

Before viewing the slideshow, Nancy and Lauri handed out an article by Loris Malaguzzi, a founder of Reggio, which was read aloud paragraph by paragraph by the attendees.

Nancy's comments during the slideshow: "What we noticed throughout the classrooms and spaces of Opal was the clear communication of the

image of the child, documentation that helped children see themselves as strong and competent... We need to reconsider the role of schools in empathy, leadership, creative problem solving... Everything was a question. We often keep those questions inside our heads as teachers. We don't often make them visible to parents or each other. Nothing was lectured, it was posed to us in a question form, and everything was a discussion which is what we do in our classrooms, we need to make that thinking more visible. We've made some shifts in our faulty meeting, classrooms, blog. Documentation makes ideas visible."

After the slideshow, Nancy and Lauri shared this year's **Umbrella Topic at LNS: Visibility**, a metaphor for our collaborative work to unite the four studios. Faculty met in August rather than September to decide on the umbrella topic. Children have a strong opinion about the natural world and we really wanted to make that more visible.

This is the first time studios are sending out **Letters of Intention**. This was Opal school's model. Each studio has sent these letters, they are also in the blog, weekly newsletter and present in classrooms to think about with your child.

Finally, we viewed a short documentary film that interviewed four graduates of the Opal school who are now in college.

Audience questions after the film:

Q) Are there other Reggio inspired schools locally? -Advent school in Boston.

Q) How does it work as a charter school? Is there a lot of parental involvement? - Lottery system. Parents aren't in the classroom.

The film led to a general group discussion about what happens when LNS children move beyond preschool to public school, with a range of concerns and experiences shared by attendees.

4. Updates:

Treasurer, Rebecca Blanchfield:

Update:

2018-2019 Fiscal Year ended 8/31/19

Balances as of 8/31/19

Cash Accounts: ~\$775k

Endowment Portfolio Value: ~\$340K

2018-2019 current school year

Enrollment: We did have four withdrawals over the summer (one Blue, two Yellow, one Red). We were able to fill the Blue and Red spots but Yellow remains under budget by 1 student. However, when setting the budget last year we didn't anticipate a full class of full day Red, so this cushion in the budget helps offset the shortfall in Yellow. Other budget offsets come from Blue going from three to four days and raising Extended Day tuition for the first time in years.

Tuition collection: Still quite a bit behind on the installment due 9/15. The last installment of tuition is due 11/15/19.

Committees should now all have their budgets and instructions on how to submit expenses—feel free to come to me with questions.

Budget Risks

- Extended Day Contracts are at ~\$45,800 thus far, which is a healthy relative to our Extended Day budgeted revenue for the year of \$54k. Last year daily extended day signups brought in ~\$16k, so if we stay on the same track this year we would exceed budget.
- Fundraising income is always a difficult number to predict.

5. Additional Questions/Discussion

- **Photos/Advertising/Social Media:** Several members raised the wish to better document and share the scenes they were witnessing as parent helpers in the classrooms. "The set-ups are so beautiful and thought provoking in the studios, there's so much people don't know." Discussion included how to share teacher photos with Jessica Kaplan for social media posting. This led to a discussion of marketing techniques and social media searches. "Every time you type in LNS (into a Google search) you get the Teddy Bear Club."

- **Snacks:** Studio Red parents described difficulty finding consensus among parents about appropriate snack foods in the setting of multiple children with food sensitivities (including dairy, gluten) and concerns about adherence to organic vs non-organic fruits/vegetables. The benefits of having a group experience of sharing snack vs children bringing individual snacks/having separate snacks was discussed. Liz Heald shared a nutritionist's perspective about centering fruit and vegetables and raised the possibility of a school-wide policy. There was an extended discussion of how this has been handled in the different studios. Parents raised concerns that children might not eat enough, or have enough energy during the day if not offered range of choices, including dairy and carbohydrates. "Trying to accommodate too many opinions has made it hard." No specific recommendations were reached by the end of the meeting but a range of perspectives shared.