

LNS Board Meeting Minutes

September 22, 2020

Via Zoom

Attendees:

- **Present:** Mara Rus, Kate Brooks, Anique Lebel, Rebecca Blanchfield, Katherine Ruhl, Jessica Kaplan, Victoria Slingerland, Matt Hendrick, Clint Cherco, Mitch Brooks, Emily Lines, Gina Cherco, Kristie Fox, Jessica Callow, Lauren O'Neil, Kerri Schubert
- **Absent:** All Board Members Present
- **Also Present:** Nancy Fincke, Christine Oumansour, Emily Drazen, Amy Funkenstein, Andy Porter, Annie Magee, Jon Magee, Kristen Gowdy, Jochem Gokemeijer, Neel Madan

President's Report – Mara Rus:

- Welcome
- Board Introduction
- Board Meeting Format
 - Will follow same format as last year. There will be call for updates as well as provocation and/or speaker
 - Attendance very important
- Thank you
 - Thank you to a few people who worked so hard to get LNS up and running safely
 - Nancy for being the rock of the school
 - Steering Committee for your hard work and late nights this summer
 - Lisa Canning who worked tirelessly this summer
 - All the teachers - Mark, Diane, Sue, Alice, Wendy, Karen, Lauri, Emily and DJ who are so dedicated to our kids
- Introductions
- Board Goals
 1. Continue to make health and safety a priority at LNS. The COVID & Steering Committees in collaboration with the Director guided by DEEC guidelines will regularly review and assess our COVID response plans and inform the community of measures that enhance safety.
 2. Foster a sense of community and support relationship building while keeping our school safe and respecting others.
 3. Integrate and support the use of Storypark, an application that is a communication tool for teachers and parents to share documentation in the form of learning stories and moments about a child, studio and the LNS community.
 4. Integrate and support the use of Jovial, a cloud based software management system for cooperative schools, to streamline forms, accounting, committee responsibilities and other requirements.

5. Review our social media, marketing and communication plans to create a strategy that shares and promotes the LNS experience to surrounding communities.
6. Strategic Planning Committee will assess and strengthen our partnership with the deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum and The Trustees of Reservations proactively in order to ensure our school's strong standing with both. Subsequently, use this standing to ensure LNS receives the support needed and required by both.
7. Strategic Planning Committee will develop an understanding of market factors and financial models to assess the size of LNS.

Secretary - Katherine Ruhl

- Approve June 2020 minutes. Vickie Slingerland approved, Kate Brooks and others second

Director's Report – Nancy Fincke

- Thank you
 - Thank you for your help in launching this school year with the health and safety guidelines of COVID-19. There are many extra steps and necessary adjustments for teachers and parents yet by everyone doing their part we are up and running! The reward is to see the children, seemingly not bothered by their masks, playing! Their voices are the wind chimes of LNS.
- Update
 - Each studio has an indoor and outdoor classroom. We have been outside everyday! Ventilation is a key factor in reducing the spread of COVID so we are most comfortable outside. As a faculty we will begin thinking through when & how we will come inside.
 - Nancy has met with HVAC company to determine how to improve the ventilation in the studios.
- Story Park
 - Storypark App (new this year) is a great way to learn what happens in your child's day and to read the learning stories that teachers post

Covid Committee Report – Amy Funkenstein

- See attached slides
- Testing
 - How LNS will use testing and the frequency of testing is still being determined by the Covid Committee and the Steering Committee
 - Reminder that testing only captures a point in time
 - Testing is secondary to safety measures we're already taking, such as masks and distancing

- Cost of testing
 - It is unknown whether insurance will cover the cost of testing asymptomatic individuals
 - The cost of test without insurance is \$60 per test
 - This cost would be the responsibility of each family not the school
 - Testing company is willing to work with families for whom this cost if not feasible
- Covid committee expects the testing landscape to change over the next few months from the current nose swab to a lick-a-stick type test that can be done at home
 - Because of the evolution in testing, the committee is only focusing on testing for the 2020 calendar year and will reassess for 2021 calendar year
- Discussion topics included:
 - The evolution of testing and hope that cheaper, easier, yet just as effective tests are coming soon
 - The overall cost of testing could exceed \$36,000. If we're going to ask families to invest that amount of money would that money be better spent making the school safer by buying outdoor heaters or updating HVAC systems, for example
 - The most effective way to test is daily, which under the current testing landscape isn't feasible
 - Any child experiencing any symptoms of Covid should be tested by their pediatrician

Call for Updates

- **Enrollment – Vickie Slingerland**
 - Enrollment is at 45 students (60 students in prior years)
 - 12 children in Red
 - 11 in Purple, Yellow, and Blue
 - We're going to hold at the current number of students as to not overwhelm the teachers
 - Enrollment Open House November 7
 - Families will sign up on the website for a time slot to visit
 - Tours will be Friday afternoons with Nancy and a member of the enrollment committee
 - School will be cleaned over the weekend following the tours
- **Welcoming & Social – Kerri Schubert**
 - Goal for this year is to keep everyone safe but also build community
 - As such, there likely will not be inter-studio mixing at this time

LNS Board Meeting Minutes

September 22, 2020

Via Zoom

- There will likely be in-person events as well as events like recipe sharing or a book drive that can build community with no risk
- Event for new families is a priority
 - Jessica Kaplan said the deCordova may be interesting in hosting

Provocation

- Lincoln Nursery School has been a cooperative school based on the love of and need for community for — years. This year community is needed more than ever yet creating this is all the more challenging. What support mechanisms can we create to build community amongst parents, families and the school? How can we work to build relationships at LNS while still remaining safe?
 - Discussion continued from the Welcoming & Social update.
 - Ideas included backyard hang outs, events held at the deCordova, etc.

Budget Approval – Rebecca Blanchfield

- Board moved to executive session to review and approve the budget

LNS COVID Testing – Summary

The COVID Committee was asked to make a recommendation on testing. Before doing so, we must note that testing is important, but secondary to the key behaviors that reduce community risk. We would like to thank everyone for their efforts to send children to school with clean masks, completing temperature checks and attestations daily. Maintaining these behaviors is far more important to our successful outcome as a community than our approach to testing.

With that in mind, we think our testing strategy can be boiled down to two central questions:

- ① What are the pros and cons of different test types and which should we choose?
- ② What is our optimal testing frequency?

For both of these questions we limited our decision horizon to the end of 2020. We did so that because the testing landscape is evolving quickly and there continues to be significant uncertainty around the virus. The Committee will reevaluate our approach sooner than the end of 2020 on relevant news, but we wanted to time-bound our recommendations to force a reevaluation at most 3 months from now.

- ① Test type – we investigated multiple tests spanning administration types, cost, timeliness, specificity, and both individual and “pooled” samples. To put it simply, there is no perfect test. Second, the testing landscape is a dynamic space; we hope and anticipate that new, better, faster and cheaper tests will be available soon that may change our answer. We ultimately selected an individual nasal swab test with high specificity from ExosomeDx.

The major drawback of this test is cost; it runs \$60 per test if not covered by insurance. While we are hopeful that the tests will be covered by insurance for many, either immediately or with continued state legislation, we cannot confirm coverage for all. The testing company has offered to work with families in need, which we are optimistic will help defray the costs, but we are unable to confirm the specifics at this time.

- ② Test frequency – our committee laid out four potential testing approaches (*see next page*), each with real trade-offs, including the option of not starting a testing regime at this time. As a group we have consensus that “no testing” is not the right answer for the LNS community. That said, we realize making a recommendation around testing with such significant financial uncertainty (e.g., will insurance reimburse each individual) carries a heavy burden.

As such, at this time, we recommend committing to a first round of testing on October 9th. This will enable the Committee and each individual to gain more certainty around the cost and for our community to discuss and build more consensus around the strategy that is right for us.

2 LNS COVID Testing – Frequency Recommendation

	A	B	C	D
	No Testing Beyond State Guidelines	Testing at Pre-ID'ed High Risk Times	Conditional Regular Cadence	Regular Cadence
Description	Adhere to state guidelines on testing as documented in the LNS handbook	Test at pre-identified times that likely convey higher risk to the community including the start of school and return from Thanksgiving break	Start with Option B... ...in addition, if the test positivity rate in Middlesex county is > 2.5% move to testing weekly testing	Expectations that students and staff receive a test once per week
Per person:				
• Est. # of test	0	2	2-10	10-11
• Est. \$ per person w/o insurance	\$0	\$120	\$120 - 600	\$600 - 660
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cheap Leaves decision on testing to each individual family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highly focused on key risk points Reasonably low cost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderates our approach (and investment) to the risk in our community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Best effort to ensure the safety and continuity of the community
Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highest risk Limited peace of mind to community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficult to pin-point highest risk points of the year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires rapid behavior change from community to be effective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Above and beyond state guidelines and what other communities are doing May instill a false sense of security in community
	<i>Not recommended</i>	<i>First round of testing Oct. 9th; select strategy once cost is known</i>		