

LNS Board Meeting Minutes

March 9, 2021

Via Zoom

Attendees:

- **Present:** Mara Rus, Kate Brooks, Anique Lebel, Rebecca Blanchfield, Katherine Ruhl, Victoria Slingerland, Matt Hendrick, Mitch Brooks, Emily Lines, Lauren O'Neil, Kerri Schubert
- **Absent:** Jessica Kaplan, Clint Cherco, Gina Cherco, Kristie Fox, Jessica Callow,
- **Also Present:** Nancy Fincke, Jenna Schmid, Lauren Lane

President's Report – Mara Rus

- Mara welcomes everyone to the meeting

Secretary - Katherine Ruhl

- Approve November 2020 minutes. Vickie Slingerland approved, Kate Brooks (and others) seconds
- Approve January 2021 minutes. Vickie Slingerland approved, Kate Brooks (and others) seconds

Director's Report – Nancy Fincke

- Professional development day is March 15 with the focus on "Reimagining Parent Connections"
 - The faculty will work on updating the parent helping section of the handbook with the goals of:
 - Create a parent helping program that fosters adult inquiry and community:
 - Cultivate questions: start with each parent's questions about child development and learning.
 - Improve the architecture for a satisfying parent helping experience: connected, joyful, not anxious.
 - Guide parents in seeing their child as a group member within the studio.
 - Facilitate a climate of mutual support, drawing upon parents' strengths in the studio.
 - We want parent helpers to:
 - Explore what it means to observe children.
 - Feel supported in the Studios, join the teachers in inquiry.

VP of Operations – Kate Brooks

- Nominating process for 2021-2022 positions will begin soon
 - Currently expecting more parent jobs next year (as opposed to more slender roles this year)
- Steering Restructure

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- Importance of development and fundraising has become apparent
 - Tuition does not cover the full cost of running LNS (there is a \$1k per student difference)
 - There are also foundations, donors, and grants that should be pursued
- There have also been difficulties filling treasurer position because parents with the specific skill set required often cannot make the time commitment to be a part of the steering committee
- The suggested solution is that the treasurer will no longer be a member of the steering committee and will be replaced on steering by a new member, Vice President of Development. The job descriptions for the new positions are:
 - **Vice President of Development:**
 - An active member of both the Board and Steering Committee. Key responsibilities include overseeing a comprehensive development program, including annual appeal, researching and applying to grants, planned giving, identifying and working with prospective donors and foundations, and parent education around fundraising. Works closely with Gala Chair, Annual Appeal, and Giving Chair. Time Commitment: Ongoing, commencing in May of the current school year.
 - **Budget Treasurer:**
 - Sets LNS budget in coordination with the President and Director and presents final budget for Board approval. Prepares board reports and updates Steering Committee as needed throughout the year. Monitors revenue/expenses relative to budget and partners with Finance committee to oversee endowment management. Signs checks when president is unavailable. *Time Commitment: Ongoing during the school year. Job commences in May of current school year.*
- This change requires an amended to the bylaws.

Board Vote to Approve Bylaw Article II Section 3 Amendment

- **Amendment 2021:** The Board may from time to time establish committees and/or designate officers to carry out its work, as further described in Article IV, Section 6. One such committee presently constituted is the Steering Committee, which expedites planning, serves as a clearing house for ideas and addresses proposals and problems between and in advance of full Board

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meetings. The Steering Committee is comprised of the Director, the President, and the First, Second and Third Vice Presidents. The Treasurer will join Steering Meetings when necessary.

- Secretary makes motion approve Amendment 2021
 - Motion passes 11 Yay votes, 0 Nay votes, 5 members absent
 - Mara Rus – Yay
 - Kate Brooks - Yay
 - Anique Lebel - Yay
 - Rebecca Blanchfield - Yay
 - Katherine Ruhl - Yay
 - Victoria Slingerland - Yay
 - Matt Hendrick - Yay
 - Mitch Brooks- Yay
 - Emily Lines - Yay
 - Lauren O’Neil - Yay
 - Kerri Schubert – Yay

Staff Search and Development - Lauren O’Neil

- Teacher Survey
 - Teacher feedback was gathered using anonymous survey and 8 out of 9 teachers responded.
 - See slides for summary and detailed comments
- Staff Transitions and Search
 - Lisa Canning, our bookkeeper will be retiring this year
 - Nancy is targeting an Assistant Director, which will continue to handle bookkeeping, but also support school accreditation, and licensing projects.
 - Alice will be retiring this year and she will be greatly missed in Studio Yellow. Based on interest from other teachers in a 4 days/week schedule, we expect we will be replacing her with a 5 day a week teacher
 - Emily is expecting a baby and will be taking leave for the 2021-2022 school year. We will be hiring to cover her full-time role in Studio Red as well.
 - We have started to receive resumes by referral and will be posting the roles shortly. Our target is to hire teachers with previous early childhood experience, advanced degrees, and preferably some exposure to or knowledge of Reggio philosophies.
- Teacher compensation
 - Steering committee is gathering local market compensation data from local public pre-k programs and nursery schools
 - Plan is to increase benefits for 2021-2022, specifically retirement plans

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- Discussion about how to make sure staff is appropriately compensated and also has enough time to do reflective practice
 - Currently teachers receive 30 minutes of planning and reflection time for every hour they spend in the classroom, the planning and reflection time is a necessary part of the LNS process and teachers generally would like more time
 - This can sometimes be at odds with parents' desire for extended day
 - Steering has spent a lot of time discussing this and it's top of mind for the future

Gala Chair – Matt Hendrick

- Virtual Gala coming up in a few weeks
 - Studio socials from 7:30-8, followed by wine and cheese tasting, followed by speeches and video
 - Auction is open to anyone and will be accessible 3 days prior to gala

Call for Updates

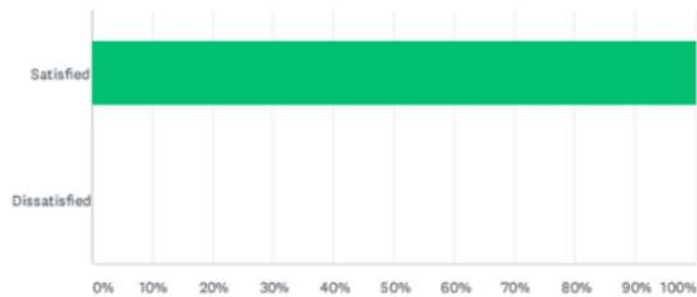
- **Enrollment – Vickie Slingerland**
 - Enrollment is complete for 2021-2022 with a large wait pool
 - Please complete enrollment contracts so wait pool participants can be notified

LNS Teacher Survey 2020-2021

Lauren O'Neil, Chair of Staff Search & Development

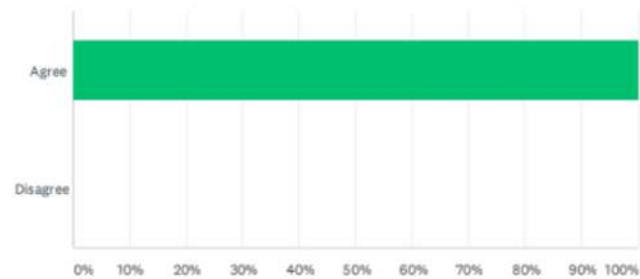
Q1 How satisfied are you with the school's response to COVID?

Answered: 7 Skipped: 1



Q4 LNS is a working environment where I feel respected and appreciated by parents

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0

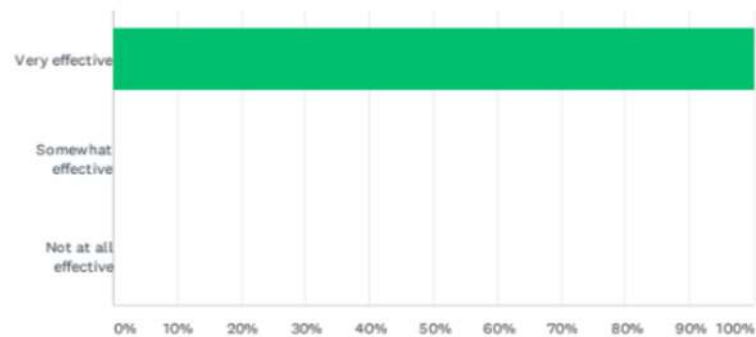


Comments in summary:

The teachers are very grateful for the commitment and hard work of the COVID committee for the exceptional effort to set up a testing program. They feel respected and supported by the LNS community.

Q7 Please rank Nancy's effectiveness as a leader

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0



Comments in summary:

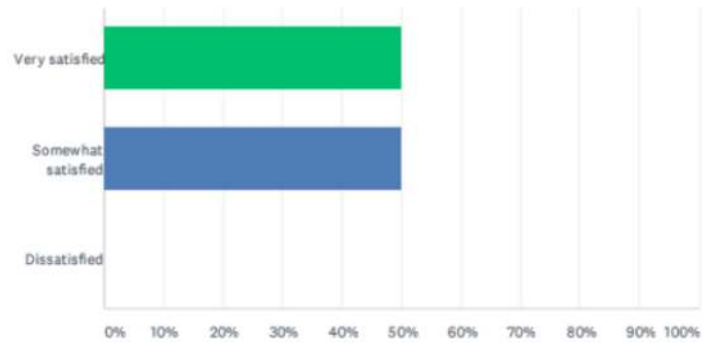
Nancy has always been an exemplary support for the teachers, and this year, in these challenging times, she has continued to go above and beyond. The teachers feel so grateful to work with Nancy.

Some quotes about Nancy:

"Amazing listener;" "clear, forward thinking leader;"
"staff advocate"

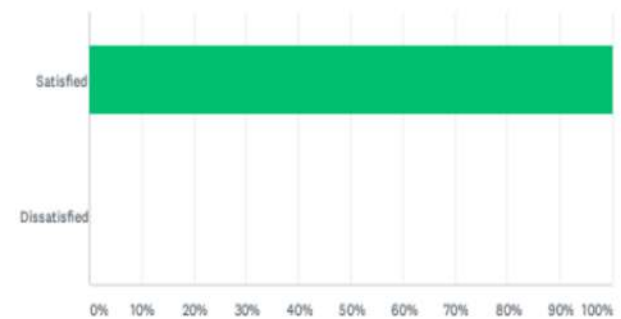
Q13 What is your level of satisfaction with Storypark?

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0



Q16 How satisfied are you with the school vacation/holiday schedule?

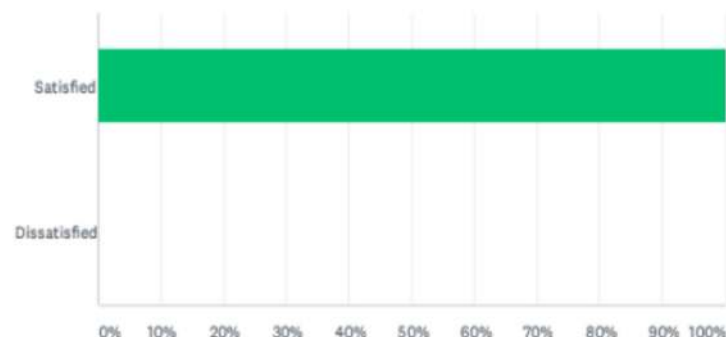
Answered: 8 Skipped: 0



- I'm in it for the children, the community, the thinking, the intention, the love. So grateful for all of this!
- This job is intense. I love it and do not want to work anywhere else but the amount of time spent on documentation, planning, reading, writing, especially progress reports is incredible. It can be 24/7 at times and we work very hard. Teachers are never paid enough for what they do, in my opinion. Especially in the past year, with the shift to online teaching and all of the changes we made in the way we work, it is frustrating that teachers as a profession are not respected and compensated in this society. The LNS community absolutely respects and values teachers and I am grateful for that, but the broader view in our society needs to change.
- These two questions are always hard to answer. Yes, I am satisfied, though I do think that this work deserves a higher pay, and greater planning time to reduce the working hours spent outside of work.
- I don't believe anyone goes into teaching to make the "big bucks." However, ECE have historically been underpaid and it's my hope this nation is waking up to this given the difficulties families have had to experience with the closures during the pandemic. This work is invaluable in so many ways. I deeply appreciate LNS's work to improving the teacher's salaries and know that this work is far from done.
- Not the best paid field in the world and appreciate the board's efforts to find ways to better compensate faculty.
- It was somewhat disappointing this year to not receive any increase given the additional work at the end of last year and the nearly weekly hours long meetings we had throughout the summer.

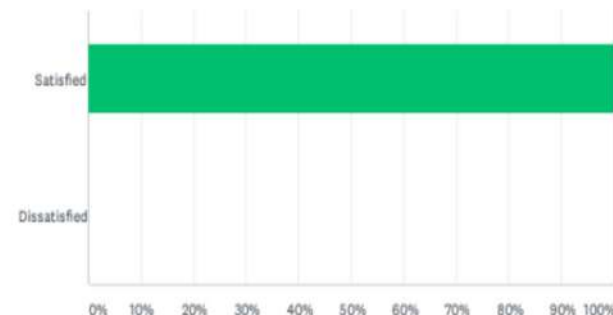
Q15 How satisfied are you with your salary?

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0



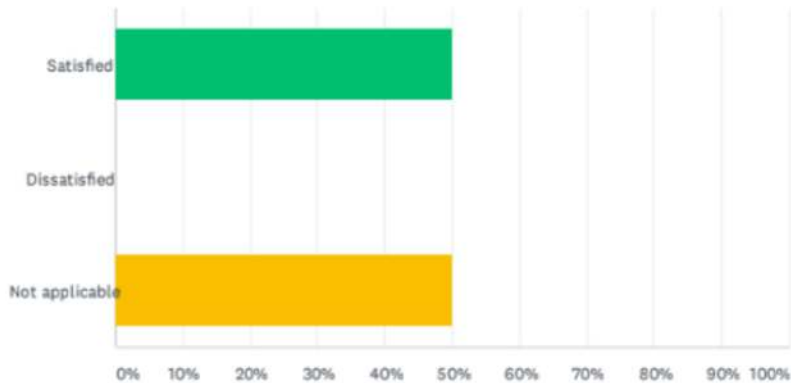
Q14 Are you satisfied with your overall compensation package?

Answered: 7 Skipped: 1



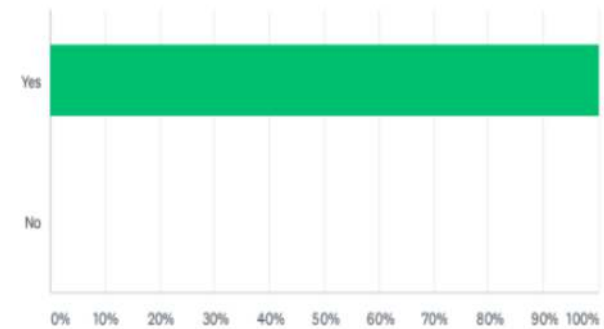
Q17 How satisfied are you with your health benefits?

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0



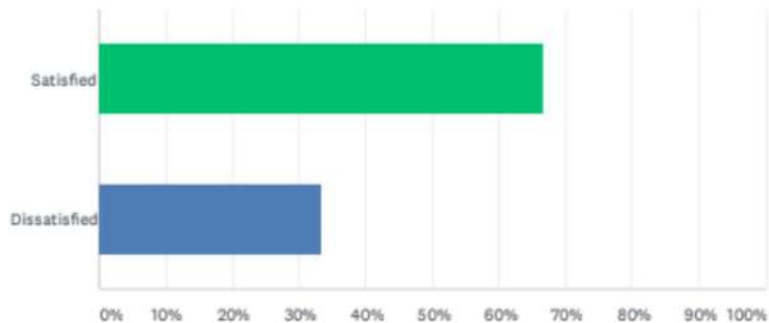
Q19 Do you feel there are opportunities for your professional development at LNS?

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0



Q18 How satisfied are you with your retirement benefits?

Answered: 6 Skipped: 2



- I am not aware of any benefits to opening a retirement account through the school. I ended up doing so on my own because of this.
- I know that there are retirement benefits but I have never taken advantage of them or even looked into them. Something for me to look in to.
- I've left retirement benefits blank as I honestly don't know if we really do have any. i know we have our amount that could be put towards our own retirement account or used instead for health benefits. If I am clear on this, then I would say that I feel we should really have both. If a teacher needs health benefits, they should be able to access funds for that. All teachers should then (and also) receive an amount to be put in retirement, ideally one that the school has set up for the teacher to pay into.

How long do you anticipate teaching at LNS?

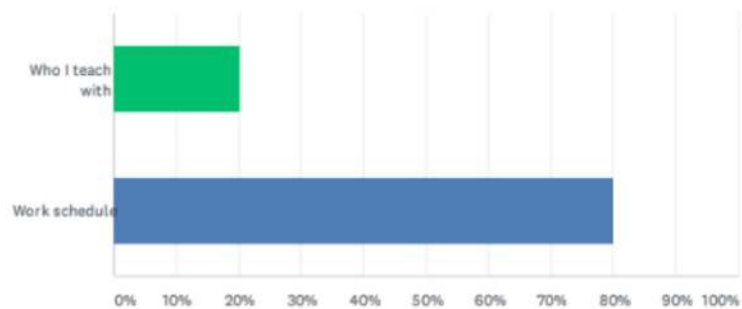
- For as long as I can!
- As long as I can. I can't imagine teaching anywhere else.
- Through the end of this year, and then returning after a year leave.
- two or three more years.
- While i don't have a definitive amount of time, say in years, it is my hope to continue for as long as I can emotionally and physically. For as long as this work continues to excite me and feed my desire to learn and know more. Of course, my time will also have to be determined based on my family's needs and that is something I cannot necessarily predict going forward.
- Hmmm A few more years, three or four at least I would imagine.
- At this time two to five years but that could change.

What is your ideal schedule? (number of days/week and schedule - mornings, afternoons, full day)

- 3-4 mornings/week
- This is a tough one. I value my afternoons spent without teaching responsibilities as it leaves me time to plan, document, reflect and work on the environment. I would like to be able to work five days but I am certainly glad that I am only four days this week with the added stress of the pandemic. So, ideally five days but not full day everyday. Perhaps a couple of longer days would be ok but with some afternoons available, not teaching, to be able to work on the "extras".
- five mornings plus lunch.
- My ideal schedule at this time would be 4 days, consistently and with the same person, mornings only. I've been 5 days for a good number of years now and I'm now finding that in my personal life circumstances, some extra time at home would be beneficial to both me and my family.
- 4 mornings.
- Monday through Thursday mornings

Q11 What has priority, who you teach with or work schedule?

Answered: 5 Skipped: 3



What is your Interest/flexibility in working with a different co-teacher?

- In summary – the teachers all highly value their working relationships with their co-teachers, they also respect all the teachers at LNS and therefore, would be open to working with a different co-teacher if it meant more could have their desired schedules

What support do you need returning to pre-Covid numbers in the studios?

- 12 has been beautiful. While it's hard to know all of the factors that have played into this year's class, I can't help but wonder how much of an impact the smaller numbers have had in allowing the children more space to settle and connect and find their voice. It has also allowed me to settle into coming to know and understand each child earlier on in the year. I also fully understand the financial needs of the school and that these smaller numbers aren't viable. I get that...I will feel sad to see 12 go, but I understand.
- I think it depends on the needs of the particular children I will be working with. If I remain where I am, we would absolutely need another adult, whether it is a parent helper or not. The developmental needs of the children really require more than two adults, and this is really a matter of safety.
- I can not think of any supports that I will need to return to 16 children
- Energy! Seriously, I am looking forward to returning with children in hopefully a more, if not "new", normal way. I have to be honest however, would I have liked our numbers to remain low at 12...yes, yes I would. I feel having a lower number really enables a closer building of relationships but I have also had smaller number with some difficult dynamics and they've have felt like a class of 30! I also think that some of the work we are doing now as a staff (reimagining parent helping) will be very supportive as we shape how we can move forward in a renewed way.
- A vaccine and commitment from parents to keep out kids even if it 'is just a runny nose'.
- Mandatory vaccines for adults and when available children. It's difficult to say without knowing the children coming into the school. If the status quo remains with mask wearing and COVID protocols, it could be difficult with with a very big age span in a larger mixed age group.