

# NSPA MEETING

## 9/16/09

### MINUTES

**1. Call to Order:** NSPA President Tom Grumbly called the NSPA meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

**Other Board Attendees:** Joanna Cole, Clare Dean, Cindi DiPalma, Jennifer Hill, Maril Levy, Mike McGurrin, Patti Oehmke, Betsy Sue Scott, Nancy Vibert and Marilyn Williams.

**Board Members Absent:** Melissa Dana, Lisa Doyle, Kathy Ginsberg, Lyn Goodman, and Brenda Mutchler.

**Other Attendees:** Jean Feldman, Carol Ko, Pat Kobor, Amy Nelson and Bonnie O'Donnell.

The President asked the attendees to introduce themselves and to state the grades of their children or their position at the school. Introductions then followed. The President set out the NSPA's meeting schedule of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month at 7pm in the Media Center. He also made introductory remarks opening the first NSPA meeting at the beginning of the school year. In particular, he explained the NSPA's role as a facilitator in the growth of our children and the school. He noted that this is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization separate from the for-profit New School. He urged greater participation in the NSPA by a wider group of parents throughout the year and encouraged parental attendance at monthly Board meetings and more input into event planning.

**2. Approval of the August Meeting Minutes:** Secretary Betsy Sue Scott presented the August meeting minutes for approval and, on motion by Treasurer Patti Oehmke that was seconded by Vice President Nancy Vibert, the Board approved the August meeting minutes.

**3. Treasurers Report:** The Treasurer distributed a Balance Sheet as of August 31, 2009, a Profit/Loss Statement covering the period September 2008 through August 2009 and a Budget for the 2009-2010 School Year. She reported that the NSPA's current assets totaled \$121,902.38, an improvement over early 2009 with a \$16,000 increase in the Long-term Fund/Vanguard account. She pointed out, on the P/L Statement, that the \$900 invoiced to John Potter for his guests at the Anniversary Gala this Spring involves a lost check. While the school had sent this payment to the NSPA, it cannot be located. She will request a new check. Webmaster Mike McGurrin submitted a reimbursement request for \$150, representing payment for renewal of the NSPA's domain name registration for a two-year period. The Board noted that this year's Budget set the domain name registration fee at zero.

The Treasurer noted that the NSPA ended the year in a slight positive position. She attributed this to the factors of: concerns during the economic downturn keeping expenditures in check and the Scholarship Fund's budgeted amount not having been fully awarded. She also reported on

the NSPA paid membership to date in this year. The NSPA is ahead of last year at the same point with 43 paid member families. There are currently 95 school families.

A parent inquired about the Budget's difference from last year in eliminating funding for Graduation. The President explained that the Board had voted last year not to fund those programs which the School ran or for which it used its Activity Fee. In addition to Graduation, other programs the School will now cover instead of the NSPA are the Halloween Party and Field Day. He also clarified that the NSPA eliminated its funding for the Rudolph Run.

#### **4. Old Business:**

**a. Opening Day Parent Coffee:** The NSPA held its Parent Coffee after the 9am drop-off of students at the Student Orientation on September 8<sup>th</sup>. Volunteer Coordinator Clare Dean, the President and Vice President represented the NSPA during the Coffee. They provided NSPA membership forms to parents and guardians who attended the event. The Volunteer Coordinator reported that parents completed the sign-up sheets for assisting in activities during the year in a much higher number than last year.

**b. Student Welcome Lunch:** The Board reviewed the successes of and lessons-learned from the Student Welcome Lunch following Orientation on September 8<sup>th</sup>. The event received high marks from those attending the Lunch. Parents served over 200 hamburgers and hot dogs despite the paucity of grills on which to prepare the food. The Board recommended simplifying the Luncheon next year and discussed soliciting private funds to buy and donate a grill to the School. Faculty Representative Maril Levy will check with John Potter to make sure he school wants (and has place to store) another grill.

**c. NSPA Annual Potluck:** The Vice President reported that she and parent Kathy Welty have plans well underway for the NSPA Annual Potluck on Saturday, September 26<sup>th</sup> at 6-9pm. They have ordered additional tables, which will have purple table clothes. The Volunteer Coordinator noted that parents have already signed up to help at the event. Parent Carol Ko offered to ask her husband to provide a translation of the Potluck brochure and for future brochures created for other NSPA events in order to help attract more parents and guardians from our international community.

**d. Possible Fall Social:** Following the Board's discussion at the August meeting, it considered the possibility of holding a Family Fun Night that would include students. The Social would take place this Fall. The 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Rep noted that the 9<sup>th</sup> grade families were having a "family picnic" later in September at a rented pavilion at Glyndon Park.

**e. Scholarships:** The President urged more announcements and information about the NSPA's Scholarships, which he identified as one of the major missions of the organization. He noted that the NSPA had budgeted \$9,000 for scholarships this year and that the NSPA had not awarded the budgeted amount last year. Last year's Scholarship Chair Betsy Sue Scott suggested pushing back the time for future announcements to synchronize with the School's student contract renewals in the Spring. The President agreed to write an email soliciting scholarship applications within the next few weeks. The Board discussed the need to update the scholarship application form posted on the NSPA website and the Treasurer and parent Jean Feldman offered to help. The Board appointed this year's Scholarship Committee: Betsy Sue Scott, Chair, Mike McGurrin, Jennifer Hill and Jean Feldman. The President will speak about the scholarship fund at the Parent and Faculty Social on September 26 and again at the spring social and auction to heighten awareness.

**5. New Business:**

**a. Back-to-School Night:** Faculty Representative Maril Levy reported that the School will hold Back-to-School Night on September 22<sup>nd</sup>. She related that Janet Trizna will run a Power School program for parents at 6pm before the event opens at 6:30. When it ends at 8:15, parents can elect to attend a Faculty Q&A session or take a tour of the Science Center.

**b. Halloween Party:** Alumni Representative Joanna Cole, who works at the School, related that students have begun to discuss activities for the school year, including the Halloween Party. She will get back to the NSPA Board once the students have made plans. The Board discussed the possibility of holding the Halloween Party, if there is to be one, on Friday, October 30<sup>th</sup>, and have it run for two hours.

**c. Volunteers for Events:** The Volunteer Coordinator reported that 33 parents had signed up for Wednesday Faculty-Staff Snacks, an increase above the 20 who assisted last year. She will send email reminders to the volunteers before their snack date. She will also send “thank you” notes to those who helped at the Student Welcome Luncheon. The Board discussed the problem in gathering email addresses for school parents and guardians who have not provided them to the NSPA. The School wishes to protect their privacy and will not give their addresses to the NSPA. Ninth Grade Rep Jennifer Hill related that she had most of the emails of 9<sup>th</sup> Grade parents after asking the parents for them directly.

**d. School’s Influenza Policy:** The President and several other parents expressed concern about the School’s preparation for a potential influenza epidemic. The Faculty Rep noted that Joan Goodman’s degree is in Public Health and that she is actively studying the issue. The Board expressed its hope that the School will communicate its plans to parents and guardians in the near future. The Faculty Rep reminded the attendees that Joan had already sent two communications via email to families about the swine flu prior to the start of school.

**6. Open Forum:** Several parents challenged the School’s mandatory travel policy with respect to certain course offerings. They noted that the course catalogue had not disclosed the high cost of \$3500 for the trip to Italy. They suggested to the Faculty Rep that, in the future, mandatory travel costs for courses be fully disclosed.

The Volunteer Coordinator noted that the Giant A-Plus Bonus Program would be available soon.

**7. Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the NSPA Board will take place at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, October 21st in the School’s Media Room.

At the July meeting, the Board set the NSPA meeting schedule for the school year, including: 11/18 and 12/16/09 and 1/20, 2/17, 3/17, 4/21 (Annual Meeting), 5/19 and 6/2/10.

**Adjournment:** The Board meeting adjourned at 8:37pm.

**Minutes prepared by Betsy Sue Scott, Board Secretary**