

Executive Director's Report to the Board

Date of the Report: June 16, 2023

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Strategic Plan Updates

Goal 5: Ensure every student has a sense of belonging within the school community.

Objective 5.1: Nova Classical will document its position on fairness and belonging.

Strategy: Write an equity policy, statement, commitment and/or vision.

Stage: In implementation.

Update: In collaboration with the Equity Team, the Governance Committee has conducted a thorough review of a Racial Equity Policy. The policy was presented during the May Board meeting for its initial reading. Tonight, it is included in the consent agenda for its second reading and final approval. If the Board grants approval to the policy this evening, we will consider the implementation of this strategy as finished.

Goal 8: Provide classrooms and extracurricular facilities which support our mission.

Objective 8.1: Nova Classical will complete a comprehensive facilities review analyzing current and projected educational and extracurricular needs as well as identifying scenarios and options to address current and future facilities needs.

Strategy: Research and select vendor for facilities needs analysis.

Stage: Planning

Update: During a previous Board meeting, it was determined that the Facilities Needs Analysis team would function as a non-board committee. I have appointed Jesse Prins as the committee chair, and he is currently engaged in coordinating the schedules of the members and potential vendors. Their objective is to review proposals for facilities needs analysis processes. We aim to have a vendor selected for this undertaking by the end of October. The committee includes the following individuals:

- Jesse Prins: Facilities Manager
- Brett Wedlund: Executive Director
- Joe Aliperto: Dieci School Finance (invited as needed)
- Colleen Hansen: Board Member
- Todd Sample: Board Member
- Christina Geer: Building Company Representative
- Duane Heidemann: Building Company Representative

General Updates

Summer Work

The 2022-2023 school year has come to a close, and summer has begun for our students and instructional staff. As is customary, we have several projects underway in the building. In addition to the regular maintenance tasks such as deep cleaning, floor polishing, and repainting walls, we have some additional projects planned.

A trophy case, funded by donations from Give to the Max, is currently being installed in the Great Room. We are also addressing playground safety based on the findings of a recent study, which will involve adding more mulch to the playground areas.

Space has become increasingly valuable in our school, particularly for small areas used for student interventions and offices. To meet the growing need for interventions and Special Education services, we are making several adjustments to our building. Firstly, we are converting a third-floor file storage room into an office. This requires sorting through and digitizing Nova's historical files, a time-consuming process as each file must be individually reviewed to ensure compliance with Nova and the state's data retention policies.

The dedicated study hall room will no longer exist, and instead, study hall periods will rotate into other classrooms when they are not in use for regular classes. This will allow us to repurpose the previous study hall classroom as a special education space. Additionally, we will be equipping an existing special education room with multiple workstations to provide the department with greater flexibility in using the space.

We have also introduced new roles for the upcoming year, including a Dean of Students and an MTSS Administrator. This will result in several individuals having to shuffle office spaces.

Several months ago, during the budget revision, we allocated additional funds for classroom furniture. Alongside the regular annual replacement cycle, approximately ten classrooms will receive new student tables and furniture this summer.

Finally, the FY24 budget includes funds to replace the original wireless access points in the facility. Due to supply chain issues, we cannot guarantee completion before the start of the school year, but we remain hopeful.

These projects aim to enhance our school environment, optimize space allocation, and provide improved resources for students, staff, and student intervention services.

Equity Audit Update

During the May meeting, you approved creating an agreement with the Equity Literacy Institute (ELI) to conduct an equity audit during the 2023-2024 school year. Last Friday, Missy and I had a meeting with the ELI leader to discuss the audit's timing and logistics. I'd like to share some of the details we discussed with you.

We have provided ELI with all the policies, handbooks, and other written documentation so that they can begin their review of these components. They plan to focus on the written aspects of the audit during the summer. Additionally, we will share data related to staff and student participation in programs, allowing ELI to examine equity in these areas quantitatively.

In early September, Dr. Johnson and Nova's leadership will collaborate closely with ELI to finalize the questions for three separate surveys: one for students, one for families, and one for staff. The tentative plan is to release these surveys during the week of September 25th. Dr. Johnson will also work with ELI to

determine the composition of 15 focus groups that will meet with them. While the exact dates are not confirmed, these onsite focus groups are expected to take place during the week of October 9th.

While not guaranteed, it is anticipated that this timeline will enable us to receive the final written report from the Equity Audit before winter break. This would be highly beneficial as we are also responsible for completing a facility needs analysis next year. The strategic action plan does not require the final selection of vendors for the facilities needs analysis until late October, and expediting the timeline for the Equity Audit could help us avoid significant overlap with these two projects.

Administrator of Multiple Tiered Systems Support

As you are aware, our Board approved a strategic plan in January of this year, outlining the vision that will guide our work for the next five years. One goal of this strategic plan is to "support students in all areas of their education and well-being." To reach this goal, a key objective outlined in the strategic plan is the development and implementation of Multiple-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS).

In order to facilitate this work, the Board approved the inclusion of a new position, Administrator of Multiple Tiered Systems of Support, in the 2023-24 budget, which was passed in April. The person in this position will have the responsibility of leading the design process for MTSS at Nova Classical throughout the upcoming school year. They will also be responsible for implementing it with a target timeline for the 2024-25 school year, as well as providing ongoing oversight and maintenance of the program thereafter. We are delighted to announce that Emily Cranberg emerged as the top candidate from a highly qualified pool of candidates and has accepted the position of Administrator of MTSS at Nova Classical.

Emily Cranberg has been a valuable member of the Nova Classical team for the past five years, serving as a School Counselor and 504 Coordinator. She holds a bachelor's degree in psychology, a Master of Arts in Educational Psychology, and a Certificate in Administrative Leadership, all from the University of Minnesota. She also holds a K-12 Principal license. Ms. Cranberg's extensive understanding of the specific needs of Nova Classical's student body, along with her proven ability to collaborate effectively with various staff and stakeholder groups, set her apart from other applicants. These qualities will greatly benefit Nova Classical as we embark on the task of implementing MTSS. Emily will assume her new role on July 1st.