

Executive Director's Report to the Board



Date of Report: April 22, 2021

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Staff Retention Update

Over the past three months (January 2021-March 2021), 3 of Nova's 137 employees ended their employment with the school. This is a reduction from the same time period in 2020 when we saw 4 employees leave. The positions represented by these departures include:

- Teacher (2)
- Educational Assistant (1)

Evaluating Fall Assessments

Under Nova's contract with Friends of Education (FOE), we are required to administer annual assessments that are nationally normed. Traditionally, the ACT Aspire assessment has been administered to meet this requirement. Effective August 2022, ACT will no longer offer Aspire Summative and there will not be a fall 2021 testing window offered. Because of this, we are review other nationally normed assessments which could be implemented to meet the requirements of our FOE contract. We anticipate bringing a recommendation on this to the Board at either the May or June meeting.

PPP Forgiveness

We have been notified by Old National Bank and the SBA that Nova has been granted forgiveness of the full amount of its PPP loan.

Middle & High School Student Testing

The state and its schools are seeing changing trends in COVID. As stated by Heather Mueller, the Minnesota's Commissioner of Education "Minnesota is experiencing high circulation of variants of COVID-19. For example, it is currently estimated that 60% of all COVID-19 cases in Minnesota are the B.1.1.7. variant strain, which is a new version of the virus that spreads more easily. **The spread of COVID-19 variants, including B.1.1.7, are contributing to a sharp increase in COVID-19 cases statewide in Minnesota. More specifically, we are seeing increased cases concentrated in our school-age population, especially among middle and high school students.**"

Because of this, Nova is working with the Minnesota Department of Education and Minnesota Department of Health to offer COVID testing to middle school and high school students. The students will be able to receive a test kit from the school, take a test supervised by a health professional on Zoom and return the sample to the school to have it submitted to a lab. Additional details about this program will be shared with families shortly once the timeline for implementation has been solidified.

School Community COVID Data

With the School of Grammar students returning to a hybrid model in March, and the School of Logic students returning to a hybrid model the week of April 19th, we have been monitoring the cases and impact of COVID within our school community. These numbers are as important as the case rates in the counties we serve in determining whether we are able to remain in our current model. Last week, we saw 1 positive case in the Lower School student population with 18 other students being affected by COVID (showing symptoms, requiring quarantine). An additional 4 positive cases were

reported in upper school students last week, however the Upper School had not returned to the on-site hybrid model.

In addition, with the Lower School students now in their 6th week of on-site learning, we are able to track longitudinal data and see changes to the number of cases and students affected over time.

