

Executive Director's Report to the Board

Date of the Report: September 21, 2022

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Enrollment

As we get a few weeks into the school year our enrollment is stabilizing. We currently have an enrollment of 1037. Of those, 571 are in K-6 and 466 are in 7-12 grade. As you may recall, we receive slightly more funding for students in 7-12 grades. This is because of the increased expense that is typically associated with running a secondary school and its programming. In addition, we have seven full-time PSEO students. One of these is a junior and the remaining six are seniors. We also have 19 part time PSEO students this year. Their schedules range from just trying one college class (5 students) all the way to just taking one course at Nova Classical (1 student).

2022 Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs)

The Minnesota Department of Education publicly released the 2022 spring MCA assessment results on August 25th. While we will not be presenting a deep dive into the results (which occurs at the September meeting), I am pleased to share that after viewing the state results the following high-level trends were seen:

- Nova Classical was the #3 ranked district/charter in math proficiency.
- Nova Classical was the #3 ranked district/charter in reading proficiency.
- Nova Classical's students had higher math progress scores in 2022 than they did the year before the pandemic (2019).
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In classical education common definitions are important, so you can [click here](#) to learn more about how MDE and Nova Classical **define progress**. We will discuss these results in further detail once we have had more time to analyze them. However, for now it is great to know that our students are both leaders in the state in terms of proficiency and they are surpassing their pre-pandemic (2019) levels of progress.

Start of Fall Sports

The fall sports seasons are getting underway. This fall has seen the following participation numbers:

Activity	Participants	
Boys & Girls Cross Country	37	Highest participation was 42 in 2019
Boys Soccer	48	2 nd highest participation in school history
Girls Soccer	30	Highest participation in school history which will allow us to have a JV team for the first time
Volleyball	45	Highest participation in school history
Girls Tennis (coop)	3	
Football (coop)	2	

Technical Problems vs. Adaptive Challenges

One of my most important roles is to ensure that the leadership team has the knowledge and skills necessary for them to be successful in their roles. This summer, our leadership team spent a significant amount of time learning about and discussing the differences between technical problems and adaptive challenges. The solutions to these types of scenarios are different and our conversations and reflections are intended to empower our leaders to oversee the areas for which they are responsible while also working collaboratively with others.

Special Education Population

We have seen the population of Nova Classical students who receive special education services grow to 87 students at the start of the 2022-2023 school year. This is about 8.4% of our student body. For reference, 16.9% of students qualified to receive special education services last year. This number has also been slowly increasing at the state level.

Special Education Wages

As the job markets continue to evolve, we are uncomfortable with the impact that is having on our ability to fill roles in our Special Education Department including teachers and paraprofessionals. This past spring, we introduced a pay differential between Special Education and General Education wages at Nova Classical. While I still believe this was a necessary approach, the differential we implemented was not large enough to yield the desired results. We are now moving forward with a plan to widen the differential in wages for Special Education staff. As a result of this change, most of our Special Education (new and existing) will be compensated at, or slightly higher, than similar roles at other schools in the area including in the St. Paul Public School district. Due to the Special Education funding formulas and reimbursements, this change is expected to have a net impact on our overall budget of under \$20,000. If it were not allocated towards this, this is money which would not legally be able used in any other part of Nova Classical's operations. We are hopeful that this change will allow us to fill the remaining openings in the Special Education department as well as retain our existing Special Education staff. This will have a positive impact on our students and overall school as our population of students who receive Special Education services continue to grow.