

**Nova Classical Academy
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Regular Meeting
January 29, 2024**

Directors Present: Nneka Constantino (via Zoom), Colleen Hansen, Jeremy Hubbell, Becky Lund, Suzanne McInroy, Theresa Nelson, Sasha Ross, Todd Sample, Bavi Weston

Directors Absent:

Advisors Present: Brett Wedlund, Tamra Paschall, Missy Johnson, Kriscel Estrella (via Zoom), Patti Mumford (NPTO, via Zoom), Demekech Williamson (Student Representative)

Others in Attendance: Nova staff, parents, students (Note: While this meeting was held in-person at 1455 Victoria Way, it was also made available on Zoom.)

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm. Suzanne McInroy chaired the meeting.

II. Business Meeting: Approval of Agenda

Ms. Nelson moved to approve the agenda. Ms. Hansen seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

III. Consent Agenda

- A. Contracted services agreement with Oswald Transportation
- B. December 18, 2023 minutes
- C. November 27, 2023 minutes
- D. 2nd reading/potential approval of revised policy 801 (Equal Access to School Facilities)
- E. 2nd reading/potential approval of new policy 516.5 (Overdose Medication)
- F. 1st reading of new policy #TBD (Unpaid Meal Charges)
- G. 1st reading of revised policy NP 206 (Board Orientation, Training)

Ms. Hansen moved to approve the consent agenda. Ms. Nelson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Public Comment

Parent Emilie Love submitted electronic public comment asking that the Board finalize the school year calendar sooner in the year and, if possible, do more than one year at a time to help families plan. She would also like Winter Break to not go beyond January 2 and for Spring Break to align with SPPS Spring Break.

Senior Marcos Odegard informed the board that students had sent a letter to the administration in support of Dr. Hubbell in December that was signed by the majority of the Senior Class.

Junior Sasha Fraser spoke about supporting teachers as they push students and not shutting down conversations, in particular in support of Dr. Hubbell.

Senior Emma Peklo spoke in support of Dr. Hubbell and his teaching style, arguing that it was necessary to growth to have AGON.

Teacher Diane Ruday spoke about bereavement leave for teachers that gives three consecutive days and asked that the word “consecutive” be removed.

Parent Marta Pierra spoke about her disappointment with the administration’s response to student concerns with actions taken regarding a video in Civics and the lost opportunity to continue to help students develop.

Senior Oliver Hungs spoke regarding the ELI report and asked the Board to consider that equity is also about receiving a classical education while also accommodating all students.

Teacher Sarah Dumont Brown spoke about Dr. Hubbell and her concern that the efforts to not dehumanize people we may have demoralized ourselves and asked that we trust each other and to foster conversation.

Parent Tim Odegard shared concerns that Nova Classical’s attempt to create an equitable environment along the lines of the Equity Literacy Institute (ELI)’s recommendations would infringe on the principles of Nova’s classical education philosophy. He is concerned that the ELI report did not include raw numbers and that the suggestions in the report would jeopardize the school’s central mission.

Teacher Josh Garvin shared a letter signed by 16 Nova teachers in support of Dr. Hubbell.

V. NPTO Report

Mrs. Mumford gave an update on the family directory; only a third of families have signed up so far, so the NPTO will do a push over the next month to get more families to join. She gave an update on past and upcoming events such as winter treats on December 19th, an event at Chuck E. Cheese on January 5th, the next NPTO meeting on February 6th, Opera for the Young on February 22nd, LS Family Game Night on February 23rd, and Comedy Sportz coming in early April.

VI. Student Report

Ms. Williamson gave several extra-curricular updates including the ongoing Battle of the Books in the Lower School, competitions in spelling and history bees, and student-directed one acts. One Act plays competed last week and came in fourth. She also spoke about Green Team, Robotics, and Letters of Love

(members made cards for kids in the hospital and raised money for St. Jude's.) Ms. Williamson reported that students are concerned about the way the school handled the Civics Class situation and the way it reported information about the incident and repercussions to the community.

VII. Piper Sandler Bonding Projections

Dr. Wedlund gave background information introducing Nick Hagen from Piper Sandler. Mr. Hagen has been a part of all three of Nova Classical's bonds. Mr. Hagen started his presentation with information about Nova Classical's outstanding debt from two separate bonds. In looking at Nova Classical's possible funding options, he looked at maximizing lease aid (plus 10% as required by state statute) with current enrollment, lease aid plus an additional \$50,000, and lease aid plus an additional \$100,000. A rough estimate is that we could spend approximately \$6 million. There was further discussion with questions raised about needing to investigate alternative sources of funding. Mr. Hagen briefly spoke about some limitations on additional indebtedness and other possible options. There was discussion.

VIII. Reports received by the Board

A. Executive Director Report

Dr. Wedlund gave two updates. First, that he is working on revisions with the FY24 budget and bringing it to Budget and Finance and then the Board in February. This will in turn inform the FY25 budget, which he is anticipating bringing for a first reading in March. The second is regarding the ERC and the mixed guidance as to if charter schools qualify for it. Another charter school was asked by the IRS to pay it back, but after submitting further information to the IRS, the IRS withdrew that demand. There was discussion about items in the report including the report from the Equity Literacy Institute (ELI). There was discussion about the recommendations in the ELI report and an appropriate response to them. The next step is to create an administrative Equity Committee to assess the report and to make further recommendations to the Board related to Goal 6 of the strategic plan. A committee is expected to be formed in the next few months.

B. Board Chair Report

Ms. McInroy spoke about training on Special Education coming in February and that she will be reviewing the board goals and committee in the next month. Ms. McInroy also spoke about the Equity Team's information night on February 8th. Finally, she spoke about the MACS Charter School Day at the MN state capitol on March 13th.

C. Board Committees

i. Governance Report

There was no discussion.

ii. Finance and Budget Report

There was no report this month. They will be looking at the revised budget as well as next year's budget in the next month.

- iii. **ED Review Committee**
Ms. Hansen reviewed a few items from the report.
- iv. **Academic Excellence Report**
There was no discussion.

IX. Business

A. 2024-2025 Calendar

Dr. Wedlund gave brief background information regarding the proposed calendar. There was discussion regarding input from families including how our calendar matched or didn't match the SPPS calendar. We do look at any district where over 10% of our population is from.

Mr. Sample, "Resolved that the Board approves the 2024-2025 calendar."
Ms. Ross seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Definition of Classical Education

Pedagogical Leads Brandon Foat, Becky Lund, and Sara Seal presented their revised definition of classical education at Nova Classical. They gave background information regarding what it does and does not mean. There was discussion about the process and the timing of the presentation.

Ms. Lund, "Resolved, that the Board extend its meeting time until we finish the presentation on classical education." Ms. Nelson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Lund, "Resolved, that the Board approves the definition of classical education at Nova Classical." Ms. Nelson seconded. Ms. Hansen, Ms. Lund, Ms. McInroy, Ms. Nelson, Ms. Ross, Mr. Sample, and Ms. Weston voted in favor. Ms. Constantino voted against. Dr. Hubbell abstained. The motion passed.

X. Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items

The next regular board meeting will be on Monday, February 26, 2024.

XI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:21 p.m.