

# Governance Committee Report on 2022 Board Election

**Committee Name:** Governance

**Date of Report:** 10-3-2022

**Written/submitted by:** Becky Lund

For the 14<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, the Governance Committee provides this report to the Board under the authority of Nova Board policy 202. The purpose of this report is to provide a written summary of the last Nova Board election, with participation percentage and recommendations for increasing voter education and participation, as well as applicable dates/deadlines for the 2022 board election. As has become customary, this report also discusses additional issues and recommendations that may affect Nova board elections.

## Executive Summary

This year two parents ran for two parent seats and one teacher ran for one teacher seat. There continued to be a lack of interest from people to run for the Board, both from people who were contacted by members of the Governance Committee and people who were generally notified of the nominations period via community emails and announcements in the Nova News. Although there were originally three parent candidates, one had to withdraw due to having no children attending Nova.

During the nomination period, members of the Governance Committee solicited recommendations from the Nova community and Becky Lund, as Governance Committee chair, reached out to all people recommended. We tried doing this a little earlier than last year, but did not have any success in getting more people who were interested in running.

The 2022 election itself proceeded smoothly with no issues. For the first time there was no communication from people who hadn't received a ballot.

Voter participation percentage is as follows:

2022 = 28%

2021 = 38%

2020 = 31% (delayed election due to Covid-19)

2019 = 40% (only two teacher candidates on ballot and a shorter - 2 wks instead of 3 - voting window)

2018 = 31%

2017 = 38%

2016 = 54.2% (switched to electronic ballot/voting instead of paper)

2015 = 29%

2014 = 35%

2013 = 39%

2012 = 52%

2011 = 51%

2010 = 42%

2009 = 56%

The committee recommends continuing the existing practices of providing early reminders to the Nova community about the election process, updating and publishing written Election Guidelines, and communicating these items and any additional matters relevant to the board election process on a regular basis. The Governance Committee will continue to discuss and

investigate best practices for getting election information to all members of the Nova community.

## **Discussion**

### **I) Recommended Dates & Deadlines for 2022 Board Election**

The date for the board meeting which also functions as the approval of the election results is Monday, May 22, 2023. Additional dates and deadlines will be provided in an online 2023 Election Timetable as the election approaches. A draft of the timetable is attached to this report.

The Governance Committee recommends continuing with a two-week voting period coupled with continuing to provide numerous reminders to vote during that period. Simply Voting allowed us to send reminders to everyone who had not yet voted.

### **II) Pre-Election Publicity and Documentation**

**A) Early Reminder Letter. Each January since 2010 an Early Reminder Letter and/or Brochure was distributed to the Nova Community, detailing the seats up for election, the overall timetable for the election with deadlines where applicable, a summary of the qualifications sought for a Nova board member, and suggestions for informing potential candidates about board service at Nova. In 2014 and after, this brochure was sent via email to the Nova community.**

The Governance Committee recommends distributing an early reminder flyer via email in January 2023, focusing on seeking recommendations for potential nominees that the Governance Committee can reach out to with more information.

**B) Call for Nominations Letter. This formal start to the annual election process is distributed to all Nova parents, teachers, current BoD members and the public. Nova's Bylaws require that this notice be sent at least 90 days before the Annual Meeting.**

The Governance Committee recommends publishing/distributing a similar letter in 2023, with updates/clarification as appropriate. Members of the Governance Committee will continue to contact members of Board committees and other recommended leaders in the Nova community to encourage them to run or nominate someone else to run.

In addition to these pieces, the Governance Committee would like to have a parent information night regarding the work of the Board and to share ways that people could become more involved with board committees and work.

The Governance Committee noted that the Board is currently in need of people with legal and finance backgrounds and will make this a priority in communications regarding nominations.

### **C) Candidate Nomination Form**

For 2023, the Governance Committee recommends using the same overall online form with minor changes as applicable based on current Board needs. It continues to be effective to have everything on one form and to conduct the nomination via Google forms. Additionally, the Governance Committee will be pro-active in soliciting nominations through Board committee members as well as doing outreach into the Nova community for recommendations for nominations.

#### **D) Candidate Questionnaire Form**

All candidate questionnaires were received by the due date. All questionnaire responses were posted on the Nova web page. Copies of the questionnaire responses were also included in the voting information included in the Nova News election updates.

The Governance Committee recommends using a similar Google form in 2023, with updated questions reflecting the progress of the strategic plan, current Board goals, and other needs of the Nova Board of Directors. The Governance Committee also recommends again asking candidates to submit a current photo to include in the Voter Packet. This would not be required, but is very helpful in connecting faces and names.

#### **III) Submission of Candidacy Timing**

The nomination period ran as usual this year. Few nominations were submitted and the parent nominations were all submitted right before the deadline. The Governance Committee will continue to set the deadline for candidate submissions a few days prior to the Governance Committee meeting at which candidate applications are reviewed. This provides time for members of the committee to review the applications and make sure they meet the guidelines set by state statute and the Governance Committee. The Governance Committee will continue to set clear and specific deadlines for all candidate information to be submitted for the candidate to be viable. Additionally, the chair of the Governance Committee will continue to respond to all nominations with a timeline, an invitation to attend the meeting, and any issues that may be obvious with the nomination (conflicts of interest, missing information, etc.)

#### **IV) Candidate Choice of Category**

No concerns or actions at this time.

#### **V) Additional Candidate Information**

The Governance Committee will continue to share an electronic copy of the Voter's Guide no later than the first day of voting to help get information to the voters; the information is also included on the Simply Voting ballot. We will also continue to research other methods of getting information to voters.

For the 2022 election the Governance Committee had prepared to hold an online Candidate Forum that would be recorded and shared, but due to the lack of candidates, decided that wasn't necessary this year. However, we do recommend trying it again next year. Some pieces that were set in place include giving members of the community an opportunity to submit questions ahead of the Forum (no one did), sharing questions with the candidates ahead of time so that they could prepare responses (this did occur), and offering to allow candidates to make a video with their responses if they could not attend the Forum (this was unnecessary due to the cancellation).

#### **VI) 2023 Nova Board Election Rules/Guidelines**

As it has done each year beginning in 2010, the Governance Committee recommends that an updated version be posted in several places on the Nova website prior to and during the 2023 election. The Governance Committee also recommends that the committee continue to remind all board members, voting and nonvoting, that campaigning on behalf of specific candidates in board elections may jeopardize Nova's tax-exempt status under IRS Section 501(c)(3).

#### **VII) Increasing Voter Participation**

The Governance Committee continues to discuss ways we can encourage more people to vote in the Board elections.

### **VIII) Ballot/Vote Tallying**

The Governance Committee continues to find electronic voting to be much easier than paper ballots. The results were immediate and certified by Simply Voting. The Governance Committee recommends continuing to use Simply Voting for the 2023 election.

### **IX) Staggered Term Requirements**

Due to a resignation of a parent board member after the election and the shrinking of the Board from 11 members to 9 two elections ago, there will be 5 seats up for election this year (3 parents, 1 community member, and 1 teacher). The recommendation of the Governance Committee is:

- 2 parent seats are for three-year terms
- 1 parent seat is for a one-year term
- Teacher seat is for a three-year term
- Community member seat is for a three-year term
- Additionally, the Governance Committee is recommending that parent-seat candidates be allowed to choose which seat they wish to run for rather than having the two candidates with the most votes get the three-year seats and the third candidate get the one-year seat.

## **Nova Board Seats – Staggered Term Status as of September 26, 2022**

### **Terms Expiring June 30, 2023 (5)**

*Parents:* Bavi Weston

Melissa DeJesus Hernandez

Jennie Winter

*Teacher:* Diane Ruday

*Community Member:* Nick LaRusso

### **Terms Expiring June 30, 2024 (1)**

*Teacher:* Sasha Ross

### **Terms Expiring June 30, 2025 (3)**

*Parents:* Colleen Hansen

Suzanne McInroy

*Teacher:* Becky Lund

### Timetable for the 2022 Nova Board Elections as of September 2022

Date Due	Event	Action Items Necessary	Person(s) Responsible
12/12/2022	Governance Committee Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review 2023 election flyer and update as needed</li> <li>• Remind Board members and Board committee members to begin reaching out to potential candidates</li> </ul>	GC
1/9/2023	Governance Committee Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make final changes to the election flyer</li> <li>• Approve and distribute the final copy via email</li> <li>• Assign election tasks to members of the committee including continued publicity such as outreach for recommended candidates and an education night regarding the work and needs of the Board</li> </ul>	GC
2/13/2023	Governance Committee Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review Call for Nominations Letter</li> <li>• Review 2023 Election Rules/Guidelines</li> <li>• Review draft election web page format</li> <li>• Reach out to Nova parents and Nova faculty for recommendations for nominations</li> <li>• Arrange for posting and emailing of Call for Nominations.</li> <li>• Confirm to hire Simply Voting (or other company) to run Nova's Board election (electronic voting).</li> </ul>	GC
2/20/2022	Distribution of misc. notices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publish/circulate Call for Nominations for 2023 board election</li> <li>• Publish election guide/rules</li> <li>• <b>Individually</b> contact people recommended to let them know and to see if they have any questions</li> </ul> <p><i>(Bylaws state that notification must happen at least 90 days before the Board meeting on May 22, 2023; this is 91 days before the meeting.)</i></p>	GC Chair (Becky), GC members
3/1/2023	Forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publish Nomination &amp; Questionnaire Forms</li> <li>• Publish start of Nomination Period</li> </ul>	GC Chair (Becky)
4/7/2023 at 4:00 PM	Close of Nominations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circulate all timely forms to the GC</li> </ul>	GC Chair (Becky)
4/10/2023	Governance Committee Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine eligibility &amp; candidate roster &amp; notify Board &amp; Nova Community of candidates &amp; election details no later than 4/20/21;</li> <li>• Approve Voters Guide and email to the eligible Nova voting community by the 20<sup>th</sup> along with voting information including to watch for a ballot link from Simply Voting (or other company).</li> </ul>	GC

<b>4/24/2023</b>	2023 Voting window opens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simply Voting (or other company) sends ballot links to all eligible voters</li> <li>• Begin to include reminders in Nova News and other emails on voting and what to do if information is not received or lost</li> </ul>	TBD
<b>5/8/2023</b>	<b>Voting window closes at 4PM</b> Governance Committee Meeting at 6:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare final report on election</li> <li>• Provide notification to Board and to all candidates</li> </ul> <p><i>(Voting period is 14 days long.)</i></p>	GC
<b>5/22/2023</b>	May Board Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver election report to Board for approval</li> <li>• Publish approved results to entire community</li> </ul>	GC Chair (Becky)