

## Executive Director's Report to the Board

**Date of the Report:** February 18, 2025

**Report Prepared By:** Dr. Brett Wedlund



### Strategic Plan Updates

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**Goal 3:** Foster an environment that values structure and classical culture in the classroom as well as joy and connections between members of Nova Classical's learning community in and outside the classroom.

**Objective 3.3:** Students in all grades will have access to a variety of extracurricular offerings.

**Strategy:** Use the extracurricular comparison and stakeholder feedback to determine if there are specific ages where an increase in arts, academic, or extracurricular offerings is needed.

**Stage:** Completed

**Update:** During the business section of this board meeting, we will present and discuss potential areas for programmatic growth. The report will highlight that our current offerings are generally competitive with similar schools while also identifying opportunities for strategic expansion in extracurricular programs, should we choose to pursue them.

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**Goal 3:** Foster an environment that values structure and classical culture in the classroom as well as joy and connections between members of Nova Classical's learning community in and outside the classroom.

**Objective 3.4:** Nova Classical will recognize students regularly for their achievements.

**Strategy:** Create a "spotlight" component of Board meetings to highlight the outstanding outcomes or actions of an individual student or student groups.

**Stage:** Completed.

**Update:** At tonight's Board meeting, we will present the inaugural Spotlight Award. This monthly award recognizes a member of the Nova community—whether staff, student, family member, or community member—who exemplifies the virtues and qualities we strive to cultivate within our school.

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**Goal 9:** Recruit, develop and retain a diverse highly skilled staff who exemplify the virtues of Nova Classical.

**Objective 9.2:** Staff will be recognized by the school community for their commitment, achievements, and actions that encourage and inspire the school to thrive and students to succeed.

**Strategy:** Create a "spotlight" component of Board meetings to highlight the outstanding outcomes or actions of an individual employee or employee group.

**Stage:** Completed.

**Update:** At tonight's Board meeting, we will present the inaugural Spotlight Award. This monthly award recognizes a member of the Nova community—whether staff, student, family member, or community member—who exemplifies the virtues and qualities we strive to cultivate within our school.

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**Goal 9:** Recruit develop and a diverse highly skilled staff who exemplify the virtues of Nova Classical.

**Objective 9.4:** Nova Classical will conduct a review of its class sizes.

**Strategy:** Write a summary of available peer research related to class size which includes information from peer reviewed sources about class size in the classical education model or identifies if this body of research does not exist.

**Strategy:** Compile data on class sizes at schools with similar instructional models.

**Strategy:** Compile on class sizes at Nova Classical disaggregated by school and department:

**Strategy:** Compile information from three strategies (listed above) into a format allowing for clear communications of findings to the Board.

**Stage:** In Progress

**Update:** At the December retreat, we shared that these strategies would be deferred to a later phase of the strategic plan if we approved continued facility expansion work. Originally, this was scheduled for completion in 2026. However, as Board discussions on class sizes continue, we have prioritized advancing

this work to ensure that these conversations are grounded in data rather than opinions or personal experiences. In addition to the strategies listed above, we will also incorporate data on class sizes from 32 metropolitan traditional school districts that participated in a class size study conducted by Brightworks, a regional service cooperative.

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### **Professional Development Day Update**

Today's professional development sessions include several key training initiatives for our staff.

- **Classical Education Training:** Support staff are receiving training on Nova's classical education model, while the full staff will engage in a session led by our Pedagogy Leads. This training will utilize the soccer analogy developed to illustrate the components of the Trivium, aligning with Nova's Board-approved definition of classical education. These sessions build on our ongoing efforts to ensure that all staff receive training in the core components of classical education, a key goal set for me by the Executive Director.
- **Cultural Competency Training:** In addition, the full staff will participate in a cultural competency case study focused on immigrant status. This training fulfills our contractual commitment with Friends of Education to provide annual cultural competency training for all Nova staff.

These professional development opportunities are part of our continued investment in staff learning and alignment with Nova's educational philosophy and commitments.

### **2025-2026 Enrollment Lottery Completed**

The **2025-2026 enrollment lottery was held on February 13** and has been successfully completed.

Families have been notified and have begun completing the updated paperwork. There were no issues with the process, and the recording will be archived in the shared Enrollment Drive's 25-26 folder.

We received **slightly more applications than last year**, with a total of **1,164 valid entries** after removing duplicates and ineligible applications. This includes **22 applications from out of state and internationally**. Offers of enrollment have been extended, and **overenroll numbers will be brought to the Board for finalization**.

### **Lower School Principal Hiring Process**

I would like to provide an update on our Lower School Principal hiring process. Our hiring committee—composed of Adam Eberhardt (LS Reading), Maria Marschand (4th Grade), Caroline Herman (LS Latin), Dr. Johnson, and myself—has been working to develop a candidate profile. This profile is informed by feedback gathered from staff and the community through surveys, listening sessions, and individual meetings. It will serve as a key tool in evaluating resumes and guiding candidate interviews.

The profile of our ideal candidate includes:

#### **Experience**

- **Teaching experience (Pre-K to 6th grade, approximately 3+ years)**
- Experience as a supervisor
- Systems management

#### **Knowledge/Expertise**

- **Principal license (which demonstrates an entry-level knowledge in the competency areas of being a principal)**
- Student support services, including special education
- Character education

#### **Abilities/Skills**

- **Instructional coaching (classroom management & pedagogy)**
- Building joyful connections with students
- Clear, direct, and timely communication
- Creating and reinforcing desired student behaviors
- Setting and inspiring high standards (and effectively addressing when they are not met)

- Collaborating with diverse populations
- Ability to work within Nova's MTSS framework

### **Leadership Style/Personal Characteristics**

- **Demonstrated ability to foster supportive relationships with staff**
- **Desire to work within Nova's classical education model**
- Empowers others
- Approachable

We currently have 23 individuals who have submitted applications, and this number typically grows as we approach the application deadline. These candidates represent a wide range of experiences, including current charter school executive directors, charter school principals, assistant principals from large traditional districts, and others. Additionally, I have received confidential inquiries from several other candidates who may be interested in the role. We are planning to conduct the first round of interviews in the last week of February, and so far, the process is progressing smoothly and as well as we had hoped.