

Executive Director's Report to the Board

Date of the Report: September 24, 2024

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Strategic Plan Updates

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 6.1: Nova Classical will recognize students regularly for their achievements.

Strategy: Streamline and communicate submissions process from the community to recognize students regularly for their achievements.

Stage: Completed

Update: The submission process for Nova News and social media has been streamline and communicated by [Nova News](#), announcements, and the website.

Goal 8: Provide classroom and extracurricular facilities which support our mission.

Objective 8.2: Nova Classical will leverage the findings of the facilities review to identify the scope and model for financing a potential facilities expansion.

Strategy: Research and select vendor for expansion scope and design.

Stage: Completed.

Update: The Board has engaged with [Hay Dobbs](#) to conduct a schematic design process. Work on this has begun.

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

Objective 9.5: Nova Classical Academy will be an educational employer of choice: a school successful in attracting outstanding and diverse candidates who exemplify the school's values and are committed to the core components of the school's classical education model.

Strategy: A thorough review of the current practices in each touchpoint area will be conducted. This review will assess the existing practices and also identify the desired long-term state for each touchpoint.

Stage: In Progress

Update: During the January retreat, I shared with the Board that while this work was underway, it was taking longer than expected to complete and the consensus was to prioritize the quality of the work being done even if it extended the deadline. Based on that, we have reviewed the remaining work and have changed our targeted completion date to June 30, 2025.

Expansion - Bonding Update

Earlier this month, I met with Nick Hagen from Piper Sandler to discuss the timing and process for potential bonding related to our facility expansion project. As you may recall, the schematic design is expected to be finalized in October, with a presentation to the Board planned for November. Our conversation centered on aligning the bonding process with the decision-making timeline for the expansion.

Before the bonding process can proceed, the following steps must be completed:

1. City Approval: The city must approve the project itself.
2. Conduit Bonding Approval: The city must also approve the conduit bonding.
3. Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP): We need to establish a GMP contract with a contractor.

4. Review and Comment: We must complete the Review and Comment process to obtain feedback from the MN Department of Education. This is typically about a 90+ day process.

Nick and I are working to ensure that the bonding timeline is synchronized with the schematic design and decision-making process, so the Board will be ready to move forward if it chooses to do so.

Key upcoming steps related to bonding include:

1. Meeting with St. Paul HRA: Nick has met with a St. Paul Housing and Redevelopment Authority employee to assess their willingness to consider a charter school expansion project. It is unclear at this time if they will have an openness to issuing conduit bonding for charter schools, however, Nova Classical's potential project has several advantages going for it including wanting to build on land that has already been removed from the St. Paul tax base, not looking to expand its enrollment, and a history of working collaboratively with the city of St. Paul. In the coming weeks, I will be speaking with strategic members of the city council to see if we can gain individual support for a potential project as having HRA members carry the request has proven a successful strategy in the past (including during our most recent bond refunding).
2. Bonding Projections: Nick and I will stay in close contact with the goal of presenting bonding projections to the Board alongside the schematic design in November.
3. Legal Counsel: I will begin exploring options for specialized legal counsel to support this project. This work requires expertise beyond that of our general counsel, and it's important to have legal representation in place before initiating the Review and Comment process, which can begin during the latter stages of schematic design.