

**Nova Classical Academy
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Regular Meeting**

November 1, 2022 (Note this is the regular October meeting, moved to avoid Halloween)

Directors Present: Colleen Hansen, Mel Hernandez, Nick LaRusso, Becky Lund, Suzanne McInroy, Diane Ruday (via Zoom), Bavi Weston, Jennie Winter

Directors Absent: Sasha Ross

Advisors Present: Brett Wedlund, Michael Pelofske (via Zoom), Missy Johnson (via Zoom), Kriscel Estrella (via Zoom), Abby Kelley-Hands (via Zoom), Joe Aliperto (Dieci Finance) (via Zoom), Oliver Hungs (student representative)

Others in Attendance: Nova staff, parents (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. Jennie Winter chaired the meeting.

II. Business Meeting: Approval of Agenda

Ms. Lund moved to approve the agenda. Ms. Weston seconded. There was a discussion.

Nick LaRusso arrived at 6:01 pm.

Ms. Hernandez moved to add a discussion regarding the strategic plan process. Ms. Hansen seconded. There was discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

The motion regarding the modified agenda passed unanimously.

III. Consent Agenda

- A. Strategic Planning Minutes – October 11, 2022
- B. 2nd reading, potential approval of revised policy 614 (School District Testing)
- C. 2nd reading, potential approval of **replacement** policy NP 402 (Reporting Unethical or Illegal Activity)
- D. 1st reading of revised policy NP 208 (Policy on Policies)
- E. 1st reading of revised policy NP 210 (Conflict of Interest for Board Members)
- F. B. Tousignant employment agreement
- G. Add Jesse Prins as a member of the Friends of Nova board
- H. Regular Board Minutes – September 26, 2022

Ms. Lund moved to approve the consent agenda. Ms. Weston seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Public Comment

Josh Garvin spoke about class sizes being too large and continuing to be a problem. He asked that the Board discuss this.

Sarah Brown spoke about having visibility about strategic planning regarding class size.

V. Board Training – Finance

Joe Aliperto did a deeper dive into the September financials. There was discussion. Ms. Winter asked about the charter school “growth trap”; that charter schools have to keep growing to make their budget work. The 2% increase in funding from the state is not enough to keep up with other costs that increase at higher percentages. Mr. Aliperto also spoke about schools using the additional federal funding to start new programs, but when that funding goes away, most likely in the next year, they will have to stop the programs or find other sources of revenue. Nova has avoided that by using our federal grants for one-time larger purchases. Mr. Aliperto said this will be important to keep in mind as we continue with our strategic planning process. There was further discussion. Dr. Wedlund added that if we don’t want to be larger than what we are, we need to be very clear about that. There was further discussion regarding the challenges of charter school funding. Nova Classical has a little flexibility with around 10% of our budget which can make it even harder to handle financial difficulties. There was discussion.

VI. Reports received by the Board

Ms. Hernandez, “Resolved, that the Student Representative Report be moved to be the first report.” Ms. Winter seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

A. Student Representative Report

Mr. Hungs spoke about Homecoming and how well it went this year. He also spoke about the PSAT and the SoL Game Night, the freshmen and senior St. Croix retreats, and transferring to winter activities in extra-curriculars. *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* is being performed this weekend. Girls volleyball continues to be undefeated. NHS inducted new members. He spoke about several other clubs and activities. Seniors are stressed, but have appreciated breaks at school with their classmates and fun activities. Mr. Hungs also spoke regarding class sizes.

B. Executive Director Report

Dr. Wedlund highlighted an additional item regarding the employee retention credit. They haven’t submitted it yet, but are very close. They’re thinking it will be around 2 million. He also requested a motion to allocate money from Give to the Max for immediate expenditure (mascot, virtue banners, display cases, photo collages of Nova students, branded scorer’s table, additional signage, and a big screen for the Great Room).

Ms. Hansen, “Resolved, that the Board authorizes the money raised from the 2022 Give to the Max be made available for immediate expenditure.” Ms. McInroy seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

C. Board Chair Report

Ms. Winter spoke about increasing Board visibility and getting more people involved.

D. Board Committees

i. Governance Report

There was discussion regarding increasing engagement and the work the Governance Committee is doing with the Friends of Nova board and increasing involvement in the Nova board election.

ii. Finance and Budget Report

There was no discussion.

iii. ED Review Committee

Dr. LaRusso gave an update regarding the work of the committee and stated that the committee is planning to present metrics for the ED goals at the November meeting.

iv. **Academic Excellence Report**

Mrs. Ruday gave an update. The committee looked at the MCA data and fall FastBridge data.

Ms. Lund, “Resolve, that Bavi Weston be added to the Academic Excellence Committee.” Mrs. Ruday seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

v. **NPTO Report**

Mrs. Gabor highlighted that the Great Gathering Kick-Off party is this Saturday. Close to 200 tickets have been sold. Additionally, a lot of grade level get-togethers have been happening. The US Advisory Board is holding socials.

VII. **Business**

A. **Benefits Renewal**

Ms. Estrella presented the renewal confirmation with Health Partners along with Margaret Kolb-Tavis, our broker. Although there is an increase, it’s still less than we were paying in 2021. There was discussion to clarify eligibility.

Ms. Hansen, “Resolved, that the Board approves renewing our benefits plan as presented.” Ms. Weston seconded. There was discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

B. **Enrollment Report**

Ginger Gabor gave an update on Nova Classical’s enrollment numbers and highlighted a few areas. We received a record number of applications for this school year: 1,443 applications so far and that will continue to rise during the school year. She also said that this year we aren’t losing students in the transition years (5th to 6th and 8th to 9th). We already have 164 applications for next school year as of today, the first day of the next enrollment period. There was discussion.

C. **2021-2022 Annual Report**

Dr. Wedlund presented the 2021-2022 Annual Report.

Ms. Lund, “Resolved, that the Board approves the 2021-2022 Annual Report.” Ms. Hernandez seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

D. **2022 Election Report**

Ms. Lund presented the 2022 Election Report and highlighted the seats up for election in 2022 and the Governance Committee’s recommendation to have parents choose ahead of time if they will run for a 1-year seat or a 3-year seat. There was discussion.

Ms. Lund , “Resolved, that the Board accepts the 2022 Election Report.” Ms. Ruday seconded. There was discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

E. **Discussion of the Strategic Plan Process**

Ms. Hernandez shared some concerns with the process to ensure that we're hearing from all of our families and that our BIPOC population is being represented. We did not hit 400 in the parent survey and there weren't a lot of parents were participating in the listening session. She would like to offer more opportunities for families to weigh in. Finally, Ms. Hernandez would like to use other data from alumni to consider in this process since there wasn't an alumni response. There was discussion. Although we can't tell our demographics from the survey results, we do have a higher percentage of parent involvement compared to other schools. We still don't know if there's an underrepresented group. There was further discussion.

Ms. Hernandez, "Resolved, that the Board charges the Executive Director to look into feedback given in a survey to last year's seniors to see if there is information that can be utilized in the strategic planning process." Dr. LaRusso seconded. There was discussion. Ms. Hansen, Ms. Hernandez, Dr. LaRusso, and Ms. Weston voted in favor. Ms. Lund, Ms. McInroy, Ms. Runday, Ms. Winter voted against. The motion failed.

VIII. Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items

The next regular board meeting will be on Monday, November 28, 2022.

IX. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Becky Lund.