

Executive Director's Report to the Board

Date of the Report: February 20, 2025

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Enrollment Lottery

The enrollment lottery has been completed. Total applications were approximately 200 lower than last year, consistent with our decision to scale back enrollment promotion efforts. Given our currently healthy waitlists, we no longer need to emphasize waitlist depth for bonding considerations.

Families have been notified and are completing the updated enrollment paperwork. The process has proceeded smoothly with no issues reported.

We received slightly more gross applications than last year. After removing duplicates and invalid applications (primarily students who will not be five years old by September 1, 2026), **863 applications** were entered into the grade level lotteries.

Enrollment offers have been extended, including approved over enroll allowances for grades 6 through 12. Current offers by grade:

Kindergarten: 80 (including 34 siblings and 1 staff child)

Grade 1: 1

Grade 2: 0

Grade 3: 0

Grade 4: 0

Grade 5: 0

Grade 6: 10

Grade 7: 4

Grade 8: 4

Grade 9: 15

Grade 10: 5

Grade 11: 5

Grade 12: 1

Friends of Education Site Visit

Friends of Education conducted their annual site visit on February 17. The visit lasted approximately six hours and included classroom observations as well as meetings with school leaders and leadership groups. Chris Shepard participated in his capacity as a Board member.

The evaluation rubric and formal feedback will be provided in the coming months. The Board will receive the report once it is available.

FY27 Budget Development

We have begun preparation of the FY27 budget. The first step in this process is completion of an FY26 revised budget, which will serve as the baseline for FY27 planning.

We are targeting the March Board meeting to present the FY26 revised budget for approval. It is also likely that the FY27 budget will be brought forward for an initial read at that meeting.

Senior Retreat Change

The Senior Retreat scheduled for March 13 will now take place at the school rather than at Base Camp. This decision follows continued monitoring of conditions near Base Camp, particularly given its proximity to the Bishop Henry Whipple Federal Building. While recent developments, including the drawdown of federal personnel and the conclusion of Operation Metro Surge, may alter the environment in that area, we determined that proceeding with the on-campus format is the most prudent course of action.

This structure has been used successfully in prior years. Staff are prepared to deliver a safe and meaningful experience for students, and planning adjustments are underway. No program disruptions are anticipated.

Federal Funding Update – DEI Lawsuit

You may recall that last year Nova was asked to respond to a Dear Colleague letter requesting certification that the school did not participate in DEI activities, with an implied risk to federal funding if certification was not provided. Nova took no action at that time and did not submit certification. Minnesota, along with several other states, subsequently filed suit against the federal government over this issue. An update and resolution have now been reached. Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison announced they have settled a multistate lawsuit with the federal government, ensuring that Minnesota will receive approximately \$530 million in K–12 federal funding regardless of the status of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility initiatives. Minnesota is one of 19 states included in the settlement. The funds will continue to support low income students, special education services, English language learner programming, students in foster care or experiencing homelessness, and educator training. This resolution removes the immediate funding risk that was raised last year.