

**Nova Classical Academy
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Regular Meeting – HELD ONLINE/REMOTELY
March 29, 2021**

Directors Present: Jason Belter, Mel Hernandez, Claudia Gumbiner Hungs, Divya Karan, Nick LaRusso, Becky Lund, Theresa Nelson, Frank Ross, Diane Ruday, Jennie Winter

Directors Absent: None

Advisors Present: Brett Wedlund, Michael Pelofske, Brooke Tousignant, Missy Johnson, Joe Aliperto (Dieci School Finance), Chris Rovn, Kriscell Estrella, Ginger Gabor (NPTO), Sarah Jeong (Student Representative)

Others in Attendance: Nova staff, parents, and students

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 pm. Theresa Nelson led the meeting.

II. Business Meeting: Approval of Agenda

Mr. Belter moved to approve the agenda. Ms. Lund seconded. A role call vote was held. Mr. Belter, Ms. Hernandez, Ms. Gumbiner Hungs, Ms. Karan, Dr. LaRusso, Ms. Lund, Ms. Nelson, Mr. Ross, Ms. Ruday, and Ms. Winter voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

III. Consent Agenda

- A. Agreement with Indigo for Director of Special Education services for FY2022
- B. Add Amy Schwartz to the Governance Committee
- C. 2nd reading/ potential approval of revised policy 709 (Student Transportation)
- D. 2nd reading/ potential approval of revised policy 807 (Health and Safety)
- E. 1st reading of revised policy NP 701 (Establishment of Budget)
- F. 1st reading of combined policies NP 702 and NP 714, now to be NP 702 (Fund Balance Requirements)
- G. Revision to the 2021-2022 school calendar
- H. Regular February 22nd minutes

Mr. Belter moved to approve the consent agenda. Ms. Lund seconded. A role call vote was held. Mr. Belter, Ms. Hernandez, Ms. Gumbiner Hungs, Ms. Karan, Dr. LaRusso, Ms. Lund, Ms. Nelson, Mr. Ross, Ms. Ruday, and Ms. Winter voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Public Comment

Sarah Dumont Brown submitted electronic public comment with areas she hoped the Board would consider as they make decisions regarding in-person learning scenarios for Upper School students.

Sasha Ross submitted electronic public comment with her concerns regarding the proposal to bring students in 6th-8th grade back on campus and suggested that efforts instead be made for students failing multiple classes in 6th-12th grade to be on campus.

Ken Graeve spoke about his disappointment with Nova's choices to remain in distance learning and the lack of instruction in distance learning.

Henry Earl Fisher spoke about his disappointment, confusion, and frustration regarding Nova's choice to have high school students remaining in distance learning.

Linnea Johnston spoke about her frustration with a lack of creative solutions and a lack of initiative to bring back all students to in-person learning.

Jay Johnston spoke about the impact on students who are losing out on an important year when they aren't able to return in person and the need to find creative solutions.

Bridget Borell spoke about a desire to bring back students in the high school and the need for Nova to respond more quickly to changing scenarios such as more people being eligible for the vaccine.

V. Reports received by the Board.

A. Executive Director Report

Ms. Tousignant gave an update on the Lower School reopening. Dr. Wedlund highlighted the requirement to do standardized testing from his report.

B. Board Chair Report

Ms. Nelson gave an update regarding conduit bonds and the motion before the St. Paul Housing and Redevelopment Authority. The motion to bar charter schools from obtaining those bonds was rescinded. She thanked people who took the time to send letters. There was discussion.

C. Board Committees

i. Governance Report

Ms. Lund reminded everyone of the April 9th 4:00 pm deadline to submit nomination forms for the upcoming board election.

ii. Finance and Budget Report

There was no discussion at this time.

iii. Academic Excellence Report

Mr. Belter highlighted that based on Nova's DDI assessments, which have been modified to reflect the slower pace of the curriculum, most students seem to be showing similar progress. There was discussion.

D. Ad Hoc Committees

E. NPTO Report

Mrs. Gabor shared several highlights including yard signs, teacher grants, and the upcoming meeting next Tuesday at 6:00 pm on Zoom.

F. Student Report

Ms. Jeong spoke about recent and upcoming events including some senior-specific events and virtual peer tutoring. She also highlighted the start of spring extra-curriculars like track and baseball. Several clubs like the Collective and Widen the Spiral have been talking about the rise of Asian hate crimes and racism. Students in

11th and 12th grade are looking forward to holding a prom this year. She also spoke about the student response to not returning to school for the end of the year.; returning is a high priority for all of them.

VI. Business

A. 1st Reading of Proposed FY22 Budget

Ms. Winter spoke about the budgeting process and thanked Dr. Wedlund and Mr. Aliperto for their work. Dr. Wedlund gave additional details about the process based on current enrollment and highlighted a few specific areas from the proposed budget including a grant for students who are not making progress. Mr. Aliperto added that we are waiting for some final information regarding grant allocations. There was discussion.

B. Branding Proposal

Dr. Wedlund spoke about the recommended proposal and the need for consistency in our messaging. There was discussion about the purpose of the messaging; it is meant first internally and then can be branched out. There was further discussion. Dr. Wedlund added that the final product should require Board approval.

Dr. LaRusso left the meeting.

Ms. Winter, “Resolved that the Board approves hiring MP+G Marketing Solutions for up to \$40,000 for a brand refresh project.” Ms. Gumbiner Hungs seconded. A role call vote was held. Mr. Belter, Ms. Hernandez, Ms. Gumbiner Hungs, Ms. Karan, Ms. Lund, Ms. Nelson, Mr. Ross, Ms. Ruday, and Ms. Winter voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

C. Approval of Line of Credit

Dr. Wedlund gave the background information behind this motion.

Mr. Belter, “Resolved, that the Board approves the \$1.5 million Line of Credit contract with Old National Bank.” Ms. Lund seconded. A role call vote was held. Mr. Belter, Ms. Hernandez, Ms. Gumbiner Hungs, Ms. Karan, Ms. Lund, Ms. Nelson, Mr. Ross, Ms. Ruday, and Ms. Winter voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

D. 1st Reading of Employee Handbook

Ms. Estrella presented the updated handbook and highlighted more substantial changes. She asked for feedback regarding the “Gifts” section; to either remove it entirely or to reduce acceptable gifts from \$25 to \$5. There was discussion. The general response was a preference to remove that clause.

Dr. LaRusso returned.

E. FY21 Learning Model

Dr. Wedlund presented the proposed update to Nova’s learning plan including the data and background information behind the update. He also went through Nova’s Reopening Checklist. He recommends an additional opt-in date for in-person learning for students in K-5, implementing a hybrid model for 6th -8th grade where students have the option to be in-person two days a week, and expanding the in-person student support services for students in 9th-12th grade as identified by the RtI

team. He also included that Nova not make any further changes to learning models during this school year and that the US would utilize three of their planning days as allowed by the state. There was discussion. Dr. Wedlund also spoke about different scenarios and research he and his team have been looking at to arrive at their recommendation.

Mr. Pelofske presented more specific details for the 6-8 hybrid plan and 9-12 targeted support plan. There was discussion.

Ms. Lund, “Resolved, that the Board approve the update for Nova’s learning plan as presented to the Board.” Ms. Karan seconded. A role call vote was held. Mr. Belter, Ms. Hernandez, Ms. Gumbiner Hungs, Ms. Karan, Dr. LaRusso, Ms. Lund, Ms. Nelson, Mr. Ross, Ms. Ruday, and Ms. Winter voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

F. Revision of Safely ReunKNIGHTed Plan

Dr. Wedlund reviewed the updated Safely ReunKNIGHTed plan that was presented to the Board for this meeting.

Ms Gumbiner Hungs, “Resolved, that the Board approves the revised Safely ReunKNIGHTED plan.” Ms. Lund seconded. A role call vote was held. Mr. Belter, Ms. Hernandez, Ms. Gumbiner Hungs, Ms. Karan, Dr. LaRusso, Ms. Lund, Ms. Nelson, Mr. Ross, Ms. Ruday, and Ms. Winter voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items

The next regular board meeting will be on April 26, 2021.

VIII. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:49 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Becky Lund.