

**Nova Classical Academy
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Regular Meeting
February 28, 2022**

Directors Present: Mel Hernandez, Claudia Gumbiner Hungs, Divya Karan, Nick LaRusso (via Zoom), Becky Lund, Frank Ross, Sasha Ross, Diane Ruday, Jennie Winter

Directors Absent:

Advisors Present: Brett Wedlund, Michael Pelofske (via Zoom), Missy Johnson, Kriscel Estrella (via Zoom), Heather Gray (NPTO, via Zoom), Ava Jane Lynch (Student Representative, via Zoom)

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 6:03 pm. Frank Ross led the meeting.

There were technical difficulties with Zoom at the beginning of the meeting.

II. Business Meeting: Approval of Agenda

Ms. Lund moved to approve the agenda with the change of moving the Student Report to after Public Comment. Ms. Ruday seconded. There was discussion. A roll call vote was held. Ms. Hernandez, Ms. Gumbiner Hungs, Ms. Karan, Dr. LaRusso, Ms. Lund, Mr. Ross, Ms. Ross, Ms. Ruday, Ms. Winter voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

There was discussion about how to add something to the agenda and next steps relating to a report the Board received.

Ms. Karan, “Resolved that the Board add a closed session discussion relating to a report regarding complaints made to the Board about an employee. This discussion would happen at the next regular board meeting.” Ms. Gumbiner Hungs seconded. There was discussion. A roll call vote was held. Ms. Hernandez, Ms. Gumbiner Hungs, Ms. Karan, Ms. Ross, and Ms. Ruday, voted in favor. Dr. LaRusso, Ms. Lund, and Ms. Winter voted against. Mr. Ross abstained. The motion passed.

III. Consent Agenda

A. 2nd January 31, 2022 board minutes

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

IV. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

V. Board Training

Dr. Johnson presented on classical education. Her [slides](#) are available online. She spoke about the “Why” of classical education: to seek the Good, to seek the Beautiful, and to seek

the True. There was brief discussion around two questions at the end of her presentation: What tenants of classical education are essential/ non-negotiable for Nova Classical Academy? and Where are you finding yourself curious for further learning?

Dr. Mike Lovett presented on board governance. The Board reflected on Nova's mission (what part of the mission most resonated with them) and the members shared their reasons for serving on the Board. [Note: There was discussion in small groups as a part of this training which was shared with the large group afterwards.]

VI. Reports received by the Board

A. Executive Director Report

Dr. Wedlund gave an update regarding masking since the city of St. Paul, federal, and CDC have changed their guidelines and mandates. Administration is working on what this might look like at Nova while keeping in mind that the CDC's guidelines have not changed regarding quarantining, which means that many schools have simultaneously removed masking and contact tracing. The administration is also looking at changes that would be needed to our Covid-related policies. There will most likely be a special meeting next week because of this. There was discussion about this. There was also discussion regarding the written report including the number of students doing PSEO, which is greater than we had projected.

Ms. Lund, "Resolved, that the Board extend its meeting until we've covered all of our business including the closed session." Ms. Winter seconded. A roll call vote was held. Ms. Hernandez, Ms. Gumbiner Hungs, Ms. Karan, Ms. Lund, Mr. Ross, Ms. Ross, Ms. Ruday, and Ms. Winter voted in favor. Dr. LaRusso abstained. The motion passed.

B. Board Chair Report

Mr. Ross shared a note from Beth Topoluk stating that we've been recognized as a high-quality school by MDE. He also stated that he is going to introduce more formality to board meeting to increase effectiveness and efficiency through a more formal adherence to Robert's Rules of Order. Mr. Ross echoed what Dr. Wedlund said in that we will most likely have a special board meeting next week regarding masking and to bring a final contract with the Executive Director. Finally, Mr. Ross reviewed his actions regarding allegations against one of Nova's employees and stated that this process highlighted the need to refine some of Nova's processes including policy NP 402. There was discussion regarding having a tool for Robert's Rules.

C. Board Committees

i. Governance Report

There was no discussion.

ii. Finance and Budget Report

There was no discussion.

iii. Academic Excellence Report

There was no discussion.

D. Ad Hoc Committees

E. Executive Director Review Committee

F. NPTO Report

Ms. Gray said that the next NPTO meeting is tomorrow via Zoom. The next US Parent Advisory meeting is on March 7 and the LS group will be starting up again soon. The NPTO had a fundraiser at the Green Mill on our Snow Day last week. Lastly, Great Gatherings is still looking for gatherings and for silent auction items.

G. Student Report

Ms. Lynch spoke about celebrating the lunar new year and this week being Snow Days Spirit Week. She highlighted more events relating to the Spirit Week. ACT tests are coming up next week. Winter sports are ending and spring sports have started. One Act performance were last weekend. She also spoke about several student clubs and some of their work. The Capstone trip to Greece and Italy is looking like it will happen.

VII. Business

A. Oswalt Transportation Consulting Services Contract

Ms. Lund, “Resolved that the Board approves the contract with Oswalt Transportation Consulting Service.” Ms. Winter seconded. All present members and Dr. LaRusso voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

B. PRIDE Transportation Contract

Ms. Hernandez, “Resolved that the Board approves the contract with PRIDE Transportation.” Ms. Gumbiner Hungs seconded. There was discussion. All present members and Dr. LaRusso voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

C. Nova Classical Communications Plan

Dr. Wedlund gave background information regarding this plan, seeking Board agreement as implementation will incur costs. Dr. Wedlund shared about the Nova Communications Plan and ways to improve Nova's communications in a way that improves the functions of the school. He also spoke about re-engaging our community as we emerge from the pandemic. He also highlighted the four goals and the key messages. There will be systematic changes over the next fifteen months, focusing on 12 goals. (16 goals will remain for future times.) This communications plan can also be helpful in our strategic plan work. Dr. Wedlund stated that agreeing to move forward with this plan will set expectations and priorities including prioritizing communication over other things and would involve significant time from Dr. Wedlund as well as the rest of the leadership time over the next 12 months. There was discussion.

Ms. Lund, “Resolved, that the Board accepts the communications plan and approves prioritizing it.” Dr. LaRusso seconded. There was discussion. All present members and Dr. LaRusso voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

D. Executive Director Contract Update

Mr. Ross gave an update. There are four main areas being added:

1. Continue with a binding agreement including how issues are resolved.
2. Evaluate “life-work” balance with a job description.
3. Explicitly separate the ability for the ED to create a contract with his direct reports so that the Board still approves the contracts, but does not get involved in minutia.

4. Get the most recent job description for the ED role so we can cross-reference it with the contract.

There was discussion.

E. Review of Fall Staff Emotional Culture Inventory

Mr. Ross asked Dr. Wedlund for an update with the intent of giving perspective on how things are going and address questions that have been posed. Dr. Wedlund spoke about the data from the survey and the questions staff were asked. He also gave an update on additional steps that are being taken to address the feedback of the survey such as hiring additional in-house subs. There was discussion.

VIII. Closed Session

The meeting was closed as permitted by section 13D.05 for the purpose of evaluating the performance of the school's Executive Director.

The meeting was reopened and the following summary of the closed session was given: Ms. Lund, "Resolved, that the Board struck ED goal #4 (In support of Nova's Vision and Priorities, increase and improve student and family engagement in the community through the following:

- a. Conduct process, systems, offerings, and outcomes audits around clubs, activities, events, legacy events, student volunteering, and family volunteering.) for SY21-22." Ms. Winter seconded. There was discussion. A roll call vote was held. Ms. Hernandez, Dr. LaRusso, Ms. Lund, Mr. Ross, Ms. Ross, and Ms. Winter voted in favor. Ms. Gumbiner Hungs and Ms. Karan voted against. Ms. Ruday abstained. The motion passed.

IX. Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items

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

X. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 10:23 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Becky Lund.