

**Nova Classical Academy
Board of Directors Minutes
Board Retreat
December 18, 2024**

Directors Present: Colleen Hansen, Shannon Hooge, Becky Lund, Suzanne McInroy, Heather Meeker, Todd Sample, Chris Shepard, Bavi Weston

Directors Absent: None

Advisors Present: Brett Wedlund, Tamra Paschall, Missy Johnson (via Zoom)

Others in Attendance: Nova staff, parents (Note: While this retreat was held in-person at 1455 Victoria Way, it was also made available on Zoom.)

The retreat began at 6:00 pm.

I. Presentation of the Strategic Plan Progress

Dr. Wedlund presented on the progress with Nova Classical's Strategic Plan focusing on the history of the strategic plan, the Board's role in the plan (primarily according to the MSBA), and a review of the work done. In brief, the action plan includes 74 strategies to be completed over 5 years and 32 have been completed to date. 12 are currently in-progress.

The six most recently completed strategies include:

- Create a long-term training calendar identifying when PD on each of the core components of classical education will be delivered.
- Provide staff with professional development training aligned with the classical education PD calendar.
- Streamline and communicate submissions process from the community to recognize students regularly for their achievements.
- Form an advisory group to make recommendations based on the findings of the equity audit.
- Create a prioritized list of areas to address based on the findings of the equity audit.
- Define the scope and sequence of an expansion project.

The twelve in-progress strategies include:

- Assemble groups of Lower and Upper School students to provide feedback and make recommendations for engaging student voice.
- Create a "spotlight" component of board meetings to highlight the outstanding outcomes or actions of an individual student or student group.
- Implement framework including providing clear expectations and training for each role involved in the MTSS framework.
- Review the communications action plan for implementation quarterly to ensure implementation of tasks in accordance with the Communications Plan.
- Analyze methods for financing a project of the designed scope and development plan and make a recommendation on the best financial options.
- Create a "spotlight" component of board meetings to highlight the outstanding outcomes or actions of an individual employee or employee group.
- Align supervisors with criteria for the creation of a recognition program to formally acknowledge the demonstrated standards of excellence of Nova Classical staff.

- Develop a formal recognition program that rewards the demonstrated standards of excellence of Nova Classical staff.
- Implement a formal recognition program that rewards the demonstrated standards of excellence of Nova Classical staff.
- Conduct a thorough review of the current practices in each touchpoint area. This review will assess the existing practices and also identify the long-term state for each touchpoint.
- Identify the major initiatives required to maximize the positive impact of each touchpoint area (recruiting, hiring, onboarding, professional development, evaluation, compensation, recognition, honoring transitions, etc.) between Nova Classical and its employees.
- Identify and rectify any deviations from our accepted practices in each of these touchpoint areas to ensure that we are effectively implementing the practices we endorse as an employer.

There was discussion.

Dr. Wedlund also presented on the impact of expansion on the action plan for the Strategic Plan and thirteen strategies that would be pushed back. These include:

- Review and revise the teacher evaluation rubric to include the core components of classical education.
- Design a Classical Education 101 course (or house) that new-to-Nova-Upper-School students are enrolled in during their first year at the school.
- Revise the supervisor pop-in process to ensure explicit virtue education is occurring during the designated times.
- Select and implement strategies for engaging student voice.
- Update PDG for licensed teachers with action plans for personalized support.
- Utilize an event, print collateral, and/or other method(s) to highlight the diversity of the Nova Classical community.
- Compile data on class sized at schools with similar instructional models.
- Identify and rectify any deviations from our accepted practices in each of these touchpoints (employer of choice) to ensure that we are effectively implementing the practices we endorse as an employer.

There was discussion.

II. Guided Discussion on Expansion Project Plan

1. What do you see in the building expansion plan that aligns with Nova's mission and Strategic Plan, and benefits the community?

- It benefits the privacy of student services. (supportive community)
- The process has been informative (lots of “grammar stage” information) in legal requirements, financing, etc.
- Access to “pull-out spaces” also supports our curriculum.
- Helps our students’ daily experiences.
- Still allows for future growth/possible expansion. (It’s not all or nothing right now.)
- Gym facilities support learning “for life” by building life-long skills.
- Planning for multiple-use spaces that we can adapt as we move into a new building.

2. From your perspective as a Board member, what potential challenges, concerns, or risks do you have regarding how this project could impact the school as a whole?

- The impact on the current space will be very positive, especially on the academic part of the day. The new space will have a positive impact on other, also important, parts of the day.
- A concern is funding; being fiscally responsible so that we're not spending everything we can and leaving no cushion if anything changes or there are unexpected costs or changes in our funding.
- The location of the showers not being next to the location athletes will be using for their games; the logistics are a concern. (There was discussion.)
- Not wanting to add more students to pay for the expansion, even in the future.
- Wanting to be able to offer as much to students as we can.
- (There was discussion about what feedback has come from sharing information regarding the expansion; not much, not even questions.)
- Ensuring that we can continue to engage the community (or even better engage the community) with a new space.
- Want to have a level of excitement for the project and to have the community behind the project as we make a large financial commitment. There was discussion.
- Communicating the great things we're doing with this plan with the given restrictions we had; it's not about prioritizing athletics.
- The Board needs to be enthusiastic about this, should we vote in favor of it.
- There are other issues that aren't being addressed such as the lunchroom space and it's hard to do some pieces and not others.
- We're making a commitment to use funds from our fund balance and yearly operating budget; does that restrict future options? (Staff compensation in particular.)

3. What more do you need to know before you are able to vote on whether or not to move forward with the building expansion plan?

- The additional funding option Dr. Wedlund mentioned at the November board meeting. (It will go to F&B in January.)
- Are there other real estate options beyond our current property, such as moving K-2 or 10 – 12 to a different building? (There was discussion.)
- How have other schools handled the storm shelter requirement; is there any way to get out of it (or partially get out of it)? (It's a state statute for education facilities; it would take legislative action to change it.)

The retreat ended at 8:08 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Becky Lund.