



Know Yourself. Know The World.

# NOVA CLASSICAL ACADEMY™

## 2022-2023 Employee Handbook



## Table of Contents

WELCOME .....	6
INTRODUCTION.....	8
MISSION AND VIRTUES .....	8
Mission .....	8
Virtues .....	8
EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES.....	8
EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY .....	8
EMPLOYMENT AT-WILL .....	9
OPEN DOOR POLICY.....	9
RECRUITMENT AND HIRING .....	9
IMMIGRATION COMPLIANCE .....	9
EMPLOYMENT CATEGORIES .....	9
Administration .....	9
Program Support Staff .....	9
Licensed Faculty .....	9
Educational Support Staff .....	9
Exempt Employees.....	10
Nonexempt Employees .....	10
Temporary Employees .....	10
TRAINING.....	10
INCLEMENT WEATHER .....	10
ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY .....	11
GENERAL .....	11
ABSENCES AND SUBSTITUTE REQUESTS .....	11
Absences .....	11
Substitute Requests .....	11
PAY PRACTICES.....	12
WORK WEEK .....	12
HOURS OF WORK .....	12
Salary for Exempt Employees .....	12
HOLIDAYS.....	12
TIME REPORTING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES .....	12
Timekeeping.....	12
Breaks .....	13

Overtime .....	13
Stipends .....	13
PAYROLL PROCEDURES .....	13
Paydays .....	13
Mandatory Direct Deposit .....	13
Reimbursements.....	14
Payment for Advanced Degrees .....	14
PAID TIME OFF.....	14
Overview .....	14
PTO Accrual .....	14
Sick and Safe Time .....	15
Scheduling and Use.....	16
PTO SHARING & DONATION POLICY .....	16
Policy Statement.....	16
CODE OF CONDUCT.....	17
GENERAL EXPECTED BEHAVIORS .....	17
Use of School Offices .....	17
Standards of Conduct.....	17
Personal Beliefs .....	18
Employee Decoration of Workspace.....	18
DRESS CODE & PUBLIC IMAGE .....	18
GENERAL GUIDELINES .....	18
Exceptions .....	19
WORKSPACE.....	19
OFFICE EQUIPMENT .....	19
PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS.....	19
TEACHER EVALUATIONS .....	19
STAFF EVALUATIONS .....	20
EMPLOYEE FILES .....	20
ACCESS TO PERSONNEL FILES .....	20
COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION .....	20
OVERVIEW.....	20
Peer-to-Peer .....	20
Faculty/Staff-Student.....	20
Parent-Teacher .....	21

COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL.....	21
COMMUNICATION WITH THE MEDIA.....	21
ETHICS .....	22
GENERAL .....	22
Conflicts of Interest .....	22
Protection of Confidential Information.....	22
Student Data Privacy .....	22
Falsification of Documents .....	23
GIFTS .....	23
RELATIVES AND INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS AT WORK .....	23
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY .....	23
EMPLOYMENT OUTSIDE THE WORKPLACE.....	24
BACKGROUND CHECKS.....	24
NOTIFICATION OF A CRIMINAL CONVICTION .....	24
LEAVES OF ABSENCE .....	25
FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE / PREGNANCY AND PARENTING LEAVE .....	25
SICK OR INJURED FAMILY MEMBER LEAVE.....	25
BEREAVEMENT LEAVE .....	25
SAFETY LEAVE .....	25
LEAVE FOR VICTIMS OF A CRIME .....	25
TIME OFF TO VOTE .....	26
JURY AND WITNESS DUTY LEAVE .....	26
MILITARY LEAVE .....	26
LEAVE FOR CIVIL AIR PATROL SERVICE.....	26
FAMILY MILITARY LEAVE.....	26
LEAVE TO ATTEND MILITARY CEREMONIES.....	26
LEAVE FOR BONE MARROW, ORGAN, AND BLOOD DONATION .....	27
SCHOOL ACTIVITIES LEAVE.....	27
UNPAID PERSONAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE .....	27
ACCOMODATIONS .....	27
DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION .....	27
RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION .....	28
LACTATION ACCOMMODATION .....	28
ALCOHOL AND DRUG POLICY.....	28
HARASSMENT .....	28
WORKPLACE VIOLENCE.....	29

DISCIPLINE AND TERMINATION ..... 30

    PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE ..... 30

        Resignation..... 30

        Return of Property..... 30

STUDENT CONTACT ..... 30

    STUDENT DISCIPLINE ..... 30

    CORPORAL PUNISHMENT ..... 30

        Physical and Verbal Abuse ..... 31

        Student Supervision ..... 31

    USE OF STUDENT IMAGE AND VOICE..... 31

    MANDATORY REPORTING ..... 31

FACILITIES ..... 31

    FACILITY USE AND SECURITY..... 31

    VISITORS AND GUESTS ..... 31

    FOB AND KEY POLICY ..... 31

    SOLICITATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF LITERATURE ..... 32

    BULLETIN BOARDS..... 32

    USE OF NOVA EQUIPMENT ..... 32

    WEAPONS IN THE WORKPLACE ..... 33

USE OF ELECTRONIC RESOURCES ..... 33

    TECHNOLOGY EQUIPMENT POLICY ..... 33

    EMAIL..... 34

    SOFTWARE CODE OF ETHICS..... 34

        Virus Protection ..... 34

        Installation of Software on the Network ..... 34

EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY ..... 34

    USE OF PHONES..... 35

    USE OF MAIL ..... 35

    SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY ..... 35

SAFETY AND SECURITY ..... 36

    HEALTH AND SAFETY PROGRAM..... 36

    SMOKE-FREE WORKPLACE ..... 36

    WORK-RELATED INJURIES..... 36

    SECURITY INSPECTIONS..... 36

    HAZARDOUS AND TOXIC MATERIALS ..... 37

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS ..... 37

BENEFITS AND ELIGIBILITY..... 37

    Health Insurance..... 37

    Dental Insurance..... 38

    Short-Term Disability Insurance..... 38

    Long-Term Disability Insurance ..... 38

    Life/AD&D Insurance ..... 38

    Voluntary Life/AD&D Insurance ..... 38

    Vision Insurance..... 38

    Dependent Care FSA..... 38

    Employee Assistance Program ..... 38

QUALIFIED FAMILY STATUS CHANGES ..... 38

    COBRA ..... 38

RETIREMENT PLANNING ..... 39

    TRA – TEACHER’S RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION ..... 39

    PERA – PUBLIC EMPLOYEE’S RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION ..... 39

    VOLUNTARY RETIREMENT PLANS..... 39

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT..... 40

## **Welcome Nova Employees!**

On behalf of your colleagues, I welcome you to Nova Classical Academy and wish you every success here.

We believe that each employee contributes directly to Nova's growth and success, and we hope you will take pride in being a member of our team.

This handbook was developed to describe some of the expectations of our employees and to outline the policies, programs, and benefits available to eligible employees.

Employees should familiarize themselves with the contents of the employee handbook as soon as possible, for it will answer many questions about employment with Nova.

We hope that your experience here will be challenging, enjoyable, and rewarding. Again, welcome!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brett Wedlund".

Dr. Brett Wedlund  
Executive Director

**INTRODUCTION**

This Employee Handbook (“Handbook”) contains information about Nova Classical Academy’s (“Nova”) employment practices, policies, and procedures. Nova expects each employee to read this Handbook carefully, as it is a valuable reference for understanding your job at Nova. This Handbook supersedes all handbooks previously issued by Nova. Nova reserves the rights to revise, delete, change, alter, interpret and/or add to the provisions of this Handbook at any time, without notice. Nova will seek to notify you of such changes by email and other appropriate means; however, such a notice is not required for changes to be effective. No verbal statements or representations can change the provisions of this Handbook.

None of Nova’s personnel documents or benefit plans, including this Handbook, constitutes an express or implied contract of any kind between Nova and any of its employees, providing you any specific term of employment, nor does it obligate you to continue your employment for a specific period of time. The purpose of the Handbook is simply to provide you with a convenient explanation of policies and practices at Nova. This Handbook is an overview or a guideline. It cannot cover every matter that might arise in the workplace. For this reason, specific questions regarding the applicability of a particular policy or practice should be addressed to your supervisor, Human Resources, or a member of Administration.

Nova provides certain benefits to persons who are eligible to receive them, based on terms, conditions, and limitations that are stated in the written plan documents applicable to each benefit. This Handbook outlines each of these benefits briefly, but the statements contained in this Handbook regarding such benefits are not controlling. Rather, the plan documents control an employee’s eligibility for a benefit and the terms and conditions that apply to an employee’s receipt of such a benefit. Plan documents for benefits offered by Nova are available for your inspection.

The Nova Board of Directors (“Board”) has enacted numerous employment-related policies. To the extent there is a conflict between those policies and this Handbook, the Board’s policies control. Additionally, this Handbook is complemented by the Nova Student-Parent Handbook and the Teacher Development and Evaluation Handbook. It is expected that all employees of Nova will acknowledge, adhere to, and assist with the enforcement of the policies and procedures found in the Student-Parent Handbook and the Teacher Development and Evaluation Handbook, to the extent which they are applicable.

**MISSION AND VIRTUES**

Nova Classical Academy, a Minnesota public charter school, is dedicated to high academic achievement through the Classical model of education, attends to the dual strands of human development: rigorous pursuit of intellect facilitated and given purpose by the refinement of moral character. It is our express goal as a school to provide meaningful enterprise towards this two-fold process.

**Mission**

In a supportive community and through a systematic, accelerated college-preparatory education in the Classical tradition, Nova Classical Academy challenges its students to develop intellect, to attain the habits of learning and mastery, and to live a virtuous life of duty and ideals.

**Virtues**

All administration, teachers, support staff, and students, as transformational leaders, strive to model both intellectual and principled living for our school and community through daily activities and interactions in accordance with the character virtues of justice, temperance, prudence, and fortitude; and, the intellectual virtues of wisdom, science, and understanding. These values are visible in our commitment to the Nova community, education, student clubs, sports, and other active involvements.

**EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES****EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

Nova is an equal opportunity employer. In accordance with applicable law, Nova prohibits discrimination based on race, color, religion, creed, sex, pregnancy or related medical conditions, age, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, marital status, sexual orientation, genetic information, status with respect to public assistance, membership or activity in a local discrimination/human rights commission, or any other category protected by federal, state or local law. Nova’s full Equal Opportunity Policy can be found in Board Policy 401.



**EMPLOYMENT AT-WILL**

In accordance with Minnesota state law, employment with Nova is at-will. This means that either Nova or the employee may terminate the employment relationship at any time, for any reason or no reason, and with or without notice. This Handbook is not, nor is it intended to be, a contract and nothing in this Handbook changes the nature of this employment on an at-will basis.

No manager or supervisor has any authority to enter into a contract of employment, express or implied, that changes or alters the at-will relationship. Only Nova's Executive Director has the authority to enter into an employment agreement that alters the at-will employment relationship; and, any such agreement must be in writing, signed by Nova's Executive Director and approved by the Board to be effective.

**OPEN DOOR POLICY**

Nova encourages you to bring forward any concerns or complaints you may have about your employment. Typically, you should raise any concerns with your supervisor. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of any issue, or if you do not feel comfortable addressing the issue with your supervisor, you should direct your concern to Human Resources.

To the extent that there exist any conflicting procedures under applicable law or other policies of Nova, including but not limited to employee discrimination, harassment, maltreatment or discipline procedures, ~~this Problem Resolution Policy Communication Protocol~~ may not be applicable. This ~~Problem Resolution Policy Communication Protocol~~ is not, nor is it intended, to limit an employee's legal right to submit complaints regarding alleged violations of law or policy.

**RECRUITMENT AND HIRING**

Nova's primary goal when recruiting is to fill vacancies with individuals who have the best available skills, abilities, and/or experience needed to perform the work. Decisions regarding the recruitment, selection, and placement of employees are made on the basis of job-related criteria.

When positions become available, external openings will be posted on Nova's website for application. Internal openings, as determined by Administration, will be posted in the employee portal of Nova's **Human Resource Information System (HRIS)**. Qualified employees are encouraged and welcome to apply for these positions. Candidates will be contacted by Human Resources to coordinate any interviews. **Candidates should be directed to Human Resources for any as-well-as** position and employment related questions. Nova encourages current employees to assist in recruitment efforts for Nova.

**IMMIGRATION COMPLIANCE**

Nova complies with the Immigration and Reform Control Act of 1986 (IRCA) by employing only U.S. Citizens and non-citizens who are authorized to work in the United States. All employees are asked no later than their first day of work to provide original documents verifying their identity and eligibility to work in the United States, and to sign a verification form required by law to complete (Form I-9, the Employee Eligibility Verification Form). If one cannot verify the right to work in the United States within three (3) days of hire, Nova is required by law to terminate employment.

**EMPLOYMENT CLASSIFICATION CATEGORIES****Administration**

Administration is defined as those employees who are responsible for running the school on a daily basis, including supervising staff and overseeing the school's operations, finances, academic and non-academic programming.

**Program Support Staff**

Program support staff is defined as those employees who work to reinforce the school's daily operations and include, without limitation, office workers and other employees who do not necessarily interact each day with students in a classroom setting.

**Licensed Faculty**

Licensed faculty is defined as those employees who are classroom and specialist teachers delivering Nova's curriculum on a daily basis and hold a current license to teach in their area of assignment.

**Educational Support Staff**

Educational support staff is defined as those employees who work to support the school's educational programs, including, without limitation, Educational Assistants.

**Exempt Employees**

Exempt employees are defined as those employees whose job assignments meet the federal and state requirements for overtime exemption.

**Nonexempt Employees**

Nonexempt employees are paid on an hourly basis and are eligible for overtime. Please refer to Nova's time reporting policies and procedures as described in this Handbook.

**Temporary Employees**

Temporary employees are defined as those employees who are hired for a stated period of time, generally categorized as on-call, short-term substitute, long-term substitute, stipend-only, or seasonal employees, usually to fill in for vacations, leaves of absence, or projects of limited duration. On-call substitutes must work at least during once per quarter of Nova's fiscal year to remain an active employee; failure to accept and work an assignment at least once per business quarter will be considered a voluntary resignation. Temporary employees are not eligible for benefits, except as required by law.

**TRAINING**

Nova may offer job-related training and/or other opportunities for professional development related to an employee's work at Nova. Some of the professional development **opportunities programs** may be voluntary, while others will be required.

**INCLEMENT WEATHER**

Nova is open unless there is a government-declared state of emergency or the Administration determines it should be closed. Use common sense and your best judgement when traveling to work in inclement weather. If an employee determines an inability to report to work on time due to weather conditions, the employee must notify their supervisor as soon as possible. Faculty must also notify the substitute coordinator and call the sub line, as soon as possible. Please see the Attendance and Punctuality section of this Handbook for more information.

In the event of severe weather (e.g., storms or sub-zero temperatures) or when the transportation system is disrupted, school closure and/or delay announcements will be broadcast, as soon as determinations are made by Administration, on WCCO Channel 4 (AM 830), KSTP Channel 5, and KARE Channel 11. Additionally, Nova will communicate emergency notifications regarding changes to normal school operations via Infinite Campus and Nova's school website. Please refer to the school closing plan on Nova's website for more information.

Should a weather event cause Nova to close, inclement weather days will be treated as a workday.

**Licensed Faculty**

Licensed Faculty may work onsite or from home to perform administrative tasks.

**Educational Support Staff**

Educational Support Staff will receive pay for the day, for their scheduled hours, and should enter these hours onto their timesheet in accordance with their assigned schedule. If school is delayed or releases early, scheduled hours will be paid for Educational Support Staff, which must be entered by the employee directly or through a change request in Nova's timesheet system.

**Program Support Staff**

Program Support Staff may choose to work on-site, from home with supervisor approval, or use PTO time for school closings, delays, or early release. Program Support Staff must enter hours worked and/or PTO onto their timesheet, in accordance with normal procedures.

**Food Service Staff**

Food Service Staff will receive pay for the day, for their scheduled hours, and should enter these hours onto their timesheet in accordance with their assigned schedule. If school is delayed or releases early, scheduled hours will be paid for Food Service Staff, which must be entered by the employee directly or through a change request in Nova's timesheet system.

## ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

### GENERAL

A normal workday is eight (8) hours per day, **not including a non-duty lunch period, if applicable**. Nova employees are expected to be regular in attendance and report to work on time. Without prior approval from Administration, employees are expected to work during Nova's regular business hours, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., including designated Staff Development (in-service) and Staff Work Days, as identified in the current Nova Staff Calendar.

It is important that employees report to work on time and avoid unnecessary absences. Nova recognizes that, on occasion, there may be circumstances beyond the employee's control which may cause an employee to be absent from work; however, frequent/excessive absenteeism and/or tardiness may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Absences and/or tardiness have a negative impact on the success of Nova's mission, Nova's service to students; and, in addition, place undue strain on Nova and one's fellow employees.

Staff may be given specific work schedules based on their classes, full time equivalent ("FTE") status, and responsibilities. Attendance at meetings and/or events that occur outside of normal business hours is required unless an absence is authorized by Administration. Examples of meetings requiring attendance include, but are not limited to: conferences and other required meetings throughout the fiscal year; open house nights; back-to-school night; in-service days; ~~and, no student~~; staff work days. **For Upper School Faculty in the School of Logic, supervision of attendance at least three two extracurricular events or supervision of two extracurricular events and attendance at graduation are required; in the School of Rhetoric, supervision of at least two extracurricular events and attendance at the high school graduation ceremony is required.**

Each instance of absenteeism and/or tardiness will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. If an employee fails to report for work without any notification for three (3) or more consecutive scheduled workdays, Nova will consider that the employee has abandoned and voluntarily resigned employment with Nova.

All Nova ~~faculty and~~ staff are encouraged to attend school-sponsored events throughout the year, including, but not limited to: athletic events, music concerts, play/musical performances, community-building events, NPTO events, and extracurricular events. Staff members should also model appropriate and virtuous behavior at such events at any time they are in attendance or otherwise participating.

## ABSENCES AND SUBSTITUTE REQUESTS

### Absences

If unable to report for work, **an** employee must inform their supervisor via email, **phone, or text**, as soon as possible, by 6:00 am or at least two (2) hours prior to the start of their scheduled shift, whichever is earlier.

Employees are required to submit an absence request through Nova's HRIS/Timesheet system as soon as possible **in advance of any planned absence** and no later than the end of the pay period **in which the absence falls**, for their supervisor's approval. Failure to submit a request prior to the end of the pay period may be cause for disciplinary action. Additionally, PTO requested, approved, but not used, may be forfeited if not rescinded prior to the end of the pay period during which it falls. See the "Paid Time Off" section of this Handbook for more information.

Failure to report absences as directed may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Absences will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, and excessive and/or unauthorized absences may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

### Substitute Requests

A request for substitute coverage must be made as far in advance as possible for approved absences and/or emergency situations (e.g. unforeseen or unexpected illness for one's self or dependent or for significant family emergency).

Positions requiring substitutes (faculty and educational support staff) must also call the absence notification and substitute request line **or email subs@novaclassical.org**, as soon as possible, by 6:00 am or at least two (2) hours prior to the start of their scheduled shift, whichever is earlier. The absence notification and substitute request line may be reached at (651) 209-6320, ext. 9. Substitute requests should be entered into Frontline, as soon as possible, by the faculty or educational support staff member who requires coverage.

For positions requiring substitute coverage, substitutes must be requested as far in advance as possible, following the receipt of absence approval from their supervisor, and at least one (1) week in advance, when time off is foreseeable.

Failure to request substitutes as directed may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **PAY PRACTICES**

### **WORK WEEK**

For payroll purposes, Nova's workweek is Sunday through Saturday, beginning at 12:00 a.m. on Sunday through 11:59 p.m. on Saturday.

### **HOURS OF WORK**

Nova's normal business hours from are 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday, while school is in session. Some evening and/or weekend work may be required, dependent upon the position. When school is not in session (e.g. summer), building/business hours may vary or be reduced, which may or may not impact working hours for staff.

### **Salary for Exempt Employees**

Exempt employees are generally paid a fixed salary for their job responsibilities, without regard to the number of hours worked in a workweek to complete the job. Exempt employees are not eligible for overtime pay, but are required to spend whatever hours are necessary to fulfill their job responsibilities. Regardless of variations in the number of days or hours worked in a pay period, Nova will not make deductions from an exempt employee's salary, unless such deductions are authorized by law, **Board policy, or** by other provisions herein contained. ~~or Board Policy.~~

As a consideration related to Nova's employment year and teacher payment for required reporting/contact days and/or paid holidays, Nova reserves the right to request repayment of salary paid in excess of the corresponding contact day and/or holiday pay upon separation of employment or unpaid leave.

### **HOLIDAYS**

Nova is closed to the public on various days throughout the year for in-service days, work days, school holidays, and other days determined by Administration, during which time faculty and/or other staff may be required to report to work.

Nova observes the following holidays, which are paid for salaried employees and employees working full-time scheduled hours during all 12-months of the year: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day after Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve day, and Christmas Day.

## **TIME REPORTING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Timekeeping**

All hourly ~~paid~~ employees are required to complete a timesheet in Nova's HRIS/timekeeping system for each pay period. Timesheets must accurately reflect all hours worked during the pay period.

Nova strictly prohibits nonexempt employees from performing any work off-the-clock (i.e., work that is not recorded on a timesheet). No supervisor or manager has the authority to ask nonexempt employees not to report or to delay reporting hours worked. Performing work off-the-clock, and/or failing to accurately record actual working time, may result in discipline, up to and including termination.

The following points should be considering when filling out timesheets:

- Nonexempt employees must record their start time, time out/in for lunch/break (if unpaid), and end time each workday on their timesheets;
- Nonexempt employees must accurately record any work performed before their scheduled start time and/or after their scheduled end time on their timesheets;
- Nonexempt employees must obtain supervisory approval prior to working outside their scheduled work hours, on non-duty workdays, over any scheduled school breaks, and may not perform any work at home without first obtaining supervisory approval to do so;
- Timesheets will be reviewed and approved. Any paid time off must be accurately recorded on timesheets;

- Unapproved and approved absences are not considered as hours worked for pay purposes; and,
- Falsifying timesheets, altering your own or another employee's timesheet, incorrectly recording hours worked, or changing your own or another employee's timesheet to under- or over-report hours worked are strictly prohibited and may be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

### **Breaks**

In accordance with Minnesota Statute, nonexempt employees are provided with one (1) paid break for each four (4) consecutive hours worked where the employee will be afforded "adequate time to utilize the nearest convenient restroom."

Nonexempt employees who are scheduled to work for eight (8) or more hours in a day are entitled to an unpaid lunch break. Lunch breaks are limited to thirty (30) minutes in length and will be scheduled to minimize disruption within the workday.

### **Overtime**

Due to the nature of Nova's business, there may be times when employees need to or are required to work overtime so Nova may successfully meet the needs of its students. Nonexempt employees are eligible for overtime pay. Exempt employees are not entitled to additional overtime pay as they receive a salary as payment for all hours worked.

Supervisors will assign overtime to, or approve overtime for, nonexempt employees. Nonexempt employees will be provided as much notice as possible when overtime is required so the employee(s) assigned or approved for overtime can plan accordingly.

Nonexempt employees are not permitted to work overtime without the prior approval of Nova's Administration. In the event nonexempt employees work overtime without receiving prior approval to do so, the overtime hours must be recorded on the employee's timesheet. Nonexempt employees will be paid for all overtime work, even if overtime is not pre-approved; however, working unapproved overtime may result in discipline, up to and including termination.

Nonexempt employees receive 1.5 times their regular rate of pay for hours worked in excess of 40 hours in any workweek. If a workweek includes PTO or holiday, these hours are not considered working hours and will not be considered in relation to overtime pay.

### **Stipends**

Nova has various roles paid by stipend (e.g. Activities, FTE Overages, Teacher Leadership roles, etc...) which are offered and paid on a case-by-case basis, with payment terms indicated in the offer letter for or assignment of such a role. For a stipend payment to be made, the employee may be required submit a Stipend Request Form for supervisor approval, prior to the payment of any stipend. Additionally, any staff member who accepts or is assigned a stipend role must remain employed at the time of the stipend payment to receive payment for services rendered. Should separation of employment occur prior to a stipend payment date, the stipend amount is forfeit by the separated employee.

## **PAYROLL PROCEDURES**

### **Paydays**

All employment follows Nova's fiscal year (July 1 – June 30). Exempt employees are paid for the pay period ending on the payday; nonexempt employees are paid one pay period in arrears. If a payday falls on a weekend or holiday, payment is made on the preceding business day. Employees are paid on the 15th and last day of each month.

### **Mandatory Direct Deposit**

All employees are required to be paid exclusively via direct deposit. Exceptions to the direct deposit requirement are limited to the following situations:

- The first paycheck for all new employees
- When an employee's banking information has been changed or temporarily disrupted
- Where a legal barrier exists to direct deposit
- When administratively necessary, as determined by the school's Administration
- When refused, formally, in writing by the employee

Requests for an exception to the direct deposit requirement must be submitted, in writing, to the Business Office. Paper checks will be available at Nova and placed in the employee’s mailbox. If not retrieved, or upon request, unclaimed checks may be mailed the following business day, to the address on record.

Nova works hard to ensure that all employees are paid correctly, but mistakes can happen. Employees are encouraged to review each paycheck upon receipt to ensure their pay is correct. Pay stubs are available via [Skyward SMARTeR](#), under ‘Check History.’ Employees should promptly report any perceived pay errors or discrepancies to the school’s Business Office. If a mistake does occur and is called to the Business Office’s attention, any necessary corrections will be made promptly. Employees have a right to raise concerns about their compensation. Nova appreciates employees raising concerns because it allows Nova to be aware of and correct pay issues before they continue and become “accounting” issues. No employee will suffer retaliation for raising a concern about pay.

**Reimbursements**

All business and travel expenses must be approved in advance by Nova’s Administration in order for the expense to be reimbursable. Employees should not presume that expenses which have not been pre-approved will be reimbursed. Reimbursements must be made using the appropriate Expense Report form, available through Nova’s Business Office and are subject to Administrator and Business Office review. Nova’s Reimbursement policy can be found in Board Policy 412.

**Payment for Advanced Degrees**

For licensed faculty to be considered eligible for a compensation change, following the receipt of an advanced degree (Master’s or Ph.D.), Nova requires pre-approval of the degree program by the employee’s direct supervisor and [Academic Director Human Resources](#). Degree programs must be relevant and germane to the employee’s teaching assignment and expand on the teacher’s ability to serve Nova’s students and its tradition of [Classical education](#). To request a compensation change, faculty must have attained a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher for their program and provide proof of degree conferment by way of a certified transcript to Human Resources for final review and approval by Administration. Approved compensation changes will take effect on the first day of the fiscal year, following degree conferment. Following program completion, the compensation for a Master’s degree will increase by \$2,000 and for a PhD compensation will increase by \$2,000.

**PAID TIME OFF**

**Overview**

Nova provides paid time off (PTO) to all eligible employees. PTO can be used for vacation, personal time, personal illness or medical needs, or to care for qualifying family members’ illness or medical needs. Employees who are regularly scheduled to work fewer than 32 hours per week on average and/or who hold a position classified as a full-time equivalency (FTE) of less than .8 are not eligible for PTO. Sick and safe time is available to employees who are not eligible to earn PTO.

**PTO Accrual**

The following defines PTO accrual rates for categories of employees. These accrual rates are based on a full-time or 1.0 full-time equivalency (FTE). Employees scheduled to work less than thirty (30) hours on average per week or who hold a position classified as temporary or part-time will only be eligible for Sick and Safe Time accruals. For hourly employees, accruals will not be processed for payroll periods [where during which](#) no hours are worked [when an employee would generally be scheduled to work \(e.g. qualified leaves of absence\)](#). Hourly employees will continue accruing PTO during times of school closure and/or over the summer months when not scheduled to work, pursuant to the terms and conditions of this handbook, so long as they remain employed by Nova in a qualified PTO-earning role.

<b>LICENSED FACULTY</b>	<i>Per Pay Period Accrual</i> 3.66 hours	<i>Annual Total*</i> 11 days per year
<b>EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT</b> 30+ hours/week	<i>Per Pay Period Accrual</i> 3.66 hours	<i>Annual Total*</i> 11 days per year
<b>PROGRAM SUPPORT</b>	<i>Per Pay Period Accrual</i> 5 hours	<i>Annual Total*</i> 15 days per year



<b>PART-TIME &amp; TEMPORARY EMPLOYEES</b> > 30 hours/week	<i>Per Pay Period Accrual</i> One (1) hour per each 30 hours worked	<i>Pursuant to Sick and Safe Time</i>
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>	<i>Per Pay Period Accrual</i>	<i>Annual Total*</i>
0-4 years of service	5 hours	15 days per year
5-9 years of service	6.66 hours	20 days per year
10+ years of service	8.33 hours	25 days per year

\*Prorated based on start dates falling after the first day of the fiscal year.

PTO accrues per pay period, based on Nova’s fiscal year, (July 1 - June 30). PTO does not accrue during unpaid leaves of absence or for hourly employees for payroll periods where no hours are worked. For qualified leaves of absence, available PTO will be paid out upon the inception of such leave. Employees must exhaust all of their available PTO prior to requesting or taking any type of unpaid time off/leave. Unpaid days off are subject to supervisor approval. Paid absences which are requested and approved, but not used, must be rescinded within the payroll period during which they fall or they may be forfeit.

Any accrued balance in excess of 80 total hours will be forfeited at the close of each fiscal year (June 30). Of the hours that remain on June 30: Licensed Faculty may opt to be compensated at a rate of \$130 per day for up to five (5) days (or 40 hours) and carry forward up to 40 hours of unused PTO; or, carry forward up to 80 hours of unused PTO; and, Educational Support Staff may opt to be compensated at a rate of \$14.30 per hour for up to five (5) days or (40 hours) and carry forward up to 40 hours of unused PTO; or, carry forward up to 80 hours of unused PTO.

Program Support staff and Administration may elect to carry forward up to 80 hours of unused PTO, in addition to their regular accrual. Any accrued balance in excess of 80 hours will be forfeited at the close of each fiscal year (June 30).

~~Accrued, unused PTO will not be paid upon termination of employment, including non-renewal of employment by either party.~~

Except as noted below or in any individual employment agreement, accrued, unused PTO will not be paid upon termination of employment, including non-renewal of employment by either party.

Payout of accrued, unused PTO will be made to Licensed Faculty and to Educational Support Staff under the following circumstances, provided those employees have accrued but unused PTO available. Licensed Faculty will receive payout of accrued, unused PTO at a rate of \$130 per day for up to five (5) days and Educational Support Staff will receive payout of accrued, unused PTO at a rate of \$14.30 per hour for up to five (5) days (maximum of 40 hours), upon separation of employment following the successful completion of all required contact days/hours for employee’s assigned duty year. Licensed Faculty and Educational Support Staff whose employment with Nova is terminated for any reason prior to completion of the duty year will not be eligible for any payout of accrued, unused PTO.

**Sick and Safe Time**

Employees who are not eligible to earn PTO earn sick and safe time (ESST). ESST can be used for an employee's absence from work due to illness, medical appointments, or critical safety issues, including domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking.

Employees who work at least 90 days and who work 30 hours or more in a fiscal year earn sick and safe time at the rate of one (1) hour per completed 30 hours of work. Sick and safe time accrues up to 48 hours each fiscal year. Up to 80 hours are eligible for carryover for returning employees. Sick and safe time may be requested and used in four (4) or eight (8) hour increments. For absences not requiring substitute coverage, sick and safe time may be requested in hourly increments. Accrued, but unused, sick and safe time will not be paid out upon termination of employment.

Sick and safe time may be used for the employee or for the care of family members, as listed below. Pursuant to City of Saint Paul Ordinance, the amount of earned sick and safe time and the terms of its use are guaranteed. Retaliation against employees who request and/or use sick and safe time is prohibited; and, each employee has the right to file a complaint or bring civil action if sick and safe time is denied or if the employee is retaliated against for requesting and/or taking sick and safe time.

For the purpose of the sick and safe time, family members are children (step, adopted, foster, adult); spouse; sibling; parent (step and in-laws); grandparents; grandchildren; guardian (ward, or member of household); registered domestic partner; and, any individual related by blood or affinity whose close association with the employee is the equivalent of a family relationship.

### **Scheduling and Use**

For employees requiring substitutes, PTO must be requested as far in advance as practical, and at least two (2) weeks in advance, when time off is foreseeable. In cases of illness or emergency, employees should complete their absence request in Nova's HRIS/timekeeping system, no later than 11:59 PM on the first day of absence, whenever possible. Employees who are absent due to illness or injury may be required to provide a physician's statement certifying necessity to absence, and fitness for duty upon return-to-work date.

When a substitute is required, PTO may be requested and used in four (4) or eight (8) hour increments. For absences not requiring substitute coverage, PTO may be requested in hourly increments. All PTO requests require supervisory approval and may be denied based on staffing, availability of substitute coverage, or other departmental needs. The securing of substitutes does not supersede the requirement of or guarantee supervisory approval.

PTO and absence requests will be reviewed and approved on a first come, first serve basis. To ensure continuity of education and appropriate student supports, only one grade level or discipline/content area faculty member may be absent at a time, unless otherwise authorized by supervisor approval.

Without prior written approval from Nova Administration, PTO for purposes other than illness or emergency will not be granted during the first three or last three weeks of school. During the month of May, PTO is discouraged and subject to approval and dependent upon the securing of substitutes. PTO is also discouraged immediately preceding or following any paid holidays. PTO use immediately before, including, or following Staff Work Days is permitted only with prior approval from an employee's supervisor.

## **PTO SHARING & DONATION POLICY**

### **Policy Statement**

Nova recognizes that employees may have a family medical emergency or be affected by a major disaster, resulting in a need for additional time off in excess of available sick/personal time. To address this need, all eligible employees will be allowed to donate sick/personal time from their unused balance to their co-workers in need of sick/personal time in accordance with the policy outlined below. This policy is strictly voluntary.

### **Eligibility**

Employees must be employed with Nova for a minimum of one (1) year in order to be eligible to receive donated sick/personal time.

### **Guidelines**

Employees who want to make a request to receive donated sick/personal time from their co-workers must have a situation that meets the following criteria:

1. Medical emergency, defined as a medical condition of the employee or an immediate family member that will require the prolonged/extended absence of the employee from duty and will result in a substantial loss of income to the employee due to the exhaustion of all available paid leave. An immediate family member is defined as a spouse, child, or parent.
2. Major disaster is defined as a disaster declared by the president under §401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (the Stafford Act), or as a major disaster or emergency declared by the president pursuant to 5 U.S.C. §6391 for federal government agencies. An employee is considered to be adversely affected by a major disaster if the disaster has caused severe hardship to the employee or to a family member of the employee that requires the employee to be absent from work.

### **Donation of PTO Time**

- The donation of PTO time is strictly voluntary.
- An employee may donate PTO time to a pool for use by eligible recipients.
- Recipient identity will not be disclosed to donating employees.
- The donation of PTO time is on an hourly basis, without regard to the dollar value of the donated or used leave.



- The minimum number of PTO time hours that an eligible employee may donate is 1 hour.
- The maximum number of PTO time hours an eligible employee may donate in one calendar year is 40 hours or no more than 50 percent of the employee's current balance, whichever is greater.
- Employees cannot borrow against future PTO time to donate.
- Employees will be given the opportunity to donate PTO time annually during benefits open enrollment. The donated PTO time will be transferred from the donor to the leave pool following the close of Open Enrollment.
- Employees who are currently on an approved leave of absence cannot donate PTO time.

### **Requesting Donated PTO Time**

Employees who want to request donated PTO time are required to complete a Donation of PTO Time Request Form and submit it to Human Resources.

Requests for donations of PTO time must be approved by the employee's immediate supervisor, Nova's Human Resources Director, and Nova's Executive Director.

If the recipient employee has available PTO time in **his or her** their balance, the recipient's own time will be used prior to any donated PTO time. Donated PTO time may only be used for time off related to the approved request.

Employees who receive donated PTO time may receive no more than 240 hours (6 weeks) within a rolling 12-month period.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **GENERAL EXPECTED BEHAVIORS**

At Nova, high expectations are set for all employees on a daily basis. These expectations exist to create a fair and equitable work environment where employees know what is expected of them at all times. Below is a non-exhaustive list of generally expected behaviors:

- Promote and implement Nova's mission, vision and values.
- Guide a school culture characterized by a welcoming atmosphere in which respect, disciplined behavior, rigorous work, and high achievement are expected of all staff and students.
- Provide academic and moral leadership and guidance to students.
- Abide by the Code of Ethics for Minnesota Teachers or Minnesota School Administrators (as applicable) at all times.
- Assist in training volunteers and substitutes available to help perform job duties.
- Set a positive example for students, parents, and fellow staff.
- Attend meetings scheduled by the Administration, both before-and-after the school day and throughout the academic year.
- Support school-sponsored activities and events.
- Maintain appropriate student grading and attendance records for reporting purposes according to school record management policies and expectations set by the Administration.
- Maintain the confidentiality of student, family and employee information.
- Abide by the rules and procedures set out in this Handbook, the Student-Parent Handbook, and the Teacher Development and Evaluation Handbook.
- Cultivate harmonious relationships with others in the Nova community.
- Assist with other duties as requested by the Administration.

### **Use of School Offices**

Employees are reminded that the school offices (District, Lower, and Upper) are for business purposes. Students, including students of **faculty and/or any** staff, are not permitted to utilize office resources including conference rooms, conference tables, or individual workstations; loiter; remain in any area of the office unsupervised; interfere with the productivity of; or infringe on data privacy related to any school business before, during, or after Nova's normal school operating hours.

### **Standards of Conduct**

In order to assure orderly operations and provide the best possible work environment, Nova expects employees to follow reasonable standards of conduct, including all of the policies outlined in this Handbook, to protect the interest and safety of staff, students, parents, and the general public. Though it is not possible to list all the forms of behavior that are considered unacceptable in the workplace, the following are examples of infractions that may result in disciplinary action, including performance warnings, suspension, and/or termination:

- Failure to abide by the policies and/or rules set out in this Handbook or any of the applicable Board Policies
- Falsification of or failure to maintain professional records including but not limited to: employment records, employment information, or other records.
- Falsification of or failure to maintain student records, student information, or other records
- Failure to maintain requisite professional accreditation or licensure
- Communicating and/or interacting inappropriately with students, staff, parents, or the public
- Being disrespectful or using abusive or threatening language during work hours or on Nova property
- Provoking a fight or fighting during work hours or on Nova property
- Theft and/or deliberate and/or careless damage of any Nova property or the property of any employee, student, or parent
- Removing or borrowing Nova’s property without prior authorization
- Unauthorized use of Nova facilities, property, or equipment
- Engaging in criminal conduct, whether or not related to job performance that is detrimental to Nova
- Possessing, distributing, selling, transferring, using, or being under the influence of alcohol, or illegal drugs, in the workplace
- Possessing firearms or other dangerous weapons at any time on Nova property
- Committing a fraudulent or dishonest act, breaching the duty of trust, or violating the duty of loyalty to Nova under any circumstances, including engaging in direct competition with Nova
- Failing to properly maintain confidential or proprietary information or Nova’s intellectual property
- Violating the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (Minnesota Statutes Chapter 13), the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. 12.32 (g) (“FERPA”), or any other federal or state information or data privacy law
- Insubordination, including, but not limited to, failure or refusal to obey the orders or instructions of any supervisor or the Administration, or refusal to fully disclose information in the course of a school investigation
- Violating any Nova safety, health, or security policy

### **Personal Beliefs**

While acting as a Nova employee or representing Nova, employees should refrain from making statements (whether verbal, written, or otherwise) expressing a preference for, judgment about, or attitude toward a political party, religious faith, political or religious personality, political or religious issue, or any other controversial or contentious topic. This also applies to other forms of expression, such as clothing or decoration, which could create an appearance of representing Nova’s position with respect to these issues. Unless authorized by the Executive Director, Nova employees shall not represent that they are speaking or acting on behalf of Nova or presenting any interests of Nova when speaking with members of the community on these issues.

While employees are encouraged to have their own beliefs regarding political, religious, social, or economic issues, Nova is not a political or religious institution and has no political or religious agenda or point-of-view. Please keep this in mind when acting as a Nova employee or representing Nova at school-related events. Teachers are encouraged to discuss political, religious, social, or economic issues in the classroom, only as such topics relate to the curriculum and learning process. Further, any discussion of these issues should be conducted in a manner that does not cause disruption or create the appearance that Nova takes a position regarding such issues.

### **Employee Decoration of Workspace**

Decoration in classrooms or areas of Nova used for instructional or other provision of services to students is permitted provided such decoration is germane to the educational or pedagogical mission of the school. Employees may not post or decorate their workspaces with written content, imagery, or other symbols that indicate a position for, against, or about any political party or organization, political candidate or personality, religious faith, creed, religious personality, or any other political, religious, or controversial or contentious issue. Employees may be required to remove material that violates this provision.

## **DRESS CODE & PUBLIC IMAGE**

### **GENERAL GUIDELINES**

As professionals and role models, appropriate dress is important for **administrators, faculty, and all** staff. These guidelines are intended to communicate the standard of dress for all employees and to promote a positive public image, along with a productive and professional workplace environment.

Employees are expected to use good judgment in their appearance and grooming. At all times they must look neat, clean and well-groomed and be dressed appropriately for a business environment. As always, employees should use common sense in choices of

business attire. Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action, including performance warnings, suspension, and/or termination.

Below are a few guidelines for professional appearance:

- Professional attire is mandatory on days when class is in session, as well as any time an individual is representing Nova as an employee.
- Sweatpants ~~and denim jeans~~ are strictly prohibited on days when class is in session.
- Casual attire (including denim jeans) may be worn to work when school is not in session **or when authorized by Administration (e.g. school spirit wear days).**
- ~~Modesty must at all times be observed.~~
  - ~~Avoid form fitting clothing.~~
  - ~~Keep ease of movement in mind when selecting attire to wear at work.~~
  - ~~Ensure that all shirts are properly buttoned up.~~

### **Exceptions**

Maintenance staff, kitchen staff, and faculty in the physical education and art departments may adjust their dress based on the nature of their work. Teachers in the physical education and art departments must dress in accordance with the spirit and goals of this policy.

### **WORKSPACE**

Employees are responsible for maintaining the workspace assigned to them. A clean, orderly workspace provides an environment conducive to working efficiently. Employees should keep in mind that their workspace is part of a professional environment that portrays Nova's overall dedication to its mission. Therefore, an employee's workspace should be clean, organized, and free of items that are not required to perform an employee's job.

### **OFFICE EQUIPMENT**

Certain equipment is assigned to staff depending on the needs of their job, such as a computer, printer and access to Nova's central computers and servers. This equipment is the property of the Nova and cannot be removed from the office without prior approval from an employee's supervisor. Nova expects that employees will treat this equipment with care and report any malfunctions immediately to the Technology Department, to diagnose the problem and take appropriate and/or corrective action. Personal devices are not permitted to access Nova's secured network, including personal computers, printers, or other devices. Additionally, such devices will not be supported by Nova's technology department.

### **PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS**

Performance reviews are conducted regularly and provide an opportunity to discuss job tasks, strengths, areas of improvement, methods for improving performance, and career development. In addition to the formal performance review process, Nova encourages employees to discuss job performance with their supervisors on an ongoing and as-needed basis.

### **TEACHER EVALUATIONS**

Teacher performance is reviewed as part of a larger evaluation process by which teachers seek to enhance the fulfillment of their professional responsibilities. This process begins prior to a teacher's appointment and continues on an annual basis thereafter. The information obtained in the formal review process is critical to salary and employment decision-making and to faculty development.

Teachers' annual evaluation process and the instruments for evaluating teachers' performance, using Nova's mission, vision, and goals as a framework, is determined by the Academic Director and carried out by the appropriate members of the Instructional Leadership team. Teachers' primary professional responsibility is classroom teaching, followed closely by other important responsibilities such as service to Nova and the community. Evaluation information will be distributed and explained to teachers each academic year during the opening in-service process.

During the process of evaluating teachers' performance, Administration may obtain information from many different sources, including but not limited to:

- Announced teacher observations, which provide an opportunity to discuss lessons and areas to be assessed pre-observation and post-observation review of the Administration's assessment;
- Unannounced teacher observations, including post-observation review of the Administration's assessment;

- Self-assessments based on personal and school goals; and,
- Administration’s review of teachers’ other duties and responsibilities, including school policy implementation, commitment to professional development, interaction with others, committee membership, etc.

Nova will endeavor to complete teacher evaluations by May 15 each year. Each academic year, the Administration will publish a timetable for teacher evaluations, observations, and goal setting.

### **STAFF EVALUATIONS**

Each staff member’s performance is formally evaluated on an annual basis by their supervisor. Staff members will receive advance notice of the criteria used to evaluate their performance and the format of their performance reviews.

### **EMPLOYEE FILES**

It is important that Nova maintain accurate employment records. Employees are responsible for notifying Human Resources of any change in name, address, phone number, immigration status, or any other pertinent personnel information. By promptly notifying Nova or such changes, employees will avoid compromising benefit eligibility, the return of W-2 forms, or other similar inconvenience. Changes include but are not limited to address, phone number, direct deposit, benefits enrollment, dependents and beneficiaries, emergency contact(s), and withholdings, **which** may be initiated through an employee’s login to Nova’s HRIS software.

### **ACCESS TO PERSONNEL FILES**

An active employee may review ~~his or her~~ **their** personnel file once every six (6) months upon a written request. Former employees may review their personnel files once each year after separation, for as long as the employee file is maintained.

Employee files will be made available for review at Nova during normal hours within seven (7) working days of ~~your~~ **the** receipt of a written request. The employee’s review must be conducted in the presence of a Nova representative. After the review and the upon the employee’s written request, Nova will provide a copy of the personnel file to the employee, free-of-charge.

If an employee disputes specific information contained in the employee’s personnel file, and an agreement is not reached to remove or revise the disputed information, the employee may submit a written statement, not exceeding five (5) pages, identifying the disputed information and explaining the employee’s position, which will be included as part of the file.

Nova will not retaliate against an employee for asserting rights or remedies under this policy.

### **COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION**

#### **OVERVIEW**

Communication is essential to Nova’s operations. Honest, respectful, and insightful communication about and amongst coworkers is critical to establishing and preserving peer relationships and a high-quality working environment. Employees are expected to communicate effectively **and respectfully** with one another, the Administration, the Board, students, parents, and the general public.

#### **Peer-to-Peer**

As members of a community of learners, faculty members should continually seek out one another for insight and discussion. Interactive discussions and engagement foster learning and our intellectual appetites.

~~Faculty members~~ **All staff** are expected to inform each other about student behavior and progress on a need-to-know basis (“need to know” is defined as needing to know non-public data about an employee or a student in order to perform one’s job). ~~Nova’s Administration has a need to know in all instances.~~ Employees are responsible for keeping Administration apprised of important events and developments, behavioral, or intellectual difficulties that a particular student or class is experiencing, and any specific parent input that an employee believes merits raising with Administration.

#### **Faculty/Staff-Student**

Special care must be taken to speak respectfully about and to students at all times. Under no circumstances should **faculty staff** vent frustrations with students to other faculty, staff, parents, or students. Students are entitled to maintain a good reputation amongst their peers and staff.

E-mail is the preferred method of communicating with students electronically. Employees may only use their Nova e-mail accounts to communicate with students electronically and are strictly prohibited from using their personal accounts to communicate with students electronically. Parents must be copied on their child’s electronic communications with Nova staff; and, ~~this protocol such requests~~ must be ~~adhered to honored~~ at all times. Additionally, Nova prohibits employees from befriending students on social media sites.

Electronic communication with students must always be Transparent, Accessible, and Professional as defined below:

- **The communication is transparent:** All electronic communication between staff and students must be transparent. As a public school, Nova is expected to maintain openness, visibility, and accountability with regard to all communications.
- **The communication is accessible:** All electronic communication between staff and students must be considered a matter of record, part of the school archives, and accessible by others.
- **The communication is professional:** All electronic communication from staff to students must be written as a professional representing Nova. This includes word choices, tone, grammar, and subject matter that model the standards and integrity of a Nova. Employees must always choose words that are courteous, conscientious, and generally business-like in manner. Staff must maintain and respect appropriate ~~physical and emotional~~ boundaries at all times.

All communications with students fall under Nova’s dominion, even those that occur outside of school.

### Parent-Teacher

Parent partnership is a cornerstone of successful learning at Nova. Contact with parents, often by e-mail, may be initiated directly by either parents or teachers. Teachers are expected to regularly check their staff mailboxes, voicemail, and e-mail and are required to return routine communications about student concerns within two (2) business days.

Teachers are expected to maintain academic records in our student information system (SIS), Infinite Campus (IC) according to ~~the~~ Administration’s direction. The online gradebooks maintained on Infinite Campus are the primary means of communicating students’ academic progress with their parents. School of Grammar teachers must enter each student assignment and grade in the SIS within two weeks of the assignment’s collection. School of Logic and School of Rhetoric teachers must enter each assignment into the SIS by 8:30 am every Monday of the current academic week so that families may plan weekly workload, mark work that is not turned in as “Missing” in the SIS on a nightly basis, and enter each grade in the SIS within two weeks of the corresponding assignment’s collection.

Both parents have right to review their child’s educational records, unless one parent provides Nova legal documentation that restricts the other parent’s right to review such records.

### COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL

Nova’s general rule concerning communication is to communicate with the person closest to the situation who is best able to address the issue quickly and effectively. Attempts to circumvent the communication process will be directed back to the process outlined in the protocol.

The communication procedure for issues and concerns for/with employees as it relates to their employment is as follows:

- Direct communication employee to employee: this shows respect for the employee receiving feedback and also for the employee communicating the information.
- Direct communication with one’s own or the employee’s direct supervisor: this shows respect for the supervisor and also for the employee communicating the information.
- Direct communication with Human Resources: if the matter remains unresolved, Human Resources may coordinate a meeting between the employee(s) and supervisor(s).
- Direct communication with the Executive Director: if the matter remains unresolved, the Executive Director may coordinate a meeting with the appropriate parties.

### COMMUNICATION WITH THE MEDIA

All media inquiries concerning or relating to Nova must be directed to the Executive Director, Communication Manager, and/or the Chair of Nova’s Board of Directors. Only the Executive Director and/or Board Chair, or a person designated by the Executive Director

or the Board of Directors, is authorized to make or approve public statements concerning or relating to Nova. Any employee who wishes to author and/or publish an article, paper, or other publication on Nova's behalf must obtain prior approval from the Executive Director.

## **ETHICS**

### **GENERAL**

Nova's successful operation and reputation is built on the principles of fair dealing and ethical conduct of its employees. Nova's reputation for integrity and excellence requires careful observance of the spirit and letter of all applicable laws and regulations, as well as scrupulous regard for the highest standards of conduct and personal integrity.

Nova will comply with all applicable laws and regulations, and it is expected that all employees will conduct themselves in accordance with the letter, spirit and intent of all relevant laws and to refrain from any illegal, dishonest, or unethical conduct.

In general, the use of good judgment, based on high ethical principles, should guide employees with respect to lines of acceptable conduct. If a situation arises where it is difficult to determine the proper course of action, the matter should be discussed with one's supervisor or the Administration.

Compliance with this Policy of Ethics and Conduct is the responsibility of every employee. Disregarding or failing to comply with Nova's standards of ethics and conduct may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

Retaliation against any employee who raises questions, concerns, or complaints concerning the honesty and integrity of Nova's operations is strictly prohibited. Similarly, retaliation is prohibited against any employee who provides accurate information to any law enforcement agency about the commission of any federal or state offense. Any employee who feels that they have been retaliated against or threatened with retaliation for these reasons should report the matter immediately to Human Resources.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

Nova expects the undivided loyalty of all employees. It is important that employees be free of any interests or other relationships that might conflict with Nova's best interests. If an employee finds that ~~he or she has~~ they have, or ~~is are~~ considering assuming, an interest or outside relationship that might involve a conflict of interest, or if the employee is in doubt as to the proper application of this Conflict of Interest policy, the employee should promptly make all the facts known to Human Resources and refrain from taking any action that might reasonably be considered to conflict with Nova's best interests.

### **Protection of Confidential Information**

Nova is committed to protecting the privacy and confidentiality of our students' and employees' information/data. Every employee must use reasonable care to protect or otherwise prevent the unauthorized use, disclosure, or misappropriation of confidential information/data about employees or students. No confidential information/data about employees or students may be disclosed or used within or outside Nova without proper authorization, and then only if the disclosure or use is in compliance with the law. If an employee is uncertain whether information should be treated as confidential, the employee should presume that such information is confidential and not disclose it without first obtaining proper authorization. For more information, see Board Policy 515 and Board Policy 515F.

Confidential information includes data classified as nonpublic under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act or the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"), "protected health information" under the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act ("HIPAA"), and other data deemed to be confidential or nonpublic under other federal or state laws.

Confidential information can take many forms (i.e., written, electronic, verbal, overheard, observed, etc.). Employees must be aware of their environment at all times.

### **Student Data Privacy**

All student data is confidential and should only be discussed with those that have a legitimate education-based interest, with the exception of Student Directory Information.

Private student data includes, but is not limited to:

- IEP or 504 status;



- Academic status, discipline reports, grades, test scores;
- Family situations (home life, mental status, court orders); and/or
- Health office visits (the health office will disclose to parents per school policy when a student is in the health office).

Student information is only released through the office of each of Nova's school or the health office. If an employee receives a request for student data from outside the school, it must be forwarded to the appropriate party for release. This is especially important to remember when the student has a parent working in the school. The office of each of Nova's schools or the health office will inform parents who are employees of any issues related to their student. Employees who have students attending Nova are prohibited from violating these protocols/school policies.

Employees with **one or more** students enrolled at Nova must make an appointment to talk with their student's teachers, just as an employee would be required to do if the employee's student attended another school. **These appointments should take place at a time that will not conflict with the employee's work responsibilities.** An employee asking a Nova teacher for information about the requesting employee's student while passing in the hall, or otherwise, leads to a discussion that the teacher may be unprepared to have and is inappropriate to discuss where others may overhear private student data.

### **Falsification of Documents**

We rely on the accuracy of information provided on or in employment records, student records, school records, and documents required to be completed or submitted under applicable law. Falsification of records is strictly prohibited, will not be tolerated, and may result in disciplinary action, including discharge.

### **GIFTS**

Employees are prohibited from giving gifts (either monetary or non-monetary) to individual students.

### **RELATIVES AND INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS AT WORK**

Nova will not take any adverse action against any employee for engaging in relationships, familial or otherwise, during nonworking hours away from school property. However, Nova will consider such relationships as a factor in any employment decisions if such relationships affect an employee's job performance, occurs during working time or on school property, or otherwise poses the danger of a conflict of interest.

A familiar or intimate relationship among employees can create an actual, or at minimum a potential/perceived conflict of interest in the employment setting, especially where one relative, spouse, partner, or other relative supervises another relative, spouse, partner, or other relative. To avoid this problem, Nova reserves the right to refuse to hire or place a relative or other intimately associated individual in a position where the potential for favoritism or conflict of interest exists or may be perceived to exist.

In other cases, where a conflict or the potential for a conflict arises, even if there is no supervisory relationship involved, the parties may be separated by reassignment or terminated from employment, at the discretion of Nova. If two employees marry, become related, or enter into an intimate relationship, Nova may choose not to allow them to remain in a reporting relationship or positions where one individual may affect the compensation or other terms or conditions of employment of the other. Should this occur, Nova will attempt to identify other available positions, and the employees will have thirty (30) days to decide which individual will remain in **his or her** their current position. If no alternate position is available, the employees will have thirty (30) days to decide which employee will remain with Nova. If this decision is not made in the time allowed, Nova's Administration will make the decision.

For purposes of this policy, a relative is any person who is related by blood or marriage, or whose relationship with the employee is similar to that of persons who are related by blood or marriage. For more information on Nova's Anti-Nepotism policy, see Board Policy 405.

### **INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**

In consideration for continued employment, employees agree to provide to Nova a non-exclusive, royalty-free, non-transferable and perpetual license in and to any intellectual property employees create, conceive of, construct, or memorialize in a tangible medium arising out of or relating to work and services performed for Nova or on Nova's behalf in the past, present, or future.

Such intellectual property includes, but is not limited to, copyrights, trademarks, writings, works of authorship, information, trade secrets, inventions, discoveries, business methods, curriculum plans, and improvements, whether or not registrable or patentable. For more information on Nova’s Curriculum Policy, see Board Policy 501.

As part of this license, employees are obligated to disclose information pertaining to such intellectual property (e.g., copies and/or lists of such intellectual property, etc.) during and after the employment with Nova upon request of the Administration.

Employees are obligated to execute any documents the Administration deems necessary or appropriate to effectuate this license during and after employment. While this agreement does not infringe on an employee’s rights to such intellectual property beyond the perpetual license to Nova, the provisions of this agreement shall not be construed to supersede any other rights Nova may assert regarding such intellectual property, including, without limitation, rights provided by additional agreements.

### **EMPLOYMENT OUTSIDE THE WORKPLACE**

Under certain circumstances, if an employee’s outside employment adversely affects ~~his or her~~ their job performance with Nova, or makes it impossible to carry out any one or all of an employee’s job duties while at work, appropriate disciplinary action up to and including discharge may be appropriate. For purposes of this policy, self-employment is considered outside employment.

Consistent with this policy, the following types of outside employment are prohibited:

- Employment that conflicts with an employee’s work schedule, duties, or responsibilities or creates an actual conflict of interest
- Employment that impairs or has a detrimental effect on an employee’s job performance with Nova
- Employment that requires an employee to conduct work or related activities on Nova property, during working hours, or using Nova facilities and/or equipment
- Employment that directly or indirectly competes with Nova’s interests

Nova employees who wish to engage in outside employment that may create a conflict of interest must submit a written request to Human Resources explaining the details of the outside employment. If an employee’s request is authorized, Nova will not assume any responsibility for ~~your~~ this outside employment. Specifically, Nova will not provide workers’ compensation coverage or any other benefit for injuries occurring from or arising out of such outside employment. Authorization to engage in outside employment is left solely to the discretion of Nova’s Administration and, if authorization is given to an employee to engage in outside employment, such authorization can be revoked by Nova at any time.

### **BACKGROUND CHECKS**

Nova recognizes the importance of maintaining a safe place for students and staff. To ensure that employees are qualified and meet Nova’s safety criteria, background checks are conducted on all employees who have received a conditional offer of employment pursuant to Minnesota Statute 123B.03. Pursuant to Minnesota Statute 123B.03, the employees who undergo a criminal background check at the time of hire are responsible to for the cost of their own background check. Nova pays all costs associated with background checks conducted after the initial background check conducted at the time of hire.

Background checks on job candidates are processed after a conditional offer of employment is made, contingent upon a successful background check completion. Nova has sole discretion to determine whether the results of a background check are adequate. Any candidate who refuses undergo a criminal background check is no longer considered eligible for employment or to conduct business with Nova. The consent release form may also authorize Nova to conduct periodic background checks on employees.

Candidates will be provided a copy of the results when required by law. Nova complies with all laws regulating the use of background checks for employment purposes, including the Fair Credit Reporting Act. The full Background Check policy can be found in Board Policy 404.

The presence of a criminal history is not a bar to employment. Nova will consider the nature and gravity of the offense for which the employee has been convicted, the time that has passed since the offense, conduct or completion of sentence, and the nature of the job sought or held.

### **NOTIFICATION OF A CRIMINAL CONVICTION**

Employees must notify Human Resources of any criminal conviction, guilty plea, plea of no contest, or deferred adjudication that occurs after they are hired by Nova within five (5) days or be subject to termination. Nova will determine whether any employment



action is warranted as a result.

## LEAVES OF ABSENCE

### FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE / PREGNANCY AND PARENTING LEAVE

Employees should contact Human Resources should the need arise for leave pursuant to the Family and Medical Leave Act or Pregnancy and Parenting Leave. Nova's Family and Medical Leave Policy and Pregnancy and Parenting Leave guidelines are set forth in Board Policy 410.

It is expected that employees provide notice of such leaves as far in advance as practicable, and generally no more than 30 days prior to the beginning of foreseeable leaves. Employees will be required to exhaust all PTO during such leaves, and will not be granted unpaid time off until all accrued PTO has been exhausted. During such qualified leaves, Nova will maintain benefits coverage for eligible employees and employees will be required to remit payment to the Business Office for the employee portion of applicable premiums. Should a leave extend beyond the provisions of a qualified leave, benefits coverage will terminate until an employee is eligible to return to work. In this event, COBRA may be extended to eligible employees.

### SICK OR INJURED FAMILY MEMBER LEAVE

An employee may use PTO (but not short- or long-term disability or other salary continuation benefits) provided by Nova for absences due to an illness or injury of the employee's child, adult child, spouse, sibling, parent, mother-in-law, father-in-law, grandchild, grandparent, or step-parent, for reasonable periods of time as the employee's attendance with such sick or injured family member may be necessary, on the same terms upon which the employee is able to use PTO for the employee's own illness or injury. The use of such leave is limited to 160 hours of accrued PTO during a 12-month period for absences due to an illness or injury of the employee's qualifying family member other than a minor child; no limit applies to the use of accrued PTO for absences due to an illness or injury of the employee's qualifying minor child.

### BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

Employees will be provided up to three (3) consecutive days of paid time off in the event of the death of an immediate family member. "Immediate family" consists of the employee's spouse, domestic partner, child, stepchild, parent, stepparent, father-in-law, mother, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother, sister, stepbrother, stepsister, uncle, aunt, niece, nephew, first cousin, grandparent, grandchild, or an adult who stood in loco parentis to the employee during childhood. ~~spouse, domestic partner, child, step-child, sibling, parents, step-parents, grandparents, grandchildren, parents of the employee's spouse or domestic partner, brother or sister in law, and son or daughter in law.~~

Nova's Administration may, in its discretion, also provide an employee an additional three (3) consecutive days of unpaid time off for bereavement leave. Employees may also request to use PTO for additional leave beyond the paid/unpaid days of leave that Nova provides.

An employee requesting bereavement leave should promptly notify their supervisor and Human Resources of the need for the leave. Nova may require verification of the need for the leave. Bereavement leave must be taken within a reasonable time after the death of an immediate family member and does not carry over or accrue. Employees who do not take bereavement leave within a reasonable time after the death of an immediate family member, as determined by Nova's Administration, will not be entitled to such leave.

Bereavement leave pay for a part-time employee will be prorated based on the employee's FTE status. Bereavement leave pay is not counted for the purpose of calculating an employee's hours of work or overtime premiums. Employees will not be compensated for unused bereavement leave at the end of employment with Nova or at any other time.

### SAFETY LEAVE

An employee may use up to 160 hours of accrued PTO during a 12-month period for the purpose of providing or receiving assistance because of sexual assault, domestic abuse, or stalking for such reasonable periods of time as may be necessary. Such leave may be used for assistance to the employee or for assistance to the employee's child, adult child, spouse, sibling, parent, mother-in-law, father-in-law, grandchild, grandparent, or step-parent, pursuant to Minn. Stat. 181.9413.

### LEAVE FOR VICTIMS OF A CRIME

Eligible employees may take time off from work to comply with a subpoena or a prosecutor's request to attend court for the purpose

of giving testimony in criminal proceedings related to the victim's case. An employee who is the victim of a heinous crime and the victim's spouse or next of kin may take time off to attend criminal proceedings related to the victim's case.

To be eligible under this policy, the employee must be the victim of a crime, the spouse or next of kin of the victim of a heinous crime, or the family member, guardian, or custodian of the victim if the victim is a minor or is incompetent, incapacitated, or deceased.

An employee must give 48 hours' advance notice to Nova unless it is impracticable or an emergency prevents the employee from doing so. The employee may be required to provide verification that supports the employee's reason for being absent from work.

### **TIME OFF TO VOTE**

Nova encourages all employees to fulfill their civic responsibilities and to vote in official public elections. When possible, Nova encourages ~~you staff~~ to vote before or after ~~you're their~~ regularly scheduled work shift. Employees will be permitted time off to vote, without loss of pay, during a regularly scheduled state primary or general election, an election to fill a vacancy in the office of United States senator or United States representative, or an election to fill a vacancy in the office of state senator or state representative. Employees having questions concerning time off to vote should contact Human Resources for clarification.

### **JURY AND WITNESS DUTY LEAVE**

Nova encourages employees to serve on jury or witness duty when called. Employees called for jury duty or to testify as a witness must notify their supervisor and Human Resources as soon as a notice or summons from the court or a subpoena is received. Time off for jury or witness duty is unpaid, except that exempt employees will not incur any reduction in pay for a partial week of absence due to jury or witness duty. PTO use is permitted during a jury or witness duty leave. Any reductions in pay will be consistent with wage and hour laws.

Verification from the court clerk of having served may be required and employees will be expected to report or return to work for the remainder of their work schedule on any day an employee is dismissed from jury or witness duty.

### **MILITARY LEAVE**

In addition to the protections under federal law, pursuant to Minnesota law, employees will be allowed time off without pay to engage in active service in the armed forces during times of emergency declared by the proper authority of the State of Minnesota. The leave may not extend more than four years, exclusive of any time the employee may be legally required to serve.

### **LEAVE FOR CIVIL AIR PATROL SERVICE**

Unless it would unduly disrupt Nova's operations, an employee may take a leave of absence without pay for time spent rendering service as a member of the civil air patrol on the request and under the authority of the state or any of its political subdivisions. Employees who work 20 hours or more per week on average are eligible for this type of leave. An employee must give advance notice to Nova unless it is impracticable or an emergency prevents the employee from doing so. The employee may be required to provide verification that supports ~~his or her their~~ reason for being absent from work.

### **FAMILY MILITARY LEAVE**

If an employee's immediate family member (meaning a parent, child, grandparent, sibling, or spouse) has been injured or killed while engaged in active service, the employee will be provided up to ten (10) working days of leave without pay. An employee must give as much advance notice as is practicable of ~~his or her their~~ intent to take a leave under this policy. Leave under this section will run concurrently with any paid leave of absence for which the employee is eligible.

### **LEAVE TO ATTEND MILITARY CEREMONIES**

Unless it would unduly disrupt Nova's operations, an employee may take a leave of absence without pay when the employee's immediate family member (including a grandparent, legal guardian, sibling, child, grandchild, fiancé, or fiancée), as a member of the United States armed forces, has been ordered into active service in support of a war or other national emergency. The amount of leave is limited to the actual time necessary for the employee to attend a send-off or homecoming ceremony for the mobilized service member, and may not exceed one day's duration in any calendar year. An employee must give advance notice to Nova unless it is impracticable or an emergency prevents the employee from doing so. The employee may be required to provide verification that supports the employee's reason for being absent from work.

**LEAVE FOR BONE MARROW, ORGAN, AND BLOOD DONATION**

Employees will be provided a paid leave of absence to undergo a medical procedure to donate bone marrow, an organ, or blood. The combined length of the leaves may not exceed 40 work hours. Employees who work 20 hours or more per week on average are eligible for this type of leave. To qualify for this leave, the employee must submit a written verification by a physician detailing the purpose and length of each leave requested. If there is a medical determination that the employee does not qualify as a donor, the paid leave of absence provided to the employee prior to that medical determination will not be forfeited.

**SCHOOL ACTIVITIES LEAVE**

Employees will be provided an unpaid leave of up to sixteen (16) hours during any twelve-month period to enable attendance at an employee's child's special education, preschool, or school conferences or school-related activities, if those conferences or activities cannot be scheduled during non-work hours. Employees who work 20 hours or more per week on average are eligible for this type of leave. Where the need for school leave is foreseeable, an employee must provide prior notice and must make a reasonable effort to schedule the leave so as not to unduly disrupt Nova's operations.

**UNPAID PERSONAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

An unpaid personal leave of absence may be granted upon request to regular full- and part-time employees for important pressing personal needs, at the discretion of Nova Classical Academy. Accepting employment elsewhere is not unpaid leave and constitutes a termination of employment at Nova Classical Academy.

**Provisions:**

1. Unpaid personal leave may only be requested once all other appropriate leave balances have been exhausted.
2. Nova will attempt to hold an employee's position while on unpaid personal leave, but reserves the right to assign an employee to another position upon return from leave if it is determined to be in the best interests of Nova.
3. Employee benefits will be continued, but the employee will be advised of their COBRA rights and rights to continuing coverage for other benefits in addition to health insurance (see Continuation of Benefits policy for additional information about COBRA).
4. Unpaid personal leaves are limited to one per year.

**Procedure for Applying for Unpaid Personal Leave:**

1. Requests for unpaid personal leave must be made in writing to the employee's supervisor, with a copy to Human Resources, and should indicate the reason and the length of leave requested.
2. The supervisor will review and act upon a request for unpaid personal leave in consideration of the following factors:
  - The purpose for which the leave is requested.
  - The length of time the employee will be away.
  - The effect the leave will have on the ability of the department to carry out its responsibilities.
  - The quality of the employee's performance prior to the submission of the request.
3. All unpaid personal leaves must be approved by the employee's supervisor and Human Resources.

**Procedure for Returning from Unpaid Personal Leave:**

1. An employee who has been granted an unpaid personal leave of absence must give their supervisor and Human Resources reasonable notification of intent to return at least two (2) weeks prior to the return date.
2. Upon receiving notification of the employee's availability, the supervisor must arrange to have the employee resume their previous position, if available.
3. If the previous position is no longer available, the employee may be considered for other open positions for which they may be qualified as they become available.
4. If no position exists, the employee will remain on unpaid personal leave until a suitable opening develops. If such an opening does not occur within a 60-day period, any obligation to reinstate the employee is discontinued and the employee's leave status is changed to voluntary termination. Future reemployment would be as a rehired with only legally required reinstatement of applicable benefits.

**ACCOMMODATIONS****DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION**

In accordance with applicable law, Nova prohibits discrimination on the basis of an individual's disability status. Nova will provide reasonable accommodations to applicants or employees with a known physical or mental disability who are qualified for the

position at issue if such accommodation will not impose an undue hardship on Nova, and will enable the applicant or employee to perform the essential functions of the position in question. Nova's full Non-Discrimination Policy can be found in Board Policy 402.

Any applicant or employee who requires an accommodation in order to perform the essential functions of the position must notify Human Resources and their supervisor to request the accommodation. Nova will then identify possible reasonable accommodations that will allow the applicant or employee to perform the essential functions of the position in question unless the proposed accommodation imposes an undue hardship or poses a direct threat to the health and/or safety of the individual or others. The applicant or employee is required to cooperate fully with Nova in seeking and evaluating possible alternatives and accommodations. Nova may require medical verification of both the claimed disability and the need for accommodation.

### **RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION**

Nova will attempt to make reasonable accommodations for employee observance of religious holidays and sincerely held religious beliefs, unless doing so would cause an undue hardship on Nova's operations. If an employee desires such an accommodation, a request must be made in writing to Human Resources as far in advance as possible.

### **LACTATION ACCOMMODATION**

Nova will provide reasonable break times each day to an employee who needs to express breast milk for her infant child during the twelve months following the birth of the child as required by Minn. Stat. 181.939 Subd. 1. The break times must, if possible, run concurrently with any break times already provided to the employee. If the break time cannot run concurrently with meal and rest breaks already provided, or if additional time is needed for the employee, the employee should work with her supervisor regarding scheduling the extra break time. Nova is not required to provide break times under this section if to do so would unduly disrupt the operations of the employer. Nova will not reduce an employee's compensation for time used for the purpose of expressing milk.

~~Nova will provide a reasonable amount of break time to accommodate an employee desiring to express breast milk for the employee's child or as required by Minnesota law. Employees needing breaks for lactation purposes may use ordinary paid rest breaks or may take other reasonable break time, when needed. The lactation break time, if possible, should run concurrently with scheduled meal and rest breaks already provided to the employee. If the lactation break time cannot run concurrently with meal and rest breaks already provided, or if additional time is needed for the employee, the lactation break time will be unpaid. Where an unpaid break or additional time is needed, the employee should work with her supervisor regarding scheduling and recording the extra break time as unpaid.~~

~~Because exempt employees receive their full salary during weeks in which they work, and are not normally required to identify meal or rest break times, exempt employees who need lactation accommodation breaks do not need to report any extra break time as "unpaid".~~

~~Nova will provide employees the use of a room or private area, other than a bathroom or toilet stall, that is shielded from view and free of intrusion from coworkers and the public. Nova will make a reasonable effort to identify a location within close proximity to the work area for the employee to express milk. Nova will make reasonable efforts to provide a room or other location, in close proximity to the work area, other than a bathroom or a toilet stall, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from coworkers and the public and that includes access to an electrical outlet, where the employee can express milk in privacy. This location may be the employee's private office, if applicable.~~

Employees should discuss the need for a lactation area and where to store expressed milk with their supervisor and/or Human Resources, and may also provide their own portable small storage unit or cooler for keeping expressed breast milk cold.

Nova will not retaliate against an employee for asserting rights or remedies under this policy.

### **ALCOHOL AND DRUG POLICY**

Nova is committed to providing a drug free workplace and school for all staff and students. All staff members are expected to familiarize themselves with and adhere to the provisions in the school's Alcohol and Drug Policies. Nova's alcohol and drug policies are set out in Board Policy 417 and Board Policy 418.

### **HARASSMENT**

Nova is committed to providing a work environment that is free of harassment. Nova maintains a strict policy prohibiting sexual harassment or harassment on the basis of a person's race, color, religion, creed, sex, pregnancy or related medical conditions, age, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, marital status, sexual orientation, genetic information, status with respect

to public assistance, membership or activity in a local discrimination/human rights commission, or any other category protected by federal, state or local law.

All such harassment is prohibited under this policy. Nova's anti-harassment policy applies to all Nova employees and to all students, parents, family members, vendors, contractors, or other persons with whom Nova staff interact.

The procedures in this policy apply to both harassment of a Nova employee by a co-worker, and harassment of a Nova employee by a non-employee, including students. Nova's full Harassment and Violence policy can be found in Board Policy 413.

Nova will discipline any employee who retaliates or seeks to retaliate against an employee who reports potential violations of this policy, participates in an investigation of a potential violation of this policy, or who files, testifies, assists or participates in any investigation, proceeding or hearing conducted by a governmental agency. Prohibited retaliation includes, but is not limited to, termination, demotion, suspension, failure to hire or consider for hire, failure to give equal consideration in making employment decisions, failure to make employment recommendations impartially, adversely affecting work conditions, or otherwise denying any employment benefit.

Please report any potential retaliation in the same manner as described above for harassment. Any report of potential retaliation will be investigated in the same manner described above and, if substantiated, will subject the offending employee to discipline as described above.

## **WORKPLACE VIOLENCE**

It is Nova's goal to have a workplace free from acts or threats of violence and to effectively respond in the event that acts or threats of violence do occur.

Workplace violence is any intentional conduct that is sufficiently severe, offensive, or intimidating to cause an individual to reasonably fear for ~~his or her~~ **their** personal safety or the safety of ~~his or her~~ **their** family, friends, and/or property such that employment conditions are altered or a hostile, abusive, or intimidating work environment is created for one or several employees.

Examples of workplace violence include, but are not limited to:

- Threats or acts of violence occurring on Nova premises, regardless of the relationship between the parties involved in the incident
- Threats or acts of violence occurring off Nova premises involving someone who is acting in the capacity of a representative of Nova
- Threats or acts of violence off Nova premises involving an employee if the threats or acts affect Nova's interests
- All threats or acts of violence occurring off Nova premises of which an employee is a victim if **we Nova** determines that the incident may lead to an incidence of violence on Nova premises
- Threats or acts resulting in the conviction of an employee or agent of Nova, or of an individual performing service(s) for Nova on a contract or temporary basis, under any criminal code provision relating to violence or threats of violence which adversely affects Nova's interests

Examples of conduct that may be considered threats or acts of violence under this policy include, but are not limited to:

- Threatening physical or aggressive contact directed toward another individual
- Threatening an individual or his/her family, friends, associates, or property with harm
- The intentional destruction of property belonging to Nova or another
- Harassing or threatening phone calls
- Surveillance and/or stalking
- Veiled threats of physical harm or physical and/or verbal intimidation
- Communicating an endorsement of the inappropriate use of firearms or weapons

Workplace violence does not refer to occasional comments of a socially acceptable nature, such as references to legitimate sporting activities, popular entertainment, or current events. Rather, it refers to behavior that is personally offensive, threatening, or intimidating.

The prohibition against threats and acts described above applies to all Nova employees as well as non-employees on Nova premises.

Important Note: Nova will make the sole determination of whether and to what extent threat or acts of violence will be acted upon by Nova. In making this determination, Nova may undertake a case-by-case analysis in order to ascertain whether there is a reasonable basis to believe that workplace violence has occurred. Threats or acts of violence should be immediately reported to Human Resources. If Human Resources is unavailable for any reason, threats or acts of violence should be immediately reported to the Executive Director.

## **DISCIPLINE AND TERMINATION**

### **PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE**

Nova is committed to administering equitable and consistent discipline for poor performance or misconduct in the workplace. The best disciplinary measure is the one that does not have to be enforced and comes from good leadership and fair supervision at all employment levels.

It is in Nova's best interest to ensure fair treatment of all employees and to make certain that disciplinary actions are prompt, uniform, and impartial. The major purpose of any disciplinary action is to correct the problem, prevent recurrence, and prepare the employee for satisfactory service in the future.

Although employment with Nova is at-will, and both Nova and employees have the right to terminate employment at will and without cause or advance notice, Nova may use progressive discipline at its discretion.

Disciplinary action may call for any of the following four steps, determined by Nova in its sole and complete discretion based on the severity of the issue and the number of occurrences:

1. Verbal warning
2. Written warning
3. Final warning
4. Termination of employment

Nova reserves the right to bypass one or more steps of discipline. Nova recognizes that there are certain types of employee behavior that are serious enough to justify immediate action, including termination of employment, without going through the progressive discipline steps.

By using progressive discipline, it is hoped that most employee problems can be corrected at an early stage, benefiting both employees and Nova.

### **Resignation**

Any employee, who decides to voluntarily resign their employment, **are is** requested to provide at least four (4) weeks' written notice of the intent to do so. This requested notice, however, does not alter the at-will nature of the employment relationship. Nova reserves the right to accept an employee's resignation immediately, rather than waiting for the notice period to expire. An employee's letters or other communication(s) to/with the community related to a planned or impending resignation are prohibited without the approval of Administration.

### **Return of Property**

Employees are required to immediately return all Nova property in their possession or control in the event of termination of employment, resignation, layoff, or upon request. To the extent permitted by law, Nova may withhold from an employee's check or final paycheck the cost of any items that are not returned, when required. No information belonging to Nova may be held for an employee's or any other person's use. Nova may also take all action deemed appropriate to recover or protect Nova property.

## **STUDENT CONTACT**

### **STUDENT DISCIPLINE**

All Nova employees are required to adhere to the guidelines set forth in the Student Discipline Policy, found in Board Policy 506. As outlined below, corporal punishment, physical abuse, and/or verbal abuse are not tolerated under any circumstances.

### **CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

Corporal punishment is physical punishment that involves the deliberate infliction of pain. Employees are strictly prohibited from corporally punishing students. An employee's use of corporal punishment against a student will result in immediate discharge.



**Physical and Verbal Abuse**

Employees are strictly prohibited from physically or verbally assaulting, or making dangerous or intimidating threats against, a student, parent, coworker, or any other person. Verbal assault includes, without limitation, the use of degrading, profane, obscene or offensive language, gestures, and/or slurs.

**Student Supervision**

All employees are responsible for the supervision and well-being of Nova students. All students are to be supervised whenever they are on campus during the academic day (including during lunch and recess/break periods) or participating in extracurricular activities, and whenever they are off-campus on school-sponsored trips and/or events.

**USE OF STUDENT IMAGE AND VOICE**

All use of student images or voices must be reviewed and approved by the Administration. Employees are strictly prohibited from using any student's image or voice, regardless of the student's age, on any personal account without first obtaining approval from the student's parents and the Administration.

**MANDATORY REPORTING**

Any employee who knows or has reasonable cause to believe that a child or vulnerable adult is being maltreated, or has been maltreated in the past three (3) years, is required under Minnesota law to report such information to the Minnesota Department of Education or local law enforcement. Reporting procedures are set out in Board Policy 414. For all staff **with regular, direct student contact (e.g. Licensed Administrators, Licensed Faculty, and Educational Support staff)**, this training is required annually.

**FACILITIES****FACILITY USE AND SECURITY**

Nova's school building and premises are an important part of the school's mission. Each teacher must take responsibility for their classroom. This includes, without limitation, ensuring that the classroom is clean and in good order at the end of each school day. Personal items should be labeled with the employee's name, whenever feasible. To ensure compliance with OSHA regulations, the use of outside or personal cleaning products is not permitted without authorization.

Employees are also responsible for ensuring that the school in general and school grounds are clean and maintained in good order. Faculty also shares responsibility for building security. If you opened it, close it; if you unlocked it; re-lock it.

**VISITORS AND GUESTS**

All visitors must report to either the District/Lower School Office immediately upon entering the building. Visitors are required to sign in using **the Nova's Visitor Management System-Raptor**, indicating their time of arrival, reason for visiting, time of departure, and must also wear a "Visitor" badge at all times while on the premises whenever students are present. Employees must immediately report any suspicious activity to the Administration.

Visits must be scheduled to minimize work disruption. Guests are prohibited from having unsupervised access to or interaction with students. Employees who host a guest are responsible for the guest at all times.

Employees whose children attend Nova must make acceptable arrangements with the Administration for the presence of their children during non-school hours. Children of employees may not be on campus or school premises during non-school workdays or when school is not in session without prior approval of the Administration.

Unattended children are not allowed on campus or school premises at any time. For safety and insurance reasons, friends, relatives and parents of students are not permitted in areas restricted to employees without prior approval of the Administration.

**FOB AND KEY POLICY**

The establishment of an environment in which students, staff, and guests at Nova may safely adhere to its core character and intellectual virtues is necessary to the fulfillment of the school's mission. Administrators, teachers, and staff may receive a FOB and/or key(s) in order to carry out their job-related responsibilities at Nova. Upon receipt of a FOB and/or key(s), Nova employees agree to the following:

- FOB/Key holders are authorized to carry specific keys, which are granted based on necessary access for the successful completion of their work.

- Only authorized FOB/key holders are permitted to carry keys and FOB/key holders must maintain control over issued keys at all times. Should unattended FOB(s)/key(s) be found, they must immediately be returned to the District Receptionist located in the Lower School Office.
- Authorized FOB/key holders must keep both safety and confidentiality in mind at all times, in accordance with their role and responsibilities to Nova’s students, employees, and families.
- Employees issued a FOB/key are prohibited from giving their FOB/key to an unauthorized user at any time. FOBs/keys found in the possession of unauthorized users will be confiscated and both the unauthorized person and the authorized FOB/key holder may be disciplined up to and including termination.
- Duplication of FOBs and/or keys in any manner is strictly prohibited. Employees issued FOBs/keys are prohibited from duplicating or requesting duplication of a FOB/key without express, written consent from school administration.
- Authorized FOB/key holders must take all reasonable steps to prevent compromising the security of all areas of the Nova’s building and grounds. Employees must immediately report any areas of the building and/or grounds that are found to be unsecured or in violation of school policies.
- Lost or stolen FOBs/keys must be reported to Nova administration immediately. Because lost or stolen FOBs/keys may require that one or more doors/areas be rekeyed, where permitted, Nova reserves the right to charge a fee for lost or stolen FOBs/keys after the first offense if a violation of this policy results in lost or stolen FOBs/key(s). Employees will also have the option to pay any non-refundable replacement fee, by check, directly to the school. Payment must be made before replacement FOB/Key is provided. Please allow one (1) business day for request(s) to be processed.
- Employees must return FOBs and/or key(s) assigned to them immediately upon verbal or written request, in the event employee’s employment with Nova ends under any circumstances including, but not limited to resignation, termination or layoff.
- Violation of any part(s) of this policy may result in the loss of authorization of FOB and/or key privileges and may result in discipline, up to and including termination.

All employees must agree and adhere to the terms and conditions outlined, accepting responsibility for the FOB(s) and/or key(s) entrusted to them during employment with Nova.

### **SOLICITATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF LITERATURE**

Nova has established rules applicable to all employees and non-employees that govern solicitation, distribution of written material, political advocacy, and access to school property. Strict compliance with these rules is required.

- No employee shall solicit or promote support for any cause or organization during ~~his or her~~ their working time, during the working time of the employee or employees at whom the activity is directed, or in the presence of students.
- Under no circumstances will non-employees be permitted to solicit or distribute written material for any purpose on Nova property.
- No employee shall distribute or circulate any written or printed material in work areas at any time, during ~~his or her~~ their working hours, or during the working time of the employee or employees at whom such activity is directed.
- No employee shall engage in political or personal belief advocacy on a subject matter over which Nova has no control in a manner that is disruptive to Nova’s operations.
- As used in this policy, “working time” includes all time for which an employee is performing and/or scheduled to be performing services for Nova. It does not include break periods, meal periods, or periods in which an employee is not performing and is not scheduled to be performing services or work for Nova.

### **BULLETIN BOARDS**

Bulletin boards are reserved for the exclusive use of Nova for posting work-related notices or notices that must be posted pursuant to federal, state, and/or local law. From time-to-time, special notices and information for employees will be posted by Nova Administration on bulletin boards.

At the Administration’s discretion, Nova may maintain a community bulletin board in the Great Room. Employee postings are only permitted with prior approval of the Administration.

### **USE OF NOVA EQUIPMENT**

When using Nova equipment or property, employees are expected to exercise care and follow all operating instructions, safety standards, and guidelines. Improper, careless, negligent, destructive, or unsafe use or operation of Nova equipment or property may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Additionally, employees who lose, steal, or misuse Nova equipment or property may be held personally liable for such loss, theft, or misuse.



Nova property may not be borrowed, lent, or sold without prior approval of the Administration. Employees are prohibited from using Nova equipment or property for personal use without prior approval of the Executive Director. Nova reserves the right to search, inspect, and monitor school equipment and property at any time.

Employees must notify the Administration if any equipment, machines, or tools appear to be damaged, defective, or in need of repair. Prompt reporting of damages, defects, and needed repairs can prevent deterioration of equipment/property and possible injury to employees or others. An employee's supervisor will answer any questions about an employee's responsibility for maintenance and care of equipment used on the job.

### **WEAPONS IN THE WORKPLACE**

Employees are banned from carrying or possessing firearms during the course and scope of employment. Regardless of whether an employee has a permit to carry a firearm, pistol or handgun, such weapons are banned from all Nova premises. Violations of Nova's weapons ban policy will lead to discipline, up to and including termination. Nova's School Weapons Policy can be found in Board Policy 501.

### **USE OF ELECTRONIC RESOURCES**

This policy generally describes Nova's guidelines with regard to the use of Nova's electronic resources, including e-mail, voicemail, Internet access, and computer systems. Faculty and staff are not permitted to bring in or install personal printers on Nova's network.

Employees must use Nova's electronic resources with the understanding that these resources are provided for the benefit of school operations and in a manner that is consistent with performance of their duties and responsibilities. All employees must utilize Nova's Google G Suite whenever possible, including its use for classroom/teacher websites. Third-party or other websites, approved by Administration, may be used at the teacher's expense.

All employees are responsible for ensuring they use Nova's electronic resources in an effective, ethical, responsible and lawful manner. Personal use of Nova's email system must be kept to a minimum and cannot be disruptive to the employee's completion of their job duties. To ensure compliance with this policy, computer and email usage may be monitored.

Email is provided for school business and employees shall have no expectation that email, computer files, Nova furnished software, or access to the Internet is private. Nova may monitor employee usage of Nova issued technology at its discretion and any email or other electronic record of employee use of Nova issued technology may be retained as part of the personnel file.

Employees should familiarize themselves with, and adhere to, all provisions set forth in Nova's Internet Acceptable Use policy in Board Policy 524.

### **TECHNOLOGY EQUIPMENT POLICY**

The establishment of an environment in which students, staff, and guests at Nova may safely adhere to its core character and intellectual virtues is necessary to the fulfillment of the school's mission. Administrators, faculty, and staff may receive an electronic device in order to carry out their job-related responsibilities at Nova. Nova employees are expected to adhere to the following when provided a device by Nova:

- Only Nova employees who are authorized electronic device holders are permitted to carry electronic devices and such employees must maintain control over issued devices at all times. Should unattended electronic device be found, it will immediately be returned to Nova's Technology Manager.
- Authorized electronic device holders must keep both safety and confidentiality in mind at all times, in accordance with their role and responsibilities to Nova's students, employees, and families.
- Employees issued an electronic device are prohibited from providing their electronic device to an unauthorized user at any time. Electronic devices found in the possession of unauthorized users will be confiscated and both the unauthorized employee and the authorized device holder/employee may be disciplined up to and including termination. The employee/device holder's access to a Nova issued electronic device may also be discontinued.
- Lost or stolen electronic devices and/or accessories must be reported to Administration immediately. Because lost or stolen devices may require that one or more devices be replaced, where permitted, Nova reserves the right to charge a fee for lost or stolen devices after the first offense if a violation of this policy results in a lost or stolen device. Employees will also have the option to pay any non-refundable replacement fee, by check, directly to the school. Payment must be made before a replacement device is provided. Please allow seven (7) business days for request(s) to

be processed.

- Electronic devices are provided solely for professional use – personal use is not allowed. An employee’s unauthorized personal use of the electronic device may result in the device being confiscated and the employee losing future access to an electronic device issued by Nova.
- Employees issued electronic devices are required to comply with Nova’s policy on Use of Electronic Resources contained elsewhere in this Employee Handbook.
- Employees must return electronic devices and accessories assigned to them immediately upon verbal or written request, in the event of separation of employment including, but not limited to resignation, termination, or layoff.
- Violation of any part(s) of this policy may result in the loss of authorization of electronic device privileges and may result in discipline, up to and including termination.
- While at work, employees should use only Nova-issued devices, unless otherwise authorized by Administration.
- All employees shall connect any/all personal (non-Nova-owned) devices only to Nova’s Guest Wi-Fi network.
- If connecting to their Nova-issued email on a personal device, the employee shall maintain the name listed on that account as the legal name on file with Nova, for the purpose of outgoing messages, at all times. Employees may elect to update their signature with their preferred name, if different. Name changes, if requested, must first be evidenced to and processed by Human Resources to take effect.

All employees must agree and adhere to the terms and conditions outlined, accepting responsibility for the electronic device(s) entrusted to them during their employment with Nova.

#### **EMAIL**

All staff are provided with Nova email accounts. Staff is prohibited from using any personal accounts for emailing or communicating electronically with students. All emails to students must be sent through staff’s Nova email addresses. While Nova has no policy forbidding employees from communicating electronically with students, any communications which constitute inappropriate behavior, even if the communication occurs outside of school and/or from an employee’s personal device, may be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

#### **SOFTWARE CODE OF ETHICS**

Employees may not duplicate any licenses, software, or related documentation for use either on Nova’s premises or elsewhere unless Nova is expressly authorized to do so by agreement with the licensor. Unauthorized duplication of software may subject users and/or Nova to both civil and criminal penalties under the United States Copyright Act. Employees are prohibited from giving software to any outsiders or downloading software from the Internet for use on their work computer. Software may be used on local area networks or on multiple machines only in accordance with applicable license agreements.

Nova reserves the right to audit any computer to determine what software is installed on the local drive(s).

#### **Virus Protection**

Nova maintains virus protection software on all network servers and filters all inbound and outbound e-mail (including attachments) for viruses. E-mail containing a virus will be quarantined and both the sender and recipient will be informed. If the virus can be removed, the message will be forwarded to the recipient.

#### **Installation of Software on the Network**

The computer network is subject to failure if software is improperly installed or if viruses are introduced into the system. In order to protect the network’s integrity, users are prohibited from installing any software on a Nova computer, including games, screen savers, or shareware. This policy also applies to any software downloaded from the Internet.

#### **EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY**

Each employee is responsible for the content of all text, audio, or images the employee places or sends using Nova’s electronic resources. The same standards should be utilized for the creation of e-mail messages as would be utilized for other Nova correspondence or memoranda. All messages must clearly identify the employee as the sender. Messages must not be transmitted under an assumed name. Employees or other users are prohibited from attempting to obscure the origin of any message. Employees who wish to express personal opinions on the Internet must use personal e-mail accounts and addresses from external (non-Nova) systems.

**USE OF PHONES**

Nova monitors all usage of its telephone system. Personal calls should be infrequent and of short duration. In the event it is necessary to make a personal long-distance call, employees may be asked to reimburse Nova for the cost of the call.

Personal cell phone use should be limited to only necessary calls during the workday and must not be used, at any time, in the classroom while class is in session. It is a best practice to avoid using your phone in view of students, whenever possible.

**USE OF MAIL**

All engraved or printed Nova stationary, letterheads (including digitally-stored letterheads), envelopes, and other work materials are for Nova business only. These materials may not be used for personal correspondence or non-business matters. When signing business letters on Nova letterhead, an employee's name and title or position must be used. Use of Nova resources to send personal mail is strictly prohibited.

Nova prohibits the delivery of personal mail and/or packages to the school.

**SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

Nova understands that social media can be a fun and rewarding way to share life experiences and opinions with family, friends and co-workers. However, use of social media also presents certain risks and carries with it certain responsibilities. To assist employees in making responsible decisions about the use of social media, Nova established guidelines for appropriate use of social media. This policy applies to all employees who work for Nova.

**Guidelines**

In the rapidly expanding world of electronic communication, social media can mean many things. Social media includes all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the Internet, including an employee's own or someone else's web log or blog, journal or diary, personal web site, social networking or affinity web site, web bulletin board or a chat room, whether or not associated or affiliated with Nova, as well as any other form of electronic communication. The same principles and guidelines found in Nova policies apply to an employee's activities online. Ultimately, ~~an employee~~ **an employee** ~~is~~ **is** solely responsible for what an employee posts online. Before creating online content, consider some of the risks and rewards that are involved. Keep in mind that any conduct that adversely affects an employee's job performance, the performance of fellow employees or students of Nova or otherwise adversely affects employees, students, students' families, members of the public, suppliers, people who work on behalf of Nova or Nova's legitimate business interests may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**Know and Follow the Rules**

Carefully read these guidelines, other Nova policies, including the policy regarding discrimination and harassment, data privacy regarding staff and students and professional codes of ethics in order to ensure that postings are consistent with these policies. Inappropriate postings that may include discriminatory remarks, harassment, and threats of violence or similar inappropriate or unlawful conduct or disclosure of private non-public data on staff and students will not be tolerated and may subject employees to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**Be Respectful**

Always be fair and courteous to fellow employees, students, students' family members, suppliers or people who work on behalf of Nova. Also, keep in mind that employees are more likely to resolve work related complaints by speaking directly with co-workers or by utilizing Nova's ~~Problem Resolution Policy Communication Protocol~~ than by posting complaints to a social media outlet. Nevertheless, if an employee decides to post complaints or criticism, avoid using statements, photographs, video or audio that reasonably can be viewed as malicious, obscene, threatening or intimidating, that disparage staff, students, members of students' families or suppliers, or that might constitute harassment or bullying. Examples of such conduct might include offensive posts meant to intentionally harm someone's reputation or posts that could contribute to a hostile work environment on the basis of race, sex, disability, religion or any other status protected by law or company policy.

**Be Honest and Accurate**

Employees must make sure that they are always honest and accurate when posting information or news, and if a mistake is made, must be corrected quickly. Be open about any previous posts that have been altered. Remember that the Internet archives almost everything; therefore, even deleted postings can be searched. Never post any information or rumors that you know to be false about Nova, fellow employees, students, members of students' families, suppliers, people working on behalf of Nova, or competitors.

**Post Only Appropriate and Respectful Content**

- Maintain the confidentiality of Nova’s private or confidential information about employees and students.
- Do not create a link from a personal blog, website, or other social networking site to a Nova website without identifying oneself as a Nova employee.
- Express only personal opinions. Employees must never represent themselves as a spokesperson for Nova. If Nova is a subject of the content being created, be clear and open about the fact that the person creating the content is an employee and make it clear that personal views do not represent those of Nova, fellow employees, students, members of students’ families, suppliers or people working on behalf of Nova. If an employee does publish a blog or post online related to the work an employee does or subjects associated with Nova, it must be made clear that the employee is not speaking on behalf of Nova. It is best to include a disclaimer such as “The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of Stonebridge World School.”

**Using Social Media at Work**

Refrain from using social media while on work time or on equipment provided by Nova, unless it is work-related as authorized by the employee’s supervisor or consistent with the Nova’s policy regarding use of school resources. Do not use Nova email addresses to register on social networks, blogs or other online tools utilized for personal use.

**Retaliation is Prohibited**

Nova prohibits taking negative action against any employee for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation. Any employee who retaliates against another employee for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

**Media Contacts**

Employees are prohibited from speaking to the media on Nova’s behalf without authorization from the Executive Director. All media inquiries should be directed to the Executive Director.

**Friending Students**

Employees are prohibited from “friending” Nova students on the employee’s personal blog, website or other social networking site.

**For More Information**

If you have questions or need further guidance, please contact the Executive Director or designee.

**SAFETY AND SECURITY****HEALTH AND SAFETY PROGRAM**

Nova’s health and safety program is described in Board Policy 807.

**SMOKE-FREE WORKPLACE**

Nova provides a work environment that is smoke-free. Smoking is prohibited on all Nova premises and property. Nova’s full Tobacco-Free policy is available in Board Policy 419.

**WORK-RELATED INJURIES**

Nova provides a comprehensive workers’ compensation insurance program at no cost for employees. This program covers most injuries or illnesses sustained in the course of employment that require medical, surgical or hospital treatment.

An employee who sustains a work-related injury or illness must inform their supervisor immediately. Employees should report to the Health Office for any initial First Aid care, as they are able. No matter how minor a work-related injury may appear, it is important that it be reported. **In addition to their supervisor, injured employees must speak with Human Resources will need to speak with any injured employee** to complete required paperwork, as soon as possible, and within 10 days of the occurrence of the work-related injury or illness.

**SECURITY INSPECTIONS**

Nova wishes to maintain a work environment that is free of illegal drugs, alcohol, firearms, explosives, or other improper materials. To this end, Nova prohibits the control, possession, transfer, sale, or use of such materials on its premises to the extent permitted by applicable law. Nova requires the cooperation of all employees in administering this policy.

Desks, lockers, and other storage devices are provided for the convenience of employees but remain the sole property of Nova. Accordingly, they, as well as any articles found within them, may be inspected by Nova at any time and for any reason, either with or without prior notice.

In addition, in order to ensure the safety and security of students and employees, Nova reserves the right to question and inspect or search any employee or other individual entering onto or leaving school premises. Nova may also require employees while on the job or on Nova premises to agree to reasonable inspection of their vehicles, personal property, and/or persons. The individual may be requested to self-inspect ~~his or her~~ their vehicle, personal property, or person by displaying the contents of any packages and/or turning out ~~his or her~~ their pockets, etc., in the presence of a Nova representative, typically a management employee of the same gender. Nova will not tolerate any employee's refusal to submit to a search.

### **HAZARDOUS AND TOXIC MATERIALS**

If an employee's job requires that the employee use hazardous and/or toxic materials, compliance with all laws, rules, and regulations concerning their safe handling and disposal is expected. If an employee has any questions about the materials with which an employee works or the proper safety procedures to follow, such questions should be discussed with the employee's supervisor before handling the materials.

### **EMPLOYEE BENEFITS**

#### **BENEFITS AND ELIGIBILITY**

Nova has established a variety of employee benefit programs designed to assist employees and their eligible dependents by providing coverage for illness and disability, and to help plan for retirement. This portion of the Employee Handbook contains a general description of the benefits to which an employee may be eligible to receive as an employee of Nova. Unless required by law, the existence of these benefits programs does not constitute entitlement to such benefits and does not signify that an employee will necessarily be employed for the required time necessary to qualify for the benefits included in and administered through these programs.

This general explanation is not intended to, and does not provide employees with all of the details of these benefits. To the extent that any of the information contained in this Handbook is inconsistent with the official plan documents, the provisions of the official documents will govern in all cases. Employees will be promptly notified of any and all situations where Nova amends, modifies, or terminates its offered insurance coverage that have a direct impact on the employee.

Benefits are overseen by Human Resources. Nova reserves the exclusive right, power, and authority, in its sole and absolute discretion, to administer, apply, and interpret the benefit plans described herein, and to decide all matters arising in connection with the operation or administration of such plans. All necessary plan premiums are paid through payroll deduction.

Coverage for new, benefit eligible employees begins on the first day of the month following the date of hire. Insurance coverage is maintained for full-time employees and licensed faculty. Employees who do not work at least 30 hours each week are not eligible for coverage. For hourly employees not scheduled to work over the summer months or who do not work at least 20 hours per week during the summer months to permit payroll withholding of benefit premiums, arrangements must be made with the Business Office to ensure payment is received for the employee portion of any insurance premium(s).

#### **Health Insurance**

For eligible employees, Nova offers two health insurance plans: a first-dollar plan and corresponding Flexible Spending Account (FSA) and a high-deductible plan and corresponding Health Savings Accounts (HSA).

Employees who elect individual coverage will pay a nominal portion of the cost of their premiums with Nova paying the remainder. For employees who elect to cover eligible dependents, those additional premiums are paid 100% by the employee.

For married couples who are both benefit-eligible employees, Nova will pay either two single contributions or the equivalent dollar amount toward one family contribution, to be decided by the employees. If benefit eligible employees, who are married to one another, elect to have family coverage, they will be responsible to pay the cost difference between two single contributions and a family contribution.

**Dental Insurance**

For eligible employees, Nova offers dental insurance coverage. Employees who elect coverage will pay a nominal portion of the cost of their premium with Nova will paying the remainder. For employees who elect to cover eligible dependents, those additional premiums are paid 100% by the employee.

**Short-Term Disability Insurance**

This voluntary coverage provides a benefit of 60% of the employee's wages during the coverage period and with the full premium paid by the employee, if elected. Certain exclusions apply and coverage may be limited to less than 60% of the employee's wages if annual pay crosses a stated amount, pursuant to plan guidelines. Employees are required to be paid for all accrued PTO at the onset of any short-term disability insurance claim.

**Long-Term Disability Insurance**

Nova pays 100% of premiums for this coverage and all benefit eligible employees are required to participate in this plan. The coverage provides a benefit of 60% of the employee's wages. Certain exclusions apply and coverage may be limited to less than 60% of the employee's wages if annual pay crosses a stated amount, pursuant to plan guidelines. Long-term disability insurance benefits begin after a 90-day elimination period and may continue for up to 36 months, dependent on plan guidelines and the nature of the claim.

**Life/AD&D Insurance**

Nova pays for life insurance for all benefit eligible employees. The benefit for this coverage is 1x the annual salary to a maximum of \$100,000.

**Voluntary Life/AD&D Insurance**

Eligible employees may purchase additional life/AD&D insurance coverage at a nominal group rate with the employee paying 100% of the premium(s). Spouse and/or dependent coverage is also available, but requires that the employee elect their own voluntary coverage and pay the applicable premiums for the elected coverage(s).

**Vision Insurance**

For eligible employees, Nova offers voluntary vision insurance coverage. Employees who elect coverage will pay 100% of the cost of their premium. For employees who elect to cover eligible dependents, those additional premiums are paid 100% by the employee.

**Dependent Care FSA**

For eligible employees, Nova offers a dependent care Flexible Spending Account, funded through voluntary payroll deduction up to federal guidelines.

**Employee Assistance Program**

For eligible employees, Nova offers an employee assistance program which includes phone and in-person services as defined within the medical plan coverage.

**QUALIFIED FAMILY STATUS CHANGES**

In accordance with applicable laws, certain life events may permit mid-year changes to benefits enrollment. Employees must notify the Human Resources as soon as possible in the event of qualified **changes life change events** like birth, marriage, divorce, death, etc., and any changes must be complete within 30-days of the qualified event date.

**COBRA**

In accordance with applicable law, benefit eligible employees may continue medical insurance benefits under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 ("COBRA") for a period of up to eighteen months at the employee's expense if they reduce their work hours to a benefit ineligible status, or discontinue their employment with Nova.

If an employee's spouse and/or dependent children are covered at the time of termination or reduction in hours, they have a right to continue coverage of the benefits subject to continuation. In addition, they may have the right to continue coverage of benefits subject to continuation if they lose coverage because of an employee's death, divorce or legal separation, entitlement to Medicare or dependent child reaching adult status. The continuation of benefits described may change because the law changes and our benefits that are subject to continuation change periodically.

## **RETIREMENT PLANNING**

### **TRA – TEACHER’S RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION**

Pursuant to Minnesota State Laws, all licensed faculty must participate in a defined benefit pension plan through the Teacher’s Retirement Association (TRA), which is automatically deducted each pay period. Contribution rates are determined by Minnesota Statute and are subject to change by the Minnesota State Legislature. Nova contributes a portion of the required withholdings, as an additional benefit to its employees. For account access and additional information, please visit [minnesotatra.org](http://minnesotatra.org).

### **PERA – PUBLIC EMPLOYEE’S RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION**

Pursuant to Minnesota State Laws, all unlicensed staff or those whose position does not require a license must participate in a defined benefit pension plan through the Public Employee’s Retirement Association (PERA), which is automatically deducted each pay period. Contribution rates are determined by Minnesota Statute and are subject to change by the Minnesota State Legislature. Nova contributes a portion of the required withholdings, as an additional benefit to its employees. For account access and additional information, please visit [mnpera.org](http://mnpera.org).

## **VOLUNTARY RETIREMENT PLANS**

### **Minnesota State Retirement System (MSRS)**

To eligible employees, Nova offers the opportunity to participate in a voluntary Minnesota Deferred Compensation 457(b) Plan (MNDCP) sponsored by MSRS. Employees may contribute to this plan through payroll deduction. Contributions to the plan may be made on a pre- or post-tax (ROTH) basis. For additional information, please contact Human Resources.

### **TIAA**

To eligible employees, Nova offers the opportunity to participate in a voluntary 403(b) retirement plan sponsored by TIAA. Employees may contribute to this plan through payroll deduction. Contributions to the plan may be made on a pre- or post-tax (ROTH) basis. For additional information, please contact Human Resources.



**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

This is to acknowledge that I have received a copy of Nova’s Employee Handbook. I understand that the Employee Handbook sets forth the general terms and conditions of my employment with Nova as well as my general duties, responsibilities, and obligations. I agree to follow the rules, policies, procedures, and standards set forth in the Employee Handbook. I also agree that nothing within the Employee Handbook creates a contract of any type or kind between Nova and me. By signing this document using any device, means or action, you consent to the legally binding terms and conditions of this Handbook. You further agree that your electronic signature on this document or any document between you and Nova (hereafter referred to as your “Signature” or "E-Signature") is as valid as if you signed the document in writing.

I understand that my employment with Nova is at-will, meaning that it is not for a specified period of time, and that my employment with Nova may be terminated by me or by Nova at any time, with or without cause. If I decide to terminate employment, I agree to provide as much advance notice as possible, ideally at least four (4) weeks, prior to my last planned work day. I acknowledge that no oral or written statements or representations regarding my employment may alter the at-will relationship, except for a written agreement made and signed by Nova’s Executive Director.

I also acknowledge that, with the exception of the policy of at-will employment, Nova reserves the right to revise, delete, amend, change, alter, and/or add to the provisions of the Employee Handbook at any time, without notice. All such revisions, deletions, amendments, alterations, and/or additions must be in writing. No oral statements or representations can change the provisions of the Employee Handbook.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name