

Executive Director's Report to the Board

Date of the Report: October 19, 2021

Report Prepared By: Dr. Brett Wedlund



Update on Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

We continue to monitor data on how our school community is being impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the mitigation strategies that we have put in place. As of October 19, 2021 Nova has had 9 students and 3 staff members test positive during the 2021-2022 school year. These numbers compare favorably with other schools that we have reviewed from. At this point, we anticipate that we will continue to utilize our current mitigations strategies until we see an increase in positive cases in our community, the Department of Labor releases their rules for mandatory employee vaccines, there is a change to who has access to vaccines and/or boosters. One of our stated goals for this year was to minimize the amount of time that students would not be able to participate in in-person learning and our current mitigation strategies are meeting that need.

Communications Audit

At the last Board meeting an Executive Director goal was set which included a measurement of “Conduct, a process, systems, content and outcomes externally-focused communications audit.” To work toward this goal, I have contracted with [CEL PR](#) which is a well-established school public relations and marketing firm. CEL PR will be completing an audit of Nova’s communications. The work on this will begin in the next couple of weeks with a tentative goal of having the work completed prior to spring break. The CEL PR audit process includes:

- PRIMARY RESEARCH developing and administering an online communications survey to priority audiences including parents, staff and key communicators; virtual focus group sessions with cabinet, staff, parents, students (using Zoom and polls); a brand review; and competitive analysis.
- MATERIALS COLLECTION to include brand documents, strategic plan documents, relevant public report cards and samples of all district publications and sample school newsletters.
- DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS AUDIT including website and social media audit, online review sites, Google listings, Realtor sites and/or reviews, SEO and Google analytics review.
- SECONDARY RESEARCH includes CEL's MissionIgnition™ Marketing/PR Scorecard, an evaluation of our findings against NSPRA's Benchmarks for School Communications, and content analysis of local media and social media channels, in addition to demographic and psychographic profile.
- RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS CUSTOMIZED FOR YOU
 - Time-saving tips and recommendations (with a focus on proactive strategic communications, technology integrations and communication tools)
 - Editorial calendar and resource allocation recommendations
 - Enrollment marketing and customer experience recommendations

MN Classical Education Conference

Nova is again participating in the MN Classical Education Conference. This year the conference is scheduled for October 21 and will be held remotely. In addition to Nova staff being able to attend the conference, some of this year's sessions will be led by Nova staff members including:

K-5 Grammar: *Putting the Fun in Drill and Kill* - Maria Marchand and Becky Lund, Nova Classical Academy:
Exploring the importance of ensuring that students have automaticity with the most crucial information, but doing so in a way that supports the joy of learning and empowers the students.

Philosophy: *Contemplative Debate* - Dr. Missy Johnson and Sara Seal, Nova Classical Academy:
One traditional purpose of logic and debate is to clarify confusion and dispel harmful views. Contemplative debate is intended to non-aggressively examine two sides of a statement or question. It is also intended to enrich, illuminate, and ventilate the thinking and communication processes of the debaters and those in attendance. In this session, participants will begin by engaging in introductory mindfulness exercises before culminating in contemplative debate.