

Executive Director's Report to the Board



Date of Report: February 22, 2020

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Professional Development Day

Friday February 12th was a professional development (PD) day for Nova's instructional staff. Staff engaged in conversation about Nova's classical curriculum and the Great Conversation.

Lower School Staff also received training on IXL. IXL is a technology based instructional tool. The IXL Real-Time Diagnostic tool pinpoints students' grade level proficiency in key math and language arts strands (standards) and develops individualize plans to helps students fill in gaps.

Upper School staff also reviewed the topics covered and pacing of their courses. This will help provide a baseline next year as we work to recover learning and curricular losses that occurred during the pandemic.

Branding

During the Board retreat 14 months ago, I spoke about Nova's Branding and systems of communication being an area that we would like to focus on. Because of the pandemic, much of that work was set aside. However, we are now preparing to begin work with this area. Melissa Guertin, Nova's Communications Manager, and I have been working with a consultant to define the scope of a brand refresh. The pandemic has changed the way that many people view both Nova and education. We anticipate that completing this work in the spring and summer will aid us in helping reconnect people with Nova following the pandemic.

Social Media Report Card

Over the past several months, we have been working to increase our presence on social media. We periodically review our progress in these areas (see the attachment for highlights). Items of note from the most recent review include:

- The "SuperNova" campaign which highlighted members of the Nova community was a large success.
- We have successfully used paid ads to boost our exposure and enrollment numbers.
- We have seen great fan growth on Instagram and Facebook.
- Our Instagram has over 600% growth since we began focusing on it. An interesting note is that while we are still acquiring student followers (12%) our biggest Insta base is age 31-55 (over 50%).

St. Paul Charter Fair

On March 20th, Nova will participate in the St. Paul Charter School Fair. This is an annual event that is designed to expose St. Paul families to potential charter school options. The fair typically has about 30 schools participate, but this will be Nova's first appearance in several years. The fair will be held virtually this year, and we are excited to be able to highlight our school to the St. Paul community.

Refinancing of Bonds

As I reported to the Board previously, the market is favorable for refinancing of the bonds on our facilities. Recent analysis indicates that a refinance has the potential to save Nova up to \$60,000 per year. On February 19th, Joe Aliperto, Jennie Winter, Jeff Ellerd (a member of Nova's Building

Company, Friends of Nova), and I will meet with Piper Sandler & Co. to gather more information and determine potential next steps.