

The Executive Director Review Committee has put forward a recommendation for Dr. Wedlund's contract covering fiscal years 2026 to 2028, citing several key reasons for their proposal. Throughout his tenure at Nova Classical, Dr. Wedlund has consistently demonstrated exemplary service, particularly in the development and implementation of the school's strategic plan. His leadership has been marked by reliability and dependability, even in the face of unprecedented challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic. This is reflected in his annual reviews, which have consistently been positive, underscoring his effectiveness as a leader.

One of Dr. Wedlund's key strengths is his commitment to fiscal responsibility. Since he took on the role of Executive Director, Nova Classical's fund balance has grown by an impressive 30.7%. His financial stewardship has been integral to the school's stability and growth. Additionally, under his leadership, Nova Classical earned the prestigious designation of a Blue Ribbon School, and the school has maintained its high standing in the U.S. News high school rankings.

Dr. Wedlund has also been instrumental in ensuring smooth transitions in leadership, including the successful onboarding of two Upper School principals. His ability to manage these changes seamlessly has contributed to the continued strength and stability of the school's leadership team. Beyond Nova Classical, Dr. Wedlund has emerged as a key figure in charter school advocacy across the state, further elevating Nova's impact on the broader educational landscape.

As the Board prepares to embark on a major building project on Nova Classical's undeveloped land, Dr. Wedlund's prior experience with a facilities expansion process and a previous bond refunding will be invaluable. His expertise in navigating these complex projects ensures that the school will be well-positioned to execute the expansion effectively. Leadership consistency is essential as such projects require intricate planning and execution, and the Board recognizes that any changes at this critical juncture could jeopardize progress. Additionally, changes in leadership could complicate the school's ability to secure necessary funding through bonds, making Dr. Wedlund's continued involvement crucial to the project's success.

In light of all these considerations, the Committee emphasizes the need for the Executive Director's salary to remain competitive in order to retain high-quality leadership. To create benchmark data, the Committee referenced the salaries of the Executive Directors at the other twelve K-12 charter schools in Minnesota with student enrollments of over 828, using the mean as the benchmark for comparison. Despite Nova being ranked in the top 5 of comparably sized schools in terms of fund balance, staff retention, and academic benchmarks, the Executive Director salary remains below the mean of these schools which have settled contracts for each of those years. Even with the recommended adjustments, Dr. Wedlund's compensation remains modest compared to the benchmark set by the mean salary of similarly sized institutions.

The Committee proposes the following salary structure for Dr. Wedlund's contract as Executive Director for FY26, FY27, and FY28, respectively:

- \$188,000 for FY26 (July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026),
- \$191,760 for FY27 (July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027),
- \$195,595 for FY28 (July 1, 2027, to June 30, 2028).