

Governance Committee Report on 2021 Board Election

Committee Name: Governance

Date of Report: September 6, 2021

Written/submitted by: Becky Lund

For the 13th consecutive year, the Governance Committee provides this report to the Board under the authority of Nova Board policy 202. The purpose of this report is to provide a written summary of the last Nova Board election, with participation percentage and recommendations for increasing voter education and participation, as well as applicable dates/deadlines for the 2022 board election. As has become customary, this report also discusses additional issues and recommendations that may affect Nova board elections.

Executive Summary

This year the Board was reduced from 11 seats to 9; one community member seat and one parent seat were removed. The Board is currently comprised of 5 parent seats, 3 teacher seats, and 1 community member seat.

During the nomination period, members of the Governance Committee solicited recommendations from the Nova community and Becky Lund, as Governance Committee chair, reached out to all people recommended. While this didn't lead to an increase in people running, feedback was still positive. The Governance Committee recommends continuing this process, but doing it a few weeks earlier in the process to allow for more time for potential candidates to ask questions or consider running without feeling pressured to complete a nomination by the deadline.

The 2021 election proceeded smoothly with no issues other than a few people communicating that they couldn't find their electronic ballot. (These were quickly fixed.) Two teachers ran for one teacher seat and three parents ran for one parent seat.

Voter participation percentage is as follows:

2021 = 38%

2020 = 31% (delayed election due to Covid-19)

2019 = 40% (only two teacher candidates on ballot and a shorter - 2 wks instead of 3 - voting window)

2018 = 31%

2017 = 38%

2016 = 54.2% (switched to electronic ballot/voting instead of paper)

2015 = 29%

2014 = 35%

2013 = 39%

2012 = 52%

2011 = 51%

2010 = 42%

2009 = 56%

The committee recommends continuing the existing practices of providing early reminders to the Nova community about the election process, updating and publishing written Election Guidelines, and communicating these items and any additional matters relevant to the board election process on a regular basis. The Governance Committee will continue to discuss and

investigate best practices for getting election information to all members of the Nova community.

Discussion

I) Recommended Dates & Deadlines for 2022 Board Election.

The date for the board meeting which also functions as the approval of the election results is Monday, May 23, 2022. Additional dates and deadlines will be provided in an online 2022 Election Timetable as the election approaches. A draft of the timetable is attached to this report.

The Governance Committee recommends continuing with a two-week voting period coupled with continuing to provide numerous reminders to vote during that period. Simply Voting allowed us to send reminders to everyone who had not yet voted and each time a reminder was sent, approximately 20 – 30 people voted.

II) Pre-Election Publicity and Documentation.

A) Early Reminder Letter. Each January since 2010 an Early Reminder Letter and/or Brochure was distributed to the Nova Community, detailing the seats up for election, the overall timetable for the election with deadlines where applicable, a summary of the qualifications sought for a Nova board member, and suggestions for informing potential candidates about board service at Nova. In 2014 and after, this brochure was sent via email to the Nova community.

The Governance Committee recommends distributing an early reminder flyer via email in January 2022, focusing on seeking recommendations for potential nominees that the Governance Committee can reach out to with more information.

B) Call for Nominations Letter. This formal start to the annual election process is distributed to all Nova parents, teachers, current BoD members and the public. Nova's Bylaws require that this notice be sent at least 90 days before the Annual Meeting.

The Governance Committee recommends publishing/distributing a similar letter in 2022, with updates/clarification as appropriate. Members of the Governance Committee will continue to contact members of Board committees and other recommended leaders in the Nova community to encourage them to run or nominate someone else to run.

C) Candidate Nomination Form.

Several completed forms were submitted and the process went smoothly.

For 2022, the Governance Committee recommends using the same overall online form with minor changes as applicable based on current Board needs. It continues to be effective to have everything on one form and to conduct the nomination via Google forms. Additionally, the Governance Committee will continue to be more pro-active in soliciting nominations through Board committee members as well as doing more outreach into the Nova community for recommendations for nominations will be the most effective method of finding candidates.

D) Candidate Questionnaire Form.

All candidate questionnaires were received by the due date. All questionnaire responses were posted on the Nova web page. Copies of the questionnaire responses were also included in the voting information included in the Nova News election updates.

The Governance Committee recommends using a similar Google form in 2022, with updated questions reflecting the progress of the strategic plan, current Board goals, and other needs of the Nova Board of Directors. The Governance Committee also recommends again asking candidates to submit a current photo to include in the Voter Packet. This would not be required, but is very helpful in connecting faces and names. The past idea to encourage candidates to make a video has not been carried out due to the constraints of Covid and the short time between the end of the nomination period and the start of the election.

III) Submission of Candidacy Timing.

The nomination period ran as usual this year despite ongoing changes in the school community due to Covid and hybrid learning. The Governance Committee will continue to set the deadline for candidate submissions a few days prior to the Governance Committee meeting at which candidate applications are reviewed. This provides time for members of the committee to review the applications and make sure they meet the guidelines set by state statute and the Governance Committee. The Governance Committee will continue to set clear and specific deadlines for all candidate information to be submitted for the candidate to be viable. Additionally, the chair of the Governance Committee will continue to respond to all nominations with a timeline, an invitation to attend the meeting, and any issues that may be obvious with the nomination (conflicts of interest, missing information, etc.)

IV) Candidate Choice of Category

No concerns or actions at this time.

V) Additional Candidate Information

The Governance Committee will continue to share an electronic copy of the Voter's Guide no later than the first day of voting to help get information to the voters; the information is also included on the Simply Voting ballot. We will also continue to research other methods of getting information to voters.

VI) 2022 Nova Board Election Rules/Guidelines.

As it has done each year beginning in 2010, the Governance Committee recommends that an updated version be posted in several places on the Nova website prior to and during the 2022 election. The Governance Committee also recommends that the committee continue to remind all board members, voting and nonvoting, that campaigning on behalf of specific candidates in board elections may jeopardize Nova's tax-exempt status under IRS Section 501(c)(3).

VII) Increasing Voter Participation

The Governance Committee continues to discuss ways we can encourage more people to vote in the Board elections.

VIII) Ballot/Vote Tallying.

The Governance Committee continues to find electronic voting to be much easier than paper ballots. The results were immediate and certified by Simply Voting. The Governance Committee recommends continuing to use Simply Voting for the 2022 election.

IX) Staggered Term Requirements.

After reducing the size of the Board after the 2021 election, the seats up for election over the next three years are not quite equal. However, as past experiences have shown, this will most likely resolve itself through resignations over time. At this time, the Governance Committee does not recommend taking any further action and is planning to have two parent seats and one teacher seat up for election in 2022, with each seat being for a three-year term.

Nova Board Seats – Staggered Term Status as of September 6, 2021

Terms Expiring June 30, 2022 (3)

Parents: Divya Karan

Frank Ross

Teacher: Becky Lund

Terms Expiring June 30, 2023 (4)

Parents: Melissa DeJesus Hernandez

Jennie Winter

Teacher: Diane Ruday

Community Member: Nick LaRusso

Terms Expiring June 30, 2024 (2)

Parent: Claudia Gumbiner Hungs

Teacher: Sasha Ross

Timetable for the 2022 Nova Board Elections as of September 2020

Date Due	Event	Action Items Necessary	Person(s) Responsible
12/13/2021	Governance Committee Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review 2022 election flyer and update as needed Remind Board members and Board committee members to begin reaching out to potential candidates 	GC
1/10/2022	Governance Committee Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make final changes to the election flyer Approve and distribute the final copy via email Assign election tasks to members of the committee including continued publicity 	GC
2/14/2022	Governance Committee Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Call for Nominations Letter Review 2022 Election Rules/Guidelines Review draft election web page format Reach out to Nova parents and Nova faculty for recommendations for nominations Arrange for posting and emailing of Call for Nominations. Vote to hire Simply Voting (or other company) to run Nova's Board election (electronic voting). 	GC
2/16/2022	Distribution of misc. notices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish/circulate Call for Nominations for 2022 board election Publish election guide/rules Individually contact people recommended to let them know and to see if they have any questions <p>(Bylaws state that notification must happen at least 90 days before the Board meeting on May 23, 2022; this is 96 days before the meeting.)</p>	GC Chair (Becky), GC members
3/1/2022	Forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish Nomination & Questionnaire Forms Publish start of Nomination Period 	GC Chair (Becky)
4/8/2022 at 4:00 PM	Close of Nominations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circulate all timely forms to the GC 	GC Chair (Becky)
4/11/2022	Governance Committee Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine eligibility & candidate roster & notify Board & Nova Community of candidates & election details no later than 4/20/21; Approve Voters Guide and email to the eligible Nova voting community by the 20th along with voting information including to watch for a ballot link from Simply Voting (or other company). 	GC
4/25/2022	2022 Voting window opens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simply Voting (or other company) sends ballot links to all eligible voters 	TBD

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to include reminders in Nova News and other emails on voting and what to do if information is not received or lost 	
5/9/2022	Voting window closes at 4PM Governance Committee Meeting at 6:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare final report on election • Provide notification to Board and to all candidates (Voting period is 14 days long.)	GC
5/23/2022	May Board Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver election report to Board for approval • Publish approved results to entire community 	GC Chair (Becky)