

Executive Director's Report to the Board

Date of the Report: November 22, 2024

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Strategic Plan Updates

Goal 8: Provide classroom and extracurricular facilities which support our mission.

Objective 8.2: Nova Classical will leverage the findings of the facilities review to identify the scope and model for financing a potential facilities expansion

Strategy: Define the scope and design of an expansion project.

Stage: Completed

Update: The schematic design process, which determine the scope, feel, and general design characteristics of a potential expansion project, has been completed and was presented to the Board at a special meeting in November.

Goal 8: Provide classroom and extracurricular facilities which support our mission.

Objective 8.2: Nova Classical will leverage the findings of the facilities review to identify the scope and model for financing a potential facilities expansion

Strategy: Analyze methods for financing a projected of the defined scope and design and make a recommendation on the best financial option.

Stage: In Progress

Update: Cost estimates for the schematic design have been completed and shared with Piper Sandler, who provided general information on potential financing models for the proposed project. The Budget and Finance Committee has reviewed these models, and I am now working with Piper Sandler to refine the options further into a model the committee will feel confident recommending to the Board.

Goal 6: Identify and transform systems that contribute to inequities.

Objective 6.2: Nova Classical will take research-based action to create a more inclusive school community.

Strategy: Create a prioritized list of areas to address based on the findings of the Equity Audit.

State: Complete

Update: The advisory group has completed its review of the recommendations from the Equity Audit conducted during the 2023-2024 school year and has used them to create a prioritized list of focus areas. This list will be presented to the Board at an upcoming meeting.

Preview of Legislative Session

Election Results and Legislative Leadership

Following the recent election, we are gaining a clearer picture of the dynamics for this legislative session. After the first round of recounts, the Minnesota House is tied, resulting in split leadership. Melissa Hortmann (D) and Lisa Demuth (R) will share the speakership. Committees will also feature co-chairs from both parties, fostering a shared governance model. Meanwhile, the Senate remains under DFL control by a single seat.

Potential Special Election in the Senate

Senator Nicole Mitchell (D) is scheduled to go to trial in January. If the trial results in her removal, it could trigger a special election, potentially impacting the Senate's slim DFL majority.

State Budget and Surplus

Minnesota is projected to have a surplus this year, though the exact amount has not yet been determined. This being the first year of the legislative biennium, funding discussions will take center stage, with policy likely to become a greater focus in year two.

Governor's Priorities

Governor Walz's priorities are expected to remain consistent, focusing on education, healthcare, and infrastructure, traditionally the largest areas of expenditure in the state budget.

Charter School Advocacy: School Safety Aid

The Minnesota Association of Charter Schools (MACS) has identified school safety aid as its top legislative priority for this session. Last year, a bill proposing to extend safety aid to charter schools came close to passing. Currently, traditional public schools receive \$36 per pupil in safety aid, which is not allocated to charter schools. For Nova Classical Academy, this would amount to approximately \$37,500 in potential funding. These funds could support security upgrades, mental health services, cybersecurity enhancements, additional support staff like counselors, and more.

We will continue to monitor legislative developments and advocate for initiatives that directly benefit Nova Classical Academy and the broader charter school community.