

**Nova Classical Academy
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Regular Meeting
January 20, 2015**

Directors Present: Jason Belter, Ann Brodeur, Jeff Eller, Dan Greenfield, Claudia Gumbiner Hungs, Tonya Johnson-Nicholie, Roxane Lehmann, Annie Lewine, Paul Mason, Nan Waisanen, Laura Westrum

Directors Absent: none

Advisors Present: Bruce Watkins, Nancy Bauman, Mari Bergerson, John Larson, Gina Zelinka, Linda LaFrombois, Beth Hawley (NPTO representative), Ben Garcia (student)

Others in Attendance: Nova parents, staff, and students

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM. Dan Greenfield led the meeting.

Nan Waisanen arrived at 6:34 PM.

II. Working Meeting:

a. Report on Student Support Services at Nova

MDE was here last week as a part of a routine special education audit looking at facilities, services offered, and financing. MDE provided some suggestions on ways to improve special education at Nova. There were no findings given.

Mr. Larson provided an overview of current internal and external services available to students, both those receiving special education services and other students. RTI referrals will track with students from year to year. RTI teams are starting to see trends and patterns emerge which provides an opportunity to share global strategies with all staff members. Intervention and resource information will be placed on website and made available for parents.

b. Upper School Topics

Ms. Bergerson and Mr. Watkins gave an overview of efforts being taking at the upper school in order to create an environment that students can't get somewhere else. This would encourage students to stay at Nova and reduce the percent of students looking at PSEO.

College in the Schools: The Latin department is interviewing this week with the UofM. Once approved, staff would attend a week-long summer training. Class syllabi/proposals are submitted after the training. Students would have UofM classes listed on their transcript. One additional day of training would be held for CIS instructors during the 2015-2016 school year. The cost to Nova is \$100/student plus sub fees for staff. There may be an opportunity to expand into the science department as well. Mr. Belter is consulting with UofM.

Advance Placement: Dr. Whalen and Dr. McCarney will submit proposals to the College Board by 1/31. If proposals are accepted, Nova classes could receive AP label on transcripts as early as this year. Both have already been trained, so there would be no additional cost to Nova.

Weighted Courses: Ms. Bergerson wouldn't recommend weighting classes this year unless AP classes are approved. She would like to consult with Mr. Watkins to make a plan for what the weighting would look like. The hope is that it might motivate students and provide some measure of equalizing grades. The impact of weighted grades on college applications needs to be evaluated. Determining whether the number of high schools weighting grades is increasing or decreasing is also important.

Scheduling Options: There are three options currently being evaluated: 7 period day with some changes, 8 period day, combination of block and traditional periods. The goal is to provide more options for students while still fully supporting faculty in the delivery of the curriculum. Ms. Bergerson hopes to have a plan in place by the beginning of February to capitalize on the last module of Infinite Campus training.

Life/School Balance: Academic Excellence Committee has reviewed and tailored larger survey about homework to better fit the Nova community/research needs. The goal will be for every parent to fill out a survey for every student at Nova. There was discussion around how to encourage parent/student participation both in terms of communication and incentives.

Mr. Mason emphasized the importance of communicating with parents and students sooner than later about the changes being made at the upper school. Mr. Watkins will work with Ms. LaFrombois to create a coordinated effort.

III. Business Meeting: Approval of Agenda

Ms. Gumbiner Hungs moved to approve the agenda. Ms. Waisanen seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

V. Consent Agenda

- A. Regular Meeting Minutes from November 24, 2014
- B. Accept Gift Donations
- C. Approval of Computer Purchases

Approve purchase of computers not originally budgeted for in the 2014-2015 budget, Resolved that the Board of Education approves the purchase of computers, in the amount of \$49,975.59, as recommended by the Administration and the Finance and Budget Committee.

Mr. Belter moved to approve the consent agenda. Mr. Mason seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Treasurer/ Finance Update

Mr. Watkins along with the administrative team found a way to save \$27,000 by making adjustments to the second semester schedule. The budget is still tight due to lower enrollment than anticipated.

VII. Reports received by the Board.

a. Executive Director Search Committee

An overview of the search process and two candidates was presented. Both are highly qualified. The search committee would like to move forward quickly with hopes of having a special board meeting prior to February to approve a contract. Mr. Mason and others on the committee were thanked for their hard work.

b. Administration Report

Ms. LaFrombois presented information on student attrition and exit interviews. The number of exit interviews received this year has increased from 3 to 30. Already this year 82 students have withdrawn compared to 74 total last year. Only 4 of those were new to Nova. Current policy states that vacant seats won't be filled after the end of first semester. It may be wise to look at picking a date later in the school year. The application period for 2015-2016 school year closes 1/30. The lottery will be held the following week. In the past there were a number of 'boomerang students', those who left Nova in 9th and came back in 10th grade. Current Board policy prevents that at this time.

Mr. Watkins shared that the maximum membership fee for MACS this year is \$7,374/year. He recommends that the budget is built to include membership for 2015-16 school year.

A food service/hot lunch audit was completed. There will be a trial period of offering breakfast before determining if it will be provided longer term.

c. Board Chair Report

Those individuals interested in the new committees should email proposals to Mr. Greenberg by Monday, February 16.

d. Board Committees

i. Academic Excellence Report

The Academic Excellence Committee has prepared a survey that will soon be sent along to stakeholders. The goal of the committee is to make decisions based on data. At an upcoming meeting Ms. Lehmann hopes to have representatives from various metrics come to explain the merits of each.

ii. Finance and Budget Report

Nova Geek Squad has been established and is working to identify which laptops can be used going forward. A new system has been created to handle the new laptops going forward.

A preliminary budget and fund balance forecast will be presented at the February Finance/Budget meeting. The goal is to build in some additional funds for professional development once all operating expenses are covered. Before moving too far ahead in developing a 3 year forecast, Mr. Watkins suggested waiting until the close of the current legislative session which will provide information on the per pupil funds from the state.

iii. Governance Report

There was a 3rd reading of the Updated Bullying Prohibition Policy (#514)
There was a 2nd reading of the new Electronic Fund Transfer Policy (#704)
There was a 1st reading of revised Fundraising Policy (#703)

In December the governance committee began work on compiling resources for Board members. The fundraising policy was presented. There is still need to work out details of how it will function and a need to communicate this policy change to parents, club advisors, and other parties. Mr. Ellerd will continue to dialog with Governance committee about this policy.

e. Ad Hoc Committees

i. School Climate Committee

Playground: This sub-committee is working with the leadership team to make the playground safer, empower supervisors, and increase communication between monitors and teachers. They hope to have a plan complete by Feb.

Technology: This group is working to draft a technology policy to protect all parts of the Nova community. It may be ready for other committees to give input by Feb.

SSSA: Ms. Brodeur will work with Mr. Watkins to ensure compliance.

Teacher satisfaction/retention: Staff answered two questions on a survey. At the Feb meeting, a plan will be presented on how to move forward with areas of concern.

f. NPTO Report

NPTO is working with Mr. Larson and others to help make EA Appreciation week a success. An all-school roller-skating party is coming up in March. NPTO is also working to create a new web page and change spirit wear providers.

VIII. Board Updates/Action Items

a. Approval of Executive Director Selection

Mr. Ellerd “Resolved, that the Board of Directors accept the recommendation of Eric Williams as Nova’s Executive Director and to appoint Paul Mason to negotiate an employment agreement between Nova and Eric Williams, acting on the behalf of the school with a June 2015 start date, contingent on successful background and reference checks.” Ms. Waisanen seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Approval of Policy 514

Mr. Ellerd “Resolved, that the Board approve the revised Bullying Prevention Policy, number 514, effective immediately.” Mr. Belter seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

c. Approval of Enrollment Plan for 2015-2016

Mr. Ellerd “Resolved that the Board sets section sizes for the 2015-16 school year as follows:

K: 20 (4 sections)

1-8: 26 (3 sections)

9: up to 78 (3 sections)

10-12: No entries

Resolved further, that the Board authorizes the Executive Director to overenroll one student per section in grades 6-8 through the start of the 2015-16 school year.” Ms. Lewine seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

IX. Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items

The next regular Board meeting will be on Monday, February 23, 2015 beginning at 6:30 PM.

X. Adjournment

Mr. Ellerd moved to adjourn. Mr. Belter seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:13 PM.

Minutes submitted by Laura Westrum.