



Nova Classical Academy

“Defining our Future: 2023 - 2028”

Strategic Planning Committee Meeting #2
Thursday, November 10, 2022



Welcome

- **Introductions**
- **Meeting Resources:** *Review Materials*
- **Ground Rules:** *Open/Honest Communication; Respect; All Ideas Valued; Be Curious; Listen for Understanding; Have Fun!!!*
- **Housekeeping:** *Use the Chat Room or Unmute Microphone and Turn Camera on to Speak; Comfort Breaks as Needed*
- **Role:** *Advise in the Development of the next Strategic Plan; Required M.S. 120B.11 Subd. 2; Supports WBWF and ESSA Requirements*
- **Process:** *MSBA Facilitation; Listening Session; Three Strategic Planning Committee Meetings; Resources Provided*
- **Session Goals:** *Work on Elements of the Strategic Plan*



Introductions and Reactions to the Strategic Planning Process

Please introduce yourself and the group you represent (School of Logic 6th-8th Student, School of Rhetoric 9th-12th Student, Teacher/Staff, Parent / Guardian, and Alumni Member, Administrator, Board of Director, etc.) and:

- Share how you are feeling (excited, hopeful, anxious, etc.) or an observation, question, concern, or other reaction to the strategic planning process so far.**



Four things we want to accomplish:

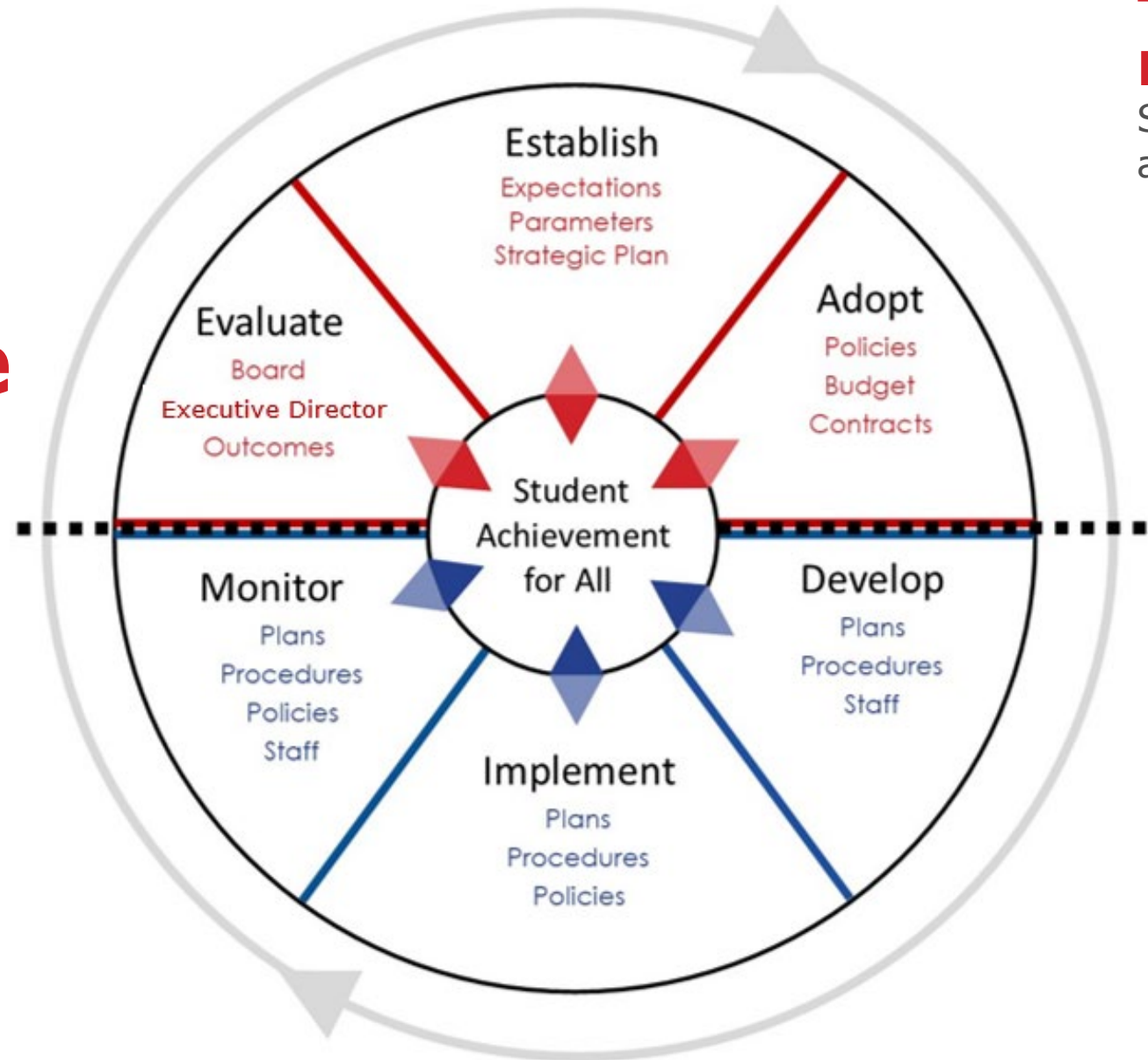
- **Review the Environmental Scan Summary of the Prouds/Possibilities/Must Haves-Must Address**
- **Consider Focus Areas**
- **Review / Develop Foundational Elements of Strategic Plan (Sets Purpose, Direction, Ground Rules):**
 - **Review the Core Values submitted**
 - **Create the Academy's Belief Statements**
 - **Review the Mission Statement**
- **Preview the next session**



The Academy's Board Governs

Sets parameters and expectations

The Board Governance Model



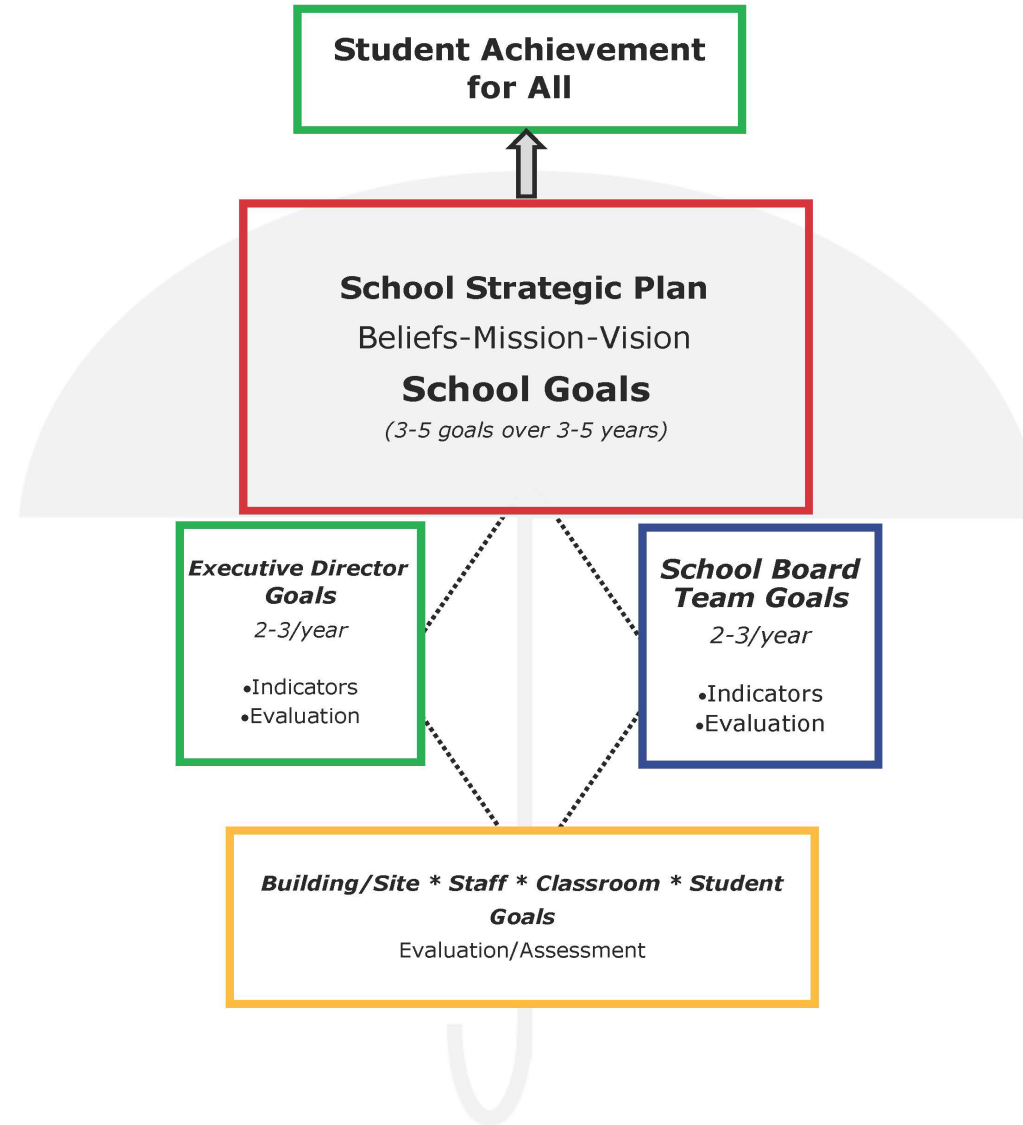
The Executive Director Manages

Provides leadership and supervision



Academy Goal Alignment

Strategic Governance Framework





Engagement Activities “Some Big Ideas” Strengths (from Surveys and Listening Sessions)

Teacher, Staff, Administrator, Board of Director (6)

School facilities are safe, secure, and well maintained.	94.67%
Policies, procedures, and resources are in place in regard to a safe, orderly, and caring environment that supports learning.	93.33%
The school does an excellent job of educating all students.	89.33%
The “climate” of the school building is conducive to teachers being able to teach and students being able to learn.	89.33%
The school uses student achievement data to inform and improve instruction.	86.67%
The school uses effective instructional programs, practices, and interventions to help all students.	85.14%

Student, Parent/Guardian, Alumni (6)

In general, I am satisfied with the quality of education provided by the school.	91.30%
School facilities are safe, secure, and well maintained.	90.87%
I am satisfied with the overall condition of the school's building.	89.70%
The school does an excellent job of educating all students.	87.26%
I am satisfied with the academic program of the school.	86.75%
In general, I am satisfied with the teachers of the school.	86.48%



Engagement Activities “Some Big Ideas” Strengths (from Surveys and Listening Sessions)

Staff Comments- Good teachers and staff; Fun activities-teacher; Staff-friendly; The teachers are good at learning; Smaller size-get to know teacher; Teachers and counselors helpful; The relationship the teachers have developed with their students and the way we as a school can get to know each other; Connection with teachers; Teacher support; Small class size to form a specific relationships with teachers; Smaller classes so better connection with teachers; Caring faculty; Staff feel heard and support one another; Strong colleagues who are content experts and trained in classical pedagogy make this school what it is; We do a nice job emphasizing to students why it is we do what we do in school; We have committed staff that seek to do what is best for their students; The special education department is doing a nice job of setting up professional development opportunities for members of the special education team; Collaboration with colleagues who are interested in collaborating is amazing; Teachers with strong content knowledge; Clear dedication of teachers especially during the pandemic; Teachers; Teachers care-they love my kids; Teacher support for tutoring and assistance; Teachers are great; Teachers, support staff, leadership know my children personally and address them when they attend to their social/emotional behavior; Quality of Teachers (2); Excellent teachers and support staff; The teachers are incredible, and I really appreciate that the leadership appears to take a growth mindset about the teachers and is happy to help teachers grow where they see the need; Supportive Educators; Attentive, Responsive Principals; Teacher availability; Teachers that are committed to the students; Staff involvement; Teaching strategies (memorize, analyze, synthesize); Support from other staff; Colleagues will help-like a family; Dedicated staff/teachers; Faculty Collaboration- facilitating teamwork across schools; Building relationships with teacher, student, and parent; Connected community of faculty, students, and families; Caring community across all groups: students and adults; Amazing students and staff!; Collaborative faculty community; Dedicated and skillful/knowledgeable faculty and staff; Good staff community; Staff passionate about student success; Solid staff; Consistent leadership team; Excellent classroom management and choreography of movement around the building to make for a smooth day for students and staff; Fantastic teaching; Dedicated and skillful teachers; Warm inviting classrooms and friendly faces that are students, staff, and faculty; Student-focused staff; Staff stay, not a high turnover; Intentions of staff well-aligned; Strong, caring relationships between teachers/students



Engagement Activities “Some Big Ideas”

Strengths (from Surveys and Listening Sessions)

– Continued

School of Logic 6th-8th Grade Students and School of Rhetoric 9th-12th Grade Students–

- Extracurriculars
- AB day-system is good
- Disciplined environment
- A comparatively peaceful student body environment where it's okay to be smart
- The core values of our school are good, and the grammar, logic, and rhetoric system works really well
- Discussion-based classes as well as lecture
- Nice to know people since elementary school

Teachers/Staff –

- Great students
- High standards for curriculum
- Staff feel heard and support one another
- Strong colleagues who are content experts and trained in classical pedagogy make this school what it is
- Most students care about their work and have home support
- We begin by seeing students as individuals and future citizens, where our mission was to nurture their whole selves through reason and discourse
- We have had an intentional curriculum that created value-added meaning as students moved through and across the curricular sequence
- We have culture that emphasizes the building of humanity for success outside of school
- Collaboration with colleagues who are interested in collaborating is amazing
- Teachers with strong content knowledge



Engagement Activities “Some Big Ideas”

Strengths (from Surveys and Listening Sessions)

– Continued

Parent / Guardian / Alumni –

- **Communication and taking feedback to action**
- **Love the school/rigor/focus on virtues**
- **Parent involvement opportunities**
- **Families are ready to support the school if we were given better opportunities**
- **Teachers, support staff, leadership know my children personally and address them when they attend to their social/emotional behavior**
- **Facility of school building is clean, nice, upkeep well**
- **K - 12 opportunity, public reputation, tuition-free, classical model**
- **High expectations for academics and behavior**
- **Teaching strategies (memorize, analyze, synthesize)**



Engagement Activities “Some Big Ideas”

Strengths (from Surveys and Listening Sessions)

– Continued

Board of Directors –

- **Character development in students**
- **Faculty Collaboration- facilitating teamwork across schools**
- **Value and virtue-based education and community-building model**
- **Building relationships with teacher, student, and parent**
- **Strong and interesting curriculum**
- **Connected community of faculty, students, and families**
- **Currently in a strong financial position**
- **Rigorous and engaging academics**
- **Accessible academics and extracurriculars**
- **Enthusiastic and interested stakeholders**



Engagement Activities “Some Big Ideas”

Strengths (from Surveys and Listening Sessions)

– Continued

Administration –

- **Great communication-always improving-fearless communication**
- **Strong parent-teacher organization**
- **Virtues and character are emphasized and tied to curriculum**
- **Excellent classroom management and choreography of movement around the building to make for a smooth day for students and staff**
- **Rich curriculum that connects the students with our shared world in so many ways**
- **Warm inviting classrooms and friendly faces that are students, staff, and faculty**
- **Small-school feel and ability to adapt to the needs of our students and families, especially through COVID**
- **Student-focused support – well-behaved student body**
- **Safe, welcoming, open for all**
- **Involved parent/community**
- **Increased diversity in student population**



Engagement Activities “Some Big Ideas” Opportunities (from Surveys and Listening Sessions)

Teacher, Staff, Administrator, Board of Director (7)

The school seeks input from all stakeholders on key decisions regarding school policies and practices.	60.00%
The school effectively manages available funding and resources needed to advance student learning and achievement.	60.00%
The entire school is committed to long-range, continuous improvement and has agreement on a shared purpose and direction for the school.	58.11%
The school works to build community support among a wide variety of groups.	54.67%
All school staff are equipped to address bias and exclusionary language or behavior when it occurs.	54.05%
The school has a process to ensure that the school board-adopted curriculum for a course or grade level is being taught by all teachers.	53.33%
The board of directors is visible and accessible throughout the school and school community.	44.59%

Student, Parent/Guardian, Alumni (5)

I am satisfied with the overall condition of the school's fine arts facilities.	57.69%
I am satisfied with the opportunities the school's co-curricular program provides for students.	56.53%
The school provides good opportunities in career and technical education.	49.36%
I am satisfied with the school's budget and use of funds.	46.28%
The school spends its funding effectively and efficiently.	42.98%



Engagement Activities “Some Big Ideas” Opportunities (from Surveys and Listening Sessions)

School of Logic 6th-8th Grade Students and School of Rhetoric 9th-12th Grade Students –

- Lunch – Some portions are too small
- Need longer time for lunch
- Expanding the grounds for more extracurriculars
- Study skills (study hall) get more homework in 8th grade and less time to work on it
- More clubs and extracurriculars and athletics and languages
- Recognition programs for good work versus rewarding bad behavior that has improved
- Efforts towards hiring people of color for Nova faculty/staff
- Hearing even more input from student voices for impactful decisions!
- Connecting with the community
- More electives
- Making rewards like merits easier to gain for everyone, not just those improving
- Increased real-world experience

Teachers/Staff –

- Address facilities for the long term
- Need time for teachers to collaborate
- Well thought out and intentional growth
- Build a library
- We have outgrown the space and didn't build a building that would foster school culture, the arts, or collaboration
- Admin might want to engage with students in a more authentic way
- A Classical School is supposed to be highly intentional; it seems we do a lot of things without clear intention
- Replacement of Merit/Demerit system
- Opportunity for upper-school students to design lessons for lower school students that are classically sound
- How to fulfill classical education pedagogy with larger class sizes and different student population
- Appropriate compensation commensurate to work required



Engagement Activities “Some Big Ideas”

Opportunities (from Surveys and Listening Sessions) – Continued

Parent / Guardian / Alumni –

- Under emphasis on whole person once in the upper school i.e., physical activity is less and academics is more
- Time needed for homework; Need to find a find balance
- What's the plan for the land - “The triangle”?
- Need an auditorium/big fundraisers
- Listen to students and graduates at why they leave Nova
- Overall security and safety
- Need more Advanced Placement for science students and financial courses
- More Post Secondary Education Options
- Typing class
- Reintroduce band and orchestra or give referral source
- College and career counseling for juniors and seniors
- Educate the whole child, not just the MCA test score
- Class sizes are growing beyond what Nova promised families
- Early lunch times - and widely different times between siblings
- Tight space, not enough room for kids to do more extracurricular activities that support academic performance
- Increasing the “joy” for the upper schoolers experience
- Increase in BIPOC teachers & staff
- Deliberate, measurable equity & inclusion efforts
- Communication consistently with upper schoolteachers. Some email, some use Google classroom, some add docs to Infinite Campus, some don’t use anything
- Continue emphasis on virtues in upper school
- Increase awareness of other ways of knowing through curriculum and classroom and lived experience
- More support for special needs or learning challenges
- Allow fundraising for specific areas (clubs, sports, etc.)



Engagement Activities “Some Big Ideas”

Opportunities (from Surveys and Listening Sessions)– Continued

Board of Directors –

- A better focus on priorities
- Better definition of who Nova is/wants to be
- Concern that class sizes are large/getting larger
- Not a wide array of extra-curricular opportunities
- Ethnicity of teachers/staff; They do not represent all students
- Holding true to the motto "not for school but for life"- incorporating that into programming, curriculum, and community building
- Better explanation for the need to rebrand and create a new tagline- know yourself know the world- what does that mean and how does it fit
- Go back to our roots of a smaller school- lower class sizes
- Communications- create a position that coordinates the communication efforts
- Alumni- create an alumni association that draws people back to nova and partner with our alums with the "for life" part of our motto
- Continue to do more long-range (5 year+) financial planning to support whatever goals we set
- Possibly growing our own administrators so we don't lose so much momentum when we lose a principal, Director of Curriculum, or Executive Director
- Some programming increases: band or instrument education, developing existing extracurriculars
- Leverage interest in equity issues to increase support for all our students
- Make careful decisions about "the triangle"
- Continue to get folks re-engaged post-Covid shutdown
- Continue to train, support, and retain faculty and staff
- Classrooms are overenrolled, limiting teacher's effectiveness
- Board and admin reluctant to take risks



Engagement Activities “Some Big Ideas”

Opportunities (from Surveys and Listening Sessions)

– Continued

Administration –

- Facilities design not conducive to programs
- Need more robust interventions
- Lack of cohesion between upper and lower school culture
- Community gathering spaces for upper school students and families
- Music program - bring back and improve access to the instrumental music program
- Utilize "the triangle" space to expand
- Define the School of Logic more as a bridge to our School of Rhetoric; carry over the virtue education that is done so well in the Lower School as a way to educate the whole person up to 12th grade
- Diversity of staff
- Addition of an additional principal for 6-8 or 9-12
- Facilities - need for flexible spaces, multi-purpose rooms
- Facilities - need for athletic, instrumental, and performing art space



Review Environmental Scan Summary:

Prouds -

- **Kindergarten-12 classical education**
- **Connected community**
- **Kids are learning and succeeding**
- **Interesting curriculum that teaches students how to learn beyond their time at Nova**
- **Financially stable**
- **High-quality academics**
- **Virtue-based education creates a common understanding for our school community**
- **Staff are deeply committed and collaborative**
- **Quality leaders**
- **High expectations**
- **High growth rates**
- **Students**
- **Faculty, staff, volunteers**
- **Culture: supportive, safe, innovative, small school with kindergarten-12**
- **Nice facilities**
- **Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments and other scores across all populations**
- **Relationships between faculty and families**
- **Virtues being taught and demonstrated**
- **Well-chosen teachers that contribute to a student's success**
- **Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments testing results are heavily over the state average**
- **The relationships between parents and teachers**
- **Extracurriculars competing at state levels**
- **Strong financial position where we can choose what we do instead of being forced to make changes to survive**
- **Postsecondary Enrollment Options program at the University of Minnesota seems to be easier than Nova after going through a rigorous curriculum. Very proud of my Nova Junior!**
- **Great teachers**
- **Education model**
- **Academic focus**
- **Invested stakeholders: teachers, students, families**
- **Proven success with classical pedagogy Extracurriculars that demonstrate value of curricular work (fine arts, robotics, forensics, green team)**



Review Environmental Scan Summary:

Prouds cont. -

- **Intentionality in all we do creates authentic instruction**
- **Fantastic teachers bring content to life**
- **Academic Achievement**
- **Coronavirus response**
- **Support of Struggling Students**
- **The way we integrate virtues into the curriculum**
- **The high-level work the students can get into as they get older**
- **"The University of Minnesota is easier than Nova"**
- **Administration got Gail/MSBA to lead this process**
- **Our students feel safe and welcome and are engaged in class**
- **Teachers know the students**
- **How we treat each other**
- **Amazing test scores**
- **Staff and administration step up to help students when needed**
- **Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments scores in the Lower School**
- **Students are polite to people outside the school**
- **Retention of our student population and the lower staff attrition**
- **Widening diversity**
- **Positive feedback on the survey regarding staff/teachers**
- **Quality of relationship between students, staff, and parents/community - partnering together**
- **Culture of learning, valuing intelligence**
- **I'm proud of the expertise the teachers possess in their particular fields and their ability to quickly adapt their lesson plans around what students are struggling with the most**
- **Growth**
- **Trivium & Spiral pedagogy**
- **Student retention growth**
- **It's cool to be smart**
- **Student community**
- **Virtue focus**
- **Family engagement**
- **Dedicated teachers**
- **Instructional excellence**
- **Stability through the pandemic**
- **Flexibility in response to the pandemic**
- **Teacher retention**



Review Environmental Scan Summary:

Possibilities -

- Rejuvenate who/what we are and keep it as the focus (rather than a wish list of things we want like a track or auditorium)
- There is a desire to focus on equity and inclusion. This is good energy to move forward imitative a to support our diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice
- Continue to refine communication strategies
- Empower student voices by making some small changes (don't limit bio breaks, lunch items)
- What are the class-sizes that pushing concern in the upper levels? Can those be addressed?
- Dedicate a middle school as a separate part from SOR
- Facility improvements and expansions
- Extracurricular improvements and expansions
- Student life (time to move, enough to eat, capacity to be heard and known in small classes)
- Communications director- could definitely benefit faculty, administration, staff, and families by hiring a person for this position
- Alumni Association- now that Nova is older and the alumni population is growing, let's keep them invested and involved in the school
- School interactions- grow relationships between scholars in School of Logic, School of Grammar, and School of Rhetoric; could easily be built into the curriculum
- Better communication between teachers and students is essential. Some teachers and students are great at this! Though, there are a few teachers who barely check their email, and a few students who are too afraid to talk to their teachers.
- Having more time to socialize with peers during lunchtime
- Having more time between each class
- Differentiating between the school culture and the academic culture. Just because there is structure and discipline in the classroom doesn't mean nonacademic times need to be strict
- More indoor spaces for clubs like FTC and FLL where they can leave everything assembled to come back anytime for programming
- More high-level coaches for some clubs like Mock Trial/debate. The Nova debate team last year was wonderful in their competition last year but got disqualified due to not knowing one of the basic rules
- Lengthened lunch period, larger lunch food portions, more spaces! (Storage, prayer/meditation, athletic, music), auditorium on triangle (Music, theater, assemblies)



Review Environmental Scan Summary:

Possibilities cont. -

- Outreach to community/field trips/enrichment
- More authentic approach to virtues in Upper School
- Graduated responsibility and trust as students move up the grades
- Meaningful assemblies where the school purpose and culture is reinforced by leadership (not just teachers and students)
- Places and time to break routine and reflect on progress, maybe in smaller (grade level) student groups if we can't meet as a School of Logic/School of Rhetoric cohorts
- Authentic celebrations of success--nothing gimmicky
- Reflect on the opportunity costs of our constant testing outside of curricular content (Fastbridge, DDI, Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments)--how do these help us and how have we changed practice based on this data?
- Adding more College in the Schools courses
- Creating teaching position that would address writing intervention and New to Nova students full-year onboarding
- More diversity on staff
- More planning for space (for students, for athletics, for music, etc.)
- Find a common space for people to gather
- Decrease class sizes
- Increase extracurriculars (especially music and theater)
- Keep thinking about how we can bring what we're doing to our students (versus changing to adapt to them)
- Find ways to make students joining in high school feel fully involved
- Very crowded
- Access and use of technology
- Student experience during the school day (lunch, classroom spaces, time for activity)
- Facilities - usage/expansion of spaces
- Building additional facilities on the triangle for classes and extracurriculars
- Communication/Community Building
- Clarifying classical pedagogy/curriculum
- Clarifying school culture
- Refine/reaffirm student success - emphasizing whole student successes
- Facility expansion - clarifying priorities
- Intentional tech standardization and/or exposure, instruction
- More time for Rhetoric students to engage one another maybe the outdoors
- Growth in music



Review Environmental Scan Summary:

Must Haves/Must Address -

- Continued high standards for all and ways to support everyone to achieve them
- A building/space that gives the needed space to achieve our goals and to continue to have a place for our community to gather
- Commitment to diversifying staff to reflect student population
- More mental health support (counseling)
- Need more building space. To be able to even explore a music program, class size, art facilities, theatre space.
- Make sure that all voices are part of these decisions
- Crowding / space in hallways and classrooms - as it pertains to enrollment and the school's capacity. If level of safety of facilities and structure of school is a "Proud" - the overcrowded hallways can quickly negate that with any emergency type of situation - especially if there is any level of panic
- The use of the "Triangle Space" - utilizing this with a possible multi-purpose structure – library / band / additional class space?
- The common theme that students have voiced, for a longer lunch / bit of time in the day for decompression
- Decide on if we want to be a "complete" school and offer a complete experience. If so, we have to grow facilities. Increase class space.
- Financial and support personnel stability
- Continued/increase academic excellence based on objective/agreed-upon metrics
- Progress towards increased ethnic/gender diversity of faculty and students
- Alignment of Board of Directors on all major decisions
- Improved communication between Board of Directors and entire Nova community
- Some student life topics above to address needs of all students to be able and ready to learn (not hungry)



Review Environmental Scan Summary:

Must Haves/Must Address cont.-

- **"The Triangle" and spaces issues**
- **Class sizes and enrollment- get them back to numbers that were publicized and a comfort level for teachers**
- **Extracurricular activities- music program, sports teams, drama; grow these as the demand requires**
- **A short snack/social break during the course of each day for students. This may promote the mental wellness of our students throughout the school day.**
- **Better lunch - variety/diversity in food, longer time to eat, bring back the microwave, bigger portions of food—one slice of pizza for a high schooler is not enough!**
- **Teachers should take into consideration that students usually receive homework from all classes. Some students choose not to be involved in extracurriculars due to the amount of homework. Others that choose to participate in extracurriculars cram homework into their busy schedule. There should be some limits on homework.**
- **Senior thesis is unnecessary. It is true that seniors learn and prepare for college by doing this. Although, seniors have to do a 20–25-page essay and presentation, while also being responsible to fill out their college applications, Advanced Placement tests, and on top of that—homework, extracurriculars, stress, and family responsibilities.**
- **Having more events for the students**
- **Focus on determining how to meet facility needs**
- **Connecting the culture of the lower school (virtues) with the upper school**
- **Keeping the alumni close to Nova. Having an annual alumni picnic or something. This could be very beneficial too.**
- **More indoor/outdoor spaces including a resourceful library**
- **More Advanced Placement classes in science and Math too since it's all interconnected. Most famous artists from history were great scientists too.**



Review Environmental Scan Summary:

Must Haves/Must Address cont.-

- **Additional funding opportunities to support programs**
- **Facilities: lunchroom, fine arts space, outdoor options**
- **Time and space during the day to foster the whole person, not just the academic mind--especially for those who cannot take part in extracurriculars.**
- **More resources allocated to English Language Learner since we have a growing population of English Learner students**
- **More reading and math intervention space**
- **A useful library**
- **Work on our English Language program to help them support the needs of our students coming in**
- **Spend money on quality coaches for extracurriculars**
- **Nova High School has been talking about the need for a prayer/meditation space where students can additionally take a short break to benefit their mental health without feeling pressured to talk to the counselors or leave school for that break**
- **SPACES for everything**
- **TIME to interact (students/ everyone) and collaborate (faculty)**
- **Time/space for older students to be independent in age-appropriate ways**
- **Auditorium**
- **Get alumni more involved (develop alumni programs/ alumni association)**
- **Equity and inclusion for the student body, including diversity of staff**
- **Competitive hiring**
- **Retention (student & staff)**
- **Increase the space and free time available to students during the school day**
- **FACILITIES consideration**
- **Grant writing & fundraising.**
- **MUSIC**
- **More differentiation in instruction/curriculum/access for all students**



Possible Focus Areas - Themes

Student Achievement –

- **World's Best Workforce (WBWF)**
- **Defining classical education and creating the "model" in Minnesota**
- **Continued high standards for all and ways to support everyone to achieve them**
- **Continued/increase academic excellence based on objective/agreed-upon metrics**
- **Progress towards increased ethnic/gender diversity of faculty and students**
- **More Advanced Placement classes in science and Math too since it's all interconnected. Most famous artists from history were great scientists too.**
- **Getting a competent Latin teacher for the lower school**
- **Time and space during the day to foster the whole person, not just the academic mind--especially for those who cannot take part in extracurriculars.**
- **More resources allocated to English Language Learner since we have a growing population of English Learner students**
- **More reading and math intervention space**
- **More differentiation in instruction/curriculum/access for all students**
- **School interactions- grow relationships between scholars in School of Logic, School of Grammar, and School of Rhetoric; could easily be built into the curriculum**
- **More authentic approach to virtues in Upper School**
- **Access and use of technology**
- **Clarifying classical pedagogy/curriculum**



Possible Focus Areas - Themes

Student Support –

- More mental health support (counseling)
- The common theme that students have voiced, for a longer lunch / bit of time in the day for decompression
- Some student life topics above to address needs of all students to be able and ready to learn (not hungry)
- Class sizes and enrollment- get them back to numbers that were publicized and a comfort level for teachers
- Extracurricular activities- music program, sports teams, drama; grow these as the demand requires
- A short snack/social break during the course of each day for students. This may promote the mental wellness of our students throughout the school day.
- Better lunch - variety/diversity in food, longer time to eat, bring back the microwave, bigger portions of food—one slice of pizza for a high schooler is not enough!
- Teachers should take into consideration that students usually receive homework from all classes. Some students choose not to be involved in extracurriculars due to the amount of homework. Others that choose to participate in extracurriculars cram homework into their busy schedule. There should be some limits on homework.
- Senior thesis is unnecessary. It is true that seniors learn and prepare for college by doing this. Although, seniors have to do a 20–25-page essay and presentation, while also being responsible to fill out their college applications, Advanced Placement tests, and on top of that—homework, extracurriculars, stress, and family responsibilities.
- Having more events for the students
- Connecting the culture of the lower school (virtues) with the upper school
- Work on our English Language program to help them support the needs of our students coming in
- Spend money on quality coaches for extracurriculars
- Nova High School has been talking about the need for a prayer/meditation space where students can additionally take a short break to benefit their mental health without feeling pressured to talk to the counselors or leave school for that break
- TIME to interact (students/ everyone) and collaborate (faculty)
- Time/space for older students to be independent in age-appropriate ways
- Equity and inclusion for the student body, including diversity of staff
- Retention (student & staff)
- Better communication between teachers and students is essential. Some teachers and students are great at this! Though, there are a few teachers who barely check their email, and a few students who are too afraid to talk to their teachers.
- Clarifying school culture



Possible Focus Areas - Themes

Staff Support –

- Commitment to diversifying staff to reflect student population
- Financial and support personnel stability
- Progress towards increased ethnic/gender diversity of faculty and students
- TIME to interact (students/ everyone) and collaborate (faculty)
- Equity and inclusion for the student body, including diversity of staff
- Competitive hiring
- Retention (student & staff)
- Clarifying school culture

Communication/Outreach –

- Defining classical education and creating the “model” in Minnesota
- Make sure that all voices are part of these decisions
- Alignment of Board of Directors on all major decisions
- Improved communication between Board of Directors and entire Nova community
- Keeping the alumni close to Nova. Having an annual alumni picnic or other gathering
- Get alumni more involved (develop alumni programs/ alumni association)
- Additional funding opportunities to support programs
- Grant writing and fundraising
- Communications Director- could definitely benefit faculty, administration, staff, and families by hiring a person for this position



Possible Focus Areas - Themes

Facilities –

- **More space**
- **A building/space that gives the needed space to achieve our goals and to continue to have a place for our community to gather**
- **Space to be able to even explore a music program, class size, art facilities, theatre space.**
- **Crowding / space in hallways and classrooms - as it pertains to enrollment and the school's capacity. If level of safety of facilities and structure of school is a "Proud" - the overcrowded hallways can quickly negate that with any emergency type of situation - especially if there is any level of panic**
- **The use of the "Triangle Space" - utilizing this with a possible multi-purpose structure – library / band / additional class space?**
- **Decide on if we want to be a "complete" school and offer a complete experience. If so, we have to grow facilities. Increase class space.**
- **SPACES for everything**
- **Auditorium**



Current Academy Initiatives:

(To be vetted by Administration for alignment in Strategic Plan)

1. Authorizer (Friends of Education) Goals

2. Communication Plan

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____



Mission Statement:

- **Defines the present state or purpose of the Academy.**
- **Answers these questions: What result and for whom? Why we exist?**
- **Is something that all should be able to articulate upon request.**
- **Is clear and easy to understand.**
- **Does the Mission Statement reflect the Academy's beliefs?**
- **The Mission Statement should not be "wimpy."**



Current Academy Promise and Mission:

The Promise of the Academy:

Nova Classical Academy is a leader in Minnesota's classical education, a rigorous and formal method of teaching thought and expression of the mind and heart, resulting in confident, compassionate and articulate graduates poised to engage as thoughtful global citizens.

(Our Promise is derived from our Mission.)

The Mission of the Academy:

In a supportive community and through a systematic, accelerated college-preparatory education in the classical tradition, Nova Classical Academy challenges its students to develop intellect, to attain the habits of learning and mastery, and to live a virtuous life of duty and ideals.



Identifying Core Values

Surveys for the Teachers, Staff, Administrators, Board of Directors, and Students, Parents/Guardians, Alumni provided an opportunity to list up to three values you hold for your school.

Values might include: honesty, integrity, caring relationships, small class sizes, social responsibility, environmental responsibility, excellent education, diverse perspectives, community partnerships, etc.

State the values the group holds for the school district.



Teachers, Staff, Administrators, and Board of Directors Values:

Values Submitted

Education (excellent, good, high standards, meaningful, rigorous)	23
Caring / caring relationships	19
Small class size(s)	19
Integrity	14
Inclusion / inclusive / inclusivity / equity / equality	13
Diverse perspective	11
Classical education	9
Responsibility (social, environmental)	7
Academics (accessible, support, excellent)	6
Opportunities (extracurricular, curricular, equitable)	5
Community (partnerships, of learners, building)	4
Diversity	4
Respect / respectful	4
Virtues	4
Honest / honesty	3



Students, Parents/Guardians, and Alumni Values:

Values Submitted

Education (excellent, good)	202
Small class size(s)	102
Responsibility (social, environmental)	82
Integrity	68
Caring / caring relationships	63
Honest / honesty	58
Community (safe, strong, supportive, partnerships, caring)	47
Diverse perspective	42
Inclusion / inclusive / inclusivity / equity / equality	31
Teachers (excellent, good, polite, caring, quality)	19
Academics (excellence, high standard, rigor)	18
Diversity	18
Opportunities (extracurricular, diverse, scholarship)	16
Safe / safety (environment, classroom)	14
Respect / respectful	13
Virtues	13
Classical (education, mission, curriculum)	12
Extracurriculars (good, more)	12
Fair / fairness	8
Mental health	7
Kindness	6
Transparency	6
Accountability	5
College prep	5
Critical thinking	5



Values:

Teachers, Staff, Administrators, and Board of Directors Values Submitted

Academics (accessible, support, excellent)	6
Caring / caring relationships	19
Classical education	9
Community (partnerships, of learners, building)	4
Diverse perspective	11
Diversity	4
Education (excellent, good, high standards, meaningful, rigorous)	23
Honest / honesty	3
Inclusion / inclusive / inclusivity / equity / equality	13
Integrity	14
Opportunities (extracurricular, curricular, equitable)	5
Respect / respectful	4
Responsibility (social, environmental)	7
Small class size(s)	19
Virtues	4

Students, Parents/Guardians, and Alumni Values Submitted

Academics (excellence, high standard, rigor)	18
Accountability	5
Caring / caring relationships	63
Classical (education, mission, curriculum)	12
College prep	5
Community (safe, strong, supportive, partnerships, caring)	47
Critical thinking	5
Diverse perspective	42
Diversity	18
Education (excellent, good)	202
Extracurriculars (good, more)	12
Fair / fairness	8
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Responsibility (social, environmental)	82
Safe / safety (environment, classroom)	14
Small class size(s)	102
Teachers (excellent, good, polite, caring, quality)	19
Transparency	6
Virtues	13



Nova Classical Academy Core Values

List the Core Values that should be reflected in the Belief Statements:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.



Belief Statements:

- **Reflect the values the group holds for the Academy. Sometimes called Value Statements.**
- **Communicate who the Academy stands for and on what principles it operates.**
- **Reflect all students/learners from birth - end of life.**
- **Establish the moral and ethical priorities that guide the Academy's activities.**
- **Should be sincere and uncompromising positions.**
- **Reflect and flow from the values.**
- **Usually 4 – 8 Belief Statements**



Belief Statements:

- ❖ **The Academy's Board will use Belief Statements to help make difficult decisions such as funding or staffing.**
- ❖ **If Belief Statements truly reflect the Academy's values all members of the Academy's community will be able to articulate and advocate for them and will be able to say, "This is what we believe!"**
- ❖ **The Belief Statements should be something that "grabs" your attention.**
- ❖ **The Belief Statements should be a statement of core things you believe in.**



Examples:

We believe:

- **Every person has intrinsic value.**
- **All people deserve to be treated with respect.**
- **All learners have unlimited potential to learn.**
- **Honesty and trust are critical for building community.**
- **Accountability is achieved through shared, evidence-based and student-centered decision making.**
- **Responsiveness to the diverse needs of all learners is our highest priority.**



Current Academy Beliefs:

We believe:

Do not have Belief Statements

**Board approved Belief Statements in
Communication Plan for consideration:**

- ***Classical education benefits individuals and communities.***
- ***Flexibility is needed to adapt to an ever-changing learning and operational environment.***



Writing the Academy Belief Statements

- **Individually, think about what's important.**
 - **What do we value?**
 - **What do we believe about students/learners and learning?**
 - **What do we believe about teachers and teaching?**
 - **What do we believe about the role of parents/guardians in students' learning?**
 - **What do we believe about the role of the community?**
- **Refer to the Values identified / Write four Values.**
- **Review existing Character/Value/Ethics Statements, if available.**
- **Write four Belief Statements. (Reference the Sample Sheet or Google ideas.)**
- **Share with the group.**
- **Agree on four to six Belief Statements and type them into the Form Link.**



Reaching Consensus: Academy's Belief Statements:

-
-
-
-
-
-



Next Steps

- **Finalize “Belief Statements.”**
- **Review goals and objectives for each “Focus Area.”**
- **Finalize Governance Document.**
- **MSBA completes “Administrative Action Plan” and Academy’s Board “Strategic Plan Monitoring Schedule.”**
- **Complete Homework Assignment for Strategic Planning Committee Meeting #3 on **Monday, November 28 at 5:00 PM**. A Meeting Invitation and Resources will be emailed to you.**



Final Thought.....

**Vision without action is a dream;
Action without a vision is aimless.**

**A vision without a plan is just a dream;
A plan without a vision is just a 'to do' list.**

But a vision with an action plan can change the world.



**Thank You
for Your Time
and Input!!**