

**NOVA ACADEMY**

Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes – March 4, 2021, 6:00 PM

Meeting Conducted via Teleconference

**CALL MEETING TO ORDER: 6:00 PM**

Board Chairman, Dr. Sanford Otsuji, called the meeting to order.

**Members Present:**

Dr. Sanford Otsuji, Chairman

Dr. Susan Garrett, Co-Chair

Norm Lester, Secretary

Karen Lester, Treasurer

Rick Weir, Member

Olga Duarte, Member

**Members Not Present**

None

**Staff Present**

Renee Lancaster, Chief Executive Officer/Founder

John Bowen, Director of Human Resources & Operations

Alicia Lewis, Business Services Manager

Regina Flores-Dunda, Principal, NOVA Academy-Santa Ana

Lisa Hernandez, Principal, NOVA Academy-Coachella

Trevor Garrett, Proposal Coordinator/Data Impact Analyst

Angie Dillon, Executive Assistant

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

None

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

None

Dr. Susan Garrett, Board Co-Chair, motioned to remove the COVID-19 Employee Vaccination Policy, item #10, from the agenda. Norm Lester, Board Secretary, seconded the motion.

**Motion:** Dr. Susan Garrett

**Second:** Norm Lester

<b>Vote</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
S. Otsuji	X		
S. Garrett	X		
N. Lester	X		
K. Lester	X		

R. Weir	X		
O. Duarte	X		

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

The Consent Calendar contained the following matters:

- Minutes from the 1-21-2021 Regular Board Meeting
- Minutes from the 1-28-2021 Special Board Meeting
- Smoke-Free Environment Policy
- Student Wellness Policy (Federal Nutrition Program)
- Facilities Use Fee Schedule

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to approve the Consent Calendar containing the Minutes from the January 21, 2021, Regular Board Meeting, the Minutes from the January 28, 2021, Special Board Meeting, the Smoke-Free Environment Policy, the Student Wellness Policy (Federal Nutrition Program), and the Facilities Use Fee Schedule. Norm Lester seconded the motion.

**Motion:** Dr. Susan Garrett                      **Second:** Norm Lester

<b>Vote</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
S. Otsuji	X		
S. Garrett	X		
N. Lester	X		
K. Lester	X		
R. Weir	X		
O. Duarte	X		

**2019-2020 SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT CARD (SARC)**

Lisa Hernandez, Principal of NOVA Academy-Coachella, and Regina Flores-Dunda, Principal of NOVA Academy-Santa Ana, presented the 2019-2020 School Accountability Report Card (SARC) for their campuses. The SARC is a public report for the community and stakeholders that indicates the school’s accomplishments over the year and demographics, school climate, class sizes, inventory of textbooks and novels, facility ratings, fiscal expenditures, and teacher and staff information. It is published on the school website and the California Department of Education (CDE) website. Ms. Hernandez and Ms. Flores-Dunda pointed out that the SARCs do not have standardized testing data for 2019-2020 as there was no testing in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Board Members reviewed the SARC reports for Santa and Coachella, and they praised Lisa Hernandez and Regina Flores-Dunda for their hard work.

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to approve the 2019-2020 School Accountability Report Card (SARC) for NOVA Academy-Coachella. Karen Lester, Board Treasurer, seconded the motion.

**Motion:** Dr. Susan Garrett                      **Second:** Karen Lester

<b>Vote</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
S. Otsuji	X		

S. Garrett	X		
N. Lester	X		
K. Lester	X		
R. Weir	X		
O. Duarte	X		

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to approve the 2019-2020 School Accountability Report Card (SARC) for NOVA Academy-Santa Ana. Norm Lester seconded the motion.

**Motion:** Dr. Susan Garrett                      **Second:** Norm Lester

<b>Vote</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
S. Otsuji	X		
S. Garrett	X		
N. Lester	X		
K. Lester	X		
R. Weir	X		
O. Duarte	X		

**COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN**

For Board ratification, Regina Dunda-Flores presented Santa Ana’s Comprehensive School Safety Plan. She said there are updates in safety procedures, such as the updated reunification point at the Santa Ana Senior Center. There are added policies, such as the COVID-19 Infection Control Plan, Health & Safety Policy, and the Professional Boundaries Policy. Board Members reviewed the safety plan for the Santa Ana campus, and they agreed it is comprehensive. They asked how students and staff are educated about safety. Ms. Flores-Dunda said safety messages are provided at multiple opportunities throughout the school year, such as during assemblies and safety drills. Administrators regularly train staff on emergency procedures and provide reminders for students.

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to ratify the Comprehensive School Safety Plan for NOVA Academy-Santa Ana. Rick Weir, Board Member, seconded the motion.

**Motion:** Dr. Susan Garrett                      **Second:** Rick Weir

<b>Vote</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
S. Otsuji	X		
S. Garrett	X		
N. Lester	X		
K. Lester	X		
R. Weir	X		
O. Duarte	X		

Lisa Hernandez presented the Comprehensive School Safety Plan for the Coachella campus. She said she and Regina Flores-Dunda collaborated in developing their plans, and Ms. Flores-Dunda was a great help. For Coachella, there were updates for new and revised Board policies, such as the COVID-19

Infection Control Plan, Health & Safety Policy, and Professional Boundaries Board Policy. Ms. Hernandez said they have a safety committee that comes together to provide input, such as on emergency drills and COVID-19 protocols for when students will return to campus for hybrid instruction.

Board Members agreed on the value of the campuses working together as a team, and they appreciated the Principals’ concerns for school safety.

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to ratify the Comprehensive School Safety Plan for NOVA Academy-Coachella. Rick Weir, Board Member, seconded the motion.

**Motion:** Dr. Susan Garrett                      **Second:** Rick Weir

<b>Vote</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
S. Otsuji	X		
S. Garrett	X		
N. Lester	X		
K. Lester	X		
R. Weir	X		
O. Duarte	X		

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to move the Revised COVID-19 Prevention Program (CPP), item #11 on the agenda, to item #7. Norm Lester seconded the motion.

**Motion:** Dr. Susan Garrett                      **Second:** Norm Lester

<b>Vote</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
S. Otsuji	X		
S. Garrett	X		
N. Lester	X		
K. Lester	X		
R. Weir	X		
O. Duarte	X		

**REVISED COVID-19 PREVENTION PROGRAM (CPP)**

Trevor Garrett, Proposal Coordinator/Data Impact Analyst, presented the Revised COVID-19 (CPP) for the Coachella and Santa Ana campuses. The document has minor updates to the language, per current Cal/OSHA regulations and California Department of Public Health guidelines. A significant change is the number of days employees with COVID-19 exposure shall be excluded from the NOVA Academy campus, which was increased from ten to fourteen days. Board Members commended Trevor Garrett for his hard work in updating the CPP.

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to approve the Revised COVID-19 Prevention Program (CPP) for NOVA Academy-Santa Ana. Norm Lester seconded the motion.

**Motion:** Dr. Susan Garrett                      **Second:** Norm Lester

<b>Vote</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
S. Otsuji	X		
S. Garrett	X		
N. Lester	X		
K. Lester	X		
R. Weir	X		
O. Duarte	X		

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to approve the Revised COVID-19 Prevention Program (CPP) for NOVA Academy-Coachella. Rick Weir seconded the motion.

**Motion:** Dr. Susan Garrett                      **Second:** Rick Weir

<b>Vote</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
S. Otsuji	X		
S. Garrett	X		
N. Lester	X		
K. Lester	X		
R. Weir	X		
O. Duarte	X		

Dr. Susan Garret motioned to move the Executive Report, item #12 on the agenda, to #8. Norm Lester seconded the motion.

**Motion:** Dr. Susan Garrett                      **Second:** Norm Lester

<b>Vote</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
S. Otsuji	X		
S. Garrett	X		
N. Lester	X		
K. Lester	X		
R. Weir	X		
O. Duarte	X		

**EXECUTIVE REPORT**

Renee Lancaster, Chief Executive Officer, presented updates for the Santa Ana and Coachella campuses. She said there has been a great deal of navigation this school year in compliance with new COVID-19 health and safety laws, and she is grateful for the teachers and staff members’ hard work. The teachers are trying hard to keep students engaged, as shown in recent survey results from students. Senior Exit Interviews is coming up, with the Santa Ana campus having its event on May 7

and the Coachella campus on May 21. The Coachella campus will have its graduation ceremony on June 9, while Santa Ana will have graduation on June 10. Renee Lancaster reported on the Standard & Poor’s annual review. They gave NOVA Academy a stable outlook, with the school having positive operations, stable leadership, and solid academic results. Ms. Lancaster said she is pleased with the annual review, and she is thankful for the stable rating. She shared that the NOVA Academy Children’s Foundation is getting more and more connections in the professional realm, and recently, the organization received a large donation. The Foundation will help fund graduation, Senior Exit Interviews, and a capital campaign in Fall 2021.

Renee Lancaster was excited to announce that the Santa Ana campus will return to hybrid instruction on March 22. The Coachella campus will continue to provide instruction online and in cohorts. As soon as they can, the Coachella campus will open for hybrid instruction for the first time this school year.

Board Members expressed appreciation towards Renee Lancaster, the Principals, and the rest of the team. They agreed that running the school during the pandemic is a lot of work, especially with the amount of compliance and regulations this school year.

**CLOSED SESSION**

Conference with Legal Counsel, Anticipated Litigation (§ 54956.9)

Initiation of litigation pursuant to paragraph (4) of subdivision (d) of Section 54956.9: 1 potential case

**RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION**

There was no action taken.

**SECOND INTERIM MULTI-YEAR BUDGET AND FINANCIAL UPDATE**

Geetha Huma, Director of Client Finance at Charter Impact, presented the Second Interim Multi-Year Budget and a January Financial Update for the Santa Ana campus. The average ADA is 339, and the attendance rate is 91.8%. There is no revenue impact, as ADA and attendance are tracked for student engagement. The pre-pandemic ADA of 386.73 is held harmless. Forecasted revenue includes COVID relief funding, nutrition revenue, and Title IV revenue. There was an increase in operations expenses and books and supplies, such as math and science textbooks. There was an increase in payroll expenses for a one-time pay increase subject to performance and retention. Deferrals in state funding are starting in March for a portion of the February-June LCFF payments. Payments will be made in segments through November 21, 2021. Overall, there are no cash flow concerns, and the school is in good shape. There is no need for deferral financing. The school will meet the Bond covenant.

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to approve the Second Interim Multi-Year Budget for NOVA Academy-Santa Ana. Karen Lester seconded the motion.

**Motion:** Dr. Susan Garrett

**Second:** Karen Lester

<b>Vote</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
S. Otsuji	X		

S. Garrett	X		
N. Lester	X		
K. Lester	X		
R. Weir	X		
O. Duarte	X		

Geetha Huma presented the Second Interim Multi-Year Budget and a January Financial Update for the Coachella campus. She said the current ADA is 228, which is higher than the pre-pandemic ADA of 215.29, and the attendance rate is 95.3%. Forecasted revenue includes COVID relief funding, nutrition revenue, and Title IV revenue. There was an increase in books and supplies expenses related to new science standard textbooks. There was an increase in payroll expenses due to a one-time pay increase subject to performance and retention. There are no cash flow concerns or financing needs during the deferral period.

Geetha Huma presented the Consolidated Applications (ConApp) for the Santa Ana and Coachella campuses. The ConApp is a winter submission report for federal funding. It shows the amount spent and the unspent amount carried over. There were no questions from the Board.

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to approve the Second Interim Multi-Year Budget for NOVA Academy-Santa Ana. Norm Lester seconded the motion.

**Motion:** Dr. Susan Garrett                      **Second:** Norm Lester

<b>Vote</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
S. Otsuji	X		
S. Garrett	X		
N. Lester	X		
K. Lester	X		
R. Weir	X		
O. Duarte	X		

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to approve the Consolidated Application (ConApp) for NOVA Academy-Coachella. Norm Lester seconded the motion.

**Motion:** Dr. Susan Garrett                      **Second:** Norm Lester

<b>Vote</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
S. Otsuji	X		
S. Garrett	X		
N. Lester	X		
K. Lester	X		
R. Weir	X		
O. Duarte	X		

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to approve the Consolidated Application (ConApp) for NOVA Academy Santa Ana. Norm Lester seconded the motion.

Motion: Dr. Susan Garrett                      Second: Norm Lester

Vote	Yes	No	Abstain
S. Otsuji	X		
S. Garrett	X		
N. Lester	X		
K. Lester	X		
R. Weir	X		
O. Duarte	X		

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 PM.



Norm Lester

3-4-2021