

**NOVA ACADEMY**

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes – March 5, 2020, 6:00 PM

500 W Santa Ana Blvd, Santa Ana, CA 92701

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

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

**Members Present:**

Dr. Sanford Otsuji, Chairman

Karen Lester, Treasurer

Rick Weir, Member

Olga Duarte, Member

**Members Not Present**

Dr. Susan Garrett, Co-Chair

Gloria Grana, Member

**Staff Present**

Renee Lancaster, Chief Executive Officer/Founder

Mark Cruickshank, Assistant Principal

Angie Dillon, Executive Assistant

**Members Present via Conference Line:**

Norm Lester, Secretary

**Staff Present via Conference Line:**

Lisa Hernandez, Principal

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

None

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

None

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

The Consent Calendar contained the following matters:

- Minutes from the 1-23-2020 Board Meeting
- NOVA Academy-Coachella Field Trip to Knott's Berry Farm in Buena Park for Physics Day
- NOVA Academy-Santa Ana Field Trip to CSULB in Long Beach

Motion to approve the Minutes from the January 23, 2020 Board Meeting, the Coachella Field Trip to Knott's Berry Farm for Physics Day, and the Santa Ana Field Trip to CSULB.

**Motion:** Karen Lester

**Second:** Rick Weir

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

**COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN**

Lisa Hernandez, Principal of the Coachella campus, presented the Comprehensive School Safety Plan for Coachella. The plan includes updated Board policies on health and safety and emergency procedures in the event of a fire, earthquake, or lockdown. Ms. Hernandez also noted that staff members receive much of this information annually in their staff notebooks given at summer Professional Development.

Lisa Hernandez said she would need to consult with the Riverside County Sherriff's department for feedback. It is now a state requirement that schools consult with local agencies in developing their Comprehensive School Safety Plan. So far, Ms. Hernandez has met with the local fire department.

The Coachella campus has a safety team that meets twice per year. They meet in the fall and late spring to reevaluate their safety procedures for the current school year and the following year.

The school has regular earthquake/fire emergency drills. The campus is scheduled to have a lockdown drill on March 10.

Renee Lancaster, Chief Executive Officer, added that teachers received Active Shooter training. Staff will receive another training at the next summer Professional Development meeting in the summer.

Dr. Sanford Otsuji said the Board could vote to approve the safety plan, but there must be a condition that the local police agency approves the plan by a specified date.

Motion to approve the Comprehensive School Safety Plan for NOVA Academy-Coachella with a deadline of April 1, 2020, for approval from the local police department.

**Motion:** Rick Weir

**Second:** Olga Duarte

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

Mark Cruickshank, Assistant Principal of the Santa Ana campus, presented the Comprehensive School Safety Plan for Santa Ana. As with Coachella, the plan includes Board policies regarding health and safety and campus emergency procedures for a fire, earthquake, or lockdown. Mr. Cruickshank said the Santa Ana campus has a unique challenge in that there will be a trolley in front of the school. He is developing a second evacuation route where staff will evacuate to the park at the Santa Ana Senior Center on 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. Mr. Cruickshank is working on gaining official approval from the city on the alternate evacuation plan. So far, he received a verbal affirmation.

Dr. Susan Garrett, Board Co-Chair, arrived at the Board Meeting at 6:14 PM via the conference line.

Mark Cruickshank said he is working on getting blinds installed in the classrooms in the event of an Active Shooter situation. He said the campus has regular emergency drills, and he alerts the local fire department in advance.

The Santa Ana campus has a safety committee that meets once per month. Mr. Cruickshank and the safety committee review the emergency procedures annually. Twice a year, Mark Cruickshank sends out a Google shared file to staff with information on upcoming drills and training at Professional Development. The teachers go over the information with students before each emergency drill.

Mr. Cruickshank said the Deputy Chief of Police of the Santa Ana Police Department reviewed and approved the Comprehensive School Safety Plan.

Rick Weir, Board Member, asked Mark Cruickshank for clarification on “localized emergencies.” Mr. Cruickshank said the school has PE classes at Angels Community Park; they have a plan for what to do if there is an Active Shooter situation there. Staff always carry walkie-talkies when they take students to the park.

Motion to approve the Comprehensive School Safety Plan for NOVA Academy-Santa Ana.

**Motion:** Karen Lester

**Second:** Olga Duarte

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

**CLOSED SESSION**

Conference with Real Property Negotiators (§ 54956.8)

Property: 52780 Frederick Street, Coachella, CA 92236

Agency Negotiator: John Von Helms

Negotiating Parties: NOVA Academy, Olive Crest

Under Negotiation: Lease

**RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION**

Dr. Sanford Otsuji reported that there was no action.

Norm Lester, Board Secretary, and Dr. Susan Garrett left the meeting via the conference line at 7:00 PM.

**UPDATED DECEMBER FINANCIAL UPDATE**

Geetha Huma, Director of Client Finance at Charter Impact, corrected the December Financial Update Board packets presented at the January 23, 2020 Board Meeting. She clarified that committed funds for capital improvements should have been \$300K for Coachella and \$40K for Santa Ana. There was no discussion.

**SECOND INTERIM MULTI-YEAR BUDGET**

For NOVA Academy-Coachella, Geetha Huma presented a Financial Update and the Second Interim Multi-Year Budget. ADA is at 216.75, which is higher than the forecast of 211. Attendance is 95.5%, which is significantly higher than budgeted. There is an increase in expenses due to the One-Time Off-Schedule Salary Increase. Expenses for field trips increased. There were savings in books and supplies for the year. Overall, there are no cash concerns; the school is in good financial shape.

Motion to approve the Second Interim Multi-Year Budget for NOVA Academy-Coachella.

**Motion:** Rick Weir

**Second:** Karen Lester

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

For NOVA Academy-Santa Ana, Geetha Huma presented a Financial Update and the Second Interim Multi-Year Budget. She said attendance is at 95.3%. There was an overall revenue increase in comparison to last month. Santa Ana will continue to meet the bond ratio requirement. The budget surplus needed for the bond is almost double the minimum without the SAUSD encroachment.

Motion to approve the Second Interim Multi-Year Budget for NOVA Academy-Santa.

**Motion:** Karen Lester

**Second:** Olga Duarte

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



construction of a PE/Fitness zone. Additionally, she would like to establish a fund balance reserve of 3% of reserves for economic uncertainties.

Motion to establish a fund balance reserve of \$300K for committed funds and a fund balance reserve of 3% of reserves for economic uncertainties for Santa Ana.

**Motion:** Rick Weir

**Second:** Karen Lester

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

**ONE-TIME OFF-SCHEDULE SALARY INCREASE FOR INCREASED SCORES ON THE CALIFORNIA SCHOOL DASHBOARD**

Renee Lancaster and Karen Lester presented an update to the One-Time Off-Schedule Salary Increase for Coachella that the Board approved at the January 23, 2020 Board Meeting. The total possible pay increase is 9% (up from 7%) if the Coachella campus meets all conditions. In Math, Coachella is currently in the Green category on the California School Dashboard. If there is an increase to Blue, teachers will receive a 3% salary increase. If they maintain at Green, teachers will receive a 2% increase. However, scores still have to go up. In English Language Arts (ELA), Coachella is currently in the Blue category. If they remain at Blue, staff will receive a 2% pay increase, but they must have an increase in scores by at least three points. If the indicator decreases to Green, they will receive a 1.5% pay increase. For College Career Indicator, if there is an increase to Blue, staff will receive a 1.5% salary increase. They will receive a 1% increase if they stay at Green. For Suspension, the current level is Orange. If they increase to Green, staff will receive a 1% pay increase. For Graduation Rate, they are currently at Blue. Staff will receive a 1.5% pay increase if they maintain at Blue.

Motion to approve the One-Time Off-Schedule Salary Increase for Increased Scores on the California School Dashboard for NOVA Academy-Coachella.

**Motion:** Olga Duarte

**Second:** Karen Lester

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

**2020-2021 SCHOOL INSTRUCTIONAL CALENDAR**

Renee Lancaster met with staff leadership to discuss the 2020-2021 school calendar for Santa Ana and Coachella. The calendar will be identical to the current school year. The first day of school will be on a Wednesday in the same week in August. The last day of school will be on May 27, which is consistent with school districts. There will be three dedicated days for Professional Development.

Motion to approve the 2020-2021 School Instructional Calendar for the Coachella campus.

**Motion:** Rick Weir

**Second:** Olga Duarte

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

Motion to approve the 2020-2021 School Instructional Calendar for the Santa Ana campus.

**Motion:** Karen Lester

**Second:** Olga Duarte

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

### **DONATION TO NOVA ACADEMY-SANTA ANA**

For Board approval, Renee Lancaster presented the donation to NOVA Academy-Santa Ana from Doug Hodge and Kylie Schuyler. Their contribution consisted of prizes for Santa Ana's Food Truck Fiesta Opportunity Drawing.

Motion to approve the Donation to Santa Ana from Doug Hodge and Kylie Schuyler.

**Motion:** Karen Lester

**Second:** Rick Weir

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

### **EXECUTIVE REPORT**

Renee Lancaster shared that both campuses are taking cautionary actions in response to the Coronavirus. The school sent Loop messages to parents and posted messages on NOVA Academy's social media. Ms. Lancaster will meet with staff at both campuses to discuss health and safety procedures, such as handwashing. She plans to work with teachers on how to talk to students about the virus.

Renee Lancaster said there are health prevention signs posted around the building. The school purchased Clorox wipes and sanitizer for both campuses. Renee Lancaster is reviewing government sites throughout the day for updates. Currently, she is looking at alternative methods for education,

such as independent study and online learning. The aim is to be prepared in case the day comes when schools will close.

The Santa Ana campus will host Parent University next week as scheduled.

Board Members agreed it is fortunate that NOVA Academy is getting ahead of the curve when we do not know what is going to happen. If needed, the school can call an Emergency Board Meeting.

Renee Lancaster went on to report that Santa Ana's enrollment is at 410. The Santa Ana campus has a new Family Engagement Coordinator. This person recently met with Board Member Olga Duarte to discuss family engagement with parents. Ms. Lancaster informed the Board that Senate Bill 328 is a new law that will go into effect on July 1, 2022. The bill will mandate that all California high schools have a start time of 8:30 AM. She expects that working parents will still drop off their children early despite the later start time. Ms. Lancaster plans to adjust the bell schedule to work up to an 8:30 AM start time gradually.

For the Santa Ana campus, Renee Lancaster plans to increase time in Family class to five days per week. Currently, Santa Ana has Family class two days per week. Ms. Lancaster noted that Family is one of NOVA's core values.

Recently, Santa Ana teachers visited the Coachella campus, where they shared several dialogues with Coachella teachers.

Renee Lancaster reminded the Board of upcoming dates, such as Graduation and Senior Exit Interviews. Santa Ana's graduation is on May 28; Coachella's graduation is on May 27.

The Santa Ana campus recently received the Award of Excellence from the Orange County Health Care Agency. Renee Lancaster said the Santa Ana staff is doing a great job following health laws for the school's nutrition program.

At the next Board Meeting, Santa Ana and Coachella will present on their Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) goals, where the Board will provide input.

Today the Santa Ana campus celebrated Multicultural Day. Students in Family class had an opportunity to take on one culture. Students switched classrooms to learn about each of the adopted cultures.

Renee Lancaster said the school is preparing for Special Education for the next school year. Administrator Melissa Mier will oversee Special Education for the Santa Ana campus.

#### **CLOSED SESSION**

Public Employee

Title: Chief Executive Officer

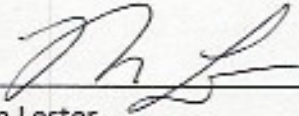


**RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION**

Dr. Sanford Otsuji reported that there was no action.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 PM.



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Norm Lester