

NOVA ACADEMY

Board of Directors Special Meeting Minutes – July 8, 2020, 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

Angie Dillon, Executive Assistant

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 5-19-2020 Board Meeting
- Minutes from the 6-16-2020 Board Meeting
- Minutes from the 6-16-2020 Special Board Meeting
- Parent and Family Engagement Policy (Title I)

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to approve the Minutes from the May 19, 2020, Board Meeting, Minutes from the June 16, 2020, Board Meeting, Minutes from the June 16, 2020, Special Board Meeting, and the Parent and Family Engagement Policy (Title I).

Motion: Susan Garrett

Second: Rick Weir

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

SPECIAL EDUCATION POLICY

Renee Lancaster, CEO of NOVA Academy, presented the Special Education Policy for Board approval. The new policy states in detail what the school is doing to meet state and federal compliance for serving Special Education students, such as providing Individualized Education Program (IEP) team meetings. This school year, NOVA Academy is managing its own Special Education program under El Dorado SELPA. Melissa Mier, an Administrator for the Santa Ana campus, and Adrienne Haggerty, Assistant Principal of the Coachella campus, are overseeing Special Education. Ms. Lancaster said teachers would receive training on the Special Education Policy at the upcoming Professional Development meeting in August.

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to approve the Special Education Policy.

Motion: 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		

Norm Lester, Board Secretary, motioned to move item #6, Executive Report, to item #7, and move item #7, 2020-2021 Employee Handbook, to item #6.

Motion: Norm Lester

Second: Susan Garrett

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

2020-2021 EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Renee Lancaster presented the 2020-2021 Employee Handbook for Board approval. Reviewed by the school's attorney, Young, Minney & Corr, the handbook has updated language in compliance with current employment laws. They expanded the definition of "race" as a protected class to include certain traits related to hair texture/style following an amendment in California law. The Professional Boundaries section has updated language regarding mandatory sexual harassment training and mandated reporting obligations. The section on Lactation Accommodation has added details on what the school will provide to employees for lactation accommodation. There were additional updates regarding Immigration Compliance, Electronic Surveillance, salary schedule placement for certificated employees, School Appearance and Activities Leave, and First Aid/CPR/AED Certification reimbursement for non-teachers.

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to approve the 2020-2021 Employee Handbook.

Motion: 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		

EXECUTIVE REPORT

On the current COVID-19 pandemic, Renee Lancaster shared that she is monitoring regulations and guidelines coming in weekly from the CDC and public health officials. She is regularly updating teachers and staff members via email. She said they need to watch unnecessary expenses in the budget since she expects there to be decreased state revenue due to the pandemic.

Ms. Lancaster said she and her team are preparing the NOVA Academy campuses for students to return in the fall. They are doing what they can to keep staff and students safe and healthy, which takes time, effort, and detail. There will be systems in place for staff and student wellness checks, wearing face masks, sanitizing, and deep-cleaning. If anyone were to walk onto the Santa Ana and Coachella campuses, they would see new signage, sneeze guards, and infrared imaging units for temperature checks.

Renee Lancaster said they have also spent time working on the school schedule, with a plan for two cohorts of students attending campus on different days. They are on schedule to reopen in August unless the governor decides to close down schools again. Although they will have a hybrid approach to school instruction, they will add a fully online option for parents who do not feel comfortable sending their children to school. Ms. Lancaster and her team are looking at the school's independent study program to see how they can offer it to families. NOVA Academy recently passed several new Board

policies, including the COVID-19 Control Plan, Health & Safety Policy. Staff members will be trained on the new policies during Professional Development in August.

Renee Lancaster said there is a certain required amount of instructional minutes every day for students. There are standards and documentation requirements that are intense regarding attendance. The school will continue keeping students at a high academic level regardless of the type of instruction.

Norm Lester, Board Secretary, asked for an update on the installation of hands-free door handle adaptors and how they work. For health and safety, the school recently purchased and installed several door handle adaptors on both campuses. Ms. Lancaster explained that the door handle adaptors are a way of opening doors without touching door handles. They are mounted on a door, like a knob. They are used to open doors with an arm or elbow. This prevents people from having to touch the door handles with their hands.

Board Members commended Renee Lancaster and her team for their hard work. Getting school ready for the fall semester is already hard enough, but now, they are dealing with COVID-19 and other difficult challenges. Many measurements were taken from the numerous people that have been working on campus. Board Members agreed that it had been quite an endeavor to prepare the school for fall, and they expressed their appreciation. Ms. Lancaster said she has a great team who have worked very hard during the summer, and she wishes to give them accolades. Also, she shared that she is excited that Santa Ana's new Principal, Regina Flores-Dunda, will begin on Tuesday.

2020-2021 STUDENT HANDBOOK

For Board approval, Renee Lancaster presented the 2020-2021 Student Handbook. There are added requirements and policies based on new legal mandates, such as information on human trafficking prevention, mental health services, pregnant and parenting teens, and sexual health education. The handbook also includes the school's new COVID-19 policy. Ms. Lancaster said Young, Minney & Corr reviewed the handbook.

Board Members asked if NOVA Academy staff would check everyone's temperature every day before they walk into campus. Renee Lancaster said yes - it is a requirement. They will be sending out a waiver to parents that they have to sign. They will have meetings with parents before school starts. They want everyone to be clear about sending a sick child to school. At the staff entry door, there is a big sign that says not to enter if you are feeling sick, with a list of symptoms. There will be systems in place with staff training. Ms. Lancaster said the school purchased disinfectant bottles for every single student underneath their desk, so they are going to be helping out as well with the cleaning. The school will have ongoing training with students during Seminar courses.

Norm Lester noticed two mistakes on page 81 of the student handbook. He said there is a reference to students in grades "9-12-12" twice. It needs to be corrected to "9-12."

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to approve the 2020-2021 Student Handbook with corrections on page 81, of "9-12-12" to "9-12."

Motion: Susan Garrett

Second: Karen 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 6:53 PM.



Norm Lester

7-8-2020