

NOVA ACADEMY

Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes – April 27, 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

Members Not Present

Olga Duarte, Member

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

Melissa Mier, Director of Student Services, NOVA Academy-Santa Ana

Adrienne Haggerty, Assistant Principal, NOVA Academy-Coachella

Carla Skaggs, Business Consultant

Angie Dillon, Executive Assistant

Dr. Susan Garrett, Board Co-Chair, motioned to remove the Financial Update, item #10, from the agenda. Karen Lester, Board Treasurer, seconded the motion.

Motion: Dr. Susan Garrett

Second: Karen Lester

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

Olga Duarte, Board Member, joined the meeting at 6:09 PM.

Norm Lester, Board Secretary, motioned to remove the Orange Crew Proposal for Thin Clients and Software for NOVA Academy-Santa Ana from item #12 on the agenda. Dr. Susan Garrett seconded the motion.

Motion: Norm Lester

Second: Dr. Susan Garrett

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

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 3-04-2021 Regular Board Meeting

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to approve the Consent Calendar containing the Minutes from the March 4, 2021, Regular Board Meeting. Rick Weir, Board Member, seconded the motion.

Motion: Dr. 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		

LOCAL CONTROL ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN (LCAP)

Adrienne Haggerty, Assistant Principal, delivered a presentation on the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) for the Coachella campus. She presented their Goals and Actions as they pertain to the State and Local Priorities and their steps for stakeholder engagement. She said they sent out their LCAP survey to parents in March of this year, and they are still collecting responses. Parent engagement is not as good as they would like, but it is better than last year. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, they have the challenge of meeting with parents virtually, and not all parents want to be virtual. She said they have staff meetings every Monday to gather input from all staff members, not just teachers. In

accomplishing their LCAP Goals, Ms. Haggerty outlined their Actions and Services, such as providing Summer InNOVAtion for incoming students, standardized testing support with "Test Like a Champion," LINK and Tutorial for academic recovery, John Hattie's "Visible Learning" for teacher training, College Bound 101 for college/career preparedness, and having a Student Wellness Committee for student safety,

Next, Regina Flores-Dunda, Principal, presented on the LCAP for the Santa Ana campus. She discussed the school's LCAP Goals and Actions and shared what the Santa Ana campus is doing for stakeholder engagement. Ms. Flores-Dunda said teachers and staff utilized the Carnegie Foundation's Improvement Science process to identify areas of need. She said they sent out the LCAP survey to parents and students, and results showed that 98% of parents who responded are satisfied with the school, and the students' average satisfaction rate is 81%. Survey completion among parents was 28% and not as high as they would have liked. The challenge is sending parent surveys home with students and relying on the students to get them completed and returned. They do not have as much access to parents as they had before the COVID-19 pandemic. Melissa Mier, Director of Student Services, said the school used to have success collecting surveys in person at the end of the year Parent University event. Ms. Mier feels that the school will eventually get back to that point. Ms. Flores-Dunda outlined several LCAP Actions and Services. Some of them include using Renaissance Star Assessment Program for regular benchmark testing, incorporating "math central" vocabulary as part of daily instruction for increasing math aptitude, "Learning in the Fast Lane" by Suzy Pepper-Rollins for professional development, and monthly Parent University workshops throughout the school year.

Board Members said the Principals did an excellent job for their LCAP presentations, and they commended them for the work they did.

CURRICULUM PURCHASE – SCIENCE AND SPANISH TEXTBOOKS

Regina Flores-Dunda presented a need to purchase new science and Spanish textbooks for the Santa Ana campus. She said the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) was adopted in California in 2013, and all of the school's current textbooks predate 2013. The Santa Ana campus needs new science textbooks to meet the standard. She acquired a quote to purchase new books, including digital versions, which is essential now that all NOVA students have a Chromebook. Next, Ms. Flores-Dunda requested the school purchase the Encuentros curriculum of Spanish textbooks to replace old Spanish texts due for an update. Ms. Flores-Dunda said the new textbooks educate readers on intercultural competence and cultural citizenship. The books also prepare students for Advanced Placement (AP) and college-level classes.

Board Members agreed that the school needs to upgrade its textbooks to align with new standards. They thanked Regina Flores-Dunda for her hard work in researching the new curriculum and putting the quotes together.

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to approve the Curriculum Purchase of Science and Spanish Textbooks for NOVA Academy-Santa Ana. Rick Weir seconded the motion.

Motion: Dr. 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		

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

Dr. Sanford Otsuji said there was no action to report.

CHROMEBOOKS PURCHASE

For Board ratification, John Bowen, Director of Human Resources & Operations, presented a need for NOVA Academy to purchase Chromebooks for the Santa Ana and Coachella campuses. He said the school's IT provider, Orange Crew, surveyed the school's current Chromebooks, and they found that the school needed to replace several of them. The current inventory contained older models that were no longer receiving software updates. Mr. Bowen said the school could use ESSER funds it received for educational technology - funds that they need to apply before the end of the year. John Bowen said the school decided to purchase the Chromebooks before the Board Meeting to ensure they were available. Many schools purchase their technology equipment during the summer in preparation for the next school year, and suppliers cannot keep up with demand.

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to ratify the Chromebooks Purchase 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		

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to ratify the Chromebooks Purchase for NOVA Academy-Coachella. 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		

Board Members agreed it was a wise decision for the school to purchase Chromebooks before they were no longer available.

FACILITY AND IT PROJECTS

John Bowen informed the Board that the Coachella campus is having problems with internet connection. New fiber cabling is needed to be laid out between the buildings and between the buildings to the server. Mr. Bowen said new cabling should clear up connectivity and Wi-Fi issues that teachers and students are having. The school's IT provider, Orange Crew, provided a proposal to redo all the wiring and cabling for the Coachella campus.

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to ratify the Orange Crew proposal for campus cabling for NOVA Academy-Coachella. Rick Weir seconded the motion.

Motion: Dr. 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		

Next, John Bowen asked the Board to ratify the Orange Crew proposal to purchase four laptops and twenty-two staff and faculty computers for the Coachella campus. Mr. Bowen said the current PCs for staff are no longer under warranty and are at the end of their life cycle. The campus has had issues with repairing PCs; they are dying out and losing performance. As for the four laptops in the proposal, John Bowen said they would be loaned out on occasion to staff members. It will be helpful for staff who do not have a laptop and may have to join an important meeting via Zoom. Alicia Lewis, Business Services Manager, added that the Coachella campus has some laptops on loan from the Santa Ana campus. John Bowen said it is important for front office staff and counselors to reach parents and students virtually.

Board Members agreed on the importance of purchasing laptops for the Coachella campus, especially to meet the need to connect with parents.

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to ratify the Orange Crew proposal to purchase PCs and laptops for NOVA Academy-Coachella. Rick Weir seconded the motion.

Motion: Dr. 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		

Next, John Bowen presented a proposal for a cooling tower replacement from Diversified Thermal Systems ("Diversified") for the Santa Ana campus. He said the current cooling tower is at the end of its life cycle, and there have been many issues with providing cool air to the building. The school has had Diversified as a vendor for several years. Yesterday John Bowen received two alternate quotes, and the quote from Diversified has the best cost.

Norm Lester recently visited the Santa Ana campus and met with John Bowen and Alicia Lewis to discuss the cooling issues in the building. Mr. Lester said it is important to have an engineered system that will meet the school's needs and not be in a situation where the demands of the school, given its size, are greater than what the system can handle. Board Members agreed. Renee Lancaster, Chief Executive Officer, thanked Norm Lester for visiting the Santa Ana campus and lending his expertise on building maintenance.

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to approve the Diversified proposal to replace the cooling tower 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		

John Bowen presented a proposal from Smart Whale Control for an LED project for the Santa Ana campus's parking garage. Having a cost of \$32K, the project involves retrofitting the garage lights for the more energy-efficient LED lights. The upgrade will yield \$12K/year in annual savings and \$60K in savings over five years. Mr. Bowen said it is an investment that will pay for itself. Board Members reviewed the proposal and agreed on the benefit of saving the school money on electricity.

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to approve the Smart Whale Control Proposal for Parking Garage LED Project. Olga Duarte seconded the motion.

Motion: Dr. Susan Garrett **Second:** Olga Duarte

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

SCHOOL FOOD PROGRAM VENDOR CONTRACTS

John Bowen presented the contracts from Preferred Meal Systems for the Coachella and Santa Ana campuses. Preferred Meal Systems is the current school food program vendor. Last year the Board approved the vendor's food program contracts with a fresh food option. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the food is served frozen as three-day "Grab and Go" meal kits. The meals are distributed to students attending school on campus and students attending virtually. Mr. Bowen shared that there was not as much participation from students this school year, and it was hard to judge how good the food was. The Grab and Go meals were given out after school, and many students did not want to hang around to collect them. Students are more likely to eat breakfast from the meal program. Mr. Bowen anticipates that next year will be different, and the school will be able to serve fresh food. The Preferred Meal Systems contracts are for the fresh food option, but if the pandemic continues and the school has to go back to serving frozen food, the rates will stay the same.

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to approve the Preferred Meals School Food Program Vendor Contract for NOVA Academy-Coachella. Rick Weir seconded the motion.

Motion: Dr. 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		

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to approve the Preferred Meals School Food Program Vendor Contract for NOVA Academy-Santa Ana. Rick Weir seconded the motion.

Motion: Dr. 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		

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 PM.



Norm Lester

4-27-2021