

NOVA ACADEMY

Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes – June 24, 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, Vice-Chair

Norm Lester, Secretary

Karen Lester, Treasurer

Olga Duarte, Member

Members Not Present

Rick Weir, Member

Staff Present

Renee Lancaster, Chief Executive Officer/Founder

John Bowen, Director of Human Resources & Operations

Alicia Lewis, Business Services Manager

Carla Skaggs, Business Consultant

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

Adrienne Haggerty, Assistant 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

INTRODUCTION TO BOARDDOCS BOARD MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Kristin Forsberg, Sales Advisor from BoardDocs, presented an introduction to the BoardDocs Board Management System. NOVA Academy will be transitioning to the new platform for managing Board of Directors meetings and Board documents in the next few months. Ms. Forsberg briefly summarized the benefits of using the new system, including increased efficiency for the administrative team, ensuring compliance to the Brown Act, and ease for the public in accessing information.

CONSENT CALENDAR

The Consent Calendar contained the following matters:

- Minutes from the 5-13-2021 Regular Board Meeting
- Minutes from the 5-13-2021 Special Board Meeting

Dr. Susan Garrett, Board Vice-Chair, motioned to approve the Consent Calendar containing the Minutes from the May 13, 2021, Regular Board Meeting and May 13, 2021, Special Board Meeting. Norm Lester, Board Secretary, 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		
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

There was no action taken.

LOCAL CONTROL ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN (LCAP)

Adrienne Haggerty, Assistant Principal, presented the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) for NOVA Academy-Coachella. The document includes the LCFF Budget Overview for Parents, the Annual Update for the 2019-2020 school year, the 2020-2021 Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan, and the LCAP for the coming three years, 2021-2024. Ms. Haggerty noticed that on page 17 of the digital document, a part of the first metric for Goal 2 for increasing stakeholder engagement was missing due to a formatting issue. She said the full text for the metric should be “DataQuest/California Dashboard – Chronic Absence Indicator and Local Data – Attendance Rate” as having the same Baseline and Desired Outcome for 2022-2023. Ms. Haggerty said she would correct it.

With the verbal change Adrienne Haggerty discussed, Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to approve the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) for NOVA Academy-Coachella. The first metric for Goal 2 is “DataQuest/California Dashboard – Chronic Absence Indicator and Local Data – Attendance Rate.” 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		
O. Duarte	X		

Alicia Lewis, Business Services Manager, and Renee Lancaster, Chief Executive Officer, presented the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) for NOVA Academy-Santa Ana. Board Members reviewed the document and noticed that it contained the contact information for a former administrator. Ms. Lewis explained that the LCAP includes the 2019-2020 Annual Update to the LCAP, which the Board approved in December 2020, when the school still employed the administrator. Ms. Lancaster said the Board could approve the LCAP with the contact information for the former administrator removed.

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to approve the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) for NOVA Academy-Santa Ana with the update to the contact name. 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		
O. Duarte	X		

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to move agenda item #11 for the Executive Report to item #10 and item #10, the Annual Budget, to item #11. 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		
O. Duarte	X		

EXECUTIVE REPORT

Renee Lancaster shared that the NOVA Academy campuses recently had their graduation ceremonies. The Board Members who attended said they enjoyed the events. Both campuses have begun a robust, five-week summer school program for helping students with credit recovery. They have also started Summer InNOVation, a program for new incoming students to help familiarize them with the school.

Melissa Mier, Director of Student Services, shared an overview of Summer InNOVation at the Santa Ana campus. She said the students participated in many activities, including STEM projects, dancing, and a field trip to UCI. They also received rotating presentations in leadership, counseling, and careers. About seventy-five students have attended each day. Today, the students took part in an art activity funded by the NOVA Academy Children’s Foundation. On one of the days, the school hosted a parent

engagement event, where they shared information on how Summer InNOVation was going and answered questions. Overall, it was a fun week for students and staff.

Adrienne Haggerty, Assistant Principal, shared that the Coachella campus recently had their Summer InNOVation program, and it was a lot of fun. She said the students participated in several activities and had opportunities to learn about each other. They made tie-dye shirts, painted welcome signs, made course requests for choosing their electives, walked to the park, and did assessment testing.

Renee Lancaster thanked Melissa Mier and Adrienne Haggerty for sharing their updates, and she said it is exciting to reengage with students after the past year of distance learning.

Last, Renee Lancaster informed the Board that there would be a Board of Directors Special Meeting in July or early August to approve the Student Handbook and updated COVID-19 Policy. The update to the COVID-19 Policy is pending the State’s update on COVID-19 regulations for schools.

2021-2022 ANNUAL BUDGET – PROJECTED YEAR-END AND MULTI-YEAR PROJECTIONS

Geetha Huma, Director of Client Finance at Charter Impact, presented the 2021-2022 Annual Budget and the May 2021 Financial Updates for the Santa Ana and Coachella campuses. The Annual Budgets are based on the State’s May Revised Budget since the final State Budget has not been approved by the State yet. Ms. Huma said there is an increase in revenue COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) and CalSTRS/CalPERS rates. Second, the budgets are based on current enrollment projections; the held harmless pre-pandemic ADA will not be extended for 2021-2022.

For Santa Ana’s Annual Budget, the projected ADA is 338.2, enrollment is at 356, and attendance is at 95%. In addition to increases in COLA and CalSTRS/CalPERS, there are state revenue increases for the Expanded Learning Opportunity (ELO) grant and SB 86 grant funds for schools providing in-person instruction. There are expense increases due to the state minimum wage increase and added open positions in math, English, science, and PE. Cash flow is good, and the budget will meet the Bond covenant.

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to approve the 2021-2022 Annual Budget for NOVA Academy-Santa Ana. Olga Duarte, Board Member, 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		
O. Duarte	X		

For the Coachella campus’s Annual Budget, Geetha Huma said the projected enrollment is 237, attendance is 95%, and ADA is 225. She noted that Coachella’s enrollment increased since the

pandemic. Its budget has similar assumptions to Santa Ana for the increase in revenue and expense for COLA. A revenue increase from SB 86 funding will be recognized in 2021-2022. Increases in expenses include added open positions in math, English, science, and a paraprofessional. There is an increase in unemployment due to a change in the calculation (Santa Ana’s budget is also affected).

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to approve the 2020-2021 Annual Budget for NOVA Academy-Coachella. 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		
O. Duarte	X		

Next, the Board reviewed the Consolidated Application for 2021-2022 Federal Funding for the NOVA Academy-Coachella and NOVA Academy-Santa Ana campuses.

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to approve the 2021-2022 Consolidated Application for NOVA Academy-Santa Ana. 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		
O. Duarte	X		

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to approve the 2021-2022 Consolidated Application for NOVA Academy-Coachella. 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		
O. Duarte	X		

2021-2022 NPA MASTER CONTRACTS

Trevor Garrett, Proposal Coordinator/Data Impact Analyst, and Alicia Lewis presented the Futures Education of California NPA (Non-Public Agency) Master Contract for Santa Ana and Coachella and the El Paseo Children’s Center NPA Master Contract for Coachella. Certified by the CDE, the vendors are contracted by NOVA Academy to provide special education services. The Board will need to approve the NPA Master Contract for Partners in Special Education at a Special Board Meeting later in the evening.

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to approve the Futures Education of California NPA Master Contract for NOVA Academy-Santa Ana. 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		
O. Duarte	X		

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to approve the Futures Education of California NPA Master Contract for NOVA Academy-Coachella. 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		
O. Duarte	X		

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to approve the El Paseo Children’s Center NPA Master Contract for NOVA Academy-Coachella. 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		
O. Duarte	X		

2021-2022 BUSINESS INSURANCE PROPOSALS

John Bowen, Director of Human Resources & Operations, presented the 2021-2022 business insurance proposals for CharterSafe, the school’s current vendor, and a competitor, Bolton & Company. He said

CharterSafe is more competitive in pricing, has greater coverage, offers lower deductibles, and he added that the school has been happy with their services. He recommended that the Board approve the proposal from CharterSafe. Board Members agreed that the school should continue with CharterSafe and Mr. Bowen did a good job doing his due diligence in reviewing the proposals.

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to approve the CharterSafe proposal for business insurance. 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		
O. Duarte	X		

Dr. Sanford Otsuji left the Board Meeting due to technical difficulties. Dr. Susan Garrett filled in as Board Chair.

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

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

IT PROJECT

John Bowen presented the Orange Crew quote to install wireless access points at the Santa Ana campus. The project will improve Wi-Fi access throughout the campus by replacing the current access points with a higher quality device and installing more of them, so there is an access point in each classroom. Mr. Bowen said the installation of the access points could be completed during the summer and tested before students return to campus in August.

Dr. Sanford Otsuji returned to the Board Meeting.

Dr. Susan Garret motioned to approve the Orange Crew quote to replace and add access points at 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		
O. Duarte	X		

2021-2022 EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Next on the agenda was the 2021-2022 Employee Handbook. John Bowen worked with the school’s attorney at Young, Minney & Corr to review the handbook. Mr. Bowen said there was an update to the section on Tuberculosis testing with the wording revised for added clarity. A second update was made for smoking on campus to match the school’s current Smoke-Free Environment Policy that now includes vaping. Otherwise, the Employee Handbook has few changes; there was no recent State legislation that would impact the handbook.

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to approve the 2021-2022 Employee Handbook. 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		
O. Duarte	X		

2021-2022 ANNUAL BOARD CALENDAR

Renee Lancaster presented the 2021-2022 Annual Board Calendar for Board approval. Board Members reviewed the dates and discussed having a Board Retreat at the Coachella campus in February 2022. Dr. Susan Garrett proposed Thursday, February 24, 2022, and Board Members agreed on the day.

Dr. Susan Garrett motioned to approve the 2021-2022 Annual Board Calendar. 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		
O. Duarte	X		

CLOSED SESSION

Public Employee

Title: Chief Executive Officer

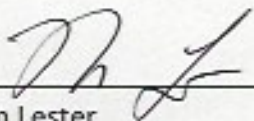
RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION

Dr. Sanford Otsuji reported there was an action taken during the Closed Session. Board Members unanimously approved the following: For the year July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022, regarding compensation for Renee Lancaster, the employee will receive a \$15,000 annual Chief Executive Officer stipend beginning July 1, 2021, for performing administrative duties beyond those of other administrators. The employee will receive a performance bonus of \$10,000 based on maintaining both schools' current ADA for the school year. The bonus will be paid on October 15, 2021, and the remaining balance on June 15, 2022. The employee will receive a \$7,000 annual contribution towards health and welfare benefits for the 2021-2022 school year.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:27 PM.

6-24-2021 (REGULAR)



Norm Lester