Novus SMART Academy (K-8)

November 2026 In-Person Board Meeting

Published on November 21, 2026 at 8:58 AM CST

Date and Time

Saturday November 21, 2026 at 9:00 AM CST

Location

- **Location:** La Vergne Public Library,5063 Murfreesboro Road, La Vergne, Tennessee 37086
- **BoardOnTrack (members only platform):** https://app2.boardontrack.com/login/auth
- **Public Virtual Link :** https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87062860772?pwd=NFGbW0MAcPwLOgbMoOORvYG0ssNKwZ.1&jst=2

Agenda

		Purpose	Presenter	Time
I.	**Opening Items**			**9:00 AM**
A.	Call the Meeting to Order		Charles Frazier	
B.	Roll Call & Establishment of Quorum (5 members present in-person)		Patricia Pryor	1 m

1. **Charles Frazier, Board Chair & Governance Committee Chair**
2. **LaTarsha White, Board Vice Chair**

		Purpose	Presenter	Time

3. **Loni Vazquez-Hall, Board Treasurer and Finance & Development Committee Chair**
4. **Patricia Pryor, Board Secretary & Academic Excellence Committee Chair**
5. **Margertha Artis, Board Member**
6. **Brian Bradshaw, Board Member**
7. **Debbie Hayes, Board Member**
8. **Tachi Lynch, Board Member**
9. **Lisa Smith-Watson, Board Member**
10. **Others**
    1. **Jeremy Sager, Founder & Executive Director**
    2. **Dominique Tross, Founding Director of Operations**

C.	Approval of November 2026 Board Meeting Agenda	Vote	Charles Frazier	2 m
D.	Approval of Minutes from the October 2026 Board Meeting	Approve Minutes	Charles Frazier	2 m

II. Public Comment — 9:05 AM

The Novus SMART Academy (K-8) Board of Directors values community input and provides an opportunity for members of the public to address the Board during designated public comment periods at regular Board meetings. This policy establishes clear, fair, and consistent procedures to ensure public comments are conducted in an orderly, respectful, and efficient manner while allowing the Board to fulfill its governance responsibilities.

Please see our Public Comment Policy: Click Here
Please see our Public Comment Request Form: Click Here

A.	Public Comment	FYI	Charles Frazier	10 m

There are currently no approved Public Comment speakers.

III. Founder & Executive Director Report — 9:15 AM

A.	How to Get Ready for Giving Tuesday	FYI	Jeremy Sager	5 m

How to Get Ready for Giving Tuesday: Click Here

B.	Enrollment and Recruitment Updates	FYI	Jeremy Sager	5 m

Enrollment Goals & Key Dates

Purpose Presenter Time

October 1, 2026: Novus begins its enrollment push.
January 2027: Rutherford County Schools officially begins its enrollment period.
CSGF Seed Goals
50% of budgeted enrollment by March 31, 2027 (84 scholars)
Kindergarten: 36
1st Grade: 24
2nd Grade: 24
65% of budgeted enrollment by April 30, 2027 (111 scholars)
Kindergarten: 47
1st Grade: 32
2nd Grade: 32
80% of budgeted enrollment by May 31, 2027 (136 scholars)
Kindergarten: 58
1st Grade: 39
2nd Grade: 39
95% of budgeted enrollment by August 2, 2027 (161 scholars)
Kindergarten: 69
1st Grade: 46
2nd Grade: 46
Lagging Indicator: 95% of scholars remain enrolled in August 2028.
Enrollment & Recruitment Focus: Enrollment and recruitment efforts continue with an increased emphasis on targeted community outreach, family engagement, and converting interested families into enrolled scholars.
Reengagement with Mariposa Consulting Group
Mariposa Consulting Group: Click Here
Biweekly check-ins on Wednesdays at 9:00 AM CT.
Partnership Hub: Click Here
Targeted Community Outreach Strategy: Outreach efforts have been reset to prioritize partnerships and direct engagement with organizations serving families with young children, including:
Early childhood education facilities.
Preschools
Pediatric facilities and providers.
Other community organizations serving families with young children.

1. Kiwanis Cookie Train & Free Santa Photo: Novus will participate in the community event on Tuesday, December 1 at 5:00 PM CT.

		Purpose	Presenter	Time

1. **Dominique Tross and Jeremy Sager will arrive for setup at 2:00 PM CT.**
2. **Participation will provide an additional opportunity to increase Novus' visibility, engage families, and strengthen community relationships.**

Family Information Sessions
Virtual Information Sessions
2nd Tuesdays at 10:00 AM CT
4th Thursdays at 6:00 PM CT
In-person information sessions will begin once Novus has full access to its facility.
Social Media & Digital Presence Reset: Novus is strengthening its digital presence to increase brand awareness, family engagement, and enrollment interest through:
Facebook
Instagram
LinkedIn
The SMART Scoop Monthly Newsletter

C.	Staffing and Talent Updates	FYI	Jeremy Sager	5 m

1. **CSGF Seed Goals**
    1. **Hiring Goals**
        1. **100% of leadership roles filled by January 2027.**
        2. **25% of open positions filled by February 2027.**
        3. **50% of open positions filled by March 2027.**
        4. **75% of open positions by May 2027.**
    2. **Staff re-Commitment Goal: 80% of staff invited to return have signed agreements for upcoming school year by March.**
    3. **Lagging Indicator: 85% fall-to-fall staff retention.**
2. **October 1 Talent Recruitment Launch**
    1. **We launched our 2027-2028 talent recruitment campaign on October 1, 2026.**
    2. **All open positions are posted on our website and actively marketed on our social media platforms:**
        1. **Board Members (immediate openings)**
        2. **Founding Dean of Academics & Scholar Access**
        3. **Founding Dean of School Culture & Community Engagement**
        4. **K-2 GenEd Teacher (7)**
        5. **Teacher-in-Residence (1)**

		Purpose	Presenter	Time

6. **Education Assistant (2)**
7. **Physical Education Teacher (1)**
8. **School Counselor & MTSS Coordinator (1)**
9. **Special Education Teacher (2)**
10. **ESL Teacher (2)**
11. **Office Manager**

3. **School Leadership Recruitment**
    1. **Recruitment and candidate management for the remaining founding leadership positions continue to be a priority.**
    2. **Candidate pipelines and progress will be actively tracked to identify leaders who demonstrate strong alignment with Novus' mission, vision, academic model, and founding culture.**
4. **Educator Recruitment & Selection Priorities: Novus' primary talent priority is recruiting, selecting, and retaining educators who demonstrate:**
    1. **Strong professional and growth mindsets.**
    2. **Alignment with Novus' mission and vision.**
    3. **High expectations for all scholars.**
    4. **Commitment to academic excellence and continuous improvement.**
    5. **Commitment to establishing and sustaining Novus' founding culture.**
5. **University & Educator Pipeline Development**
    1. **Novus is expanding its educator pipeline through partnerships and outreach to regional universities and educator preparation programs.**
    2. **Job postings and recruitment information have been shared with:**
        1. **Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU)**
        2. **Lipscomb University**
        3. **Austin Peay State University (APSU)**
        4. **Tennessee State University (TSU)**
        5. **Trevecca Nazarene University**
        6. **Belmont University**
        7. **Vanderbilt University**
        8. **Cumberland University**

D.	Academic Planning, Performance & Instructional Updates		Jeremy Sager	5 m

1. **CSGF Seed Goals**
    1. **Draft Curriculum Map & Vision of Excellence (July-September): Click Here**
    2. **Draft Hiring Process & Guides (September-October): Click Here**

		Purpose	Presenter	Time

3. **Final Curriculum Map & Vision of Excellence (September-December): Click Here**
4. **Summer Professional LEarning & Development Schedule & Goals Drafted: Click Here**
5. **Schoolwide Expectations & COnsistent Classroom Routines Documented: Click Here**
6. **Minute-by-Minute Plans for Whole School Times, Behavior & Removal Systems Drafted: Click Here**

2. **Student Growth Goal**
    1. **Novus will score at/above the 60th percentile for conditional growth on mid-year and end-of-year NWEA MAP Growth or another nationally normed assessment.**
    2. **Simply put: We want Novus scholars to demonstrate stronger academic growth than typical students with similar starting achievement levels.**
    3. **A 60th percentile conditional growth result means the school's growth performance is higher than approximately 60% of comparable growth outcomes.**
3. **Student Achievement Goal**
    1. **Novus will meet or exceed the national average on NWEA MAP Growth or another nationally normed assessment.**
    2. **Simply put: We want our scholars, on average, to perform at least as well as students nationally in the subjects assessed.**
    3. **Over time, this supports Novus' broader goal of ensuring scholars remain on track for college and career readiness.**
4. **The easiest way to distinguish the two goals:**
    1. **Growth = How much are our scholars learning?**
    2. **Achievement = Where are our scholars performing compared with students nationally?**
    3. **Together, the goals mean Novus is accountable for both accelerating student learning and helping scholars reach strong levels of academic achievement.**

E.	Facilities & Finance Updates		Jeremy Sager	5 m

1. **CSGF Seed Goals**
    1. **Secure signed LOI (September-October)**
    2. **Enter lease negotiations with contingency secured. (November-December)**
    3. **Secure signed or contingency locked. (January-February)**
    4. **Secure an affordable facility and sign a lease by February 15, 2027.**

	Purpose	Presenter	Time

5. **Maintain a minimum of 60 days of cash on hand to ensure sufficient liquidity to meet operating expenses and support long-term financial sustainability.**

2. **Matter Real Estate Tracker: Click Here**

F. Grants Updates — Jeremy Sager — 5 m

1. **Securing Grants Updates: Click Here**
2. **Appropriations Committee in Congress in Tennessee that Supports Charter Schools: Click Here**

G. Required Board Trainings — Jeremy Sager — 5 m

1. As part of our ongoing governance responsibilities and preparation for the 2026-2027 school year, all Novus SMART Academy Board members must complete the applicable board training.
2. Please use the link below to register for and complete the currently available training: https://tcscmembershipportal.thinkific.com/products/courses/copy-of-2025-26-returning-board-member-training
3. **Important Notes:**
    1. **Returning Board Members:** Please register and complete the available training modules.

1. **New Board Members:** Please also register under **"Returning Members"** for now and complete the modules currently available. **There are currently 4 modules to complete.**
2. Two additional courses specifically for new board members are being uploaded. Once those are available, Kim West from the Tennessee Charter School Center will send the additional link and instructions to the members who need to complete them.
3. Please prioritize completing the currently available training as soon as possible. This training is an important part of ensuring that our Board remains informed, compliant, and prepared to govern Novus effectively as we move toward our August 2027 opening.

IV. Academic Excellence Committee Report — 9:50 AM

		Purpose	Presenter	Time

Committee Meeting Objective: To ensure that Novus SMART Academy's academic model is fully defined, measurable, and executable in preparation for its August 2027 opening, while strengthening the Board's capacity to provide effective academic oversight. The Committee focused on school leadership recruitment, enrollment readiness, academic performance expectations, scholar support systems, and long-term academic growth.

1. Scholar Recruitment & Enrollment
Reviewed Goals: Enroll 84 scholars by March 31
Mariposa Consulting Group is generating enrollment leads.
One family attended the recent virtual information session and enrolled.
Virtual sessions occur on the 2nd Tuesday (10 AM) and 4th Thursday (6 PM) monthly.
Novus will participate in the December 1 Kiwanis Cookie Train and Santa event.
January outreach will target early childhood facilities through direct engagement with providers and families.
2. AEC Vacancies
Dr. Dexter Peterson's departure created a vacancy.
S. Sayles has been contacted regarding board membership.
A parent representative is still needed.
3. School Leadership Recruitment
Two strong candidates completed tasks for the Dean of Academics & Scholar Access position.
Neither holds the preferred endorsements. Leadership is prioritizing a licensed candidate while considering both for culture-related roles.
4. Enrollment Planning
The Recruitment & Enrollment Playbook will include phased strategies and monthly enrollment targets.
Tross will present the enrollment tracking document at the next work session.
Current Priorities: Accelerate enrollment, strengthen recruitment efforts, and fill board and leadership vacancies.

A.	Key Takeaways and Next Steps	Discuss	Charles Frazier	10 m

V. Finance & Development Committee Report — 10:00 AM

Committee Meeting Objective: To strengthen the effectiveness, accountability, financial literacy, and long-term capacity of the Novus SMART Academy Board of Directors through intentional Board recruitment, candidate evaluation, strategic committee placement, and improved governance practices.

		Purpose	Presenter	Time

An additional priority was to deepen Board leadership's understanding of the Academy's operating budget through a comprehensive review and engagement with Vertex Education, the school's back-office financial services partner. This work is intended to ensure that Board members are equipped to exercise informed financial oversight, understand the assumptions driving the budget, and make responsible decisions as the Academy prepares to open in August 2027.

A.	Key Takeaways and Next Steps		Loni Vazquez-Hall	10 m

VI. Governance Committee Report — 10:10 AM

Committee Meeting Objective: The Governance Committee convened to review prospective Board member candidates, strengthen Board recruitment and onboarding processes, monitor facilities developments, review governance policies and personnel procedures, and ensure continued alignment with Novus SMART Academy's mission, strategic priorities, and organizational readiness for its August 2027 opening.

A.	Key Takeaways and Next Steps		Charles Frazier	11 m

VII. Ongoing Business — 10:21 AM

A.	Policies & Procedures	Discuss	Charles Frazier	25 m

1. **Review of Board of Directors Annual Calendar:** Click Here
2. **Review of Open Meetings Law Policy:** Click Here
3. **Review of Bylaws:** Click Here
    1. **Code of Conduct Policy:** Click Here
    2. **Conflict of Interest Policy:** Click Here
    3. **Confidentiality Policy Draft:** Click Here

VIII. Closing Items — 10:46 AM

A.	Adjourn Meeting	Vote		
B.	Closing Reflections & Adjournment	FYI	Charles Frazier	5 m