

MNIC ELA Campus
300 Industrial Blvd.
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55413

Approved Minutes
EMERGENCY MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Wednesday, October 15, 2008
4:00 p.m.

Membership: Kat Anthony, John Breyfogle, Susan Knittel, Jama Farah, Hassan Hilowle, Kaha Mohamed, Kassim Mohamed, Takara Spaulding, Reggie Womack

Ex officio: Kevin Byrne, Steven Oates, Chanda Smith

Note: All votes were unanimous unless otherwise stated. Items distributed at the meeting include: Agenda; new board roster, MNIC Bylaws, Letter submitted to Pillsbury United Community Sponsor Liaison from Susan Knittel, letter from Susan Airhart to MNIC regarding the bank.

- I. ROLL CALL: All board members introduced themselves to the staff, parents and community representatives. Susan Knittel, chairperson, gave her expectations for the meeting and time.

The Meeting was called to order at 4:01 PM. Board members introduced themselves.

Present: Kat Anthony, John Breyfogle, Susan Knittel, Jama Farah, Hassan Hilowle, Kaha Mohamed, Kassim Mohamed, Takara Spaulding, Reggie Womack

Ex Officio:

Others: Steve Bosacker, Sandra Hall, Linda Duncanson, Rick Polanski, Amy Libman, Melissa Kappenman, Kristin Quinn, Loretta Flippin, Susan Natala, Katie Bow, Gertrude Hoskins, Jim Miller, Jill Krause, George Sand, Rita Dugelman, Ron Wodtke, Jon Gross, Don Link, Janet White, Sue Francis, Sandra Massey, Laura Nichols, Carrie Otis, David Nelson, Bahar Hassan, Beth Ottaviani, Ishmael Sheik, Idris Dira

- II. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mr. Breyfogle moved to add to the agenda Ms. Knittel's request to include Cash Flow discussion with Item III. Ms. Anthony seconded. Passed.

Ms. Mohamed moved to postpone discussion of legal counsel to another meeting. Mr. Breyfogle seconded. Passed.

Ms. Mohamed moved to postpone Item IV, "Staffing and Seniority List" to a later meeting. Ms. Spaulding seconded. Passed with Mr. Mohamed opposing.

Mr. Womack moved to accept the amended agenda. Mr. Breyfogle seconded. Passed.

- III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR THE 10-12-08 BOARD MEETING

Mr. Breyfogle moved to delay approval of minutes (no copies available yet). Ms. Spaulding seconded. Passed.

REGULAR AGENDA

I. STATE OF SCHOOL UPDATE AND DISCUSSION

Ms. Knittel read an email message from Chanda Smith, the sponsor liaison with Pillsbury United Communities, stating that MNIC's action at the last board meeting satisfied Pillsbury's requirements to maintain sponsorship. Ms. Knittel asked the whole group what they think about the state of the board.

Mr. Womack reported that a lot of staff felt much better about the school after the board meeting than before the meeting. Ms. Spaulding would like to get board training as soon as possible. Mr. Breyfogle thinks that what happened in the past is linked to an "us vs. them" mentality. He called for people to put that behind them.

Ms. Knittel asked everyone to communicate positively and as mature adults. A woman asked for more time for the two program groups to get together, get to know each other. Many people present agreed with this. Ms. Libman requested the school look again at strategic planning; many things have changed. Ms. Mohamed suggested to have a few board members sit on a financial committee. Mr. Link reported on the new sports coaches and teams. A few times a week both programs will blend students on these teams and play sports together. Rita said there is some interest in students from both programs to work together on academic projects. Ms. Libman suggested Junior Achievement could be another way for students to work together. Mr. Breyfogle requested a group review and update the bylaws. Ms. Libman asked to have similar work done for elections.

II. DISCUSS LEGAL COUNSEL FOR BOARD MEETINGS OF PAST. (postponed to another meeting)

A five minute break was called. Mr. Link announced Jon Gross' retirement and thanked him for all his service to the school.

III. TREASURER'S REPORT/UPDATED BUDGET AND CASHFLOW

Report from the administrative finance team composed of Mr. Sand, Ms. Natala, Mr. Link and Ms. Libman. They have been acting for the school and welcome the board's approval of this group. This group considered enrollment trends and found ELA enrollments were dropping this summer. Ms. Natala reported enrollments as of this week: ELA 172 and Circle 228 students enrolled. Ms. Natala explained ADM and how this is calculated in relation to membership (enrollment). The team considered 380 ADM is a realistic and conservative basis for establishing the budget. The school should work to restore a good fund balance. This is important to have a financial reserve for the lean times. The school can adjust budgets during the year any number of times. The purpose of the budget is to manage the school's finances well. The MDE holds back 10% of funds due to the school until the following year. This is why cash flow is so important to monitor and manage. A member asked what ADM level is the MDE paying MNIC now? Answered later.

Susan Airhart at Designs for Learning helps the school manage its finances. The team hopes that a couple board members will be part of this group to meet with her later this month. Mr. Sand also asked that board members get financial training. The finance committee carries an important role to check figures and make good plans.

Next, Mr. Sand reviewed the cash flow document. Important items: line of credit will be paid off in October and not renewed until January. This is important for the school's cash flow. The bank looks for the board's effectiveness and net financial balance. A serious cash flow shortage could occur starting in May. The finance team recommends "belt tightening" to cut costs and increase enrollments (income) to ensure the school's success through that period.

Ms. Knittel recommended two people from the board join this team. This team formed in August to help the school. Would these meetings be open for others to view? Mr. Sand

replied that this committee needs to be closed due to confidentiality issues. The committee will report to the board. Mr. Mohamed proposed having 3 from the board and 2 from staff on the committee. Mr. Womack countered that all these people should stay on the committee and add 2 people from the board. Mr. Mohamed proposed 4 from the board and 3 from the staff. Ms. Anthony replied to have the 4 on the team and add board members. Mr. Womack thinks changing this group is risky for the board. **Ms. Spaulding moved to keep the current committee and add 2 board members, Ms. Knittel and Mr. Breyfogle, and Ms. Anthony as an alternate. Ms. Anthony seconded. Passed.** Mr. Breyfogle asked if Mr. Libman would be available as an advisor (who helped the school in August and September). Ms. Libman replied that this could happen. Mr. Link, Ms. Natala, Ms. Libman, Mr. Sand remain on the committee. Mr. Sand encouraged finding an advisor from the community. Ms. Duncanson stated that her mentor at the Hubert Humphrey institute would be willing to act as an advisor. Mr. Breyfogle will communicate with him. Oct 23rd is the next meeting for the Financial Committee.

Question about MDE payment rate – an adjustment to the rate of pay from 440 ADM to 380 ADM at MNIC will occur sometime later in October. MNIC is good with the bank for the line of credit.

IV. STAFFING AND SENIORITY LIST (There is no seniority list and no staffing list. Item is postponed.)

V. RECRUITING: Updates for all sites

Ms. Duncanson reported: Recruiting at Circle sites is down some right now. There are about 230 students at Circle Sites; recruiting about 5 students a week. This is a normal slow recruiting time for these sites. Recruiting needs to pick up again. The school needs to work on improving retention – this is very important to keep the ADM goal. Recruiting continues all year because of student turnovers. Recruiting by advertising costs money, which is tight now.

Ishmael is recruiting for ELA. They are receiving 4 to 5 new students in a week, while 2 to 3 leave. So this program enrollment is growing slowly. New immigrant arrival rates are very slow. Ms. Duncanson suggested placing some long term advertisements in the community. Ms. Natala asked about what other plans are in place or could be to help recruit. Ms. Duncanson replied there are social and legal workers who are helping. Ms. Knittel asked Ms. Duncanson to write up her plans and procedures for the board to see. Mr. Sand emphasized that recruitment efforts continue and the board should look to support an ELA program change to satisfy the needs of new students. Ms. Duncanson recommended incentives.

VI. TRAINING: Appointment of board member to research free training for all board members.

Ms. Knittel asked for members to help find free training for the board. **Mr. Breyfogle moved that board training will be mandatory for all board members; if a board member does not complete training they should leave the board. Mr. Mohamed seconded. Passed.**

VII. TRANSPORTATION

Transportation costs about \$23,000 each month. This does not cover field trips or tokens or quarters for public transportation. Tokens and quarters come to about \$13,000 a month. Ms. Knittel would like to see what is being spent on tokens. The bussing contract needs to be approved by the Board. Investigate ways to cut costs or improve options that are less costly. Steve will send what contract he has in his care.

Ms. Mohamed moved to look at transportation at a future board meeting. Mr. Mohamed seconded. Passed. Question about planning field trips will be addressed after a little more time.

III. Resuming Approval of Minutes

Mr. Womack moved to approve the MNIC Board minutes of Oct 12, 2008 as amended. Mr. Mohamed seconded. Passed.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The next meeting will be October 30th at 4:30 PM at ELA.

Mr. Breyfogle moved to adjourn Mr. Farah seconded. Passed. Meeting adjourned at 5:55

Submitted by Stephen C. Bosacker.