

**MNIC ELA Campus  
300 Industrial Boulevard  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55413**

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**Unapproved Minutes**  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
Thursday, January 10, 2008  
2:00 p.m.

Membership: Abdighani Ali, Mary Ander, Abdirahman Egeh, Elizabeth Gedatus-Garcia, Rebecca Gutierrez, Vin McMahon, Kassim Mohamed, Janet White, Ron White,

Ex officio: Kevin Byrne, Patsy Brooks, Idiris Mohamed, Steven Oates, Chanda Smith

Note: All votes were unanimous unless otherwise stated. Items distributed at the meeting include: Agenda, unapproved 11/01/07 Minutes; Finance Committee Agenda November Financial Statements (2), Board membership and election cycle worksheet, Ballot to elect new Board member, Letter from Mr. Hassan Hilowle, HR Staff Report

I. ROLL CALL

Mr. Ron White called the meeting to order at 2:11PM.

Members in attendance: Elizabeth Gedatus-Garcia, Rebecca Gutierrez, Vin McMahon, Ron White, Kassim Mohamed. Abdiraman Egeh (2:15 arrived), Mary Ander. Absent: Abdighani Ali.

Ex officio and others in attendance: Executive Director Kevin Byrne, Executive Assistant Patsy Brooks; Stephen Bosacker (Designs for Learning), Amy Libman (Director of Volunteer Programs and Student Support Services) (arrived for open mike), Gloria Thompson (American Insurance Agency), Reggie Womack (Dean of Students), Simpson Brown (Security), Mike Powell (Security), Peter Reddit (Security)

II. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Removed Minnehaha Transportation Contract from agenda. Accommodate guest speakers into the agenda timing.

**Ms. Gutierrez moved to approve the agenda as amended; Ms. Gedatus-Garcia seconded. Carried.**

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR THE DECEMBER 6<sup>TH</sup> BOARD MEETING

Changes: Not in attendance: Steven Oates, Actually in attendance: Kathy Reamer, Takara Spaulding. Corrections: Reamer for Riemer, Ms. for Ms. Ms., Ms. Ander for Mr. Mary.

Ms. Gedatus-Garcia moved to approve December minutes as amended. Mr. Egeh seconded. Carried.

IV. OPEN MIKE

Ms. Gutierrez encouraged student interaction with the Food Service people, perhaps through the Student Council, to help improve lunch. Discussion expanded to ideas for what the students could learn and how they could contribute to menu design, etc. Those

involved will explore these options. Discussion shifted to the need to clarify the philosophy of the food program. Consider factors such as finance/budget, quality and kinds of foods, alignment between menu and curriculum, etc. Now is a good time to look into this for short and long range plans. Someone raised the concept of educating the students about nutrition through that day's lunch. Patsy explained that the cooking crew was constrained in their ability to cook foods from scratch for lack of certain cooking tools.

Next meeting learn from the cooking team needs from the school to provide more acceptable food to students, etc.

Mr. McMahon asked about what and how past agenda items were going to be updated in future Board Meetings – progress reports. Examples are what will the school do about MACS membership.

Recruiting – set goals to be able to recruit and then teach students of more cultures and countries than currently exist at school. Consider the Little Ecuador area of NE Minneapolis. Concern that Latino students are not staying with MNIC. Proposed goal: for the short term fill the student seats at ELA, long term pursue diversify. A large number of Karen (from Myanmar) are moving into our area.

A: CONSENT AGENDA

None

B: REGULAR AGENDA

I. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT (KEVIN BYRNE)

a) General progress report

BST test results from UTEC – 6 of 8 passed reading, 8 of 14 passed math? all passed at least one test. Staff attribute improvements in student testing to tutoring, strong focus on preparing students to learn academic material and how to take tests.

There is a potential purchaser of Unity House from PUC. MNIC is pursuing a \$500,000 grant to improve this facility. The new purchaser may help improve the facility as well.

b) Student enrollment update

ADM is 427.16, currently. This is just the break-even level of enrollment for the budget.

c) Hiring and Layoff update

Personnel Report for December 2007 presented.

Just before the Winter Holiday Break Susan Airhart informed Administration that payroll is too high for the budget. The Cash Flow issue compounds the financial situation. So over the break school administration worked on layoffs. No teaching staff were laid off. The layoffs have been accomplished. Kevin will update all staff about these changes. (Ms. Ander arrived 3:01 PM) (Ms. Libman left) (We took a break from this topic for Insurance presentation by Gloria Thompson and update for the FOCUS Program.)

Ms. Gutierrez moved to approve the HR Report, Ms. Gedatus-Garcia seconded.

Discussion – clarifying if there is a hiring freeze or not. This would not be a complete freeze so that real staffing requirements are satisfied. Carried.

II. PROGRAM UPDATE: FOCUS (REGGIE WOMACK)

3:50 PM – Mr. Womack (Circles), Mr. Brown (Circles), Mr. Powell (Shiloh), Mr. Reddit (Sabathani) presented

Handout: FOCUS \_ Future of Our Community, Unity and Strength is a student after-school "club" held mostly at Unity House. The MNIC Circle Sites Security Team is working to keep students in line and safe. They invite students into weekly meetings to discuss conflict resolution and other relevant topics for students. Discussion usually shifts

to students talking about their real issues and needs. This activity provides support for them. Attendance is increasing. These staff men focus especially on some of the toughest students. They have learned that building relationship with these students helps in other ways. Now that they have built relationships with the students, students are more responsive to staff. Mr. Reddit shared about how many students came to participate in a skit/play about conflict resolution, more than the number of parts available. Students learn to acknowledge their problems, dreams, and explore how to pursue them. Many students don't have positive role models in their lives. Students are learning that they are loved, accepted, and many are opening up to give the same to others. The FOCUS team wants to expand the kinds of things they do with the students.

Ms. Ander praised the team for the awesome work they are doing. These men are also getting students back to the school. They would like to be called the Safety Support Staff – this is what they are doing. Many students come to school and have issues to process before they can start to learn. The students need to have someone to talk to and learn how to deal with their issues. If this team can get funding for food, transportation, take the students to other places that will enable them to be more effective with the students. They will prepare a budget for these needs. Right now the priority is helping the students know how to deal with the basic things in their lives. (4:15 PM)

### III. BOARD SEAT DISTRIBUTION, AND MEETING LOCATIONS (KEVIN BYRNE)

Mr. Byrne asked, if in the coming elections would the Board accept that there be Board members representative of the 2 programs? Should the Board rotate location of the meetings among the facilities? When it comes to elections, the students and staff who can vote may not know of candidates from other sites and tend to vote for those they know. Discussion ensued about the value of committed representation for the two programs. Members discussed if and how the Board would meet in other locations.

### IV. FINANCE (KEVIN BYRNE)

#### a) Receipts and disbursements

Ms. Gutierrez moved to accept the financial reports presented. Mr. K. Mohamed seconded. Carried. Mr. McMahon encouraged everyone to study this report. Mr. K. Mohamed left, Ms. Gedatus-Garcia left quorum lost 4:50.

#### b) Insurance (Gloria Thompson) (Started at 3:02 PM)

Presentation about risk, liability and insurance. Most people purchase insurance because they are required to do so. Insurance is used to help protect or offset risks and liabilities. MNIC gets insurance from Berkley Risk Administrators Company, which is a non-profit organization under the MSBA. Handouts: presentation document, MNIC Insurance Summary. Inform your agent when something is to be added under the coverage. (Mr. K. Mohamed left 3:20)

Schools are non-profits and have different risks from for-profit companies. Berkeley provides the right coverages for schools. Each school and site have different needs. Each Insurance provider and policy packages are different between companies, locations, etc. MNIC's policy is an enhanced coverage policy. All MNIC staff need to be covered for liabilities. School leaders need professional liability (handout). All board members are liable for a suit, so this insurance covers all members. Board members are held to higher level of accountability because this is a school. This policy covers individuals for mistakes and errors but not for gross, intentional crimes/wrong acts.

Who is covered? All board members, administrators, school committees. The insurer covers members for and during accusations of wrong-doing. Ms. Thompson has seen Berkeley continue to cover schools when private/corporate insurers would drop them. Teachers are covered, as well as Volunteer workers (non-retainers). Organizations not listed in the policy are not covered.

Concerning facilities – a building owner could be sued, but only when the school is also sued does the school’s insurance become available. The leases define liabilities. Once a lease is signed, then the owners are not interested in changing the lease. So beware of possible problems in your leases and correct them before signing.

Few exclusions are worth worrying about. Some exclusions can be covered by a different policy. There are two kinds of policies: occurrence-based from an event which occurred on a date, or claims-made-based from a claim that pertains to something during the policy period. Berkeley allows purchase of a 1-year policy “tail” to protect for 12 months after the end of a policy. A “tail” provides for when a policy ceases to exist, and a claim is made for a time period when the policy was in force, but money is no longer available from the insurer. Schools in financial trouble tend to have more suits. Stakeholders in the school’s success or failure seek redress from troubles. Most of the suits come over financially crippled organizations/businesses.

Handout – Statutes for 124D.10 Focused on conflict of interest law.

(3:43 Mr. Egeh left) Minimum premium for professional liability is \$2000/yr. (3:45 Mr. K. Mohamed returned) Discussed a liability/coverage trail: if a teacher drives a student and has crash. Ms. Thompson encourages schools to get coverage for potential total loss. Ms. Thompson explained what various terms mean.

#### V. SPACE UPDATES, CONTRACTS, BIDS AND LEASES

##### a) Contract RFP progress (No quorum)

Finance committee broke down current contract components for future Request for Proposals (RFPs). These components were rewritten to be more understandable by staff. A schedule has been developed to prepare the RFPs. The language of the RFPs needs to be clear enough to ensure that bidders will bid on what the school wants. The survey will help clarify what is needed. Discussion about how to know who would be the best vendor. The committee will develop a scoring system to ensure clarity and even-handedness.

They will look for scope and quality of service proposed and the price. They will build in a negotiation phase after bidder is selected to adjust contract to fine-tune the contract before going to the Board. The RFP Process reveals many issues of contracting, receiving services, and benefiting from them. They will seek counsel on this process from someone at the MDE.

##### b) Minnehaha Transportation Final Contract – dropped from agenda

#### VI. OTHER BUSINESS

Next Board meeting will be February 7, 4:00 PM at the Shiloh Temple site.

#### VII. ADJOURNMENT

**Mr. McMahan moved to adjourn at 4:58 PM. Mr. White Seconded.**

Submitted by Stephen C. Bosacker