

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

Approved Minutes

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Thursday, December 6, 2007

2:00 p.m.

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

Ex officio: Kevin Byrne, Patsy Brooks, Idris 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 2:17PM.

Members in attendance: Elizabeth Gedatus-Garcia, Rebecca Gutierrez, Vin McMahon, Ron White, Mary Ander, Kassim Mohamed. Abdiraman Egeh. 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), Janet White (Teacher), Kathy Reamer (Teacher), Takara Spaulding (Vista Volunteer)

II. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR THE NOVEMBER 1st BOARD MEETING

Mr. McMahon moved to approve minutes as amended; Ms. Gutierrez seconded. Carried.

Strike paragraph about Mr. Lopez, Change title of document from "Agenda" to "Minutes".

IV. OPEN MIKE

Ms. Gutierrez – Shared an idea for showers for the gym using the gym storage room

Ms. Gedatus-Garcia – Concerns about the food service. Ms. Gedatus-Garcia wants to find how to improve the whole process of how meal decisions are made. There are concerns that enrollment may be affected by how meals are perceived. At the same time she wants to protect the food staff from criticism and complaints.

Ms. Gutierrez wants to find ways to align what is taught about nutrition with what the

students are offered to help reinforce both what is offered and what students learn.
Suggestion to create a food advisory group to support the food staff team. Amy will bring this to the team.

Comment about Design for Learning's (DL) HR service. It is a challenge for staff when staff make repeated calls to DL but can only do so during staff breaks. Can we coordinate between staff and DL times so this can work better?

Discussion about the time it takes for people to learn about and respond to problems within the school. In recent situations people became concerned and the problem was exacerbated. Question about how to communicate with the staff – use the staff bulletin board on the website. There should be no blast emails within MNIC. Use the link in the email Kevin sent a message to use the bulletin board for sharing ideas and concerns. Some ELA staff are confused about questions that were raised in a blast email. Kevin will address these needs.

HR Issues expressed here may come down to communications problems. It will help MNIC as people seek to become more effective in communicating about changes (in when things are done, forms, etc.), practices, who to communicate with about what, etc.

ELA students are planning to create a student council. They would like support from the Board. **Ms. Gedatus-Garcia moved that the Board support ELA Students to form a student council. Mr. Kassim Mohamed seconded. Carried.**

Mr. White met with a student at Shiloh, who wants to have a student dance this year. This was done last year at Boys and Girls Club.

A) CONSENT AGENDA

Recommendations from Finance and HR Committees: No Consent Agenda

B) REGULAR AGENDA

I. BOARD VACANCY/ELECTION TO REPLACE MICHAEL LOPEZ (candidates will appear at 2:15 to make brief statements. A brief description will be mailed out on all candidates before hand)

A. Orientation to the Election: Mr. Byrne explained that the Board members are the only legal members of this non-profit organization. These are the ones who will vote to fill the vacant seat from Michael Lopez.

B. Statements, Questions to and answers from candidates.

Kathy Riemer. Has been with MNIC since 2005. She would like to serve on the Board. She is lead teacher and site leader of the Unity Site and oversees Shiloh site as well. She coaches circle site teaching practices. She believes serving on the Board will give her a better perspective on the school and will be able to represent Board decisions to the staff and students.

Takara Spalding: In her second year as volunteer. Working out of UTEC, but is involved with Circle Sites. She wants to be on the Board to build experience and to serve the school.

Janet White – Site coordinator at Sabathani. She will have been with MNIC 3 years in January. She believes in the school's mission, the students and that the staff have the students' best interest at heart. She can represent Circle Sites interests. She knows how students there view things. She has achieved much with MNIC students. She can improve things for the school by serving on the Board.

Question from Ms. Gedatus-Garcia to all three. She thinks all sites should be represented. What will you use to address the different sites needs?

Ms. Reimer: The Board is where this starts – to unite the school, from the different programs’ structures and practices. She thinks getting conflicts out from between the sites starts in how the Board works together.

Ms. Spaulding: She has come to know people at all the sites. By being at the different sites she can bring perspectives to the Board as a support staff person.

Ms. White: Communication is the key to understanding. She noted the differences between the programs and stated that by communicating with one another we can come together. The students will pick up from the Board’s collaboration.

Ms. Gutierrez thanked the candidates for their genuine interest and care about the school. “Please stay involved, even if one of you are not elected today.”

Mr. McMahon presented a letter from an individual, Hassan Hilowle, from ELA who wants to be considered for the Board. Ron allowed for write-in on the ballot. Mr. McMahon read the letter.

- C. Election process: Members voted by secret ballot. Steve Bosacker and Idris Mohamed counted and confirmed the ballots and reported results:

7 members present, **7 votes:**

3 for Ms. White

2 for Ms. Spaulding

1 for Ms. Reimer

1 for Mr. Hilowle

Ms. Janet White won the election.

- D. Suggestion to allow Takara and Kathy to participate in a committee.
E. Janet White joined the Board meeting as the newly elected Board member.

II. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT (KEVIN BYRNE)

- A. General progress report

Times for Meetings: Board meetings start at 2 PM. Committees meet starting at 3:30 PM.

Question about liabilities for Board members: Kevin will invite MNIC’s insurance agent to come speak to the Board about these things next month.

- B. Student enrollment update

All sites total ADMs: = 420

There is no financial margin for MNIC right now. Because of lower ADMs MNIC lost \$30,000 because of the lower ADM count at ELA and earlier expenses to start the school year and move to the new ELA site.

If MNIC cannot increase the number of students budget cuts will be needed. MNIC is being paid on 420 students. MNIC is still finding students who did not know MNIC moved. They thought the school was closed.

Plan for recruiting. Idris Mohamad, Ishmael Sheik and Idris Mohamed are recruiting students. The flyer was redesigned. Students don’t like the name ELA.

They don't recognize that this is a High School. The name will be changed. A new video will be created of the new site to broadcast on cable TV to the community. Flyers will be distributed to different areas such as NE Minneapolis, further North and West areas of St. Paul. They will get help from people who work with youth. Request to call students who dropped out.

C. Report on centralized security

Document diagram of MNIC security personnel passed around. Reggie Womack coordinates security. Security staff will receive training with security certificates issued when completed. (Ms. Gedatus-Garcia stepped out)

Report of thefts at ELA. Concern about possible altercations within the elevator at Unity House.

Each site has differences. Security practices are tailored in coordination with the site leader according to that site's needs.

III. PROGRAM UPDATE: F.O.C.U.S.

Program developed by security staff. Each security staff person will mentor a specific student. They get to know students, to be proactive about issues and problems that may be arising among the students or in the community. More on this next month.

IV. FINANCE (KEVIN BYRNE)

A. Balance sheet, Receipts and disbursements

Question about financial challenges and scenarios that could occur. The school needs to prepare to cover for cash flow shortfall in late winter. Mr. Byrne is working to contain costs. Managing the number of staff for each site and total staff numbers is one strategy being used. The school needs to keep student enrollment numbers and increase enrollment by 60 students. Question about when revenue comes for new students. The school has to make the case to MDE to increase payment based on ADMs. The MDE will make immediate changes in payment based on increase or decrease of ADM.

B. Enrollment/retention incentives

No discussion

V. HR REPORT (KIMBERLY PADUVERIS)

Kevin passed out the HR Report. **Ms. Ander moved to accept the MNIC Personnel Report. Ms. Gedatus-Garcia seconded. Carried.**

VI. GRANTS, AWARDS, DONATIONS

A. First Book Award (Kevin Byrne)

Mr. Byrne received a pallet of books for classes and students. (Ms. Gedatus-Garcia left) This collection is multi-cultural. Request from Mr. McMahon for ELA students reading needs. Most are reading at 2nd or 3rd grade level. No one is reading at high school level.

Worldwide Book Drive would look out for specific book needs. Challenge for MNIC students is that children's books are not appropriate subject matter, but students' reading levels are not high enough for more mature subject matter. Comments that the more students read, the better they can read. Idris Mohamed thinks some of these books can be valuable. Some are motivated to select books they want. Others don't care to read, even though they take books. Encourage and seek to motivate the students to read whatever they have. Ms. Gutierrez learned that there are many reading level appropriate books that have been

published recently. Idris Mohamed appealed that people find ways to make existing books usable and appreciated by the students.

People shared their experiences with helping students read. Janet gives students variety – first an easy book, then a more difficult book, then easy again. This way students learn how to tackle a book that is difficult.

VII. BOARD TERMS/COMMITTEES

A. Board Member Terms: Board members resolved a schedule of terms:

Member	Representation	Position	Date Elected	Term ends
Abdighani Ali	At-Large		May 2006	June 2009
Mary Ander	Teacher			June 2008
Abdirahman Egeh	Teacher		May 2007	June 2010
Elizabeth Gedatus-Garcia	Teacher		May 2007	June 2008
Rebecca Gutierrez	Teacher	Secretary	May 2007	June 2010
Janet White	Teacher	Vice Chair	December 2007	June 2010
Vin McMahan	Teacher	Treasurer	May 2006	June 2009
Kassim Mohamed	Teacher		May 2007	June 2009
Ron White	Community	Chair		June 2008

B. Electing Officers to the Board. After discussion and by consensus: Ms. Gedatus-Garcia moved that Mr. White will remain Chairperson. Ms. Janet White will serve as Vice Chair, Mr. McMahan will serve as Treasurer and Ms. Gutierrez will serve as Secretary. Ms. Janet White seconded. Carried.

VIII. SPACE UPDATES, CONTRACTS, BIDS AND LEASES

A. Steve reported on the Unity House Planning Grant, which is completed. Next the school will pursue a construction grant due January 15th for up to \$500,000 to remodel Unity House this next summer.

B. Report on the auto damage. The lawyer said paying for this will not create a problem. If the adjuster will pay.

C. MICCS TO MNIC LEASES

Mr. Egeh moved to approve the leases intended from August between MNIC and MICCS for Shiloh and for 300 Industrial Blvd. Ms. Ander seconded. Carried.

IX. OTHER BUSINESS

The Board discussed plans to prepare an RFP for a future contract for services to MNIC.

Request to continue reporting on past actions. Minutes will reflect previous topics that require follow up

X. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Ander moved to adjourn at 4:53 PM.

Submitted by Stephen C. Bosacker