



Annual Report 2009-2010

**Produced by Designs for Learning and the
Minnesota Internship Center Charter School
300 Industrial Boulevard Northeast
Minneapolis, MN 55413
<http://www.mnic.org>**

The body of this report follows the Commissioner’s Required Data Elements for Charter School Annual Reports:

Narrative elements

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1. Annual Report Introduction

An annual report introduction could cite the purpose of the report and include the school’s mission, vision and a brief history of the school.

Background

The Minnesota Internship Center (MNIC), a charter school that serves high school students in Minneapolis, has completed its seventh year of operation and is pleased to present this 2009-2010 Annual Report. This Report is prepared for the Minnesota Department of Education, Pillsbury United Communities, MNIC’s sponsor, and any other interested parties to report on aspects of the school, its activities and results.

Our mission: The Minnesota Internship Center partners with communities and learners to achieve academic, career, and life success. *Imagine waking up every day knowing that life is on your side.*

The Minnesota Internship Center is a unique type of high school in Minnesota with community and business roots – one that offers relevant learning for its high school student population through the context of career-focused internships. We are a school which helps older teens with multiple challenges-- including foreign-born persons – recover and advance in academic and career learning, learning that is relevant and achievable for their lives and dreams.

School History, Rationale and Model

MNIC was started in 2003 to provide a relevant and realistic opportunity for the thousands of urban students in the Twin Cities who have missed out on the intended benefits of public education through multiple and complex issues in students’ lives. Because of these issues, most if not all of the high-school-aged students that come to MNIC are mired between the necessity to earn a high school diploma (with resulting prospects for a better future through better employment) and the fact that they are 2 to 5 years behind in their high school education.

The factors affecting most MNIC students when first enrolled are multiple and complex. These factors contribute to students being at risk of not graduating. Primary factors are that students tend to be very poor economically and almost all have experienced significant hindrances to learning and mastering

academic knowledge and skills due to life, language, family challenges. Student choices are in many ways an outgrowth of the context of their lives. MNIC staff passion is to give them new opportunities and ways to choose what previously was not available.

MNIC has worked since its inception to establish an effective model for educating these students in the middle of the challenges that have held them back from a full and effective education. The structure and priorities of the school appear to be non-conventional in large part because the conventional school system has not worked for these students. As has been identified by numerous educational research groups, these students have four primary educational prerequisites to be able to overcome their historical handicaps to a diploma: Relationship, Relevance, Results and Rigor. Relationship focuses on the students' need for trusted adult relationships that give students the emotional power to focus on what these adults have to give them – a safe place to learn knowledge, skill and wisdom. Relevance focuses on the students' needs for learning that relates to what they know and care about. Few are ready to believe that a grammar text book will get them a paying job when they don't know where their next meal will come from or if they will have a place to sleep the next night. Internships and academics that link to life and job skills become object lessons and the path to that necessary future. Results focuses on proving to students that their small wins are a sign that they can learn and they can overcome the fear or shame that has pushed them back into quitting. Rigor focuses on building and accelerating student learning when students have gained the necessary foundations of knowledge, skill and confidence.

While the new 4-Rs are important, other research shows that people who are in significantly life-challenged situations can emerge from their conditions with multiple and simultaneous supports in their lives. This is evident with homeless men in Rockford, IL (EMPOWR, U of N. IL), child poverty in urban settings (Child Poverty and Urban Policy, Judith A. Chafel, page 141) and recent reports on research with schools (Consortium on Chicago School Research (CCSR) see Organizing Schools for Improvement: Lessons from Chicago, 2010, University of Chicago Press) and Teach for America (www.teachforamerica.org), to name a few. The needs and challenges of these students are great, and their challenges result in eruptions during school. This happens sometimes through student choices, staff mistakes, or factors outside the school. When large numbers of students like this attend the same school the entire school is affected. The charter school world in Minnesota has its own issues that complicate the mission. This turbulence often impacts parts of the school for short or even longer periods. Because of the emerging expertise of MNIC staff, many of these interruptions are now being curtailed or avoided.

For students learning well requires a measure of stability – physically, emotionally, mentally and relationally. Because these students live in dangerous communities and various, often unpredictable events can interrupt their lives, the issues of the community can and do intrude on the school. Keeping the building safe is a first prerequisite. MNIC staff do much more and remain constantly vigilant. In spring 2010 an individual in the community determined that he was going to get into the Unity Site to get to an unidentified student. This person and his comrades attempted a number of times to threaten students, impersonate registering to attend the school, among other ploys. One time these men drove by the school property with a van door open and a man sitting in the seat with a rifle on his knees in full view of students and staff who were outside taking a break. The impression was that these people intended to harm or kill the student. Police were called in and the site was on high alert for many days. These events greatly disturbed the students and the staff. Survival and threat of danger can easily override the plans of a school or class. This one event disrupted learning for many days.

This report is a snap-shot on the school's path to perfecting this system. The CCSR has found after 20 years of studying Chicago's public schools, there is no "silver bullet" to improving schools in tough urban environments. It takes careful attention and continuing management of critical factors to gain ground. MNIC leaders and staff have persevered with their passion and focus. Lessons learned in previous years help current staff. Every aspect of the MNIC programs are intended to contribute to moving students out of their mired situations into academic, career and life success. There are many challenges to creating this envisioned system, as is the case for any school serving students at risk. This last year witnessed school

staff teams who are far more adept at working with these students to teach them and help them connect with the supports that other organizations and agencies provide. Gaining ground on this is a complex and ongoing challenge. If there are weaknesses in team competence and collaboration, the program can suffer. The fact that there have been substantial successes with students encourages the staff to press on. Their passion is to enable more and more of MNIC's students to climb out of their mire onto a solid place where they have the skills and resources to say that "life is on their side."

In this last year MNIC succeeded in expanding excellent contextualized classroom-based instruction and internships aligned with Minnesota academic standards, to the best level yet. MNIC teachers provide student-tuned opportunities, a personalized education plan, to enable each student to start where they are in knowledge, credits and interest. This is necessary because of the great diversity of academic readiness and credits the students have. Internships are a foundational theme to the program, but students are not required to participate in an internship. Many students prefer full days in the classroom, or paid employment rather than an internship. These opportunities offer valuable potential in career and academic growth. Special education services are provided wherever needed in all programs. Staff are prepared to support students to move forward in this high school education. Each year more tangible support systems are set up to help and teachers' skills are advanced.

Programs and Sites

In 2009-2010 MNIC operated two programs which focus on students with different types of needs. Due to these needs separate approaches are necessary. The English Language Academy site (ELA) serves individuals who are children of immigrants, who are native-born as well as recently arrived to the USA. Most of these lack sufficient fluency in English. The Circle Sites Program (3 sites) serves individuals who have experienced multiple challenges to success in the traditional Minnesota school environment.

The Minnesota Internship Center has been approved as a Work Experience school by the Minnesota Department of Education. Many MNIC students combine work with classroom activity for some credit.

MNIC has four approved sites that enable the school to protect students from excessive amounts of distractions through smaller and more manageable numbers of students in classes/Circles and sites. This has significantly reduced threats and instances of violence and disruptions. It also makes it very much easier and safer for students to get to school, since most students travelling in Minneapolis must navigate the gang territories and safety concerns about who is with whom. Optimal staffing for safety and crisis prevention training further helps reduce incidents.

Sites during 2009-10 included:

- 300 Industrial Boulevard: School number 010; located near East Hennepin Ave. and Hwy 280. in Northeast Minneapolis; houses the English Academy, administrative headquarters and food service
- Unity Site, 2507 Fremont Avenue: School number 015; in North Minneapolis; houses two Circles
- Sabathani site, 310 ELA 38th Street: School number 055; in South Minneapolis; houses two Circles
- UTEC Campus, 1313 SE 5th Street: School number 020; in Dinkytown, houses two Circles

Most Sites are within walking or easy busing distance; MNIC provides transportation between sites for students and teachers. Most program needs are met within a site, but not all. Teachers and students sometimes move from site to site. Students are placed at the MNIC site most appropriate for them based on interests and needs.

Due to MDE and DOE definitions of a physical school, MNIC sites are identified as separate schools, even through most of the sites operate as a single program. These definitions add to work required to plan and manage the school, and meet program and compliance to Federal and State mandates.

The Circle Sites serve a mainly African-American population, many of whom have dropped out of a “regular” or alternative education programs or are otherwise not academically engaged. Circle Sites during 2009-10 were:

- **Unity** – the Unity Campus offers career-focused programs in Health Care, Transportation and general career exploration. It has a capacity of 150 students.
- **UTEC** - The Dinkytown Jobs and Career Center near the University of Minnesota’s ELA-Bank campus offers strong career and job programs, including some with a limited amount of paid training. Located at the University Technology Center, the site hosts our Building Trades program. This program is a joint program with Tree Trust (<http://www.treetrust.org/>).
- **Sabathani** - Our Education and Health Care Internship Circle, is located in Sabathani Community Center at 310 38th Street South in Minneapolis. The program emphasizes regular basic high school accreditation in the areas of English, History and Math, as well internships and trainings in health care related careers. This site hosts an ABE program that is part of MNIC services to students. All Sabathani programs partner with job training agencies at Sabathani Community Center and in south Minneapolis.

The MNIC English Language Academy (English Academy) site is primarily LEP students of varying English fluency. The English Academy site moved during the summer of 2007 to 300 Industrial Boulevard Northeast. English Academy operated even further below capacity during the 2009-2010 school year with approximately 115 students in attendance. Students served were almost all ELA African, with Somalis the largest group, Hmong and Karen and a small number of Spanish speaking students. Many students are recent immigrants to the U.S. This site has a high school diploma program with an intensive focus on the development of English skills in Vocabulary, Reading, and Writing for those students who need it (ELL). Standard High School subjects are offered to students with a focus on reading skills. Students have additional learning opportunities in math and English through a small extended day program without outside financial support. Through volunteers, students receive homework help after school as well as individual help in the classroom. Internships opportunities were expanded in 2009-2010 and some students transferred to the UTEC site to take advantage of specific internship options.

2. School Governance

Information on school governance might include: board election date, 2009-10 board member names and contact information, board member positions and the group they represent (e.g., teachers, parents, community), teacher file folder number (if applicable), and board attendance data. The information may also include any changes in the board during the reporting year indicating if members left during the year, returned for the following year, or did not return and comments regarding board changes. A sample governance table can be found in the report template section.

The MNIC Board holds nine seats. There were a total of twelve meetings of the MNIC Board during 2009-10. In the Annual Meeting (10/22/2009) new bylaws were approved to bring the school to compliance with new statutes and address other issues. The board election was conducted at this same meeting. Nicole Harris (community seat) and Tracy McFarland (parent seat) were elected to the Board and Kat Wigle-Anthony and Takara Spauling retired from the board. Omar Fiqi (teacher) was reelected to the board. Board membership remained stable the rest of the year. The election of new members for the

2010-2011 year was conducted on May 20, 2010. New members would be seated in the first meeting of the next school year.

MNIC employs an Executive Director and two administrators, one for the English Academy and one for the Circle sites. The school as a whole is managed by a team led by its Executive Director, Kevin Byrne, and including the program administrators for the two programs, key supervisors, and the data manager.

The below chart shows all MNIC Board members during 2009-10. Note: Phone/email information is included for those members who were on the Board and are still available for contact.

MNIC Board Membership in 2009-2010

Board Member Name	Member Status	Board Position	Group	Service Dates	Email	Attendance
Kathy Anthony-Wigle	Teacher	Secretary	Teacher - 380859	7/1/09 to 10/22/09		4 of 4
Ali Egaale	Community	Member	Community member	Full year	egaale@yahoo.com	7 of 12
Jama Farah	At-Large	Member	Staff	Full year	Jfarah@mnico.org	6 of 12
Omar Fiqi	Teacher	Member	Teacher - 369215	Full year		6 of 12
Nicole Harris	Community	Member	Staff	10/22/09 forward	nharris@mnic.org	6 of 8
Susan Knittel	Teacher	Chairperson	Teacher - 387399	Full year	sknittel@mnic.org	12 of 12
Tracy McFarland	Parent	Member	Staff	10/22/09 forward		4 of 8
Kathy Reamer	Teacher	Treasurer	Teacher - 380352	Full year	KReamer@mnic.org	12 of 12
Takara Spaulding	Community	Member	Staff	7/1/09 to 10/22/09		2 of 4
Oliver White	At-Large	Secretary (after K. Anthony - Wigle)	Staff	Full year	owhite@mnic.org	12 of 12
Reggie Womack	Community	Vice-Chairperson	Staff	Full year	rwomack@mnic.org	10 of 12
Kevin Byrne	Director	Ex-officio	Staff	Full year	kbryne@mnic.org	12 of 12

Due to significant changes in charter school statutes in 2009, new requirements were applied to the school in 2009-2010. This included new requirements for Board Training, changes in definition of conflicts of interest, reporting requirements, professional development plans for all supervisors lacking a principal's

license, and more. Once it became clear what these statutes meant, the school board and administration was able to implement required changes and practices.

Board Training was implemented for all board members in Spring 2010 and is being maintained according to the statute requirement. While the initial training included all members, as new members are inducted into the board, these members' training will be separate from and possibly different from other members' training. The board is considering this situation.

In 2009-2010 MNIC initiated a Leadership Academy for all supervisors and individuals interested in advancing their leadership skills and competencies. A primary deliverable from this first instance of the Leadership Academy was to update Job Descriptions and create personal Professional Development Plans. These plans were approved by the Board and are to be implemented going forward. In 2010-2011 these plans will be reviewed and enhanced as supervisors have more resources and identify important factors to improve their plans.

Another significant change to Charter School statutes was the redefinition of the charter school sponsor role into the new authorizer role. Due to the great shift in responsibilities now being placed on authorizers and uncertainties about which sponsors will pursue application or will be approved as authorizers, the board has initiated plans with administration to protect the school from this new threat. As of the end of the school year, it was apparent that at least 40 charter schools were in a similar position, not knowing if or when they will have an approved authorizer. This has also distracted the school in its primary purpose of educating Minnesota students.

At the same time as MN Statutes were changed, the economic crisis further extended into the State budget. The result was an increase in state holdback on payments from 10% to 27%. Because charter schools are poor in assets, the prospects of finding and securing sufficient financing nearly triple the amount of financing to maintain cash flow was very poor. Significant time and effort by the board and especially administration was given to find and secure sufficient financing. The solution emerged with a new company setting up business in Minnesota from California that secured a way to advance cash based on legal commitments of state funds for the school. Few charter schools were able to secure traditional bank lines of credit sufficient to meet their needs. Prospects for MNIC to secure only bank funding was very poor. This change also distracted the school and board from their primary purpose of educating Minnesota students.

In late winter 2010 the Federal Department of Education cancelled the current School Improvement Grants, two of which MNIC was receiving. A new School Improvement Grant was created and applied to the lowest 5% performing schools in the state in terms of MCA-II Test results and Graduation Rates. These schools were placed on the Persistently Low Achieving Schools list (PLAS). MNIC was placed on this list for two of its sites, Unity and English Academy (English Academy). It was made clear to school leaders that MNIC must apply for this grant. Time available to accomplish this was very short and changes were made almost weekly in application requirements. Significant time and costs were invested by school staff and consultants for this application in May and June 2010, which continued into July 2010. This impacted Administration and Board activities, diverting attention from preparing for the next school year. The strategies and plans created by this plan were met with great enthusiasm and hope by school leaders and Board. The Board and Administration received news with great frustration in July 2010 that the applications were disapproved. This also happened to all but one other charter school on the PLAS list. Actual reasons for this disapproval are still not clear, as no formal letter has been delivered to the Board. More discussion of this will be presented in the next annual report. At this time there are no staff development funds available for MNIC aside from the regular Title funds available to schools. The impact of this is that staff development has been downgraded at a time when it should be increased to benefit students.

Overall, this school year witnessed a large number of changes, challenges and threats to the school. The Board with close collaboration with the Executive Director and school leaders worked hard and long to protect and preserve the school and the quality of the school program.

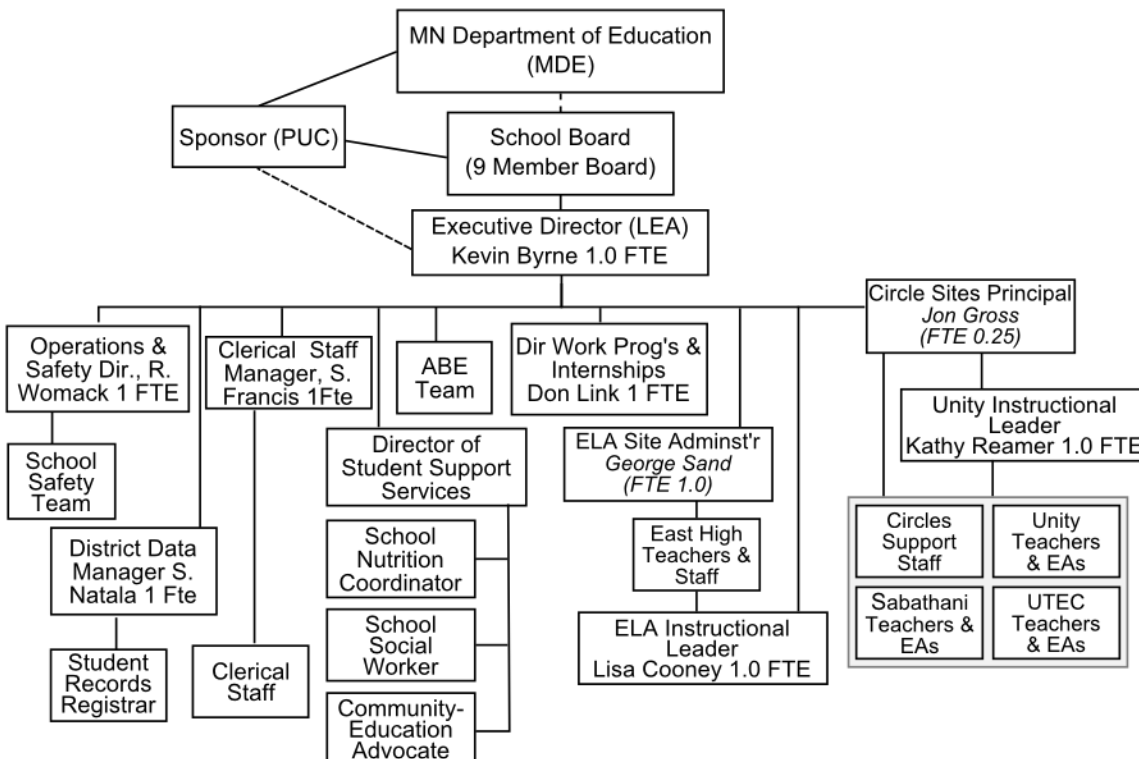
3. School Management and Administration

Information on school management might include: names and file folder numbers, when applicable, for each member of the school management team. A sample table titled "Management and Faculty" can be found in the report template section. Reports could provide a description of the basic role/responsibilities or structure of the school management team, including: director(s)/principal(s), assistant director(s), deans, business manager, administrative assistants or a faculty flow chart. Content could also include a description of the professional background of the school director/principal. If the school director does not hold a valid administrator's license, the annual report must also document the implementation of the professional development plan.

MNIC Management Structure

In pursuing the mission of the school, MNIC leaders and staff discovered early on that there is a significant need for alternative high school education in the urban metropolitan area. Conventional high school culture and structure has not produced the levels of success needed by students MNIC serves. Management structure at MNIC is an outgrowth of its mission strategy to serve students. MNIC is relatively small school with multiple sites. Conventional school management structures do not work well in this environment, where a dynamic blend of team and some autonomy is needed at each site, yet strong leadership and direction is needed for the entire school. The diagram below represents the general organizational structure of the school from a staffing perspective.

MNIC Organizational Chart 2009-2010



Because of the smaller number of teachers at each site in 2009-2010, it was very important to build as much consistency and support for the entire school through the Executive Director and school leadership team. The leadership team is generally composed of the Executive Director, Kevin Byrne; Director of Work Programs and Internships, Don Link; Director of Student Support Services, Amy Libman; ELA Site Administrator, George Sand; Circle Sites Principal, Jon Gross. Others participate as there is time and need: Kathy Reamer Unity Instructional Leader and in prior years Lead Teacher for Circle Sites, Reggie Womack Operations and Safety Director; Lisa Cooney ELA Instructional Leader; Sue Francis Staff Clerical Manager; Kristin Quinn, Lead Teacher for Sabathani Site. This management and leadership design affords MNIC some degree of efficiency and helps build a stronger, cohesive team of educators. In 2009-2010 specific steps were taken to more carefully integrate the Circles operating at the different sites with strong internship opportunities and to provide professional development for teachers. This integration is the result of lessons learned from prior years when sites were allowed too much autonomy, which resulted in some instances of dysfunction in the site teams and poorer performance for teaching and student learning. This kind of integration was strongly encouraged from surveys and conversations with staff over the previous two years, and from Board discussions.

Maintaining effective and regular communication with staff at each site has been crucial for the school. Because of the constant possibilities for disturbances, safety team staff and members of the leadership team remain available to address any issue as it arises. This often requires great flexibility by leaders and staff to allow the right people to act as needed. Building a strong and respectful culture where individuals know what is important and how to act is a recognized necessity. This emerging culture has demonstrated an important capacity to create new innovative solutions to emerging challenges. This adaptability was well demonstrated this last year with the many challenges that appeared in the charter schools in Minnesota.

Weekly and sometimes daily meetings are held to manage the adaptations needed, while maintaining as much momentum on priority goals and strategies for the school. In the mean time, the cadre of MNIC staff work as diligently as they can with tools and resources to benefit students.

Executive Director and Leaders

Executive Director

Kevin Byrne founded MNIC and is the Executive Director. He is Past President of the Minnesota Association of Continuing and Adult Educators. He was a Bloomington Public Schools administrator for over twenty years, and while there he founded Mindquest, the nation's first web-based public school diploma program, and SHAPE, one of the state's largest adult basic education and alternative school system. In the late 1980's, he worked with McKnight Foundation and Employment Action Center to create Skills 2000, in which many of the internship program ideas were first developed. Kevin holds an M.A. in Educational Administration.

Director of Internships and Job Programs:

Don Link was a work coordinator with the St. Paul Public Schools for 36 years. Don serves as administrator and heads the work and internship programs. He has developed and later sold several businesses as well as taught. Don also serves as our Math Curriculum Director.

School Operations

Several aspects of operational performance (community partnerships, attendance and retention, staff turnover, safety, and facilities) are addressed in the Program Successes and Program Challenges sections of the report. MNIC operations include the school's own food service, which prepares food on-site at the

English Academy (delivered daily to the other sites). To transport students to its schools, MNIC contracts with Minnehaha Transport for students who attend the English Academy. For the other sites, MNIC provides bus tokens and quarters so students can use Metro Transit (for transport both to MNIC sites and to work sites for students who participate in a work program).

Strategy and Balance

To address the enrollment issue while planning for a better future, MNIC is beginning a strategic planning process in February 2010. School leadership will revisit key aspects of the program including the number of sites.

Professional Development

Documentation of director's and other supervisors' professional development plans

MNIC's Executive Director, the Director of Volunteer Programs and Student Support Services, and one of the two site administrators, do not have administrative licensure. MNIC leadership is implementing best practices that will build strong and effective leadership in all aspects of the school, including but not limited to the requirements of the statute (M.S. 124D.10, Subd. 11, as revised in 2009). MNIC is putting in place HR practices and components for leadership positions ranging from job requirements and description, performance management and review, succession planning, and leader development programming, in order to positively impact school culture, staff performance, and student learning. MNIC is working with its sponsor, Pillsbury United Communities, in this initiative to develop leadership and professional learning structures for all staff who are in leadership positions. Another resource supporting the initiative is the Principals' Academy run by Metro ECSU. In addition to the school's existing leadership team, other staff who are interested in leadership positions in the future will also have the opportunity to participate.

Leadership Academy report

The leadership initiative is being presented to the MNIC Board for approval in January 2010. The MNIC Executive Director, the Director of Volunteer Programs and Student Support Services, and the non-licensed site administrator, will have professional development plans in place by March 2010.

List of Supervisors with Professional Development Plans:

Kevin Byrne, Don Link, Kristen Quinn, Kathy Reamer, Melissa Kappenman,

4. Teaching Faculty Information

Information regarding teaching faculty could also include a description of the conditions for any changes in teaching faculty. A sample table titled "Teaching Faculty" is included in the report template section. It is suggested to include records of all teachers for the reporting year, as well an indication of the status of the teachers—if teachers left during the year, returned for following year, or did not return.

Teaching Staff Information

MNIC employed a total of approximately 69.8 Effective- FTE's of staff during 2009-10. This measure multiplies the portion of the school year and portion of work week each person generally worked at the school. MNIC also honors the other staff who work diligently to support and enhance the MNIC school system. If not for the team work between all staff and teachers, the school could not exist. Staff were in the following categories:

- **Teachers, 21.4 eFTEs (32.6%)**
- **Administrative, 3.6 eFTEs (5.5%)**

- *Paraprofessionals, 4.6 eFTEs (7.0%)*
- *Social worker, 1.0 eFTEs (1.5%)*
- Safety (security) staff, 7.9 eFTEs (11.9%)
- Operations/Program Support, 9.6 eFTEs (14.6%)
- Work Study Tutors, Advocates & Americorps (grants), 14.3 eFTEs (21.8%)
- Food service, 3.0 eFTEs (4.6%)
- Cleaners, 1.0 eFTEs (1.5%)

Extensive use of work study tutors, advocates and Americorps volunteers enhances the effectiveness of MNIC staff by supporting students to deepen and accelerate learning. Americorps volunteers acted as strategic advocates for prominent student needs, in conjunction with the social worker and teachers. Work study tutors and advocates, approximately 32 individuals, were paid stipends from grants. Another 60 to 70 college students from Macalester College, the University of Minnesota, Augsburg College and College of St. Catherine further supported student learning.

For 2009-10 staff salaries were reduced across the board and the number of staff was reduced, especially paraprofessionals, to contain costs and maintain a balanced budget. Decreased student enrollment in the ELA site plus the 27% holdback put on all public schools this year resulted in increased financing costs, which directly cut into staffing levels.

Table 1.1 MNIC Management and Faculty 2009-2010

Name	File Folder #	Sites and Roles	Left during 2009/10	Not returning 2010/11
Management				
Kevin Byrne		Executive Director		
George Sand		English Academy/ELA Administrator	X	X
Amy Libman		Director of Volunteer Programs and Student Support Services		
Jon Gross	150957	Acting Principal – Unity, English Academy		
Reggie Womack		Dean of Students		
Donald Link		Leadership Team		
Kathy Reamer		Leadership Team		

Faculty				
Katherine Anthony-Wigle	380859	Unity	X	X
Kathryn Boe	431432	Unity	X	X
Lisa Cooney	401612	English Academy (PD Specialist)		X

Lynn Cooper	445785	English Academy		X
Jama Farah	998192	English Academy, Phy Ed.		X
Omar Fiqi	369215	English Academy		X
Amy Gaspard	426023	Unity - SpEd		
Noreen Haq	442771	English Academy	X	
Nathaniel Hedke	450148	English Academy		
Pattijo Johnson/Nwokeuku	433137	Multi-Site – Social Work		
John Kilde	420596	UTEC (short term)	X	X
Susan Knittel	387399	Multi-Site - SpEd		
Donald Link	184726	Lead Teacher Internship & Work Coordinator		
Carmita McGlory	422117	Multi-Site – Social Work	X	X
Melinda Melin	400278	Sabathani/Unity		
James Morehouse	432945	English Academy		
Jason Morzenti	377021	English Academy		X
Laura Nichols	437811	Multi-Site – Social Work	X	X
Kate Oliver	441255	UTEC	X	X
Rebecca Olseen	444919	UTEC	X	X
Joseph Pastoor	397978	English Academy		
Margaret Quam	442801	UTEC		X
Kristin Quinn	436357	Unity/Sabathani		
Katherine Reamer	380352	Unity (PD Specialist)		
Sandra Saline	449692	Sabathani		
Carol Schreiner	118036	English Academy (Test Coordinator & Counselor)		
Craig Smith	139607	English Academy		
Peter Sovell	273128	ELA/Unity		
Tricia Torrey	430312	English Academy		
Janet White	998299	Sabathani/Unity/ELA		
Ron Wodtke	245280	English Academy/UTEC		
Stack-Ander Mary	304742	Multi-Sites Work Coordinator		

5. School Admissions and Enrollment

Information regarding school admissions could include a description of how the charter school is supported by need and projected enrollment, student demographics, and any notable trends. A sample table titled “Student Enrollment and Attrition Rates” can be found in the report template section. Reports might also describe the corresponding student application, lottery, and enrollment procedures, and include a copy of the school admissions policies, as well as the school application and enrollment forms.

School Admissions Policies/Procedures

MNIC’s admissions policy is to enroll any student who requests attendance, limited by program capacity and grades served. All statutory requirements are followed including sibling preference. MNIC staff do not ask prospective students about special education background prior to enrollment. Staff have been trained regarding proper admission procedures. At the beginning of the year updated policies and forms are distributed to all staff and sites. All involved in recruitment, admission and orientation for students and families are trained or coached in procedures.

Registration forms are available at the school and on the school’s website, at <http://www.mnic.org/register.html>.

Student Participation Measures

MNIC considers a number of measures when looking at student participation in the school. The fundamental measure is student enrollment, which records the days a student is properly enrolled in the school. See other discussion about student enrollment policies and practices. Typically student enrollment numbers fluctuates in a pattern over the entire school year. Enrollment peaks occur typically near the beginning of terms, with lowest enrollments shortly after holiday breaks. This pattern is the result of student mobility within and outside the state of Minnesota.

School enrollment

Enrollment at MNIC’s four sites as of October 1, 2009 was:

- English Academy: 102 (down from 163, fall 2008)
- Unity: 126 (up from 119, fall 2008)
- UTEC: 57 (up from 29, fall 2008)
- Sabathani: 24 (down from 47, fall 2008)

Enrollment at the English Academy continued to decline from 2008-09 to 2009-10, driven by a decline in the immigrant population the school serves, loss of teachers due to the decline, the school’s location, and possibly by students feeling less interested in the school because of a smaller student group (note in Program Challenges, p. 7.) Total district enrollment decreased, from 414 in the fall of 2008 to 309 as of October 1, 2009.

Average Daily Membership (ADMs)

Current best measure Total ADMs for MNIC in 2009-2010 is: **289.53**. This is down from 390 in 2008-2009. By sites: ELA had 90.52, Unity had 106.63, UTEC had 56.58 and Sabathani had 35.80.

Graduation

MNIC Graduations are extremely important to the staff, students and community. The primary goal of MNIC is to enable as many students to graduate within the standards of the state and school as possible. When it comes to reporting on graduation rates in the Annual Report this is a more difficult matter. The MDE is aligning the state graduation measure to the Federal Department of Education measure that uses a four year cohort graduation. This measure is not available for publication with this report.

This measure tracks students who graduate within 4 years of being first fully enrolled as 9th grade students. Typically to meet this measure students would be 18 or 19 years old at graduation. The four year measure is a performance measure that requires students to come into high school (9th grade) in good standing and stay on that track. Unfortunately, the average age of students enrolling in MNIC is 17.5 years old. Almost every student is a year or more behind academically. The 2008-2009 rate was 9.64%.

In 2009-2010 seventy-five students graduated from MNIC. Another ten graduated but after they turned 21 years old. MNIC honors and applauds these individuals for persevering to overcome the barriers to this very important achievement.

Retention

Retention remains an important measure for multiple reasons. But for 2009-2010 the focus was shifted to the more fundamental issue of attendance. Because of the chronic variability of student attendance and their high mobility, MNIC teachers have developed strategies to enable any student to learn and earn credits given a basic level of attendance. This means that retention is of less strategic value as a measure. When attendance is significantly improved, retention may be resumed as a measure with goals.

Student Attendance

While student membership is important, the number of days students spend in school is critical to student learning, academic and life skills success. Since 2006 MNIC has been working intently on methods and practices to improve student participation in classroom activities – a critical time and space for learning. The students attending MNIC are often in life challenging situations, as represented by some of the measures presented in this Annual Report. Most have dropped out of school at least one time and so their personal perspectives on school and schooling, associations, interests and needs often lead them to not come to school. This is a well documented issue with any school serving this student population. Nevertheless, many students in difficult situations work very hard to attend and learn. Some are true heroes by overcoming barriers to attending and making their way to graduation.

Based on study and research, MNIC leaders recognize that improving attendance is a complex process requiring multiple and likely simultaneous improvements in school practices, teacher effectiveness, supports for students (life, academic and transportation) and building trusting relationships. This is a quest to win and motivate students to come and stay in school. When students in greater numbers become highly motivated and supported to participate in school, the attendance rate will increase.

The Response to Intervention program for attendance conducted at the former Shiloh site in the site's last year was very helpful to improve attendance by raising student awareness and understanding of the days they were and were not in school and the connection between attendance and credits earned towards graduation. Due to the very late timing of the closing of the Shiloh site in 2009, the school staff were not able to transfer the program to other sites for the 2009-2010 year. This program will be reinstated in 2010-2011.

Further study and research is needed to identify what effect missed days has on student learning success. Anecdotally, teachers understand that the longer the period of absence from class the less the student retains or connects in learning from one time in class to the next. The academic program has been designed to provide timing and opportunity for students to better pick up where they left off

Finalized student attendance data prepared by MDE for 2009-2010 is not yet available. School MARSS data, which did not reflect corrections made by MDE, indicates the average attendance rate is 68% with a mean of 75.3 enrollment days per student and mean of 51.3 attendance days per student. A large portion of students enroll for short periods of time at different times of the year. Information on what these students do before and after enrollment times is hard to acquire. Based on communications between students and teachers and support staff, many of these students are just not in school. For example, after the Shiloh site was closed in 2009, staff were able to bring back only about 50% of the students to MNIC the next year. They believe most of the other students just stopped going to school. Some leave MNIC to try another school, some of these students return later after failing in that school system. Other students leave the city to live with some other relative for a time. Many students who are recruited to MNIC have not been in school for many months. This situation represents a significant community-wide issue that has been only partially addressed by a small number of schools and organizations.

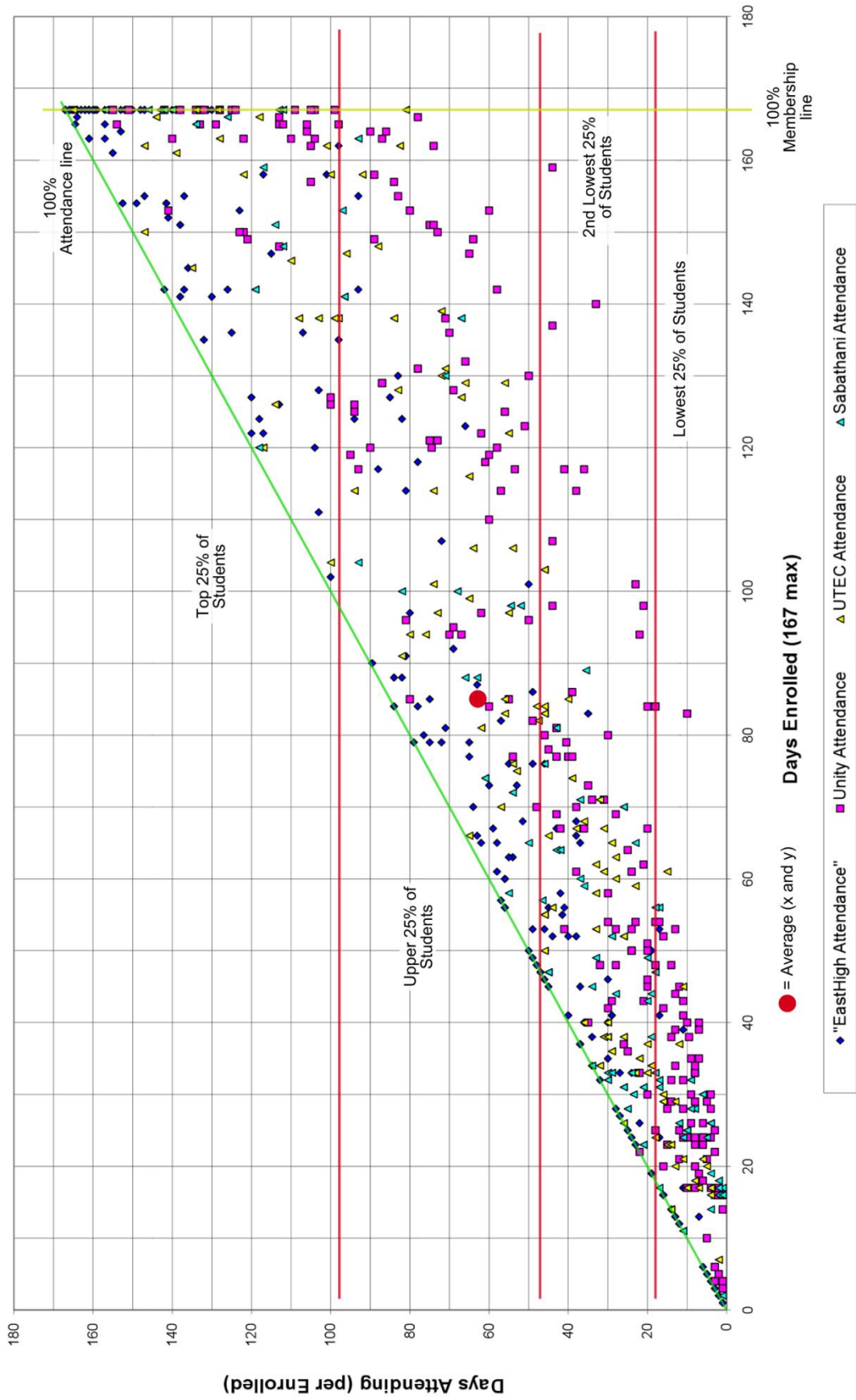
The scatter graph on page 17 represents the distribution of student attendance related to the days of enrollment in the school. The graph represents more students than data points on the graph. Data was derived from 653 students, which is higher than the final approved MARSS data when completed later in 2010. Dividing days attended into quartiles reveals the proportion of students participating in school. 100% attendance is relatively rare. The number of students who enrolled in school the entire year (from before October 2 to the end of the school year) is about 22 out of 514 students (4.3%). One of these students had perfect attendance of 167 days. Distribution of students by days attending school:

- 47 students attended more than 125 days
- 54 students attended from 84 to 125 days
- 149 students attended from 42 to 83 days
- 264 students attended for less than 42 days

This kind of pattern is not uncommon with schools serving this population of students. The students attending fewer than half the schools days are most challenged to be in school and gain the least from the time they do attend school. MNIC's mission is to win and support these students to a level of motivation and engagement that they can gain the benefits of a high school education.

This attendance data does not reveal the real-life issues, challenges and pressures the students face. MNIC staff, who spend significant amounts of time with these students are much more aware of these issues. Secondary impacts result from this pattern. MNIC staff and teachers have dramatically more work to do to process these students and win their participation in school so the benefits of a public high school education can become part of the students' experience. As was presented at the beginning of this report, it is only as students enter into trusting relationships and benefit from multiple and simultaneous supports for their lives that these students can begin to catch up to earn a high school diploma. Unfortunately, the needs of these students and their learned responses to choices for these needs often hinder them from engaging in learning at MNIC to the needed levels. MNIC continues to strategize and create effective ways to win students to engage in learning at school. A successful experiment based on the Response to Intervention methodology was conducted in the former Shiloh Site in 2008-2009 that significantly increased student attendance. While this innovation was not implemented in 2009-2010 in the other sites, it is planned to be implemented in 2010-2011.

Days Attending vs Days Enrolled 2009-2010, MNIC all Sites



Students with IEPs.

Student Attrition

Attrition compares the number of students enrolled in the school on October 1 from year to year. Attrition is helpful for schools that have stable enrollments over the entire year and is helpful for the state and those schools. While attrition is less helpful a measure for MNIC, the fact that the October 1 snapshot of student enrollment is near the beginning of a school term (and a peak in enrollment rates), we can analyze and compare the changes in enrollments and link these to trends and factors in the district and specific school sites. Historically the number of enrolled students on or around October 1st is a close indicator of the eventual final ADM for the school.

School Year	9	10	11	12	Total	Attrition Rate/ count change	Notes
2007-08 – ELA	13	49	80	72	214	NA	Moved to 300 Ind Blvd 8/07
2007-08 – Unity	38	25	27	15	105	NA	1 st full year in whole facility
2007-08 – UTEC	4	11	12	6	33	NA	
2007-08 – Shiloh	14	14	8	9	45	NA	Moved to Shiloh 07-08
2007-08 – Sabathani	9	5	11	2	27	NA	1 st year in old Friendship Academy space
2007-2008 District	78	104	138	104	424	NA	
2008-09 – ELA	38	38	58	29	163	76.2%/-51	
2008-09 – Unity	35	30	27	27	119	113.3%/+14	
2008-09 – UTEC	7	4	13	5	29	87.9%/-4	
2008-09 – Shiloh	27	12	10	7	56	124.4%/+11	Site closed end of 08-09
2008-09 – Sabathani	25	8	8	6	47	174.1%/+20	
2008-2009 District	132	92	116	74	414	97.6%/-10	
2009-10 – ELA	38	21	22	21	102	62.6%/-61	
2009-10 – Unity	45	30	32	19	126	105.9%/+7	
2009-10 – UTEC	20	15	13	9	57	196.6%/+28	
2009-10 – Sabathani	8	5	7	4	24	51.1%/-23	
2009-2010 District	111	71	74	53	309	74.6%/-105	
Est 2010-11 – ELA/ELA	5	5	5	5	20	19.6%/-82	reduced SF in lease
Est 2010-11 – Unity	48	35	35	23	141	111.9%/+15	
Est 2010-11 – UTEC	18	16	18	15	67	117.5%/+29	

Est 2010-11 – Sabathani	18	12	14	12	56	233.3%/+32	
2010-2011 District	89	68	72	55	284	91.9%/-25	

6. Academic Program

Information regarding the academic program could include an overview and description of academic program successes or best practices with corresponding data. Information might consider the class size by program or grade level and (if applicable) the percentage of students intending to enter some form of two- or four-year higher education institution, and highlight special honors/accomplishments of students (e.g., debate, drama, speech, journalism, music). Information could also include the specific, measurable academic/instructional and nonacademic goals for the 2009-10 school year with corresponding measurement tools for each goal, as well as applicable test/assessment results, student growth data, and a description of how assessments are embedded in the learning program.

Generally, charters use a variety of assessments to measure student achievement (e.g., standardized tests, student portfolios, and teacher observations). Further information could include other nonacademic school goals along with the type of measurement that was used to assess progress meeting the goal, and the rationale for the new and/or continuing student and/or school goals (e.g. involvement and satisfaction of students' families, community support).

Program Design

Circle Sites' instructional day runs from 9 AM to 3:30 PM with 30 minutes for lunch and two 10 minute breaks mid-AM and mid-PM. This translates to 5-1/2 hours of instructional time per day. Instructional time is enhanced through the provision of a tutoring program, with volunteer college students. Students with quality levels of attendance can participate in internships and job-programs, which help them earn extra work-based credits. MNIC has endeavored to initiate home reading programs for students and families. This is particularly important for the Unity students who are also parents of toddlers and young students.

ELA instructional day is the same but set up with regular 50-minute-long classes in the morning and afternoon with optional internship and jobs program activities in the afternoon for those who have selected or qualified such programs.

Extra tutoring time is available for students at all sites.

Academic Goals for 2009-2010

Circle Program

Most Circle Site students have had a very disrupted education, attending several high schools or having been out of the educational system entirely for a wide variety of reasons. Many of these students have discovered that a high school education and diploma is an essential tool to improve their chances for life.

The drop in enrollment at the English Academy in 2008-09 has continued into 2009-10; this decline in student numbers is a major challenge the school is facing this school year. Consequently the overall focus of the English Academy's program is shifting in 2009-10, from a program focusing largely on teaching English to immigrants, to a more comprehensive high school which includes vocational preparation in line with MNIC's mission. During the morning there will be instruction focused on core academics, while during the afternoon students will

have the option of continuing their studies in a more project-based format or leaving the site for work or internships. The new model is a variation on the “Circle learning” model which is utilized at MNIC’s three other sites which serve primarily American-born students. This change is due to changes in the communities served by the English Academy (there are fewer immigrants coming to the Twin Cities than in past years so the focus needs to shift away from basic English), and also in response to demand from immigrant communities, for more advanced academic preparation and for schooling that will prepare students for careers. The name of the school has been unofficially changed as well, to MNIC English Academy School, to reflect this change in emphasis. These changes began during the fall of 2009.

Each MNIC Circle Site focuses on particular interests or learners in the urban community setting. A Circle is functionally a class, classroom and a cohort of students with a consistent teacher and paraprofessional. This arrangement enables teachers and students to build trusting relationships, learn how to manage their behaviors together and build a camaraderie that supports learning. Without this students can too easily “slip through the cracks” and disappear from schooling. The program and specific teachers are brought, most of the time, to the students. Mornings are dedicated for focused learning in the core academic subjects of reading, writing and mathematics. Afternoons are designed to enable students who are in internships or have jobs to go to their work sites where the academic-internship/work program is held. Social studies and science subjects are also taught in the afternoons.

English Language Academy

Changed program from traditional ESL program to a blend of ESL and Circles, with new options for internships/vocational programs in afternoon.

On site staff development person (Lisa) for the SIG. Half as many teachers as year before, released over half of the site to be leased by another school to reduce site fixed costs. Continue to operate the kitchen to prepare food for all MNIC sites.

Students start at the ELA with a personal interview, followed by testing and assessments to place them at the appropriate level of school. Once this is done, staff meet with each student to set learning goals and a learning contract. An individual learning plan is developed for each student based on skill level and credits accrued to date. The ELA offers a high school diploma program which provides intensive English instruction, content classes adapted to the needs of second-language students, computer technology, cultural support and bilingual services, and career exploration. In 2009-20 the site’s focus on vocational/career learning was initiated. Career focuses are on health care a partnership with MNDOT to provide internships for students in the transportation sector. Building more of a jobs focus into the program aligns well with the interests and needs of immigrant communities, and brings the English Academy into alignment with the internship focus of MNIC as a whole.

The English Academy faces the dual challenge of teaching basic reading and math skills while also teaching academic content which students need to meet the state standards. English Academy teachers use an array of learning materials which strive to match to students’ unique learning needs. Materials include content materials in academic core curriculum areas that are adapted to the needs of language learners. The English Academy’s Title I School Improvement Grant was closed at the end of 2009-2010 due to changes in the program at the Federal Level. This provided resources for a Professional Development specialist to work intensively with instructors to implement a professional learning community, analyze student data, observe and coach instructors, and help them implement formative assessment. The PD specialist continued until the end of the year. PD focused on math and reading school year. to encompass all core academic subjects.

A very large portion of the students who attend MNIC, at both programs, come into the school with significant challenges. Most of them have been out of the school system for many months. Some have

experienced homelessness, extreme poverty or have been incarcerated. Most are at least a year behind in their school work (self-reported), and score well below grade level on standardized tests. Because of these factors, MNIC students start out significantly behind in reading, math and other skills valued as state and federal learning requirements.

Internships and Service Learning

Circles that host an internship program craft academic subjects and standards to fit the theme and industry focus of the program. Those students enrolled in internships and volunteer programs continue to learn academic material, but it is contextualized to the industry.

By integrating employability skills into the academic curriculum, students are gaining awareness of the relevance of school for their current and future lives. Social and work skills are developed so that students can become and remain employed. This holistic approach reinforces for students the value of learning academic content by making it life and job relevant.

This approach has built trusting relationships and insight for good will among the students with many different adults. Students are gaining appreciation for the plight of others, the value of giving and working.

UTEC:

Tree Trust Youth Build Program, through Tree Trust. Students built one new house and contributed to extensive arson rehabilitation in North Minneapolis. Students were paid through a grant, tied to student attendance. Those who attended school could attend work. Consistency is carefully rewarded. Those not willing or ready to participate at this level were regularly informed about what happened with students who were ready. All students continued with regular circle site classes. On-the-Job-Site students received math curriculum and training, with practical trades applications, leadership and conflict resolution training. This program started with 10 students in September, ended up with 6 by the end of the year. Students were on site one week and one week in school. A second team alternated with the first, so that a team was always on site. Only students qualified in academics could be selected for the program. They had to be in good standing, pass drug tests and participate in orientation over two weeks.

All sites had a jobs program. 25 students at UTEC received credit for paid and unpaid internships. A few were hired for jobs in the summer.

SABATHANI

The Health Care Program involves learning medical terminology, patient feeding, first aid training (CPR, First Aid, some emergency training), patient feeding curriculum with practical at memory wards in different nursing homes. This program is designed with stages of development. The first threshold to identify which students are ready and interested in this career path. Those who succeeded in the basic curricula and practical can move on to Personal Care Assistant training. Those who passed this phase moved on to C. N. A. nursing assistant training with practicum in a nursing home. All 6 students that reached this level passed the state exam (100% success).

Some students worked at Mall of America and volunteered at VA hospital. 15 to 18 students received credit for this.

The Tree Trust Program hosted by UTEC was also available at Sabathani. Students were transported to join with UTEC students at the Tree Trust program site. Four students from Sabathani participated.

ENGLISH ACADEMY

Environmental Science Project – students took an environmental science class linked to an internship at the U Of M Recycle Store less than 1 mile from ELA. They also interned at Macalester College where they helped sort recyclable materials and items. Interns received a stipend from a grant for this work and

learning. 10 students received internship stipends and credit for paid and non-paid internships associated with this project.

The CAD-CAM machining internship program that was available to ELA students in previous years has been discontinued.

UNITY

Six Unity students were also able to participate in the Tree Trust program.

Many Unity students tutored at the nearby elementary school, Brightwater Academy (charter school), receiving credit as volunteer service learning. Thirty students received credit for on-the-job training with some pay.

All sites had students that participated in Sabathani in health care. This approach of moving students around for skill training expands students' experience base without duplicating staff work. This enhances the value of school for students in a cost effective way.

Two students worked with Catalyst, which leases the Unity site to MNIC, on a new Catalyst restaurant construction project in North Minneapolis. Students were paid stipends. This led to both students being hired last summer for jobs with Catalyst and the Pohlad Family Foundation.

The StreetWerks program through Emerge (Pillsbury United Community) was held again in North Minneapolis. About thirty MNIC students participated in this from the Unity and Sabathani locations.

Three students from Unity and Sabathani participated in the SEED Project with MNDOT. This is an internship program that brings students into MNDOT facilities and work. One student was offered a full time job after graduation.

Connecting with the Community

Every year a group of MNIC staff and volunteers reach out to different organizations to recruit support for MNIC students and their families. Multiple grants are noted above, which reach into MNIC programs or extend student supports to learn what they have missed so far. This last year the owners of the MNIC Unity Site, Catalyst, have become a strong advocate for the students. Catalyst has recruited other organizations, including the Pohlad Family Foundation to contribute to the Unity site and connect with students. In July 2010 Catalyst planned to have an event to improve the facility. More will be reported on this in next year's Annual Report.

Student Supports and Partnerships

A unique feature of MNIC is our emphasis on creating partnerships and collaborations and seeking grants to support the MNIC mission. Most of these efforts are coordinated by the Student Support Services Department which is made up of the Student Support Services Director, Social Worker, School Nutrition Coordinator and AmeriCorps Promise Fellows who serve as College and Career Access Coordinators.

We had a very successful grant seeing year and received the following grants and donations:

- Sam's Club - \$2,000 for the library and guidance counseling efforts
- Food Program Stimulus Grant - \$9,000 for a walk-in cooler
- Delta Dental Service Grant - \$1,000 for a community art mural project and dental supplies
- Valspar - \$1,000 for paint and painting supplies for the mural project
- Macalester College Action Fund - \$500 for a community meeting to inform immigrant residents of Seward Towers on green practices that will lower their utility bills
- MN Alliance With Youth AmeriCorps Promise Fellow – 2 positions

As in past years many volunteers, interns and university work study students were engaged in tutoring and advocacy activities with MNIC students. Over 150 volunteers gave over 21,000 hours of service. Participating organizations include: University of MN, Macalester College, St Catherine's University, Augsburg College, MCTC, Inver Hills Community College, Metro State University and Century College. In addition we partner with Tree Trust and work with their supported worker program for MFIP clients who serve in tutoring, clerical and food production roles. Activities of these many volunteers include:

- Tutoring in the classroom setting providing one to one and small group assistance assuring that individual needs can be met
- Tutoring in homework centers and BST and MCAII/GRAD test preparation study halls
- Leading learning activities on teen health concerns
- Leading activities on green initiatives including waste reduction through recycling and organics waste separation
- Assisting students with service projects both within the school and in the community
- Assisting students with all aspects of job seeking skills
- Assisting students with all aspects of college exploration and application

In addition 3 Social Work interns worked intensively one to one with students under the guidance of the MNIC school social worker. Virtually all MNIC students have the opportunity to work with volunteer tutors and advocates on a regular basis.

Students were engaged in service projects both within the school and in the community. These projects provide invaluable hands-on experiences that not only build skills and resumes but also help our students to see themselves as community assets

This year's service projects included:

- Community Art Mural projects at Unity location – students were assisted by a local artist and Inver Hills Community College Art instructor and art students in creating beautiful murals both inside the building and outside for all to enjoy.
- Bright Water School – Unity students assisted children with reading and learning activities
- University of Minnesota Recycle Center – students learned the duties of this industry and assisted the University with their recycling program
- Macalester College and Seward Towers – students volunteered at the Macalester College Sustainability Office and created a video to inform immigrants on how to lower their utility bills in an environmentally helpful manner.
- Earth Day – students helped with spring chores at a local teaching farm
- MNIC Waste Reduction Program – students in environmental science classes studied waste reduction and then taught their classmates about recycling and separating organic waste

To support students in completing high school and preparing for life beyond high school, MNIC has developed partnerships with several outside organizations that focus on college and career readiness. These partnerships are supported by our AmeriCorps workers who serve as College and Career Access Coordinators. They and the volunteers they supervise work with students to provide them links to postsecondary education and/or a career in the workforce. Partnerships benefiting MNIC sites included:

- MNIC students from the Unity and East attended a college readiness course facilitated by the YMCA's "Y Scholars" program. The "Y Scholars" program also coordinated visits to colleges and universities.
- Best Prep recruited speakers to discuss topics such as construction careers, nursing careers, art careers, and business careers.
- Junior Achievement recruited speakers to provide a seven-week curriculum on work readiness and career exploration for MNIC students.

- The City County Federal Credit Union’s Community Education Coordinator presented one-hour presentations on financial literacy for six weeks.
- The College and Career Access Coordinator recruited speakers from other organizations on topics of interest including gang violence, filing taxes, and other careers.
- Macalester College donated 135 caps and gowns, for MNIC graduation ceremonies.

In addition to these partnerships every student at MNIC had access to volunteers and paid staff to assist them with graduation test preparation, college entrance exams, all aspects of job seeking skills and all aspects of college exploration and application activities. We are proud to say that 6 of our students received Page Foundation and/or Power of You scholarships to local colleges.

Teachers and Professional Development

Every year teachers receive professional development training and are encouraged to pursue their own development. For 2009-2010 10 days of training and professional development were provided to teachers within the school year. Beyond this two School Improvement Grants were in operation, one for the English Academy Site and one for Unity Campus. Each grant provided a full time professional development leader who trained and coached teachers in teaching mathematics. This was a very significant investment in the teachers and there was hope to continue this training into 2010-2011.

School Improvement Grants (Unity and ELA)

These grants resulted in many benefits for MNIC teachers and programs. Teachers are far more competent to develop and refine curricula based on grad standards. Teachers can clearly show others what they are teaching students; they can also communicate learning objectives to students. This allowed teachers to individualize instruction along a pathway for each kind of student. Each student has a personal learning plan, so the curriculum is customized to what the student needs to learn. This is a great benefit for teaching MNIC students. The training for teachers helped improve teachers’ professional aspirations and competence. Teachers are excited about what they learned and are now using it.

For Unity Campus, four teachers were served with this grant. Their improved teaching skills resulted in measurable increase in math scores beyond previous years. Students were able to advance closer to passing the MCA. Many previously tested below or into the Low 1100s on the Math MCA-II. This year students moved to close to mid-1100s. 1150 is passing. Though many were just below passing, the fact that they got very close is a valuable improvement. NWEA showed 10 of 12 students improved in their math scores.

Teachers implemented what they were learning starting in late October. Classroom teaching demonstrations, modeling and coaching was provided throughout the year. This training generated much more interest in math by students. Typically math has been a challenge every year because of the low levels of success by students. Students are commonly 2 to 5 years behind in math when they first enroll at MNIC. Many struggle with middle school math concepts and skills.

For ELA the grant program was completed with all teachers receiving training in English literacy, after a focus in the previous year on mathematics. Similar benefits were obtained with teachers here as in Unity Campus.

Student Life and Growth Data

In 2009-2010 the Social Workers took up a task to interview, survey and track important measures affecting students’ lives. From this research it was learned that 105 students (19%) were homeless. Somewhere between 25% and 35% are parents or pregnant. Poverty is significant, but how significant is still not known. Teachers know that certain students arrive early to school to make sure they can get a breakfast. Efforts to provide quality food through the breakfast and lunch program has been ongoing. For MNIC students the federal portions are just not sufficient. These students are not in danger of getting too

fat. So a new venture has initiated with Chef Seth to develop highly nutritious and very tasty foods. More data will be available next year.

Encounter with the New School Improvement Grant

Being required to apply for the new School Improvement Grant (ARRA) this year was a mixture of benefits and setbacks. The investment staff made and the costs to develop the applications was great, taking up most of the summer months and costing the school money it never budgeted to spend, while teachers were not available to help. The fact that the school was denied the grant in the way it was denied indicates that charter schools are not truly welcome in this grant. The school is seriously reconsidering what to do with this kind of mandate. Now that the school has no extra funds for teacher development, the school is set back in its plans to improve the school. The timeline for the grant application was extremely short, so short that it was nearly impossible to meet the requirements in the time frame set by the Federal DOE. Given a full year to ramp up with funding and staff training could yield the intended results.

Insights into MNIC strategy and needed improvements were helpful. The efforts to evaluate and design a viable strategy to improve the school in significant ways were very enlightening. Most strategically, we see now that multiple improvements need to be carefully choreographed to gain the benefits needed with MNIC students. If the SIG requirements are again placed on the school, it may be that this population of students can never meet the performance requirements in the time allowed. Some other schools serving this population have received “opt-out” permission. This prospect of being yet again required to meet mandates is a concern to the school. Nevertheless, MNIC will pursue as much of these improvements as possible.

Program successes and best practices at MNIC during 2009-10 included:

- Approximately sixty students completed a pre-medical career and patient feeding program at two of MNIC’s five sites. This program began with six weeks of preparation in the classroom including first aid, CPR and other areas required for certification, followed by training to do patient feeding in a nursing home. Then there were four weeks of residency in one of several local nursing homes, where patients assisted with patient feeding and recreational activities. After this, students are eligible to apply for admission to a Certified Nursing Assistant program.
- What about Unity successes with Peter and Melinda? - Engaging students in learning, taught Shakespeare, method teaching with costumes to heighten interest. Improvements to the building with the help of other organizations and companies in the community. This engendered greater support and enthusiasm for the school and community. Testing results, enthusiasm for curriculum content, using method acting during class enhanced interest and enthusiasm.
- MNIC had a FEWER graduates again than in 2009-. Based on close-to-final 2008-09 school year data, collected September 2009, there were a total of 126 graduates in 2008-09, 62 from the English Academy and 64 from the Circle sites. This is down slightly from 2007-08 when there were 139 graduates (97 from the English Academy and 42 from the Circle sites) but more than in 2006-07 when there were just 87 graduates (67 from the English Academy and 20 from the Circle sites). Same support for graduation from
- MNIC continued to use volunteers, interns, work study students, MFIP workers and university service learning students to provide MNIC students with tutoring and advocacy. There were over 100 volunteers and student interns who contributed an estimated total of 14 full-time-equivalent staff positions or 29,000 hours of service at MNIC sites in 2009-10. Utilization of volunteer tutors, who work on a one-on-one or small-group basis, helping students improve their speaking skills as well as helping with reading (e.g. explaining unfamiliar vocabulary, correcting grammar mistakes), is a particularly important best-practices feature of the English Language Academy program. At all sites, volunteers supported students in math as well as English/reading, and also acted as college and career

advocates, helping MNIC students prepare for required graduation tests and for college applications. Volunteer and work-study students were particularly strongly involved during 2008-09 in supporting MNIC's medical-career students, who participate in a patient feeding program as part of training that can lead to a Certified Nursing Assistant credential. Over twenty work study students came from the University of Minnesota and the colleges of Macalester and Augsburg, and worked at four sites. MNIC pays a small portion of the wages for these young people, who help our students as tutors and student-advocates (providing college, career, and living-stability assistance to students). There were 55 service learning students from the University of Minnesota. Also, the social worker had three social-work interns who assisted with her work. The MFIP Supported Worker program, through TreeTrust, provided assistance for clerical, food program and tutoring support.

With the move to its new site in 2007, a college and career center was set up at the English Academy, providing material on applying to colleges and applying for scholarships; also career-search resources. Students from all sites had opportunities to tour several local colleges and universities, facilitated by MNIC. 6 students received scholarships to attend a local college in the fall.

2008-09 Academic Accountability Data

The Minnesota Internship Center has been identified as not making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) – this applies to the “district” as a whole, and to the English Academy, Unity and UTEC sites. AYP planning continued during 2009-10 per State of Minnesota requirements, with School Level Improvement Plans completed for the English Academy, Unity, and UTEC sites in October, 2009.

The AYP planning process led to revised Performance Targets for the two programs for the 2009-10 school year. The following targets were articulated for the two programs, and incorporated into the District Improvement Plan which was submitted to MDE November 6, 2009.

The remainder of this section is organized around the Performance Targets and measures; data pertaining to each is reported in turn.

2009-10 Accountability Data, MNIC South Site (English Academy/English Academy)

MNIC South Performance Target 1: *The AYP Reading Proficiency Index will increase from 0.00 in 2009 to at least 10.00 in 2010 as measured by the MCA-II in Reading.*

Measures pertaining to this goal are the MCA-II reading test and a pre-post test which had in the past been the Gates-MacGinitie reading test. However, the Gates-MacGinitie was discontinued in 2008-09 due to its un-suitability as a test of reading fluency. For 2009-10, pre-post progress in reading proficiency was gauged by student gains in reading levels in the TEAE and IDEA Proficiency Test (IPT). MCA-II results are reported in this section, along with results on the Test of Emerging Academic English (TEAE) in Reading and Writing.

Also reported are Basic Skills Tests results in Reading; the BST is not directly relevant to the Performance Target but is important for students and for the school, as many MNIC students have not passed the BST and still need to do so in order to graduate.

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments in Reading

2009 results for ELA: 21 students were tested in April 2009. Thirty-one 10th graders were enrolled at that time but only ten were continuously enrolled from 10/1/08, who could count for AYP. Of these ten students, all scored at “Not Meeting Standards.”

2010 results: 7 students tested in April of 2010. Fifteen 10th graders were enrolled at that time but only two counted for AYP. The Index rate was 25.00 as one student scored at Partially Meeting Standards.

Test of Emerging Academic English

2009 results summary: Of a total of 136 students who had valid scores on the TEAE Reading test in the spring of 2009, 46 also had scores the previous year. Of the 46 students with pre-post scores, 35 improved their scores, two stayed the same and nine declined. Fifteen improved their scores enough to move up at least one level. Two moved up two levels, two went down one level, and the rest stayed the same.

2010 results from DSR: Of a total of 66 students who had valid scores on the TEAE Reading test in the spring of 2010, 18 also had scores the previous year. Of the 18 students with pre-post scores, all but one improved their scores. Six improved their scores enough to move up one level; one student moved up two levels.

Basic Skills Tests in Reading

A total of 66 students in MNIC's English Academy program took the Reading BST in November and April of the 2009-10 school year; of these students 55 had valid scores and only one student passed¹. This compares to 2008-09 when a total of 206 students took the Reading BST, of whom 67 passed. These results compare poorly to last year's BST results and yet still reflect the nature of the English Academy student population, which is predominantly English Language Learners many of whom are still recent immigrants. Research studies have shown that students who have been in-country four years or less are rarely able to read at higher than a fifth-grade level. Such students are unlikely to pass the Basic Skills Test in Reading – however, school policy is to encourage students who are willing to take the tests regardless, for the experience of making the attempt, and to gain understanding of the level of language skill that is expected in American schools.

MNIC South Performance Target 2: *The AYP Mathematics Proficiency Index will increase from 12.50 in 2009 to at least 21.25 in 2010 as measured by the MTELL.*

The primary measure pertaining to this goal was Minnesota's Mathematics Test for English Language Learners, which students took in place of the MCA-II for Math in the spring of 2010. Results on the Basic Skills Tests in math are reported as well; this is a test which many MNIC students still need to pass in order to graduate.

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments in Mathematics

In place of the MCA in Mathematics, students at the English Academy took the Mathematics Test for English Language Learners (MTELL) in 2010. This is the state's equivalent high-stakes math test for ELL's. **There were just eleven 11th graders at the English Academy who took the MTELL in April 2009 (of a total of seventeen enrolled); of these eleven students only five counted for AYP. All five of these students scored at Not Meeting Standards.** This result was disappointing considering the extra training and coaching teachers received for teaching mathematics through the Title I School Improvement grant, which the English Academy was awarded in the fall of 2008. These efforts to accelerate student learning will continue though the 2010-11 school year without the School Improvement Grant.

Basic Skills Tests in Mathematics

¹ This figure counts some students more than once, e.g. if a student took the test three times they would be counted three times.

A total of 66 students at the English Academy took the Mathematics BST in November and April last year². Of these students, 9 passed (13% of attempts). These results compare more poorly with last year, when a total of 27 of 106 students (25%) tested passed the Mathematics BST. However, some students took the test multiple times.

As with the BST in Reading, results here are largely reflective of the English Academy student population. Students who lack basic reading skills are unable to understand much of the content of the math BST.

Improvement in algebraic thinking by students in Math Foundations & Math Mastery (not part of SIP measures; is part of School Improvement grant initiative)

SMART goal per Title I SI grant: MNIC-ELA students who are enrolled for a full year will move toward proficiency in mathematics as shown by improvements on a test of algebraic thinking: Average percent correct will improve by at least 15%, moving from 37% in September 2009 to at least 52% in January 2010.

Math Foundations was the largest group with approximately 45 students as of March 2010, with just seven students in Math Mastery.

January re-test results showed an average percent correct increasing to 49%. The common formative assessment was to be re-administered (same subject matter but different questions) in May, with the goal of attaining the 52% target then. However, this second re-test was not conducted. The conclusion was that students were improving in mathematical-algebraic reasoning skills, but not at the pace anticipated.

Proportion of students in Math Strategies who achieve mastery (not part of SIP measures; is part of School Improvement grant initiative)

Math SMART goal for students in Math Strategies: SMART goals specific to 3-week periods (units), based on what they are studying – students have to achieve mastery to move on.

There were approximately 40 students in the Math Strategies group as of March 2010. Prior to March 2010 approximately 12 students had moved from Strategies to Foundations classes. By April 14, 2010 three more students moved from Strategies to Foundations at end of semester; many more were close to ready. Intervals are sometimes increased to more than three weeks to support more students to reach mastery, measured as of 80% of proficiency in a subject area. In May 2010 progress was reported on this measure though it was not quantifiable. By then of the school year all students had moved beyond basic math computation skills.

GRAD Math re-test results (not part of SIP measures)

Out of 50 attempts no students passed the GRAD Math test or re-test.

- Tested on 11/09: 10 students tested; none passed
- Tested on 1/10: 12 students tested; none passed
- Tested on 2/10: 2 students tested; neither passed
- Tested on 3/10: 7 students tested; none passed
- Tested on 4/10: 7 students tested; none passed
- Tested on 5/10: 12 students tested; none passed

² This figure counts some students more than once, e.g. if a student took the test three times they would be counted three times.

Performance Target 3: *English Academy students who are enrolled for a full year will move toward proficiency in the English language as shown by improvements in the Comprehension substrand of the MCA in Reading: As shown by a test comprised of Comprehension questions from old MCA's, all students and students at each of three TEAE Reading-based language levels will improve from September 2009 to January 2010:*

- *Level 1 students: Average percent correct will improve from 32% in September at least to 38% in January*
- *Level 2 students: Average percent correct will improve from 38% to at least 53%*
- *Level 3 students: Average percent correct will improve from 53% to at least 68%*
- *All students: Average percent correct will improve from 42% to at least 53%*

This goal was established in fall 2009, in the course of generating the English Academy's School Improvement Plan for the year.

January results: improved only 4 percentage points, to 46% average correct for all students. Specific results for fluency levels was revealing:

- *Level 1: students improved just 1% on average, to 33% correct. Site staff decided to use another assessment for these lowest-English-level students, as it was too difficult for them.*
- *Level 2: students improved 2% on average, to 40% correct; target was lowered to 42% for the spring.*
- *Level 3: students improved 11% on average, to 64% correct. This was the original target for January. Improvements continued to at least 68% correct on average May 2010.*

Final re-administered tests for Levels 2 and 3 were not conducted in May 2010. An alternative assessment was developed for Level 1 students but not administered in May 2010.

2008-09 Accountability Data, MNIC North Sites (Circles)

MNIC North Performance Target 1: *Performance of Circle sites students continuously enrolled since Oct. 1 will improve on the Reading MCA-II: proportion of students meeting or exceeding the standards will increase from 22% (the 2009 figure) at least to 32% in 2010. Also, students will make sufficient progress from fall to spring on the Northwest Evaluation Association's Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) test in Reading to keep up with the national norming group.*

Rewrite this intro

The key measure pertaining to this goal was the MCA-II Reading test; plans were made to administer pre-post reading assessments using the Northwest Evaluation Association's Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) as a pre-post measure of growth. Also reported are Basic Skills Tests results in Reading, as many MNIC students have not yet passed this test and need to do so in order to graduate.

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments in Reading

2009 results for Circle sites: 39 students tested but only nine were continuously enrolled from 10/1 and hence counted for AYP. Of these nine students, four scored at Not Meeting Standards, three Partially Meeting Standards, and two (22%) Meeting Standards.

2010 results for Circle sites: A total of only 15 students took the Reading MCA at the three Circle sites in the spring of 2010; of these students, just seven were Of these seven students, two or 29% scored at Meeting Standards.

For the Circle sites combined, a total of 15 students took the MCA-II in Reading. Of these 15 students, seven continuously enrolled and counted for AYP. Of these seven, five scored at Not Meeting Standards, none Partially Meeting Standards, and two (29%) Meeting Standards. **Proportion of students meeting the standards was two of seven or 29%. This MNIC Program did not meet the target of 32%.**

To improve in both Reading and Mathematics, the Circle sites will continue to implement their improvement plan through extending existing strategies for improvement in reading.

Basic Skills Tests in Reading

A total of 109 students³ at MNIC's Circle sites took the Reading BST in November 2009 and April 2010. Only 39 had valid scores. Of these students 9 passed. The Passing rate was 23% of attempts. These results differ from 2008-09, when 41 of 91 students who took the Reading BST in November, February or April passed.

MNIC actively recruits students who dropped out of other schools, ALC settings and have been incarcerated. Most students enrolling at MNIC have already taken the BST's, and been unable to pass, multiple times. MNIC remains committed to building literacy skills but is working at a disadvantage. Results on these tests reflect students' academic achievement levels when they enter more than learning activities at MNIC.

MAP test in reading

Fall MAP tests were taken in late September and early October 2009. 89 students tested at the 3 Circle sites. Spring tests taken early April through early May. 70 students tested in the spring.

Pre-post analysis showed that only 17 students took the Reading MAP in both fall and spring. Of these 17 students, nine or 53% met or exceeded norm-group gains. Meeting or exceeding norm-group gains is important for students to progress to proficiency in reading.

GRAD Reading re-test results (not part of SIP measures)

In the Circle Sites 14 test attempts were made with the GRAD Reading test. Of these attempts one student passed.

- Tested on 1/10: 2 students tested; 1 passed
- Tested on 2/10: 4 students tested; none passed
- Tested on 3/10: 7 students tested; none passed
- Tested on 7/10: 1 student tested; did not pass

MNIC North Performance Target 2: *Performance of Circle sites students continuously enrolled since Oct. 1 will improve on the Mathematics MCA-II: proportion of students meeting or exceeding the standards will increase from no students (the 2009 figure) at least to 10% in 2010. Also, students will make sufficient progress from fall to spring on the NWEA's MAP in Mathematics to keep up with the national norming group.*

As with Performance Target 1, the key measure pertaining to this goal was the MCA-II. Also reported are Basic Skills Tests results in Mathematics, as many MNIC students have not yet passed this test and need to do so in order to graduate.

³ This figure counts some students more than once, e.g. if a student took the test three times they would be counted three times.

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments in Mathematics

2008 results: for the Circle sites combined, just 19 “October 1” students took the Math MCA, all of whom scored at the lowest level.

Spring 09 results for Circle sites: 45 students tested but only 23 were continuously enrolled from 10/1 and hence counted for AYP. All 23 of these students scored in the Not Meeting Standards range.

2010 results for Circle sites: A total of only 28 students took the Mathematics MCA at the three Circle sites in the spring of 2010; of these students, just twelve were continuously enrolled and hence counted for AYP. All of these students scored at Not Meeting Standards.

For the Circle sites combined, there were twenty-three grade-11 students who were continuously enrolled from October 1 through testing who took the MCA-II in Mathematics (of a total of 45 students tested).

All 23 of these students scored in the Not Meeting Standards range, so MNIC did not meet this target.

More careful analysis of test results showed that while students did not Meet Standards there was substantial improvement in their individual test scores. Many tested just below the cut point score of 1150. So there was improvement, but not enough to meet the goal.

To improve in both Reading and Mathematics, the Circle sites will continue to implement their improvement plans initiated with the help of the Professional Development specialist, funded through a Title I School Improvement grant which was awarded to the Unity site for the 2009-2010 year.

MAP test in Mathematics

Fall MAP tests were taken in late September and early October 2009. 78 students tested at the 3 Circle sites. Spring tests taken early April through early May. 76 students tested in the spring.

Pre-post analysis showed that only 24 students took the Math MAP in both fall and spring. Of these 24 students, 15 or 63% met or exceeded norm-group gains. Meeting or exceeding norm-group gains is important for students to progress to proficiency in math.

Basic Skills Tests in Mathematics BST Math test (not part of SIP measures)

A total of 100 students⁴ at MNIC’s three Circle sites took the Mathematics BST in November and April of the 2009-10 school year. Of these students 83 had valid scores and of these 10 passed. These results are lower than 2008-09 results when 40 of 172 students who took the Mathematics BST in November, February or April passed.

GRAD Math re-test results (not part of SIP measures)

- Tested on 1/10: 5 students tested; none passed
- Tested on 2/10: 5 students tested; none passed
- Tested on 3/10: 3 students tested; none passed
- Tested on 4/10: 1 student tested; that one did pass
- Tested on 7/10: 2 students tested; neither passed

MNIC North Performance Target 3: *The attendance rate of students continuously enrolled at UTEC will increase, from 70.2% in 2008-09 at least to 75% for 2009-10. Continuously enrolled means enrolled by October and either graduating or remaining enrolled to the end of the school year.*

⁴ This figure counts some students more than once, e.g. if a student took the test three times they would be counted three times.

Attendance in school is critical for any student to learn and master the knowledge and skills needed to graduate and go on to a quality job and career. Earlier in the Student Enrollment and Admissions Section the patterns of attendance were discussed, indicating that large portions of students enrolling in MNIC have very poor attendance rates. This measure as defined in this goal focuses on the students who stay in school for nearly the entire year.

Analysis of close-to-final 2009-10 student enrollment data, compiled in early September, shows a significant attendance increase at UTEC from 70.2% in 2008-2009 to 76.1% in 2009-2010. Five students met the criteria of this goal. The goal of 75% was exceeded by 1.1% point. This is a significant and historic improvement for this site.

Overall attendance for the same time period from all sites was 82.1%, which is significantly better than last year. This measure counts 22 students. Average attendance for all students (584) is 68.0%.

Future Plans for MNIC Programs

MNIC gained significant insights on how to improve the school from the new SIG application process and clear reasons for the difficulties in improving the school through past efforts. Going forward MNIC leaders intend to focus on multiple and more simultaneous improvements in strategic aspects of the school. Maintaining safety and security is a continual priority. A principal dedicated to teacher improvement will be hired without help from the SIG grant, which was denied. This will help build competencies in the teachers, which will make learning more interesting and effective for students. New and research-based teaching practice rubrics will be used to train and evaluate teachers. Simultaneous, as much as possible, MNIC will implement the Response to Intervention attendance practices that were proven in the Shiloh site in 2008-2009. Recruitment of students will be changed into an outreach practice. MNIC staff will find students and build relationships with them that can at a minimum benefit these individuals even if they don't attend MNIC. Conversations with youth on the street rarely focuses on school or education, but rather on their current issues.

The most important progress needed at MNIC is to build a critical mass of students who believe they can learn, want to learn and are able, somehow, to attend and learn at school. As this core group of students emerges and demonstrates success, many aspects of the school operations and program can be stabilized. Achieving this will take more than training teachers, as most of the issues emerge from the context of the community in which students live. Partnerships and collaboration with multiple organizations also committed to these students and their families will be an important component to this strategy.

If MNIC can secure funding for core aspects of the disapproved School Improvement Grant, it would be possible to accelerate improvements for the school that at current funding levels will take many years to implement.

7. Innovative Practices

Information should include innovative practices implemented by the school during the 2009-10 school year and should also include corresponding data when applicable.

MNIC has been developing and integrating innovative practices every year since inception. Continuing study and discussions among staff who know what students are living in and what they can do academically. It has become clear, and especially so this year, that no single intervention will make the difference with these students. Thus MNIC is at the stage where the best innovative practices must be carefully and consistently integrated.

Research published in 2010 was used to analyze and strategize for MNIC's School Improvement Grant applications. Research from the Consortium for Chicago School Research (University of Chicago) that improving urban schools, especially when large numbers of students with significant life challenges

attend the school, requires multiple and coordinated improvements in strategic areas. Some school factors if weak can detract schools dramatically.

Reflecting on these insights and MNIC's experience shows that the multiple innovative practices MNIC is using have value, but must be more carefully integrated and some weak areas need significant improvement. The School Improvement Grant would have moved the school forward significantly along this line.

Innovative Practices are many:

Internships and jobs – outside the school walls in most cases, working closely with accomplished partners in the community.

Circles learning design – keeping a cohort of students together with the same teachers, paras and support staff builds trusting relationships through which students become open to learn. Adults model behavior, attitudes and strategies for learning and working. Adults get to know experientially and through assessments what students know and need to learn. Bringing teachers and topics to the group is better than breaking the groups of students up frequently

Safety team staff – redesigned from security to provide mentoring, coaching and adult discipline to the students. It is much harder for students to hide things from adults who know them, which often leads to opportunities to help students grow in emotional, ethical and motivational ways.

CPI –Crisis Prevention Institute training. Every two years all staff are retrained in CPI techniques to defuse situations that otherwise could result in physical or emotional harm.

Multiple partnerships provide tutors and volunteers to help students connect with supports they would not have had otherwise. This extended to a weekly health clinic

Service learning: Students are given opportunities for credit to serve people who have needs they can help meet. This happens with elderly people in nursing homes, cleaning yards, helping young students learn to read

Advocates for homeless and student parents are present in the school. A large portion of students are homeless and/or are parents of young children, or pregnant. Many of these students would drop out of school, but MNIC teachers and staff have created supports and creative academic programming to support these students' learning.

Multiple small sites – keeping the number of students lower has significantly reduced the number of incidents in the school. Combining this with other features of the program makes the sites even more safe.

Adjusting the curriculum to meet real life needs of students. This requires creative curriculum development and moves away from reliance on traditional text books. Relevance is primary in making a curriculum that students who have failed or been harmed by traditional schooling work.

Creating a culture of high expectations for students by and through the staff. This must be balanced by motivating and supporting students so that they do not run away from expectations.

Innovative teaching practices – two teachers developed ways to teach students that integrated method acting. For example, a teacher came to class dressed in a Victorian dress while students studied a Victorian era book. Through acting students began to connect to the drama and relationships portrayed in classic stories. So much so that students learned how to speak in Shakespearian English, with enthusiasm. Through these practices many students began to want to come to school and stay until after class was done.

Training students how to overcome fear of taking tests: this has been a significant barrier for students to pass mandated tests. Through building relationships, gradual training of how to take a quiz that looks like

a mandated test, and other practices has helped many students persevere, even to take an MCA-II test for four hours, instead of quitting after 20 minutes.

Support is available for students who need assistance – e.g., MNIC’s school social worker with intern social workers helps students with a range of life challenges. MNIC staff work with local human-services providers to help connect students to resources that will help them address their non-academic needs. The People’s Center Medical Clinic, a community health center began operating weekly at the English Academy site. This clinic serves disadvantaged populations (students and families). on a sliding-scale fee basis one day a week, at MNIC’s English Academy site. Assistance seeking post-secondary education for students who are close to graduation is also provided.

8. Program Challenges

Information could include a description of program challenges and specific strategies for addressing these challenges and supporting data when applicable.

Student Demographics: The Minnesota Internship Center continued to face many challenges during 2009-10. The largest challenge faced by MNIC is our challenging student demographics. This is the challenge MNIC has chosen to address in its mission and vision because these students are valuable and should be empowered to earn a high school diploma if possible. Most of the students who attend MNIC come into the school with significant challenges. Most of them have been out of the school system for many months. Some have experienced homelessness, extreme poverty or have been incarcerated. The English Academy serves immigrants, many quite new to the country, who usually start out with minimal English skills. The Circle sites serve mainly students who have dropped out, been expelled, or otherwise not succeeded in the regular public schools, and/or other alternative programs.

Other major challenges during the past year included:

Attendance and retention. Will it help to give more information about this challenge? It is difficult to effectively serve students when they are not in attendance regularly, and/or do not attend school for extended periods of time. Due to the life challenges described above, many MNIC students have difficulty attending school consistently. For both of the past three years, the AYP teams for MNIC’s Circle programs identified improving attendance and retention as two of the goal areas, in addition to improving student performance in reading and math. Specific details about attendance and retention are provided in the Student Membership and Enrollment Section.

After losing the Shiloh site at the end of 2008-2009, the Response to Intervention attendance model was disbanded for 2009-2010. Some insights gained from the program were transferred to other sites, but the timing of the closing disrupted ability to implement the same program in other sites. To make this program work, specific tools and resources must be available along with advance training for teachers and staff.

Student Enrollment at the English Academy: There was substantial loss of student enrollment, resulting in a reduction in staff during the year. MNIC reduced the number of teachers to match enrollment, kept the best teachers. This decline was driven by a decline in the number of immigrants moving to the Twin Cities, particularly from ELA Africa and clan-based preferences. It may have also been related to the site location which is less convenient for the communities served. To address the student-enrollment challenge, the English Academy is seeking to diversify its student population, e.g. recruiting Hmong and Hispanic students and moving the program to more match the school’s mission and vision – internships and life-relevant learning. To enhance the appeal to immigrant communities, the program shifted from an emphasis on teaching basic English-language skills to recent immigrants, to a more comprehensive high school.

Taking tests. Aside from student skill levels which often prevent them from scoring well, it is difficult with MNIC's American-born population to motivate students to take tests. Most students at the Circle sites come to MNIC with a history of doing poorly on tests and hence are not motivated to sit down and try their best. This has made it challenging for us to obtain high levels of student participation in tests such as the Measures of Academic Progress and Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (students are more motivated to take the BST's as these are required for graduation). This area was a major priority for 2009-10; the Circle sites implemented use of the MAP tests from the start of the school year and leadership and staff are taking on the challenge to work with students to see that all take the test and do their best. Staff incorporated a number of strategies to prepare students to be comfortable with taking tests. Significant improvement in the number of students taking tests was achieved in some of the circles.

Safety (of students, at school, on the way to school, and in the community). This is a major issue at the North Minneapolis sites, and remains a concern though to a lesser extent at the other sites. Some MNIC students have been involved in criminal activities; more are victims of crime, or are at risk of becoming victims, due to violence in the communities which we serve. MNIC staff work closely with probation and truancy officers; during 2008-09 about 15% of students at the Circle sites were seeing probation officers. Circle sites staff and administration discuss safety issues on a regular basis and continue to seek ways to address concerns. Aims for improving safety and security include having clear, well-communicated expectations of students; modeling respectful behavior; providing more supports to students including assistance finding employment; more integration with the community (e.g. projects to benefit the community, inviting speakers from the neighborhood, and working with law enforcement regarding truancy); more activities to encourage student bonding; and more resources to address student conflict and anger issues.

Circles sites safety staff continued meeting weekly with the Dean of Students, to strategize and address safety concerns. An after-school program initiated by safety staff for some of the students with the most challenges continued this year. About 10% of total MNIC FTES are safety staff. If the student work study volunteers are removed from FTES list, the percentage increases to about 15%. It would be impossible to run the school with any success without these men being there every day with the students. These staff members act as youth counselors and advocates as well as providing security at all sites. Keeping sites small helps reduce violence; MNIC seeks to increase safety for staff and students by having more than one staff member on-site at all times. MNIC has at least one on-site security staff person at each building.

Site –City Issues. The Circle Program sites cater almost exclusively to native born Black American youth, most of whom have had significant challenges with the conventional education system in Minneapolis. Providing effective and adequate facilities for these sites have been a significant challenge. Because most of these students live within gang territories and by necessity must make some kind of association with the gangs to survive, they cannot easily or safely attend anywhere in the city. The risks of violence to students and disruption to the program are intensified because of this context. MNIC has adopted a multi-site strategy to dissipate some of these tensions, locating sites in areas that are either gang-neutral or within gang territories to allow students to attend with relative freedom. While this strategy has value, finding adequate facilities has not been easy.

Homelessness. MNIC had 105 students who were homeless last year. This is about 19% of all enrolled students last year. This is a serious challenge that MNIC has chosen to not ignore. Next year (2010-2011) MNIC will pursue an advocate position funded by a grant to advocate for and support these students. These students often do not know where they will stay the next day and tend to move from house to house with friends and extended families. This instability dramatically effects student learning. But, amazingly, the attendance rates of homeless students is insignificantly less than that of other students.

Students as Parents: Even more students enrolled at MNIC are parents of young children. Most young women in school when they get pregnant have to drop out of school – which can sacrifice any hopes for a future. These often become the poorest of the poor. MNIC is starting to track and find supports for these

students. It may be necessary to create a special home in the community where these students can live safely and get to school.

Drugs Alcohol and Violence: Finally, a major challenge to note is drug and alcohol use among students attending MNIC's Circle sites. Staff believe a large majority of students are users. Substance-use contributes to a range of other problems from inability to sustain focus on schoolwork to violent tendencies and crime. Many students have left other programs due to substance-use issues. This is a challenge that is too big for the school to deal with alone. MNIC staff and leadership recognize the issue, however, and are exploring options for treatment with the goal of finding a treatment option with an African-American focus, to which students can be referred. While MNIC's major focus in 2008-09 was on other restructuring, this continues to be an area of concern which is to be addressed in strategic planning.

9. Finances

Reports should contain financial information. The narrative might include an overview of the financial health and stability of the school during the 2009-10 school year (fiscal year 2010), including any goals, improvements, and/or challenges. Other information might include a summary of the FY09 audit, with mention to any material weaknesses or other audit findings, and the schools response/action plan in response to those findings. A report might also include a copy of the 2009-10 school budget approved prior to June 30, 2009, as well as a copy of the FY10 final revised budget and a preliminary (unaudited if the audit is not final) set of financial statements (Balance Sheet and Statement of Revenues and Expenditures).

MNIC Finances were managed with great diligence in 2009-2010. The Board and Administration came into the year well aware of the trend of declining enrollments for the English Language Academy. Lease commitments for four facilities, with the ELA Facility being the most expensive meant that fixed costs were going to be very challenging for the school. It was not possible in 2009-2010 to reduce the lease commitment. Significant efforts to maintain enrollment at ELA and increase enrollments, along with program quality were initiated in June 2009 and continued into the start of the school program in Fall 2009. Staffing was also reduced to match enrollment needs.

Implications from the new MN Charter School Statues and the continuing recession impacted MNIC Finances. The state holdback on payments increased from 10% to 27%. Because charter schools are poor in assets, the prospects of securing sufficient financing to maintain cash flow was very poor. Significant time and effort by the board and especially administration was given to find and secure sufficient financing. The solution emerged with Charter School Capital, Inc. (CSC), located in Portland, OR, which set up business in Minnesota after many years of successful service to charter schools in California. CSC business model provides cash discounted by fees based on legal commitments of state funds for the school. Financing for cash flow at this volume significantly increased costs to the school and will remain high for the foreseeable future.

MNIC negotiated good-will deals with each of the landlords to put off payment of 25% of the leases until MNIC received its holdback funds in late 2010. This significantly relieved cash flow pressure until financing was in place. All staff also received pay cuts. Without these measures and sacrifices, the program and services to students would have been significantly impacted.

The June 2010 Summary Income Statement below combines the final approved budget with actual but unaudited incomes and spending for the year.

Minnesota Internship Center - June 2010 Summary Income Statement

% of

FUND 01 - GENERAL FUND

REVENUES

State Revenue

General Education Aid	3,034,804.53	3,114,649.00	97%
Charter School Lease Aid	459,413.97	348,000.00	132%
State Special Ed Aid.....	142,171.06	115,489.00	123%

Total State Revenue.....	3,636,389.56	3,578,138.00	102 %
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Federal Revenue

Title I, Part A - Academic Achievement.....	90,824.84	129,000.00	70 %
Title II, Part A - Teacher Training.....	32,612.08	34,049.00	96 %
Title III, English Language Enhancement	6,606.30	8,000.00	83 %
Federal Special Education	62,003.65	79,954.00	78 %
Other Sources	826,502.60	807,404.00	102 %

Total Federal Revenue	1,018,549.47	1,058,407.00	96 %
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Other Local Revenue Sources

Gifts & Bequests.....	1,750.00	100.00	1,750 %
Work Study Income.....	41,688.96	25,000.00	167 %
Misc Local Revenue Activity Fd.....	3,294.88	500.00	659 %
Miscellaneous Revenue-Local Sources	23,212.31	10,000.00	232 %

Total Other Local Revenue Sources	69,946.15	35,600.00	196 %
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FUND 01 - Total Revenues	4,724,885.18	4,672,145.00	101 %
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EXPENDITURES

Administration

Salaries and Wages	258,049.11	254,166.00	102 %
Benefits	89,425.30	97,393.89	92 %
Purchased Services	148,239.64	88,700.00	167 %
Supplies	2,736.78	3,750.00	73 %
Miscellaneous Expenditures	116,910.58	52,825.00	221 %

Total Administration.....	615,361.41	496,834.89	124 %
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Secondary Education

Salaries and Wages	746,353.43	767,574.17	97 %
Benefits	258,429.57	292,845.82	88 %
Purchased Services	28,672.27	33,470.00	86 %
Supplies	36,995.45	32,050.00	115 %
Equipment.....		2,000.00	0 %

Total Secondary Education.....	1,070,450.72	1,127,939.99	95 %
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Federal Programs

State Fiscal Stabilization.....	382,859.49	382,845.94	100 %
Title I -School Improvement	188,996.02	44,113.55	428 %
Title I	126,283.59	128,932.86	98 %
Title I ARRA.....	91,186.71	116,419.00	78 %

Title II	32,612.08	34,128.64	96 %
Title III	7,032.36	8,213.03	86 %
Title IV	300.00	300.00	100 %
Title V	47,657.85	47,657.85	100 %
Total Federal Programs	876,928.10	762,610.87	115 %
Special Education			
Salaries and Wages	134,014.60	134,493.04	100 %
Benefits	9,858.63	43,699.94	23 %
Purchased Services	59,024.69	67,555.00	87 %
Supplies		100.00	0 %
Special Education Stimulus	72,937.08	72,896.00	100 %
Miscellaneous Expenditures	132.58	133.00	100 %
Total Special Education	275,967.58	318,876.98	87 %
Instructional Support			
Staff Development and Training	135.00	190.00	71 %
Student Support Services	405,297.03	398,856.98	102 %
Total Instructional Support	405,432.03	399,046.98	102 %
Pupil Support Services			
Transportation	304,387.90	240,238.00	127 %
Total Pupil Support Services.....	304,387.90	240,238.00	127 %
Lease and Operations			
Salaries & Benefits	45,964.79	46,017.80	100 %
Purchased Services	127,325.72	119,138.99	107 %
Facilities and Building Lease	756,258.15	763,963.46	99 %
Supplies	6,982.26	6,862.00	102 %
Miscellaneous Expenditures	348.00	348.00	100 %
Total Lease and Operations.....	936,878.92	936,330.25	100 %
FUND 01 - Total Expenditures	4,485,406.66	4,281,877.96	105 %
FUND 01 - GENERAL FUND Net Income.....	239,478.52	390,267.04	

FUND 02 - FOOD SERVICE FUND

REVENUES

State Revenue

State Breakfast Revenue	376.80	300.00	126 %
State Lunch Revenue	2,629.80	2,600.00	101 %

Total State Revenue..... **3,006.60** **2,900.00** **104 %**

Federal Revenue

Fed Free & Reduced Lunch	59,854.20	44,000.00	136 %
Federal Breakfast Revenue	19,586.94	19,000.00	103 %
Federal Lunch Revenue.....	5,917.05	13,000.00	46 %

Total Federal Revenue **85,358.19** **76,000.00** **112 %**

Other Local Revenue Sources

Pupil Lunch Sales.....		25.00	0 %
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Perm Interfd Transf from fund one	89,546.44	89,547.00	0 %
Adult Lunch Sales	250.00	300.00	83 %
Total Other Local Revenue Sources	89,796.44	89,222.00	-101 %
FUND 02 - Total Revenues.....	178,161.23	168,122.00	

EXPENDITURES

Food, Supplies and Materials.....	165,052.06	155,648.09	106 %
Fund 02 Total Expenditures	165,052.06	155,648.09	106 %
FUND 02 – Total.....	165,052.06	155,648.09	106 %
FUND 02 - FOOD SERVICE FUND Net Income	13,109.17	12,473.91	

FUND 04 - COMMUNITY SERVICE FUND

REVENUES

State Revenue			
Misc State Revenue.....	222,987.19	222,823.00	100 %
Total State Revenue.....	222,987.19	222,823.00	100 %
Federal Revenue			
Federal Aids & Grant.....	27,860.52	27,861.00	100 %
Total Federal Revenue	27,860.52	27,861.00	100 %
Other Sources			
Misc Local Revenue.....	5,408.50	2,000.00	270 %
Gifts And Bequests.....	3,741.00	3,800.00	98 %
Total Other Sources	9,149.50	5,800.00	158 %
FUND 04 - Total Revenues.....	259,997.21	256,484.00	101 %

EXPENDITURES

Salaries, Wages, Benefits	249,508.12	252,070.48	99 %
FUND 04 Total Expenditures	249,508.12	252,070.48	99 %
FUND 04 – Total.....	249,508.12	252,070.48	99 %
FUND 04 - COMMUNITY SERVICE FUND Net Income.....	16,964.52	4,413.52	
Net Income - All Funds	269,552.21	228,710.47	

MNIC succeeded in increasing its Fund Balance during 2009-10:

Even after the fund transfer to cover deficit in Fund 2 the school had positive gains of \$239, 478.52 to fund one leaving a current Fund 1 balance of \$661,880

	Fund 1 (General)	Fund 2 (Food Svc.)	Fund 4 (Community Svc.)
6/30/2009:	\$413,286	(\$89,549)	\$108,104
6/30/2010:	\$661,880	(\$76,437.27)	125,068.61

Fund 4 gain in fund balance was \$16,964.42

Total fund balance increased from \$431,841 to \$710,511. Balance in the General Fund and Community Service Fund improved, though the Food Service fund continues to run a deficit. This is due to MNIC's high poverty population, and the Board's commitment to feeding all students regardless of whether they can pay. In order to improve the school's effectiveness in financial management, the Board established a finance committee during 2008-09. This committee continues to operate with great diligence. The finance committee reviews financial status monthly and reports to the Board, working with the school's contracted financial manager.

10. Authorizer

Sponsor Information

Reports should include relevant information about the authorizer, which might include a description of the authorizer's oversight of the school (e.g., site visits, board meetings attended, other monitoring efforts), as well as reporting requirements of the school, and the authorizer's relationship with the charter school. Include: name of the authorizer, authorizer liaison, contact information, and contract expiration date.

Minnesota Internship Center Charter School's sponsor is Pillsbury United Communities (PUC). PUC has sponsored MNIC since the start of the school in 2003. MNIC's contract with PUC was renewed in the spring of 2007, for a three-year term. With uncertainties about how Authorizers would be approved by the MDE, and the ensuing distractions for schools, sponsors and the MDE about charter school approvals in the state, PUC granted a one year extension to MNIC.

The termination date of MNIC's charter contract is June 30, 2011. The charter renewal process will be conducted in 2010-2011.

Sponsor contact is Katie Black (email blackk@puc-mn.org; 612-787-3657), assisting Chanda Smith Baker (email smithc@puc-mn.org; 612-302-3444). Ms. Black is in regular contact with MNIC leadership and has attended Board meetings. Ms. Black and Ms. Baker provided guidance and critique of the SIG applications in June and July 2010.

Uncertainties about approval of many authorizers, including PUC and the emerging news that many sponsors are choosing not to seek approval as authorizers, is forcing MNIC to strategize on its options to remain a viable charter school. This development is perceived as a serious threat to the existence of charter schools in Minnesota. Many charter schools are seeking to work together with various entities and in collaboration to address this threat.

11. School's State Report Card

The Minnesota Internship Center's 2009-10 Report Card Information is online for Unity Campus:

http://education.state.mn.us/ReportCard2005/schoolDistrictInfo.do?SCHOOL_NUM=015&DISTRICT_NUM=4102&DISTRICT_TYPE=07

and English Academy (English Academy):

http://education.state.mn.us/ReportCard2005/schoolDistrictInfo.do?SCHOOL_NUM=010&DISTRICT_NUM=4102&DISTRICT_TYPE=07

Both sites' report cards produced this information:

Math: Student counts qualifying for growth measurement across 2009-2010 in this subject were too few to report for this school/district

Reading: Student counts qualifying for growth measurement across 2009-2010 in this subject were too few to report for this school/district

12. Non-Profit Status

The Minnesota Internship Center Charter School is a nonprofit corporation registered as a Charity with the Minnesota Attorney General's office. Its current status is **active**.

See <http://www.ag.state.mn.us/Charities/CharitySearch.asp>.