

MINGUS UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
1801 East Fir, Cottonwood, AZ 86326

GOVERNING BOARD
MINUTES OF MEETING

Mingus Union High School Library
Thursday, October 24, 2024 5:00 PM

Governing Board:

Lori Drake
Misty Cox
Anthony Lozano
Carol Anne Teague
Austin Babcock

Also Present:

Melody Herne, Superintendent
Lynn Leonard, Finance Director
Bridget Hillman, Admin Asst.
Josh Fant, IT Director

OPENING

Call to Order

Vice President Cox called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

Roll Call

Vice President Misty Cox, Board Member Anthony Lozano, Board Member Carol Anne Teague, and Board Member Austin Babcock are all present. President Drake absent.

Pledge of Allegiance

The pledge was led by Director Genie Gee.

Moment of Silence

A moment of silence was observed.

Adoption of Agenda

Motion was made by Board Member Babcock to adopt the agenda as presented. Second was made by Vice President Cox.

Roll Call Vote:

Board President Lori Drake – Absent
Vice President Misty Cox - Aye
Board Member Anthony Lozano - Aye
Board Member Carol Anne Teague – Aye
Board Member Austin Babcock – Aye

Motion passed: 4-0

Public Comments - No Call to the Public items were received for this meeting.

ACTION ITEMS - CONSENT

(Specific information on routine vouchers and personnel will be available at the District Office 24 hours prior to Board Meetings. Please see the Governing Board Secretary during regular office hours. All items listed hereunder are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Board member so requests, in which event the item will be removed from the consent agenda and will be discussed separately.)

Policy Second Readings

Second Reading of Policy Advisory 788-791, 792-796, 798-800

Motion was made by Vice President Cox to approve the Action Items Consent as presented. Second was made by Board Member Babcock.

Roll Call Vote:

Board President Lori Drake - Absent

Vice President Misty Cox - Aye

Board Member Anthony Lozano - Aye

Board Member Carol Anne Teague - Aye

Board Member Austin Babcock - Aye

Motion passed 4-0.

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

Band Lesson and Feeder School Band Program Update

Director Josh Stallworth gave a presentation on the progress of the Feeder School Band Program and band lessons. Parent Night is scheduled for November 7, 2024, 5:00 pm at Cottonwood Community School gymnasium. The L.I.S.A. (Low Income Student Aide) foundation and Milano's Music will be in attendance. Milano's Music is the main supplier for music education supplies in Arizona. Lessons are to begin the week after Parent Night. Questions by the board were answered as the presentation took place.

Board members thanked Director Stallworth for his efforts.

Finance Updates and Cafeteria Highlights

Finance Director Lynn Leonard reviewed the Food Service Annual Financial Report for Fiscal Year 2024. It was noted in the effort for transparency that the cafeteria had a \$40,000 loss last year. The cafeteria is not normally an area that profits are seen. Finance Director Leonard then review the profit and loss comparison for fiscal years 2012-2024. A strategy that some schools use to offset expenses is to employ part-time help. In hiring part-time help you do not incur the expense of a benefit package, that cost could be estimated at \$8,000 per employee. This is not the practice at Mingus. A high school cafeteria is different from elementary or middle school where students do not have the flexibility to leave campus. Mingus Union has an off-campus lunch for juniors and seniors who have earned that privilege therefore they have other options for lunch. Finance Director Leonard also presented to the Board information regarding Provision Two, free meals for all students. Information for free and reduced student numbers can be found on the Arizona Department of Education website. In speaking with ADE currently our free and reduced student numbers would not accommodate Mingus Union High School to qualify for free meals for all students. The Auditor General performance review and past strategies for the cafeteria were also presented. Questions by the board were answered as the presentation took place.

Finance Director introduced Nutrition Director Christopher Lomeli to present the cafeteria highlights. Nutrition Director Lomeli has a background in the food industry and brings a wealth of knowledge to this position.

Nutrition Director Christopher Lomeli presented improvements over the last year that have included: menu revamp to offer high quality natural ingredients, improvements to packaging and presentation of meals, new student lunch account system Meal Time, free salad bar at lunch for all students, free all day fruit bar, digital menus, and snack shop. Nutrition Director Lomeli stated over production of food has dramatically reduced under his supervision. Daily production logs are tracked through the Meal Time system. Weekly and monthly reports are utilized to reduce the over production of food. The kitchen has been improved with new equipment, tools, and the way food is presented for service. Feedback from students, staff, and community has been helpful to steer the improvements have been made. The goal of Nutrition Director Lomeli is to move away from pre-cooked meals to in-house made meals.

Vice President Cox asked if there is a way to stop outside food that is brought back to the campus by junior and seniors to the students who do not have the off-campus privilege. Superintendent Herne states that the Administrative Team has discussed this, however it would be difficult to eliminate this practice.

Board Member Lozano would like to see fresh marketing tools implemented to draw students back to the cafeteria. He also supports homemade in-house meals.

Superintendent Herne complemented Nutrition Director Lomeli for the staff luncheon that took place before fall break. Director Lomeli and the cafeteria staff did a wonderful job.

Board members thanked Nutrition Director Lomeli for his efforts.

Finance Director Lynn Leonard reviewed the School District Employee Report (SDER) that was submitted to the Arizona Department of Education on October 15, 2024. From this report the Arizona Department of Education generates the Teachers by Degree and Experience and Teacher Experience Index (TEI) reports. It was noted that 15 teachers have a Bachelor's degree, 10 teachers have a Bachelor's degree plus additional credits, 12 teachers have a Master's degree and nine teachers have a Master's degree plus additional credits. This information came from the Teachers by Degree and Experience report. Superintendent Herne expressed that these numbers are for our teaching staff only and do not include Administrative Staff who obtain a Master's degree to gain certain credentials. Finance Director Leonard stated the School District Employee Report is submitted for the state to generate the Teacher Experience Index (TEI). Our TEI has increased over the last few years because we are able to retain our teachers. Our average years of experience for a teacher is seven years. This effects our budget in a positive way.

Board Member Babcock stated it is amazing that the average teacher's experience for Mingus is seven years. He is happy that we are able to pay our teachers well in order to retain them year after year.

Superintendent Herne reminded the Board that every school in the state is required to turn information into the Arizona Department of Education and these reports along with the previous are public facing. They can be found on the Arizona Department of Education website.

Verkada Camera Updates

Superintendent Herne asked the board to be aware of the time and effort it takes to maintain and understand the new camera system. The new camera system has amazing features, and we will continue to take the time and effort to fully understand all that it has to offer.

IT Director Josh Fant gave information to the board regarding the line crossing feature in the Verkada camera system. Vice President Cox asked if the line crossing feature had been activated. Superintendent Herne stated with the new camera system we are prioritizing needs for implementation. This feature is an item on the list of priority. Dean of Students Katherine Forbes reviewed features that have been used on the Verkada camera system. She went into depth regarding the intruder feature which can be used to scan the system for any person of interest. The example Dean of Students Forbes used to demonstrate the intruder feature was a community member who had been trespassed from school grounds image was uploaded into the system for scanning. If that subject appeared in view of the camera system an alert would go to designated administrators for them to respond. These alerts can be programmed for a 24-hour scan, in school hours only or outside of school hours. Historical footage is also available and being used when needed. Principal Beery states that we are working on our priority list. The upgraded camera system has made an impact on discouraging vaping in the school. The other priority would be the visitor management system feature that the camera system provides.

Board Member Babcock asked if we have any legal obligation to notify parents and students that the school utilizes the use of a 24-hour camera system. Superintendent Herne states that this has been covered by an Arizona Revised Statute as a public record.

Board Member Babcock clarifies we are legally in a good spot with parent consent for our camera system. Do parents know that their student is being filmed and recorded. Superintendent Herne states we have signage posted throughout the camps stating that we have 24-hour video surveillance. Dean of Students Katherine Forbes states we have a section in our Student Handbook that covers this item.

Vice President Cox asked what the law for retention of record is. Dean of Students Katherin Forbes states six years.

Academy Updates

Academy Director Genie Gee gave a presentation on the progress of the Academy. Currently the Academy has 25 seniors, 17 juniors, 4 V'ACTE students, and eight work experience students. Out of those students 17 are recovered students which means those students were not Mingus Union High School students last year. Director Gee displayed before and after pictures of the Academy space. The Academy space was updated so the students had a sense of belonging and pride. The Snack Shop is being utilized by the Academy students for their break time schedule and they are also able to have lunch on the campus. The Academy students have had transcripts reviews, parent conferences and counselor meetings. Items for celebration during the first quarter are; 12 students earned College Level Examination Program (CLEP) credits at Yavapai Community College, 50 plus classes completed, and increase in confidence and pride. Director Gee shared a couple stories regarding her students to the Board. She also thanked the Board and administration for supporting alternative education and this program. Our students need other options outside of traditional education.

Vice President Cox would like Academy data emailed to the Board. She also asked if any home visits have taken place. Director Gee states no home visits have taken place however, there are two scheduled for next week. Director Gee also states that home visits will be incorporated during quarter two.

Superintendent Herne clarifies that Director Gee will send Academy data to her. Superintendent Herne will send the Academy data report out to the Board in the weekly email update.

Board Member Babcock asked out of the 25 seniors how many of them will obtain graduation. Director Gee states she is optimistic that all 25 seniors will graduate, however by quarter three we will have better numbers. Board Member Babcock also asked how many students can be serviced. Director Gee stated 58 is the number of computer stations at the Academy. We have resolved the technical issues that we were experiencing at the beginning of the year. Director Gee feels comfortable going out and marketing the Academy to fill it to capacity. Once at capacity we can look at other schedules to accommodate increased enrollment.

Board Member Lozano asked if students have the opportunity to go on field trips. Director Gee states currently students can go on field trips if they are associated with a club, activity, or V'ACTE. In the future Director Gee would like to incorporate field trips for the Academy as a group. Superintendent Herne compliments Director Gee for her efforts with the Academy and the students. The Academy students are able to participate in school activities dances, games, and pep assemblies. When Superintendent Herne encountered the Academy students, they have been kind, respectful, and simply amazing.

Board Member Teague expressed how much she enjoyed watching Director Gee's enthusiasm, happiness, and sparkle for the Academy. The Academy numbers are amazing, and she thanked Director Gee.

MUHS Fall 2024 Discipline Data

Principal Beery introduced Dean of Students Katherine Forbes. He commends the work she has done to put this presentation together and the diligence she has displayed during this school year. Dean of Students Katherine Forbes reviews the 2024 fall discipline data to the Board.

Vice President Cox states when looking at the data it does not seem that the enforcement of consequences has not deterred students' behavior. Dean of Students Katherine Forbes has seen a difference. Principal Beery states it is still only quarter one. Students need to see that we are taking things seriously and that there is follow through. For example, this week we suspended students for filming an incident on campus. This is not something we have done in the past. Now students and families know we are serious about this type of enforcement. Another area where we can see improvement is vaping on campus. With the new camera system, we can catch students with vapes were before we were not. Our students are incredibly good at reporting things to administration. Principal Beery has had a number of students tell him this year that they appreciate the fact that they can go into the restroom without a bunch of vape smoke in the air. Principal Beery doesn't think that we are taking things more seriously, but the administration has more tools to keep them informed. Dean of Students Katherine Forbes states when conferencing with parents this year they are very thankful. On a number of occasions parents were not aware that their student was vaping. She has put up resources from MATFORCE in her office for parents and students. This gives them an idea of what to look for and another resource for help if needed.

Vice President Cox asked if there is anything else needed from the Board. Principal Beery expressed thanks for the additional security positions.

Board Member Cox asked if the enforcement of the cell phone policy has had any effects. Superintendent Herne asked teacher Amy Badger to give her perspective regarding the cell phone policy. Science Teacher Amy Badger states that the cell phone policy is having huge impact in the classroom.

Board Member Teague states that the student feedback she has heard is that students are able to pay attention in class due to the cell phone policy.

Executive Session

Please remain seated until such time as the Board votes to convene an executive session. The Board will either move to a different location to hold the session or will ask those in attendance to leave the room and take with them all materials and belongings and ensure that no recording devices are left in the room. No action will be taken in the Executive Session if convened.

Superintendent Evaluation A.R.S 15-503 - Superintendent Herne will update the board regarding the Superintendent's Evaluation.

Motion was made by Vice President Cox for the board to move into the Executive Session. Second was made by Board Member Teague.

Roll Call Vote:

Board President Lori Drake - Absent

Vice President Misty Cox - Aye

Board Member Anthony Lozano - Aye

Board Member Carol Anne Teague - Aye

Board Member Austin Babcock - Aye

Motion passed 4-0.

Convened to Executive Session: 6:39pm

Reconvened from Executive Session: 7:03pm

ACTION ITEMS – DISTRICT BUSINESS

Superintendent Evaluation

Motion was made by Vice President Cox to approve updates to the Superintendent's evaluation and evaluation schedule as presented. Board members will complete the evaluation with a final copy to Superintendent Herne by December 2, 2024. Second was made by Board Member Babcock.

Roll Call Vote:

Board President Lori Drake - Absent

Vice President Misty Cox - Aye

Board Member Anthony Lozano - Aye

Board Member Carol Anne Teague - Aye

Board Member Austin Babcock - Aye

Motion passed 4-0.

Requests for Future Agenda Items

Vice President Cox – Security Officer Training
Board Member Lozano – will send items to Superintendent Herne

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Board Member Teague to adjourn the meeting. Second by Vice President Cox.

Roll Call Vote:

Board President Lori Drake - Absent

Vice President Misty Cox - Aye

Board Member Anthony Lozano - Aye

Board Member Carol Anne Teague - Aye

Board Member Austin Babcock - Aye

Motion passed 4-0.

Adjournment: 7:07pm

Board President Lori Drake

Vice President Misty Cox

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