

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

**GOVERNING BOARD**  
**MINUTES OF MEETING**  
Mingus Union High School Library  
Thursday, May 8, 2025 6:00 PM

**Governing Board:**

Ms. Taylor Bell  
Ms. Ashley Koepnick  
Mr. Austin Babcock  
Mr. Frank Nevarez  
Mr. Will David

**Also Present:**

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

**OPENING**

**Call to Order**

President Bell called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

**Roll Call**

President Taylor Bell, Vice President Ashley Koepnick, Board Member Austin Babcock, Board Member Frank Nevarez and Board Member Will David are all present.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

The pledge was led by Board Member David.

**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 Board Member Nevarez.

**Roll Call Vote:**

President Taylor Bell – Aye  
Vice President Ashley Koepnick – Aye  
Board Member Austin Babcock - Aye  
Board Member Frank Nevarez – Aye  
Board Member Will David - Aye

**Motion** passed 5-0.

**STUDENT RECOGNITION**

Presentation and certificates for student recognition were presented by Superintendent Herne and Principal Beery.

**EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION**

Principal Beery and Superintendent Herne recognized the employees of the month, Sherri Ullery and Haley Davis.

## REPORTS

### Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Herne reported on several events and recognitions that students have received during the fourth quarter. Upcoming events: Senior Week May 19<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup>, Senior Honors Night May 19<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm, Graduation Practice May 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7:00 am, Graduation May 23<sup>rd</sup> 7:00 pm, Operation Graduation 2025 May 23<sup>rd</sup> 9:00 pm.

### Mingus Recognitions and Highlights

Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) • Ashley Gonzalez and Lexi Bourque competed in Community Awareness • Ashley Gonzalez took Gold • Elora Bakhaus competed in Health Career Photography and took Gold

Universal Technical Institute (UTI) Event • April 10, 2025 • Mark Merrill • Universal Technical Institute presented • Courses offered for continuing education in Career and Technical Education • Highlighting the wide variety and high demand for skilled professionals

Competitive College & Scholarship Flex Presentation April 10, 2025 • Sophomores and Juniors were invited to attend this event during a FLEX period • Presenters— • College Knowing and Going Senior Ambassador Kayta Aronson • Questbridge Recipient Brooklyn Colvin • 44 students pre-registered for this event • School Counselors, Kristy Meyers and Amanda Lange, provided materials and assisted the students with the presentation

El Valle Puede Celebration – Arizona Decision Day 2025 (April 14, 2025) • Mingus Union High School took 13 seniors to join the 1400 high school seniors from across Arizona to celebrate the 2nd El Valle Puede Celebration • The El Valle Puede Celebration was held at the Phoenix Arena and hosted by Phoenix Suns/Mercury Foundation, Helios Education Foundation, and the Arizona Board of Regents • AZ Decision Day, proclaimed in 2024 by Governor Katie Hobbs, is a statewide celebration designed to inspire students to take charge of their futures – whether pursuing college, trade school, military service or entering the workforce – the event encourages high schoolers to make meaningful post-graduation plans • Event Highlights include: • College Resource Fair • Guest Speakers including Phoenix Mayor, Kate Gallego, Helios Founding Chairs Vince Roig and Jane Roig and ABOR Student Regent David Zaragoza • MUHS Jose Felix was chosen for a free throw competition on the Suns Court and he WON • Performances by Phoenix Suns dancers and stunt team • Concert by Latin hip-hop artist Xavi

Anatomage Table • Sports Med Program • Anatomage Table arrived 4/17/25 • New resource and tool for enhanced learning of anatomy & physiology

MUHS CREATIVE WRITING CLUB Verde Valley Fair: Writing Contest Winners • Zaira Landaverde Hernandez: • 1st Place: Creative Writing: Shakespearean Sonnet • 2nd Place Creative Writing: Shakespearean Sonnet • 3rd Place Haiku • Casey Odell: • 1st Place: Haiku • Taiya Trujillo: • 2nd Place: Haiku • Cash prizes were awarded to all these students for their winning poems

Congressional Student Art Competition • An annual National Art Competition where students from each Congressional District compete for scholarships. There were 5 awards for AZ District #2. • 1st Place, Nicholas Osborn, “Looking Forward”, Charcoal on Paper • Won \$36,000 Scholarship and an all-expense paid trip for 2 to Washington DC to attend awards ceremony • Artwork will hang in the Nations Capital for the next year • 2nd Place, Asher McFarland, “A Day in the Life of a Fridge”, Acrylic on Canvas • Artwork will hang in Congressman Crane’s Washington DC office for the next year

Verde Valley Fair Art Show • Annual Art Show in the Verde Valley highlighting student Artwork from local schools. Numerous awards are given by Fair Sponsors and local Artist Communities. • Award Winners Audri Anderson, Best in Show, Color Photography Ava Fransk, Made In Clarkdale Special Award, Mixed Media Asher Mcfarland, Made in Clarkdale Special Award, Drawing Audri Anderson, Ray Storm Memorial Award, Color Photography Lulu Clements, 1st Place, Painting Alexis Williams, 2nd Place, Mixed Media Serenity De La Torre, 3rd Place, Painting

Derek Alvarez, 2nd Place, Photography Finn Pollock, 3rd Place, Photography Audri Anderson , 2nd Place, Color Photography Grace Gomez, 3rd Place, Drawing Shelby Kauffman, 1st Place, Printmaking Scarlett Whitney, 2nd Place, Printmaking

High School Music Theatre Awards at ASU Gammage – Semi Finalists Announced • We have finalists in 9 of the 13 categories • Mingus Union is one of two non-Phoenix schools represented in the State Competition • Judges came to our production and evaluated every acting, dancing, and technical detail • Event is on Saturday, May 24th at 7pm • There will be a streaming link for those who can't make it to ASU Gammage • Top 7 Finalists to MUHS Hair and Make-up Crew lead by Melaine Rodriguez • Top 8 Finalist to MUHS Costume Crew lead by Addi Hughes (...shout out to our designer, 2024 Alumni Beth Bates as well) • Top 8 Finalist to MUHS Set and Props Crew lead by Ava Fransk and Jack Murphee • Top 8 Finalist to MUHS Lighting Team - Henry Crawford, Ian Laas, and Sofia Arvayo • Top 9 Finalist – Best Dance Ensemble – Voulez-Vous, choreographed by Carla and Stephen Renard • Top 8 Finalist – Best Supporting Actor – Caleb Thompson • Top 10 Finalist – Best Lead Female – Mekenzie Combs (If she wins, she competes in New York on Broadway for the Jimmy Awards) • Top 10 Finalist – Best Vocalist – Mekenzie Combs • Top 4 Finalist – ASU Gammage Leadership Award – Mekenzie Combs

Verde Valley Fair– May 1, 2025 • Mingus FFA Students competed in multiple areas • Pinnacle of hard work and dedication • All animals were sold in the Auction on Saturday (5/3) \$779,653 raised for kids across the Verde Valley

### **Board Member Report(s)**

Vice President Koepnick and President Bell reported on their attendance at the Verde Valley Fair. Each commended the hard work of students, family and community for their efforts in the success of the fair this year. Vice President Koepnick gave a special recognition to Mr. Banuelos and Superintendent Herne for their support of the students at the fair.

Board Member Nevarez was not able to attend the fair this year, however wanted to commend the students and families for their dedication and hard work. He also gave thanks to the teaching staff in recognition of Teacher Appreciation Week.

### **PRESENTATION AND INFORMATION**

#### **Administration Information**

Principal Beery gave a presentation to the Board on the PLC processes as it relates to Curriculum and information from the Staff Needs Assessment.

#### **Student Council Presentation**

Student Council members will be presenting current Student Body events and future activities. Items Include: Prom, Spring Sports Pep Assembly, Vitalant Banner Night at DBacks, Teacher Appreciation Week, and May Blood Drive. Upcoming events for the Student Council are: Senior Spirit week, Senior Field day, Senior Sunset, Graduation, Summer Camp.

#### **AVID Information**

Senior AVID students presented information on their experiences with the AVID program. Mrs. Bodam also gave her highlights of the year and expressed her appreciation to the Senior AVID students.

#### **Other Information for Reading**

May Newsletter

### **BOARD MEETING MINUTES NOT PREVIOUSLY APPROVED**

**Motion** was made by President Bell to separate the approval of the April 10, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes and the April 24, 2025, Work Session Meeting Minutes. Second was made by Board Member David.

**Roll Call Vote:**

President Taylor Bell – Aye

Vice President Ashley Koepnick – Aye

Board Member Austin Babcock - Aye

Board Member Frank Nevarez – Aye

Board Member Will David - Aye

**Motion** passed 5-0.

**Motion** was made by Vice President Koepnick to approve the minutes for April 10, 2025, Regular Meeting as presented. Second was made by President Bell.

**Roll Call Vote:**

President Taylor Bell – Aye

Vice President Ashley Koepnick – Aye

Board Member Austin Babcock - Aye

Board Member Frank Nevarez – Aye

Board Member Will David - abstain

**Motion** passed 4-1.

**Motion** was made by President Bell to approve the minutes for April 24, 2025, Work Session as presented. Second was made by Vice President Koepnick.

**Roll Call Vote:**

President Taylor Bell – Aye

Vice President Ashley Koepnick – Aye

Board Member Austin Babcock - Aye

Board Member Frank Nevarez – Aye

Board Member Will David - Aye

**Motion** passed 5-0.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

*At the conclusion of the call to the public, Board members may respond to any criticism made by an individual who addressed the Board. Board members may also direct staff to review the concern or request the item be discussed at a future meeting. Board members may not discuss or take legal action on matters raised during this open call to the public. If you have submitted a Request to Speak form, the Board President will call upon you and ask that you please identify yourself by clearly stating for the record your name and address. Citizens are asked to restrict their comments to three (3) minutes. Groups wishing to speak should select a spokesperson to represent the view of the group. (Board President may refrain from reciting this section if no RTS forms have been submitted).*

**Paula Herald** – Paul Herald voiced her concern regarding the April 10, 2025, vote to move forward with the Override. The placement of the Override on the April 10<sup>th</sup> agenda did not lead her to believe a vote would be taking place. She states that even though she doesn't disagree with the need for the Override however, more information, questions and answers need to be discussed.

**ACTION ITEMS – CONSENT**

**Motion** was made by Vice President Koepnick to adopt the consent agenda as presented. Second was made by Board Member Frank Nevarez.

**Roll Call Vote:**

President Taylor Bell – Aye

Vice President Ashley Koepnick – Aye

Board Member Austin Babcock - Aye  
Board Member Frank Nevarez – Aye  
Board Member Will David - Aye  
**Motion** passed 5-0.

**Approval of Routine Vouchers**

Expense, Payroll, and Bookstore Activity

**Personnel**

HR Report, Classified, Certified, and Support Staff (Classified Non-Admin) Employment Renewals for FY2026

**Donation**

Band, Art, Graduation, Track

**Sole Source**

Addition of Center for High School Success to the Sole Source list for the FY2025

**Out of State Travel**

Out of state travel for the Girls Flag Football Team to California for the 2025 California Flag Football Camp from July 23, 2025 - July 26, 2025.

**ACTION ITEMS - DISTRICT BUSINESS**

**Helios Decision Center Agreement** - Helios would like to partner with Mingus Union High School on data sharing for personalized admissions to the three (3) State Universities. (Superintendent Herne)

Superintendent Herne presented information to the Board regarding the Helios Data Sharing Agreement.

Board Member Nevarez requested clarification regarding cost to the families. Superintendent Herne stated that no cost to the families, with the data supplied, the students would be ready for the application process if they and their family select to participate (opt-in).

Board Member Babcock asked who generates the data given to Helios and how long does this take. Superintendent Herne states that the work is done by the MUHS Counseling Department. Mrs. Wesbrock, Director of Student Services, states that it is not very time consuming roughly around an hour to obtain the data.

Board Member Babcock also requests that parents are made aware of data being collected and shared regarding their students. Superintendent Herne reiterates this information is given to the parents/guardians.

President Bell asked can families choose to participate, and they change their mind, can they opt-out. Superintendent Herne answers yes.

President Bell wants to clarify that this is the same type of data that we have agreed to in other data sharing documents. Superintendent Herne answers yes.

**Motion** was made by President Bell to approve the Helios Decision Center Agreement as presented. Second was made by Board Member David.

**Roll Call Vote:**

President Taylor Bell – Aye  
Vice President Ashley Koepnick – Aye  
Board Member Austin Babcock - Aye

Board Member Frank Nevarez – Aye  
Board Member Will David - Aye  
**Motion** passed 5-0.

#### **Administrative Salary Increase**

Superintendent Herne presented information regarding the recommendation for the FY2026 Administrative Salary increase and Salary Schedule.

**Motion** was made by Board Member Nevarez to approve the recommendation for the FY2026 Administrative Salary increase and Salary Schedule as presented. Second was made by Vice President Koepnick

#### **Roll Call Vote:**

President Taylor Bell – Aye  
Vice President Ashley Koepnick – Aye  
Board Member Austin Babcock - Aye  
Board Member Frank Nevarez – Aye  
Board Member Will David - Aye  
**Motion** passed 5-0.

#### **Final FY25 Budget Revision**

Finance Director Lynn Leonard presented the final Fiscal Year 2025 budget revision.

**Motion** was made by President Bell to approve the final Fiscal Year 2025 budget revision as presented. Second was made by Board Member Babcock.

#### **Roll Call Vote:**

President Taylor Bell – Aye  
Vice President Ashley Koepnick – Aye  
Board Member Austin Babcock - Aye  
Board Member Frank Nevarez – Aye  
Board Member Will David - Aye  
**Motion** passed 5-0.

#### **Conflict of Interest**

Finance Director Lynn Leonard conducted the annual Mandatory Conflict of Interest training for Governing Board Members.

#### **Job Description**

Superintendent Herne reviewed the revisions to the Athletic Director job description.

**Motion** was made by President Bell to approve the revisions to the Athletic Director Job Description as presented. Second was made by Board Member Babcock.

#### **Roll Call Vote:**

President Taylor Bell – Aye  
Vice President Ashley Koepnick – Aye  
Board Member Austin Babcock - Aye  
Board Member Frank Nevarez – Aye  
Board Member Will David - Aye  
**Motion** passed 5-0.

## **INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **Yavapai College Early College Academy**

Director Wesbrock gave the Board background regarding the YC Early College Academy. The current students presented to the Board their experience with the YC Early College Academy.

Vice President Koepnick praised the students for their accomplishments and continued success.

Board Member David stated that he teaches at the college level and student who participate in a program such as YC Early College Academy have a much higher success rate than other students. He is proud of the MUHS students.

### **Policy 1st Reading**

Superintendent Herne went through the First reading of Policy Advisory Volume 37 #2 819-862, 863-865 Volume 37 #3, 866-875 Volume 37 #4.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION** The Governing Board may vote to retire into executive session pursuant to A.R.S. §431.03 (A)(1), (3) and (4) for the following purpose(s) (1) Discussion or consideration of employment, assignment, appointment of Superintendent and (2) Discussion or consultation for legal advice with the attorney or attorneys of the public body or to consider its position regarding Superintendent's contract and related issues.

### **Discussion and Information**

Call for Executive Session Pursuant to A.R.S. §431.03 (A)(1), (3) and (4) for the following purpose(s) (1) Discussion or consideration of employment, assignment, appointment of Superintendent and (2) Discussion or consultation for legal advice with the attorney or attorneys of the public body or to consider its position regarding Superintendent's contract and related issues.

**Motion** was made by Vice President Koepnick for the Board to move into Executive Session. Second was made by Board Member Nevarez.

### **Roll Call Vote:**

President Taylor Bell - Aye

Vice President Ashley Koepnick – Aye

Board Member Austin Babcock - Aye

Board Member Frank Nevarez - Aye

Board Member Will David - Aye

**Motion** passed 5-0.

Convened to Executive Session: 8:31 pm

Reconvened from Executive Session: 9:00 pm

### **Action Item - District Business**

### **Superintendent's Contract**

**Motion** was made by Board Member Nevarez to approve a 3-year employment contract for Mingus Superintendent for a period commencing July 1, 2025. Second was made by Vice President Koepnick.

**Roll Call Vote:**

President Taylor Bell - Aye

Vice President Ashley Koepnick – Aye

Board Member Austin Babcock - Aye

Board Member Frank Nevarez - Aye

Board Member Will David - Aye

**Motion** passed 5-0.

Superintendent Herne thanked the Board and states that there is a lot of work ahead of them, but she is not afraid of the hard work.

**REQUEST FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Board Member David asked if anyone else will be attending the Flagstaff conference. Superintendent Herne states at this time four of the five Board Members will be attending different points of the Flagstaff conference.

Board Member David reminds the need for a quorum posting. Superintendent Herne states this will be done.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion** was made by Vice President Koepnick to adjourn the meeting. Second was made by President Bell.

**Roll Call Vote:**

President Taylor Bell - Aye

Vice President Ashley Koepnick – Aye

Board Member Austin Babcock - Aye

Board Member Frank Nevarez - Aye

Board Member Will David - Aye

**Motion** passed 5-0.

**Adjournment: 9:04 PM**

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Board President

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Vice President