



Minutes

Board of Directors Meeting

August 27, 2025 | 7:30 – 9:00 am

AGENDA

7:30-7:45

- Welcome and introductions
- Approval of meeting agenda
- Approval of June 11, 2025 minutes

7:45-8:05

- 2025 Audit Report
 - Cathy Lydon, CPA, Director, Redpath and Co.
 - Motion to accept audit

8:05-8:20

- President's report
 - MINNDEPENDENT 101
 - Legislative update re: school safety/security

8:20-8:35

- Finance report
- Membership report (renewal status and new members)
- Development report
- Program report
 - STEM Education Conference
 - School Leadership Conference (9/22-9/24)

8:35-8:55

- Board Survey results and discussion

8:55-9:15

- 50th Anniversary discussion
 - Format, goals/outcome, day/date

9:15-9:30

- Executive Session
 - President FY26 goals



MINUTES

Those present: Tim Benz, Tim Berner, Mike Brennan, Dean Broadhead, Pat Callan
Pete Deavan, Shana Duininck, Heidi Gallus, Jim Hansen, Michael Lamb, Joel Landskroener, Anna
Lima, Brian Lynch, Teri McCloughan, Blake Nelson, Kelly Regan, Josh Schultz

Staff present: Michele Skare, Lisa Vosbeek

The meeting was called to order at 7:31 AM.

Michael called for a motion to accept the minutes as written. Motion made by Teri, seconded by Kelly. Motion passed

Michael called for a motion to accept the meeting agenda. Motion made by Josh Schultz, seconded by Heidi. Motion passed.

Audit and Financial Review

Cathy Lydon, CPA, Director, Redpath and Co., presented the audit results for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025. She reported that the organization received an unmodified (clean) opinion, with no deficiencies identified. The audit covered fiscal years 2024 and 2025, confirming that financial statements were fairly stated in accordance with GAAP. Assets increased modestly by \$14,000, liabilities decreased by \$16,000, and net assets grew by \$30,000. Cash and cash equivalents rose by \$45,000 due to strong collections, though revenue was down overall because of a reduction in grant funding compared to the prior year's large WEM Foundation grant. Expenses increased by \$45,000, largely in salaries/benefits and outside services, with allocations remaining consistent at 67% program, 24% administration, and 8.5% fundraising.

Cathy highlighted that the organization's cash flow improved by \$60,000 during the year, with an operating reserve approaching \$370,000. Liquidity remains strong, with \$924,000 in available financial assets. She emphasized that no audit adjustments were needed — a significant affirmation of the accuracy of internal financial reporting throughout the year. The only recommendation was to strengthen documentation practices for restricted grants, though this was noted as a best practice rather than a deficiency.

Michael Lamb congratulated Tim, Brian, and the staff on the strong results, and Cathy praised the preparation and responsiveness of the accounting team. Brian and Tim explained that the organization aims to maintain reserves of 6–12 months of expenses, with \$3,000 deposited monthly. Patrick asked clarifying questions about reserve targets and cash goals for newer board members, and Brian explained the ongoing proactive approach.

The board also discussed the shift to outsourced accounting with All In One, which continues to serve the organization well. Tim noted that this marks the 12th or 13th consecutive clean audit, a testament to sound processes and consistency.



President's report

Tim provided a comprehensive overview of the organization's structure and activities in the presentation 'MINNDEPENDENT 101.' He outlined the membership model (95% retention, 85–90% engagement), funding streams (sponsorships, grants, annual fund, and endowment income), and advocacy priorities. He emphasized that the staff of 2.6 FTE is 'small but mighty,' with roles including fundraising, STEM programming, and lobbying. He reiterated that membership and sponsorship remain strong, and that retention and engagement are consistently high.

He also addressed the recent tragic incident at Annunciation School. He described the organization's measured response, balancing support for families and schools with careful media engagement.. Tim noted outreach to federal contacts in the Department of Education for resources, as well as connections with Annunciation's leadership and community members.

The board discussed security vendor options. Tim cited 360 Security Services and the Minnesota Emergency Safety Board's free campus mapping program. Josh Schultz recommended Kingswood Security. Anna shared positive experiences from Our Lady of Grace. Joel highlighted a federal grant program providing up to \$200,000 annually for security upgrades, which his school successfully accessed. Board members agreed on the importance of helping schools identify affordable and effective security solutions.

Finance, Membership, Development, and Programs

Brian presented the financial update, noting that revenues and expenses were consistent with expectations at this early stage of the fiscal year. The budget included a 3% staff salary increase. He expressed confidence in the organization's financial position.

Membership renewals were proceeding well, with two new Immanuel schools (Lewiston and Hutchinson) joining recently. Development performance was strong, with sponsorships climbing and grant prospecting underway. Preparations are almost finished for the School Leadership Conference, while the STEM Education Conference received positive feedback, particularly regarding Heritage Christian's hospitality. However, attendance gaps among high schools and elementary schools without designated STEM staff were noted. The board suggested broadening the scope of the conference to include general education content to increase participation.

Board Survey Results

Michael Lamb summarized the annual board survey results, noting two themes: the board's strong engagement and passion for the mission, and the need to better utilize members' skills and talents. He praised the dedication evident in both quantitative metrics and written comments.

Tim added that the board has grown stronger and is highly regarded by external partners. He emphasized the importance of 'optimizing' talents.



Other board members shared feedback: Dean Broadhead emphasized willingness to contribute skills; Blake Nelson praised the staff's 'military precision' in mobilizing against the elimination of pupil aid; Teri McCloughan proposed subcommittees for targeted issues; Shana Duininck encouraged leveraging board members' school connections for feedback; Kelly Regan recommended adding leadership development components to events; and Tim Berner stressed the importance of remaining streamlined and avoiding mission drift.

The discussion underscored enthusiasm for deepening engagement while maintaining focus on the mission.

50th Anniversary Planning

Tim introduced initial planning for the organization's 50th anniversary in 2026. The board discussed combining the Education Awards with the anniversary celebration to maximize impact, particularly for out-state schools. Shana suggested holding the event on a Friday evening instead of Sunday to accommodate community schedules. Ideas included inviting parents and school leaders, offering half-table options for schools, and producing a video featuring school leaders sharing their experiences with the organization.

Board members expressed enthusiasm, and an ad hoc committee will be formed to lead the planning. The group agreed that one major event would be more effective than two smaller ones, providing a strong platform to celebrate the organization's history and future.

Executive Session

The meeting concluded at 9:13 AM with an executive session to review Tim Benz's recommended goals for fiscal year 2025–26.

September 17, 2025

/s/ Dean Broadhead
Secretary