



Minutes

Executive Committee Meeting

February 11, 2026 | 7:30 – 8:30 am – via Zoom

AGENDA

7:30-7:35

- Approval of meeting agenda.
- Approval of November 12, 2025 minutes

7:35-7:55

- President's report

7:55-8:15

- Finance report
- Membership report
- Development report
- Program report
 - Education Awards – Sunday, April 26 at Mendakota CC
 - STEM Grant Program – 25 LOIs (19 innovation, 2 starter, 2 sustainability, 2 community partnerships) \$95,000 requested

8:15-8:30

- Executive session

MINUTES

Those present: Tim Benz, Dean Broadhead, Michael Lamb, Joel Lans Kroener, Brian Lynch, Teri McCloughan, Kate Wollan

Staff present: Jennifer Renstrom



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 Dean. Motion passed.

President's Report

The meeting covered several updates and discussions. Tim reported on staffing transitions, including Jennifer Renstrom's onboarding and the introduction of a new controller at MINNDEPENDENT's external accounting firm, Stacy. He also mentioned the upcoming legislative session and a proposed bill for school safety and security funding, asking to allocate \$36 per student. This would be for a variety of uses such as key cards, mental health resources, and staff development. The group discussed preparations for a hearing on the bill, including plans to present expert testimony and ensure a balanced approach in messaging.

The group discussed the impact of recent ICE activities on schools. Kids staying home are creating several issues. Teri highlighted financial challenges at Risen Christ, where 50 students are absent, which is complicating lunch reimbursement issues and lack of outdoor recess since mid-December. Kate described similar concerns affecting schools across Minnesota, including St. Odilia in Shoreview. The discussion emphasized the broader educational impact, including lost learning opportunities and potential long-term costs for interventions with students who miss significant school time.

Tim mentioned attending group administrator meetings– he was in New Ulm this week and Seventh Day Adventists next week, with more on the horizon. Tim also reported positive progress on De La Salle's membership review, which resulted in them renewing their membership.

Finance Report

The meeting focused on financial updates and organizational membership. Brian presented a strong financial report, noting increased revenue in the honor fund and cash reserves, performing well on income statement. Tim also mentioned that the 990 tax filing is delayed but would be ready for board review within a week. He said MINNDEPENDENT filed for an extension to May.



Membership Report

The organization reported its highest number of member schools in history, with a 97% retention rate and 10 new schools joining since December, for a total of 187 schools. Tim noted that non-metro schools are joining at a better rate, indicating increased value for out-state schools. Joel inquired about potential new membership from St. Max in Delano, and Tim suggested they could wait until the new fiscal year if needed. Tim discussed the importance of sharing their organization's benefits with non-member schools, particularly during group meetings with diocesan superintendents in various parts of the state.

Development Report

Overall, development has been really strong. The board reviewed development updates, including a successful grant operating and capital grants from Hardenbergh Foundation. There is a potential Schulze Grant, MINNDEPENDENT was approved to apply for up to \$55,000.. Tim reported that Xcel Energy has been supporting MINNDEPENDENT since 1979, and they are preparing a grant application, specifically for STEM, due on February 23rd.

The program awards nomination process is ongoing with a "sweet spot" number of submissions for each category. Tim announced confidentially that Doug Jaeger will receive the Jim Field Legacy Award.

The STEM grant process saw 25 LOIs received, with 18 applications completed across the various categories, and the STEM Advisory Committee will review applications in early March.

Tim also provided an update on Education Savings Accounts (ESAs), noting a bill will be introduced in late March for an ESA bill in Minnesota, with federal scholarship tax credit rules and regulations still pending.

Pete Deavan, a new board member, has a grant program through his company for employees who serve on a board.

Every January, MINNDEPENDENT gets a notification from the Helen Harrington Trust which is about \$11,000 per quarter. The team will do some research about Helen Harrington and what her connection was to the organization. This could be a possible 50th Anniversary story.



Adjournment

Michael entertained a motion to adjourn. So moved by Kate, seconded by Dean. Meeting adjourned at 8:13 am. The meeting was followed by an Executive Session attended by all committee members, and Jennifer left the meeting.

February 11, 2026

/s/ Dean Broadhead

Secretary