

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

GOVERNING BOARD MINUTES OF MEETING
Mingus Union High School Library
Thursday, April 09, 2026, 6:00 PM

Governing Board:

Ms. Taylor Bell
Mr. Frank Nevarez
Mr. Austin Babcock
Mr. Will David
Mr. Matthew Chavez

Also Present:

Melody Herne, Superintendent
Tari Garrison, Board Secretary

Meeting Started at: 6:00 PM

I. OPENING

I.1. Call to Order

I.2. Roll Call

- President Bell – Here
- Vice President Nevarez – Here
- Member Babcock – Here
- Member David – Here
- Member Chavez – Here

I.3. Pledge of Allegiance

I.4. Moment of Silence

I.5. Adoption of Agenda

Motion to **Adopt the Agenda** as presented by **Member Babcock**, and seconded by **Vice President Nevarez**.

- President Bell – Aye
- Vice President Nevarez – Aye
- Member Babcock – Yes
- Member David – Yes
- Member Chavez – Yes

Motion passes 5-0

II. STUDENT RECOGNITION

II.1. Mingus Connection-- Mingus Connection Logo Contest Winners (Staff: Superintendent Herne and Mingus Connection Board).

Representatives from Mingus Connection were introduced, including President **Barbie Duncan**, Vice President **Roy Sandoval**, Secretary **Mike Lindner**, Treasurer **Steve Hughson**, Director of Alumni Relations **Mike Westcott**, Statutory Agent **Richard Mayberry**, and Superintendent **Melody Herne** (ex officio).

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President Duncan provided an overview of Mingus Connection, noting that the organization has supported the high school for over 30 years. She explained that the foundation provides annual scholarships and teacher grants, typically awarding between **\$40,000–\$50,000** each year. Additionally, Mingus Connection organizes **Operation Graduation**, raising approximately **\$20,000 annually** to provide a safe, drug-free, all-night event for graduating seniors.

President Duncan shared that the organization recently initiated a **logo redesign project** to update its branding. Rather than hiring an outside designer, the project was opened to Mingus students. In collaboration with district administration and the art department, students were invited to submit logo designs. A total of **13 student submissions** were received.

She noted that students utilized art tablets funded through a previous Mingus Connection grant, highlighting a “full circle” moment where grant-funded resources supported the creation of the new logo.

Awards were presented to the top three student designers:

- **3rd Place:** Dillon Windschilt
- **2nd Place:** Lilly Scott
- **1st Place:** Vic Johnson

Mingus Connection expressed appreciation to all participating students, their families, the art department, and district administration for their support. Community members were encouraged to learn more about Mingus Connection through the district newsletter.

The Board thanked Mingus Connection for their continued support of students and staff.

II.2. **Student Recognition**

- **English & Literature:** Damian Miranda Ruiz
- **Science:** Angel Beltran-Miranda
- **Mathematics:** Reevyn Rogers
- **Social Studies:** Alissa Amundson
- **Physical Education:** Jacob Bogda
- **Foreign Language:** Dalila Matthews
- **Performing & Visual Arts:** Dalton Ryan
- **Career & Technical Education:** Shelby McWorthy
- **AVID:** Hailey Dobrowolski
- **Male Athlete:** Damian Velazquez
- **Female Athlete:** Ali Hernandez
- **Victory with Honors:** Quinn Wright

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Senior Spotlights

- **Senior Recognition:** Karen Zul Ramirez

III. EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

- **Staff Recognition:** James Ball

IV. REPORTS -- The Superintendent and Board Member(s) reports will consist of brief summaries of current events. These reports will be without any discussion or feedback.

IV.1. Superintendent's Report

- RECOGNITION
 - On **March 7–10, 2026**, **Lilly Scott**, the only MUHS representative, attended the Aspiring Youth Academy Innovation Camp, where she developed and pitched a business idea with her team. Her team earned **2nd place** in the final competition.
- **CRIME SCENE DAY**
 - On **March 26 and 30, 2026**, VACTE Law Enforcement I & II students, led by **Ms. Jennifer Choate**, presented interactive crime scene projects. The top three groups advanced to present at the **March 30 MUHS Community Event**.
- **CLEP TESTING**
 - On **March 27, 2026**, **43 students** traveled to Yavapai College to take the CLEP exam, with **38 earning college credit** and **8 earning the full 16 credits**. An additional **25 students** are scheduled to test in April, as part of Mingus Counseling's effort to help students earn college credit, particularly in Spanish.
- **2026 CONGRESSION ART SHOW**
 - MUHS senior **Isabell McKean** submitted her oil painting "*The Burning Bush*," inspired by an Old Testament story and her AP Sustained Investigation on faith. The national competition offers scholarship opportunities and the chance for winning artwork to be displayed in Washington, D.C. MUHS previously had success in this event, with student **Nicholas Osbourn** winning a \$40,000 scholarship last year.
- **FFA-SUPERIOR CHAPTER PROGRAM**
 - The **Mingus Union FFA Chapter**, led by advisor **Eric Banuelos**, was recognized as a **Superior Chapter** by Arizona FFA, one of only 16 chapters to receive this honor. The award highlights chapters that exemplify the mission and standards of the National FFA Organization and will be presented on June 4 at the Arizona FFA State Leadership Conference.
- **CURRENT EVENTS**
 - Upcoming events include **ATORT's *Something Rotten*** (April 10–12), **ACT** make-ups and **Prom Spirit Week** (April 13–17), with **Prom** on April 18. Athletic events include baseball, tennis, and a home track meet throughout the week. Additional highlights include the **VACTE 25-Year Anniversary** on April 16.

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V. PRESENTATION AND INFORMATION

V.1. **Administration Information**--Principal Beery will report on Arizona State Summative Testing and Principals' Leadership Academy (PLA) Training.

V.2. **Student Council Presentation**— Student Council Members will present Current Student Body Events and Future Activities. Items Include: Prom 2026, Pep Assembly, and Spring Bash.

V.3. **Other Information for Reading** -- April MUHS Newsletter

VI. BOARD MEETING MINUTES NOT PREVIOUSLY APPROVED

VI.1. **Meetings** -- March 12, 2026, General Meeting Minutes

Motion to Approve Minutes as presented by Member Chavez, and seconded by Member David

- President Bell – Aye
- Vice President Nevarez – Aye
- Member Babcock – Yes
- Member David – Yes
- Member Chavez – Yes

Motion passes 5-0

VII. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**-- No public comments were made.

VIII. ACTION ITEMS – CONSENT

VIII.1. **Approval of Routine Vouchers**

VIII.1.1. **Expense**

VIII.1.1.1. **Vouchers**

Voucher 1034

Voucher 1035

Voucher 1036

Voucher 1037

VIII.1.2. **Payroll**--

Voucher 25

Voucher 26

Voucher 27

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VIII.1.3. **Bookstore Activity**-- Account Summary for March 2026 Description: Ratification of payments

VIII.2. **Personnel - HR Report**

PA-1

PA-2

PA-3

PA-4

PA-5

PA-6

PA-7

PA-8

PA-9

VIII.3. **Donation**

VIII.3.1. **Hope Center Report**

VIII.4. **Agreements**

VIII.4.1. **ESI 2026-2027 Employee Staffing Agreement**

VIII.5. **FY2027 Classified Hourly Pay Schedule** -- FY2027 Classified Hourly Pay Schedule

VIII.6. **Out of State Travel Request**

Football California Summer Trip July 16-19

Mingus Flag Football Summer Camp July 22-July 26

American Indian Arts field trip April 23-25

VIII.7. **Removal of Course Offerings**-- Due to declining enrollment, the following courses will not be offered at MUHS for 2026-2027 school year.

- CADD1-4
- Coding 1-2
- AP Computer Science

VIII.8. **School Facilities Division**- Building Grant Funds: Dishwashing Drainage Line and Collapsed Sewer Line.

VIII.9. **Mingus Union High School 2026-2027 Academic Calendar** — Approval the 2026-2027 Academic Calendar.

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VIII.10. **Policy GCD and GDD FY2027 Administrative Requests**

- Proposed Staff Holidays for School Year 2026-2027
- Proposed Employee Benefits for School Year 2026-2027

VIII.11. **Bereavement Leave**-Board approval of three (3) extended bereavement leave days for an employee.

VIII.12. **Job Description**-- Board Approval of the following job descriptions:
Teacher-Mathematics

Motion to Approve Consent Agenda as presented by President Bell, and seconded by Vice President Nevarez

- President Bell – Aye
- Vice President Nevarez – Aye
- Member Babcock – Yes
- Member David – Yes
- Member Chavez – Yes

Motion passes 5-0

IX. **ACTION ITEMS - DISTRICT BUSINESS**

IX.1. **Strategic Planning**: Approval of Mingus Union High School District #4's Strategic Plan and Portrait of a Graduate (Staff: Superintendent Herne and ASBA Facilitators)

In March 2025, the District began work on its strategic plan, leading to today's final rollout. Ms. Julie Bacon and Ms. Sarah James presented the draft of the **Portrait of a Graduate and Strategic Plan**, noting that the Communications Department is currently incorporating photos provided by Superintendent Herne to create a finalized, visually engaging strategic plan.

Ms. Bacon and Ms. James expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to work with the District, sharing that each visit reinforced how fortunate students are to have such a dedicated staff, Board, and community invested in their success. They offered to answer any questions and expressed hope for approval of the plan.

There were no questions from the Board.

Prior to the vote, **President Bell** expressed appreciation to **Superintendent Herne** for her leadership and vision in guiding the development of the strategic plan. Gratitude was also extended to Ms. Bacon and Ms. James (ASBA) for their time, dedication, and continued support throughout the process. Additional thanks were given to District staff for their ongoing efforts, as well as to community members who participated in focus groups and contributed to the development of the plan. The Board also acknowledged one another for their collaboration and commitment to the process.

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Motion to Approve Strategic Plan as presented by President Bell, and seconded by Member David.

- President Bell – Aye
- Vice President Nevarez – Aye
- Member Babcock – Yes
- Member David – Yes
- Member Chavez – Yes

Motion passes 5-0

X. REQUEST FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to Approve Adjournment as presented by Member David, and seconded by Vice President Nevarez

- President Bell – Aye
- Vice President Nevarez – Aye
- Member Babcock – Yes
- Member David – Yes
- Member Chavez – Yes

Motion passes 5-0

Meeting Ended at 6:38 PM

Board President

Board Vice President
