



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Thursday, February 26, 2026 - 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Perpich Visitor's Center / Zoom Meeting

Mission: to provide all Minnesota students the opportunity to develop and integrate their artistic and academic abilities to their highest potential.

REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES - APPROVED

CALL TO ORDER: Chair S. Grans Korsh called the meeting to order at 5:24 p.m.

On a call of the roll, members attending in-person were: S. Grans Korsh, D. Hastings, P. Hustoles, T. Wollenzien, N. Laven. Members attending virtually were: M. Haley, P. Khosravi, N. McComb, B. Melville, D. Pierre-Toussaint, S. Sampson, E. Winslow, J. Yusty Rojas. Members S. Finnegan, D. Moen and E. Orfield Johnston were absent. A quorum was declared present.

ACTION: Approval of Meeting Agenda

The agenda was presented as posted. Chair S. Grans Korsh moved to approve the regular meeting agenda. On a call of the roll, all present members voted in favor and no votes against. The motion carried.

ACTION: Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda consisted of the Approval of the Minutes, Board of Directors Regular Meeting, December 18, 2025, the Arts High School Calendars for 2026-2027 and 2027-2028, and the Finance Reports ending January 31, 2026. Vice Chair P. Hustoles moved to approve the consent agenda. Member P. Khosravi provided a second. On a call of the roll, all present members voted in favor and no votes against. The motion carried.

INFORMATION: Deep Dive – Chronic Absenteeism Presentation

Executive Director, Allegra Smisek and Director of Professional Development and Resource Programs, Dr. Wendy Barden provided an overview of the presentation that Dr. Wendy Barden, Dr. Michael Buck, Max Clark-Vail and Allegra gave at the January 15th MSBA (Minnesota School Board Association) Leadership Conference, titled, "*Turning the Tide on Chronic Absenteeism with Arts Education.*"

INFORMATION: Board Chair Report

Chair S. Grans Korsh emphasized the critical importance of increasing enrollment at the Arts High School. The Chair noted that enrollment has declined steadily over the past several years and expressed concern about the potential impact on legislative support and funding. The Chair highlighted the positive shift toward collaboration between the board and administration on enrollment efforts. Board members were asked to actively support recruitment by promoting the school within their communities, distributing admissions flyers, leveraging personal and professional networks, encouraging prospective students to apply and promoting the school's summer programs. Board members were also encouraged to assist with outreach efforts in their respective geographic areas and communities.

INFORMATION: Enrollment Ad Hoc Committee

Enrollment Ad Hoc Committee materials were included in the board packet, including the February 6, 2026 meeting minutes, the AHS Admissions Flyer and Summer Camp Information/Social Media Graphic. Committee Chair D. Hastings outlined the committee's purpose to provide strategic and practical support to administration in increasing

enrollment, expand awareness of the school statewide, particularly outside the Twin Cities metro area and leverage board members' community networks to promote the school and increasing board member attendance at student events. Additional ideas raised during discussion among board members included creating recruitment materials in multiple languages and expanding outreach to community arts organizations serving multilingual populations and creating digital versions of materials that board members can easily distribute online. Staff agreed to review the feedback and explore potential improvements to outreach materials.

INFORMATION: Executive Director Report

Executive Director Allegra Smisek's written report was included in the board packet. Executive Director Allegra Smisek provided updates on professional development, outreach, and legislative advocacy. Recently attended and presented at the American Association of School Administrators conference and participation in the Minnesota School Boards Association Conference. The Executive Director reported ongoing legislative engagement activities, including meetings and presentations with legislative committees, preparations for a House committee presentation regarding enrollment and coordination with government relations staff and external advisors. The Executive Director noted that while the upcoming legislative committee hearing may be challenging, it also provides an opportunity to advocate for the school and highlight its importance.

INFORMATION: Perpich Arts High School

Principal Rebecca Bullen's written report was included in the board packet. No formal verbal report was provided.

INFORMATION: Professional Development and Resource Report

Director Dr. Wendy Barden's written report was included in the board packet. No formal verbal report was provided.

INFORMATION: Government Relations Committee

Government Relations Committee materials were included in the board packet, including the February 4, 2026 meeting minutes and the final 2026 Legislative Platform. The committee identified 43 key state senators and representatives for targeted outreach and has successfully contacted 38 of them as of February 25th. Following a recent special invitation opportunity, the committee expanded outreach to an additional 14 legislators, with 4 already contacted and 2 having responded. The committee has also ensured outreach to leadership and members of key legislative committees, including House and Senate Education Finance, House and Senate Education Policy and House and Senate Capital Improvement. The committee's goal is to ensure legislators understand the broader value and impact of the program beyond its role as a high school, including its contributions to communities and enrollment outcomes. This level of outreach represents the most proactive legislative engagement undertaken by the organization to date.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Board members expressed strong confidence in Perpich's administrative staff and leadership, noting the high quality of work being done across the organization. The board chair and other members emphasized the dedication and engagement of current board members, highlighting that the board is among the most active in recent years and that members are contributing meaningfully to the organization's mission. Various board members reasserted their welcome to new members E. Winslow and J. Yusty Rojas and shared professional updates about arts-related activities and opportunities.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Chair S. Grans Korsh adjourned the meeting at 6:59 p.m.