

MSCF Minute



An electronic publication of the Minnesota State College Faculty

We Care

by Kevin Lindstrom, MSCF President

As you hopefully already know, the faculty at Rochester Community and Technical College and at Ridgewater College have expressed serious concerns about their college leadership. Below is the message I recently delivered to the Board of Trustees.

Chancellor Rosenstone, Chair Vekich, Trustees,

My name is Kevin Lindstrom, and I am the President of the Minnesota State College Faculty. I thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today.

A couple years ago, I sat before you on the occasion of the retirements of Jim Johnson and Kevin Kopischke. I praised and thanked those two for their many years of leadership and service to their institutions. I further suggested that every college deserved to have a leader of the quality of Kevin and Jim, while hinting that not all were getting it.

Today, unfortunately, I am compelled to be much more direct in my remarks. Simply put, we have two colleges in desperate need of your immediate attention. One of these colleges has been

coming apart at the seams for many years. The concerns of faculty have been delivered to the system office many times, including in the form of a three-ring binder of documentation. Faculty at this college conducted a vote of no confidence last year, and the results were overwhelming. I left a recent faculty meeting at this college deeply saddened by the unbelievably low morale on campus.

The other college is in public crisis as we speak. As I said to a reporter yesterday, I've never seen anything get so dire, so fast, in my 26 years in the system. Some, but not all, concerns have been captured in a series of recent newspaper articles. Every day I receive new reports of something else bad happening on campus. I was there yesterday, and I can tell you first-hand the situation is very real, incredibly urgent, and getting worse by the hour.

We need to continue to celebrate the many examples of excellent leadership in this system. We can no longer, however, continue to ignore the situations that exist on the other end of the spectrum. I call on you to act to ensure

excellence in leadership at all our colleges, most immediately at these two.

Thank you for your time.

Prior to the current difficulties at these colleges, if you had asked the faculty if they believed things could ever have gotten this bad at their school, they would have said, "No way." They didn't think it could ever happen to them, much like many of you think it couldn't ever happen to you. The truth is that it could happen to any of us.

As a show of support and unity, and in recognition of the fact it could happen to any of us, we've printed buttons which convey a very simple but powerful message, "We Care." Your Board member was given a supply of them at our meeting on Friday. Please seek out your Board member and get a button to wear. Once the buttons are distributed on your campus, get the group together, take a picture, and send it to Darci (darci.stanford@edmn.org) for posting on our Facebook page.

I'm also encouraging you to seek out the many excellent leaders on our campuses and offer them a hearty "thank you." As I said to the trustees, we have to celebrate

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excellence, while dealing decisively with problems.

This is an effort we can all actively participate in, because we care.

IMPORTANT LEGISLATIVE DATES

MSCF Legislative Training for Chapter Presidents and Legislative Liaisons
January 13, 2016

Education Minnesota Political Conferences:

January 22-23, 2016

DoubleTree Bloomington

January 29-30, 2016

City Center Hotel Mankato

February 5-6, 2016

Holiday Inn Detroit Lakes

February 12-13, 2016

Holiday Inn Duluth

Precinct Caucuses

March 1, 2016

Legislative Steering Committee Lobby Day/First Day of Session

March 8, 2016

Last Constitutional Day of Session

May 17, 2016

Primary Day in Minnesota

August 9, 2016

Election Day

November 8, 2016