

MSCF Minute



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A Couple Updates

by Kevin Lindstrom, MSCF President

Concurrent Enrollment

You've likely heard a good deal over the past few weeks from education "experts" in the state who have all kinds of solutions to the challenges presented by the Higher Learning Commission's recent declaration about credentialing in concurrent enrollment. Unfortunately, most of those solutions involve compromising things that are near and dear to us, things like credentialing standards, course content, and course rigor.

I recently read a letter from a state leader suggesting that all is fine in concurrent enrollment, so there is no need for any change. Given that, the letter writer contended, the HLC's credentialing standard should simply be set aside. Another so-called expert recently wrote a piece in which he extolled the virtues of concurrent enrollment and then, to support his claims, offered a quote from an administrator in the Anoka-Hennepin school district. I didn't know whether to laugh, cry, or scream. You see, I worked at Anoka Technical College when their concurrent partnership with the Anoka-

Hennepin district started. I know the whole story. The so-called experts will gladly tell you the half of the story that is convenient for them. They don't, however, want anyone to know the other half, the half I and many others know. At some point, sooner rather than later, we need to have a complete conversation about concurrent enrollment in this system.

Bargaining

As you likely know, the financial components of the bargaining process remain unresolved. Each side has revealed a "bottom-line" position. Unfortunately, several million dollars separate the two positions. The bargaining team is currently in the process of visiting campuses and providing specifics regarding the proposals and the greater context in which they occur.

Our financial proposal is based on the settlement AFSCME and MAPE received this past summer. Simply put, all we want is what they got. It doesn't seem any more than fair that we should get a compensation increase with a value equal to those who we work next to

everyday. If you know the history of our settlement values, you know we have historically lagged behind both of those groups, and other system employees, in base growth. It's a trend that needs to stop.

We have a couple of significant events coming up regarding bargaining. On December 4, we will have our Board of Directors meeting. At that meeting, we'll discuss what we've heard at our campus visits and seek the Board's input regarding how we should proceed. Then, on December 28, we will enter mediation under the guidance of the Bureau of Mediation Services. Our hope is that a third-party neutral will be able to help the parties find common ground.

Friedrichs – An Update From AFT Media Affairs

WASHINGTON— The American Federation of Teachers, along with the American Association of University Professors, filed an amicus curiae brief in the *Friedrichs v. California Teachers Association* case before the U.S. Supreme Court. The case threatens to make it harder for working

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people to join together and speak out together.

AFT President Randi Weingarten—who is a lawyer, was admitted to the Supreme Court and co-wrote the brief—said, "Working people are struggling to get ahead, and this case will make it worse, especially for our children. When educators come together in a union, they are able to advocate not just for better pay and benefits but for a higher-quality public education for their students. Through their union, educators receive professional development to help them implement reform initiatives vital to helping all students succeed in this 21st-century economy. Through their union, educators participate on health and safety committees to raise concerns—like leaky roofs or asbestos—and devise plans to keep their students healthy. If the court overturns 40 years of precedent, it will be much harder for unions to do this vital work. When working people can speak up together, our children are better off." [Click here to view a copy of the legal brief.](#)