It has been said that the longest journey we make as humans is the one from our heads to our hearts. Perhaps, that is the best way to sum up the work we are doing together here at Na-way-ee Center School.

Students, their families, and the staff work together every day to heal, grow stronger, and become wiser, because it is wisdom which we all need to make the best decisions. These decisions can be fairly simple, such as deciding not to do or say something hurtful, or they can be profound decisions about what our path in life should be. Sometimes young people do not understand that it is wise to attend school or that we should always be learning, but I do believe that given the chance and the time, they will come to realize this. The secret of our success has always been that we really believe in the potential of our students. Their potential is limitless and when you believe this to be true, you do not have to say so for them to get it, because it informs your every action.

Because staff and board members see their work at Center School as part of that journey of lifelong learning, our program has improved every year that I have been here and I am confident that it will continue to do so.

In the past year we have added a holistic health component to our curriculum which encompasses all aspects of health according to our traditions, which tell us that the human entity has four parts (mental, physical, spiritual, emotional), and that you have to feed all four to maintain a balanced individual and community.

We have continued our journey into experiential forms of learning with our Garden Project, a new mural, and a fence around the garden, all built by students under the watchful eye of our teaching staff.

In partnership with cooperating agencies like Migizi Communications, Twin Cities Healthy Nations, the Native American Community Clinic, Division of Indian Work, University of Minnesota, and many others, we have improved the nutrition and activity level of students, conducted screenings for diabetes indicators, provided numerous adventure learning opportunities, provided empowerment trainings, and sent three students to the National American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) Fair in New Mexico.

To keep our building in operating shape, we recently tuck pointed the foundation. Also, thanks to The McKnight Foundation and The Shakopee Mdewakantonwan Sioux Community we installed brand new windows throughout the building for the first time in about 70 years.

While we are proud of our efforts and our accomplishments, we are also grateful to all of our brother and sister agencies in the Native Community, and the entire Metro Area, who have been so giving and generous hearted, helping us in every way imaginable.

Special thanks to the foundations and their staffs who have been so supportive and without whom much of the essential cultural aspect of our program would not be possible.

Sincerely,

Joe Rice
Executive Director
Staff
Joe Rice, Executive Director
Mary Cullen, Lead Teacher
Ethel Bruce, Office Manager
Debra Bruce, Student Support Services
Jim Lorenz, Science Teacher
Jamie Barton, Language Arts Teacher
Matthew Burns, Math Teacher
Randy Gresczyk, Ojibwe Language and Culture, Social Studies
Patricia Welch, Indigenous Health Coordinator
Vicki Bruce, Security Officer
Quentin Brown and Wendell Pemberton, Maintenance
Flo Golod, Development Consultant

From Collaborating Agencies
Migizi Communications
Tedi Grey Owl, PSPP
Cindy Ward, Science
Learning Disabilities Association
Valerie Griffin, Reading (LDA)
Division of Indian Work
Louise Matsen, Pregnancy Prevention
Anita Gates, Cultural Arts
Minneapolis Public Schools
Kim Galloway, Special Education
Native American Community Clinic
Lydia Caros, Connie Norman, Judy Day, Shannon Fahey
Healthy Nations Program
LeMoine LaPointe, Director

We would like to thank Brad Englund and Christine Sanguinet from the Metropolitan Federation of Alternative Schools.

We value our partnership with the Minneapolis Public Schools and wish to thank Mary Barrie and Diane Glawe for their assistance.

Statement of Financial Position

Assets

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2007</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current Assets</strong></td>
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<td>Cash</td>
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<td><strong>Total Assets</strong></td>
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Liabilities and Net Assets

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<tr>
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<th>2008</th>
<th>2007</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Net Assets</strong></td>
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<td>149,785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</strong></td>
<td>$155,882</td>
<td>$234,889</td>
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Beverly Foundation
Otto Bremer Foundation
General Mills Foundation
Headwaters Foundation, Fund of the Sacred Circle
Honor the Earth
Ronald and Devin McKinley
McKnight Foundation
Medtronic Foundation
Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe
Minneapolis Kiwanis Club
Minneapolis Foundation, Martha Atwater Fund
Park Nicollet Foundation
Jay and Rose Phillips Family Foundation
St. Paul Travellers Foundation
Seva Foundation
Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community
James R. Thorpe Foundation
F. Owen and Muriel J. Turnland
Two Feathers Fund, St. Paul Foundation
Greater Twin Cities United Way
Archie D. and Bertha H. Walker Foundation
WCA Foundation
Lauren Weck
The Frederick and Margaret L. Weyerhauser Foundation
Woman’s Club of Minneapolis
Center School Achievements

Center School expanded programming and increased its commitment to an integrated culturally specific curriculum. This work resulted in marked improvements in student outcomes during the 2007-08 school year:

Cultural Enrichment
Continuous improvement of the Ojibwe language program, enhanced by Native cultural experiences that include drumming, sweat lodges, and participation in other ceremonies

Engaging Tobasonikwut Kinew, a respected Ojibwe elder, as a school leader and mentor.

Sponsorship of a weekly Ojibwe language table that attracted between 10 and 25 adults from around the state.

Health and Wellness
Growing our Healthy Choices Program that provides exercise, health instruction and screening services to Na-way-ee students. A collaboration with Migizi Communications and the Native American Community Clinic, the program is designed to reduce the incidence of diabetes and other diseases among Native youth.

Our girls programs include classes, enrichment opportunities and individual mentoring. These combined efforts that we call Children of the Seventh Fire (after an Ojibwe prophecy), improved with the creation of gender-specific health and life skills classes for female and male students, increased hours of mentoring available to girls and support from the Division of Indian Work and NACC to meet specific needs of young Native women.

The school sponsored the second year of a very popular and successful gardening program, which became the focus of our summer school. Retaining students in summer school has long been a challenge. Last summer our retention rate was 65%, much higher than other summers.

Working with the Healthy Nations Program of the Minneapolis American Indian Center, we offered students opportunities for extended field trips that including canoeing, orienteering and a visit to sacred sites in South Dakota.

Community Leadership
Center School coordinates the Phillips Indian Educators (PIE) network, which brings together educators who work in public, charter and alternative schools that serve Native American students. The school launched the PIE website with best practices posted and a list for communication among teachers. www.pieducators.com

As part of our work with PIE, staff and board members actively participated in Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) discussions with the Minneapolis Public Schools. Our goal is to work with the District to create better educational environments and outcomes for all Indian students.

Student Success
Last year, attendance improved significantly with the Average Daily Membership (ADM) increasing by 17% over the previous school year.

Three students entered and took prizes in the National Indian Science Fair, with one student winning a first prize.

Five students graduated in June 2008. We are very proud of Renee, Lawrence, Josh, Bonita and Stephanie, who worked so hard for their diplomas.

Organizational Growth
We continued the Wisdom Recovery Project, which documents our curriculum, providing assistance to new teachers. We are using this valuable resource to assist our new teachers and as a contribution to the PIE website.

With new staff and renewed energy, we hired Jim Lorenz, an experienced science teacher and Matt Byrnes, our new math teacher. Mary Cullen, who has over 20 years experience in alternative education, became Lead Teacher, providing leadership and overseeing new programs and student progress.

Volunteers from Philadelphia Farms supported our students by helping out with the garden and other projects.

Three new community members joined our board of Directors: Dr. Cecelia Martinez, Director of the Center for Earth, Energy and Democracy at the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, Deatrick LaPointe of the Division of Indian Work, and Nancy Bordeaux, Director of Indigenous Women’s Life Net bring new ideas and energy to our governing body.

Volunteers from Philadelphia Farms supported our students by helping out with the garden and other projects.

Our 2008 graduates.

Extended field trips, including sacred sites in South Dakota, were done in collaboration with the Healthy Nations Program of the Minneapolis American Indian Center.

Our gardening program, in its second year, was key to increasing retention during summer school.
Board of Directors 2007-2008

Thank you to our board of Directors for their support and guidance during the last year.

NANCY BOURDEAUX
Indigenous Women’s Life Net

ANDREA CARLSON
Graduate Student

PAUL HEGRE
Teacher on Special Assignment
Minneapolis Public Schools

ROBERT JIBBEN
Director (ret.)
Metropolitan Federation of
Alternative Schools

DEATRICK LAPOINTE
Division of Indian Work

LEMOINE LAPOINTE
Director
Healthy Nations Program

CECELIA MARTINEZ
Director of the Center for Earth,
Energy and Democracy
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy

KAREN MCCALL
McCall Design, Inc.

OWEN TURNLUND
Director (ret.)
Plymouth Christian Youth Center