

Minnesota



QUICK FACTS ON GÜLEN CHARTER SCHOOLS

Minnesota



NUMBER OF SCHOOLS:

1

KNOWN AS:

MINNESOTA MATH AND SCIENCE ACADEMY "MMSA"

TOTAL ENROLLMENT:

340

CHARTER VENDOR:

CONCEPT SCHOOLS, INC.

TOTAL REVENUES:

\$5,192,659

KEY PEOPLE:



Ozer Asdemir



Murat Ergen



Gene Scapanski



Ahmet Akyol



Mustafa Igdelioglu

RELATED INSTITUTIONS:

MATH AND SCIENCE



GATEWAY



HORIZON



NOBLE



ALLEGED FINANCIAL ABUSE



MMSA's 990 tax documentation and annual reports show that the school has operated at a **negative net financial position** since opening.

REAL ESTATE

MMSA leases its facility from **Gülenist landlords, New Plan Learning**. A substantial portion of its **revenue** is spent on **sites and buildings**:

in 2014 -15

\$1,166,966 spent

in 2015- 16

\$1,176,248 spent

These expenditures far exceed **MMSA's** expenses when it leased facilities from the unaffiliated **Minneapolis Public Schools**.

2013 EVICTION



A court ruled to evict **MSS** from its **Minneapolis Public Schools** property in 2013, citing concerns regarding its financial mismanagement, testing irregularities, and **discriminatory treatment** of special needs students. Earlier, **MSS** had **expelled 40 special needs students** claiming that they brought down their test scores.

SPONSORED TRIPS FOR POLITICIANS



Minnesota Gülenists favored with state politicians by **sponsoring trips to Turkey** for **Kurt Daudt** (Crown), **Sandy Pappas** (St. Paul), **Ron Kresha** (Little Falls), **Ron Latz** (St. Louis Park), **Paul Rosenthal** (Edina,) and **Claire Robling** (Carver).

All figures based on available data for 2015-2016 academic year.

Quick Facts

- ▶ **Region:** Midwest
- ▶ **School Name (known as):**
 - ▷ Math and Science Academy
- ▶ **Total # of Schools in State:** 1
- ▶ **Total Student Enrollment 2015-16:** 340¹
- ▶ **Charter Holder/Governing Board(s):**
 - ▷ Minnesota Math and Science Academy
 - Organized as a non-profit with 501(c)(3) status
 - Operates 1 charter school
- ▶ **Charter Management Services Vendor:** Concept Schools, Inc. ("Concept")
- ▶ **Regional Gülen Organization Oversight Entity:** Concept
- ▶ **Regional Sister Networks:** Math and Science (IL); Horizon (IL); Math and Science (IN); Math and Science (MI); Horizon (OH); Noble (OH); Gateway (MO); Math and Science (WI).
- ▶ **Total Revenues for the 2015-16 school year:** \$5,192,659²
- ▶ **Network Founders:**
 - ▷ Ozer Asdemir: Founder, Minnesota Math and Science Academy; President, Turkish American Society Minnesota (formerly Northern Lights Society); Speaker, 7th Annual Dialogue Iftar Dinner by Niagara Foundation; Professor, Purdue University; currently Professor, University of St. Thomas.³
 - ▷ Murat Ergen: Founder, Minnesota School of Science; President, Turkish American Society Minnesota (formerly Northern Lights Society); Marketing Database Analyst, Wells Fargo Home Mortgage; Econometrician, DHSof Inc.; Corporate Advisor, Snapscreen.com; Chairman of Advisory Board, Algomus Inc.; currently Executive Director, Ergenomics.com.⁴
 - ▷ Gene Scapanski: Vice President/Professor, Mission at the University of St. Thomas; Chairman, The LINK; Speaker, Niagara Foundation 4th Annual Dialogue Iftar Dinner.⁵
 - ▷ Ahmet Akyol: Wisconsin Career Academy sponsored H-1B visa; Executive Director, Northern Lights Society/Turkish American Society of Minnesota; Founder, Minnesota Math and Science Academy.⁶

¹ Student enrollment and demographic information available at: <http://tinyurl.com/m86xl5y> (last checked 4/26/2017).

² Figure includes revenues of Minnesota Math and Science Academy, annual report available at: <http://tinyurl.com/m86xl5y> (last checked 4/26/2017).

³ Turkish American Society of Minnesota 990s available at: <http://tinyurl.com/ltuf69h> (last checked 4/26/2017); 7th Annual Dialogue Iftar Dinner, Niagara Foundation (July 22, 2011), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/n3rlj7r> (last checked 4/26/2017); Minnesota School of Science Charter Application, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/kqowjgm> (last checked 4/26/2017); LinkedIn profile, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/kyo23a3> (last checked 4/23/2017).

⁴ Turkish American Society of Minnesota 990s available at: <http://tinyurl.com/ltuf69h> (last checked 4/26/2017); LinkedIn profile, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/lmr6uba> (last checked 4/23/2017).

⁵ Minnesota School of Science Charter Application, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/kqowjgm> (last checked 4/26/2017); 4th Annual Dialogue Iftar Dinner, Niagara Foundation (Aug. 27, 2010), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/k5bbdq9> (last checked 4/26/2017).

⁶ Wisconsin Career Academy, Special Review 2008-19 (Feb. 2008), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/l74v4vt> (last checked 4/23/2017); Minnesota School of Science Charter Application, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/kqowjgm> (last checked 4/26/2017).

- Mustafa Igdelioglu: Founder, Minnesota Math and Science Academy; President, Philadelphia Dialogue Forum; President, Turkish American Society of

Minnesota (formerly Northern Lights Foundation/Northern Lights Academy); Registered Agent, Turkish American Society, Inc.; currently Engineer, Barr Engineering Co.⁷

Overview

As of the 2016-2017 school year, Minnesota has one Gülen Organization charter school in operation- the Minnesota Math and Science Academy ("MMSA"). This school is overseen by an educational foundation by the same name in operation since 2013. MMSA is the successor to Minnesota School of Science, a prior school that closed in 2013. Although the two entities have not formally merged, MMSA's own fact sheet states that the Minnesota School of Science board of directors opened the new MMSA.⁸ MMSA contracts with Concept Schools, Inc., the corporate entity responsible for the Midwestern

region of the Gülen Organization charter networks, allegedly for additional educational management services. On average, this school serves 66% English Language Learners vs. 8% state average; 97% free and reduced lunch population vs. 38% state; 3% special education students vs. 15% state; 91% African American students vs. 10.7% state; 1% Caucasian students vs. 68% state; and 2% Hispanic students vs. 9% state. As these numbers indicate, MMSA serves a significant percentage of vulnerable student populations.

School	Operation	Student Demographic Information*	Authorizer	Governing Board
Minnesota Math and Science Academy 169 East Jenks Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55117	K-6 2014 -Present	66% ELL 96% FRL 03% SPED 91% African American 01% Caucasian 02% Hispanic	Pillsbury United Communities	Minnesota Math and Science Academy
<i>Closed Schools</i>				
Minnesota School of Science	K-8 (starting with K-5 and adding one grade per year) 2011-2013	Court ruled school could not receive lease aid since Minneapolis Public Schools served as both authorizer and landlord	Minneapolis Public Schools	Minnesota School of Science

*Student demographic information was taken from the 2015-2016 school year. "ELL" indicates English Language Learners, "FRL" indicates students receiving free/reduced lunch, and "SPED" indicates special education students.⁹

⁷ Minnesota School of Science Charter Application, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/kqowjgm> (last checked 4/26/2017); Minnesota Corporate Records, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/ltpo75> (last checked 4/26/2017); Minnesota Corporate Records, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/meb359v> (last checked 4/26/2017); Mustafa Igdelioglu, Barr Engineering, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/mjh2g5e> (last checked 4/26/2017).

⁸ Fact Sheet, Minnesota Math and Science Academy, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/k3g4wum> (last checked 4/26/2017).

⁹ Student enrollment and demographic information available at: <http://tinyurl.com/m7a4q3n> (last checked 4//2017).

A History of Strategic Ambiguity and Conflicting Interests

Minnesota School of Science (“MSS”) incorporated in 2004 and opened a school in 2011 under the same name authorized by the Minneapolis school district. Our research indicated that MSS was beset with problems including testing irregularities, insufficient special education services, financial missteps, and problems with Concept.¹⁰ In 2013, MSS asked to switch authorizers, but the district refused to release a school with so many problems to a new authorizer.¹¹

After the MSS school closed in 2013, its governing board petitioned Pillsbury, its desired authorizer, to open the Minnesota Math and Science Academy.¹² One year later, Minnesota Math and Science Academy opened under the auspices of Pillsbury United Communities. This move also made it possible for the board to escape Minneapolis Public Schools’ suspicions regarding its financial missteps, testing irregularities, and Concept, its management organization.

According to media reports, Concept is currently involved in an ongoing FBI investigation concerning the alleged collusion of Concept employees and their vendors to defraud the federal E-Rate grant program of millions of dollars.¹³ According to the FBI’s released search warrant application, Concept executives allegedly violated the competitive bidding rules of the E-Rate

program by selecting a vendor complicit with Concept’s plans to defraud E-Rate outside of the normal procurement process. Then, Concept’s Chief Information Officer directed that vendor to divert hefty “subcontracts” to affiliated Turkish individuals and companies in exchange for a cut of the proceeds. The actual work was performed by Concept employees themselves, not by the complicit vendor who was approved by E-Rate to provide the work, or the so-named companies and Turkish vendors for the subcontracts.¹⁴ Concept continues to award substantial business to the vendors under scrutiny and named in the search warrant application.¹⁵

The Minnesota Gülen schools are implicated in the ongoing investigation due to their business with the entities under suspicion. Before it closed, MSS completed an FCC Form 471 naming Advanced Solutions for Education as an E-Rate consultant and the Core Group, Inc. as an E-Rate service provider.¹⁶ Both companies are suspected to be the primary companies involved with the alleged fraudulent activity under investigation, and the Minnesota network used them for the same services.¹⁷ Additionally, Hasan Kose, the founding director of Minnesota School of Science, became president and CEO of Advanced Solutions for Education upon leaving the school.¹⁸

¹⁰ Id.

¹¹ Cristeta Boarini, *Minnesota School of Science Loses in Court: Out of Cityview*, Twin Cities Daily Planet (July 31, 2013), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/lutmlso> (last checked 4/26/2017).

¹² Minnesota Corporate Records, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/mm62g2p> (last checked 4/26/2017).

¹³ Dan Mihalopoulos & Jon Seidel, *Charter Firm Suspected of Cheating Federal Grant Program*, Chicago Sun-Times (Dec. 16, 2015), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/j3snbad> (last checked 9/8/2016).

¹⁴ Search Warrant application available at: <http://tinyurl.com/jt9j4ed> (last checked 9/8/2016).

¹⁵ See Dan Mihalopoulos, *Targeted Firms Still Get Tax Money After Charter Raids*, Chicago Sun-Times <http://tinyurl.com/jzmzevh> (last checked 9/8/2016).

¹⁶ Minnesota School of Science FCC Form 471 (Mar. 14, 2013), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/l8egh2h> (last checked 4/26/2017).

¹⁷ Search Warrant application available at: <http://tinyurl.com/jt9j4ed> (last checked 9/8/2016).

¹⁸ LinkedIn profile, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/l8xo7el> (last checked 4/23/2017).

Financial Abuse

Minnesota requires charter schools like MMSA to undergo annual audits, but the audits are not made publicly available. The audits must be requested from the organizations. This requirement decreases charter school transparency and increases the ability of MMSA to obscure its actions in the state. The files have been requested, but as of the date of this report's publication, have not been provided.

Despite the lack of public information regarding the finances at these schools, the financial issues endemic to all Gülen charter networks—lack of transparency, financial misuse, periodic insolvency, and overpayment to affiliated vendors—can still be shown from the limited record available. Before MSS closed, Minneapolis Public

Schools expressed concern about Concept and financial missteps at the school.¹⁹ Furthermore, MMSA's 990 tax documentation and annual reports show that the school has operated at a negative net financial position since opening.²⁰ MMSA also utilizes the same Gülenist vendors currently being investigated by the FBI for allegedly defrauding the federal E-Rate program. Because MMSA uses the same vendors implicated in the FBI investigation and described by Concept whistleblowers as fraudulent, a forensic accounting, which examines specific payouts to vendors in comparison to goods and services actually received would likely reveal the same pattern of purposeful overcharging and underperformance endemic across the Midwestern region and the Gülen Organization.

Bond Financing

MMSA and Wisconsin Career Academy do not have any known municipal bonds. Concept Schools and its affiliated real estate arm, however, have used bond financing for schools in

other states.²¹ For that reason, the situation should be monitored in the event that MMSA does apply for bond financing.

Real Estate

One of the most significant profit centers for the Gülen Organization, and in particular the Midwestern region, is through real estate. This property financing scheme has been replicated throughout the country—in fact, Vahap Uysal, a board member of Concept Schools,²² wrote and presented an article entitled "Gülen Movement and School Financing" at the Third Annual Conference on Islam in the Contemporary World:

The Fethullah Gülen Movement in Thought and Practice.²³ Gülenist charter operators throughout the country attended and presented.²⁴ The scheme is perpetuated by using affiliated Gülenist landlord entities to acquire property and then sell or lease it back to the charter schools at grossly inflated rates. This model allows the Gülen Organization to acquire property which it pays for with public tax dollars, and if the charter

¹⁹ Cristeta Boarini, Minnesota School of Science Loses in Court: Out of Cityview, Twin Cities Daily Planet (July 31, 2013), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/lutmlso> (last checked 4/26/2017).

²⁰ MMSA Annual Reports available at: <http://tinyurl.com/k5wf36e> (last checked 4/26/2017); tax documentation at: <http://tinyurl.com/l8h8b2s> (last checked 4/28/2017).

²¹ See, e.g., the Ohio profile.

²² See Concept Schools 990 tax form, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/h5yvjlt> (last checked 4/28/2017).

²³ Conference was held Nov. 3, 2007 in San Antonio, Texas, and the conference agenda is available at: <http://tinyurl.com/gt2vujs> (last checked October 31, 2016).

²⁴ See Texas profile for more information about Alp Aslandogan.

school is terminated or non-renewed, the publicly financed property remains in the hands of the Gülen Organization.

In the Midwestern region, Concept's founders established Breeze Inc, to acquire properties for Concept Schools throughout the Concept network.²⁵ New Plan Learning was created shortly thereafter and now acts as the non-profit umbrella organization for Breeze and several other wholly owned subsidiaries.²⁶ Murat Arabaci, a former Concept employee,²⁷ has managed New Plan Learning and each of its subsidiaries since 2005.²⁸ Together with its subsidiaries, New Plan Learning buys, renovates, leases, and sometimes sells properties to Concept-managed schools, allegedly as a supporting organization to those schools. In reality, it follows the Gülen Organization's real estate *modus operandi* by buying properties that it then rents to the schools

at egregiously high lease rates.

MMSA leases its facility from 169 Jenks LLC, one of New Plan Learning's subsidiaries managed by Murat Arabaci.²⁹ New Plan Learning also lists MMSA's facility on its website as one of its assets.³⁰

According to MMSA's annual reports, a substantial portion of its revenue is spent on sites and buildings--\$1,166,966 in 2014-15 and \$1,176,248 in 2015-16.³¹ These expenditures far exceed Minnesota School of Science's expenses when it leased facilities from the unaffiliated Minneapolis Public Schools. In its last full year of operation (2012), Minnesota School of Science paid only \$331,222 for facilities.³² Since our research has indicated that other Gülen charter schools have been overcharged by affiliated Gülenist landlords, including New Plan Learning specifically, MMSA's lease deserves further investigation.³³

Excessive Use of the H-1B Visa Program

Like all Gülen Organization charter networks, Minnesota's Gülen charter schools utilize the H-1B visa program to immigrate large numbers of Turkish Gülenists into the United States for employment in the schools and network. In the limited amount of time the Minnesota schools have been open, they have filed at least 10 H-1B visa applications for foreign workers,³⁴ filling positions such as instructional coordinator, assistant principal, and computer science teacher.

The Minnesota schools have used the same immigration attorneys to file and process their H-1B applications as other known Gülen Organization charter networks, vendors, and cultural associations, indicating once again the existence of an overall network. For example:

- Mustafa Genc. - IMSA used Genc, an Illinois-based attorney, to file numerous H-1B applications. Genc also filed applications for:

²⁵ New Plan Learning, Inc. 2011A Bond Official Statement pg A-4, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/zxoauxp> (last checked 9/6/2016).

²⁶ New Plan Learning, Inc. 2011A Bond Official Statement pg A-4, A-5, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/zxoauxp> (last checked 9/6/2016).

²⁷ See 2007 Concept 990 with Arabaci listed as employee, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/z9y36lh> (last checked 9/8/2016).

²⁸ See Business profile for New Plan Learning, Inc., showing its incorporation in 2005 and listing Arabaci as agent, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/hu2d6x7> (last checked 9/8/2016).

²⁹ Minnesota Corporate Records, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/n4sbjkm> (last checked 4/26/2017).

³⁰ Our Properties, New Plan Learning, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/max7t5m> (last checked 4/26/2017).

³¹ MMSA Annual Reports available at: <http://tinyurl.com/k5wf36e> (last checked 4/26/2017).

³² Expenditures Reports for 2012-2016, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/mepe3c5> (last checked 4/26/2017).

³³ See, e.g. the Ohio State Narrative.

³⁴ The sum total of all of their organizations is 314, and the numbers supporting that total are located at the following links: from 2001-2015, <http://tinyurl.com/leshe6r> (2); <http://tinyurl.com/m4ay4vn> (1). For 2016, refer to the 2016 data on the US DOL website, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/zm5dvec> (last checked 1/30/2017).

- ▷ Concept Schools (OH, IL, MO, IN, MI, MN)

- ▷ Gateway (MO)³⁵

Scandals, Investigations & Notable Activities

Before MSS closed, it pushed out forty students with special needs, including students with Down syndrome, autism, and other special needs.³⁶ One board member stated that the school could not educate these students and still meet its testing goals, a clear contradiction of the school's legal duties under state and federal law and illegal disability discrimination.³⁷ While at MSS, the special education students were excluded from wearing school uniforms. The school's director, Hasan Kose, stated the special students "were not our students; they were the district's students." He asked: "Why should someone who attending a district wear [the Minnesota School of Science] school uniform just because they are coming to our classroom two to three hours a week?"³⁸ The school's decision suggested it refused to host the students to improve its test scores.³⁹ In light of this treatment of special education students, coupled with concerns regarding Concept, financial missteps,

testing irregularities, and a court ruling evicting the school from Minneapolis Public Schools' property, the school closed in 2013.⁴⁰

In 2015, two Arizona Members of Congress, U.S. Representative Raul Grijalva and U.S. Representative Ruben Gallego, wrote letters urging the U.S. Department of Education and the Government Accountability Office respectively to urge an investigation of charter schools affiliated with Gülen. These letters were sent in light of the recent raids of the Concept Schools network located in Ohio, Illinois, and other Midwestern states for suspected defrauding of the federal E-Rate program by Concept's Turkish administrators and vendors. Both Grijalva and Gallego were concerned about the connections between Concept and the Sonoran network in Arizona uncovered by investigative journalism at the time; thus, they asked for a thorough investigation.⁴¹

Notable Turkish Vendors

- ▶ Concept Schools, Inc. Concept is a comprehensive services vendor that controls human resources, fiscal management, school design, curriculum, accountability, compliance, and reporting for a twelve percent fee of each school's total

revenues. Currently, Concept is the contracted nonprofit management services vendor for thirty such charter schools, with seventeen schools in Ohio, four in Illinois, three in Missouri, three in Indiana, one in Michigan, one in Wisconsin, and

³⁵ List of entities represented by Mustafa Genc, available at <http://tinyurl.com/ko77hqq> (last checked 4/20/2017).

³⁶ Valerie Strauss, Why Are TFA and a California Billionaire Investing in Minnesota School Board Race, Washington Post (Oct. 9, 2014), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/nykl36l> (last checked 4/26/2017).

³⁷ Education, Minnesota School of Science Will Not Welcome Back Students with Special Needs, HuffPost (Aug. 1, 2012), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/mnzobkp> (last checked 4/26/2017).

³⁸ Alleen Brown, The Quest to Close the Achievement Gap in North Minneapolis, City Pages (Mar. 5, 2014), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/h4qe2tj> (last checked 4/26/2017).

³⁹ Education, Minnesota School of Science Will Not Welcome Back Students with Special Needs, HuffPost (Aug. 1, 2012), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/mnzobkp> (last checked 4/26/2017).

⁴⁰ Cristeta Boarini, Minnesota School of Science Loses in Court: Out of Cityview, Twin Cities Daily Planet (July 31, 2013), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/lutmlso> (last checked 4/26/2017).

⁴¹ Representative Grijalva's letter is available at: <http://tinyurl.com/hnhcbq5> (last checked 3/14/2017). Representative Gallego's letter is available at: <http://tinyurl.com/zyrhf3u> (last checked 3/14/2017).

one in Minnesota.⁴² The founders of the first OH charter schools in the Gülen Organization formed Concept shortly thereafter. According to MMSA's tax returns, it has paid Concept \$762,369.⁴³

- Breeze Inc./New Plan Learning: Breeze, Inc., was created in 2004 to acquire properties for Concept Schools throughout the Concept Network.⁴⁴ New Plan Learning was created shortly thereafter, and now acts as the non-profit umbrella organization for Breeze and several other wholly owned subsidiaries.⁴⁵ Together with its subsidiaries, New Plan Learning buys, renovates, leases, and sometimes sells properties to Concept-managed schools, allegedly as a supporting organization to those schools. MMSA's facility is listed on the New Plan Learning website.⁴⁶
- The Core Group: Minnesota School of Science listed The Core Group, Inc. as

an E-Rate service provider in a 2013 FCC Form 471.⁴⁷ The Core Group is currently under federal investigation as one of the vendors Concept used allegedly to defraud the E-Rate program.⁴⁸ The company and its subsidiaries have received over \$3.2 million dollars from Concept schools.⁴⁹

- Advanced Solutions for Education: Minnesota School of Science listed the Advanced Solutions for Education as an E-Rate consultant in a 2014 FCC Form 471.⁵⁰ Advanced Solutions for Education, owned by former Concept employee Ozgur Balsoy, is also implicated in the ongoing FBI investigation regarding the defrauding of the E-Rate program.⁵¹ Additionally, Hasan Kose, the founding director of Minnesota School of Science, became president and CEO of Advanced Solutions for Education upon leaving the school.⁵²

Gülenist Cultural Foundations

- Niagara Foundation: The Niagara Foundation is a major Turkish Gülenist cultural association based in Chicago.

Gülen is its honorary president.⁵³ Niagara Educational Services, Inc., oversees both the Niagara Foundation and the Science

⁴² See Concept Schools network, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/z3d8qsb> (last checked 8/26/2016).

⁴³ MMSA 990s available at: <http://tinyurl.com/kfnsvr> and <http://tinyurl.com/mm6dnq> (last checked 4/26/2017).

⁴⁴ New Plan Learning, Inc. 2011A Bond Official Statement pg A-4, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/zxoauxp> (last checked 9/6/2016).

⁴⁵ New Plan Learning, Inc. 2011A Bond Official Statement pg A-4, A-5, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/zxoauxp> (last checked 9/6/2016).

⁴⁶ Our Properties, New Plan Learning, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/max7t5m> (last checked 4/26/2017); see also James Warden, Charter School Will Occupy Industrial Building in St. Paul, Finance and Commerce (June 18, 2014), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/zezjetv> (last checked 3/7/2017).

⁴⁷ Minnesota School of Science FCC Form 471 (Mar. 14, 2013), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/l8egh2h> (last checked 4/26/2017).

⁴⁸ See Mihalopoulos, Dan. *Targeted Firms Still Get Tax Money After Charter Raids*, Chicago Sun-Times <http://tinyurl.com/jzmzevh> (last checked 9/8/2016).

⁴⁹ Id.

⁵⁰ Minnesota School of Science FCC Form 471 (Mar. 14, 2013), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/l8egh2h> (last checked 4/26/2017).

⁵¹ See Mihalopoulos, Dan. *Targeted Firms Still Get Tax Money After Charter Raids*, Chicago Sun-Times <http://tinyurl.com/jzmzevh> (last checked 9/8/2016).

⁵² LinkedIn profile, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/l8xo7el> (last checked 4/23/2017).

⁵³ See <http://www.niagarafoundation.org/> for information about the Niagara Foundation and <http://tinyurl.com/d8tlv5c> for information about Gülen as Honorary President (last checked 9/6/2016).

Academy of Chicago, a private Gülenist school. Several Concept employees as well as school employees are members of the Niagara Foundation. It maintains a presence in Minnesota.⁵⁴ It provides free/low-cost trips to Turkey for legislators, as well as hosting dialogue dinners and fundraisers.⁵⁵ The Niagara Foundation sponsored trips for Minnesota politicians Kurt Daudt (Crown), Ron Kresha (Little Falls), and Paul Rosenthal (Edina) to Turkey.⁵⁶ Minnesota politician Sandy Pappas discussed her trip to Turkey sponsored by the Niagara Foundation at a dinner it co-hosted.⁵⁷ She went on that trip with two former legislators, two state senators, and two house members.⁵⁸

- Turkish American Federation of Midwest (TAFM): TAFM is a member of the Turkic American Alliance (TAA).⁵⁹ The TAA posts articles and op-eds written by Fethullah

Gülen.⁶⁰ TAFM has four member organizations in Minnesota, one of which overlaps with the Niagara Foundation: Niagara Foundation of Minnesota, Turkish American Society of Minnesota, and the Turkish American Chamber of Commerce.⁶¹ TAFM provides year-round informational bulletins to members of Congress, sponsors congressional trips to Turkey, and provides a platform for Turkish American activism and advocacy.⁶²

- Turkish American Society of Minnesota ("TASM") (formerly: Northern Lights Society/Northern Lights Academy/Northern Lights Society): Many of the founders of Minnesota School of Science have served on the board of the Gülenist cultural association TASM, including Ozer Asdemir, Murat Ergen, Mustafa Igdelioglu, and Ahmet Akyol.⁶³ It hosts dialogue dinners attended by politicians.⁶⁴

Individuals Caught in the Gülen Organization Web

Our research has shown that it is quite common for the charter networks within a region to shuffle their Turkish H-1B visa teachers from school to school, as well as between education management vendors such as Concept. This is just a small number of individuals with

these overlapping ties throughout the region, which further demonstrates the region's interconnections. Notably, this shuffling only occurs with these schools' Turkish employees.

- Yasar Bora: Wisconsin Career Academy

⁵⁴ Minnesota, Niagara Foundation, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/m5tmq2l> (last checked 4/27/2017).

⁵⁵ For a description of a legislator's trip to Turkey with the Niagara Foundation, see: <http://tinyurl.com/mkfando> (last checked 4/20/2017); Mark Baldwin, Turkish People Provide the Delight, Turkish American Society Minnesota (July 12, 2014), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/ljdpk5o> (last checked 4/26/2017).

⁵⁶ Patrick Condon, Legislator's Trip to Turkey Was Led by Nonprofit with Controversial Ties, Star Tribune (Dec. 5, 2015), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/kqgr4mc> (last checked 4/26/2017).

⁵⁷ Stephanie Fox, People of Three Religious Traditions Break Ramadan Fast Together in St. Paul, Daily Planet (Aug. 30, 2010), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/mygr48h> (last checked 4/26/2017).

⁵⁸ Id.

⁵⁹ Turkic American Alliance, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/mm9ko3r> (last checked 4/21/2017).

⁶⁰ Turkic American Alliance, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/ll5x8rd> (last checked 4/21/2017).

⁶¹ Turkic American Federation of Midwest, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/lgz6odt> (last checked 4/21/2017).

⁶² Turkic American Federation of Midwest, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/k7occf5> (last checked 4/21/2017).

⁶³ Turkish American Society of Minnesota 990s available at: <http://tinyurl.com/ltuf69h> (last checked 4/26/2017).

⁶⁴ Fifth Dialogue Iftar Dinner, TASM, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/kka9lye> (last checked 4/26/2017); Stephanie Fox, People of Three Religious Traditions Break Ramadan Fast Together in St. Paul, Daily Planet (Aug. 30, 2010), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/mygr48h> (last checked 4/26/2017).

sponsored H-1B visa;⁶⁵ Principal, Wisconsin Career Academy;⁶⁶ Superintendent, Minnesota School of Science (Concept, Midwest Region);⁶⁷ currently Superintendent, Horizon/Noble (OH).⁶⁸

- Serkan Gunpinar: Board of Directors, MMSA (MN); Director, Sargas Trade Incorporated (FL); President, Sirius Foundation, Inc. (FL); Vice President, New Springs, Inc. (FL).⁶⁹
- Hasan Kose: Founding Director, Noble Academy (OH); Founding Director,

Minnesota School of Science (MN); President/CEO, Advanced Solutions for Education (Midwestern region); Director, School Public Relations Concept (Midwest region).⁷⁰

- Murat Oguz: School Director, MMSA (MN);⁷¹ Director, Horizon (OH).⁷²
- Mustafa Icel: Director, Minnesota School of Science;⁷³ School Director, Horizon (OH);⁷⁴ currently Dean of Academics, Gateway (MO).⁷⁵

Notable Articles regarding the Minnesota Network

David Montgomery, *MN Lawmakers Among Dozens Nationwide to Visit Turkey on Group's Dime*, Pioneer Press (Feb 9, 2017) (discussing trips to Turkey sponsored by Gülen organizations for Minnesota politicians Kurt Daudt (Crown), Sandy Pappas (St. Paul), Ron Kresha (Little Falls), Ron Latz (St. Louis Park), Paul Rosenthal (Edina), and Claire Robling).⁷⁶

James Warden, *Charter school will occupy industrial building in St. Paul*, Finance and Commerce (June 18, 2014) (discussing facility

purchase and renovation involving MMSA and New Plan Learning).⁷⁷

Alleen Brown, *The Quest to Close the Achievement Gap in North Minneapolis*, City Pages (Mar. 5, 2014) (discussing the history, testing irregularities, special education issues, and the history of Minnesota School of Science).⁷⁸

Steve Brandt, *Minnesota School of Science charter school closes*, Star Tribune (Aug. 22, 2013) (discussing closure of Minnesota School

⁶⁵ Wisconsin Career Academy, Special Review 2008-19 (Feb. 2008), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/l74v4vt> (last checked 4/23/2017).

⁶⁶ Milwaukee Public Schools, School Selections, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/koa4k6b> (last checked 4/26/2017).

⁶⁷ Minnesota School of Science FCC Form 471 (Mar. 14, 2013), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/l8egh2h> (last checked 4/26/2017).

⁶⁸ LinkedIn profile, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/mky7cp8> (last checked 4/23/2017).

⁶⁹ Information taken from: MMSA 990s, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/kz4nkqg> (last checked 4/26/2017); Florida Corporate Documents available at: <http://tinyurl.com/kem57n4> (last checked 4/26/2017); Florida Corporate Documents available at: <http://tinyurl.com/mmj67c7> (last checked 4/26/2017); LinkedIn profile, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/lvtqxe6> (last checked 4/23/2017).

⁷⁰ LinkedIn profile, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/l8xo7el> (last checked 4/23/2017).

⁷¹ MMSA 990s, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/kz4nkqg> (last checked 4/26/2017);

⁷² LinkedIn profile, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/lpyjn42> (last checked 4/23/2017).

⁷³ Minnesota School of Science 990s available at: <http://tinyurl.com/klprfkv> (last checked 4/26/2017).

⁷⁴ The Horizon Times, Horizon (Apr. 10, 2012) available at: <http://tinyurl.com/klcxjw> (last checked 4/26/2017).

⁷⁵ School Update, Gateway Science Academy (Sep. 25, 2015), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/mg8wruo> (last checked 4/26/2017); Mustafa Icel, Facebook, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/n35gl3o> (last checked 4/26/2017);

⁷⁶ <http://tinyurl.com/hf6g77b> (last checked 4/17/2017).

⁷⁷ <http://tinyurl.com/zezjetv> (last checked 4/26/2017).

⁷⁸ <http://tinyurl.com/h4qe2tj> (last checked 4/26/2017).

of Science).⁷⁹

Tim Post, *School of Science supporters protest district decision to end lease*, MPR News (June 17, 2013) (discussing Minneapolis Public Schools' suspicions about Minnesota School of Science's test scores).⁸⁰ Available at: <http://tinyurl.com/jvbdgd8> (7 March 2017).

Cristeta Boarini, *Minnesota School of Science Loses in Court: Out of Cityview*, Twin Cities Daily Planet (July 31, 2013) (discussing the history and difficulties at Minnesota School of Science).⁸¹

N. Mpls Charter School Closing Amid Allegations, CBS Minnesota (June 17, 2013)

(discussing testing irregularities and closure of Minnesota School of Science).⁸²

Education, *Minnesota School of Science Will Not Welcome Back Students with Special Needs*, HuffPost (Aug. 1, 2012) (discussing Minnesota School of Science's refusal to host students with special needs).⁸³

Stephanie Fox, *People of Three Religious Traditions Break Ramadan Fast Together in St. Paul*, Daily Planet (Aug. 30, 2010) (discussing a dialogue dinner hosted by Gülen cultural organizations attended by local politicians and their trip to Turkey).⁸⁴

⁷⁹ <https://tinyurl.com/lg4gg5y> (last checked 4/26/2017).

⁸⁰ <http://tinyurl.com/jvbdgd8> (last checked 4/26/2017).

⁸¹ <http://tinyurl.com/lutmlso> (last checked 4/26/2017).

⁸² <http://tinyurl.com/jgsv9bt> (last checked 4/26/2017).

⁸³ <http://tinyurl.com/mnzobkp> (last checked 4/26/2017).

⁸⁴ <http://tinyurl.com/mygr48h> (last checked 4/26/2017).