



separately from any conversation related to the content of the performance.”<sup>2</sup> Nor does MCC spokesman Alan Campbell’s statement to *The Gazette* that MCC “reviews all college activities presented to the public and reserves the right to determine their appropriateness based on . . . *content*”<sup>3</sup> lend credibility to your claim that the play was not canceled due to its content.

To the contrary, it is readily apparent that MCC’s cited public health and technological concerns are mere pretext, as evidenced by the vocalized administrative concerns about the content of the script, previous administrative efforts to exert control over the content of the play, the fact that MCC has not denied that there were administrative misgivings about the script’s content, and the fact that—despite MCC’s stated concerns—no additional financial or technical resources would be required for MCC to reinstate its sponsorship of the play. The pretextual nature of technological concerns regarding hosting a virtual event is further demonstrated by MCC’s choice to host a virtual panel on LGBTQ+ issues to precede the virtual performance of “Dog Sees God.”

If MCC’s concerns about COVID-19 and technological resources were not pretextual, and were instead based on a misunderstanding of plans related to the fall play, we trust that this letter will resolve those concerns and that MCC will reinstate its support of the fall performance of “Dog Sees God.” If, on the other hand, MCC’s withdrawal of support was driven by concerns with the script’s content, we again invite MCC and EICC to take this opportunity to align its actions with its First Amendment obligations and reinstate sponsorship of the fall play by allowing MCC’s name to be used in marketing materials and by ensuring students may attend free of charge.

It is our understanding that MCC has offered to use funding from student fees to purchase tickets for students to virtually attend the performance. This is a great first step. However, we urge MCC and EICC to fully reinstate its sponsorship of the performance of “Dog Sees God.” We further request assurance that MCC will respect Oltmanns’ right to select the play script in subsequent terms.

Given the urgent nature of this matter, we request receipt of a response to this letter no later than the close of business on Friday, October 23, 2020.

Sincerely,

Lindsie Rank  
Program Officer, Individual Rights Defense Program

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<sup>2</sup> Letter from Naomi DeWinter, President, MCC, to Lindsie Rank, Program Officer, Found. for Individual Rights in Educ., Oct. 1, 2020 (on file with author).

<sup>3</sup> Erin Jordan, Iowa college bans controversial play based on *Peanuts*

Cc: Deborah Sullivan, EICC Director of Human Resources  
Jeremy Pickard, MCC Dean of Instruction