

## Welcoming the New School Year

by Antoinette Johns,  
2003-04 MASA President and  
Superintendent,  
Brooklyn Center Schools

Dear Members,  
The “Great Minnesota Get Together” has come to a close and now we gather the children together within our doors. The children we gather are so very different across many of our communities. They may speak one to four languages other than English. They may have experienced war and the loss of loved ones before their eyes. They may have always lived in poverty in America. They may have lived in a refugee camp and been to school only intermittently. Their mom or dad may have been a person of great influence and well educated, now working in entry level positions in health care, driving a taxi, or in food service to get a new start in America. Yet they are so much like all of our precious children—full of hope, unmet promises yet to unfold, anxious to make friends and be liked by their teacher.

It is difficult to follow in the footsteps of Ken Dragseth. I have the pleasure of working with him in the West Metro Integration Programs and MASA. He is a man of integrity and intelligence, with soul and a great sense of humor. Many thanks to Ken and the other members of the Board

who so ably represented us and furthered our voice as the preeminent one on behalf of Minnesota’s children. I am grateful he and our past president Jerry Jensen have been such great role models and I look forward to working with them, the other officers, and Board this year. I have also known and worked with the incredibly competent staff in MASA’s office and Charlie Kyte. Therefore, I know they will be there to support our efforts and guide me this year.

Each year it seems we face challenges, but with new state academic standards, and the federal No Child Left Behind Act, the timelines provided for us to meet these challenges require laser focused attention.

It is imperative our response be one of action, not hand-wringing, yet simultaneously we must identify the problems and work to offer solutions for the NCLBA to our congressmen. The ultimate statistical impossibility of making AYP must be addressed, the special education problem has to be highlighted, as well as other problems made known. The intent that every child deserves to learn through quality instruction is honestly owed to children, and I applaud all of the changes being implemented by teachers and districts. My first goal of working on targeted issues through federal advocacy will

allow us to address the NCLBA and special education funding issues in Washington, while back home we deliver on instruction.



Antoinette Johns

Secondly, we must continue to work with Minnesota legislators and the Minnesota Department of Education on state funding during the session and through the School Finance Task force. There are no simple solutions to complex problems. We all know how difficult it is to continue doing more with less. Early Childhood Family Education is a research-based program with substantiated results over time. It is the best solution to children being prepared to learn if they don’t have the preparation needed through their family and community.

Third, working collaboratively with the new Minnesota Department of Education is needed as we address not only the

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## The Importance of Personal Professional Development



Charlie Kyte

by Charlie Kyte,  
MASA Executive  
Director

Steven Covey, in his book *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, identified the seventh successful habit as “sharpening the saw.” He recognized that

people, like tools, had to remain sharp in order to be effective.

In my own personal story, I went through a time where I forgot about the importance of personal professional development. At heart, I’m a positive person who enjoys working. However, during the last couple of years that I served as a school superintendent, I became so immersed in my work that I didn’t look for opportunities to renew myself, stretch my horizons or develop my professional self through personal

action. The result was insidious.

I didn’t realize that somehow I was no longer taking joy from my work, I was grumpy around people and found myself simply working harder to make up for it. This created a vicious cycle of taking even less personal development time.

I didn’t realize what was happening and it was only after a job change that I was able to reflect on what was going on with me. I came to realize how important it was to take time regularly for personal professional renewal.

Unfortunately, I see others in the same situation as I felt several years ago. On the other hand, I see examples of people who carefully take care to professionally renew and develop. One example of the positive approach is Ted Blaesing, Superintendent of the White Bear Lake Public Schools. He is

somewhat of a hero of mine.

Ted Blaesing regularly finds opportunities for professional renewal. This past summer he attended the Columbia University School Leaders Conference in New York City. He comes to state level conferences sponsored by MASA and others. He is constantly looking for those opportunities where he can grow professionally and also renew himself.

A result for Ted and others who follow the same regimen is that they are able to go through their professional careers with more ups than downs. They remain positive and they look for the brighter side not only in themselves but also in others.

Based on my personal experiences, and observation of so many school leaders who do extremely difficult jobs, it is important to remember to forever be “sharpening the saw.” •

## Profiles of Learning – Maligned, but a Good Investment

by Charlie Kyte,  
MASA Executive Director

The stories about the difficulty of implementing the “Profiles of Learning” are legend across the state. This original good idea succumbed to layers upon layers of crazy “top down” requirements that made it nearly impossible for students and parents to understand and very difficult for teachers and administrators to implement. However, there was also an important good side to remember.

The “good side” was the tremendous amount of curriculum alignment and examination, which happened over a period of years in every Minnesota school because of the Profiles of Learning. Most school districts and buildings had minimal alignment of their curriculums.

It wasn’t just a matter of high schools not knowing what middle schools were doing, or what the expectations were at the high school for middle school work. It wasn’t just a misalignment between elementary and middle schools. It was greater than just a lack of alignment between grade levels in the school. In fact, in many schools where there were multiple classrooms at a grade level, the teachers in one classroom were using significantly different curriculums and methodology than teachers in other classrooms.

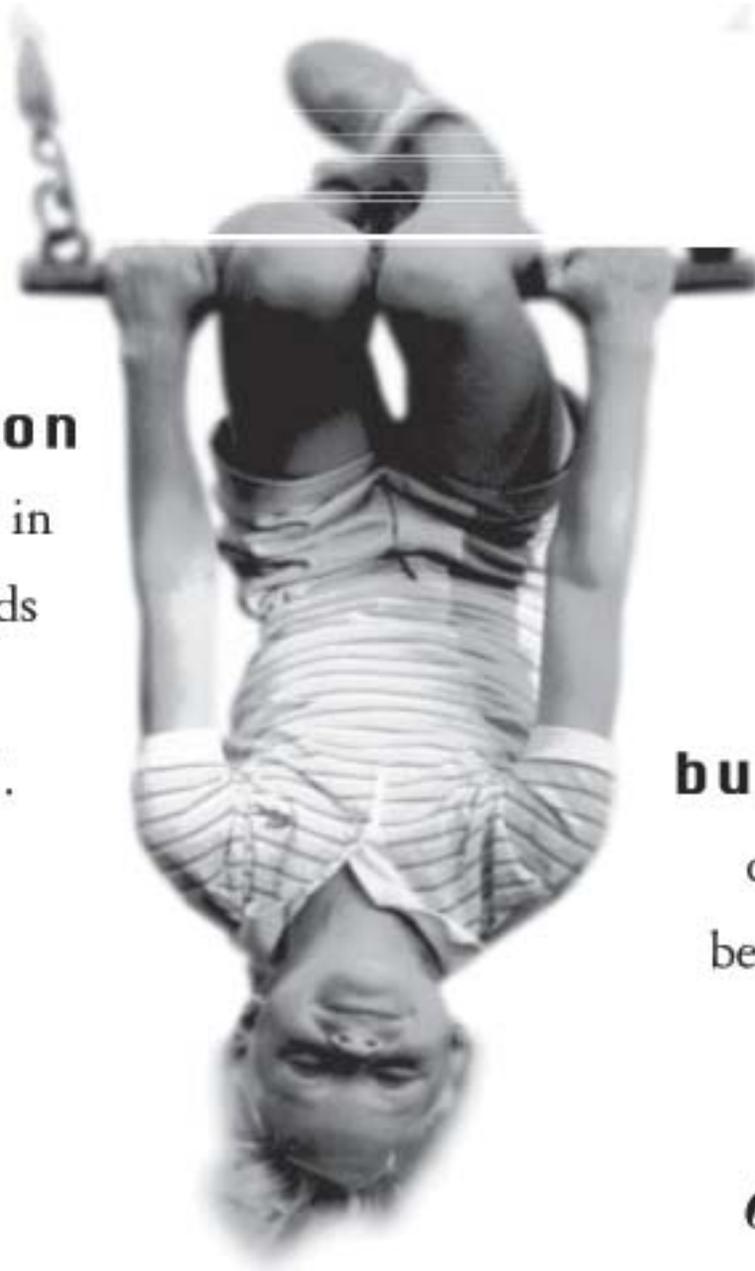
The result of the effort at the grass roots level on the Profile of

Learning accomplished a significant amount of alignment which was executed with a great deal of wisdom by Minnesota’s teachers and school administrators. Redundancy was pushed out and articulation was brought in. Across the entire spectrum of K-12 education the academic rigor was enhanced.

Occasionally when you hear someone complaining about the expenditures of the implementation of the Profile of Learning, recognize that it was not money wasted. The money that was spent at the local school and school district level was well utilized in the effort to

**Profiles ...**  
**Continued Page 17**

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## AASA Adopts New Governance Structure

AASA members have adopted a new two-tiered governance structure to oversee the association. The new structure “creates a more vital and vibrant national association for our members,” said AASA Executive Director Paul Houston. “I believe that this is a watershed moment for AASA.”

The new arrangement creates a governing board with at least two representatives from each state affiliate and additional representatives from more populous state affiliates. The board will provide overall direction for AASA with special emphasis on policy-related areas. A smaller executive committee, consisting of regional members elected from the governing board, will oversee more specific day-to-day responsibilities.

Two years ago, AASA’s Executive Committee embraced the idea that the association’s governance structure needed “a major overhaul and appointed a task force to rethink the entire process,” said AASA President John Lawrence. The task force consisted of members of the Executive Committee and state executives as well as past presidents. The group developed a proposal for a broadened governance process that was adopted unanimously by the executive committee. The proposal was endorsed unanimously by the executives of AASA’s state affiliates and was approved by the membership via special election ballots mailed in mid-March.

Both new governing bodies will be chaired by a president elected by the full membership after nominations by the governing board. The governing board also will be responsible for approving the resolutions and legislative agenda developed by the executive committee. The annual Delegate Assembly will be replaced by the governing board.

Each state affiliate will now be entitled to a minimum of two representatives on the governing board. State affiliates with more than 100 eligible AASA voting members will receive one additional representative for every 100 additional eligible AASA voting members.

The country will be divided into seven electoral regions and each region will be entitled to a minimum of two regionally elected members to the executive committee. Executive committee members will be elected by the governing board members from their respective region.

### Minnesota Governing Board Selection Plan

by **Kay Worner,**  
**MASA Nominating Committee Chair and Superintendent,**  
**Sartell-St. Stephen Schools**

The new AASA governance structure provides for the establishment of a Governing Board consisting of elected members from each national chartered affiliate. Each chartered affiliate (in our case, MASA) is responsible for developing a plan to elect representatives to the newly established Governing Board. Minnesota is allowed four representatives on the Governing Board.

The qualifications for Governing Board Member are:

- Be a voting member of AASA for at least three years (Active, Institutional, Active Life, College Professor).
- Be a member of MASA for at least three years

The responsibilities of a Governing Board member are:

- Attend Governing Board meetings held two times per year, one of which is in conjunction with the national AASA convention. Expenses for attending the Governing Board meeting held in conjunction with the AASA annual conference is the responsibility of each Governing Board member. Expenses for attending the second meeting of the Governing Board is AASA’s responsibility.

**AASA Structure ...**  
**Continued Page 5**

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## AASA Structure ... Continued from Page 4

- Serve as a liaison between the charter affiliate (MASA) and AASA.
- Recommend policy to the AASA Executive Committee.
- Act on resolutions submitted by the AASA Executive Committee.
- Determine, on an annual basis, the association dues for Active and Associate members.
- Recommend, on an annual basis, programs and activities for inclusion in the AASA budget.
- Review the annual AASA budget and programs.
- Affirm AASA's legislative agenda.
- Elect, by national region, Executive Committee members to represent the region and serve as voting members on the Executive Committee.
- Receive and act on the annual report of AASA Executive Director.

- Receive and act on the report of the Audit Committee.
- Approve, by 2/3 majority, any change in regional composition or Bylaws.
- Perform other duties as assigned by the Executive Committee.

Each charter affiliate is entitled to a minimum of two representatives and one additional representative for each 100 voting members. Representatives can be elected to two consecutive three-year terms. However, the first terms will be staggered for the four elected Minnesota representatives to assure that there is a rotation of representation from Minnesota and of experience on the Governing Board. Plans developed by each charter affiliate, should be open, inclusive, and encourage active participation by all membership segments particularly in areas of gender and ethnicity. The process must reflect an election not a selection process. The new governance structure requires that

the representatives to the Governing Board shall be elected prior to December 31, 2003.

The timeline for Minnesota's election process is as follows:

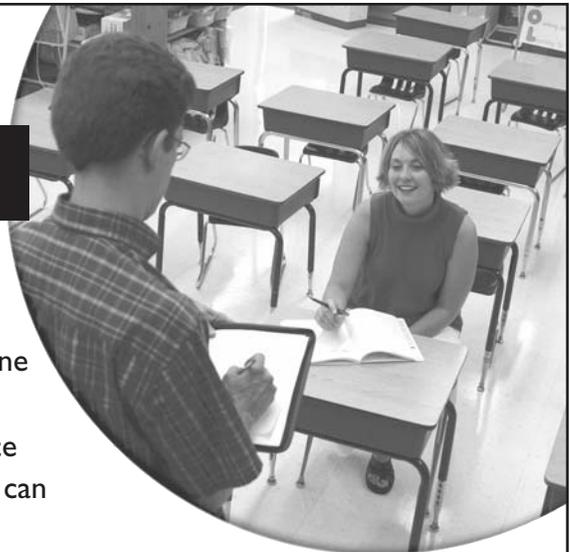
- Minnesota's AASA members nominated candidates last summer.
- Ballots will be mailed to all eligible voting members on October 10.
- Ballots are due at the MASA offices by October 31.
- Ballots will be counted by the MASA office staff and validated by the Nominating Committee and MASA Executive Director on November 7. Elected representatives will be notified no later than November 14. In case of a tie, the representative shall be determined by lot. Names will be drawn from the four elected representatives to determine the terms of office (one for one-year, one for two-years, two for three-years).

Any questions related to the election process should be directed to MASA Executive Director Charlie Kyte (651-645-6272) or to the Nominating Committee Chair, Kay Worner (320-656-3713). •

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## What Schools Should Know About “Conceal and Carry”



Gregory S. Madsen

by **Gregory S. Madsen, Attorney, Rider Bennett**

Despite the concern and controversy surrounding Minnesota's new “conceal and carry” law, guns and other weapons

are prohibited in all public and private K-12 schools and on school property—regardless of a school district's policy. Minnesota law makes it illegal for anyone except law enforcement and certain military personnel to possess a “dangerous weapon,” “replica firearm,” or “BB gun” on school property. The new law specifically makes it a crime for even the holder of a firearms permit to bring a gun onto school property.

Unlike most privately—or publicly—owned businesses that wish to prohibit guns, schools are not required by law to post a “no guns” notice. However, permit holders may falsely believe they can bring the gun for which they carry a permit into any building that is not posted with a “guns are banned from these premises” warning sign. We therefore recommend that schools voluntarily post signs at each school entrance communicating the following message: “WARNING: IT IS ILLEGAL TO HAVE A WEAPON ON SCHOOL PROPERTY.” A message making it clear that weapons are not allowed at school may act as a deterrent and help to reduce violations of the law and school policies prohibiting weapons on school property. It also serves to remind and reassure members of the school community that weapons are prohibited at school.

A very significant aspect of the

“conceal and carry” law for schools is that it is lawful for a non-student or non-employee permit holder to park in a school parking area and place the licensed weapon in the trunk or rear area of the vehicle. Neither schools nor any other entity may restrict the legal right of a permit holder to keep or store a licensed weapon in the permit holder's car, even while parked in a school parking area. Schools are free to prohibit—by policy—students and employees from possessing weapons in their vehicles parked in school parking lots, as well as elsewhere on school property. Moreover, a school district also may adopt a policy barring all employees (including permit holders) from carrying a gun while acting in the course and scope of employment away from school.

### *Frequently Asked Questions*

#### **FAQ:**

What is “school property” under the conceal and carry law?

#### **Answer:**

“School property” includes: (1) any public or private elementary, middle or secondary school building and its “improved grounds, whether leased or owned by the school;” (2) a licensed child care center during operating hours;

(3) a school bus while being used for any school-related activity; and (4) that portion of any non-school building under the “temporary, exclusive control” of a public or private school where “conspicuous signs are prominently posted at each entrance” giving actual notice of the school-related use.

#### **FAQ:**

How can a school district ensure that guns are not permitted at a school-related ceremony, athletic or other event at a location not owned by the school district?

#### **Answer:**

If the school district has “temporary, exclusive control” of a “portion of a building or facility,” and provides the required notice, weapons at that part of the building or the facility housing the school function are illegal. The law specifies that “conspicuous signs” be “prominently posted at each entrance that give actual notice to persons of the school-related use.” Note that such notice only requires identification of the area exclusively devoted to school-related use. However, for that notice to be meaningful, schools also may wish to post a warning against weapons (“WARNING: IT IS ILLEGAL TO HAVE A WEAPON ON SCHOOL PROPERTY”). •

Attention, Members!

### Mark your calendar for the **2004 MASA/MASE Spring Conference**

Thursday-Friday,  
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**Radisson South Hotel,  
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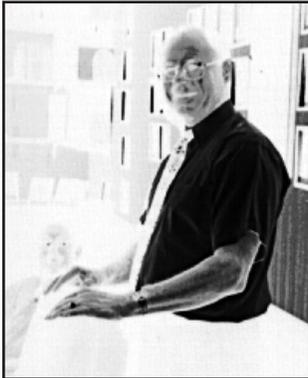


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## What Do Superintendent Candidates Want to Know?

*And What do they Want to Know First?*



Charlie Kyte

by Charlie Kyte,  
MASA Executive  
Director

This past hiring season has seen sixty-three vacancies for the position of superintendent of schools. These vacancies have run the entire gamut of large to small districts. There is a vacancy now for the Minneapolis Public Schools. Recently, John

Currie was hired to be Superintendent of the Rosemount/Apple Valley/Eagan schools. We have also seen vacancies in places such as Ivanhoe-Hendricks, Two Harbors, Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton and Pelican Rapids.

I have often heard the following three questions asked by prospective candidates:

1. What is the School Board like? Are they a group of decent people who can debate issues well and then pull together in a positive way once a decision is reached?
2. What is the attitude in the community towards public education? Is the community supportive of teachers and administrators and is the community willing to pay for a good education system?
3. Is the compensation for the job fair?

Too often school boards think that the only issue is the level of compensation. That is very important, but it is the first two questions that are of greater importance.

Often, school boards are mystified as to why they don't have large pools of candidates applying for their superintendency, or why don't they have all of the potential candidates they think should be available applying for the job. Truth be told, there is no problem attracting candidates to those school districts in which we have high performing school boards with a reputation

**Candidates ...**

**Continued Page 17**

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**Some Conference Highlights ...**

- Don't miss the Foundation **Golf Tournament Mixer** Sunday afternoon at Enger Park. The tournament will benefit the work of the MASA Foundation, enhancing the leadership development of educational

administrators.

- Celebrate the service of our honored peers at the Sunday **Awards Banquet**. Service recognition and the **Morris Bye Memorial Award** will be presented. Entertainment will be by the Duluth Schools' *Sterling Strings!*
- Monday keynote speaker **John Busacker** of the Inventure Group will challenge participants to think about what their role as a leader means to them. While many speakers focus on the "what" of leadership, John Busacker concentrates on who participants are as leaders and on developing their natural strengths for

leading authentically.

- The **Exhibit Fair** is a convenient way to visit with representatives of companies offering the latest products and services of value to school leaders.
- Smaller group **Breakout Sessions** offer cutting-edge information on a variety of topics.
- Well-known author, researcher, analyst, and speaker **Gerald Bracey** will keynote our Tuesday sessions with his perspective on the challenges and successes of educational leaders.
- Our Tuesday closing speaker **Michael Stewart** will reflect on the politics of leadership—with a twist of humor!
- Unwind and enjoy the attractions of Duluth and Canal Park. Whether it is a walk to enjoy the fall colors, a trip to the Omnimax, a great meal, or a little shopping, there are many choices for you and your family to enjoy when sessions adjourn for the day.

**Registration materials have been mailed and are available on the MASA web site ([www.mnasa.org](http://www.mnasa.org)). See you in Duluth!**

**Are you in a New District?**

Now is the time of year when many of our members are on the move! Help us keep track of you (and therefore keep your MASA benefits and services coming to you!). Just give Jeanna a call (651/645-6272), fax her a note (651/645-7518), or email her at [members@mnasa.org](mailto:members@mnasa.org) and she will update your records. Also, if you have new colleagues in your area who are not yet MASA members, let us know and we will send membership information to them. •

**Have you renewed your membership?**

Membership materials have been mailed. For more information or additional membership materials, contact the MASA office or visit our web site—651/645-6272 or [members@mnasa.org](mailto:members@mnasa.org).

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## Bits 'n Pieces for Fall, 2003



Shari Prest

by Shari Prest,  
Ark Associates

### *Just the Facts*

#### School Choice

Minnesota public school characteristics (2001-2002 school year):

- 485 public school districts
- 2,408 schools including 77 charter schools
- 851,384 students (82% white, 7.0% black, 3.8% Hispanic, 5.2% Pacific Islander, 2.0% American Indian/Alaskan Native)
- 53,081 FTE teachers
- \$7,645 per-pupil expenditures
- 26.4% eligible for free/reduced lunch
- 5.6% limited-English proficiency
- 13.0% with individualized education programs (IEP).

“Vouchers empower parents (at least theoretically) by giving them access to tax dollars to use as they see fit, so long as it is for the benefit of the education of their children. Parents are an increasingly shrinking minority in America. Those who pay the majority of the taxes to support education are now—and will be increasingly in the future—nonparents. To tell those whose tax dollars are being spent that they will have no control over how the dollars are to be spent is to send a message that will, in the long run, further erode support for public education.” (*A Trailblazer, on the frontier of school reform*, Phillip Schlechty author, educator and reformer).

“...the charter schools in our study had a higher student-teacher ratio than either magnet or regular public schools” (*Policy Brief*,

Budget Crisis: Minnesota’s Investment in School Choice, May 2003).

The average cost of educating a child in a charter school was \$10,235. The average cost per student at a traditional public school for the same school year was \$9,775 (*CFL, Charter School Profiles, 2002*).

“With regard to achievement test results, charter schools had the lowest mean score on each of the four tests we considered. Regular public schools had the highest mean score and magnet schools fell in between.” (*Student achievement at charter, magnet, and regular public schools*, Jenks, Dove, Murray-Close, Doire, December, 2002).

#### Tax Talk

How fast was government really growing? We were told by the

Taxpayers League and Governor Pawlenty that prior to the last session and the no-new tax pledges, state expenditures were going to grow by 14.3% in the next biennium if budget cuts were not made. A nonpartisan House research department tells a different story. In fact:

- The budget increase reflects a two-year jump because the state does its budgeting every other year, making the rate 6.9% per year.
- 5.7% of the amount described as increased spending is actually property-tax cuts approved by the legislature in 2001. The current budget is the first in which those cuts will be felt, bumping up “expenditures” by 5.7%.
- 1.6% is actually the result of payments last year’s legislature delayed to shift the costs to the

**Bits 'n Pieces ...**

**Continued Page 16**

## PR Bits ‘n Pieces Online

by Shari Prest, Ark Associates

Don’t have time to find interesting and appropriate data, quotes or fillers for your newsletters? No problem. At [www.mnasa.org](http://www.mnasa.org), you will find *Bits ‘n Pieces* of just that kind of information for your use. For example, do you know:

- How fast government was actually growing prior to the recent budget cuts?
- What percent of Minnesota’s students have limited-English proficiency?
- What metropolitan area was ranked the world’s most knowledge-competitive region?
- What percent of Minnesota homes have computers?
- Who said, “If I could go one-on-one with every school administrator in America, my message would be simple; the failure isn’t in the product but in the marketing...Public education’s public relations are woefully inadequate”?
- How Minnesota ranks among the 50 states in school spending?

Find the answers to these questions and others in the article above—or at [www.mnasa.org](http://www.mnasa.org)—*Champions for Children, Bits ‘n Pieces On-line*.



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## Jobsite/Applicant Site Heavily Promoted and Successful

by Dennis Rens,  
Director,  
MASA Jobsite Online

As the MASA Online Jobsite and Applicant Site enter their fifth and third year of successful operation, MASA has increased their promotion of the sites to make them even more visible to candidates in Minnesota and the upper Midwest. To help ensure that candidates use the sites to find Minnesota school jobs, MASA committed to the following promotional activities this spring:

1. A personal letter and flyers were sent to over 100 Education Department Chairs and Career Service Directors in colleges and universities in Minnesota and the upper Midwest.
2. Letters and flyers were sent to all Education Minnesota building representatives in the State asking them to post Jobsite/Applicant Site flyers in their buildings.
3. Jobsite/Applicant Site information was published in Education Minnesota flyers to their members for two months.
4. Ads were placed in the Sunday edition of the Star/

Tribune throughout the State on six different weeks in May, June, and July. In addition, the site was included on their website for the full week each time the ad was included in the paper.

5. Ads were placed in the Hmong Times twice a month in May and June.
6. Ads were placed in the Insight News three times in May and June, and each time the ads were placed in three different publications from three different areas.

These efforts along with the sites' increased visibility on most major search engines as well as word-of-mouth have greatly increased the effectiveness of the sites over time.

As of the printing of this newsletter, over 18,000 jobs have been posted on the Jobsite since its inception four and a half years ago. Since January of this year, approximately 3000 jobs have been posted by the nearly 190 school districts that have subscribed to the service. In addition, nearly 900 teacher candidates have entered their profile on the Applicant Site in 2003. The thousands of hits the site gets each week make this the job search site of choice for districts and candidates.

Dennis Rens (Jobsite) and Fred Kunze (Applicant Site) continue to manage the sites. If you need further information or help, call them at:

Dennis:  
Metro - 763-862-6111  
Toll free - 888-519-5752

Fred:  
Metro - 763-792-6690  
Toll free - 877-373-9494

Thanks to all our participating districts. Together, you maximize the job sites' effectiveness—when more districts participate, more candidates browse the Jobsites as their first research in their job search. •

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[www.mnasa.org](http://www.mnasa.org)

# New Year ... Continued from Page 1

NCLBA, but the many issues before public education today. We may not always agree philosophically or on details of implementation when the Minnesota Department of Education acts. However, it is imperative that we continue to dialogue and listen to each other.

Our reorganization of the MASA structure was needed if we are to be an inclusive organization like the schools we serve. All district types from rural to urban should be actively involved if we are to have the impact desired as the preeminent voice on behalf of children in the State of Minnesota. I will be visiting as many regional meetings as I possibly can this year, as I want to be assured when speaking that I'm representing the wide diversity of needs within our state. Having been a Superintendent in rural Minnesota and in the suburbs, in quite an urban student district, the specific issues we face are somewhat

different. I have always looked at all state reports to see the legislative impact on all dimensions. Together, though, we can strive to meet the critical needs and issues of each type of district. Active membership on your part will further this goal and I will be calling on you. If you have a particular interest, please let me know, and I will facilitate your participation in that area.

This year the Fall Conference is being held in Duluth. The change responds to membership request and I hope you can attend. There are a number of events scheduled to bring us all together but also more flexibility in the evenings and in your ability to be housed where you choose. This is an important conference as we start the school year, and I hope to see you there.

It seems that many of my goals overlap this year. I know we will all work hard to attain each, as

complex as they are.

Most important, though, are the daily plans we carry out to provide a quality education to every child who enters our doors. Public education is the bedrock of democracy. We must develop an educated public if we are to maintain the freedoms we enjoy. You, and everyone who works with you, are in the most important profession you could choose, "Creating America's Future Through Its Youth."

Best wishes for a wonderful school year. Thank you for this opportunity to serve you. •

MASA members can contact President Anoinette Johns at:

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Superintendent  
Brooklyn Center Schools  
6500 Humboldt Avenue N  
Brooklyn Center, MN 55430  
Phone: 763/561-2120 x202  
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## MASA Activities Support Leadership

by Charlie Kyte,  
MASA Executive Director

### *Regional Mentoring*

MASA has set up a regional mentoring network. Once again this year, there are a significant number of new school superintendents and top-level administrators in the state of Minnesota. In an effort to help these members, MASA has set up a relatively simple mentoring network in each region of the state. Experienced school leaders may well be asked to help by developing a personal relationship with one of the new MASA members.

In August, regional leaders received a request from MASA to invite the new MASA members in their part of the state to a breakfast or luncheon meeting for the purpose of helping the new member to connect better with other school leaders in their area. To facilitate this, MASA utilized

the nine regional groupings in the state, but further, subdivided a couple of the regions because of their large geographical size and the number of new leaders in the area.

Secondly, each of the regional leaders was asked to match each new MASA member up with one experienced and positive member from their region. We hope that the new member and the experienced mentor would be in communication with each other and that the experienced member would provide support for the new member.

Leaders from the Service Coop in Southwestern Minnesota took this idea even one step further. At the MASA Summer Workshop they invited all of the new leaders from

Southwest Minnesota to a dinner to introducing them to each other and to help create a support network in that part of the state.

A number of you reading this article may have already been asked to be mentors or are new members themselves receiving support from experienced leaders. By next year we hope to build on this elemental system to create even a stronger set of relationships for the newly emerging leaders of Minnesota public education.

### *The Senior Year of High School*

On August 7th, approximately 100 school and college administrators and counselors gathered to discuss **Activities ...**

**Continued Page 26**

## *Thank You Conference Sponsors !*



A special thank you to our friends in business who are sponsoring portions of the 2003 MASA Fall Conference. Your participation allows MASA to offer a higher quality conference. You make a difference for Minnesota education!

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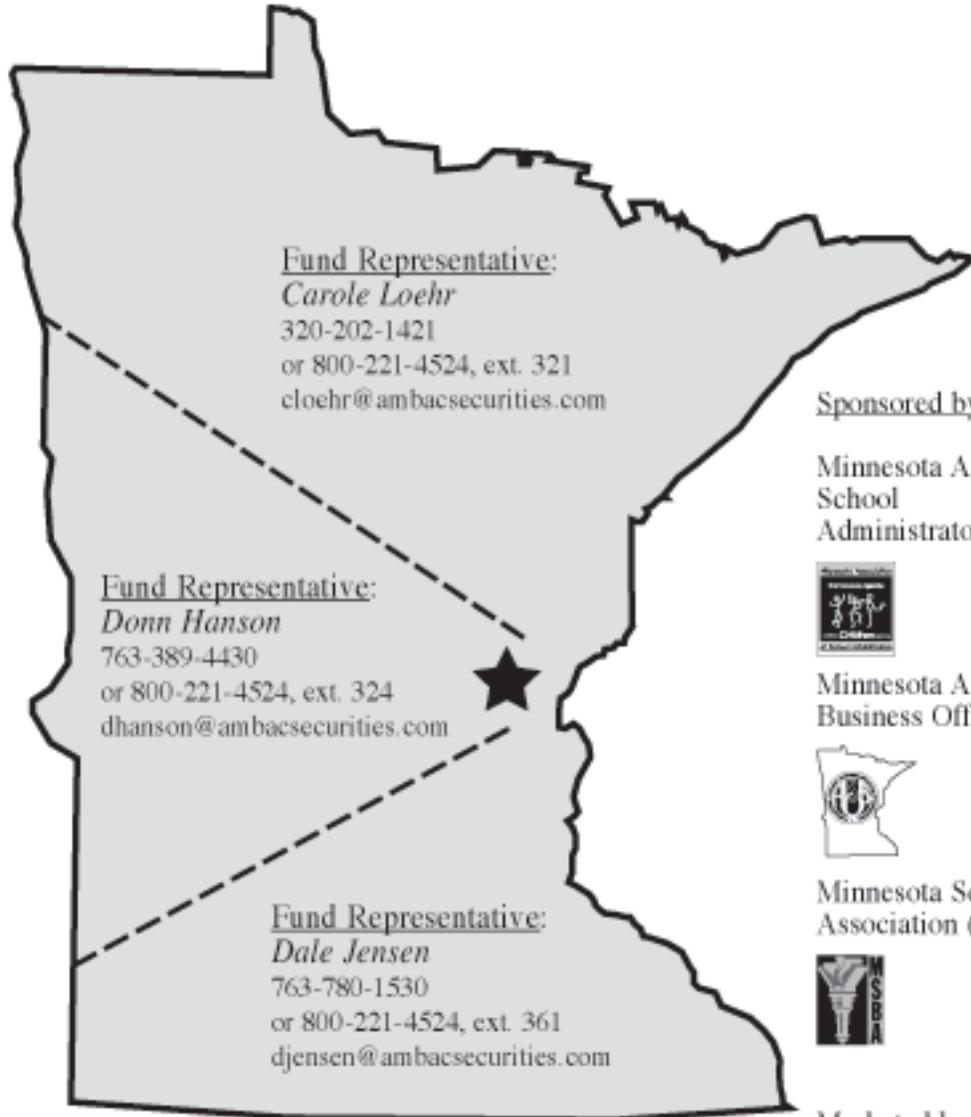
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## Minnesota Administrators Leadership Forum Year III Begins



Kris Bryan Nielsen

by **Kristine Bryan Nielsen, Executive Director, Minnesota Administrators Leadership Forum**

As you read this, we have just completed our first three of five days of training with eight groups of

Minnesota leaders! In other words, I have had the pleasure of working with 500 more of you over the course of June, July, and August.

In this third and possibly final year of our Gates Foundation funding, we are trying some new things. One of our training days will be “virtual” and is composed of a series of online meetings, surveys, discussions and other

communications. We have a new version of our rubric-based appraisal software, mVal, that is web based. I believe that it has great potential to streamline and improve staff appraisal. We have also built our own private Atomic Learning website as a forum for discussions, sharing and online learning.

We have 24 mentors working with our project this year and I couldn't be more pleased with the group. You can find these mentors and their contact information on the resource page of our website at [www.mn-admin-forum.org](http://www.mn-admin-forum.org). We have the added capacity this year to provide remote, online tech support to our Forum members. Past Forum participants will receive information about upgrading their mVal software to the web based version and should watch for membership information for our

Atomic Learning site via email in the near future.

I get many questions about upgrading Palm handhelds. The model we are using this year is the Palm Zire 71. It retails for \$299, and is quite a bargain at that price with its built-in camera and MP3 player. We have been very pleased with the performance of the Zire 71 so far!

I invite you to contact me ([kris@mn-admin-forum.org](mailto:kris@mn-admin-forum.org)) with ideas about follow up training, and to communicate with the directors of your administrative associations about those needs also. Watch for surveys about topics such as online learning for school leaders, professional development needs and mentorship ideas to come your way. We welcome and need your input! Have a wonderful school start! •

## Bits 'n Pieces ... Continued from Page 10

current year, making last year's budget look smaller and the current year's budget totals look higher.

After accounting for the above legislative maneuvers, the actual projected growth before budget cuts was about 3.5% per year. If adjusted for inflation, the spending increase would have been about 1.1% which, if tax cuts were removed, would have made this year's budget a frugal one indeed (Mankato Free Press, Mark Fischenich)

“The fact that we've been able to, with the help of the governor, convince the majority of Minnesotans that government is too big...that's the real power that we have—our ability to persuade people.” – *David Strom*, Taxpayers League's chief lobbyist

“I do believe that people have started to believe some of the rhetoric, and that the rhetoric is being passed back to us from people like it's true.” *Representative Barbara Goodwin*

### School Spending

Minnesota ranks 25th in the nation for school spending, but 1st in performance.

### Bragging Rights

#### Quality of Life

For the third straight year, United Way of America has ranked Minnesota as the Number one state for quality of life in its annual State of Caring Index. (United Way of America, 2002).

“For the seventh straight year, Minnesota was named the most livable state (Morgan Quitno Press, 2003).

#### Education and Innovation

Robert Huggins Associates, a

research-based economics consultancy and think-tank, has ranked the Minneapolis-St. Paul area as the world's most knowledge-competitive region. In its report, “World Knowledge Competitiveness Index 2002,” the United Kingdom research firm prepared its rankings based on a series of indicators, including the number of managers per 1,000 inhabitants; computer manufacturing, biotechnology and automotive engineering employees per 1,000 inhabitants; the number of patents registered per million people; mean gross monthly earnings; unemployment rates; and per capita public spending on education.

Minnesota's high-tech industry is **Bits 'n Pieces ... Continued Page 18**

## Candidates ... Continued from Page 8

for professionalism and respect, and a history in the community of being supportive of the schools.

However, when a school board is in-fighting with itself, or when a community has a history of nonsupport of its schools, they have a very difficult time finding the “tier one” candidates for their particular size school district. Thank goodness there are only a few school districts that are truly deficient in these qualities.

In commenting on school boards it is important to recognize that good school superintendents are not looking for complacent school boards. They have no problem with school boards that wrestle with issues of significance in their school district. However, they want those issues to be worked on in a professional manner and in a way that is not personally blaming. Further, they look for school boards that upon completion of a discussion and debate, will vote and then come together behind the majority opinion.

Professional behavior on the part of elected boards helps the school district to build a reputation of being attractive to future CEO's. We all know that it requires good leadership for student learning to really thrive in a community. •

## Profiles ... Continued from Page 2

understand and articulate our curriculums better.

As the new standards come into being, the job of teachers and school administrators, while still challenging, will be infinitely easier because of the work that has come before. We now know how to do this right down to the individual classroom level. Minnesota's educators will make the adjustments to again increase the level of rigor and provide the children of Minnesota with an even better education than they had before.

There is a lesson to be learned from all this. In observing back, the grass roots work of teachers, building administrators and district coordinators was effective.

What was not effective was the attempt to lay rules on the school from a higher lever that ultimately caused more confusion than positive results. In wise leadership at the state level, we will see investment in our schools at the grass roots level and avoidance of a “top down” approach that ultimately will cause more resentment than positive result. •



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## Bits 'n Pieces ... Continued from Page 16

ranked 10th among the states in the most recent national study published by the American Electronics Association (AEA). (Cyberstates 2002). Highlights include:

- 136,437 total high-tech workers
- High-tech firms employed 60 of every 1,000 private sector workers
- Minnesota's electro-medical equipment manufacturing industry ranked 2nd in the nation
- High-tech exports totaled \$4.4 billion, ranked 10th nationwide
- High-tech exports were 42% of total exports.
- Venture capital investments of \$541 million ranked 15th nationwide
- 64.7% of all homes had computers, ranked 7th nationwide
- Home internet use ranked 9th nationwide.

### Quotes and Quotables

#### Character

"Life on Earth is a hand-to-hand mortal combat...between the law of love and the law of hate." – José Martí, Cuban patriot, 1881

"I firmly believe that it is the challenges we face that strengthen our will and our spirit. It is oftentimes the biggest challenges that result in the greatest rewards." – Chace Anderson, Edina High School principal  
"People ask the difference between a leader and a boss...the leader works in the open,

and the boss in covert. The leader leads and the boss drives." – President Theodore Roosevelt

#### Citizenship

"Give to your community, be at peace with yourself, and try to be as human as you can be." – Morrie Schwartz

"It's not just the responsibility of families, schools, social service agencies, or other institutions—though they all have important roles. Everyone—from a child to a grandparent to a caring neighbor—can start building assets today with the young people in your family, neighborhood, community, or place of business." – Search Institute

"In all parts of the world, a young person is considered successfully educated if he or she understands how to behave, or as some cultures put it, 'the way to go.' To be educated does not mean to have finished school. Rather, it means to be civilized." – Stephen Heyneman, educator for 21 years with the World Bank

#### Education

"I know this: If they think that

every kid is going to get an equal opportunity and that it's going to cost less in a private system, they are out of their cotton-pickin' minds." – David Jennings, former state commerce commissioner, CEO Minneapolis Regional Chamber of Commerce, Republican speaker of the Minnesota house and soon-to-be acting Superintendent of Minneapolis Public Schools.

"Nothing matters more to an organization's success than the quality of its leadership, and nowhere is that clearer than in public education." – Chester E. Finn Jr., professor of education, Vanderbilt University

"Education, beyond all the devices of human origin, is the great equalizer of the conditions of men; the great balance wheel of the social machinery." – Horace Mann

#### Innovation

"Storybook happiness involves every form of pleasant thumb-twiddling; true happiness involves the full use of one's powers and talents." – John Gardner, Carnegie Foundation president

"Technology is pushing kids at the speed of light, and adults need to catch up." – Jennifer Jones, anthropologist

#### Perseverance

"Do what you can, with what you have, where you are." – President Theodore Roosevelt

"If I could go one-on-one with every school administrator in America, my message would be simple: The failure isn't in the product but in the marketing...Public education's public relations are woefully inadequate." – Frosty Troy, editor, Oklahoma Observer

"Procrastination is opportunity's natural assassin." – Victor Kiam •

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## MASA Partners In Resource for NCLB Parent Notifications

As the new school year began, millions of parents across the nation were notified that their children are attending schools that did or didn't make Adequate Yearly Progress. Some states are reporting districts in which 25 to 60 percent of schools did not meet AYP standards.

Notifying parents of progress toward AYP is only one example of the many NCLB notices and information that must be sent or made available to parents before or during the school year. Parent advocacy groups in several states have requested districts provide them copies of notices that make parents aware of such requirements as assignment of children to non-highly qualified staff and paraprofessionals, annual principal verification of highly qualified staff, annual notice of supplemental service providers, and parent involvement policies.

Adding to the challenge of keeping parents informed is the NCLB requirement that all notices must be, when practicable, in a language the parent can understand.

MASA has partnered with TransACT to make available an online subscription to a collection of more than 37 notices to help districts comply with NCLB parent notification requirements. Currently, the TransACT® Parent Notifications collection is being used in districts in over 25 states.

Visit [www.mynclb.com](http://www.mynclb.com) and print the document "TransACT NCLB Parent Notifications Summary, Checklist and Timelines" to compare your NCLB parent communications with the broad collection of "master letters." The TransACT collection is also available in Spanish. You may get more information regarding the notices and fees, and enroll online at [www.mynclb.com](http://www.mynclb.com), or contact Mary Law at MASA (651-645-6272 or [mrlaw@mnasa.org](mailto:mrlaw@mnasa.org)).

Note that the Minnesota Department of Education has also created several of the letters and has translated them into several languages. These are on the MDE web site: <http://www.education.state.mn.us>. •

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# LEADERSHIP *service*

## 2003 - 2004 MASA Committees Formed

Thank you to the MASA members who have volunteered to serve on the 2003-04 MASA Committees!

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Tom Westerhaus, Prior Lake-Savage Schools (Chair-Elect)

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# MASA Foundation Supports Professional Development

One of the primary goals of the MASA Foundation is to promote leadership development among Minnesota's school leaders. In support of that objective, the Foundation Board has created a permanent endowment. The endowment and its earnings will be invested in developing opportunities for MASA members to further their education in educational administration. Earnings will also be used to provide outstanding programs in professional development to new members and mid-career members.

The Foundation is working with each MASA component group to identify activities to fund that will be the most meaningful to their members. These might include activities for aspiring administrators, orientation for leaders in new positions, or training for seasoned administrators. Some possibilities include:

- Week-long comprehensive academies for superintendents, special education administrators, or other administrators, somewhat like a mini Bush experience.
- Support for administrators to attend national seminars or conventions, or perhaps an international experience.

The Foundation is able to move in this direction because it has spent a number of years raising the principal to begin the endowment. Funding activities have included personal gift campaigns, the Fall Foundation Golf Tournament, and the Spring Silent Auction. The Board is proud of its past efforts and is ready to move to the next level. In order to make that a reality, the Foundation needs the help of each and every MASA member.

The Foundation is asking current and retired MASA members to participate in a four-year pledge commitment of a minimum \$50 per year as a small way of giving back to their profession. If you haven't made a commitment already, please consider filling out the pledge form in this newsletter (at right) and sending it to MASA. The Foundation will ask donors to begin meeting their commitments this fall.

If each MASA member pledge their support, a minimum of \$200,000 new dollars for the endowment can easily be raised in the four-year period. But more importantly, the Foundation will use this demonstration of support to approach companies who do business with schools to ask them for their financial support for the endowment as well.

It is within our power to create an important source of funding to benefit the school administrators of MASA. Please consider carefully what the Foundation Board is trying to accomplish on your behalf and pledge a minimum of \$50 or more dollars a year for four years. •

*I would like to help!*

Here is my pledge for my annual contribution to the MASA Foundation Endowment Fund.

I will pledge:

\_\_\_\_\_ \$ 50 Annually

\_\_\_\_\_ \$ 100 Annually

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All gifts are tax-deductible.

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Thank you for your pledge.

We will send you an invoice this fall, so you can honor your pledge in time to claim the tax deduction for the calendar year. The MASA Foundation is a 501(c)3 organization.

*Thank you!*

## Foundation Golf Tourney Heads for Duluth's Enger Park

Come kick off the MASA Fall Conference by golfing beautiful Enger Park Golf Course! The golf tournament supports the work of the MASA Foundation (a 501(c)(3) organization), providing leadership development for Minnesota's school leaders and supporting the field of school administration.

The 18-hole, 4-person team event will be held on Sunday, September 28—shot-gun tee off at 12:30. There will be fun and prizes, and all are invited to play. Your conference registration packet contains more detailed information and registration materials, or find info at [www.mnasa.org](http://www.mnasa.org). Join the fun and support your Foundation!



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## Activities ... Continued from Page 14

ways in which the experience of students "senior year" could be enhanced. The Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP), the MnSCU College System and MASA sponsored this gathering. This is part of each organization's commitment to help build the K-16 relationship by which K-12 education and the college systems of Minnesota look for ways to work together.

The "Seminar on the Senior Year" began with a panel of recently graduated high school seniors. They discussed their senior year and generally had positive praise for their high schools. All admitted to a good deal of "senioritis" and made numerous thoughtful suggestions on how the systems may be tweaked or changed to enhance the experience.

The participants of the conference which included school superintendents, high school principals, high school counselors, college administrators and college counselors, then gathered into small groups to discuss their impressions of how students were educated and served in their senior year. In a second small group setting, they discussed this issue from the standpoint of

their systems. They looked at the barriers the systems pose to change and also places where the systems could change to provide better opportunities for students at the point of their senior year of high school.

All of the data and discussions are now being tabulated and there will be a second meeting for members of the original group plus key stakeholders from other organizations and units of government. We are hopeful that these discussions will lead to an evolving system of schooling that best serves students while at the same time respects the strongest parts of our education tradition as we know it.

Of special note, former Grand Rapids Superintendent, Jim Luoma, who is now the chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the MnSCU System, made introductions at the beginning of the "Seminar on the Senior Year." •

## AASA Gathers Regional NCLB Data

As state departments of education and local school districts work to implement the No Child Left Behind Act, the American Association of School Administrators identified a critical need for national analysis of the law. AASA has responded by focusing significant resources to tracking how the new Act is being implemented in states and communities, what practices the U.S. Education Department is approving under the law and how the public is responding to this major federal initiative.

AASA's policy analyst, Terri Duggan Schwartzbeck, provides cutting-edge analysis on implementation of the Act. Schwartzbeck's work to date has included an exclusive state-by-state analysis and comparison of education plans, which provide an examination into how assessment and accountability are being implemented.

Schwartzbeck is also studying the impact of state lists of schools in need of improvement, the effects of the law in assessing students

with limited English proficiency and with disabilities, how the law impacts small and rural schools, how choice and supplemental services are being implemented, the challenges of implementing teacher quality regulations and how states and districts are meeting NCLB's reporting requirements.

"Despite the fact that No Child Left Behind is entering its second year of implementation, the majority of school administrators and the public remain unfamiliar with many of the law's provisions," said AASA Executive Director Paul Houston. "AASA is committed to providing much-needed resources to superintendents as well as public officials as they work through the demands and intricacies of the law." •

### *Leaders Forum*

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# Calendar . . .

## September 27 - 28

### Board Meetings

- Inn on Lake Superior, Duluth, MN
- Executive Committee
- September 27: 12:30 - 2:15 pm
- Board of Directors
- September 27: 2:30 - 5 pm
- September 28: 9 - 11 am

## September 28 - 30

### MASA Fall Conference

Duluth Entertainment Convention Center

## November 4

### Election Day

## November 14

### Newsletter Submissions Due

## November 27 - 28

### Thanksgiving Holiday

## December 3

### Board Meetings

- MASA Office
- Executive Committee
- 9 - 10:45 am
- Board of Directors
- 11 am - 4 pm

## December 24 - 25

### December 31 - January 1

### Winter Holidays

## February 2

### Legislative Session Convenes

## February 4

### Board Meetings

- MASA Office
- Executive Committee
- 9 - 10:45 am
- Board of Directors
- 11 am - 4 pm

## February 13

### Newsletter Submissions Due

## February 19 - 22

### AASA National Conference on Education

San Francisco

## March 31

### Board Meetings

- Radisson South, Bloomington
- Executive Committee
- 9 - 10:45 am
- Board of Directors
- 11 am - 4 pm

## April 1 - 2

### MASA/MASE Spring Conference

Radisson South, Bloomington

## April 9

### Spring Holiday

## May 14

### Newsletter Submissions Due

## May 31

### Memorial Day Holiday



Kevin Halbach, AIA

Mohammed Lawal, AIA

Lee Meyer, AIA

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## Important—Please help!

# Alliance Surveys Districts on Budget Cuts

On behalf of the Alliance for Student Achievement, MASBO is conducting a survey on school district budget cuts. Please ask your business person to go to the MASBO website ([www.mnasabo.org](http://www.mnasabo.org)) to get the survey and complete it. If you don't know exact information, give your best estimate.

MASBO would like this information by October 1 so it can be compiled and then used with legislators to show them the impact of the present funding formula. •

## 63 New Superintendents Welcome Aboard!

20% of the Superintendents in Minnesota are in new positions this year and many are new to the job. If you are an experienced person, reach out to welcome and help your new neighbors. If you are new, we encourage you to ask for help when unsure of what to do. Ask a neighboring colleague or give MASA Executive Director Charlie Kyte a call at 651-645-6272. MASA is here to help—or we will get you in touch with someone who can answer your questions. •

## The New and Improved [www.mnasa.org](http://www.mnasa.org) ... Have you visited?

Be sure to check out the new MASA web site! The address is the same ([www.mnasa.org](http://www.mnasa.org)), but the features have been improved to provide a more interactive site. New resources include a password-protected member directory, a survey instrument, and navigation designed to be easier and faster. If you would like a guided tour, plan to attend the session, "How to Make Your District's Web Site More Interactive," at the MASA Fall Conference. •



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