



Fall 2015

## What Would You Like To Know?



Jeff Ronneberg  
MASA President and  
Superintendent  
Spring Lake Park Schools

Welcome to the new school year. It's a great time of year, full of optimism and possibility. It's a time of excitement as we work with staff throughout our systems to implement innovations and improvements we have designed and worked so hard to build a commitment

for. As leaders, we do our best to make sure that our vision is clear, our staff and systems are aligned, that everything is in place to reach new heights.

An important aspect of leadership is simply seeing the system, recognizing opportunities, needs, and emerging influences. Knowing what is happening and what is possible—and having a notion about how to bridge the gap between the two—is the crux of leading our schools forward. Leaders are always forecasting, predicting everything from student enrollments and budgets to the weather. Yet, it is interesting that school leaders, who are experts who bring so much expertise to their work, may better serve their systems by asking the right questions, seeking and hearing the expertise of those they work with, rather than providing answers.

In December, 2013, FastCompany's Co.Design featured an article by Warren Berger entitled, "Forget The Mission Statement. What's Your Mission Question?" ([www.fastcodesign.com/1672137/forget-the-mission-statement-whats-your-mission-question](http://www.fastcodesign.com/1672137/forget-the-mission-statement-whats-your-mission-question)).

In the article, Berger asserts that asking repeatedly the questions about why we exist, what we want to do, and how we might do it better, will ultimately provide a keen focus for the mission of the organization. In the end, it's about focusing on what we want to create rather than what we want to rid ourselves of.

Berger went on to publish his book, *A More Beautiful Question* (Bloomsbury, 2014), in which he explores in fine detail the role inquiry plays in our work. He suggests that we avoid inquiry for a number of reasons, including a cultural predisposition to look toward leaders for answers, not questions, and a concern that if we do find the right questions, there may not be good answers. That brings up significant questions in itself, questions that we may be afraid of as leaders: will people follow a leader who questions? Does continuous inquiry make a leader seem "uncertain?" As you begin this new school year, think about your own leadership practice and ask yourself how you can ask the best questions, rather than the right answer, that will lead to creation and innovation.

I am honored to be your MASA president this year, and I can tell you that we are doing our best to ask the right questions to propel your association forward in its ability to serve and support our members. Many of you have responded to MASA's annual member survey and we will soon be sharing those results with you. We will use the "why," the "what if," and the "how" to make MASA an ever-better source for successful leadership support. I wish you all a successful, creative, and innovative school year!

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# A New Year, New Opportunities

Looking forward into 2015-2016!



**Gary Amoroso**  
Executive Director  
Minnesota Association of  
School Administrators

The MASA Strategic Plan continues to guide the actions of the organization. The two objectives in the plan will set the course for our activities and action.

The objectives are:

*By 2017, MASA will coordinate professional learning that meets the needs and interests of each member.*

*By 2017, all members will affirm that MASA is the unifying force for Minnesota public education.*

While these are lofty objectives, it is our intent to work in a collaborative fashion with our members to continuously move towards accomplishment of them. As I've stated in the past, the strength of MASA lies within our members. Thank you for all that you do to make MASA a growing and vibrant professional organization.

As some of you may know, we have expanded our Mentor/Mentee program to include any new member of our association. Thanks to so many of our members who will be working as mentors during the coming year. Feedback on this program has demonstrated how valuable the guidance and advice provided to our mentees can be. Best wishes for a successful year to each of our new members. Please know that all of us at MASA are here to assist you whenever the need arises.

I wish you the best as this new year commences. I believe we are very fortunate to be involved in an endeavor that has a new beginning on a yearly basis. Always remember the impact that you can have on the students and staff in the district in which you serve!

As always, please contact me if I can be of assistance - (651) 319-1211 or [gamoroso@mnasa.org](mailto:gamoroso@mnasa.org).

**W**elcome to the 2015-2016 school year! The State Fair is over and it's time to continue the journey of providing each student in Minnesota with a high quality and dynamic educational experience. I want to start by thanking each of you for what you do every day to make this happen in your school district!

It's hard for me to believe that I am in my fifth year as your executive director. As your professional organization, MASA staff will strive to provide you with experiences and resources that will assist you in your daily work.

Our annual Fall Conference will be held on Sunday, September 27 – Tuesday, September 29 at the DECC in Duluth. Registration materials and conference details are available on our web site at [www.mnasa.org](http://www.mnasa.org). We will provide you with excellent general sessions as well as stimulating breakout sessions. I hope to see you there!

## Leaders Forum

Fall 2015

Volume 50, Number 1

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### Executive Director

Gary M. Amoroso, Ph.D.  
(651) 319-1211

### Professional Development Director

Mia Urick  
(651) 645-7231

### 2015-16 Officers

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<b>Past President</b>	Lynne Kovash
<b>Treasurer</b>	Chris Richardson

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Josh Swanson (2014-17)  
Curt Tryggestad (2015-18)

### Retiree Representative

Mary Ann Nelson (2012-18)

The *Leaders Forum* is your newsletter and we welcome your input. Please send your ideas, district news, and articles to Dave Christians at [dchristians@mnasa.org](mailto:dchristians@mnasa.org). Past copies of our newsletter are available at [mnasa.org](http://mnasa.org).



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# FALL CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

Great school leaders create effective systems that adapt to rapid and pervasive change, provide a culture supporting risk-taking and experimentation, and nurture a climate of possibilities. Future ready leaders' systems optimize the use of technology while keeping the vision about the learning, not the devices. Collaborative leadership focusing on excellent instruction for all students draws on well-developed systems that integrate curriculum, instruction, professional development, technology, and assessment, creating a powerful learning environment. Join your MASA colleagues this fall and examine how we can employ future ready leadership within our schools and wider networks to provide great education systems for all of our students.



**Networking, Networking, Networking!** There will be numerous opportunities to socialize with colleagues you already know, as well as grow your professional network with fellow administrators from around the state. Participate in the MASA Foundation Golf Tournament at Lester Park Golf Course on Sunday afternoon (register online), gather at Grandma's Sports Garden for the Welcome Reception on Sunday evening, dine with new colleagues during meals, and learn together during general sessions.

**Inspiring Keynote Speakers!** Monday will feature a keynote address from **Kai Kight**, asking the question, "Are You Writing New Music, or Simply Playing Notes That Have Been Written In The Past?" **Gary Marx** will present "Twenty-One Trends for the 21st Century: Out of the Trenches and Into the Future." Tuesday will feature MASA's 2015 Richard Green Scholar **Dr. Curt Tryggestad**, presenting his research "The Role of the Minnesota Superintendent as a Technology Leader: A Delphi Study." The final conference speaker will be **Leslie Fisher** with her rock-star presentation "Apps, Tips, Websites and Gadgets for the Administrator."

**Customize Your Experience!** Individualize your professional learning with a variety of breakout sessions to choose from - and visit Monday's Exhibit Fair. With more than 80 exhibitors offering the innovative products and services, you'll discover the latest educational technology available for your students and communities.

**Celebrate Your Colleagues!** Throughout the conference we will be celebrating the service of our colleagues. In addition to celebrating our members' years of service with milestone pins, we will present the 2015 Richard Green Scholar scholarship to **Curt Tryggestad** (special thank you to Cuningham Group Architecture, Inc.) and the 2015 Polaris Award to **Chris Richardson** (special thank you to Ehlers).

**Gain Association Insights!** Make plans to attend the Annual Meeting Monday afternoon. In addition to our annual business meetings, we will recognize our colleagues achievement with service pins, learn about MASA strategic plan progress, and hear from Gary Amoroso about the vision for next year.

**Practice 21st Century Skills!** As 21st century education leaders, we encourage 21st century practices! All MASA conferences are digital, featuring program information, session handouts, contact lists and much more on our app. Please bring your computer, tablet or smartphone with you to stay connected!

## 2015 MASA Fall Conference Future Ready Leadership September 27-29, 2015 Duluth Entertainment Convention Center in Duluth, MN [regonline.com/2015masafallconference](http://regonline.com/2015masafallconference)

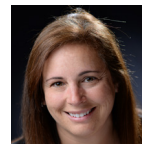
### Meet Your Keynote Speakers...



Gary Marx



Dr. Curt Tryggestad



Leslie Fisher



Kai Kight

### Schedule At-a-Glance

#### Sunday, September 27

- 9 am-3 pm • MASA Great Start Cohort II
- 11:30 am • Foundation Golf Tournament
- 6-8 pm • Welcome Reception

#### Monday, September 28 (Registration open 7 am)

- 8:30-10:30 am • Keynote Speaker: Kai Kight
- 10:30 am-3:30 pm • Exhibits Open
- 11 am-noon • Breakout Sessions I
- Noon-1:30 pm • Awards Luncheon  
• Service Pin Recognition
- 1:30-2 pm • Dessert Reception in Exhibit Hall
- 2-3 pm • Keynote Speaker: Gary Marx
- 3:15 pm • Exhibit Hall Break & Prize Drawings
- 3:30-4:30 pm • Breakout Sessions II

#### Tuesday, September 29 (Registration open 8 am)

- 8:30-9:30 am • Keynote Speaker: Dr. Curt Tryggestad
- 9:45-10:45 am • Breakout Sessions III
- 11 am-noon • Keynote: Leslie Fisher

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## Donate Today!

Let's "grow our own" leaders for tomorrow's schools. We encourage you to consider a pledge to the MASA Foundation to help Minnesota's education system continue to improve by developing the skills of our leaders.

The mission of the 501(c)(3) School Administrators Charitable and Educational Foundation is to enhance the leadership development of educational administrators, to encourage and support individuals interested in careers in teaching or educational administration, to enhance the role and image of educational administrators, and to conduct research and provide information to policymakers and the public at large.

The generosity of our members allows the MASA Foundation to award grants to individual members to further their professional development. These grants provide up to \$750 to members with particular needs that cannot be otherwise met by their districts, allowing members to participate in conferences, workshops and training opportunities they may have otherwise been denied.

The MASA Foundation is proud to sponsor MASA's Professional Assistance Team (P.A.T.) The P.A.T program directly supports the Foundation's mission of leadership development and individual support by meeting the immediate need of MASA members to confidentially discuss issues, seek advice, and receive valuable coaching from experienced and trusted MASA colleagues. Meet the 2015-16 P.A.T. members on page 29.

The MASA Foundation also sponsors the MASA Mentorship Program. Through guidance and coaching, networking, training, and social support, MASA's Mentorship Program supports administrators new to their role in building the capacity to lead their schools in student growth.

### *Help us meet our goals:*

1. Provide outstanding workshops for early career & mid-career school leaders.
2. Provide grants to MASA members engaging in creative professional development.
3. Create an endowment fund to support the work of the MASA Foundation.

You can donate online at [www.mnasa.org](http://www.mnasa.org) by clicking the MASA Foundation section!

## 2015 Golf Tournament

Sunday, September 27, 2015

11:30 am

Lester Park Golf Course, Duluth, MN



If you registered for the MASA Foundation Golf Tournament, don't forget to pack your golf clubs! A reminder that the tournament will be held at a new location this year - the Lester Park Golf Course.

Plan to be at the golf course about 30 minutes early (11:30 am) to check-in and participate in the putting

contest. Donate \$5 at the golf check-in desk for 4 chances to putt. Each golfer may participate twice. Each hole-in-one is worth one entry into the grand prize drawing. This year's putting contest grand prize is a one night stay at the Canal Park Lodge and a \$50 gift certificate to any Grandma's restaurant!

While you're on the course you will have four chances to sink a hole-in-one for a chance to win four great prizes - a Sharp 40 inch LCD flat screen TV, \$10,000 - split 50/50 with golfer and the Foundation, a set of Callaway golf irons or a round-trip domestic airline tickets for two!

## Fundraising Changes

The MASA Foundation Board met on August 13, 2015 and recommended that the Foundation discontinue the silent auction during the MASA/MASE Fall Conference.

Instead we will host a donation campaign that will feature a friendly competition between all MASA members - administrators, business partners and exhibitors! And the end of the conference, everyone who donated will have an opportunity to win a prize package from a drawing.

A MASA Foundation Board work group is currently creating a fundraising plan and more details will be announced in the coming months.

## *Thank you to the 2015-16 MASA Foundation Board of Directors!*

*Harold Remme, President  
Chris Richardson, Treasurer  
Eric Bartleson, President Elect  
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Don Bungum  
Rob Cavanna  
John Christiansen*

*Marty Duncan  
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# Chris Richardson Receives Polaris Leadership Award



Dr. Chris Richardson  
Superintendent  
Northfield Public Schools

The Minnesota Association of School Administrators (MASA) has named Chris Richardson, Superintendent for Northfield Public Schools, the recipient of the MASA Polaris Leadership Award. Dr. Richardson will be honored for his exemplary school leadership and a lifetime of balanced achievement inside and outside of education at a statewide recognition ceremony to be held at the 2015 MASA Fall Conference,

September 27-29, in Duluth, Minnesota. This award is presented with the support of Ehlers and Associates.

Polaris, the “North Star”, themes this award because, just as exemplary administrators serve as definitive leaders, Polaris is constant and unmoving in the sky. A navigator’s benchmark, the star marks “true north”, the fundamental direction that defines east, west and south. With this award, Dr. Richardson is recognized for qualities such as professional courage, creation of a legacy of excellent leadership, fostering innovation, contribution through example and mentoring, exemplary conduct reflecting integrity and bearing emulation, and significant tenure in each position to support district vision and affect positive change.

Dr. Richardson has more than 38 years of education administration experience, ranging from principal to curriculum director to superintendent, and has been leading Northfield Public Schools since 2004.

Dr. Richardson is currently serving as Treasurer on the MASA Board of Directors and is also an active member of the Minnesota Alliance for Student Achievement, Minnesota Council on Economic Education, and Schools for Equity in Education. In 2012, Dr. Richardson was named the Minnesota Superintendent of the Year. Dr. Richardson received his Ph.D. in Education Administration from the University of Iowa and his masters and bachelor of science degrees from Iowa State University.

# Curt Tryggestad Named Richard Green Scholar



Dr. Curt Tryggestad  
Superintendent  
Eden Prairie Schools

The Minnesota Association of School Administrators (MASA) has named Dr. Curt Tryggestad, superintendent at Eden Prairie Schools, the 2015 Richard Green Scholar. Dr. Tryggestad will present his research, “The Role of the Minnesota Superintendent as a Technology Leader: A Delphi Study” at the MASA Fall Conference, September 27-29, in Duluth, Minnesota.

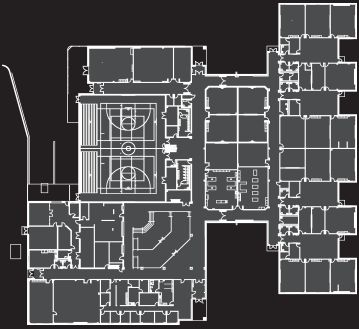

MASA, with the support of Cunningham Group Architecture, Inc., established the Richard Green Scholars Program in 2006 to honor the scholarly work and professional development of Minnesota school leaders. The program is an annual recognition of the research, writing, and presentation of a paper reflecting the practice of excellent school leadership. Scholar candidates apply for the program and a subcommittee of the MASA Executive Development Committee selects the recipient.

Previous to his position as superintendent at Eden Prairie Schools, Dr. Tryggestad served as superintendent at Little Falls Community Schools from 2006-2012. His previous administrative positions include superintendent at Esko Public Schools for three years and secondary principal at Pine City Public Schools for six years. Dr. Tryggestad began his career in education as an instrumental music instructor.


Dr. Tryggestad holds a doctorate and master’s degree from St. Cloud State University and a bachelor’s degree in music from Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. He received his licensure in educational leadership at Winona State University.

Dr. Tryggestad serves on the Minnesota Online Learning Advisory Council and has previously served on the Minnesota Technology Task Force in 2008, both appointments made by the Minnesota Commissioner of Education. In 2010, he was awarded the Administrator of Excellence Award by the MASA, and twice recognized by the Minnesota Rural Education Association (MREA) with an Exemplary Program Award for a bullying prevention program.








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## PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE TEAM

A very important part of the work of MASA is to provide outstanding service to the members of the association. Besides a strong professional development component, MASA wants to stand ready to help members as they navigate the many complex situations that they face on a day-to-day basis. The five member Professional Assistance Team (P.A.T.) is made up of highly experienced school leaders who will use their expertise to help their colleagues when they need consultation and/or advice. The members of the 2015-2016 P.A.T. are listed below...



**Deb Henton**

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dhenton@isd138.org



**Jerry Nesland**

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**Jeff Olson**

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**Patty Phillips**

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pattyjphillips@gmail.com



**Carl Wahlstrom**

Cell: (952) 807-8906  
Home: (952) 435-2893  
cwahlstr@smumn.edu

These individuals will take confidential calls and contacts from any MASA member. The only case in which information may be shared is in the event that a situation is complex enough that you may require legal assistance and will be directed to the Executive Director of MASA.

### Examples of services the P.A.T. provides:

- Answers to questions regarding your role as a superintendent
- Advice on how to handle specific situations involving the community, school board(s), employees, students, and operational situations
- Communication situations

*P.A.T. members will always maintain confidentiality when working with our members.*

# Meet your 2015-16 Legislative Committee

As we gear up for the 2015-16 MN legislative session here are your legislative committee members! The first meeting of the year is on **Thursday, October 29** from 10 am-3 pm at the MASA Offices in St. Paul. Be sure to RSVP to Dave Christians at [dchristians@mnasa.org](mailto:dchristians@mnasa.org).

**2015-2016 MASA Legislative/Education Positions Committee:**  
*The Legislative Committee is responsible for developing organizational position statements reflecting the view of the MASA membership. The Committee identifies issues, gathers information, solicits input from members, and conducts research. The Committee develops the written legislative priorities (educational position statements and platform) in preparation for publishing and distribution to members, legislators, other policy makers, and other agencies as appropriate, prior to and during the legislative session. Committee members may be asked to provide written or oral testimony to policy makers.*

<b>Chair:</b>	<b>Region 9</b>	<b>Jane Berenz</b>	<b>Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan Schools</b>	<b>Superintendent</b>	<b><a href="mailto:jane.berenz@district196.org">jane.berenz@district196.org</a></b>
<b>Chair-Elect:</b>	<b>Region 8</b>	<b>Larry Guggisberg</b>	<b>Roseau Community Schools</b>	<b>Superintendent</b>	<b><a href="mailto:larry_guggisberg@roseau.k12.mn.us">larry_guggisberg@roseau.k12.mn.us</a></b>

**2015-2016 Legislative Policy Sub-Committee:**  
*Focusing on school policy issues.*

<b>Sub-Committee Chair:</b>	<b>Region 9</b>	<b>Nancy Allen-Mastro</b>	<b>West St. Paul-Mendota Hgts-Eagan Area Schools</b>	<b>Superintendent</b>	<b><a href="mailto:nancy.allenmastro@isd197.org">nancy.allenmastro@isd197.org</a></b>
<b>Sub-Committee Chair-Elect:</b>	<b>Region 2</b>	<b>John Cselovszki</b>	<b>Sleepy Eye Public School</b>	<b>Superintendent</b>	<b><a href="mailto:john.cselovszki@sleepyeye.mntm.org">john.cselovszki@sleepyeye.mntm.org</a></b>

<b>Term</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Componet Group</b>	
2014-2016	Region 1	Jeff Apse	Lewiston-Altura Schools	Superintendent	<a href="mailto:japse@lewalt.k12.mn.us">japse@lewalt.k12.mn.us</a>
2014-2016	Region 1	Joseph Jezierski	Red Wing Public Schools	Curriculum	<a href="mailto:jljezierski@rwps.org">jljezierski@rwps.org</a>
2014-2016	Region 2	Bill Adams	Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton Schools	Superintendent	<a href="mailto:adamsb@jwp.k12.mn.us">adamsb@jwp.k12.mn.us</a>
2014-2016	Region 2	Thomas Lee	Waseca Public Schools	Superintendent	<a href="mailto:leet@waseca.k12.mn.us">leet@waseca.k12.mn.us</a>
2014-2016	Region 3	Karen Jacobson	MN River Valley Ed District	Superintendent	<a href="mailto:kjacobson@mrved.net">kjacobson@mrved.net</a>
2014-2016	Region 4	Diane Cordes	Breckenridge Public School	Superintendent	<a href="mailto:cordesd@breckenridge.k12.mn.us">cordesd@breckenridge.k12.mn.us</a>
2014-2016	Region 4	Greg Schmidt	Minnewaska Area School District	Superintendent	<a href="mailto:gschmidt@minnewaska.k12.mn.us">gschmidt@minnewaska.k12.mn.us</a>
2014-2016	Region 5	Lee Westrum	Wadena-Deer Creek Public Schools	Superintendent	<a href="mailto:lwestrum@wdc2155.k12.mn.us">lwestrum@wdc2155.k12.mn.us</a>
2014-2016	Region 6	Robert Prater	Hinckley-Finlayson Public Schools	Superintendent	<a href="mailto:rprater@hf.k12.mn.us">rprater@hf.k12.mn.us</a>
2014-2016	Region 7	Gregg Allen	Mesabi East School District	Superintendent	<a href="mailto:gallen@isd2711.org">gallen@isd2711.org</a>
2014-2016	Region 7	Reggie Engebretson	Northland Special Ed Coop	Superintendent	<a href="mailto:rengebretson@northlandsped.org">rengebretson@northlandsped.org</a>
2014-2016	Region 7	Matthew Grose	Deer River Schools	Superintendent	<a href="mailto:mgrose@isd317.org">mgrose@isd317.org</a>
2014-2016	Region 9	Bob Laney	St. Anthony-New Brighton School District	Superintendent	<a href="mailto:blaney@stanthony.k12.mn.us">blaney@stanthony.k12.mn.us</a>
2014-2016	Region 9	Malinda Lansfeldt	Stillwater Area Public Schools	Curriculum	<a href="mailto:lansfeldtm@stillwaterschools.org">lansfeldtm@stillwaterschools.org</a>
2014-2016	Region 9	Michael Lovett	White Bear Lake Area Schools	Superintendent	<a href="mailto:michael.lovett@isd624.org">michael.lovett@isd624.org</a>
2014-2016	Region 9	Janet Mohr	MN Board of School Administrators	Service	<a href="mailto:janet.mohr@state.mn.us">janet.mohr@state.mn.us</a>
2014-2016	Region 9	Lisa Snyder	Lakeville Area Public Schools	Superintendent	<a href="mailto:lisa.snyder@isd194.org">lisa.snyder@isd194.org</a>

<b>Term</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Componet Group</b>	
2015-2017	Region 1	Jennifer Backer	Mabel Canton & Lyle Schools	Superintendent	<a href="mailto:jbacker@lyle.k12.mn.us">jbacker@lyle.k12.mn.us</a>
2015-2017	Region 1	Jeff Horton	Pine Island Public Schools	Subscription	<a href="mailto:jhorton@pineisland.k12.mn.us">jhorton@pineisland.k12.mn.us</a>
2015-2017	Region 1	Jeff Sampson	Southland/Leroy-Ostrander Public Schools	Superintendent	<a href="mailto:jsampson@isd500.k12.mn.us">jsampson@isd500.k12.mn.us</a>
2015-2017	Region 4	Jeremy Kovash	Lakes Country Service Cooperative	Service Provider	<a href="mailto:jkovash@lcsc.org">jkovash@lcsc.org</a>
2015-2017	Region 6	Julia Espe	Princeton Public Schools	Superintendent	<a href="mailto:julia.espe@isd477.org">julia.espe@isd477.org</a>
2015-2017	Region 6	Dan Frazier	Litchfield Public Schools	Superintendent	<a href="mailto:dfrazier@isd465.org">dfrazier@isd465.org</a>
2015-2017	Region 6	Scott Staska	Rocori Public Schools	Superintendent	<a href="mailto:staskas@rocori.k12.mn.us">staskas@rocori.k12.mn.us</a>
2015-2017	Region 6	Jim Wagner	Kimball Area Public Schools	Superintendent	<a href="mailto:ron.wagner@mpls.k12.mn.us">ron.wagner@mpls.k12.mn.us</a>
2015-2017	Region 7	Steve Sallee	St. Louis County Schools	Superintendent	<a href="mailto:ssallee@isd2142.k12.mn.us">ssallee@isd2142.k12.mn.us</a>
2015-2017	Region 8	Jeff Bisek	Mahnomen Public Schools	Superintendent	<a href="mailto:jeff.bisek@mahnomen.k12.mn.us">jeff.bisek@mahnomen.k12.mn.us</a>
2015-2017	Region 8	Bill Walters	Climax-Shelly School	Superintendent	<a href="mailto:wwalters@climax.k12.mn.us">wwalters@climax.k12.mn.us</a>
2015-2017	Region 9	Denise Pontrelli	Stillwater Area Public Schools	Superintendent	<a href="mailto:pontrellid@stillwaterschools.org">pontrellid@stillwaterschools.org</a>
2015-2017	Business	Donna Ploof	Trusted Employees	Business	<a href="mailto:donna.ploof@trustedemployees.com">donna.ploof@trustedemployees.com</a>



# MASA LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

You can find all of your committee members online in the About Us section of [www.mnasa.org](http://www.mnasa.org)!

<b>2015-2016 Legislative Finance Sub-Committee:</b> <i>Focusing on school finance issues.</i>					
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<b>Sub-Committee Chair:</b>	<b>Region 6</b>	<b>Ray Queener</b>	<b>Cambridge-Isanti Public Schools</b>	<b>Superintendent</b>	<b>rqueener@cambridge.k12.mn.us</b>
<b>Sub-Committee Chair-Elect:</b>	<b>Region 1</b>	<b>David Krenz</b>	<b>Austin Public Schools</b>	<b>Superintendent</b>	<b>david.krenz@austin.k12.mn.us</b>
<b>Term</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Componet Group</b>	
2014-2016	Region 1	Karsten Anderson	Red Wing Public Schools	Superintendent	klanderson@rwps.org
2014-2016	Region 1	Jeff Apse	Lewiston-Altura Schools	Superintendent	japse@lewalt.k12.mn.us
2014-2016	Region 1	Richard Dahman	Medford Public Schools	Superintendent	rdahman@medford.k12.mn.us
2014-2016	Region 1	Jim Freihammer	Wabasha-Kellogg Public School District	Superintendent	jfreihammer@wabasha-kellogg.k12.mn.us
2014-2016	Region 1	Peter Grant	Owatonna Public Schools	Superintendent	pgrant@owatonna.k12.mn.us
2014-2016	Region 1	Matthew Hillmann	Northfield Public Schools	Central Office	matt.hillmann@nfld.k12.mn.us
2014-2016	Region 1	Chris Richardson	Northfield Public Schools	Superintendent	crichardson@northfieldschools.org
2014-2016	Region 2	Tom Bruels	St. Clair Public Schools	Superintendent	tbruels@stclaircyclones.org
2014-2016	Region 2	Brian Phillips	Cleveland Public School	Superintendent	phillips.brian@cleveland.k12.mn.us
2014-2016	Region 3	Ray Hassing	Round Lake-Brewster School Districts	Superintendent	r.hassing@rlb.mntm.org
2014-2016	Region 3	Luther Heller	Montevideo Public Schools	Superintendent	lheller@montevideoschools.org
2014-2016	Region 4	Phil Jensen	Hawley Public Schools	Superintendent	pjensen@hawley.k12.mn.us
2014-2016	Region 5	Mary Klamm	Menahga Public Schools	Superintendent	mklamm@menahga.k12.mn.us
2014-2016	Region 6	Matthew Bullard	BBE Public Schools	Superintendent	mbullard@bbejaguars.org
2014-2016	Region 6	Scott Thielman	Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose Schools	Superintendent	sthielman@bhmschools.org
2014-2016	Region 7	Diane Rauschenfels	University of MN, Duluth	Subscription	djrausch@d.umn.edu
2014-2016	Region 8	Wayne Olson	Clearbrook-Gonvick School District	Superintendent	wolson@clearbrook-gonvick.k12.mn.us
2014-2016	Region 9	John Bezek	Shakopee Public Schools	Superintendent	jbezek@shakopee.k12.mn.us
2014-2016	Region 9	John Christiansen	Intermediate School District 917	Superintendent	john.christiansen@isd917.k12.mn.us
2014-2016	Region 9	Mike McNulty	Aspen Academy	Superintendent	mike.mculty@aspencademymn.org
2014-2016	Region 9	Dennis Peterson	Minnetonka Public Schools	Superintendent	dennis.peterson@minnetonka.k12.mn.us
2014-2016	Region 9	Aldo Sicoli	Robbinsdale Area Schools	Superintendent	aldo.sicoli@isd623.org
2014-2016	Region 9	Kelly Smith	Belle Plaine Public Schools	Superintendent	ksmith@belleplaine.k12.mn.us
2014-2016	Region 9	Eric Williams	Nova Classical Academy	Superintendent	eric.williams@novaclassical.org
<b>Term</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Componet Group</b>	
2015-2017	Region 1	Mike Redmond	Goodhue Public School	Superintendent	mredmond@goodhue.k12.mn.us
2015-2017	Region 2	Bill Adams	Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton School District	Superintendent	adamsb@jwp.k12.mn.us
2015-2017	Region 3	Keth Kottke	Springfield Public Schools	Superintendent	keith.kottke@springfield.mntm.org
2015-2017	Region 3	Dennis Laumeyer	Benson Public Schools	Superintendent	dlaumeyer@benso.k12.mn.us
2015-2017	Region 4	Bryan Thygeson	Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton School District	Superintendent	bthygeson@dgf.k12.mn.us
2015-2017	Region 5	Scott Vedbraaten	Browerville Public Schools	Superintendent	svedbraaten@browerville.k12.mn.us
2015-2017	Region 6	Jim Behl	St. Michael-Albertville Schools	Superintendent	jamesb@stma.k12.mn.us
2015-2017	Region 6	Deb Henton	North Branch Area Public Schools	Superintendent	dhenton@northbranch.k12.mn.us
2015-2017	Region 9	Jeff Jeska	Waconia Public Schools	Technology	jjeska@isd110.org
2015-2017	Business	Kathleen Donovan	Johnson Controls, Inc.	Business	kathleen.m.donovan@jci.com
2015-2017	Business	John Huenink	Kraus-Anderson Construction Company	Business	john.huenink@krausanderson.com

# Re-invest Maintenance of Effort (MoE) Resources to Improving Learning for ALL

*This was written with the leadership of 2015-16 MASA Federal Advocacy Committee Chair Connie Hayes, Superintendent of the NE Metro 916 Intermediate District. We would like to thank our colleagues who contributed their wisdom and perspective to this document: Dan Naidicz, Special Education Director and Alyssa Diamond, Communications Coordinator from NE Metro 916 Intermediate District.*

**W**hat is Maintenance of Effort (MoE)? Maintenance of effort is a concept that requires states and school districts to maintain funding efforts from year to year in order to receive any federal education dollars. MoE provisions are intended to ensure education funding is not reduced for students with disabilities in tough economic times and that federal funding does not supplant other sources of money.

*It's time to change the way that districts look at MoE and allow resources to be re-invested into initiatives and programs consistent with Multi Tired Systems of Supports (MTSS) so that all students have better outcomes...*

**Why is this a problem in school districts you serve?** Current exceptions to the MoE are too narrow to account for temporary fluctuations to special education budgets, such as longterm substitute costs or students whose successful development reduces the need for expensive temporary treatment services from one year to the next. MoE requirements act as disincentives for school districts to plan and work productively together to decrease redundancies and operational costs related to special education and to improve programming for all students.

Some school districts can identify efficiencies in spending in special education that should be re-invested to improve student learning, for example:

**More efficient bus schedules** – Districts can share busing services for some special education students rather than transporting one student per bus to other districts. Even though students could receive the same level of service (transportation on appropriately outfitted buses), and districts can save hundreds of thousands of dollars by collaborating, MoE restrictions require districts to miss the opportunity for the savings to be re-invested on improving student learning for all.

**Create in-district programs and reduce placement with other districts** – When districts have the capacity to serve students in their own neighborhood schools rather than transporting them to other districts, they might save dollars. Under MoE, the same level of spending is required. Savings cannot be re-invested to improve programs for all students.

**MoE Does Not Guarantee Best Services for Students with Disabilities Anyway!**

**Staffing and scheduling models** – In a simplified hypothetical scenario, a district's entire special education spending is \$1,000,000 comprised of 20 teachers, each earning \$50,000 a year. If the district was to cut a teacher, and spend \$950,000 instead, this would violate MoE. If however, all teachers received a 5% raise, the district could cut a teacher, potentially decreasing services to students, and not violate MoE. Thoughtful planning for the needs of students should not be compromised by MoE.

## **Provide Some Flexibility in Spending to Plan for Better Student Success**

The constraints of MoE hold state education agencies and local school districts to unrealistically narrow restrictions that fiscally punish the SEA or LEA for proposing rational exceptions to the requirements that can result in better outcomes for students. MoE made sense when services for students with disabilities were developing in schools. Now, however, either intentional or not, MoE equates spending with effort. They are in fact different.

It's time to change the way that districts look at MoE and allow resources to be re-invested into initiatives and programs consistent with Multi Tired Systems of Supports (MTSS) so that all students have better outcomes, resulting in fewer children being referred to special education, such as:

1. Re-invest dollars to hire general education, highly skilled, reading specialists that serve all children with needs in reading.
2. Re-invest dollars to pay for additional general education math teachers for high school students who struggle with math (with and without an IEP), and similarly for English. Extra general education staff would support extra extraction from content expert teachers.
3. Re-invest dollars to less costly, but better for students, pushing services and inclusion (setting II) rather than substantially separate (setting III) when appropriate.
4. Re-invest dollars to hire behaviorists to better support students with emotional/behavioral needs, serving students before a referral to special education.
5. Re-invest in social workers and substance abuse counseling to address needs of students who have complicated lives, but not a disability.
6. Re-invest in instructional coaches to improve core instruction, where students with special needs receive the vast majority of their learning.

**How? Support HR 2965: The BOLD (Building on Local District) Flexibility in the IDEA Act.** BOLD amends provisions in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) related to MoE. Your local school districts need your support for BOLD. By doing so, your school leaders would have the opportunity to make wiser investment decisions for limited education dollars on proven initiatives with greater results.

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# Educational Technology Component Group Update

Listen to a podcast version of this article at: [bit.ly/MASAtchnology](http://bit.ly/MASAtchnology)

Mark Diehl, [mdiehl@lfalls.k12.mn.us](mailto:mdiehl@lfalls.k12.mn.us), Director of Information & Technology Services, Little Falls Community Schools, Josh Swanson, [jswanson@edenpr.org](mailto:jswanson@edenpr.org), Assistant Superintendent, Eden Prairie Schools  
 MASA Technology Component Group Board Representatives

Technology is playing a more important role than ever before in how school districts across the state function. Every area within districts is now infused with technology. To name a few: classrooms, the office, cafeterias, transportation, maintenance, and finance. All areas are utilizing technology to improve effectiveness and efficiency as we educate children. The result is a safer, more comfortable, more efficient, more engaging, more connected, and more personalized learning environment for our students, families, and staff. The role of technology leader in a school district has evolved and it requires the person to understand the needs of the entire district to serve all stakeholders effectively.

This raises a question; how can a school district provide the technology leader with the professional support that is needed to meet the ever increasing demands on the position? One very good option is to provide that leader with an MASA membership in the Technology Component Group.

MASA membership provides a variety of opportunities for technology leaders to participate in professional networks, mentorship, and professional development. The membership also provides avenues to engage in leadership at the local, regional, and state level. The component group members support growth opportunities in technology, education, and leadership. MASA's technology component group members can also get involved in designing professional development, engaging in district and regional collaboration, MASA committee work, and on the Google+ community "MASA Tech." This community provides instant access to top Educational Technology Leaders around the state. Being a member will make your technology leader a more informed leader in your district.

In 2014-15 the Technology Component Group had a very busy year. Here are a few things the group accomplished:

- Developed a large body of leaders who can lead and mobilize around issues related to educational technology (Almost 60 members in our first year)
- Influenced the MASA strategic plan
- Served on committees that created the 2014-15 MASA political platform
- Presented at both the Fall and Spring MASA

conferences

- Created a separate strand for Ed Tech Leaders at the Spring Conference
- Testified for both the Senate and House Education Committees
- Influenced bills in both the house and senate that will move the goal of data portability in our state forward
- Organized a legislative lobbying day at the Capitol
- Created conversations across the state among educational technology leaders and superintendents about the role of technology leaders in education
- Hosted meetings and luncheons to gather input from members and foster professional and personal relationships among colleagues
- Created a Google Community to share the work of the organization and its members
- Began a partnership with the CLM group to co-plan the CLM 2015 conference
- Generated a pool of talented Ed Tech Leaders who are willing to serve as mentors to new leaders in the field

In the spirit of continuous improvement, we are engaged in steps to strengthen MASA and our component group. We feel our association provides significant value and a strong professional community for members. If you have not already established a membership for your district's technology leader please consider the opportunity. Together we can all serve as a leading voice for education.



# Apply Today - Applications Due October 2

The Minnesota Aspiring Superintendents' Academy provides a rich, collegial cohort opportunity for school leaders who wish to become Minnesota School Superintendents. The Academy focuses on developing a professional practice in the superintendency that is grounded on evidence-based knowledge, skills, and dispositions that contribute to successful capstone leadership. Sessions are taught by experienced, effective school leaders, and each participant will be paired with a coach for guidance during the cohort and beyond.



The opportunity to apply to be a participant in the first cohort is now open. **The deadline to apply is Friday, October 2.** Individuals selected for the Academy will be notified by October 30. Apply today at: [www.aasa.org/aspiring-supt-academy.aspx](http://www.aasa.org/aspiring-supt-academy.aspx).

### **2016 Dates (all sessions are Friday – Saturday)**

Location: MASA Building in St. Paul.

The program includes 10 Content Days in five sessions and seven days of monitored independent study and online learning.

*January 22-23*

*March 18-19t*

*May 20-21*

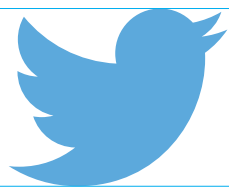
*September 16-17*

*November 11-12*

More information can be found online about the MN Aspiring Superintendents' Academy including costs and key topics!

The MN Aspiring Superintendents' Academy is a partnership among the Minnesota Association of School Administrators (MASA), the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), and National Joint Powers Alliance (NJPA) and Minnesota Service Cooperatives. The program is offered at this affordable cost due to the support of NJPA and AASA.

**NOTE:** The Aspiring Superintendents' Academy **does NOT provide licensure to practice as a superintendent.** We are confident that the Academy will significantly enhance preparation for leadership practice, and participants will receive documentation that recognizes participation in the Academy, but no type of certification or licensure. If you are looking for a Minnesota licensure program, please see the resources provided by the Minnesota Board of School Administrators as well as information provided by approved licensing institutions.



## Twitter Chat for MASA Members

#MNMASA Second Sunday of the Month @ 8 pm

Many of our current members have discovered the power of Twitter Chats through #mnlead, #edtech, #iaedchat and many others. Each of these chats allows participants to share their experiences while also learning from the experiences shared by participating colleagues. **#MNMASA** will provide our members with opportunities to engage and learn from others in district leadership about the experiences being realized.

Our discussions take place the second Sunday of the month at 8:00 pm. Chats are facilitated by Bill Adams, Superintendent at Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton (@JWPBulldog) and Teri Preisler, Superintendent at Tri-City United (@TPreisler). Topics will be developed for each week's conversation with future topics coming from those participating in the chats.

Please let us know whether you are interested — go to <https://sites.google.com/site/mnmasatwitterchat> and click on the Twitter Chat Form tab. For details, please click on the “How To” tab at the above address.

# The Effective Utilization of Police Liaison Officers in Responding to Student Misconduct



Tim R. Palmatier  
Education Law Attorney  
Kennedy & Graven, Chartered

The cooperative relationship between local law enforcement and the public schools has undoubtedly been of great benefit to building administrators who want to maintain school safety and security. However, the relationship sometimes creates double standards that can cause confusion and increase the potential for legal challenges. The prospect for legal difficulties is most apparent in the area of student discipline, where students occasionally must be questioned, searched, restrained or arrested.

## Searching Students

Constitutional protections against unlawful search and seizure apply to police officers and public school officials. However, different standards apply in determining whether a school administrator or police officer may legally search a student. Generally, a decision by a school administrator to search a student must be based on “reasonable suspicion” that the student has violated some school rule and the search must be reasonable in its scope. This standard generally requires some level of individualized suspicion (and more than a hunch or feeling). On the other hand, a police officer is generally required to have a higher standard of “probable cause” to search a person.

The different standards afford school officials a little more leeway in deciding what evidence would be sufficient to conduct a search reasonable in its scope. For example, under the totality of the circumstances a school official may have reasonable suspicion to conduct a search of a student with prior drug offenses who appears at school with a flushed face, glassy-red eyes and an unusual or unruly affect. On the other hand, a police officer encountering such an individual in the community would, under most circumstances, not be at liberty to conduct a search.

So which standard applies to searches where the police liaison officer and school administrators are working cooperatively? In answer to this question several courts have indicated that, “a search of a student on school grounds by a school resource officer at the request of school officials should be deemed a search by a school employee . . . and thus is subject to the reasonableness standard, not the probable cause standard.”

## Seizure or Holding a Student for Questioning

Constitutional concerns can also be invoked when a student is held for questioning. Most courts have applied the “reasonableness test” when examining whether a school official’s questioning of a student constitutes an unlawful seizure. The decisions have tended to permit more extended “involuntary” questioning of a student about school misconduct than would be

permitted by a police officer acting outside of the school because “[s]tudents at school . . . have a significantly lesser expectation of privacy in regard to the temporary “seizure” of their persons than does the general population.” Courts are more likely to uphold a challenge based on the method of the detention (e.g. decision to place a student in a storage closet or have a liaison officer handcuff a student), rather than questioning the sufficiency of a district’s rationale for detaining the student.

Case law also suggests that joint questioning of a student by both school officials and a police liaison officer is entitled to a more relaxed “reasonableness standard.” Nonetheless, it is best to separate routine school investigations from police investigations. Serious criminal investigations require the work of trained law enforcement officers. Too much involvement or interference in the criminal investigation by school officials can compromise prosecution of a case. School officials should instead rely on initial police investigations to provide the factual support for any related school disciplinary action.

Similarly, school officials are advised to keep peace officers removed from routine disciplinary matters. Use of a police liaison officer for routine discipline interventions can sometimes result in claims that the school district should be held responsible for the decisions and actions of the police.

- Only involve police liaison officers for health, safety or criminal concerns
- Ensure that district policies and contracts with law enforcement clearly define the role of police liaison officers
- Conduct staff training on the appropriate use of police liaison officers
- Designate administration that will serve as primary contact with law enforcement (exceptions may exist for emergency situations)
- Consider training for law enforcement officer who may be required to interact with students with unique needs
- Avoid drafting IEPs/behavior plans that limit the authority of school officials to involve law enforcement
- Don’t play the role of police or prosecutor by advocating a result in the juvenile justice system

*This article is intended to provide general information with commentary. It should not be relied upon as legal advice. If required, legal advice regarding this topic should be obtained from district legal counsel.*

*Tim R. Palmatier is an education law attorney with the law firm of Kennedy & Graven, Chartered. For more information, please contact him at (612) 337-9300 or [www.kennedy-graven.com](http://www.kennedy-graven.com).*

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# The Superintendent's Weather Web Page

*John W. Schultz, Superintendent, Hopkins Public Schools*

*Daniel Luna, Meteorologist-in-Charge, National Weather Service, Twin Cities*

*John Wetter, Technical Services Manager and Meteorologist, Hopkins Public Schools*

Those who have lived and worked in Minnesota understand the adage that, "if you don't like the weather, be patient, it will change!" Our Minnesota climate offers a variety of weather conditions, making this State a wonderful place to live. Minnesota Superintendents either remember well the winter of 2014, or they have repressed that winter. We had two, two-day cold snaps, which forced many school districts to close. Governor Dayton closed all Minnesota schools on the first Monday of January in 2014.

In between these two cold snaps we had the National Weather Service (NWS) and media announce a wind-chill warning on January 15, 2014 for the morning of January 16, 2014. The warning was warranted, but the cold temperatures and wind speeds had a short duration (less than an hour) in the early hours of January 16. Temperatures warmed after we had already made announcements the evening before to our communities that school would be closed the following day. Wind chills in the metro were safe enough to open schools on the morning of January 16, causing confusion and consternation for many.

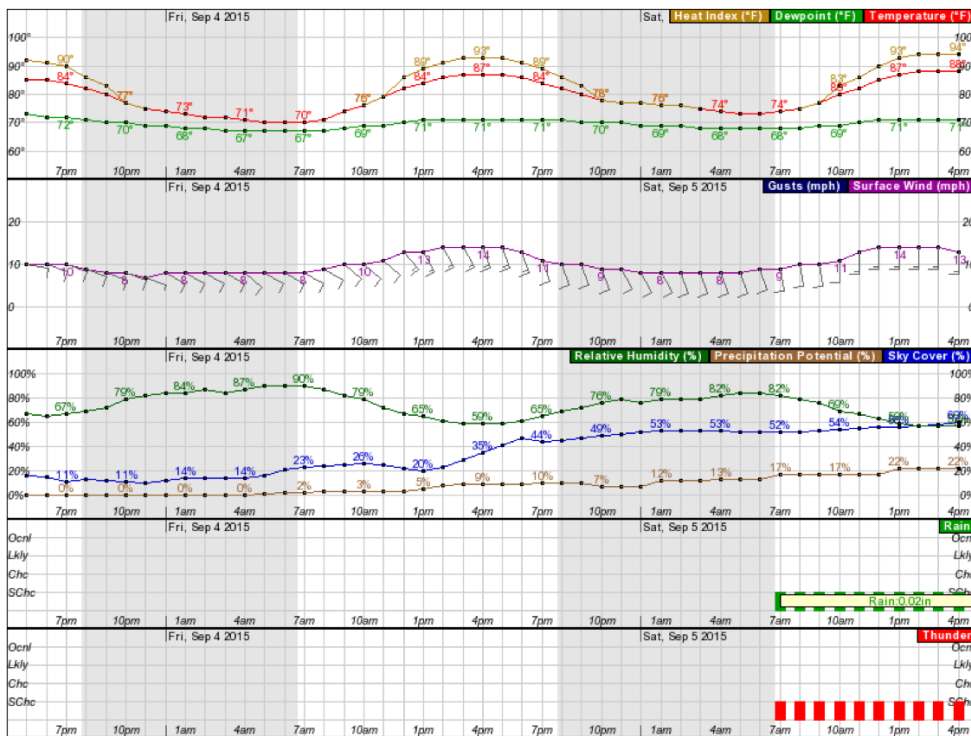
Superintendents are faced annually with making decisions about operating schools in varying weather conditions. The decision to maintain normal school operations, start late,

release early, or close school for inclement weather conditions is a Superintendent's responsibility. These decisions are also influenced by the expectations and traditions of our Minnesota communities. There is great respect for districts in greater Minnesota that remain open for their students and families on very cold, blustery days. In the metropolitan areas of the State, another contributing factor in Superintendent determinations are the capacity of private, State, County, and city plows to clear snow for safe and efficient commutes for students and staff to school. Regardless of geography and weather conditions, we have to do our best to ensure every student receives the civil right of an education every day of the school year. This article introduces Minnesota Superintendents to resources available to inform their decision-making during significant weather events, that are well beyond the typical watches and warnings our media provides, in order for schools to remain open and accessible to our public whenever possible.

Mr. Daniel Luna, Meteorologist-in-Charge of the National Weather Service (NWS), in Chanhassen on January 17, 2015 inquired about the criteria and process for closing schools. In general, our criteria and process in the metropolitan area is to gather information about the weather from many sources, and to begin conversations with Superintendents in

the region in order to facilitate a collective decision about school closing, opening, or late starts. The decision still rests with each individual Superintendent. In this process the NWS's warnings in these decisions have been important, as they indicate severity of weather conditions.

The NWS is committed to ensuring their scientific information, warnings, and communications provide relevant and useful data to make important decisions in our communities, such as determining whether our schools are open or not. After this January 16th event, the NWS explained how the watch and warning system by itself may not be the best information available for decision makers. The NWS suggest that Superintendents look beyond the current watch and



Hourly Weather Graph for September 4 and 5, 2015, provided on September 3, 2015.

Weather continued on page 30.



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**Access to Expertise** includes access to highly experienced technical assistance staff.

**Equipment Services** includes discount purchase programs for hardware and software.

**Questions? Contact Mary Bettlach  
at [mbettlach@ucpnet.org](mailto:mbettlach@ucpnet.org)**

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# Creating a Culture for Rigorous Learning: The Key to Successful Lives for ALL Students

*Bill Daggett, Ed.D. and Susan A. Gendron*

**R**igorous learning is the bridge from our classrooms to our students' future, long-term success. Rigorous learning is developing in students the skills, knowledge, attitudes and aptitudes that will enable their success in the increasingly complex world in which they will live and work. To achieve rigorous learning for all students requires instructing each student in a way that is relevant to him or her. It includes nurturing, caring relationships with ALL students and teaching interpersonal skills. It includes instilling in ALL students the skills they will need for the careers that will allow self-sufficiency as adults.

The world is changing at a rapid fire pace. Think back to what the world looked like when you were an elementary school student. Recall the learning tools you used and the technologies you had in your home. Consider how much life has changed since then, and how quickly. Consider how much your smartphone alone has changed in just the past few years.

Technology is driving change at breakneck speed. And it's influencing everything—from how we communicate and get and share information, to how we get work done and engage in commerce. It's changed our relationships with each other and it's changed how we relate to and collaborate with those in other parts of the world. It's changed what is needed to be successful in work; everyone must be reasonably fluent in technology. It's changed how we will be successful in life; the transparency and permanence of our digital selves—our “digital tattoo,” that mark we leave of all of our online communications and actions—is having and will continue to have a huge impact on our students' ability to succeed in college, the workplace and society.

What does this mean? It means that the well-paying jobs of tomorrow, the jobs that will allow people to be self-sufficient, successful in their careers and successful as citizens—the jobs we want our students to get—are getting increasingly competitive. As the world changes rapidly, by and large our schools' rate of change is not keeping pace. Too many schools are struggling to provide our students the rigorous learning they need to thrive in the world they will face upon graduation. Unless we as leaders decide to make big changes in name of rigorous, student-centered learning, the gap between what today's learners need and what schools provide them will only grow larger and larger, making it harder and harder to catch up.

Many schools across the nation are now attempting to create curriculum where the goal is to provide rigorous learning opportunities for every student.

How do they do that? More importantly, how do you do that? How do you and your district close the gap between what the

world demands and what schools provide?

It begins with a shift in culture and our collective mindset: ALL educators must begin thinking less about teachers teaching and more about learners learning. This is the lens through which productive education must be viewed: Are students learning?

*A Systemwide Approach to Rigorous Learning and Sustainable Change*

Change is hard—there is no doubt about it. But when approached collectively with a systemwide shift in mindset, the culture can and will change.

We've seen many districts make great strides in building instructional capacity and shifting the culture to where ALL parts of the system believe in rigorous learning for ALL students. We have also seen time and time again that if the entire system—from the classroom all the way to the district office—is not aligned around supporting teachers as they deliver rigorous and relevant learning to ALL students, innovation and broad changes will not sustain.

The key to making a systemwide shift toward rigorous learning for ALL students is first to create awareness of the problem and then to nurture a change in mentality, one that will eventually become a “change culture” that is embedded throughout the entire system of organizational leaders, instructional leaders and teachers, as well as parents and the community.

Leading the change process also requires patience. It cannot be rushed. The initial awareness program should start small, typically with a group—perhaps one-third—of administrators and teachers who seem to recognize the challenge and therefore are open to change.

Leaders must guide the process through three distinct stages by addressing three overarching questions: Why? What? How?

1. **Why** is change needed?
2. **What** are our beliefs about learning and what do we believe needs to be done to address the challenges identified?
3. **How** are we going to implement change?

Only after the first two questions have been communicated and addressed should a plan of action—the how—be planned and built.

Not all staff and other stakeholders will be in agreement with

*Future Ready Leaders continued on page 27.*

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# Translating Research to Practice: It takes a Village!

Kim Gibbons, Ph.D.

Associate Director of CAREI

Most of us have heard the phrase “It takes a village to raise a child.” As a parent, I completely agree! As an educational professional, I think this phrase applies equally to translating research to educational practice – it takes a village, and it is not as easy as it sounds! I have spent the last twenty years of my career working in the schools to try to improve educational outcomes for students. While I continue to have the same mission, I recently began working at the Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement (CAREI) at the University of Minnesota as an Associate Director. Now, my task is how to assist districts and other educational organizations to use the results of research to help guide their work towards closing the achievement gap and increasing educational outcomes for all students.

My experience over the past 20 years has largely been focused on how to maintain effective programs for students during tough economic times. We have all faced budget cuts, quickly rising benefit costs, salary increases for staff, and a growing number of high needs students. Fortunately, I learned there are strategies available that can raise achievement to all students without breaking the bank! However, the challenge for leaders is to distinguish what expenditures really make a difference for students from a hundred that do not. Knowing what works requires district leaders to ask different questions.

Typically, conversations start out by asking “What works in education?” While this may seem like a great question, a more powerful question is “What works best?” If you review the educational research literature, there are thousands of strategies that “work.” However, we need to identify those strategies that have the greatest impact on student achievement and make sure those strategies are well embedded in the instructional environment. When we talk about closing the achievement gap, we need to identify strategies and frameworks that will accelerate student achievement allowing them to make more than one year’s growth in one year.

Imagine if you had answers to some of the following questions during your annual budget preparation:

- Students of teachers receiving support from instructional coaches gained 4 months more learning than students of teachers who did not receive coaching.
- Students of teachers who received professional development in (pick your area) fared no better than students of teachers who did not receive the professional development.

- Students who used on-line “flex books” performed similarly on standardized tests of achievement than students who used traditional textbooks.

If you were trying to make budget decisions about those three areas, you may decide to invest in instructional coaches, change the way professional development is delivered, and move away from purchasing textbooks in selected areas. But having data like this requires work. It requires that districts evaluate all programs, frameworks, and strategies using multiple measures. Many districts don’t have the internal capacity to do this type of work.

CAREI wants to help! We are working to identify statewide needs in the area of assessment, research, and evaluation and provide low-cost (or no-cost) services to districts. We have set an ambitious goal that we want our services to impact 80% of school districts within three years! In the ongoing quest to translate research to practice, I will be writing a regular column in the MASA newsletter called “Research to Practice”. I hope to identify relevant research and help build the bridge to practice. Please contact me at [kgibbons@umn.edu](mailto:kgibbons@umn.edu) if you want more information about CAREI or if you have certain topics you would like covered in future newsletters!

*Kim Gibbons, Ph.D., currently is the Associate Director of the Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement at the University of Minnesota. Prior to that, she was the Executive Director of the St. Croix River Education District (SCRED) located in Rush City, MN. SCRED has received national recognition for its use of the Response to Intervention (RtI) framework. In 2007, SCRED received a legislative appropriation to fund a statewide Minnesota RtI Center for two years. Dr. Gibbons obtained her doctoral degree in school psychology from the University of Oregon where she received extensive training in the problem solving model, curriculum based measurement, and research-based instructional practices. Prior to her role as the Executive Director, Dr. Gibbons has worked as a director of special education, staff development coordinator, and school psychologist. She is active in state leadership and is the past-president of the Minnesota Administrators for Special Educators. Finally, she is the co-author of three books and has numerous other peer-reviewed publications. She is a sought-after consultant who has given numerous workshops throughout the nation.*



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Don't forget your lodging reservations - registration open now at: [www.nce.aasa.org/hotel-travel/](http://www.nce.aasa.org/hotel-travel/)

### SAVE THE DATE

The MASA State Breakfast will be held at 7:30 am on Friday, February 12, 2016, at the Sheraton Phoenix Downtown Hotel.



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# "How to Carve a Duck"

**H**ow to Carve a Duck" is a strange title, but the concept is powerful. You might ask, "What does carving a duck have to do with anything?"



Denny Smith

Leadership and Development  
Trainer  
www.dennysmith.com

My father in law took up carving in his retirement and one of his favorite jokes was to ask "How do you carve a duck?" The answer is simple. Take a block of wood and carve away everything that doesn't look like a duck. Again you might query, "What does that have to do with being a school administrator?" It's all about developing and honing your leadership skills and achieving self-mastery.

So many times when something isn't working in our lives, we want to throw everything away and start over, when in reality all we have to

do is to tweak just a couple of attitudes and/or behaviors and we're right back on track.

For example, if you would like to be more patient, every time you find yourself thinking or acting impatiently, carve it away. If you eliminate impatience in your leadership style, you are left with a patient and calm demeanor. If you would like to develop a kinder tone of voice, when you catch yourself using a harsh tone, carve it away and you are left with soft-spoken and approachable tone of voice.

If you want to eliminate bullying in your schools, carve it away. Train your teachers, students, cooks, custodians and everyone in the building to intervene when they see bullying and soon you are left with a safe and welcoming environment for all students and staff.

This sounds so simple, and it is. But it is not easy. It's just like the game of golf. Take a little stick and hit a little ball into a little cup and if you do that in four shots, you are a par golfer. For those of you who golf, you know that it is not easy, which is why you often hear a lot of biblical terms not used in a biblical sense on the fairways. Mastering golf skills takes hours and hours of practice, and the same goes for leadership skills.

Let's start with a specific - dealing with upset people. As a group of bank supervisors were discussing working with upset employees, one of the participants said, "I kill 'em with kindness." When asked what he meant by that he outlined three simple steps. The first is to "get in step." Say something like "I am really glad you came to see me about this. Let's see what we can do." That's a little different from the old authoritarian response of the past. "Hey, I have 14 people that would take your job in a minute, so if you're not happy here don't let the door hit you on the way out." Getting in step

diffuses tension and creates a climate that fosters open and honest discussion.

The second step is to listen, and that's hard to do. We've all been vaccinated with phonograph needles - we like to talk, talk, talk. But the bank supervisor didn't do that, he just listened. And good listening doesn't mean thinking about what you are going to say next, it means making a concerted effort to hear what the other person has to say.

The third step is to solve the problem, which doesn't mean you have to tell the other person what he or she wants to hear. You have policies to follow and standards to uphold, but if you have successfully applied steps one and two, you increase your chances of the person's willingness to abide with your decision.

Let's list the three steps and then put this in perspective.

1. **Get in step**
2. **Listen**
3. **Solve the problem**

This is nothing more than a model -- a track to run on. You can go to the internet and easily find 50 or more similar suggestions. So the key isn't which model you use, but the fact that you actually use it. More important than the model is exercising the emotional intelligence to carry it out. There are a lot of definitions of emotional intelligence, but I would simply define it as the ability to keep yourself under control, even when you don't want to.

That's where the concept of carving a duck comes into play. When you feel yourself getting defensive and combative, be aware of it and carve it away. Replace it with self-control and a calm and confident demeanor. You can still be tough and stick to your principles, but the difference is in your ability to lead a civil discussion in a controlled manner.

One key to all of this happening is heightened awareness, which is the subject of our next discussion. In the meantime, list just one or two personal skills that you would like to improve upon and work on them. Picture yourself executing that skill and every time you are not on track, carve the unwanted behavior away and you are left with the leadership style you aspire to.

Here are four ingredients necessary for success in your endeavor. Number one is desire. Your desire to be patient has to be stronger than your willingness to fly off the handle. The second is "no excuses." Accept total responsibility for your behavior in any give situation. The third is to be aware of what you are thinking and doing in the moment, then monitor and adjust as necessary. The fourth is illustrated by the old joke about the violin player who jumped into a taxi cab in New York and asked the driver how to get to Carnegie Hall. The driver responded, "Practice, practice, practice." These are

*Put Me In, Coach, continued on page 25.*

# Cool Tools for Hot Topics

Mariah Levison,

Minnesota State Office for Collaboration and Dispute Resolution

Changing school hours, tearing down an aging playground, reductions in bus service and other common issues can quickly become contentious topics that tear at the fabric of communities and cost school administrators needless hours, dollars, and heartache.

Fortunately, collaborative problem solving is a tool for turning contentious issues into positive opportunities. Collaborative problem solving processes bring stakeholders together (usually with the assistance of a trained facilitator) to define a problem, identify the core interests and concerns of all involved, and generate solutions that integrate these interests and concerns.

Why use collaborative problem solving?

Not only do collaborative approaches bridge differences by enabling participants to better understand each other's interests and find mutually acceptable solutions based on common interests, but they often result in higher quality solutions than would otherwise be possible. As people learn about each other's views and needs, they learn more about the problem. In developing options together, they consider a wider variety of possibilities. In arriving at a plan or policy that reflects the concerns and ideas of all participants, they develop the best possible solutions. Another benefit of collaborative problem solving is that it accelerates the pace of a decision or project because stakeholders are less likely to block implementation if they understand that a plan or policy reflects their input and has been crafted to meet their basic interests. Stakeholders involved in this process often have a high commitment to the success of the plan or policy. Finally, collaborative processes can save districts resources by mobilizing the resources of all of the participants be those resources time, space, ideas, fundraising capabilities, or donations.

### How does it work?

1. Identify an issue that needs to be resolved.
2. Identify a neutral facilitator to guide the process or the district may decide to convene the process with the help of a small, representative group of stakeholders.
3. Assess the feasibility of collaboration and who needs to be involved and how to engage them.
4. Convene all needed participants.
5. Participants jointly agree to objectives and ground rules for working together.
6. Conveners and participants work together to frame the issues to be resolved.
7. Conveners and participants develop agreements that integrate interests and resources.
8. Conveners and participants implement their agreements together.

For example:

In 2011, a metro area integration district was facing the potential closure of two schools that leaders once hoped would address segregation and the achievement gap. Following a public outcry, the district embarked on a collaborative problem solving process designed to gather stakeholder input on options to redesign the 10-member district. Ultimately, the district arrived at the innovative solution of transferring two of the schools to other districts.

### How do I get started?

While districts can lead successful collaborative problem solving efforts on their own, their chances for success are greatly increased by utilizing a professional facilitator. The Minnesota State Office for Collaboration and Dispute Resolution can help. Learn more at <http://mn.gov/admin/bms/ocdr> or by calling 651-539-1409.

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*Put Me In, Coach, continued from page 24.*

skills, and like any skills, they take practice to master.

Make ongoing personal and professional development a quest. Set aside time every day to read and study leadership principles. Strive to make personal positivity a way of life for you and your staff. Take advantage of the opportunities your MASA membership offers to learn and grow personally and professionally. And always remember the advice of author Hiam Ginnot. As the leader, YOU are the decisive element.

*Denny Smith is a former teacher and coach, a motivational speaker, and author committed to making our schools and communities safe and welcoming for all people. More information is available at [www.dennysmith.com](http://www.dennysmith.com) or email [denny@dennysmith.com](mailto:denny@dennysmith.com).*



# Bits 'n Pieces Fall 2015

Shari Prest, InvestMN

**D**id you know?  
**Let's Get Engaged** (Search Institute, Citizenship Project, [www.civicroots.org](http://www.civicroots.org))

**Civic engagement is linked to important youth outcomes, such as:**

- Healthier individuals, including increases in the satisfaction and positive emotions. Kids feel good when they help others!
- Fewer problem behaviors and higher school achievement
- Stronger communities, where young people are valued and feel committed to supporting the greater good

**Just so you know:**

- One-third of kids report their parents volunteer, follow the news, or work to improve their neighborhood
- 40% of youth report they have too much schoolwork or would rather do other things than participate in extracurricular activities
- 70% of parents report that their family discusses problems facing their community
- 30% of youth report that their family discusses problems facing their community
- 72% of youth feel supported by their parents
- 54% of youth feel supported by their teachers

**Values and Variables**

- \$1.2 trillion – The amount spent in one year of fast-food and casual-restaurants
- \$545 billion – the amount spent on pre-k through secondary education by federal, state and local governments combined in 2014

**A Time for Everything** (extracted from Sleep Deficit, Kermit Pattison, ExperienceLife, May 2015.)

- Adults need 7 to eight hours of sleep daily, according to the National Institutes of Health. Teens require 9 to 10 hours of sleep each day
- 70% of American adults and teens get insufficient sleep
- 31% of high school students report getting at least 8 hours of sleep on an average on a school night
- The average American gets 2 hours less sleep per night than the average American did 40 years ago
- There was a 34% increase in of-the-job performance in a study done of pilots who took naps and a 54 percent improvement in alertness
- Functions like short-term memory and high-level

mental tasks that require us to pay attention to several things at once, are particularly vulnerable to sleep loss

- Studies consistently demonstrate that good sleep sets up the brain for positive feelings

**Energy Overload**

- 50% of adolescents consume energy drinks
- 32% of adolescents consume energy drinks on a daily basis
- 46% of energy drink ads appear on TV air on channels favored by adolescents
- According to a 2010 study, sugar-free energy drinks can increase the risk of adverse heart events
- Research indicates that energy drinks make it harder for kids to pay attention in school
- Middle schoolers who consume sugary energy drinks are 66% likelier to show symptoms of hyperactivity
- Between January 2012 and November 2014, the FDA received 224 adverse-event reports from energy-drink companies

**Considering Careers** (based in part on Time Magazine, The Answer Issue, careers, July 6/13, 2015)

When students select a career path to pursue each of the following merit consideration:

- Compensation (annual pay not including benefits)
- Level of stress (measured by CareerCast.com based on 11 factors including travel and deadlines)
- Growth of field (projected change in the number of jobs in that field from 2012 to 2022) (Bureau of Labor Statistics)
- Satisfaction (measured individually and personally by level of interest, ability to contribute and workplace environment)

**Currency Quiz**

- What woman should be represented on the next ten-dollar bill and why?
- What Latin phrase appears "E Pluribus Unum" mean?
- A mile of pennies laid out is \$844.80. By this standard, America is about \$2.5 million pennies wide, coast to coast
- What does the so-called "all-seeing eye" that sits atop the pyramid on dollar bills represent?
- What bill makes up 80% of all U.S. currency?
- What bill has the shortest lifespan of any currency?

Invest in Minnesota *continued on page 27.*

## Save the Date!

### 2015 Curriculum Leaders of MN (CLM) Conference

Wednesday - Friday  
November 18-20, 2015

Cragun's Conference Center  
Brainerd, MN

*Registration, agenda and lodging details will be sent out soon!*

*Invest in Minnesota, continued from page 26.*

#### Definitions

##### *Engage:*

- Occupy, attract or involve (someone's interest or attention)
- Participate or become involved in

##### *Engagement:*

- The act of engaging or state of being engaged

##### *Employee Engagement:*

- Employee engagement is the emotional commitment the employee has to the organization and its goals. (Forbes)
- The harnessing of organization members to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances. (William Kahn)
- Emotional connection an employee feels toward his or her employment organization, which tends to influence his or her behaviors and level of effort in work related activities. (businessdictionary.com)

##### *Community engagement:*

- The process by which community benefit organizations and individuals build ongoing, permanent relationships for the purpose of applying a collective vision for the benefit of a community (Wikipedia)

#### Quotable

The more engagement an employee has with his or her company, the more effort they put forth. Employee engagement also involves the nature of the job itself - if the employee feels mentally stimulated; the trust and communication between employees and management; ability of an employee to see how their own work contributes to the overall company performance; the opportunity of growth within the organization; and the level of pride an employee has about working or being associated with the company. (businessdictionary.com)

## Are You Moving?

Help us keep track of you (and keep your MASA benefits and services coming to you). Please give Deb a call at (651) 645-6272 or (866) 444-5251, or send an email to [members@mnasa.org](mailto:members@mnasa.org) to update your records. If you have new colleagues in your area who are not MASA members, let us know and we will send membership information to them.

##### *Future Ready Leaders, continued from page 20.*

the need or the plans, especially in the early stages. Consider two important approaches to implementing transformational change:

- By segmenting the staff into thirds, the “lunatic fringe,” those who are always up for improvement efforts, can convince the “moderate middle” that change is inevitable and they will get on board when they recognize the realities of why change is needed. Once two-thirds of the staff is invested, the “nay-sayers,” who may never be entirely on board with anything that will make them change their 10-year-old lesson plans or calendars, are more likely to follow suit. Be sure to involve those outside stakeholders who can provide support, credibility, reinforcement of messaging, and resources.
- Be compassionate and empathetic during the process of culture change. People accept change in different ways, with different needs and styles of adapting. Be honest, but also encouraging. Reach out to those who need support along the journey. A culture of positive relationships, trust, and caring concern really makes a difference in helping people suspend disbelief and eventually climb on board. Culture trumps strategy every time.

Changing culture isn't easy. However, a shift toward more rigorous learning for all students must be made if our children are to be prepared to succeed in this ever-changing world that requires complex, high-level thinking.

*Bill Daggett, Ed.D. is founder and chairman of the International Center for Leadership in Education (ICLE), in Rexford, NY.*

*Susan A. Gendron is President of ICLE. For more information, go to [www.leadered.com](http://www.leadered.com).*

# Improving School Climate is a Key Factor in Bullying Prevention



**Craig Wethington**  
Interim Director of the School of Safety & Technical Assistance Center  
Minnesota Department of Education

Developing a positive school climate and improving school discipline policies and practices are becoming widely recognized as a critical strategy for bullying prevention. There is no single formula for improving school climate, but there is substantial evidence that a positive school climate is one that engages students in learning, promotes academic success and reduces school bullying.

School climate refers to the quality and character of school life. School climate is based on patterns of students', parents' and school personnel's experience of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures, according to the National School Climate Center.

## Benefits of School Climate

One large study of high schools found that a school climate characterized by lower rates of bullying and teasing predicted higher graduation rates four years later (Cornell, Gregory, Huang, & Fan, 2013). Schools with high amounts of bullying and teasing had dropout rates 29 percent above the state average, compared with schools with less bullying and teasing, which had a dropout rate 28 percent below average. The association between school climate and graduation rates was just as strong as the association between student poverty and graduation rates.

## Characteristics of Schools with Less Bullying

Schools with both fair discipline and a positive school climate have less bullying. Research shows that high schools with a strong school climate, characterized by high levels of both disciplinary structure and adult support for students have lower levels of bullying and other forms of student aggression (e.g., fights among peers, theft) (Gregory, Cornell, Fan, Sheras, Shih, & Huang, 2010). Equally, high schools with low structure and low support had higher levels of bullying and other forms of student aggression and violence.

## Conclusions and Implications

A positive school climate is essential to bullying prevention and to student retention in school. There are research-based steps that educators can take to improve school climate, according to the National School Climate Center.

### The steps include:

- Developing a shared vision among the entire school community about what kind of school they want their school to be.
- Assessing the school's climate strengths and needs in a comprehensive, reliable, and valid manner.
- Teaching prosocial skills in regular classes, advisory classes, and other small-group experiences with opportunities for practice.
- Engaging in prevention efforts that range from on-the-spot teaching with students who engage in teasing or bullying behavior to formal school-wide programs. Supporting partnerships among parents, educators, and mental health professionals who seek to interrupt the bully-victim-bystander cycle and encourage bystanders to be upstanders who do not allow bullying to continue.

While successfully implementing these strategies is highly complex work in practice, this work is essential to achieving the goal of supporting all students in safe and supportive learning environments that promote academic excellence and student success.

*Craig Wethington is the Interim Director of the School Safety and Technical Assistance Center, which helps districts and schools provide a safe and supportive learning environment and foster academic achievement for all students.*

*Prior to assuming the role of Interim Director, he served as the Deputy Director for the Division of Safety, Health and Nutrition.*

*Mr. Wethington came to the department with more than 15 years of experience coordinating local and state level efforts in public health and education related initiatives addressing a myriad of health issues that may impact a student's ability to learn. He has a Master of Public Health from The Ohio State University.*



## 2015-16 MASA BUSINESS PARTNERS

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### Special thanks to our 2015-16 MASA Business Partners!

The MASA Business Partner Program provides opportunities for businesses to connect with Minnesota's educational leaders. Our core belief is that MASA's role in engaging business partners is to facilitate a rich conversation that helps our practitioner members understand what resources are available to support their districts, and our business partner members understand the needs of our school districts.

#### **Premier (\$15,000+)**

*Johnson Controls, Inc.*  
*Kraus-Anderson Construction Company*

#### **Executive (\$10,000-\$14,999)**

*MSDLAF+/PFM Asset Management, LLC*  
*Springsted Incorporated*

#### **Leader (\$7,500-\$9,999)**

*Infinitec*  
*Nexus Solutions, LLC*  
*PMA Financial Network, Inc.*  
*Robert W. Baird & Co.*

#### **Fellow (\$5,000-\$7,499)**

*Ehlers*  
*PeopleAdmin*

#### **Key (\$2,500-\$4,999)**

*ATS&R Planners/Architects/Engineers*  
*Compass Learning*  
*CTS Group*  
*Cunningham Group Architecture, Inc.*  
*DLR Group*  
*Kennedy & Graven, Chartered*  
*Marsh & McLennan Agency*  
*SchoolFinances.com*  
*Teachers On Call*

#### **Friend (\$1,000-\$2,499)**

*Alpine Achievement Systems*  
*Ameresco, Inc.*  
*Architects Rego & Youngquist, Inc.*  
*BloomBoard*  
*Borgen Consulting*  
*CAREI*  
*Carnegie Learning Inc*  
*College of St. Scholastica*  
*CrisisGo*  
*Donlar Construction*  
*Education Minnesota ESI*  
*Fisher Tracks, Inc.*  
*Foster, Jacobs & Johnson, Inc.*  
*GLTArchitectst*  
*Hallberg Engineering, Inc.*  
*HealthPartners*  
*Hiller Commercial Floors*  
*Houghton Mifflin Harcourt*  
*ICS Consulting*  
*IEA, Inc.*  
*Infinite Campus, Inc.*  
*InGensa, Inc.*  
*Karges-Faulconbridge, Inc.*

*Knutson, Flynn & Deans, P. A.*  
*Lexia Learning Systems, Inc.*  
*LHB, Inc.*  
*Lifetouch*  
*Lightspeed Technologies, Inc.*  
*McDonalds Twin Cities Co-Op*  
*McKinstry*  
*MLA Architects*  
*MPAS-MN Principal Assessment Services*  
*Northland Securities, Inc. Financial Advisors*  
*PEER Solutions*  
*Professional Wireless Communications*  
*Public Financial Management, Inc.*  
*Raptor Technologies, LLC*  
*Riverport Insurance Company*  
*Skyward, Inc.*  
*TIES*  
*TSP Architects & Engineers*  
*unesco Corporation*  
*US Army/Mpls Recruiting Battalion*  
*Vaaler Insurance, Inc.*  
*Voyager Sopris Learning*  
*Widseth Smith Nolting*

warning system and know their local and regional conditions too. The NWS displayed to a small group of Superintendents additional data that goes beyond warnings and advisories and provides more context to the forecast. At that meeting, it was decided that the NWS should work collaboratively with Minnesota superintendents to provide essential, relevant data for decision-making related to weather.

One of Hopkins Public Schools technology leaders is a trained meteorologist and storm chaser. Mr. John Wetter became the author of the Minnesota Superintendent's Weather web page which will be accessible on the front page of the MASA website some time after the MASA fall conference. The page pulls together various pieces of information not currently easily found and provides "hourly" understandable weather data:

- a colorful current weather discussion graphic
- the hourly weather forecast graph for your area
- radar and satellite imagery
- links to forecasts
- current conditions, watches and warnings
- risk for excessive cold, snow and sleet
- forecasters detailed summary of conditions and forecast

This website is filled with easy to read and relevant graphics and images for Superintendents to make data driven decisions.

The most notable items, especially for winter weather, are the risks for excessive cold and for sleet and snow. The other is the "Hourly Weather Forecast Graph". This graph forecasts many weather variables over a 24-hour period, including temperature, snow fall, rainfall, wind chill, and other variables that contribute to seasonal weather hazards. For example, a Superintendent can see the temperature, windchill, and snowfall predictions when the school day starts.

"Hourly Weather Graph" for September 4 and 5, 2015, provided on September 3, 2015:

The NWS will be partnering with the Minnesota Association of School Administrators (MASA) to provide more resources to Superintendents. MASA has kindly agreed to host the Superintendent weather website. Superintendents enter their zip code and the site will provide relevant information for that region. The NWS will also receive Superintendent email addresses from MASA. These addresses will be placed into the NWS message system. Superintendents will get emails on approaching hazardous weather early enough to begin analyzing weather data from the website to inform decision-making. This data-base sharing will be maintained annually with MASA assistance.

Additionally, the NWS provides thorough education focused on preparing our schools to be StormReady. On this website you will find a link for "Storm Ready in a Box". This online kit and video provides background for staff or student groups and/or Earth Science classes to prepare their school(s) to be StormReady. School districts that have been certified as StormReady have found increased parent and staff confidence, especially in light of some of the extreme weather and storm

damage observed in the central United States in recent years.

Another service the NWS has provided is a webinar for significant weather events approaching a region. For example, the weather service forecasted a significant snow event for the metropolitan area on November 10th, 2014. The NWS and media outlets appropriately warned that a significant snowfall event was going to impact the region. The winter storm warning informed us that the metropolitan area would receive 14 inches of snow. The storm dropped up to 16 inches of snow in the northern metropolitan counties, and southern counties received only 1 to 2 inches of snow. As a result of the webinar provided by the weather service, northern metropolitan school districts decided to close in order to give plows a chance to clean roadways. Southern metropolitan school districts maintained normal operations. Being in direct contact with the NWS, and armed with more specific and detailed data, provides more relevant information in an ambivalent, yet important, watch and warning system.

It would be great if our weather was 72 degrees and sunny every day, with 0.1 inches of rain every other night. However, we live in a climate where the norm is changing weather, which may become extreme enough to harm. As a result, our decision-making in order to safely operate schools for our children, families, and staff becomes one of heightened importance for school leaders and the National Weather Service. If our decision-making is too extreme, keeping school open at all costs, we may inadvertently harm a child or staff member in their commute to school. If our decision-making becomes too cautious in closing schools it jeopardizes learning and the civil right of providing education to our communities. We hope the accessible and understandable resources introduced in this article help all of us avoid these extremes, keeping access to school safe and efficient. We anticipate that this National Weather Service resource will be used in the decision-making we often need in order to operate schools in our beautifully diverse four-season climate.



# A nutrition story sure to spark a discussion.



© 2015 McDonald's

## THE PREMISE

A science teacher conducted a class experiment about choice. He ate McDonald's® meals every day for six months, exercised regularly and lost weight.

## THE LESSON

John Cisna's message is not about a weight loss plan. No one is suggesting that eating at McDonald's will result in any health benefit. Rather, his message is focused on the importance and impact of making informed, balanced food choices.

## THE REVIEWS

*"Our sophomore class watched this DVD during our nutrition unit. It fit in well with decision-making regarding foods we eat when we are away from home. Thanks again for this video."*

– Bertha-Hewitt H.S.

*"The emphasis on calculated choices and planning fit right in with our curriculum."*

– Sauk Centre H.S.

## THE RESOURCE

You need to see it to believe it and we're making it easy for you. John Cisna's story is documented in the 19-minute film: "540 Meals: Choices Make the Difference." We're happy to provide a free DVD to high schools. Please email [jeff@kellergrayson.com](mailto:jeff@kellergrayson.com) with "CISNA DVD" in the subject line and provide your high school's contact information.



@McD\_Minnesota





# MASA Calendar of Events

## 2015

### September 26

MASA Board of Directors  
DECC, Duluth

### September 27

MASA Board of Directors  
MASA Great Start Cohort  
MASA Foundation Golf  
Tournament  
DECC, Duluth

### September 27-29

MASA Fall Conference  
DECC, Duluth

### October 5 or 6

Annual School Law Seminar  
Minneapolis

### October 15-16

Minnesota Educator Academy  
St. Paul

### November 18-20

CLM Fall Conference  
Cragun's, Brainerd

### November 26-27

MASA offices closed  
Thanksgiving Holiday

### December 16

MASA Board of Director's  
Meeting  
St. Paul

### December 24-25

MASA offices closed  
Winter Holiday

## 2016

### January 1

MASA offices closed  
Winter Holiday

### February 11-13

AASA National Conference  
on Education  
Phoenix Convention Center,  
Phoenix, AZ

### March 9

MASA Board of Directors  
MASA Great Start Cohort V  
Marriott NW, Brooklyn Park

### March 10-11

MASA/MASE Spring  
Conference  
Brooklyn Center

### March 25

MASA offices closed  
Spring Holiday

### May 30

MASA offices closed  
Memorial Day Holiday



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