

WOW!—A POWERFUL Spring Conference

by Greg Vandal
MASA President and
Superintendent,
Sauk Rapids-Rice Schools

WOW! There was energy in the room. Senator Paul Wellstone was the “closer” for the spring MASA conference this year, and he spoke with passion and conviction about our moral obligation to meet the needs of the child. A packed ballroom rose as one in response. While we, as school administrators, usually need little convincing on these issues, it is important from time to time that our convictions be reinforced. Paul Wellstone certainly accomplished that!

The Senator provided a perfect ending for what had been, by most accounts, a truly powerful conference which focused on our “Changing World, Changing Needs.” Washington Bureau Chief for the Wall Street Journal Alan Murray led us off with his insights into how intellectual horsepower is driving and will continue to fuel a vibrant, global economy. Murray challenged schools to be increasingly flexible and creative so as to allow our students every opportunity to develop their potential.

Minnesota’s own Geek Squad

creator, Robert Stephens, keynoted our lunch session that first day. A highly successful technology entrepreneur, Robert had the audience in stitches with his witticisms and insights. This barely-thirty success story clearly did not fit the mold of our traditional education system. In fact, his achievements may have come in spite of our best efforts. His challenge, like Murray’s, was that we educate outside the mold.

I met a 15-year-old version of Robert Stephens on the first day of conference. Beau Gjerdingen, a sophomore from Northfield High School, helped lead a workshop session on student interns in the technology field. Beau was described by his employer as one of the brightest, most capable of young people and a real asset to the wireless communications company for which he worked. Beau, surely one of tomorrow’s industry leaders, shyly commented that, in spite of his technological aptitude, he knew he must “keep a sense of humility in order to have the will to learn more.” Not an adult in that room could disagree. Not a conference speaker of any age made a more profound statement.

Thursday’s conference schedule included break-out sessions on

everything from resiliency—led by MASE member and Assistant Superintendent for Orono, Karen

Orcutt—to models for alternative compensation—presented by MASA member and superintendent from Buffalo, Tom Nelson. Many attendees commented on the strong and consistent theme threaded throughout large and small group presentations alike. The culmination of our first day was a celebration of collegial success as service awards were given and retirees acknowledged. Ted Blaesing of White Bear Lake, our 2001 Minnesota Superintendent of the Year, challenged us all to continue to ask, “How are the children?”

WOW! ...
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The Battle for Supremacy, or Charlie vs. the Squirrels

by Charlie Kyte
MASA Executive Director



Cookie Kyte and Her Human

A war has been going on in the Kyte's yard. Charlie and Cookie, the ever faithful Brittany Spaniel, have taken on the squirrels that live in the trees all around our house. I regret to inform you that the squirrels have won every battle so far and are close to winning the entire war.

We live in a house on the south edge of Northfield. Our lot is fully wooded and we are blessed with all kinds of wildlife.

I have had visions of attracting every kind of possible bird species, so I began acquiring a number of bird feeders. I made a couple (you should see my woeful carpentry skills), had another given to me and actually bought a couple. I even got hold of an outdoor water heater so the birds would have water to drink during the winter months.

This fall I went out to the Cannon Valley Coop feed mill in Dundas to load up on sunflower seeds. You can drive right into the mill in Dundas and actually pretend you are a real farmer for a few seconds. After the boys at the mill got through giving me a hard time for every possible reason, they finally consented to sell me a couple hundred pounds of sunflower seeds. We got them loaded and Cookie and I headed for home.

We filled the bird feeders and saw initial success. We had nuthatches, chickadees, cardinals and blue jays. As winter approached, the junkos came down from Canada and

joined our flock. However, for every two birds that showed up, there was one gray squirrel. They are eating me out of house and home.

After the last snowfall, I counted 13 squirrels on the bird feeders and patrolling the ground under them. You could practically see the level of the sunflower seeds going down in the feeders. Cookie would stand for hours by the patio door quivering as she pointed at the squirrels, blood lust in her eyes. Every time we went outside, Cookie made a mad dash for the feeders and the squirrels disappeared up the tree and into the brush. Cookie never got close to them.

We decided we had to take action to ward off this hungry herd so there would be something left for the birds to eat. This is where my friend Lee Lansing comes into the story. Lee owns Lansing's hardware in downtown Northfield. Lansing's carry just about every type of squirrel deterrent devise for bird feeders. Lee used his silver tongue to talk me into buying practically every kind of screen, shield, or other devise for keeping squirrels away.

Each time I buy another devise, I know in my heart it won't work! Cookie and I go home and go through the process of mounting the shield on the pole or putting up the appropriate screen. We keep moving the feeders further and further away from the trees. By the next morning, the squirrels are again eating away. I swear they can jump 10 feet and make it around any deterrent I put up.

Again, I go back to Lansing's Hardware and there is Lee with a smile on his face. I know there is nothing he can sell me that will help. But after he talks to me for a few minutes and softens me up, I

find myself walking out the door with another \$10 worth of equipment.

One Saturday morning I got up and looked into the yard. There were two squirrels sitting on the rail of my deck, one at the back feeder and another nibbling suet at another protected feeder. One especially inquisitive squirrel, who we have named Evelyn, was sitting on the bird bath having a drink. There were another six on the ground. The birds were all sitting up in the trees looking down and waiting for an opening to get in on the feast. The squirrels weren't even letting them close.

It was at this point that I realized I was defeated. I am giving up and have decided to just let the squirrels eat along with the birds. I'll just keep on throwing out more seed. As soon as I am finished writing this column I'm on my way back down to Lansing's to see if I can get a good deal on feed. I figure that Lee should give me a discount because of all of the profit he made selling me the squirrel shields.

Actually, we enjoy our house a lot and especially like the birds and the squirrels hanging around. Cookie is still having a little trouble with the squirrels nibbling away practically underneath her nose. But even she is settling down a little bit. With all of the snow this winter, it is probably a good thing there are suckers like me who are willing to buy the birdseed to keep the birds and squirrels fed.

By the way, if anyone wants to buy an excellent set of squirrel deterrent devices, just give me a call. I will have my personal representative, Lee Lansing, bring them over to you and convince you about how wonderful they will work. •

PRESIDENT'S *perspective*

What a Day (@ the Capitol!)

by Greg Vandal
MASA President and
Superintendent,
Sauk Rapids-Rice Schools

If this piece has a slightly different feel, it is probably because it was mostly written (taped) in my enthusiasm as I drove away from the MASA Day @ the Capitol on February 1. What a day it turned out to be! Organizers for the event initially hoped for 75 or 100 participants. Charlie Kyte and I had earlier shared quiet conversations in which we expressed the fear that, if no one showed, the whole thing could be a bust. This was far from the case. The day before the event, over 175 MASA members had registered. Staff brought name tags to the Kelly Inn on that all-important morning along with blank stickers for walk-ins. We ran out of both. A

head count revealed over 220 individuals took part in what turned out to be a powerful rally on behalf of public education. I surveyed the group from the podium that morning; literally every corner of our state was well represented.

MASA's Day @ the Capitol was co-sponsored by MASE, AMSD, SEE, MREA, and RAMS. This formidable blend of education advocacy groups brought together a rich program for all who took part. Key legislative leaders, clearly impressed by our sheer numbers, delivered messages of hope for enhanced education funding. House Education Policy Chair Harry Mares, House Education Funding Chair Alice Seagren, House Speaker Steve Sviggum, Senate Education Chair Sandra Pappas, and Education Finance Chair LeRoy Stumpf all

pledged that they would work for kids and schools. They laid the challenge before us to continue to make our voices heard and to rally the cry of the people on behalf of public education.



Greg Vandal

Mixed into this early morning program was what felt like more than just a touch of righteous indignation. As school leaders responsible for the well-being of Minnesota's 850,000 children, our cause of funding adequacy is right and just. Our indignation that education policy has thus far been framed so as to force serious program retrenchment across the state is well earned. The Day @ the Capitol gave
What a Day ...
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Inclusive Educational Administration

by **Janine Dahms-Walker**
Executive Director
Benton-Stearns Education
District and President, MASA
Special Education
Administrators Component
Group



Janine Dahms-Walker

The belief that Regular and Special Education administration should work jointly to create and maintain successful special education programs is not new.

Unfortunately, the actual state of a partnership between the two administrations has not reached its full potential.

One of the problems that stands in the way of inclusive administration is a lack of training on shared problem solving. Other areas of difficulty focus on understanding the systemic nature of school districts and the need to form a community of administrators.

Inclusive school administration refers to a school organization that focuses its governance on providing a seamless instructional format that assists all educators to work effectively with children displaying a wide range of abilities and disabilities. Inclusive school governance requires a district to think about its strategic planning in relationship to all students, provide the funds and training needed for all stakeholders to understand the process and put into place a system that does not propagate differences.

Superintendents could promote inclusive school governance if the following areas were addressed:

1. Develop an organization chart that promotes inclusive administration. If a balance of power is to be attained, it is essential that someone with Special Education responsibility be part of the district's decision making group. I frequently counsel directors of Special Education seeking positions to insure that the director is included in the administrative cabinet and reports directly to the superintendent. An inclusive administration reflects an organizational chart where Special Education and Regular Education administrators are treated equally.

2. Implement an administrative development program that promotes special education in a planning training cycle. Review your district's plan for the past five years. Does the district have continued emphasis on special education teachers,

administrators, and regular education teachers and administrators?

3. Provide the board with training that assists them in understanding the importance of inclusive school governance. A district initiated board development program should be in place for new and experienced board members that reflect your role and vision in sculpting inclusive administration for your district.

If we want our staff to accept responsibility for all students, then the administrative structure must model the same philosophy of all administrators responsible for all students. This is the task that faces our profession as we move to an inclusive form of school governance, one that does not look at students and programs as separate, but rather one that includes "all." •

Foundation Honors Lifetime Members



Nineteen MASA Foundation Lifetime Members were honored at the MASA/MASE

Spring Conference Awards Celebration on March 15. Their commitment of a \$1,000 donation significantly assists the Foundation in realizing its goals.

The mission of the MASA 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 Lifetime Member lapel pin (pictured left) was designed to reflect the foundation's theme, *We're On the Grow*. The honored members are:

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Leaders Forum

Spring, 2001 • Vol. 35, No. 3

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Director of Communications

Mia Urick
MASA
1884 Como Avenue
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108
(651) 645-6272
FAX (651) 645-7518

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Leaders Forum is your newsletter and we encourage your input! If you have ideas or an article to share, please contact Mia Urick, MASA's Director of Communications and Professional Development (contact information listed above).

Eliminate the gap between perception and reality

As a school leader, you know there is a gap between perception and reality when it comes to public education. That gap makes it difficult to connect with our communities — for referendum support, when we try to market our schools, during a school crisis, and when we try to secure more state funding.

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Alternative Compensation and Collective Bargaining

by Gloria Olsen
Attorney
Rider Bennett Egan & Arundel, LLP

Alternatives to the traditional "step and lane" system of compensating teachers recently have been the subject of much discussion in public k-12 education circles. The focus on alternative teacher compensation by state legislators and the governor has created an expectation that some number of Minnesota school districts will negotiate alternative compensation systems, perhaps completely replacing steps and lanes, in the 2001-2003 round of collective bargaining.

The task of negotiating an alternative teacher compensation system for 2001-2003 collective bargaining agreements raises several interesting questions with no simple answers. As MASA members know, collective

bargaining is a complex, dynamic, human relations activity, not prone to right or wrong answers or bright line distinctions.

Is Everybody We Need At the Bargaining Table?

Any system of alternative teacher compensation must end up at the bargaining table because compensation is a mandatory subject of bargaining. Replacement of step and lane systems with alternative compensation is a massive systemic change. Teachers, administrators, and sometimes board members and professional negotiators sit at the bargaining table. But do we need to include other stakeholders, such as parents, students, community members, and additional teachers in a process of developing alternative compensation systems that result in increased student achievement?

And do we need to involve compensation consultants or professionals from outside the school districts in designing alternative systems?

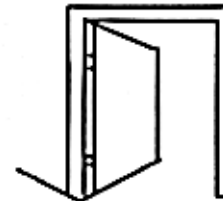
Do We Have Enough Time To Negotiate Alternative Compensation?

Many of you have heard consultants and professionals in human resources and compensation systems express opinions that it takes several years, not weeks or months, to develop and implement an effective alternative compensation plan.

Unfortunately, school districts don't have years within which to construct such a plan. Minnesota law provides for loss of state revenue if school boards and **Alternative Comp ...**
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**MASA Works With
Legislature —**

MN School Conditions Must Become Better for Children and Staff

**by Charlie Kyte
MASA Executive Director**

The legislative process is very interesting. It is complex to move from an idea to an actual funded statute. It takes time, persistence, and the building of significant consensus. I am receiving an excellent education as I attempt, along with the MASA Legislative Committee, to make headway on a number of important issues.

The first lesson I learned is that it is much better to have your ideas planted within the Governor's budget than to try to introduce them independently. The Governor's budget is created months before the beginning of a legislative session. In the case of education, much of the planning is done at the DCFL. The

process begins with ideas that are forwarded on to become funded parts of the Governor's budget.

Another lesson is that an organization or group must create ways to have their "presence" shown at the capitol. MASA's DAY @ THE CAPITOL was especially successful. We pulled together six different organizations in which educational administrators are active. These included MASA, AMSD, SEE, MREA, MASE and RAMS. An important role for a state level organization is that of helping the various interest groups come together around common agendas.

The day at the capitol also showed a wide range of legislators that school superintendents, special education directors and school administrators

have the ability to influence legislation. 200 school leaders turned out for the day at the capitol. We also showed ourselves that we have the capability of coming together in a time of need.



Charlie Kyte

The day at the capitol demonstrated to legislative leaders that K-12 education needs their help and support. We were represented in an excellent manner by scores of school leaders meeting individually with local legislators. MASA President Greg Vandal and members Mike Kremer of Hopkins and Kathy Leedom of Willmar represented the greater body of MASA members in an exceptional fashion at the press conference held at the capitol.

Developing and moving legislation can be a slippery process. Much of what we hear from various lobbyists changes from day-to-day.

Legislature ...

Continued Page 9

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Alternative Comp ... Continued from Page 6

teacher representatives do not complete negotiation of the 2001-2003 contract by January 15, 2002. Is it reasonable or possible for school districts that have done little or no work on alternative compensation to achieve consensus with the stakeholders regarding alternative compensation, develop a plan, and negotiate the necessary modifications in collective bargaining agreement before January 15, 2002?

Do We Have Enough Resources To Implement Alternative Compensation?

Many alternative compensation plans are performance based and involve sophisticated systems of evaluation. Evaluation of teachers includes the time-consuming process of classroom observation by administrators. Some compensation and evaluation systems involve teachers as peer

mentors or peer observers—tasks that obviously take teachers away from classroom teaching duties. Other compensation systems involve additional activities on the part of teachers such as creating portfolios and otherwise establishing their credentials and levels of performance. If nothing else, the step and lane system is simple and easy to administer. It appears as if all alternative compensation systems will involve a more time-consuming and complicated process of administration.

And there also is the question of the increased financial cost of changing from one type of compensation system to another. The general view of unions and employees toward any conceptual change in a collective bargaining agreement is that no employee should suffer a loss. This may mean that any alternative compensation system will result in

an added cost to the school district, and not an alternative system at the same cost.

Is Collective Bargaining Inconsistent With Alternative Compensation?

The traditional collective bargaining process involves formal exchanges of proposals, discussion justification of proposals by management and unions, and compromise by both parties. It is subject to the bargaining power of both parties. It ends in a legally binding document. Many find the process to be more adversarial, stressful, and negative than any other activity or process in our k-12 educational system. Most other activities and processes in the k-12 system are more creative, cooperative, productive, and consensus building. Often, labor contracts are settled in late night, **Alternative Comp ... Continued Page 12**



MASA's Legislative Hot List

MASA is attempting to get hearings on four bills in the 2001 Legislative Session. In addition, MASA is working closely with other associations to support additional bills and to provide watchful oversight over others.

Bills which MASA is attempting to introduce and receive hearings:

Technology Funding: This bill would provide funding for technology connectivity for school districts across the state. A small amount of money is provided at present to cover the 2000-01 school year and the 2001-02 school year. This bill will enhance the funding for the first year of the biennium and provide sole funding for the second year.

Professional Development for Administrators: This bill is being offered in cooperation with the two principal's associations and the service cooperatives. It provides funding for mentorships, internships and professional development of newer administrators across the state.

Changes in Superintendent Contracts: The present statute allows a superintendent's contract of up to three-years with a one-year renewal period. This bill provides two options for

school boards and superintendents in regard to setting the superintendent's contract. The first option allows a contract of up to five-years with a two-year renewal period. The second option allows a roll forward of an additional year as each year expires. In either case, these options would become effective when a superintendent enters into their next formal contract. This bill may need to wait until next year as we work with MSBA to reach an agreement on how these changes can be best effected.

Administrative Board of Licensure: Decisions regarding administrative licensure used to go through the State Board of Education. However, since the board of education has been discontinued, licensure decisions now come through the Department of Children, Families and Learning with final authority resting with the Commissioner. This bill, co-sponsored with the principal's associations, calls for a separate Board of Administrative Licensure which would cover all aspects of licensing for superintendents, principals, special education directors and community education directors.

MASA staff and lobbyists have met with the staffs of AMSD, SEE, MSBA, MREA, and the Transportation Associations. We're reviewing bills to determine which are appropriate to be supported by MASA. Further we are watching, and will be prepared to comment, on bills introduced by the DCFL, Education Minnesota, and by others. The lobbyists and the executive director of MASA and MASE are actively involved representing our membership at the 2001 Legislative Session.

Legislature ... Continued from Page 7

The alliances and relationships between the various associations sometimes are collaborative, but often are self-serving. As a relatively new player, I'm still finding my way in this environment.

MASA sponsored four bills that would improve the lot of our members. One is to create a separate Board of Administrative Licensure. This particular bill was drafted by Roger Aronson, lobbyist for MASSP. MASA helped to "broker" the language in this bill.

A second bill asks for funding for professional development of newer administrators, including funding for internships, mentorships, and workshops across the state to help educators see the merits and challenges of school administration. Once again, MASA has allied itself with both the secondary and elementary principal associations as well as service cooperatives. A challenge in moving this bill forward are competing interests including a DCFL bill to provide mentoring for new teachers and another bill possibly being tacked onto the DCFL initiative that would provide loan forgiveness for educators training in administration. It will be interesting to see which, if any, of these bills emerge from the process.

MASA wanted to bring forward a bill that would seek to improve the contracts of superintendents. Within this bill were two options; one called for contracts to be permissive up to five years with a two year renewal period; the other for a three-year automatically rolling contract. The problem we ran into immediately was that this bill did not necessarily have the support of MSBA. Thus, rather than introducing the bill, we asked that this concern be placed on the agenda of an already scheduled joint meeting between the executive committees of MSBA and MASA. We need to hammer this issue out with MSBA before we have any chance of moving the bill in the legislature. This particular bill calls into mind the phrase "a person must lay pipe, before they can pump

water." It will take some time building understanding and support for this idea and we may not actually see a bill introduced until 2002.

Another piece of legislation which MASA has introduced involves funding for technology. At present, the Governor's budget provides just over \$22 million in FY 2002 for technology connectivity. However, the funding drops down to less than \$2 million for FY 2003. MASA introduced a bill asking that the higher level of funding be provided during the second year of the biennium. Access to technology statewide is a very important issue in the education of our children.

In addition to introducing a few pieces of legislation, MASA is attempting to use its influence, in combination with the influence of other associations to convince legislators to provide a fair level of funding for education so that educational programs and staff levels can be maintained across the state.

Education is key to the success of our economy and our society. The citizens in Minnesota have long prided themselves on being strong supporters of education and we hope that tradition will continue as we move forward. Thank you to all MASA members who participated by contacting legislators, coming to the MASA DAY @ THE CAPITOL, arranging meetings with legislators on March 10th, and for all of your other efforts to support the funding of education. •

What a Day ... Continued from Page 3

us a chance to respond, and we did not squander our opportunity. MASA showed great unity as we set out to reveal an education proposal sorely inadequate to meet the needs of our children.

Following the addresses by the legislative leadership and sponsor group representatives, we moved en masse to the State Office Building to stand before the capitol press corps. Once again, our sheer numbers were impressive, and I felt the power of the organization behind us—for, that is precisely where the group stood—as Hopkins Superintendent Mike Kremer, Willmar Superintendent Kathy Leedom, and I identified our concerns for our kids. I was pleased with the ensuing coverage; the very fact that the Governor directly responded a day later was an indication that our voice was heard. We said what we still believe to be the case: the Governor's education budget will hurt our students. Both Mike and Kathy identified the scope of program reductions that would be required should it be enacted into law. We decried the problems we already face in recruiting and retaining educators to serve Minnesota's children. We called for

financial relief to help deliver the mandates of special education. We focused our message on the students we serve.

Throughout the day, our membership did the same. More than a dozen administrators sat for an hour with reporters from the St. Paul Pioneer Press Dispatch to discuss high energy bills and restrictive licensing procedures. Capitol reporters interviewed our members in corridors and offices. Our legislative committee met in the Governor's office with Wayne Hayes, one of the chief education advisors to Mr. Ventura; Lieutenant Governor Mae Schunk joined us as well. Perhaps of greatest import throughout the day, 220 passionate school leaders—individually and in small groups—descended into legislative offices to speak on behalf of kids.

In this age in which we are continuously challenged to measure achievement and show accountability, it is difficult to tangibly demonstrate the impact we may have had. Still, I've seldom been as proud of this organization and its membership as I was at our Day @ the Capitol. We joined in one voice and one spirit on behalf of Minnesota's school children. The state's policy makers were listening; I hope they will respond with an education bill that is a strong investment in our kids. Thanks to everyone who helped organize this great day. Thanks especially to all of you who so enthusiastically took part. •

Changing World, Changing Needs— Leading in a Global Economy ... Spring Conference 2001

On March 15 and 16, MASA and MASE members explored Minnesota's New Economy and its impact on schools and children. The 2001 Spring Conference invited participants to examine how educational leaders can position schools to prepare students for our rapidly changing workforce needs. Keynote presenters educated and inspired, helping leaders make decisions using key trends that will influence the future. Small group sessions offered insight into changing ways of managing education, rethinking business opportunities for workers of the future, and new ways of managing existing systems.

Photos:

- A. MASA Executive Director Charlie Kyte welcomes participants and frames the conference theme.
- B. Each year at the awards event, MASA and MASE recognize retiring members. Orlyn Wiemers, Superintendent, Minneota Schools, accepts his engraved clock from Chris Sonenblum, MASE President-Elect and Director of Special Services, District 112, Chaska Area Schools.
- C. Brad Madsen, Superintendent, Dawson-Boyd Schools, receives the MASA Administrator of Excellence Award for Region 3 from Assistant Commissioner Jessie Montano, Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning.
- D. "How are the Children?" was the theme of a presentation by Ted Blaesing, Superintendent of the White Bear Lake Schools and 2001 Minnesota Superintendent of the Year.
- E. Chris Sonenblum presents the MASE Distinguished Service Award to Bob Vaadeland, Superintendent of the Minnewaska Schools.
- F. Bob Fischer, Director of Special Education for the Northfield Schools and recipient of the MASE Leader of Excellence for Special Education Award, and Janine Dahms-Walker, MASE President and Executive Director, Benton-Stearns Education District, share a glad moment.



- G. Senator Paul Wellstone spoke passionately about education and meeting kids' needs because it's the right thing to do.
- H. *Our Own Almanac Show* packaged the legislative update in a fun format. The Eskola-esque Greg Vandal, MASA President and Superintendent, Sauk Rapids-Rice Schools moderated a panel that included Charlie Kyte; Vernae Hasbargen, Executive Director of the Minnesota Rural Education Association; and Scott Croonquist, Executive Director of the Association of Metropolitan Schools Districts.

- I. Greg Vandal presents the MASA Distinguished Service Award to Tom Melcher, Manager, Program Finance Division, Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning. •

Thanks to all who made this event possible!



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WOW! ... Continued from Page 1

Friday's half-day session, which featured the Wellstone address, was no less exciting. We began the morning with our own version of the Almanac Show in which a panel of education association officials responded to questions designed to elicit insights into the workings at the capitol. Rose Hermodson, the Governor's representative to the DCFL, handled tough questions about the Governor's education budget. We gained insight into what might be expected in the months to come. The MASA political strategy was reinforced: to focus attention on the legislature rather than the Governor in order to bring about change.

Hazel Reinhardt, a much-respected demographer and popular conference presenter, discussed her insights into Minnesota's changing population. Her predictions regarding the expected shift from outstate to metro core, as well as changes in birth rates, caused many to take notice. Some of the predictions were dire, but our capstone event, the Wellstone address, left us all in good spirit and with renewed resolve to serve our children well.

In my role as MASA president, I got a close look at the work that goes on behind the scenes to make such a conference a success. I can state with pride and sincerity that we are extremely well served by Executive Director Charlie Kyte and an incredibly capable staff which includes Mia Urick, Stephanie Schaefer, Mary Law, and Jeanna Quinn. The Executive Development Committee for our organization, led by Fred Nolan and Mike Lovett, did a marvelous job! Our conference numbers were strong, our exhibitor base larger than ever. Our sponsors seemed well pleased. All in all, the MASA conference was a powerful event, and I thank everyone who participated in any way. We'll get together again on September 30 at Madden's for the fall event. Mark your calendars now. We are an organization on the move, and there is so much to be gained from these experiences. •

Thank you to our major conference sponsors

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Alternative Comp ... Continued from Page 8

pressure-filled, total-package compromises; not surprisingly, it is often said that a good agreement is one that makes neither party happy.

Can collective bargaining accommodate the thoughtful process necessary to developing an effective alternative compensation plan? Does this mean that the initial dialogue and development of an alternative system should be accomplished before and/or outside of collective bargaining? Perhaps school districts with an effective "interest based" negotiations process where interests of both parties are explored and resolved in a creative, non-threatening manner have a better basis for dealing with alternative compensation.

Why Bother With Alternative Compensation?

School districts, government employees, unions, parents, students, and the public all want the same things: for students to learn and achieve more in our public schools. CFL has suggested, "We Want: High Student Achievement—We Pay For: Length of Service." The interest in alternative compensation appears to be driven by the belief that the method of compensating teachers should encourage improved teaching and learning, an undeniable worthy goal. Is there or can there be consensus on that? If there is, the complexity and pressures of incorporating alternative compensation, particularly performance based pay, into the collective bargaining process and collective bargaining agreements will be the challenge. And public school districts will be among the first, perhaps the first, public employers in Minnesota to negotiate performance based pay into collective bargaining agreements. •

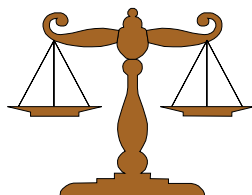
MN OAH Offers Pamphlet on Hearings, Mediation

The Minnesota Office of Administrative Hearings has issued a new pamphlet entitled,

"Services for Cities, Counties, and School Districts."

It describes the services the office provides to local government to help conduct contested administrative hearings, such as employee discharges, license revocations, or other ordinance violations. The booklet also explains OAH mediation services.

To receive a copy, contact LaVon Regan—
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2001-2002 Candidates Announced

MASA is pleased to announce the nomination of the candidates for 2001-2002 leadership positions. The nominees are:

2001-2002 MASA President-Elect:

- **Kenneth Dragseth**
Superintendent
Edina Schools

The President-Elect serves one year, followed by one year as President and one year as Past President.

Accountabilities of this office include:

- Participates in MASA Executive Committee, Board, and Employee Relations Committee meetings.
- Assists the President in providing general leadership to the organization.
- Performs all duties of the President, in absence of the President.
- Participates on the Strategic Planning Team.
- Recommends appointment of Chair-Elect for all standing committees.

2001-2002 Component Group President-Elect nominees:

Superintendent Component Group President-Elect nominee:

- **Kay Worner**
Superintendent
Sartell –St. Stephen Schools

Central Office Component Group President-Elect nominee:

- **Dan Walker**
Assistant Superintendent
St. Louis Park Schools

Service Provider Component Group President-Elect nominee:

- **Robert Cavanna**
Executive Director
Resource Training & Solutions

In accordance with the MASA Special Education Administrator Component Group bylaws, the President-Elect of Minnesota Administrators for Special Education (MASE) serves as the MASA Special Education Administrator Component Group President-Elect. The nominee for MASE President-Elect is:

- **Lorie Schulstad-Werk**
Director of Special Services
North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale Schools

The Component Group Presidents-Elect serve one year, followed by one year as President.

2001-2004 Superintendent Component Group Representative to the MASA Board of Directors nominees (4 positions):

- **James Redfield**
Superintendent
Lester Prairie Schools
- **Wendy Shannon**
Superintendent
Byron Schools
- **Kelly Smith**
Superintendent
West Central Area Schools
- **Beverly Stofferahn**
Superintendent
Chaska Schools

Component Group Representatives to the MASA Board serve a three-year term. These Directors will replace the Component Group Board Representatives who are completing their terms in 2001.

Our thanks to the nominees for their commitment and willingness to lead. •



Ken Dragseth Nominated for MASA President-Elect

Dr. Kenneth Dragseth, Superintendent of the Edina Schools, has been nominated for the position of MASA 2001-2002 President-Elect. Ken was introduced to the membership at the Spring Conference, at lunch on Thursday, March 15. Election information and ballots have been mailed. Return your ballots by April 13.

“It is an honor to be nominated for the position of MASA President-Elect. I am grateful for the opportunity to represent MASA’s members, and I look forward to the prospect of serving my colleagues. I pledge to do my best to promote the collective voice of Minnesota’s educational leaders and maintain the legacy of MASA’s quality leadership. My commitment to my peers parallels my promise to the children we serve: to promote and support all of Minnesota’s schools and the community of leaders who sustain them. Thank you for your support.”

— Ken Dragseth

NEWS FROM *the field*

Consider the Fulbright Administrator Exchange Program

by **Charles Kyte**
Executive Director

The Fulbright Teacher Exchange Program has been in effect since just after World War II with the purpose of helping educators become more culturally aware. Lesser known is the Administrator Exchange Program, which has been developed more recently.



The Fulbright Administrative Exchange Program is different from the teacher exchange in that administrators when matched up, simply shadow each other in their schools and countries for a period of weeks. The teacher exchange program typically is an actual exchange of two teachers for either a full school year or a semester. The administrative exchange program matches up administrators of the United States with administrators in nine other countries. For the Latin countries involved in the exchange, an administrator must have workable fluency in Spanish. However, the other countries involved in the exchange program do not require language capability other than English.

When an administrator is matched up to become a Fulbright Exchange Program participant, they make contact with their exchange partner. Together they each identify a period of six weeks when they will visit the other country and shadow each other. Sometimes housing arrangements are shared and at

other times, the visiting administrator stays in a hotel or rented housing.

The Fulbright Program provides a \$3,000 stipend to help cover expenses for all exchanges of administrators except if the exchange is to the United Kingdom. In that case, the stipend is not provided.

Applications for the following school year are always due by October 15th. Thus an October 15th, 2001 deadline applies for the 2002-03 school year.

The Fulbright administrative exchanges are considered to be competitive, but in reality the competition is more of a need to match up common interests between administrators in the

United States and administrators in other countries. The Fulbright Program helps to find appropriate match ups of interest. The mandate of the Fulbright Program is to promote cultural understanding. In the case of the teacher/administrative exchange programs education tends to be the primary focus. Theoretically, spouses are not included in the exchange but it is a relatively common practice for spouses to accompany the administrators chosen to participate in the Fulbright Programs.

If you're interested in the Fulbright Program, more information can be obtained by calling 1-800-726-0479 or logging on to the Fulbright web-site www.grad.usda.gov/info_for/fulbright.cfm.

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New Ed. D. Cohort for Educational Leaders

The Department of Educational Policy and Administration at the University of Minnesota is pleased to announce that a new Ed. D. Cohort will begin in Summer, 2001 in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. The theme for this cohort is, Educational Policy and Administration: Leadership for School Improvement. Members of the Ed.D. cohort program are the current and future leaders in Minnesota schools. They are teachers, principals, and superintendents who have chosen to remain employed in their school districts while studying for an advanced degree. Instruction and advising is provided by regular faculty, many of whom have won awards

for teaching excellence. Application materials will be reviewed on a monthly basis, with the expectation that the cohort will be filled by the first week in April, 2001. Qualified applicants will be considered after that date only if cohort openings remain. If you have questions about this program or would like to receive application materials, contact: Dr. Alice Thomas, Coordinator of Graduate Studies, 330 Wulling Hall, 86 Pleasant Street SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455. Phone: 612-624-9377. Email: thoma078@tc.umn.edu.



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North Central Association Seeks State Executive Director

NCA's State Chair Gil Carlson, Superintendent, St. Peter Schools, has announced that Minnesota NCA is seeking an Executive Director due to the June, 2001 retirement of current Executive Director Phil LeBeau. This position will be changing from full time to approximately half time. A full time office support person will assist this person. This position could be the perfect fit for a retired school administrator. If you know someone who would like to work half time and has had some experience with NCA, please encourage him or her to contact Gil Carlson:

St. Peter Public Schools
803 Davis Street
St. Peter, MN 56082
Phone: 507-931-5703
Fax: 507-931-2805
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UPDATE—Accessible Entrance Compliance

As you may have read in previous related articles, if any of your city buildings has at least one entrance (employee or public) that is not wheelchair accessible, you are required to mount “Accessible Entrance” signs at every entrance, whether accessible or not. In response the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulation 35.163, the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) now offers an **Entrance Sign Kit** to help city administrators cost-effectively comply with current ADA entrance sign rules.

The Entrance Sign Kit includes the number of blue and white reflective aluminum signs that you need to mark your facility entrances, as well as specific mounting materials, instructions, and sign guidelines. All kit text materials have been reviewed by the federally mandated ADA

Technical Assistance Center,
Region V.

To get your Entrance Sign Kit, it is important to count the number of accessible and inaccessible entrances to your buildings that are not marked with ADA signs, so that ICMA will know the number of each type of sign to include with your kit. Then, call the ICMA ADA sign staff toll free at 877-ADA-KITS (877-232-5487), or fax or send a purchase order to:

ADA KIT – ICMA Entrance Project
56 Salem Lane
Evanston, IL 60203
Fax: 847-568-9485

Cost is \$20 per sign plus \$9.50 shipping and handling (for up to 10 signs). Please note: As required by law, inaccessible entrance signs have right or left arrows on each sign to direct people to the nearest accessible entrance. Please make a note of which direction the arrows need to point when ordering signs for inaccessible entrances. •

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Scenes from AASA: National Conference on Education

The 2001 AASA National Conference on Education was held February 16 - 18 in Orlando. Our "roving reporter" Charlie Kyte captured a few scenes ...

Right: Jerry Jensen, MASA President-Elect and Superintendent of the Lake City Schools, visits with Christine Sweeny of NCS Pearson, sponsor of the Minnesota Breakfast. **Below right:** Jerry Jensen and Greg Vandal, MASA President and Superintendent of the Sauk Rapids-Rice Schools, congratulate Ted Blaesing, 2001 Minnesota Superintendent of the Year and Superintendent of the White Bear Lake Area Schools. **Below left:** Loretta and Ted Blaesing enjoy dinner with Dale Birkeland, Educational Consultant for Kraus-Anderson Construction Company, sponsor the MASA Board of Directors Dinner at *Ciao Italia*.



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Calendar 2001

April 13

Spring Holiday

MASA Offices Closed

April 16

Alliance Meeting

MASA Offices

1 - 3 pm

May 11

Alliance Meeting

MASA Offices

9:30 - 11:30 am

May 28

Memorial Day Holiday

MASA Offices Closed

June 20 - 21

Board Meetings

Madden's on Gull Lake,
Brainerd, MN

- Executive Committee

June 20

9:30 - 11:30 am

- New Officer and Board Orientation

June 20

1 - 1:45 pm

- Board of Directors

June 20

2 - 5:30 pm

June 21

9 am - 12 noon

September 30 - October 2

MASA/MASE Fall Conference

Madden's on Gull Lake,
Brainerd

*Mark your
calendar ...*

MASA 2001 Fall Conference

September 30 -

October 2

Madden's on Gull Lake,
Brainerd

Plan to attend!



**How
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Enclosed in this newsletter you will find a photo-ready copy of an article that begins with the sentence, "How do you want your money spent?" You may use it to encourage your community members to be public education advocates in the drive for adequate school funding. It is important that each and every person knows that their input matters.

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