



summer, 2009

Whose Job Is It?

by **Dan Brooks,**
2008-09 MASA President
and Superintendent, Sauk Centre Schools

This is a story about four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody, and Nobody. There was an important job to be done and Everybody was asked to do it. Everybody was sure Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that, because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Anybody could do it but Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done!

During the final days of the regular session I contemplated the happenings, or lack there of, in St. Paul. I was reminded of the above story, which certainly seems to sum up the legislative process. There was a time when public education was a much less partisan animal and our kids and state were the better for it. Most certainly the work of public education is an important job.

The needs of public education, our kids, and the future of our great state have been relegated to a lesser priority because "Nobody" is willing to have the courage to tell "Everybody" what "Anybody" ought to know. The fact is we have a revenue problem in our state and "Somebody" needs to pay more!

The problem is exacerbated in that "Somebody" seems to be willing to seriously mortgage the future, while ignoring significant additional investment in infrastructure and the essential services of state government. Upon reading Minnesota's Constitution, "Nobody" should be able to argue with the fact that public education needs to remain at the top of the list. I relish the idea of increased taxes no more than any of you. However, "Everybody" can't simply keep ignoring the problem so "Somebody" can get reelected!

Reflecting upon this past year I am most thankful that

our Association continues to become reinvigorated and engaged in the work of advocating with "Everybody" and encouraging "Somebody" to do good things for all kids. Our Regions are as strong as they have been in many years. Our participation in our various committees is as high as I can remember for the past 26 years. Our efforts with weekly visits to the Capitol are being noticed. Our effort to impact the reauthorization of ESEA/NCLB has been noted by the State's congressional delegation.



Dan Brooks

Our good friend Gary Amoroso will lead us this next year. Here's hoping he can continue to advance the good work of our Association and that "Somebody," "Anybody" and maybe even "Everybody" will truly come to believe the education of our state's children needs to be our most important legacy.

Advocating for and adequately funding public education is "Everybody's" job!

Thank you for allowing me to serve as the President of this great organization. •

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MASA: Connecting With Members



Charlie Kyte

by **Charlie Kyte,**
MASA Executive Director

Every association has several major goals. At MASA, serving the needs of our members is one of our highest priorities. While it is very important to be a strong voice and advocate for public education, serving our members is our number one priority.

The MASA Board of Directors met recently and serving the needs of our members was one of

their priority discussions. It is important that we understand how members want to become active, what services they need, and how they best go about accessing them.

There is also a succession of generations within the membership of MASA. Our middle-aged and older members are all Boomers who learn, lead, and think in a somewhat similar pattern. Our newer and younger members are Gen-Xers - they learn and lead in a pattern that is somewhat different than Boomers.

Of course generations just don't change instantly overnight. There is a blending within our membership that participated in the Boomer era and the beginning of the Gen-X era. This is a slow change and of course not everyone acts and reacts in the same ways.

There are a couple of larger differences that we should all be

aware of.

1. Like Boomer parents, Boomer education leaders tend to put greater faith in institutions. Thus, they are more resistant to choices and change when it comes to public education. Gen-Xers, on the other hand, grew up hearing about the problems of schools, real or imagined, and are quicker to embrace significant changes. Thus, it may not be surprising that many of our newer members are thinking actively about alternative ways of educating children such as online learning, charter schools, etc. These are ideas that don't necessarily click in synch with the mature Boomer's mind.
2. Boomers tend to get their information by more traditional means. They like things in writing although they adapted very well to the use of email. On the other hand, Gen-Xers are more comfortable with more advanced electronic forms of communication. They embrace the idea of audio and video broadcasts and emerging social networking sites and are comfortable getting much of their information in electronic form.

Thus, for associations, we have to understand our members, understand the ways in which they learn, and understand the ways in which they care to participate. Associations have to adapt, being able to provide information for members in many different forms and through differing mechanisms. Here at MASA we strive to meet the needs of our members no matter where they are coming from or what their styles may be. •

Understanding the Mindset of Students and Their Parents: A Challenge for School Leaders

by **Charles Kyte**
Executive Director, MASA

There will always be plenty of local issues in school districts and the tide of opinion will ebb and flow. However, there is another larger set of changes taking place in front of us as we have shifted from educating the Generation-X to the Millennial Generation. Now we will begin to see the first of the Homeland Generation entering our schools.

Each generation of students is being raised by the past generation of parents to the Boomers. Thus, the Millennials, who are in our schools right now, are being raised by Gen-X parents.

It is important to understand the hopes and desires of these students as well as the opinions of their parents if you are to have a strong connection with both as you lead your schools. As an example, when Gen-Xers were students they

were brought up at a time when there was great doubt about the value of the public schools of America. They have now internalized that as adults. Thus, it does not bother a good Gen-X parent to be very demanding of their school system, be doubtful about the quality of the system, and to be very willing to look at other choices when they are looking for an education for their child.

Another characteristic of Generation-X parents is that many were difficult children, but are now excellent and caring parents. We sometimes describe some of them as "helicopter" parents who hover over and watch their children very closely.

The Millennial children are in a generational cycle that indicates that they may well be much like The Greatest Generation which really had to step up in defense of our country. They had to be positive young people, hear
Understanding the Mindset ... Continued on Page 3

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Mary Law, Associate for
Leadership Support
MASA, 1884 Como Avenue
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108
(651) 645-6272 • (866) 444-5251 • FAX (651) 645-7518

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The *Leaders Forum* is your newsletter and we welcome your input. Please send your ideas or articles to Mary Law at mrlaw@mnasa.org.



**Have
an
enjoyable
and
relaxing
summer!
From the
Staff at
MASA**

Understanding the Mindset ... Continued from Page 2

positive messages, and then were expected to do great things. Remember that The Greatest Generation both fought a World War and literally put their shoulder to the wheel to build America during the 50's and 60's.

Another issue for school leaders is to come to an understanding of the way in which boys learn in school, which is significantly different than how girls learn. There is a good book titled "Winning Back the Boys" that helps education leaders understand the differences and the way that we should better structure schools so that boys can be able learners.

Understanding the succession of generations and the difference between how young men and young women approach learning are important nuances for educational leaders to understand. Decisions then need to be made about how to communicate with parents, how to structure programs and activities for our children and how to create appropriate curriculums and delivery approaches so all of our children can be successful. •

Are You Moving?

Now is the time of year when many of our members are on the move! Help us keep track of you (and therefore keep your MASA benefits and services coming to you!). Just give Deb a call (651/645-6272 or 866/444-5251), fax her a note (651/645-7518), or email her at members@mnasa.org and she will update your records. Also, if you have new colleagues in your area who are not MASA members, let us know and we will send membership information to them. •

**Be sure to mark your calendars for the
2009 Curriculum Leaders of
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**Plan to attend the third annual
MN School Safety Conference
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When Parents Say "No": How School Districts Should Respond to Parents Who Withdraw Consent for Special Education Evaluation and Services



Chuck Long

by **Chuck Long**
Attorney
Kennedy & Graven, Chartered

The recent amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA") allowing parents to unilaterally withdraw a child from special education services represent a radical departure from the long-held mantra that the "right to FAPE belongs to the child." With this change, the right to FAPE now clearly

rests with the parents. Neither school districts nor the courts may challenge or overrule the parents' decision.

To date, the reaction has been mixed. The amendment's supporters point out that school districts no longer have to pursue litigation to keep students in service, discipline is more consistent in the absence of manifestation determinations, and funds can be redirected. On the other hand, the Act's detractors argue that the amendment denies services to those in need, students who are exited from services may struggle academically and/or behaviorally in the general education environment and lose instructional time that can never be replaced, and as a result, graduation rates will fall and drop outs will increase.

How this amendment will actually impact students and the schools that serve them will not be known for years. Regardless of whether one favors or opposes the amendment, it is the law and school districts need to ensure that proper procedures and safeguards are in place.

The new law states that any time after the initial provision of special education parents may withdraw their child from services. Other than that the withdrawal be in writing, the IDEA does not impose any additional requirements or criteria on the parents. The withdrawal may be for any reason and may be made at any time.

If the parents withdraw consent, the school district may not continue servicing the child. In other words, there is no "stay put" placement while the issue is disputed. The school district must provide prior written notice stating that services will be ended. The notice must conform to the federal regulations and specify the action being taken, the reasons for the action, and the other options that were considered and why they were rejected. School districts must provide this notice regardless of whether they favor the parents' decision. Thus, a school district may find itself in the seemingly anomalous position of seeking consent for an action it does not support.

Under the IDEA, "consent" means that parents have been fully informed of all information relevant to the activity and understand and agree in writing to the carrying out of the activity for which their consent is sought. When the activity is the cessation of all special education services, it becomes even more imperative that school districts ensure that parents are fully informed. The IDEA specifies that the parents' revocation is not retroactive. The withdrawal does not negate the prior actions of identification, evaluation, placement and provision of FAPE for which consent was received and does not require the school district to destroy, amend or remove the student's special education records. The act also states that following a withdrawal from services, the school district is not required to hold further IEP meetings, need not develop new IEPs and will not otherwise be in violation of its obligation to provide the student with a free, appropriate public education.

The withdrawal of a disabled student from services has other consequences that might not be as readily apparent. For example, the student will be subject to the application of the school discipline policy, including expulsion. The student will no longer have the protections a manifestation determination may afford. The student will be a general education student for purposes of state-wide testing. The student will need to satisfy the school district's class and credit requirements in order to graduate. Formal classroom accommodations or modifications will no longer apply. The student may have to change schools if the building of attendance was determined through the IEP team process. Because the IDEA does not address these points, school districts should be sure to bring them to the parents' attention. In fact, some districts have created a special form delineating these potentially unforeseen consequences.

Once parents decide to end a child's special education services, there is little under the IDEA the school district can do to prevent it. The amendments strictly prohibit school districts from using due process procedures, including mediation and a hearing, to obtain an order that would allow them to keep the student in special education.

This does not mean, however, that a school district cannot voice its concerns. If a school district truly disagrees with the parents' decision, it should make considerable efforts to indicate its position when appropriate and document such efforts. It should ensure that the parent knows how to access parent advocacy/support groups that can further explain the implications of the parent's decision. Finally, it should confirm that its parental rights brochure and other forms have been updated to properly account for these new amendments. •

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Susan E. Torgerson, storgerson@kennedy-graven.com / Maggie R. Wallner, mwallner@kennedy-graven.com

Finance and Bond

Stephen J. Bubul, sbubul@kennedy-graven.com / Martha Ingram, mingram@kennedy-graven.com
Andy Pratt, apratt@kennedy-graven.com

Construction

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The Legislative Outcome



Charles Kyte

by Charles Kyte
Executive Director, MASA

As of the middle of May there were still deep divisions regarding tax policy in the state. The governor wanted no new taxes. The legislature was willing to raise revenues in order to pay for some of the programs funded by the state. However, within the legislature, there were deep divisions in philosophy over tax policy between the House and

Senate. Even within the Senate there were deep divisions within the DFL Caucus about how to approach tax policy. Thus, producing revenues for the programs in the state of Minnesota was complex at multiple levels.

In the end the funding for Minnesota's K-12 schools came out at 0% and 0% changes over the next two years. There was no formal aid or tax recognition shift approved. Rather, this will be accomplished by the governor either delaying or suspending K-12 education aid (not property taxes). Also, we

were not surprised to see some specific unallotments of certain categorical funds as the state revenue shortfall got worse. Another issue is how to interpret the rules regarding the federal stimulus money. During the session it was a complicated task of figuring out how much federal-state stabilization money should be awarded to higher education or K-12 education and how it needs to be divided between the next two years so that it meets compliance with federal regulations.

Now that the State has used the unallotment process, its share of federal-state stabilization funds could be jeopardized if "maintenance of effort" guidelines imposed on the state are not met. School superintendents and their managers of Title I and special education have to come to an understanding of the rules regarding the IDEA federal stimulus money and the Title I stimulus money. As usual with federal dollars, especially when they are new to a state, the messages tend to be quite garbled with different versions coming from US Congressional offices, others coming from the US Department of Education and sometimes a third set as they are interpreted at the state level. All this is enough to give any MASA member a severe headache. •

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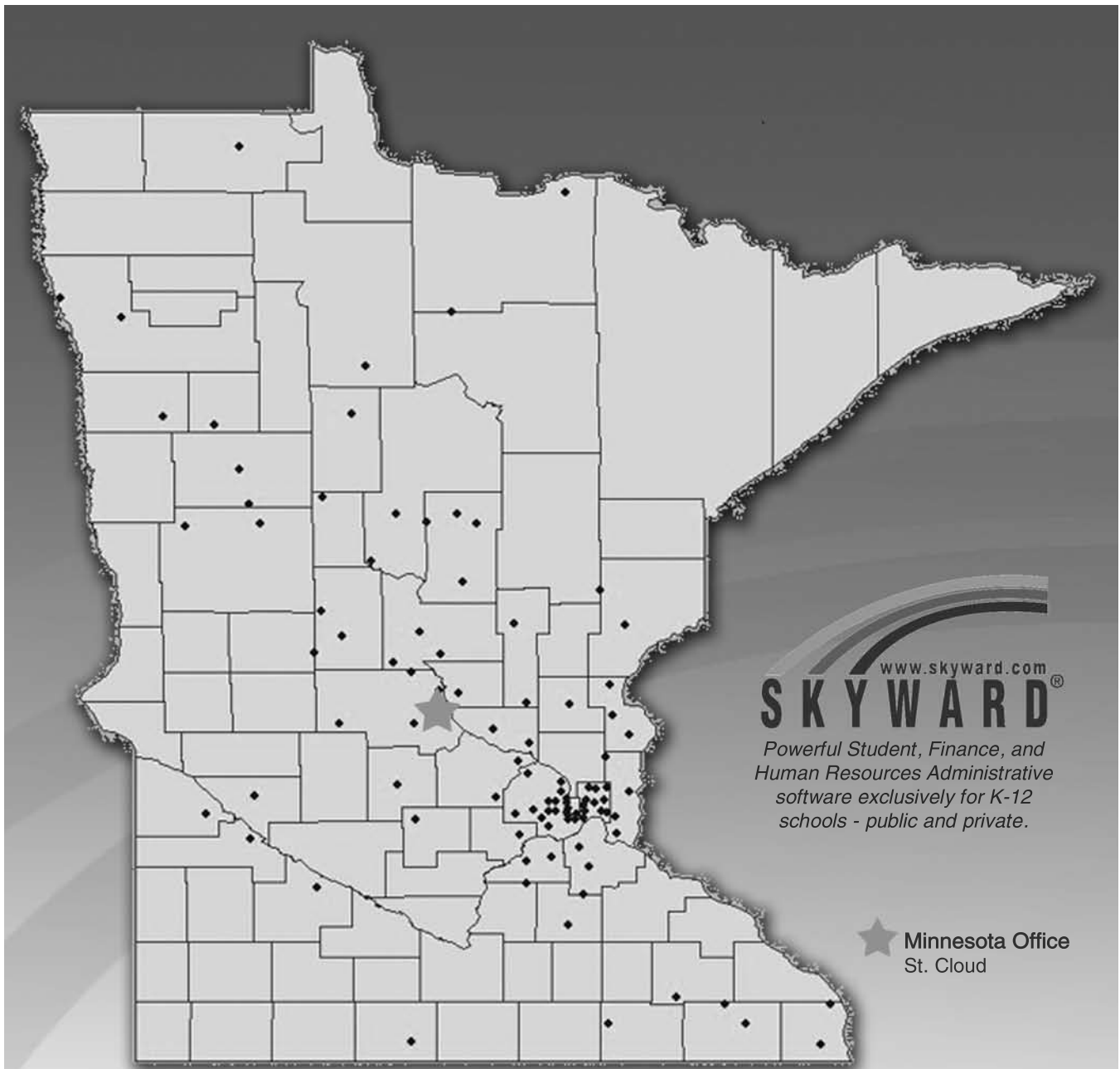
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Building High-Impact Board-Superintendent Partnerships: A Precious But Fragile Bond



by **Doug Eadie**
President & CEO
Doug Eadie & Company

Early in my 25-year career, I learned that at the very top of the list of factors that influence the educational and administrative performance of every school district is that most precious but always-fragile professional marriage between the school board and its chief executive

officer, the superintendent. Have no doubt: certain leadership outcomes that are critical to your system's ultimate success depend on these two partners working closely together as a "Strategic Leadership Team" – for example, a clear vision for the future, long-term educational goals, targets for significant innovation, operating priorities, the rational allocation of financial resources, the management of relationships with key stakeholders such as state and local government departments, to name but a few.

TREMENDOUS COSTS

On the flip side, when this precious bond is allowed to loosen, or to become badly frayed, your school system is in for real trouble if steps aren't taken to shore up the partnership. All too often over the years, I've seen what appear to be minor irritations rapidly turn into chasms that can't be bridged and that exact a terrible price. The signs of a troubled "marriage" might seem petty at first. For example, the board begins to question the superintendent at length on relatively minor administrative actions and maybe even tables what were once routine matters for consideration at the next meeting.

Experience has taught me that no matter how petty the relationship problems appear at first, if they aren't addressed early on, the deterioration can be rapid, inevitably causing lots of pain and suffering and often ending in divorce. A final parting of the ways inevitably means the superintendent moves on to other challenges; so far as I know, no school board in human history has ever fired itself for relationship problems with its superintendent. Keep in mind that the cost of a ruptured board-superintendent partnership can be awesome: educational performance shortfalls that aren't remedied; strategic innovation opportunities that are missed; a tarnished public image and decline in public support; deteriorating administrative and faculty morale; and, of course, the cost of recruiting a new superintendent. What can you do to keep the board-

superintendent partnership healthy, thereby reaping the benefits and avoiding the costs?

THE SUPERINTENDENT'S ROLE

First and foremost, the superintendent must accept primary responsibility for building and maintaining a strong, positive working partnership with the school board. Keep in mind that your board members are part-time volunteers who are modestly paid, if at all, and whose lives are lived largely outside the board. It just wouldn't make sense to expect them to take the lead in managing the partnership. Your superintendent can take some practical steps to ensure success in carrying out this responsibility. As a start, the superintendent must bring a positive attitude to the relationship building task, seeing his or her board as a precious asset and vital partner, rather than as a damage-control challenge. Too many superintendents I have met over the years have started with a negative viewpoint that makes success well nigh impossible. "Boards are apt to meddle and micromanage if they're not closely watched and controlled," they say to themselves, "and my major job is to make sure that they stay in their place and out of trouble." If a superintendent approaches his or her board with this attitude, divorce is highly likely somewhere down the pike.

Armed with a positive attitude, your superintendent can also make governance – the work of the school board – a high priority, becoming a real expert in this rapidly developing field and devoting significant time to thinking about ways to help the board strengthen its governing performance. If a superintendent doesn't understand the work of governing in detail and doesn't help the board become more proficient at governing, board member frustration and irritation will inevitably erode the board-superintendent partnership. For example, there is virtually universal agreement that high-performing school boards play a leading, creative role in strategic decision-making, rather than merely sitting back and reading staff or consultant-prepared plans. But the likelihood of your school board developing a strong role in strategic planning on its own is nil; the superintendent must take the lead in designing the planning structure and process that will make a creative board role possible.

In addition to viewing their boards in a positive light and helping them develop strong governing roles, "board-savvy" superintendents also never forget that boards are above all else PEOPLE, and they, therefore, pay attention to the psychological dimension of relationship building. For example, whenever possible, these superintendents find **Building High-Impact ... Continued on Page 9**


Building High-Impact ... Continued from Page 8

ways to strengthen board members' feelings of ownership – hence, strengthening their commitment – by involving them in generating directions, rather than merely reviewing finished documentation. This is why board-staff retreats have become so popular. These savvy superintendents also look for every opportunity to provide their board members with ego satisfaction, making sure that they receive credit in the media for system accomplishments and that they are given opportunities to appear in public forums.

AND IN RETURN


Of course, good relationships involve reciprocal obligations, and a school board can make three key contributions to its relationship with its superintendent: (1) to focus on playing a high-level governing role, rather than getting bogged down in administrative details; (2) to make a firm commitment to strengthening governing skills; and (3) to treat the superintendent as a colleague and partner deserving respect, rather than as an adversary. Playing a truly productive role in governing a school system depends on your board's taking responsibility for leading a large and complex public corporation, rather than merely representing the views of particular constituencies.

Doug Eadie is president & CEO of Doug Eadie & Company, a firm specializing in building strong board-superintendent partnerships. You can reach Doug at doug@dougeadie.com or 800.209.7652.



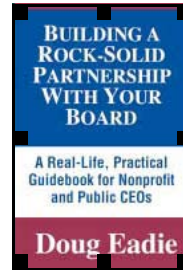
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ELECTION *news*

The Results are In— Congratulations to Elected & Appointed Leaders!



Jeff Olson

Congratulations to the following candidates who have been elected to MASA leadership positions. Newly elected leaders participated in a planning session with the full MASA Board of Directors this month. MASA appreciates these leaders for their commitment to MASA and Minnesota education and offers them thanks and best wishes as they begin their terms of service.

President-Elect: Jeff Olson, St. Peter

Board Members:

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- Region 4—Doug Froke, Detroit Lakes
- Region 6—Scott Thielman, Albany Area
- Region 7—Tim Caroline, Moose Lake
- Region 9—Jay Haugen, W. St. Paul-Mendota Hgts-Eagan
- Region 9—Karen Orcutt, Orono
- Greater MN Special Ed – Nan Records, Sherburne-N Wright Cooperative
- Retiree – Ed Anderson

Minnesota Representative to the AASA Governing Board

Jim Hess, Bemidji Area

Special thanks to all MASA members who participated in the election process!

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Jerry Ness, Fergus Falls, Chair-Elect

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Flexible Learning Year Program Proposal: School Leaders Initiating Change in Southwest Minnesota

by **Jamie Hultgren**
MASA Staff

It all began last November when a group of 8 superintendents from southwest Minnesota got together to discuss how they could work together better. After talking about what kinds of structural things they could do to better coordinate sharing services, Post-Secondary Educational Opportunities (PSEO) with colleges, and improve student achievement, the conversation led to a realization that a common calendar would be a great way to facilitate wide scale multi-district coordination.

Together, they spearheaded an initiative to address and go beyond the delayed Labor Day start restrictions set by the Minnesota Legislature. They formulated a Flexible Learning Year Program request that proposed that the school start of approximately 20 school districts in southwest Minnesota move up to August 24, 2009. Minnesota Rule 3500.1000 allows the option to request that the Commissioner of Education grant permission to implement such a program.

In their proposal to the Commissioner, the school leaders outlined the benefits of this new calendar design, arguing it would accomplish the following: improved instructional quality, increased cost effectiveness, and a better use of community resources. In support of their case, they argued that the program would complement current education programs, accelerate regional planning and resource management, support efforts to prepare students for achievement, and enhance regional educational opportunities (outlined below).

Complement Current Educational Programs: The new calendar would allow participating districts to coordinate activities more efficiently for MSHSL competitions. Because MSHSL rules require students to participate in practice two weeks before the first contest for fall sports (with start dates as early as August 17th), these activities could be better coordinated, and therefore event participation and attendance will increase and extra-curricular/athletic funds would receive a much needed revenue boost. Other programs that will benefit include, but are not limited to: summer school, FFA activities, special clinics and camps, and special education programs.

Accelerate Regional Planning and Resource Management: Creative regional initiatives would be formed (such as shared staff, coordinated staff development, and an increased ability to create common school days and

schedule common activities) through a coordinated calendar that would also save funds and increase revenue with no foreseeable negative fiscal impact on the state education budget.

Support Effort to Prepare Students for Achievement: The new calendar will enable schools to maximize the “high impact instructional time” at the start of the school year, when students have higher motivational and performance levels. The additional 7-10 days of high impact instructional time will help teachers and administrators prepare students for state tests and critical ACT and AP exams. It also lays groundwork for the extended 190-200 student contact day schedule that may be lengthened from the current ~175 student contact day model.

Enhance Regional Educational Opportunities: High school students participating in post-secondary opportunities are best served if the K-12 district calendar is more closely aligned with the start dates of area community colleges, state and private post-secondary institutions.

Because some schools found the notice too short for them to start this coming fall with the new calendar, if approved by the Commissioner, 11 school districts will move ahead with their joint calendar for next year. However, 14 additional school districts will be on board for the second year of the calendar. The joint application submitted during the week of May 25th awaits comment and approval in the coming weeks. •

Have you renewed your membership?

Membership materials have been mailed.
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MASA Staff Profile: Stephanie Kastanos

Job Title: Associate - Accounting and Events

How long have you been with MASA: This is my 14th year at MASA.

Tell us about your loved ones (spouse, significant other, children): I have a husband, Tony, and two daughters, Tiana (5) and Victoria (2), and a 9 year old Bulldog named Cleo.



What do you most like most about working for MASA: I like the fact that we all do multiple jobs, we're not doing the same thing everyday, it keeps things interesting.

Favorite Memory of Working at MASA: Because I've been here so long, I started my career at MASA at the same time as many of our members were starting their careers. It's been great getting to know people over the years and watching where members' careers take them.

I also have many not so favorite, but funny, memories about being across the street from the State Fair for 14 years.

One thing you would like the members of MASA to know about you: I have been teaching dance, and involved in running a dance studio for many years.



Testing for Tomorrow



Shari Prest

by Shari Prest,
Ark Associates

Key Message: Tests that have the capacity to measure individual student progress provide the most useful information for improvement. Testing is just one of several meaningful components of measuring school and student success.

The implementation of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) has given unprecedented attention and power to standardized tests. It has also caused tests scores to be used in some ways for which they were not designed: evaluating teachers and schools and using results to determine future funding. The results can trigger rewards and penalties for teachers, schools and districts, without adequate regard for the student variables that are beyond the influence of schools. Also, many of the standardized tests provide very little information about individual student growth and progress.

Standardized tests fall into the following main categories:

Criterion-referenced tests. Criterion-referenced tests (CRT) compare student performance to a specific set of criteria. The Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA-II), the Minnesota Basic Standards Tests (BST) and the Graduation Required Assessments for Diploma (GRAD) are examples of criterion-referenced tests. That means they are closely aligned to what is taught and may indicate what and how much is learned.

- *Criterion-referenced tests cover limited areas of content in-depth.*
- *Criterion-referenced tests usually have a specific level of performance that is considered “passing” or “proficient.”*
- *Criterion-referenced tests measure students more accurately when they score near the passing score than when they score well above or well below the passing score.*
- *Criterion-referenced tests are usually not appropriate for identification of exceptional students (gifted/ talented or Title I; see previous).*
- *Criterion-referenced tests generally are poor at measuring individual student growth.*

Norm-referenced tests. Norm-referenced tests (NRT) compare student performance to a norm (or average) group

across content areas. The Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), the California Achievement Tests (CAT), The Stanford Achievement Tests (SAT), and the NWEA MAP tests are examples of norm-referenced tests.

- *Norm-referenced tests measure students’ mastery of commonly-taught content.*
- *Norm-referenced tests utilize percentile rank as their main measurement indicator.*
- *Norm-referenced tests are not aligned to district curriculum; they do not identify how much an individual student has learned.*
- *Norm-referenced tests were not designed to judge instructional quality.*
- *Important note: It is possible to define a criterion score on an NRT (for example, students must score below the 40th percentile to be eligible for Title I), and it is possible for a CRT to have normative scores (the MCA-II reports percentile ranks each year, which describe how a student performed relative to all the other students in the grade for that year.)*

Growth–model tests. Growth models are not a test type by themselves, but rather represent a wide range of approaches to assessing schools, all of which focus on student progress over time. There clearly are characteristics of tests that used to measure growth. An example of a test designed to measure and report the growth of all students is an adaptive test such as Northwest Evaluation Association’s Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA MAP). Adaptive tests match the difficulty of the questions to the performance of the student.

Two important characteristics in measuring individual student growth are:

1. Consecutive tests used to measure growth (pre-test and post-test) must measure the same content.
2. Consecutive tests need to be valid and reliable, and they need to have a minimum amount of measurement error. Most measurement error comes from a test that is too difficult or too easy for the student.

“Many educators feel a growth measure is the fairest system of accountability, because it takes into account the well-known fact that some schools have high proportions of low achieving students, and we really need to concern ourselves with whether schools are earning a year’s worth of growth

Testing for Tomorrow ... Continued on Page 16



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Testing for Tomorrow ... Continued from Page 14

in a year's time." – *Jim Angermeyr, Director of Research and Evaluation, Bloomington Schools*

Standardized tests cost the state of Minnesota millions of dollars every year. It is important to ensure the those dollars contribute to the future growth and success of our students. Schools need to be very thoughtful about what they test, how they test, and that the testing used provides information about how our schools can help each individual grow to their greatest potential. "The perfect test that everyone wants is one that is useful, delivers results quickly, and gets a lot of student achievement information in as few questions as possible." – *Dirk Mattson, Director of Assessment and Testing, Minnesota Department of Education.*

Most educators agree that standardized tests are a useful part of a comprehensive student and school assessment system, but they are concerned that many current tests do not assess or promote a variety of important aspects of teaching and learning. "When all your time is directed to test preparation, the students lose out on problem-solving skills, creativity, multiple methods for learning, outside resources and the desire to be a life-long learner." – *Minnesota 2020 Principal Survey, as quoted by the ECM Editorial Board.* •

This information was taken from Minnesota 2020, the ECM Editorial Board and the Minneapolis StarTribune, Jennings and Corcoran, Phi Delta Kappan, May 2009, and with the assistance of Jim Angermeyr, director of research and evaluation for Bloomington Schools.

Congratulations!

**Greg Vandal, 2009 MASA Polaris
Leadership Award Recipient**

**Jay Haugen, 2009 MASA Richard Green
Scholar Recipient**

Greg and Jay will be honored at the 2009 MASA Fall Conference. The Polaris Leadership Award is sponsored by Ehlers & Associates, Inc. and the Richard Green Scholar Award is sponsored by the Cuningham Group. Thank you for your generosity so that these two individuals are recognized for their educational leadership!





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Registration Materials will be
emailed and available on the MASA
web site -- <http://www.mnasa.org> --
in early August.

See you in Duluth!

MASA and MDE present ...

The Summer Superintendent Conference Wednesday, August 12th 2009 Northland Inn Hotel



Join us as we welcome **Ioannis N. Miaoulis**, President and Director of the Museum of Science, Boston as the Keynote Speaker for the day. Ioannis is an innovative educator with a passion for both science and engineering. He has championed the introduction

of engineering into the Massachusetts science and technology public school curriculum which made Massachusetts the first in the nation in 2001 to develop a K-12 curriculum framework and assessments for technology/engineering.

Registration Materials have been sent to all MASA members and are available on the MASA website at <http://www.mnasa.org> --

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See you August!



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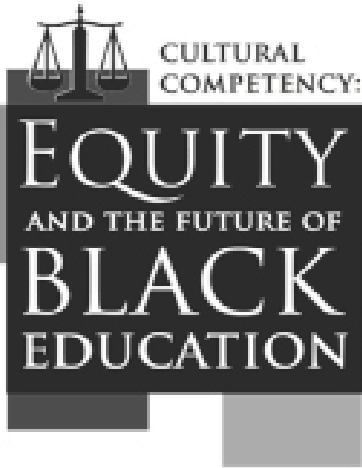
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SAVE THE DATE!

August 11-12, 2009

Join the Minnesota Humanities Center, Normandale Community College, and the University of Minnesota Department of African American and African Studies for the exciting two-day workshop, Cultural Competency: Equity and the Future of Black Education, as we directly address questions about the responsibility of schools and districts to revolutionize educational approaches.

Scheduled speakers include:

Dr. Roland Fryer, Harvard University
Gloria Ladson-Billings, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Paul Gorski, George Mason University's New Century College

Scheduled sessions include:

Social Justice and Equity
Does Culture Really Matter?
Competent Schools: Are Districts the Problem?
Race, Class, and Gender in Public Education

The details:

When: Tuesday and Wednesday, Aug. 11-12, 2009
Intended audience: grades k-12 educators and school administrators
Location: Normandale Community College
Fee: \$200--group rates are available! Contact Nicole Youngvorst at 651-772-4242 or nicole@minnesotahumanities.org for more information.

**For more information, or to register now, visit
www.minnesotahumanities.org/blackeducation.**

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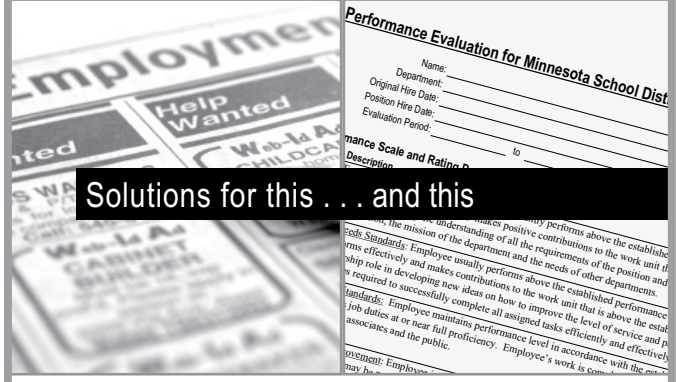
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Calendar 2009-2010

July 3
Independence Day Holiday
 MASA Offices Closed

July 22
Fresh Start Workshop III
 MASA Offices, St. Paul

July 23 & 24
Great Start Workshop I
 The Venue @ Galtier
 St. Paul

August 4
MASA Foundation Board Meeting
 MASA Offices, St. Paul

August 12
Summer Superintendent Conference
 The Northland Inn Hotel
 Brooklyn Center

August 13-14
MSBA Summer Conference
 The Northland Inn Hotel
 Brooklyn Center

August 14
Newsletter Submissions Due

September 7
Labor Day Holiday
 MASA Offices Closed

September 26
MASA Executive Committee Meeting
 9:30 - 11:30 am
MASA Board of Directors Meeting
 1 - 5:30 pm
 The Inn on Lake Superior
 Duluth

September 27
Board Meeting Continues
 9 - 11:30 am

September 27
MASA Foundation Golf Tournament
 12 noon
 Enger Park, Duluth

September 27-29
MASA Fall Conference
 Duluth Entertainment &
 Convention Center, Duluth

September 28-29
RtI Summit
 Rochester

October 5
MASA Foundation Board Meeting
 MASA Offices, St. Paul

October 21
Great Start Workshop II
 MASA Offices, St. Paul

October 21-23
MASE Fall Directors' Conference
 Cragun's Resort, Brainerd

October 28
Fresh Start Workshop IV
 MASA Offices, St. Paul

November 13
Newsletter Submissions Due

November 18-20
Curriculum Leaders of Minnesota Conference
 Cragun's Resort, Brainerd

November 26-27
Thanksgiving Holiday
 MASA Offices Closed

December 1
Great Start Workshop III
 MASA Offices, St. Paul

December 2
MASA Executive Committee Meeting
 9 - 10:45 am
MASA Board of Directors Meeting
 11 am - 4 pm
 MASA Offices, St. Paul

December 24 - 25 & 31
Winter Holiday
 MASA Offices Closed

2010...
 January 1
Winter Holiday
 MASA Offices Closed

January 5
MASA Foundation Board Meeting
 MASA Offices, St. Paul

January 13
Great Start Workshop IV
 Hilton Hotel, Minneapolis

January 14
2nd Year Cohort I
 Minneapolis Convention
 Center, Minneapolis

January 14-15
MSBA Winter Convention
 Minneapolis Convention
 Center, Minneapolis

February 15
Newsletter Submissions Due

February 11-13
AASA National Convention
 Phoenix, AZ

February 24-25
Minnesota School Safety Conference
 Radisson Hotel &
 Conference Center
 Plymouth

March 17
Great Start Workshop V & Year 2 Cohort II
 The Northland Inn Hotel
 Brooklyn Center

March 17
MASA Executive Committee Meeting
 9:30 - 11:30 am
MASA Board of Directors Meeting
 1 - 4 pm
 The Northland Inn Hotel
 Brooklyn Center

March 18-19
MASA & MASE Spring Conference
 The Northland Inn Hotel
 Brooklyn Center

April 2
Spring Holiday
 MASA Offices Closed

April 22
MASA Foundation Board Meeting
 MASA Offices, St. Paul

May 14
Newsletter Submissions Due

May 31
Spring Holiday
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June (Dates to be announced)
MASA Board Retreat
 Madden's Resort, Brainerd



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