

Leaders FORUM

Winter 2013

Kate Maguire is 2014 MN Superintendent of the Year



Kate Maguire
2014 MN Superintendent of the Year & Superintendent of Osseo Area Public Schools

The Minnesota Association of School Administrators (MASA) has named Superintendent Katherine Maguire, Superintendent for Osseo Area Schools, the 2014 Minnesota Superintendent of the Year.

Superintendent of the Year nominees are evaluated on how each candidate demonstrates:

- Leadership for learning—creativity in successfully meeting the needs of students in his or her school system.
- Communication skills—strength in both personal and organizational communication.
- Professionalism—constant improvement of administrative knowledge and skills, while providing professional development opportunities and motivation to others on the education team.
- Community involvement—active participation in local community activities and understanding of regional, national, and international issues.

“I’m honored to represent Minnesota’s outstanding superintendents, many of whom are colleagues and mentors,” said Kate Maguire. “This award recognizes the progressive, difficult and exciting work occurring in Osseo Area Schools. The improved results we are getting do not happen without strong administrative and teacher leadership, dedicated staff, a supportive community and excellent school board leadership.”

As the Minnesota honoree, Superintendent Maguire is a candidate among other state winners for National Superintendent of the Year, to be announced during the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) convention on February 13-15, 2014 in Nashville, TN.

Superintendent Maguire was selected for this honor by a panel of representatives from a variety of Minnesota education organizations. “Dr. Maguire is the consummate professional. She is a child-centered educator who truly cares about the development of every student in the Osseo Area Schools,” said MASA Executive Director Dr. Gary Amoroso.

Superintendent Maguire has been with Osseo Area Schools since 1993, serving as superintendent since 2010. Osseo Area

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INSPIRE

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EXECUTIVE VIEW...

This year, the leaders of MASA invite you to Minneivate!

MASA has begun a year-long initiative to bridge the space between our visions for the future of Minnesota's schools and the realities of today. "Minneivate!" is a dialogue process to build an action agenda for Minnesota educational leadership.

For several years, MASA has explored innovation in the practice of educational leadership in our state, and our Board and other leaders created a direction for our organization that would support advanced school leadership. MASA's Strategic Plan charges us with "strengthen(ing) relationships with other Minnesota educational associations and policy makers to develop a common education agenda," and to "deliver a multi-tiered system of professional development that meets the individualized learning goals of all members." We are doing a number of things in support of those goals, and a tremendously important aspect of our MASA initiatives is a continuing conversation among our members and our wider community of stakeholders.

This past December 3rd, MASA convened a group to begin a significant conversation about the future of education in Minnesota. We invited 275 participants, including the MASA Board and Regional Leaders, legislators, representatives of the business community, higher education, the philanthropic community, and other organizations that serve children and families. We were hoping to have fifty participants and we were delighted to have almost 100 constituents register! You can see some of the outcomes of that rich conversation by visiting the Minneivate! website: <http://minneivate.mnasa.org>

Results from the December meeting will help inform our work in the following months as we continue the conversation with communities across Minnesota. Our final product, to be released in autumn, 2014, will be an agenda for action that school leaders can use to build positive futures for education in Minnesota.

I'd like to invite all of our members into this conversation. At MASA, we are committed to

bringing our members the best information and perspectives in support of that dialogue. We have heard from experts such as Tony Wagner, Yong Zhao, Peter Skarzynski, and Annie McKee. When you hear an inspiring speaker present a vision for the future, do you see it as possible, or do you get whiplash as you think about it in the context of the reality of practice?

We live in times of rapid, pervasive change—not just in the technology that affects every part of our lives, but in the fabric of our communities, the expectations of public organizations, the impacts of economic shift, and the interaction of diverse communities locally and globally. As school leaders, we are tasked with preparing students for futures that we cannot dream of.

Peter Block writes in his book *Community, the Structure of Belonging*, "Modern society is plagued by fragmentation. The various sectors of our communities--businesses, schools, social service organizations, churches, government--do not work together. They exist in their own worlds. As do so many individual citizens, who long for connection but end up marginalized, their gifts overlooked, their potential contributions lost. This disconnection and detachment makes it hard if not impossible to envision a common future and work towards it together."

Let's take this opportunity to solve this fragmentation and make whole our community through quality conversations that support our common goals. Watch for a Minneivate! session in your region, join in the dialogue, and lead the way to an action agenda for real positive change for our schools.

Article written by

*Gary Amoroso, MASA Executive Director and
Mia Urick, MASA Director of Professional
Development*

Leaders Forum

Winter 2013

Volume 48, Number 2

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The *Leaders Forum* is your newsletter and we welcome your input. Please send your ideas or articles to Aimee Ranallo at aranallo@mnasa.org.

Maguire... Continued from front cover

Schools is the 5th largest district in Minnesota, supporting more than 20,000 students at 32 sites in the northwest Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area.

Under Superintendent Maguire's leadership, the district reduced \$3.1 million from its operating budget which lead to the restructuring of two departments to resource priorities around equitable student achievement. Dr. Maguire wrote, "This innovative organizational structure now supports instructional priorities through district site and classroom job-embedded professional development, delivered by equity teachers and curriculum assessment specialists."

Superintendent Maguire's executive team nominated her for the award, adding that, "Dr. Maguire leads our system's work to implement our strategic plan's key strategies, including 'creating transformational system change to ensure equitable



"Dr. Maguire is the consummate professional. She is a child-centered educator who truly cares about the development of every student in the Osseo Area Schools."

- Gary Amoroso, MASA

student achievement? Under her leadership, achievement is climbing; access to college-level coursework has increased; and graduation rates have improved. She has ensured that our system has a clear mission that employees live and breathe every day."

Superintendent Maguire received her doctorate in education and master's degree from the University of St. Thomas, and her bachelor's degree from the College of St. Benedict. Before becoming superintendent for the Osseo Area Schools, she served in a variety of positions for the district including teacher, principal, director of human resources, director of curriculum, and assistant superintendent. Dr. Maguire is an active member of MASA, a member

of the University of St. Thomas Educational Leadership Advisory Board, and a member of the Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development.

MASA Snapshot



December 3, 2013 - MASA hosted educational stakeholders from around the state during the Minnevate kick-off event. The day's events included presentations from Minnesota Secretary of State Mark Richie, MASA's Richard Green Scholar Aaron Ruhland, and Education Futures LLC founder John Moravec. Brenda Cassellius, Minnesota Commissioner of Education, also spoke with the group. Participants engaged in conversations about Minnesota's education future in the first step towards building an action agenda tool for school leaders! Next step - regional meetings! #Minnevate

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March 13 - 14**

**Minneapolis Marriott Northwest
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be available soon.



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INSPIRE...

Need a Little Inspiration?

Three Districts Share their Innovative Practice Success

Customized Professional Development



Deb Henton
Superintendent
North Branch Area Public
Schools

WIN (What I Need) Professional Development is a personally customized professional development opportunity for the 13-14 School Year. Research has shown when professional learning is job-embedded, it increases implementation of instructional best practices.

This is a time for teachers to work with district instructional leaders to deepen implementation of instructional best practices into the classroom. Teachers are working on, but not limited to, enhancing student learning targets, enhancing formative assessments, strategies for effective feedback and questioning combined with the continuous conversation of ways to integrate technology to increase student achievement and engagement.

Through an application process we have identified about 60 staff members across all grade levels to participate in this wonderful opportunity. We are three months into this initiative. The participants are pulled from their classrooms for two hours per month to work on their professional learning goal(s) for the year supported by Instructional Strategies Coaches, Media and Technology Integrationists, and outside consultants.

We budgeted this initiative out of district staff development funds. The District Staff Development Committee is committed to student learning. This initiative is a reflection of that commitment. Our staff are very appreciative for this opportunity as evidenced by the number of staff that applied for this wonderful learning venture.



District Collaboration



Matt Grose
Superintendent
Deer River Schools

The Itasca Area Schools Collaborative (IASC) is a joint powers organization made up of Hill City ISD #2, Northland ISD #118, Greenway ISD #316, Deer River ISD #317, Grand Rapids ISD #318, Nashwauk-Keewatin ISD#319, Floodwood ISD #698, and Itasca Community College. Covering over 3500 square miles and serving approximately 7000 students, IASC serves communities from across the Iron Range and the Leech Lake Indian Reservation.

IASC is committed to the principles of:

- Equity: all of the children of our region deserve rich educational opportunities, regardless of where they live;
- Solidarity: we can only be our best when we work together; and
- Results: the purpose of collaboration isn't great collaboration, but great results.

As a result of district collaboration in IASC, students have access to a broader array of courses, high level music instruction from the MacPhail School of Music, and virtual fieldtrips around the world through our immersive telepresence video system. Teachers are collaborating on multi-district staff development, regional common formative assessments, cross-district PLCs, and common instructional language through a shared teacher growth and evaluation model. Communities have access to a broader range of community education courses and are starting to take advantage of the cutting edge technology in their local district to access educational, business, and other resources. By creating economies of scale, districts are able to provide enterprise-level resources and technology to improve student learning, foster teacher growth, and improve building safety and security.

INSPIRE...

Innovation Grants and Recognition



Lynne Kovash
Superintendent
Moorhead Area Public Schools

As school leaders we are all responsible for creating an environment where creativity, innovation and risk-taking flourish. This is easier to write in a sentence than to accomplish. As a district leader I have looked for ways to create this type of environment in our schools.

This year we've implemented two ideas to help create this type of environment. We've started to provide innovation grants to teachers or groups of teachers. The purpose of this grant to provide a small amount of funding for teachers to practice innovation by transforming the learning environment through teaching strategies or technology. Our staff has looked at using theater to address bullying issues, the use of iPads to change the learning environment and technology for music students.

We've also implemented the Superintendent's Award for special recognition of staff, students, parents and community members who go above and beyond expectations in support of the district's mission to develop the maximum potential of every learner to thrive in a changing world. One of the specific areas we are using is recognition of innovation through practices and ideas that will change education. Through acknowledging those that are making a difference in our school district, our goal is to provide an environment where innovation and creativity are celebrated and honored.

What's Going On in *The Zone*?

Innovation Zone superintendents Jay Haugen, Farmington Area Public Schools, and Jeff Ronneberg, Spring Lake Park Schools, write about their experiences during the first five months in The Zone...

Five months into our designation as an Innovation Zone means five months of questions about "how it is going," and inquiries into "how can we become one." We are excited that there is so much interest, and that there are conversations about working with policy-makers to allow more Innovation Zones to be established. At this point, the most accurate description is that this is a work in progress, but here are some early learning.

First, just the designation itself has great benefits. Our strategic direction challenges us to unleash our staff, to create new systems that help every student meet their highest aspiration, and to personalize an education for each student. Designing this type of transformation has always been difficult because we worry so much about all the rules and regulations that control us. Being able to tell staff not to worry about all of that because we are an Innovation Zone and will work to overcome any obstacles in their way both frees our staff to think differently, and also demonstrates a level of professional support to our staff that they have seldom felt. A by-product of this is an evolving perception of administrative roles as supporting instead of controlling educational change.

Another thing we are coming to understand is that having the ability to potentially "waive rules and regulations," is not enough. There are on the books right now a large number of opportunities to waive rules concerning educational programming, on the surface giving us great flexibility. The problem is that each of these comes with an involved process of application and approval that is time consuming, uncertain, and often gets in the way of design as it adds another level of uncertainty and jumping through hoops. The fact that there are so many of these little known, and little used opportunities speaks, to the need for a different approach. To achieve true transformation, to create a sustainable system that serves every student well, we need to start with a blank-slate in regard to our educational program.

Finally, both of our school districts are happy to answer any questions or inquiries in regard to our work. Feel free to contact us, Jay Haugen (jhaugen@farmington.k12.mn.us) or Jeff Ronneberg (jronne@district16.org).



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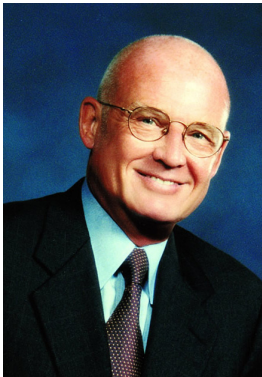
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INNOVATIVE LEADERSHIP...

The Change-Savvy INNOVATOR-IN-CHIEF



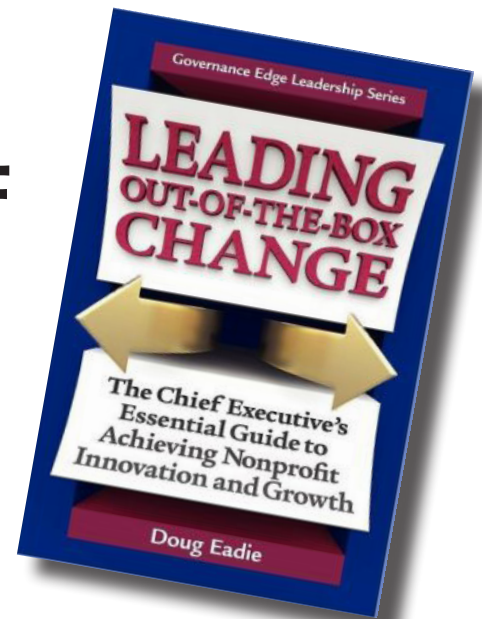
Doug Eadie
President & CEO
Doug Eadie & Company, Inc.

In his new book, *Leading Out-of-the-Box Change: Essential Guide to Achieving Nonprofit Innovation and Growth*, Doug Eadie deals with three main topics: The leadership role of your chief executive officer as innovator-in-chief; the key elements of a powerful new change planning tool: the Change Investment Portfolio Process; and how to transform association governing bodies into strong advocates for-- and committed owners of-- out-of-the-box change initiatives.

The following article is excerpted from Doug's book.

CEOs who succeed in the Innovator-in-Chief role are what I think of as change-savvy. The change-savvy CEOs that I've worked with and observed:

- Are technically very knowledgeable about best practices in the rapidly changing area of change planning and management, which means she isn't wedded to conventional planning wisdom and out-of-date approaches. You'll never hear a change-savvy CEO extolling the virtues of traditional long-range (or strategic) planning as a change tool, much less catch her fondling a ten-pound five year plan.
- Realize that successfully bringing off out-of-the-box change against all odds requires that she make leading the change planning and implementation process a top-tier priority. In practice, this means that the change-savvy CEO makes a firm commitment of time to leading change from the top and never tries to delegate one piece of another of this leadership role to lieutenants.
- Recognize that leading out-of-the-box change as Innovator-in-Chief of the organization is more psychological and political in nature than technical. Not only does the change-savvy CEO understand that fear is more often than not at the heart of staff resistance to change, she also takes strong, visible steps to allay that fear through the clear articulation of vision and other motivational steps that are intended to inspire and energize participants in the change process. The change-savvy CEO also pays close attention to the transformation of key stakeholders into ardent change champions.
- And command the respect of staff members and key stakeholders, primarily by playing a very aggressive and visible change-leadership role and practicing what she's preaching in the change arena. A change-savvy CEO knows that her leadership credibility depends on walking that talk, never contradiction in practice what she's saying publicly.



In addition to the characteristics I've just described, the CEOs I've observed who have been most successful at accomplishing out-of-the-box change have possessed three powerful character traits: courage; deep emotional self-awareness; and fundamental self-confidence. Being courageous and steadfast in leading change planning and management is a critical CEO trait. It never fails: the farther change planning moves outside the box in your organization, the more fear, anxiety, tension, and often anger you're likely to see. As you've probably already observed, fear (which feel quite weak) is often quickly transformed in indignation (which feel far stronger), and who's a more convenient culprit and target of anger than the highly visible Innovator-in-Chief who's leading the change charge? The CEOs I've seen do a great job of leading out-of-the-box change are loaded with calcium. That doesn't mean they're insensitive Genghis Khans bludgeoning staff into change -- quite the contrary. But it does mean they don't cave under pressure. They expect the resistance and frequent anger; and they withstand it.

The absence of deep emotional self-awareness can seriously limit the impact of a CEO in leading out-of-the-box change. I've seen CEOs who couldn't capitalize on the talents and commitment of strong women on their executive teams because they found such strengths threatening. I've observed CEOs who were unsuccessful in building critical partnerships and joint ventures with other organizations because they saw the world as a dark and dangerous place filled with competitors waiting to do them in. And, I've come across CEOs who need for security and control made them intolerant of the give-and-take or wide-open discussion and led them to impose on their organizations mechanistic long-range planning processes that substituted neatness and order for creative questioning and exploration. In these and other cases, what has struck me over the years is how hidden, unrecognized emotions can sabotage CEOs, causing them to see the world through an internal lens that distorts objective reality, and, hence, leads to inappropriate behavior.

Innovator-in-Chief...
Continued on Page 9

Innovator-in-Chief...

Continued from page 8

I know that this might sound like psychobabble to some readers, but long experience has convinced me that the most effective change leaders are emotionally so self-knowledgeable that they aren't easily sabotaged by deep-seated emotions they aren't aware of. A few years ago, I worked with such a CEO, who headed a large and highly successful senior services nonprofit. We were chatting one evening after getting through the first day of an intensive 1 1/2-day work session kicking off the organization's change planning process, when she confided that at one point in what'd been a great day she'd felt like lashing out at two of her board members. She she that when they'd raised some pretty pointed questions about her decision to pursue a merger with a sister agency a couple of months earlier, she out of the blue felt like a little girl again, being harshly judged by her parents, and the sudden surge of anger caught her off guard. Fortunately, she didn't last out, knowing that the anger --while a real emotion that she'd truly felt -- was totally misplaced, having to do with a vulnerable little girl inside, not with the strong CEO she'd become. That's what I mean by self-awareness.

The fundamentally self-confident CEOs I've worked with and observed have embodied a character trait that I think of as true humility. They are so secure, psychologically speaking, that they are able to celebrate -- and capitalize on -- the strengths of the people around them, both board and staff members. They're blessed with robust, healthy egos that aren't easily wounded and don't require constant protection. They are able to keep things in perspective, seldom seeing a personal challenge, slight or even insult as a cause to celebre. Rather, they are able to take the long view, resisting the impulse to last out now in the interest of achieving an important objective down the pike. They're keenly aware that the person who's treated them with apparent disrespect today might very well turn out to be a valuable ally some day if they bide their time.

Virginia Jacko, my colleague and coauthor of our book, *The Blind Visionary*, is a great example of a fundamentally self-confident CEO who's wasted absolutely zero time defending a fragile ego. President & CEO of the Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Virginia, who is blind, recounts a story in our book that vividly demonstrates the value of a healthy ego. Not long after her appointment as the first blind CEO of the Miami Lighthouse, Virginia learned that a prominent Lighthouse volunteer had commented to a current Lighthouse board member, referring to her appointment, "Can you believe that inmates are now running the asylum?" Were Virginia's feelings hurt? Of course. Did she lash out in anger? Of course not. She didn't take any action, and when she eventually sat down in a meeting with her detractor, she made clear her decision her desire to work together, letting bygones be bygones. The upshot? The person who'd make the derogatory comment became a close ally, even nominating Virginia for a major community award. That's the kind of emotional maturing that makes Virginia a highly successful out-of-the-box leader.

Key Work of the Innovator-in-Chief

Leading the out-of-the-box change charge as your organization's Innovator-in-Chief, the CEO plays three key roles that are critical to accomplishing significant change in your organization:

- As **Chief Process Designer**, the vision-driven CEO makes sure that the structures and processes that are required to plan and implement out-of-the-box change are well designed, both technically (for example, the planning steps that board members, staff, and external stakeholders go through actually result in technically sound change initiatives that can be implemented) and from a psychological/political perspective (for example, participation in the planning process turns keys stakeholders into owners of out-of-the-box change initiatives and consequently change champions for those initiatives).
- As **Chief Motivator**, the change-savvy CEO employs her words and deeds --usually in-person and always very visibly -- to build support for, and commitment to, out-of-the-box change, countering the inevitable inertia, and resistance that work against successful change.
- As **Chief Enabler**, the out-of-the-box leader enables the change process to move forward from plans to action in a full and timely fashion, through clear and firm direction, incisive decision making, the allocation of sufficient resources in terms of both staff time and money, and -- when necessary -- disciplinary action to overcome efforts to sabotage change.

Article Source: (2012). "The Change Savvy Innovator-in-Chief." *Association Leadership* 12.3:16-18. Excerpt from: Eadie, D. (2012). *Leading Out-of-the-Box Change*. Governance Edge Publishing. Contact Doug Eadie at doug@dougeadie.com.



**MASA Foundation
Grants
Available!**

The MASA Foundation will provide up to 10 grants to members this year for professional development experiences that you would not be able to access through your district or that are unique learning opportunities. Grants can range from \$500-\$750. To apply, simply submit a one page summary of your intended experience and either mail or fax it to the MASA offices (651-645-7518) or email Gary Amoroso (gamoroso@mnasa.org), and the Foundation Grant Committee will consider it in a timely manner.

SCHOOL SAFETY...

How Can I Help You?



Sheri Boyer-Jacobs
School Safety Specialist

Wouldn't it be best practice if every school had a greeter - a welcome desk - a security officer - *someone* - to keep an eye on school traffic at each primary entrance the entire school day? With the funding restraints we face in all areas of school operations, implementing best

practices can be an anomaly, especially when it comes to school safety. But keeping our schools safe is our foremost responsibility. If children don't feel safe at school, they don't feel "safe" to learn.¹ What can you do to build a safe school community?

The good news is that there are many practical strategies you can implement at no cost, or minimal cost. And there really are some excellent resources available. Following is a scenario that reveals the need for teaching your staff that they are each responsible for building a safe and secure school culture:

An unidentified individual is walking through your facility. It's ten o'clock in the morning and passing time is almost over. Somehow he has successfully walked past the welcome desk, the main office, the Commons. He is not wearing a district badge, school lanyard, or any other recognizable form of identification. Nonetheless, no one has stopped him. But he knows where he is going. As he walks with purpose, no one questions his purpose. In fact, this person has now walked your halls for ten minutes. Several staff have walked by, cast a quick smile, or worse, turned their head, to avoid an interruption of their impending task or time. He now enters a classroom wing. Another few minutes passes before an astute teacher calls the office and reports an unfamiliar person, in his forties, approaching her area. Administration announces a "Full Lockdown."

This is an actual event that happened last year. Fortunately, nothing tragic occurred, and the event prompted the district to take immediate action in securing its buildings and training its staff. But it's not an unusual story. In fact, a tragic example of an unaccounted for intruder occurred in Bailey, CO, 2006.³

What can we do to mitigate harm to our children, our staff, our communities? While no action we take comes with guarantees, we can build confidence and trust in our school communities through emergency planning and preparedness activities. You don't have to spend a fortune on high tech modalities, but you do have to spend time training your staff and communicating with your constituents.

Security expert, Paul Timm², instructs trainees to greet an unfamiliar person by asking, "How Can I Help You?" The word choice is critical because it is not a rhetorical question; rather, one has to consider a response. If the person has ill intentions, it may be difficult for him to answer with conviction as to his purpose. A simple strategy such as this costs you nothing - but it may save a life.

Consider providing school safety tips or brief scenarios at the beginning of staff meetings to keep useful school safety measures at the forefront. Perhaps these activities can be staff led. Your best security measure is your own staff: train them, guide them, test them, in how to foster a safe and welcoming district.

¹For more information on this topic, reference Hawkins, Karen M., *Educational Research Service*

²President, *RETA Security*, www.retasecurity.com

³www.nbcnews.com/id/15041037



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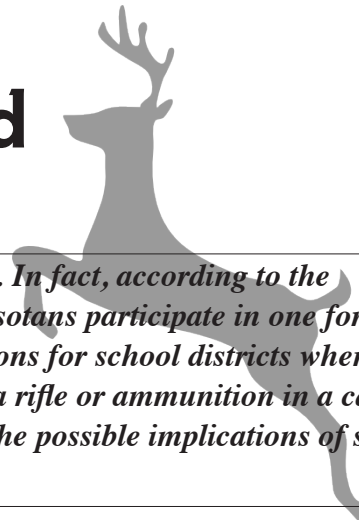
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LEGAL ISSUES...

School Safety: Firearms and the Hunting Season



Hunting is one of the most popular fall/winter activities in the state. In fact, according to the Department of Natural Resources, more than half a million Minnesotans participate in one form of hunting or another. Occasionally, this can create difficult situations for school districts when an employee, student or member of the public inadvertently leaves a rifle or ammunition in a car following a weekend or after school hunt. This article will discuss the possible implications of such conduct and the various considerations school districts face.



Charles E. Long
Education Law Attorney
Kennedy & Graven, Chartered

Minnesota law generally prohibits individuals from possessing, storing or keeping a dangerous weapon while knowingly on school property. School property or school location is defined to include: any school building, whether leased or owned; the improved grounds around a school building, such as a parking lot; a child care center while children are present and participating in the program; school buses; and buildings or facilities clearly noticed as being temporarily used for school-related purposes. Any person who violates this law is guilty of a felony and subject to fines and/or imprisonment. Minn.Stat. § 609.66, Subd 1d(a).

As with most statutes, there are several exceptions to this prohibition. A person authorized under the state law (i.e., has a state-issued permit) to carry a pistol may possess one in a school parking lot while placing the pistol in or retrieving it from the trunk or rear area of a vehicle. Similarly, a person

with a conceal and carry permit may keep or store a pistol in a motor vehicle while the vehicle is on school property. Minn.Stat. § 609.66, Subd. 1d(f)(3) and (4). Pursuant to state law, the firearm must be unloaded and in the closed trunk of a motor vehicle. Minn.Stat. § 97B.045, Subd. 1. However, even with a permit, an individual may not carry a firearm on or about the person's clothes or person in a location known to be school property. A person who does so is guilty of a misdemeanor. Minn. Stat. § 609.66, Subd 1d(d).

In addition to the parking lot exception, Minnesota law allows licensed peace officers and military personnel or students participating in military training and performing official duties to possess firearms on school property. It

allows weapons possession by individuals in “firearm safety or marksmanship courses or activities,” by “a ceremonial color guard,” and at a “gun or knife show held on school property.” Individuals also may possess “dangerous weapons [including firearms], BB guns, or replica firearms” on school property “with written permission of the principal or other person having general control and supervision of the school.” Minn.Stat. § 609.66, Subd. 1d(f)(8). The statute does not establish any criteria to be employed. Decisions are made on a case-by-case basis

A different statute applies to firearms used for hunting. Minn.Stat. § 97B.045 allows a person to transport an unloaded, uncased firearm (other than a pistol) in a motor vehicle while lawfully hunting on private or public land or while “traveling to or from a site the person intends to hunt lawfully that day or has hunted lawfully that day unless . . . on school grounds . . .” Minn.Stat. § 97B.045, Subd. 3(emphasis added).

With respect to teachers and other staff, school districts may restrict employees from carrying or possessing firearms “while acting in the course and scope of employment” and may impose “employment related” sanctions for a violation. Minn.Stat. § 624.714, Subd. 18. This applies even if the employee has a permit to carry a gun. While there is no definitive test for when an employee is “acting in the course and scope of employment”, factors such as the nature of the employee’s duties, the location(s) of work and the hours of employment are relevant.

School districts must report to the commissioner of education all incidents involving the use or possession of dangerous weapons in a school zone. The report must describe the incident, identify the time and circumstances, provide information about the offender and victim (if any), state the incident’s cost to the school and victim, and describe the actions taken by the school district in response. Minn.Stat. § 121A.06.

Beyond the possible criminal sanctions, Minnesota law contains additional penalties for students who bring firearms to school. School boards “must expel for a period of at least one year a pupil who is determined to have brought

Firearms...

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Firearms...

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a firearm to school except the board may modify this expulsion requirement for a pupil on a case-by-case basis.” Minn.Stat. § 121A.44(a)(emphasis added). This provision creates occasional dilemmas for school districts. On the one hand, it suggests that a one year expulsion is mandatory yet grants school districts discretion to impose a lesser penalty. However, school districts may be bound by “zero tolerance” policies which eliminate such discretion. Such policies may require the same penalty for a student who inadvertently leaves a shot gun in a car trunk following a weekend of hunting as for a student who purposefully and knowingly brings a firearm on to school property. School districts, therefore, should review their policies to ensure that they accurately reflect the board’s intent and do not bind the district to a specific course of action that may have unintended results.

Taken together, the following principles can be discerned:

- A person who is not an employee or student and has a permit may have an unloaded pistol in the trunk of his or her car that is parked on school property.
- A person who is not an employee or student and has a permit may possess a pistol or have a pistol on his or her person while on school property but only for the purpose of putting the pistol in or removing the pistol from the trunk of a motor vehicle.

- Unless another statutory exception applies, no teacher, student or person without a permit may be in possession of a pistol or keep a pistol in a motor vehicle on school property without first obtaining written permission of the school principal or other person having general control and supervision over the school.
- Unless another statutory exception applies, no person may be in possession of a firearm (such as a hunting rifle) or keep a firearm in a motor vehicle on school property without first obtaining written permission of the school principal or other person having general control and supervision over the school.
- School districts may prohibit teachers and other staff from carrying or possessing firearms while acting in the course and scope of employment even if the individuals are permit holders.

If permitted by their individual policies, school districts may exercise discretion and modify the state law requiring a year-long expulsion of any student who brings firearm to school by imposing disciplinary consequences for such behavior on a case-by-case basis.

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.

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INVEST MN'S TALKING POINTS...

Superintendent/Board Relationships ARE Public Relations



Shari Prest
Ark Associates

"The quality of superintendent-school board relationships has a direct impact on the success of any school system through the power of good public relations" (Patricia Richardson, Journal of School Public Relations, 2005).

According to a 2010 study done by MASA Richard Green Scholar, Mary Ann Nelson, the vast majority of Minnesota superintendents view their relationships with their school boards as good or very good. The study also reveals a clear correlation between superintendents' job satisfaction and their relationship with the school board. Of the 37% of respondents rating themselves as highly effective, 63% selected the board of education as their number-one or number-two most important effectiveness factor.

"A well-rounded working relationship between the school board and the superintendent is imperative if the district wants to achieve the goals set by the school board and to meet the mandates and requirements from federal and state agencies" (Raye Lynn White, Boards in distress: school boards' and superintendents' perceptions of their role and responsibilities during conflict, University of Texas, 1969).

Yet in some Minnesota school districts, issues still exist. Outside facilitators are required for conflict resolution, contracts are not renewed, school board meetings exhibit animosity that interferes with resolving issues, news reporters tell stories of dissention, lawsuits are threatened, stakeholders receive mixed messages, and—in some cases—board meetings actually reduce instead of increase stakeholder confidence.

Many of these circumstances are less the result of diverse perspectives on issues than they are relationships and the ability or inability to deal with difficult issues or challenging personalities constructively.

Constructive relationships are built upon the foundation of trust: trust in the administrator's honesty, competence, loyalty and reliability; and trust that board members will demonstrate those same characteristics. As the foundation of trust is strengthened, administrators and school board members are likely to become more communicative, have a deeper

understanding of issues, be more able to discern and honor the different roles of professional leadership and elected leadership, and garner greater public support. The building blocks of trust include honesty, competence, loyalty, and reliability.

Honesty

Honesty goes all the way from truth telling to full disclosure and may include the following leadership commitments:

- Provide all relevant information rather than parsing it out to control outcomes.
- Ensure that all board members have access to the same relevant information.
- Treat board members with equal respect, having the same value for each board member's input.
- Present a balanced picture of problems, solutions or accomplishments in appropriate forums.
- Be willing to say, "I don't know" or "I made a mistake."
- Grow genuine respect for diverse opinions and individual perspectives.

"... the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth..."
(extracted from Judicial System Oath Commitment).

Competence

Competence is an accumulation of innate abilities combined with skills derived from education, training, experience, practice and relationships. Real and perceived administrative competence in the school environment may include the markers that follow:

- Development of clarity about role boundaries between board and administration.
- Evidence of collaboration and cooperation with others.
- A compelling vision that has the capacity to inspire others to behave in ways that move the organization and its stakeholders toward that vision.
- Benchmarks of the objectives and outcomes that will make the vision a reality.
- Evidence of responsible risk-taking and progress.
- Clear and consistent communications about school district challenges, progress, and needs in a manner that reminds people they are genuine stakeholders in the system.

"If people are failing, they look inept. If people are succeeding, they look strong and good and competent. That's the 'halo effect.' Your first impression of a thing sets up your subsequent beliefs" (Daniel Kahneman, Senior Fellow at Princeton University's Wilson School of Learning).

Loyalty

Loyalty is defined as being faithful to a person, ideal, custom, cause, or duty. For effective school administrators and school board members, all of those characteristics

Public Relations ...
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Public Relations...

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apply and should be honored in ways that support honesty, competence or reliability.

- Only say about a person what you would say to that person.
- Problem solve instead of blame—even in your own mind.
- Be loyal to the process and the majority group decision after that decision is made.
- Be committed to best possible outcomes regardless of where or how a decision was made.

“Here in America we are descended in blood and in spirit from revolutionists and rebels - men and women who dare to dissent from accepted doctrine. As their heirs, may we never confuse honest dissent with disloyal subversion” (Dwight D. Eisenhower).

Reliability

Reliability is doing what you say you will do with such regularity that others trust that you are reliable.

- Reliability is the litmus test for trustworthiness.
- Follow through on all commitments—large or small—in a timely manner.

- Keep a calendar of commitments, including when you will return calls, schedule appointments, take action on a specific item, meet benchmarks, etc. Review your calendar and give yourself a percentage grade at the end of each month until you regularly achieve 100%.
- Never make a commitment loosely or without the intent or capacity to follow through.

“Imagine a world where all your friends, teammates, family members, educators, coaches, and those you encountered on a daily basis took full responsibility for their actions. In this imaginary world everyone you interacted with did what they said they would do. And people approached interpersonal interactions with a perspective of looking beyond personal goals to consider those of the team or the community” (Cory Dobbs, Ed. D, Leadership Principle #1 – Do What You Say You Will Do, 2012).

Trust-building habits and greater public relationships will grow within your system as you model honesty, competency, loyalty and reliability.

CAPITOL REPORT...

Looking to the 2014 LEGISLATIVE SESSION



Valerie Dosland
EWALD
MASA Lobbyist

The 2014 session promises to be very short, with the legislature convening in late February and adjourning in mid-May. Legislative leaders have said that they envision a 10-to-12 week session.

As a result, the policy and budget agenda will be short for the DFL majorities and the Governor, with the primary focus on completing a capital budget. However, a small supplemental budget is almost always passed the second year of the legislative cycle.

In October, Minnesota received more good economic news and as a result, the state will be able to pay a large portion of the remaining amount owed to public schools. Over the last two budget cycles, state leaders withheld \$2.8 billion in school payments to help balance the budget. As the economic picture has improved, that amount has been paid down over time. With the increased positive economic outlook, the state announced \$636 million more will go to repay Minnesota schools. An estimated \$287 million will go to fully repay school aid borrowing and \$349 million will reduce the school district property tax recognition shift. A majority of the additional money came from unexpected savings in state spending, largely health and human services costs. The state's balance to schools is now at \$238 million.

An improving economy means a budget surplus is possible but not a given. In addition, the Governor and legislative leaders have expressed their commitment to repealing two taxes instituted last session – increases in the farm equipment and warehousing taxes. Governor Dayton often states the 2014 session will be the “un-session.”

The next economic forecast is out early December, which will give us a better idea of what might happen in regards to funding this next session.

As it relates to education, a number of policy issues are likely to take over the attention of the education committees. Mandate reduction is always a popular topic – the teacher evaluation requirement remains unfunded and world's best work force is getting many questions. We also are planning for continued discussion of the Safe and Supportive Schools legislation, school district facilities needs and statewide health insurance.

Although February 25, 2014 seems a long time from now, there is important work you can now do to solidify your relationships with your legislative delegation. The interim is an excellent time to build and strengthen relationships with your elected officials, educate them on your issues and rally their support for future legislative efforts. Your work now strengthens the work MASA is able to do on your behalf at the Capitol.

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE...

Creating a System Worthy of Our Vision



Jay Haugen
MASA President and
Superintendent
Farmington Area Schools

In the Fall, 2013 *Leaders Forum*, I described a vision for education intended to truly “not leave anyone behind.” I ended saying “I feel an incredible sense of urgency to set a new course before it is too late. To create a system that inspires all students, engages them, encourages them to raise their own aspirations, and to explore all the possibilities for their life. For every student has greatness inside them.”

Now, our own MASA is working to create a state-wide vision for education, involving all of us and our communities in the process. I am confident the outcome will be inspiring, a vision we all believe in, one that does not leave any student behind.

Reflecting on my own 30 years in education, I see that we are never short of vision. It is successful implementation that eludes us, especially at the system (district) level. Occasionally, a great vision of education comes to fruition in an individual school, and we all witness classrooms in our own district where a powerful vision is fully implemented, but it is rare, if ever, that an entire system of schools fulfills a unified vision. Today’s system of education relies on a hero, either at the building or classroom level to find success for all. We need the system to be the hero.

It is easy to dwell on external reasons for this, such as the laws, rules and regulations that control us, funding that has not kept up with inflation, inflexible unions, and teacher preparation programs that don’t meet the needs of a 21st century education. In fact, I am so confident that external factors keep us from reaching our vision for students that I have championed many new laws that increase our flexibility, including the innovation zone legislation that our school district ultimately applied for and received. But with

“...keep in mind when creating a powerful system that just as we as school systems chafe under the control of those above us, our teachers chafe at our control. For each teacher has unique strengths, talents and abilities, pathways to success for them and their students. Requiring all staff to teach in the same way, including using “best practice,” makes as much sense as requiring every student to learn in the same way.”



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so much of this out of our control, I’d like to spend a little time exploring something internal that is in our control.

Many of the things that are part of our vision, customizing/personalizing education, finding and developing the strengths in every student, creating a continuous progress system, teaching 21st Century Skills etc., often lead to controversy and political wrangling when proposed by a school system. But when these things are led by a teacher, or a team of teachers, they can come true with little or no fanfare. How can we create a system that inspires and frees our teaching staff to fulfill our vision of education?

One thing to keep in mind when creating a powerful system is that just as we as school systems chafe under the control of those above us, our teachers chafe at our control. For each teacher has unique strengths, talents and abilities, pathways to success for them and their students. Requiring all staff to teach in the same way, including using “best practice,” makes as much sense as requiring every student to learn in the same way. We must free our staff to design their own “how,” using best practice only as a guide. This also leads to increased accountability in a system. Clarifying a vision naturally increases accountability, telling someone how to achieve that vision lowers accountability, allowing people to say “it’s not my fault, you told me to do it this way.” This is something for our policy-makers to remember as well.

And so, I for one am done running district-wide teaching and learning initiatives from the central office, done requiring everyone to follow “best-practice,” done telling everyone how to do their job. I am for creating a system that inspires everyone with its vision, unleashes staff to create their own pathways to that vision, infuses joy, excitement and passion, and holds everyone accountable for progress toward the vision.

And now, the most challenging part. At some point, early in their educational careers, each student must be unleashed in much the same way, allowing them to create their own unique learning pathways, customizing high standards for them based on their strengths and passions, so they can reach their own highest aspirations.

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CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS...

Negotiations Filtered through Song and Verse



Greg Vandal
Educational Consultant
Vox Liberi

For some reason, the Joni Mitchell piece from the 60s called “Both Sides Now” is wafting through my brain. Not the more modern version by Carly Rae Jepsen or the gorgeous cover by Judy Collins... It is Joni’s original song – first heard, perhaps, on my transistor radio – that won’t let go.

I was an educator about a decade removed from the first release of that soulful melody when I first entered the classroom. As college debater,

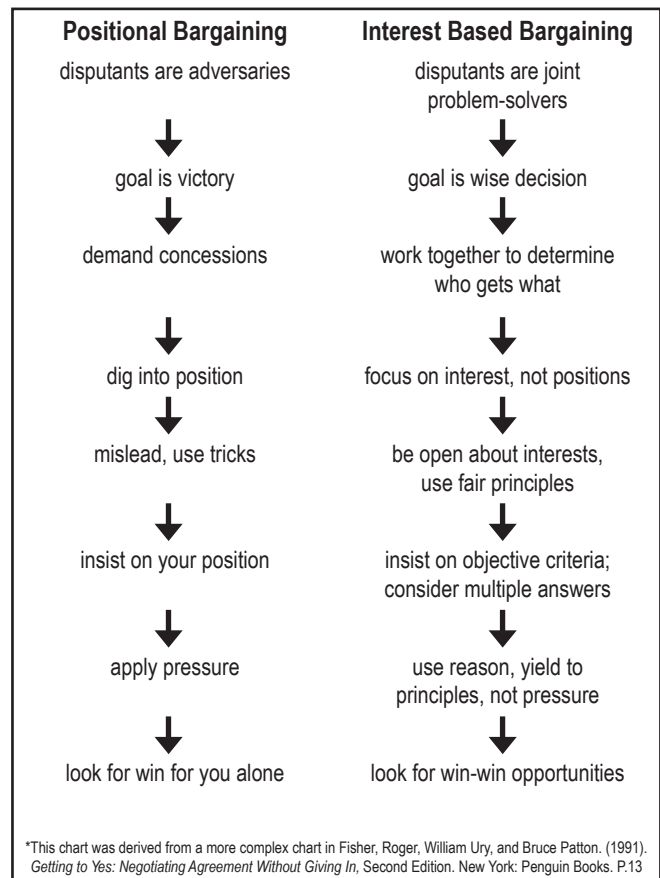
I was eager to volunteer at Eden Valley-Watkins for teacher negotiations. Pity Bob Block, a great superintendent, who had to suffer through my vociferous challenge of nearly every word of the proposed ground rules that first night, and it went on from there. Somehow, Bob tolerated the tirade, as did Charlie Kyte some years later in that same role.

When Charlie left for Northfield, I was then his high school principal and the school board tapped me to take Charlie’s place. It was like Joni’s “dizzy dancing way you feel,” for I became the lead negotiator for the very board I had challenged in those early years. I faced some of the same teachers at what used to be our common table. And Joni said:

“I’ve looked at life from both sides now
From WIN and LOSE and still somehow
It’s life’s illusions I recall
I really don’t know life at all”

One of those illusions was soon made clear. As a teacher, I had framed a seemingly reasonable solution to a problem with leave that would have permitted a staff member to attend to the critical illness of his spouse. (These were the days before FMLA.) The proposal was met with skepticism by the other side. Some years later, now as the district’s spokesperson, I brought similar language to the fore. And it was met with skepticism by the other side... The substance of the solution was not what prompted the hesitation, it was the nature of the negotiations process used.

Too often, as Joni said of life, we look at negotiations as “WIN and LOSE.” We think about solutions to problems both sides experience as a part of the exchange. We surrender good ideas on the battlefield of bargaining because these inevitably involve a trade. After all, “something’s lost, but something’s gained in living every day...” But, it need not always be that way.



Traditional bargaining surely has its place; the trade may be a necessary part of reaching agreement on perpetually limited resources. When dollars are involved, the rituals of this process provide the (PELRA) protections of a kind of rules of engagement.

But “look at clouds” another way; consider that the rituals themselves can “block the sun.” Discussions about leave, professional development, and the like might best be reconciled if the bargaining process is Interest Based rather than traditional in its approach. Would that the potential disputants might come to understand that many solutions to life’s great challenges can be mutually advantageous.

Life experience with “both sides” – and both processes – has led to a belief that bargaining teams that start with a clear understanding of common interests can more effectively transition to the traditional approach when discussions inevitably turn to money. These are the “dreams and schemes” of Joni’s meditation that can keep good contract negotiations – and good staff relations – heading toward the light.



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Questions? Contact Mary Bettlach
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Patricia Clair, Executive Director of Student Support
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Sean Cotherman, Assistant Principal,
MTS (MN Connections Academy)

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Michael Spanier, Interim Superintendent,
Sartell-St. Stephen Schools

Mary Stafford, President & Chief Operating Officer,
Distinctive Schools

Steve Swiontek, Superintendent, Lancaster School District

Erin Talley, Director of Teaching & Learning,
Elk River Area School District

Joe Thimm, Superintendent, Chisago Lakes School District

Jason Wenschlag, Principal, Richfield Public Schools

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2014 MASA Elections... Nominate Today!

Nominations are open until January 14, 2014 for the MASA offices of:

2014 - 2015 MASA President-Elect

The President-Elect serves one year, followed by one year as President and one year as Past President. In the year of presidency, a student from the President's district will receive a \$1,000 scholarship. All members located in the "Metro" districts (Region 9) are eligible.

Accountabilities of this office include:

- represent MASA for 3 years (2014 - 2017)
- participate in MASA Executive Committee and Board meetings
- assist the President in providing general leadership to the organization
- perform all duties of the President, in absence of the President
- recommend appointments of all standing committee members, including Chairs-Elect

2014 - 2017 MASA Treasurer

The MASA Treasurer to the MASA Board of Directors serves a three-year term. All MASA members are eligible.

Accountabilities of this office include:

- represent MASA for 3 years (2014-2017)
- participate in MASA Executive Committee and Board meetings
- represent and promote MASA
- assist the Executive Director in developing the annual budget
- review and approve monthly expenditures
- manage investments for the association

Superintendent Component Group Representative to the MASA Board of Directors for Region 5

The Component Group Representatives to the MASA Board of Directors serves a three-year term representing their region. This Representative will replace the Component Group Board Representative who are completing their term June 30, 2014.

Greater Minnesota Curriculum Component Group Representative to the MASA Board of Directors (Must be from Region 1-8)

The Component Group Representative to the MASA Board serves a three-year term. This Representative will replace the Component Group Board Representative that is completing their term June 30, 2014.

Service Provider Component Group Representative to the MASA Board of Directors

The Component Group Representative to the MASA Board serves a three-year term. This Representative will replace the Component Group Board Representative that is completing their term June 30, 2014.

Metro Special Education Component Group Representative to the MASA Board of Directors (Must be from Region 9)

The Component Group Representative to the MASA Board serves a three-year term. This Representative will replace the Component Group Board Representative that is completing their term June 30, 2014.

AASA Regional Governing Board Representative (2)
Represent Minnesota on the AASA Regional Governing Board. Representatives must be a joint MASA/AASA member and also have been an AASA member for a least three consecutive years. This representative will replace the representative who is completing his term June 30, 2012.


The Nomination Process:

MASA officers have the opportunity to influence education in Minnesota and serve their fellow colleagues.

We encourage you to nominate yourself or a colleague who you feel would be a strong leader for MASA. If you nominate a colleague, please contact your nominee to ask them whether or not they are interested in running for the position and so that they know you have nominated them!

Nomination forms and the lists of eligible candidates are available on the MASA web site (www.mnasa.org). Fill out your nomination and return it to the MASA office via mail or fax by January 13, 2014. You may also email your nomination to aranallo@mnasa.org.

MASA Awards Recognize Outstanding Leadership



Administrators of Excellence Award
Kay E. Jacobs Award
MASA Distinguished Service Award
Richard Green Scholars Program
Outstanding Central Office Leader Award
Polaris Leadership Award

Each year, the MASA/MASE Spring Conference provides an opportunity to recognize outstanding members who are dedicated leaders and advocates for children and Minnesota education. We encourage you to consider nominating yourself or a colleague for recognition. Nominate someone who you feel reflects the qualities of a leader who is committed to education and who is an exemplary representative of MASA. Information packets with award nomination forms will be emailed to all members. Award background information is also available on the MASA Website (www.mnasa.org).

Nominations are due by January 13, 2014.

Congratulations!

Ric Dressen Receives MASA's 2013 Polaris Award



Dr. Ric Dressen accepting the 2013 MASA Polaris Award, presented by Joel Sutter, during the Fall conference.

The Minnesota Association of School Administrators (MASA) has named Ric Dressen, Superintendent for Edina Public Schools, the recipient of the MASA Polaris Leadership Award. Dr. Dressen was honored for his exemplary school leadership and a lifetime of balanced achievement inside and outside of education at a statewide recognition ceremony during October's MASA Fall Conference in Duluth. 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. Dressen 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. Dressen has been the superintendent of Edina Public Schools since 2006. Previously he served as superintendent at Waconia Public Schools and Alexandria Public Schools. Dr. Dressen holds a doctorate degree in education from the University of Minnesota, a master's degree in educational administration from Minnesota State University, Bemidji, and a bachelor's degree in elementary education and elementary physical education from St. Cloud State University.

Aaron Ruhland is MASA's 2013 Richard Green Scholar



Aaron Ruhland accepting the 2013 MASA Richard Green Scholar Award, presented by Jim Hess, during the Fall conference.

The Minnesota Association of School Administrators (MASA) has named Aaron Ruhland, Director of Learning and Accountability at Orono Public Schools, the 2013 Richard Green Scholar. Mr. Ruhland was honored and presented his work during October's MASA Fall Conference in Duluth.

MASA, with the support of Cuningham Group Architecture, established the Richard Green Scholars Program in 2006 to honor the scholarly work and professional development of Minnesota school leaders. Mr. Ruhland has been recognized for his research, writing and presentation of his paper exploring the relationships between financial resources, educational processes and student outcomes, entitled Educational Adequacy: Leading the dialogue about educational process and outcomes.

If you're interested in reviewing Mr. Ruhland's work, his Powerpoint presentation and paper are available on the MASA website (www.mnasa.org, "Awards" section).

Mr. Ruhland has been with Orono Public Schools for over 15 years. He is currently a doctorate candidate at the University of Minnesota in the Organizational Leadership, Policy and Development (OLPD) Department. Mr. Ruhland holds an educational specialist degree from the University of Minnesota and a bachelor's degree from Hamline University in sociology and psychology.



Calendar of Events...

2013

December

25 - 27
MASA Offices Closed

2014...

January

1
MASA Offices Closed

15
Great Start Cohort Session 4
MASA Offices, St. Paul

16-17
MSBA Winter Conference
Minneapolis

February

13-15
AASA National Convention
Nashville, TN

March

12
MASA Board of Directors Meeting
Marriott, Brooklyn Park

12
Great Start Cohort Session 5
Marriott, Minneapolis

13-14
MASA/MASE Spring Conference
Marriott, Brooklyn Park

June

19-20
MASA Board of Directors Retreat
Madden's Resort, Brainerd

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YouTube: MnASA Forum



Gary's Typepad Blog: Voice of MN Education



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