

# Leaders FORUM

Winter 2016

## Curt Tryggestad is the 2017 Minnesota Superintendent of the Year

**M**ASA has named Dr. Curt Tryggestad, Superintendent of Eden Prairie Schools, as the 2017 Minnesota Superintendent of the Year.

As the Minnesota honoree, Dr. Tryggestad is a candidate among other state recipients for National Superintendent of the Year, to be announced during the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) convention held on March 1-4, 2017 in New Orleans, LA. Dr. Tryggestad was selected for this honor by a panel of representatives from a variety of Minnesota education organizations.

“During his time at Eden Prairie Schools, Dr. Tryggestad has become a pillar of leadership and professional excellence within his schools and the surrounding communities,” said MASA Executive Director Dr. Gary Amoroso. “Dr. Tryggestad is deserving of this award in every fashion, and I am excited to continue to watch him lead Eden Prairie Schools for many years to come. On behalf of MASA, I am extremely proud to have him represent our administrators as Minnesota’s 2017 Superintendent of the Year.”

Eden Prairie Schools serves 9,300 students with six elementary schools, a middle school and a high school as well as two early childhood program sites and the Tassel Transition Program. Eden Prairie Schools has one of the most comprehensive digital programs in the country, providing individual devices to students from early childhood through high school and targeted, job-embedded professional development opportunities for their teaching staff. Eden Prairie has the largest array of student activities in the state, with more than 80% of their high school students involved in at

least one after school activity. Eden Prairie students consistently score above the state ACT averages and are recognized as State AP Scholars at a rate far outpacing all other Minnesota high schools.

“Dr. Tryggestad exemplifies every day the key values of leadership, communication, professionalism, and community involvement that are the important components of a successful superintendent,” said Elaine Larabee, Chair of the Eden Prairie School Board. “Eden Prairie has a rich and diverse student culture that requires a variety of programming to serve a variety of needs. During his tenure with Eden Prairie Schools, Dr. Tryggestad has led a number of initiatives that have been respectful of that culture and will result in the long term success of all students and of the district itself.”

Dr. Tryggestad began his duties as superintendent of Eden Prairie Schools on July 1, 2012. Prior to working at Eden Prairie Schools, he was the Superintendent at Little Falls Community Schools, Superintendent at Esko Public Schools, and Secondary Principal at Pine City Public Schools. Dr. Tryggestad began his career in education as an instrumental music instructor.

Read the full news release at [www.mnasa.org/news](http://www.mnasa.org/news).

*The Minnesota Superintendent of the Year Award is sponsored by ATSe&R, Planners/Architects/Engineers. Visit their web site at [www.atstr.com](http://www.atstr.com).*



Curt Tryggestad  
Superintendent  
Eden Prairie Schools

## What's Inside

- 2 **MASA Business Partners**
- 3 **Executive View**  
We Are Here To Support You
- 4 **MASA Fall Conference Thank-Yous**
- 5 **President's Message**  
New Year, New Resolutions
- 7 **MASA Elections & Awards**
- 9 **2016-17 New Members**
- 11 **Legislative Update**  
2016 Elections – More Changes at the Capitol
- 13 **Federal Advocacy**  
MASA and MASE Members Lobby for Education Issues in Washington D.C.
- 14 **AASA December Advocate**  
Preparing for a New Congress and Administration
- 15 **Technology**  
On Being a Passionate Beginner
- 16 **Professional Assistance Team**
- 17 **Effective School Boards**  
The Key Work of School Boards
- 18 **Legal Issues**  
New FLSA Regulations Cast in Doubt by Recent Court Decision
- 19 **Put Me in, Coach...Notes for Mentors**  
Teaching Civility
- 21 **Fall Award Recipients**
- 23 **Invest in MN**  
Creating a Change Culture
- 24 **Research to Practice**  
The "20-80" Rule
- 26 **Research Focused**  
Social Media Use in the Superintendency
- 28 **Preparing Future Leaders**  
Leading the Minnesota Aspiring Superintendents' Academy
- 32 **MASA Calendar**

## 2016-17 MASA BUSINESS PARTNERS

### Special thanks to our 2016-17 MASA Business Partners!

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

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# We Are Here To Support You



Gary Amoroso  
Executive Director  
Minnesota Association of School  
Administrators

As you may recall, MASA conducted our annual survey of the membership in September. The results of the survey are available on our web site. One area of the results that drew my attention was the feedback regarding the legal support benefit provided by

our association. It was evident that there is a segment of our members who are unaware of the legal support MASA provides to our members. I'd like to share a few examples where MASA provides legal support.

At times, a Board might want to end the contract relationship with our member. This can occur prior to the expiration of the contract. In that type of case an attorney works with us to secure as positive a financial settlement as possible. We always work to maintain the professional integrity and reputation of our member. We want to ensure that they are in a good position to seek another position if they wish.

Other times, a Board may conduct an investigation regarding the actions of a member that could result in disciplinary action. We work with an attorney to represent our member during the investigation.

Lastly, there are times when someone files a complaint with the Board of School Administrators (BOSA) involving a member. Again, we work with an attorney to represent our member during those proceedings.

Of course there could be other situations that might necessitate the need for legal support for a member. I do want to clarify that our legal support does not include situations where our member chooses to file some type of legal action against a district or individual. If a member wanted to do this, they would need to secure their own legal representation.

Legal support is available to any active MASA member. It is important to note that if our member seeking legal support is supervised by

another MASA member, and the supervising member is involved in the issue, MASA has processes in place to build a fire wall between those interests. MASA will protect each member's benefits and rights throughout the process.

The amount of financial support a member is entitled to depends upon their years of membership in MASA. A first year member of MASA is entitled to \$700 in support. A member receives an additional \$500 of support for each additional year of consecutive membership, up to a maximum of 10 years. That would equal a maximum of \$5,200 for a member who has ten years of consecutive membership.

The process to gain legal support begins with our member contacting me. We thoroughly review the situation, I explain the available benefit and our member makes the decision on whether they want to access the MASA support or not. If a member wants to proceed, I have an attorney contact them. The attorney explains the process in order for our member to retain them. If our member wants to proceed, the attorney sends them the retainer letter and MASA sends the person a letter identifying the amount of legal support that MASA will provide. It is important to note, that once the MASA financial support is exhausted, the member is responsible for any additional attorney fees.

It is also important to note that if a member is a member of AASA, they can request legal support from AASA. The AASA legal support is also based on a member's consecutive years of membership. For each year of consecutive service up to ten years a person may be able to access \$1,000 per year. I provide the contact for AASA and our member makes the decision on if they want to pursue this avenue.

I hope this does not sound confusing. I work closely with every member that accesses our legal benefit. I know these can be very trying situations to experience. You will not walk that journey on your own; your professional association will be with you every step of the way.

As always please contact me at (651) 319-1211 or [gamoroso@mnasa.org](mailto:gamoroso@mnasa.org) if I can ever be of service to you! •

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### 2016-17 Officers

**President** Scott Thielman  
**President-Elect** Curt Tryggestad  
**Past President** Jeff Ronneberg  
**Treasurer** Jamie Skjeveland

### 2016-17 Board of Directors

**Region 1**  
Jeff Elstad (2016-19)  
**Region 2**  
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**Region 3**  
John Landgaard (2013-19)  
**Region 4**  
Missy Eidsness (2016-19)  
Doug Froke (2016-18)  
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Mark Diehl (2014 -19)  
Lee Westrum (2016-17)  
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Scott Staska (2015-18)  
**Region 7**  
Gregg Allen (2015-18)  
Reggie Engebretson (2015-18)  
**Region 8**  
Christopher Mills (2016-19)  
**Region 9**  
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Connie Haynes (2015-18)  
Wayne Kazmierczak (2015-18)  
Darren Kermes (2011-17)  
David Law (2016-18)  
Kimberly Pavlovich (2016-17)  
Josh Swanson (2014-17)

### Retiree Representative

Mary Ann Nelson (2012-18)

## FALL CONFERENCE THANK YOU



Thank you to everyone who helped make the  
2016 MASA Fall Conference a success!

*A special thank you to our premier business partners!*



### Save the Date!

2017 MASA/MASE  
Spring Conference

Thursday-Friday  
March 9-10, 2017

Minneapolis Marriott Northwest,  
Brooklyn Park, MN

*Keep your eyes open for  
registration, agenda and lodging details!*



### Thank You Dale G. Jensen Golf Classic Golf Tournament Sponsors!

*A friendly reminder that there is still time to donate to the  
MASA Foundation this year for your 2016 tax deductions!*

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**Registration & Lodging Now Open!**

Registration is now open for AASA's National Conference on Education, March 2-4, 2017, in New Orleans, LA. Registration can be found online at: [www.nce.aasa.org/registration-fees/](http://www.nce.aasa.org/registration-fees/)

Join thousands of superintendents from across the nation for world-class education and networking. Hear from speakers who are championing our nation's school systems, and take home ideas and approaches to invigorate your district. Connect with like-minded leaders and share strategies on improving student outcomes, district performance, and so much more.

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

**SAVE THE DATE**

The MASA State Breakfast will be held at 7:30 am on Friday, March 3, 2017, at the Hilton New Orleans Riverside! RSVP information will be sent to MN AASA members shortly!

### New Year, New Resolutions



Scott Thielman  
MASA President and  
Superintendent  
Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose  
Schools

For many, this time of year finds us in reflection. Perhaps you are even contemplating a New Year's resolution. I suggest school leaders resolve to be multipliers in 2017. You may be asking, what do you mean we should be a multiplier? A few years ago, a colleague invited me to attend a workshop featuring the authors of one of Wall Street Journal's bestsellers, *Multipliers: How the Best Leaders Make Everyone Smarter*. Unfortunately, I was unable to join her at the workshop, but recently

our administration team had the opportunity to engage in a book discussion using the same book. Through the process, we found that we needed to reflect on our leadership style and ensure we were not caught in the trap of wanting to be considered the smartest person in the room (a genius), but rather, we should want to be a genius maker (someone who enhances and supports the capabilities of those around them).

Liz Wiseman, coauthor of *Multipliers* and *The Multiplier Effect*, has deftly identified characteristics that can multiply and diminish the intelligence, energy and capabilities of individuals in an organization. Wiseman and her co-authors analyzed data from more than 250 leaders in business and education and identified disciplines that distinguish multipliers and diminishers. The disciplines focus on skills and practices that everyone can learn to use to multiply the intelligence and energy in an organization.

As leaders of the school districts we serve, we give our very best to our students and communities on a daily basis. To grow, learn and benefit from our research and reflection is critical to the vitality and sustainability of the districts we lead. *The Multipliers* and *The Multiplier Effect* are books that can provide practical tips and techniques for us in our own reflection and personal growth to improve our leadership capabilities.

Wiseman and her colleagues, Lois Allen and Elise Foster, have identified five disciplines that focus on skills leaders can practice to multiply the genius of an organization. She and her coauthors took an in-depth look into schools in their book *The Multiplier Effect: Tapping the Genius Inside Our Schools*. The authors make an insightful observation about school leaders striving to be perfect leaders, but in reality falling on "the continuum between amazing multipliers and dreadful diminishers." In their exploration of identifying multipliers and diminishers, the authors provide a quick

reference for leaders to reflect upon for their own practices.

"Multipliers: attract talented people and use them at their highest point of contribution; they create an intense environment that requires people's best thinking and work; they define an opportunity that causes people to stretch; they drive sound decisions by constructing debate and decision-making forums; and they give other people the ownership for results and invest in their success. On the opposite end of the continuum, diminishers: hoard resources and underutilize talent; they create tense environments that suppress people's thinking and capabilities; they give directives that showcase how much they know; they make centralized, abrupt decisions that confuse the organization; and they drive results through their personal involvement."

Some may think that these descriptions are somewhat obvious of a diminisher and not very likely to occur in their daily practice but Wiseman and her coauthors highlight how in our own practices we can drift from a multiplier into an accidental diminisher. It is easy to fall into the role of accidental diminisher by presenting too many new ideas that have the effect of inhibiting the completion of current goals or rescuing people who don't need to be rescued and by doing so not utilizing the capabilities of your team to their fullest potential. To discover if you may be an accidental diminisher, Wiseman offers us an opportunity to assess ourselves by taking a three-minute quiz at [MultiplierEffectBook.com](http://MultiplierEffectBook.com).

The authors point out that no one is free from tendencies that may accidentally diminish our team or organization's capacities. In this New Year, make a resolution to become an amazing multiplier and in your reflective practices focus on how you can increase the genius of your team and organization.

As tireless advocates of a world class education for Minnesota's children, I thank you for all that you do, on a daily basis, on behalf of your students, your schools and those you serve. Thank you for the privilege to serve our organization on your behalf. Happy Holidays! •

#### Are You Receiving Our Communications?

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Please contact us at [members@mnasa.org](mailto:members@mnasa.org).

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# 2017 MASA ELECTIONS & AWARDS

## MASA Leadership Nominations Are Open Until January 9, 2017

### **2017-18 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 Greater Minnesota districts (Regions 1-8) are eligible.

The following seats on the MASA Board of Directors need nominations for representation:

- **Region 5 Superintendent Component Group Rep**
- **Metro (Region 9) Curriculum Component Group Rep**
- **Metro (Region 9) Special Education Component Group Rep**
- **Metro (Region 9) Technology Component Group Rep**
- **Greater MN (Regions 1-8) Curriculum Component Group Rep**
- **Service Provider Component Group Rep (Regions 1-9)**

Each representative will serve a three-year term representing their region and component group beginning July 1, 2017. MASA Board of Directors term limits are two consecutive terms.

### **The Nomination Process**

Any "Active" (voting) MASA member may nominate themselves or a colleague. Both nominator and nominee must be a member of the MASA Region and/or Component Group to which the nomination pertains.

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!

You can find the forms by going to [www.mnasa.org/boardofdirectors](http://www.mnasa.org/boardofdirectors) and clicking "MASA Board Nomination Forms" in the right hand column.

Fill out your nomination and return it to [dchristians@mnasa.org](mailto:dchristians@mnasa.org) by January 9, 2017!

## MASA Award Nominations Are Open Until January 9, 2017

Each year, MASA 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.

### **Kay E. Jacobs Award**

The nominee of this award must be an active or associate female member of MASA, must have demonstrated the attributes of leadership and involvement in MASA and other educational organizations as did Kay E. Jacobs prior to her death, and have ten years or less of central office experience. This award is presented at the Annual Spring Conference.

### **MASA Distinguished Service Award**

The nominee of this award will have a positive history/association with Minnesota public education. The recipient will have contributed/participated in activities that improve Minnesota's public education system on a statewide basis and have a reputation as a person that willingly goes the extra mile. This award is presented at the MASA Spring Conference.

### **MASA Outstanding Central Office Leader Award (Metro and Greater MN)**

The nominees of this award must be non-superintendent MASA members who are Central Office Administrators exhibiting a willingness to risk, possess strong communication skills, are progressive change agents and who have high expectations for self and others. Two awards will be presented annually, one from greater Minnesota and one from the metro area. This award is presented at the MASA Spring Conference.

### **MASA Polaris Award**

The nominee of this award must be a current active or associate member of MASA and an exemplary school leader with twenty or more years of administrative experience. This award is presented at the MASA Fall Conference.

### **Regional Administrators of Excellence Award - return to your Regional Chair**

*The Regional Leadership Chair should submit their region's selection to the MASA office by February 1, 2017.*

This award honors an administrator annually from each of the nine MASA regions. The nominee must have provided service to MASA through their active participation in a MASA district, regional and state organization and/or leadership functions and activities, demonstrated active involvement in educational and community affairs, be regarded as a role model by MASA colleagues and be a practicing administrator and a member of MASA.

### **Richard Green Scholars Award - Due March 1, 2017**

This award honors the scholarly work and professional development of Minnesota school leaders through the award of an annual recognition for the research, writing and presentation of one paper reflecting the practice of excellent school leadership. This award is announced at the MASA Spring Conference and presented at the Fall Conference.

### **Applications Online**

You can find all the award applications at: [www.mnasa.org/nominationforms](http://www.mnasa.org/nominationforms).

Remember to fill out your nomination forms and return them to [dchristians@mnasa.org](mailto:dchristians@mnasa.org) by January 9, 2017!

# get to KNOW US



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# Welcome! New MASA Members!

**Paul Bang**, Superintendent/Principal, Heron Lake-Okabena School District

**Brad Bergstrom**, Superintendent, Thief River Falls Public Schools

**Paul Besel**, Superintendent, Grand Meadow School

**Kyle Breikreutz**, Director of Technology, Sartell-St. Stephen Schools

**Gwen Carman**, Superintendent, Carlton School District

**Jennifer Cherry**, Title IX/Equity Coordinator, Anoka-Hennepin School District

**Mary Jo Dorman**, Elementary Program Coordinator, Albert Lea Area Schools

**Kevin Enerson**, Superintendent, Pipestone Area Schools

**Keith Fleming**, Superintendent, United South Central School District

**Annette Freiheit**, Superintendent, Pine City Public Schools

**Timothy Gadson**, Exec. Director of Curriculum, Robbinsdale Area Schools

**Diane Giorgi**, Director of Teaching & Learning, Forest Lake Area Schools

**Ed Graff**, Superintendent, Minneapolis Public Schools

**David Hansen**, Superintendent, Buffalo Lake-Hector-Stewart School District

**Kim Hiel**, Ass't. Superintendent, Osseo Area Schools

**Shannon Hunstad**, Superintendent, Lancaster School District

**William Ihrke**, Superintendent, Plainview-Elgin-Millville Community Schools

**Phil Johnson**, Superintendent, Willow River School

**Sharilyn Ledahl**, Testing & Assessment Coordinator, St. Michael-Albertville Schools

**Nathan Libbon**, Superintendent, Cromwell-Wright School

**Corey McKinnon**, Director of Community Education, Forest Lake Area Schools

**Joe Meyer**, Superintendent, Murray County Central School District

**Jenna Mitchler**, Lead Curriculum & Instruction Specialist, Bloomington Public Schools

**Alecia Mobley**, Interim Director of Specialized Services, Saint Paul Public Schools

**Alan Niemann**, Superintendent, Ashby Public School

**Elam Noor**, Director of Technology, NE Metro 916 Intermediate District

**Rob Nudell**, Superintendent, Norman County East School

**Eric Pingrey**, Superintendent, Walker-Hackensack-Akeley Schools

**Mark Raymond**, Director of Human Resources, Austin Public Schools

**Patrick Rendle**, Superintendent, Hill City School

**Kevin Ricke**, Superintendent, Fosston School District

**Scott Ripley**, Chief Technology Officer, Montevideo Public Schools

**Kari Rock**, Director of Elementary Schools, Anoka-Hennepin School District

**Noel Schmidt**, Superintendent, Virginia Minnesota Public Schools

**Matthew Schultz**, Superintendent, Lanesboro Public Schools

**Kelly Stanton**, Director of Teaching & Learning, Elk River Area School District

**Donita Stepan**, Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assmt., Byron Public Schools

**Shane Tappe**, Superintendent, Dawson-Boyd Public Schools

**Dessica Veum**, Superintendent, Eagle Valley School District

**Jason Vold**, Interim Superintendent, Onamia Schools

**Vera Weber**, Technology Integration Specialist, Montevideo Public Schools

**Terry Wilding**, Superintendent, MN State Academies

**Shawn Yates**, Superintendent, Ada-Borup & Norman County West Schools

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# 2016 Elections – More Changes at the Capitol



Valerie Dosland  
Government Affairs Director  
Ewald Consulting  
MASA Lobbyist

Once again, elections bring great changes at the State Capitol with another turnover in majority control. Senate Republicans now have the majority and House Republicans increased their majority.

Before the election, Republicans controlled the House of Representatives by a margin of 73 to 61; they improved that margin by picking up four more seats to put the Republican majority at 77 members

to 57 Democrats. The 2017 session however will start with only 133 members of the House due to a special election scheduled to take place in February of 2017 to replace outgoing Rep. Bob Barrett (R-Taylors Falls). The House is up for election every two years, so all 134 members will be on the ballot in 2018.

Before the election, Democrats controlled the State Senate with a majority of 39 seats to 28 for the Republicans. The Senate Republicans needed six seats to take control of the chamber — and they picked up exactly that number. The Senate will now be controlled by Republicans with a majority of 34 to 33. The Senate will be up for election in 2020, meaning the Senate Republicans will maintain a narrow majority for the next four years.

### New Committee Structure

House and Senate majority will next decide on a new committee structure for the biennium, followed by appointing chairs to each committee. Once the committees have been established, both the Republicans and Democrats will determine which of their members will serve on each committee.

### What to Expect Next Session

2017 will be the first year of the two-year biennial legislative cycle which means much of the focus will be on passing a two-year state budget. The November forecast is the basis on which the Governor and Legislature will begin crafting the state budget. As of July, the Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) economic outlook update showed the state's general fund was estimated to be \$230 million more than projected this past February. Recent updates however indicate that revenue is not coming in as expected.

### Possible 2017 Session Issues

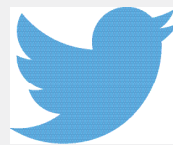
Below is a list of education issues we expect to come up in the 2017 session. This is in addition to the ongoing discussions we have with elected officials on the need for general education funding; including a per-pupil formula

increase and special education funding.

- Universal Pre-K
- Agricultural land credit
- TRA sustainability
- Student discipline and school safety
- Educator licensing and teacher shortages
- ESSA
- Tax credits and deductions/private school vouchers
- LIFO

### Capitol to Reopen!

After three years of construction, the Capitol is expected to reopen for the 2017 legislative session. The \$310 million project will not be completed but the capitol will function for legislative business and be accessible to the public. •



## MASA Twitter Chats

#MNMASA Every Third Tuesday of the Month @ 12 noon

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

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

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



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### MASA and MASE Members Lobby for Education Issues in Washington D.C.



Dr. James Johnson  
Superintendent  
Monticello Public Schools

In mid-September, MASA Executive Director Gary Amoroso, MASA President Scott Thielman, MASE Executive Director John Klaber, MASE President Mary Clarkson, Federal Advocacy Chair Jim Johnson, and Federal Advocacy Committee member Chris Mills traveled to Washington D.C. to engage in conversation with our elected officials who represent Minnesota at a federal level.

Once in Washington D.C., the group met at the AASA Offices with the Advocacy and Policy staff as they helped prepared us for meetings with our representatives. Most of the conversation surrounded the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). When this bipartisan bill was signed into law in December, 2015, it was widely viewed as a significant improvement over NCLB. While the law maintains a federal role in education, it emphasizes that role is to support and strengthen, not dictate and prescribe to, schools. The main intent was to bring more control back to the state and local levels.

At the time we met with the AASA Advocacy and Policy staff, they shared a number of key points regarding ESSA and other federal programs that we discussed with our representatives and senators. They include:

- Title I – There is concern that local districts will see a reduction in Title I funding as a result of ESSA. The US Department of Education, in their rulemaking process, would allow for states to keep more of the Title I funding by increasing the set-aside from 4% to a mandatory 7%, with the option to go up to 10%. This means that MDE would keep more money for implementing and monitoring programs while fewer dollars would be available to local districts for student programming. Also, under the President’s current budget proposal, there is a \$200,000,000 shortfall for implementation. AASA recommends advocating for \$400,000,000 above the President’s proposal to meet the needs to fully implement the program.
- Title IV Part A – The President’s budget proposal increases funding in this program from \$350,000,000 to \$500,000,000. Twenty percent of the dollars would go to “well rounded education programs”, which is another way of saying those areas not tested. Twenty percent would be earmarked for school climate issues, which includes everything under the Safe and Drug-Free Schools categories. Up to fifteen percent could be used for devices and up to sixty percent could be used

for curriculum, content, and professional development related to devices. While the increase in dollars is a positive thing, the President’s proposal also makes Title IV a competitive grant process. This could have a significant negative impact on a large number of school districts. AASA recommends advocating for Formula Flexible Block Grant, similar to what exists today, as well as a budget target of \$750,000,000 which is robust enough to make a meaningful difference in programming for our students.

- IDEA – The current funding rate for IDEA is 15.9%. AASA is advocating for an increase to bring us back to the 2009 rates of 16.8-16.9%.
- Perkins Grants – Perkins funding has received a great deal of attention in the House. The House version of legislation regarding Perkins passed overwhelmingly with bipartisan support. It includes streamlining the local applications, advocates for better alignment between business and school districts, and promotes career counseling and exploration. AASA advocates for supporting the House version and stressed the points that it must remain a formula driven program and it must keep secondary and post-secondary funding separate. The Senate had not taken any action on Perkins at the time we visited with our Senators.
- Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act – AASA is advocating for a hold on the upcoming renewal of this legislation. In 2017 and 2022, there are new requirements regarding things such as sodium content, which will make it even more difficult for us to run our food service programs. Currently, one serving of the commodities we receive from the federal government for our food service programs may exceed the sodium content for a full week. In addition, the Senate has a requirement in their proposal to renew this legislation which would require us to verify 10% of free and reduced lunch applications and would also require us to get W-2s from parents. This is an increase from the 3% of applications we must verify now which increases our cost of operation. Any parent that does not provide their W-2 would automatically not be verified and therefore their children would no longer be eligible for free and reduced meals.

Most of our trip was spent meeting with members of the Minnesota legislative delegation in Washington D.C. We met with Representatives Emmer, Kline, Nolan, Paulson, Peterson, and Walz as well as staff members from

*Federal Advocacy continued on page 31.*

## Preparing for a New Congress and Administration



Sasha Pudelski  
Assistant Director, Policy and  
Advocacy  
AASA, The School  
Superintendents Association

Washington D.C. is in a bit of a funk. As the 114th Congress draws to a close, Congress is set to leave town in a few days without fully completing its federal budgeting process (yet again). There is a sense of bewilderment by lobbyists, congressional and agency staff and even members of Congress about what kind of political environment they will face when they return in January.

As a staunchly non-partisan organization, AASA is in many ways lucky compared to other key education groups. We have great relationships on both sides of the aisle. We know that our members depend on us to advance the best policies possible for students and school systems regardless of who thinks of them. This allows our team to be flexible, pragmatic, aggressive and independent in our defense of the public policy interests of superintendents.

While this election was devoid of much serious conversation about education policy, now that we know we are working with President-elect Trump, we are determined to make it a meaningful relationship. We didn't hide our displeasure with the Obama Administration's Race-to-the-Top initiative, or conditional ESEA waivers or expansion of the Civil Rights data collection. The Department knew what we thought and they chose to do things differently than we would have liked, which is their prerogative. Similarly, we will call it like we see it with the Trump Administration. And, as we look ahead to next year and try and crystalize what Trump may want to do in the K-12 education space, it's a bit of a mixed bag.

On the one hand, one of the most controversial fiscal regulations on school districts ever proposed governing the distribution of state and local Title I dollars is likely to disappear (see supplement not supplant call-to-action). We could also see a less aggressive role for the Office of Civil Rights under a Trump Administration and a reduction in data collection requirements on districts and proactive investigations. We could also see potential changes to regulations at the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Labor, and related to the Affordable Care Act. These changes will likely be wins for AASA members, from a policy point of view.

On the other hand, we will likely find ourselves spending significant time and energy fighting draconian cuts to education. With control of both chambers, Republicans could try and lift spending caps on defense at the expense of non-defense discretionary spending, of which education is

included. This would mean that we could see reductions in our key federal education funding streams at a critical time.

Medicaid reform is also a concern we will be tracking. Our policy team works closely with our Children's Department to incentivize greater healthcare coverage for students. The untimely need to reauthorize the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) coupled with the possibility that fewer Medicaid-eligible students will receive coverage if Medicaid expansion under the Affordable Care Act is repealed should be of great concern to school leaders.

While Trump disagrees with members of his own party about spending sometimes, there's a possibility that there could be broad support for finding and funneling "new" dollars toward school choice. While Trump's \$20 billion-dollar school choice plan is short on details, most Beltway insiders do not believe that attempts to make Title I dollars portable to private schools will go far next Congress. The majority of the Congress was re-elected and they are proud to see the implementation of ESSA move forward and know that Title I portability would fundamentally alter successful enactment of the most heralded legislative accomplishments in recent memory. However, attempts to voucherize IDEA funding, create a federal tuition tax-credit system, or expand the floundering D.C. voucher program are all strong possibilities. There is also some speculation that Trump could try to use the presidential pulpit to get states to repurpose state dollars.

As we consider the Trump policies we probably will not like, there is comfort in knowing that we still have the same Chairman and Ranking Member on the Senate Education Committee: U.S. Sens. Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.) Patty Murray (D-Wash.) The thin GOP majority in the Senate and the continuation of the 60-vote threshold make it more likely that reasonable, bipartisan policy and funding measures prevail in that chamber. In contrast, the House Education Committee will be led by a known firebrand, U.S. Rep. Virginia Foxx (R-N.C.), who has been more focused on higher education policy than K-12.

While AASA would have preferred a nominee to lead the Department of Education with not only experience within education, but a track record reflecting support for public schools, we will to try and build a strong working relationship with Betsy DeVos and her team, and continue to honestly and actively represent the views of school leaders in Washington D.C. To the extent that education policy is on the menu, we will be at the table. •

*Reprinted with permission from The Leading Edge Blog: Policy and Advocacy, AASA 2016.*

# On Being a Passionate Beginner

I read an article by Microsoft researcher Bill Buxton a few years ago that has stuck with me ever since. In his article entitled *How To Keep Innovating*, Buxton advocates for staying fresh in your professional calling by pursuing your passions outside of work.

Specifically, he recommends (quoting the article):

- Always be bad at something that you are passionate about.
- You can be everything in your life—just not all at once.
- When you get good at one skill, drop another in which you have achieved competence in order to make room for a new passion at which you are—yet again—bad.
- Life is too short to waste on bad teachers and inefficient learning.
- Remember: You can learn from anyone.

Are you comfortable being a beginner? Perhaps, like me, you've had the good fortune to have one of your personal passions turn into your career (technology in my case). However you've landed in your position as an education leader, chances are good that you feel a certain amount of mastery in your work. It's all the more important, then, to find something you are passionate about and at which you are still a novice.

My latest adventure with being a novice began approximately 3½ years ago when I took up competitive target archery. My son was a beginning archer then, and it became apparent almost immediately that doing archery is much more fun than watching archery. Since I began my journey as an archer I've met amazing people; competed in archery events with some of the best archers in the world; reconnected with the teacher in me by coaching at a local club; utilized my leadership skills to make an impact in a statewide archery organization; and developed new appreciation for goal setting, the pursuit of perfection, the importance of practice, and the connection between achievement and the mind. And to think I got all of that from deciding one day to try something new.

The dictionary definition of novice speaks of being a beginner or learner. That sounds great in theory, but in practice, being a novice is often uncomfortable and frustrating for someone who is accustomed to feeling competent in his or her day job. Breaking out of your cocoon of competence is an act of vulnerability and a great way to build empathy for students and staff. If I begin to feel impatient at work when coaching a staff member who is working on building skill in an area where I have a lot of experience, it helps me to remember the current struggle I'm having with my archery form or that arrow that just barely missed scoring a 10 during my last competition.

This summer I took my department managers for an off-site

strategic planning session where, amid the chart paper, smelly markers, and goal setting activities, I spent an hour teaching them archery. There was a lot of laughter and fun to be sure, and there was some good-natured competition too. But there was also plenty of frustration about not being able to hit the center of the target. That experience provided a great jumping off point for a conversation about empathy and supporting teachers and other staff who often don't know as much about elements of technology as those of us in the technology department.



Tim Wilson  
Chief Technology Officer  
Osseo Area Schools

It's a lot more comfortable to stick with what you know. We often encourage students to follow their passions and dreams. (It might even be in your school district's mission statement.) Are we encouraging students to take academic risks, or has GPA pressure squeezed out some of their passion? How about teachers? Have we designed our appraisal systems to encourage teachers to try new techniques and learn new skills?

Leaders, are you following your passions? Are you cultivating interests outside of work that help recharge your batteries and broaden your perspective? If so, take some time to share those interests with your staff and encourage them to share theirs. If not, what are you waiting for? •



MASA has been pleased to add an important new resource to our members' toolboxes for monitoring the weather.

**StormReady™** is an online resource that provides specific weather data by zip code.

The website is filled with easy to read and relevant graphics and images for superintendents to make data-driven decisions. The "Hourly Weather Forecast Graph" forecasts many weather variables over a 24-hour period, including temperature, snow fall, rainfall, wind chill, and other variables that contribute to seasonal weather hazards. For example, a superintendent can see the temperature, windchill, and snowfall predictions for the start of the school day.

Additionally, the National Weather Service provides thorough education focused on preparing our schools to be StormReady™. On this website you will find a link for "Storm Ready in a Box." This online kit and video provides background for staff or student groups and/or Earth Science classes to prepare their school(s) to be StormReady™.

Get started by visiting [www.mnasa.org/stormready](http://www.mnasa.org/stormready)

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## PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE TEAM

A very important part of the work of MASA is to provide outstanding service to the members of the association. Besides a strong professional development component, MASA wants to stand ready to help members as they navigate the many complex situations that they face on a day-to-day basis. The five member Professional Assistance Team (P.A.T.) is made up of highly experienced school leaders who will use their expertise to help their colleagues when they need consultation and/or advice. The members of the 2016-17 P.A.T. are listed below...



**Deb Henton**  
 Office: (651) 674-1000  
 Cell: (651) 439-7719  
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 Office: (218) 894-2439  
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**Patty Phillips**  
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**Carl Wahlstrom**  
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 cwahlstr@smumn.edu

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

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

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

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



### The Key Work of School Boards



Mary Cecconi  
Education Consultant

According to the National School Boards Association, “The key work of school boards – student achievement and community engagement to promote student achievement – is becoming nationally recognized as the primary agenda for boards of education.”

This statement is based on the premise that excellence in the boardroom promotes excellence in the classroom, but does evidence support that premise?

The 2009 [study](#)<sup>1</sup> of the Iowa Lighthouse Project found that “school boards can impact student achievement by creating conditions for productive change. Recommended steps included building connections across the education system, providing workplace support and professional development, and finding the right balance between district authority and school autonomy.”

In 2013, from the University of Southern Mississippi, Dr. David Lee’s ground-breaking [study](#)<sup>2</sup> submits that “school board behavior does matter, and if gains are to be made in low-performing districts, behaviors must change at the board level.”

Most recently the question, “Is there hard evidence that democratically elected school boards impact student achievement and, if so how?” was undertaken by UW professors Michael Ford and Douglas M. Ihrke.

Their [research](#)<sup>3</sup> findings, published in the International Journal of Public Administration, found that “school boards can positively impact student achievement by:

- Keeping its strategic plan up-to-date.
- Adjusting academic standards and assessment policies in response to student needs.
- Being open and honest with one another.
- Governing in partnership with their superintendent.
- Proactively and regularly engaging with the public.
- Engaging in formal board development.”

It is one thing to understand the concepts of school boarding and quite another to practice them with fidelity. Boards not focused on learning how to govern quickly find themselves frustrated and inappropriately wander into a district’s organizational duties. If your board is focused on your work rather than their own, one wonders if they truly know what their work is.

Effective boards participate in systems thinking, accept their fair share of responsibility for student outcomes, partner

with the superintendent to create a shared accountability process, and create the conditions under which excellent teaching and learning can take place.

Simply put, effective school boards know which sand box is theirs and which is the superintendent’s.

Research would undeniably tell us that if we are not working to develop boards of education, we are underutilizing them. After working 20 years with communities wanting to lift up public schools, I couldn’t agree more.

Boards I work with want to operate more effectively. They are focused on governing, building community connections and building the healthiest of relationships with the district CEO.

The research is clear. Building capacities within boards of education is critical to realizing student success. A skilled school board is an asset that a savvy and clever superintendent knows is too valuable to waste. •

#### References

1. <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED521566.pdf>
2. <https://www.usm.edu/educational-research-administration/faculty/david-e-lee-edd>
3. [http://wasb.org/websites/wisconsin\\_school\\_news/File/2015\\_December/governance\\_Dec\\_2015.pdf](http://wasb.org/websites/wisconsin_school_news/File/2015_December/governance_Dec_2015.pdf)

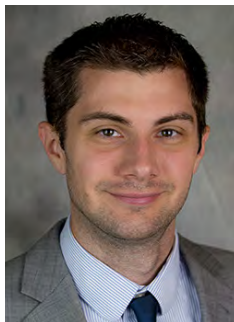
Mary is a former teacher, licensed administrator, school board member and the most recent Executive Director of Parents United for Public Schools. In 2012, she was the first woman to receive the MASA Distinguished Service Award.

[www.maryceconi.com](http://www.maryceconi.com)

## Are You Moving?

Help us keep track of you (and keep your MASA benefits and services coming to you). Please contact [members@mnasa.org](mailto:members@mnasa.org) to update your records. If you have new colleagues in your area who are not MASA members, let us know and we will send membership information to them.

# New FLSA Regulations Cast in Doubt by Recent Court Decision



Adam C. Wattenbarger  
Education Law Attorney  
Kennedy & Graven, Chartered

School districts and other employers have likely been busy preparing to ensure compliance with the Department of Labor's new overtime rules under the Fair Labor Standards Act ("FLSA"). But just over a week before the new rules were scheduled to take effect, they came to a screeching halt when a Texas federal district court granted a preliminary injunction stopping their implementation.

The FLSA requires employers to pay nonexempt employees the federal minimum wage and overtime pay (1.5 times the regular rate of pay) for all hours worked over 40 hours in a workweek. To be exempt from these requirements, employees must be paid a salary of at least \$455 per week (\$23,660 per year). Exempt employees must also fall under one of the exempt duties categories: either executive, administrative, or professional. Teachers are exempt without meeting the salary requirement.

Under the Department's new regulations, the duty classifications would remain the same, but the salary threshold would increase to \$913 per week, or \$47,476 per year. The regulations also establish a formula by which the salary threshold would automatically increase every three years. Non-teacher employees making less than that amount would no longer be exempt. Districts would have the option to either raise these employees' salaries to meet the new minimum, or to begin tracking their hours and paying any applicable overtime. These changes were scheduled to be effective starting December 1, 2016.

Several states and businesses filed suit challenging the Department's Final Rule, and brought a motion for preliminary injunctive relief to prevent the new rule from going into effect during the pendency of the case. On November 22, 2016, the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Texas granted the injunction. The court agreed with the plaintiffs that the Department exceeded the authority delegated to it by Congress through the FLSA. The language of the statute, the court reasoned, does not specifically set any salary requirements, but applies to "any employee employed in a bona fide executive, administrative, or professional capacity." Although the statute authorizes the Department to define the duties that qualify within those classifications, the court found that nothing in the statutory language indicates that Congress intended the Department to establish a minimum salary level. The court noted that the existing salary level was purposefully set low to "screen out the obviously nonexempt employees," but that the significant

increase "creates essentially a de facto salary-only test," contrary to the statutory text and Congress's intent.

The court applied its injunction nationwide, meaning that the Department is enjoined from enforcing the new rules across the board. Thus, for the time being, the existing rules and the longstanding \$23,660 salary threshold remain in effect. As a preliminary injunction, this is not a final decision on the legality of the regulations, and the Department may appeal. However, given the impending change in the presidential administration, it is possible that any potential appeal might be withdrawn, and the Department may decide not to pursue the new regulations at all. In the meantime, districts are free to maintain the status quo with respect to exempt job classifications.

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. •

*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.*

Adam Wattenbarger is an education law attorney with the law firm of Kennedy & Graven, Chartered. For more information, please contact him at (612) 337-9306 or [www.kennedy-graven.com](http://www.kennedy-graven.com).  
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Questions? Contact Mary Bettlach  
at [mbettlach@ucpnet.org](mailto:mbettlach@ucpnet.org)

### Teaching Civility



Denny Smith  
Leadership and Development  
Trainer

There is little doubt that our political process has rarely faced the serious challenges we currently encounter. The level of divide, disrespect and downright hate is at its highest level in my lifetime.

While many lament the current political climate in America, I profess that it presents us with a golden opportunity to bring about civility, growth and change. Our recent campaign has caused people to either engage in vehement political debate or to avoid it completely. Neither is the answer.

It is imperative that we the people get involved at the grassroots level if we are to survive and replace angry partisan bickering with civil, respectful dialogue. We need to focus less on whether we like or dislike a politician or party and turn our attention to how policies affect us now and in the future. The skills necessary to achieve this can be learned, and if they can be learned they can be taught.

So the question that educators face is this: Should we teach civility in our schools? Perhaps the answer is not to ask whether we should, but to declare that we must. It has nothing to do with partisan politics but everything to do with our job as educators to create a safe and welcoming society with opportunity for all to live a rich full life. Education has always been on the leading edge of social change and change may be needed more now than at any time in our recent history.

This fall I campaigned on a college campus and before I talked about any issue or candidate, I informed the students that my mission was to promote civility in politics. I reminded students that their involvement or lack of involvement would greatly determine what America will look like ten or fifteen years from now and that their involvement needed to be civil to be effective. I asked a favor. "Would you young people please teach us older folks how to behave?"

The challenge for you administrators would be to provide training for your teachers and other staff members to teach and direct civility as a way of life in school. It is not meant to replace academic achievement but to enhance it.

Keeping in mind that we want to encourage courageous and open dialogue about challenges that face us, let's take a look at a partial list of learnable skills to use as a guideline for doing so. You can use this with your own administrative team as you develop a focus on respect and civility that permeates the entire district.

At the top of the list is to find common ground. When I was working on campus I had a flyer that highlighted civility in politics. Few people would disagree with the need for that so we immediately found agreement, then moved on with

further discussion that was pleasant and enjoyable.

Bruce Watkins was the Superintendent in St. Cloud when they were working to include LGBT language into the district's safety policy, long before it was mandated to do so. It was a volatile issue and tensions were high, so at the beginning of each discussion he asked those present if they could agree that every student should be safe in school. Once they established common ground, he skillfully guided people to navigate some rough waters with courageous but civil conversation and the policy became a reality.

It is challenging but necessary to accept and respect everyone. That doesn't mean that you have to agree with them, but that you honor their worth as a human being and respect their right to their opinions. This takes an advanced level of consciousness, but with awareness and practice it is achievable.

The art of questioning is one of the most persuasive tools available. Before you express your views, find out what is important to the other person, then listen. That's hard to do because we seem to be vaccinated with phonograph needles, but effective listening is imperative to becoming a good communicator. Active listening means your motivation for listening is not to decide what you are going to say next, but to really understand more about the other person. Statements like "That's interesting, tell me more," or questions like, "How did you come to that conclusion?" or "Can I ask you a tough question?" can open channels of communications.

As difficult as it is, we all need to learn how to get out of attack mode. Giving each other the right to say, "We're getting a little heated here, let's try to calm down and stick with the issues," can pave the way to redirecting the discussion back to the issue at hand.

When being interrupted, an effective technique may be to put your hand up and calmly say, "Please let me finish, then I will listen to what you have to say." And you can always agree to disagree, then move on.

A short article merely scratches the surface as we explore ways to promote and teach civility in our society. It is impossible to even begin in just one writing, but if you are determined to move forward with a program in your district, it will happen and skill and technique will naturally evolve. Information is available in abundance -- the major ingredient is your personal motivation to lead and make a difference. The same is true for each teacher. A little bit of knowledge coupled with a huge dose of commitment can make civility a reality in every classroom.

The major decision is not how to start or when to start. The major decision is to start. •

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

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## Creating a Change Culture



Shari Prest  
President  
ARK Associates

Change may be the only constant in our world. That is certainly true for public education, despite suggestions that our schools are the same as they were 50 years ago. In fact, change is so regular that stakeholders have become cynical about what they perceive to be temporary cycles rather than a progressive path of continual improvement. That may, in part, be because we approach change too discreetly and with inadequate emotional

and intellectual preparation for our communities and our staffs.

The role of leaders, educational and otherwise, is to cultivate a climate where change is treated as the very soil from which innovation takes root and the foundation upon which inspiration begins. Continual change is as fundamental school progress as the seasons of the year are to the year in Minnesota. While the adage that different is not always better but better is always different is true, advancement in the dynamics of teaching and learning and adaptation for increasingly diverse communities require that we be willing to take some risks and learn from the outcomes of those risks.

Students tend to adapt more naturally to change. Their learning takes place in a constantly shifting environment. The lesson is different each day than it was the day before. New seating or a rearranged classroom are frequently thrust upon learners. One day children may have physical education class and another day art. They adapt to different and evolving teachers, places, curriculum and classmates. Each day when they enter the classroom, they expect something different. Educators would never teach the same things in the same way day after day or keep children at the same level year after year. Progress is expected and change is anticipated—and even embraced—by learners.

The greatest barriers to change are 1) fear; 2) lack of understanding how the change represents improvement; and 3) inadequate knowledge of how the change fits into the larger picture. In her 2012 Harvard Business Review article, Rosabeth Moss Kanter describes the reasons people resist change, including the following:

- Loss of control
- Excess uncertainty
- Surprise decisions imposed

- Loss of face
- Concerns about competence
- More work
- Past resentments

These are issues that can be addressed in an ongoing change environment that includes the following:

- Consistent, broad-based affirmation that change is an essential and ongoing element of progress toward a compelling long-term vision.
- Identification of the risks and rewards of change.
- Stakeholder freedom to express fears and request information when specific changes occur.
- Clarity about the roles of individuals and/or groups in determining the focus, scope and timing of change.
- Acknowledgment of the impact the changes are likely to have on each stakeholder group and how that impact will be managed.
- Recognition of the potential internal and external barriers to change.
- A sustained commitment to change and ongoing assessment processes.

In her Johns Hopkins University article for *Creating the Future* entitled “Facilitating Change in Our Schools,” Linda MacRae Campbell, M.A., suggests the following strategies for accomplishing that change environment:

- Develop a common language and conceptual picture of the processes and goals of change among diverse stakeholders.
- Develop a strategic plan for moving forward on systemic change.
- Develop an ongoing assessment process to support and encourage deep, quality change.

Change is in the air and moving at a greater speed than ever before. As you read this, the United States has elected a new president, Congress and state legislatures are being transformed, school boards are transitioning, and educational strategies continue to adapt as we learn more about the methods used and the people impacted by public education. ESSA, as one part of the ongoing flow of progress, will influence the future for our schools. But one thing will remain the same. The mission of public schools and their educational leaders will be what it has always been: to prepare learners to be successful participants and responsible citizens in the workplace and communities of the future. •

# The "20-80" Rule: It Doesn't take Much Effort to Obtain Needed Results



Kim Gibbons  
Associate Director  
Center for Applied Research and  
Educational Improvement (CAREI)

School improvement and data-based decision-making are terms that school leaders hear numerous times per day. Program evaluation is a way of bringing these two terms together by systematically focusing on data collection and analysis to improve programs and ultimately schools and student outcomes. With the budget season approaching, imagine that you had the following evaluation information available to you as you were constructing your budget for

the following year.

- Students of teachers receiving support from instructional coaches gained 4 months more learning than students of teachers who did not receive coaching.
- Students of teachers who received professional development in math fared no better than students of teachers who did not receive the professional development.
- Elementary buildings implementing an MTSS framework saw a 50% reduction in SLD prevalence over 3 years.
- Students who used on-line "flex books" performed similarly on standardized tests of achievement than students who used traditional textbooks.

How might this information impact your budgeting, and more importantly, student achievement? You might decide to invest more resources into instructional coaching, re-examine your professional development in the area math, invest resources in scaling MTSS up into secondary settings, and continue investing in on-line flex books. All of these scenarios are examples of evaluating specific policies, programs, approaches, and frameworks. The Center for Comprehension School Reform and Improvement (2006) defines program evaluation as examining initiatives the school or district has undertaken to answer the question, "Is what we are doing working?" Along with determining the effectiveness of a program or practice, program evaluation provides information on what aspects of the program or practice can be improved. In fact, many school leaders may agree that program evaluation is important, but they often think they don't have the time or skills needed to carry out an evaluation. This assumption was confirmed by a recent statewide needs assessment conducted by CAREI in 2016 finding that 51% of administrators rated their capacity to evaluate policies and programs as poor. High-quality program evaluation was rated as infrequent due to lack of

time (78%), inadequate staffing/expertise (63%), and cost (53%).

Some folks have suggested that educators do have the skills and ability to evaluate programs since expertise in the topic is not needed to carry out a useful program evaluation (McNamara, 1998). Now, if you noticed the "20-80" rule in the title, here is where that rule applies. The rule states that 20% of effort generates 80% of the needed results. In plain English, it is better to do some evaluation than to do no evaluation at all! Many evaluation techniques can be utilized by school districts in day to day practice to make use of existing data in a practical manner for teachers and school leaders. The main challenge is to conduct evaluations that provide useful data and also balance the amount of time and effort needed by staff to carry out evaluation activities.

Organizing the program evaluation process involves answering three important questions:

1. What are we looking for?
2. How will we look for it?
3. How will we use the data?

To determine what to look for, leaders will need to determine if they are interested in formative or summative evaluation information (or both). Formative program evaluation involves collecting information during the implementation of a program to ensure that the program is being implemented with fidelity. Formative evaluation helps improve implementation and identify areas where changes are needed to ensure that intended outcomes are met. Summative evaluation evaluates a program after implementation to see if the desired goal has been reached. For example, suppose your district recently adopted a new reading curriculum. A formative evaluation would be useful in making sure that teachers are implementing the new curriculum as intended and receiving enough support during implementation. If not, then resources can be directed toward providing more support during implementation. A summative evaluation might occur at the end of year to determine the percentage of students who made adequate reading growth during the school year.

Once you determine what you are looking for, the next question is to determine how you will look for it. A prerequisite for "how" is to develop a simple and clear plan of action. This action plan should include due dates and timelines and identification of needed resources. In addition, the components of the evaluation will need to be identified along with designations of who will be responsible for

*The "20-80" Rule continued on page 25.*



*The "20-80" Rule from page 24.*

overseeing each component. The final step is to determine how to use the data. Using the data involves analyzing it and making meaning out of the results. Remember that multiple data sources will often inform each question you are trying to answer. Triangulating your data will strengthen the judgments you make about the evaluation. Once the steps have been completed, it is time to summarize and communicate the results to your key stakeholders and decision makers. Keep it simple. Provide an executive summary with the purpose of the evaluation, findings by questions, conclusions and recommendations.

CAREI has been helping school districts and other non-profits conduct program evaluations for over 25 years! We have over 200 technical reports on our website ([www.cehd.umn.edu/carei/](http://www.cehd.umn.edu/carei/)). This year, we are working with the Anoka-Hennepin School District to complete an audit of special education programs and practices in the district. We are looking at the extent to which programs are aligned with research and best practices, appropriately staffed, and whether teachers have the necessary skills to be successful with their students. We are here to help you determine the effectiveness of programs and to make recommendations on next steps needed to reach your goals. We are also available to help "audit" existing frameworks and practices to provide you with information for making programs and frameworks better (e.g., continual improvement). Feel free to give me a call at 612-625-9751. •



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## Social Media Use in the Superintendency

A study by Mike Redmond, Superintendent, Goodhue Public Schools



Michael Redmond  
Superintendent  
Goodhue Public Schools

What does actual data say about Minnesota superintendents' familiarity with and use of social media?

First, is there a difference between the level of familiarity with and use of social media and the age of the superintendent, gender of the superintendent, and/or size of the school district led by the superintendent? The answers are yes, yes, and yes.

Superintendents aged 30-59 were more familiar with and use social media more frequently than their peers age 60 and above. There were no significant differences among superintendents ages 30-49 versus superintendents ages 50-59.

Superintendents leading larger school districts are more familiar with and use social media more frequently than do their counterparts leading smaller school districts.

The most surprising result from my research was the discovery that female superintendents were significantly more familiar with and use social media more frequently than male superintendents. This finding held true even when accounting for differences in age of the superintendents and the size of student enrollment in the district being served by the superintendents. Also, the self-reported frequency of use of social media tools was also greater for female respondents than for male respondents.

In terms of familiarity with and use of different types of social media, respondents were asked to self-report their awareness and use of fourteen types of social media:

1. Productivity Applications: Survey Monkey, Yahoo!, Google Docs, Gmail, AOL, or Acteva
2. Search Tools: Google, Yahoo!, EveryZing, Ice Rocket, or Metatube
3. Interpersonal: FaceTime, AcrobatConnect, AOL Instant, Messenger, Skype, or Go To Meeting
4. Video: Google Video, YouTube, Metacafe, Brightcove, Hulu, or Viddler
5. Social Networks: Facebook, LinkedIn, Friendster, MySpace, Ning, or Orkut
6. Audio: iTunes, PodBean, Podcast.net, or Rhapsody
7. Microblogging: Twitter, Twitxr, or Plurk
8. Publishing Tools: Blogger, Constant Contact, Joomla, Knowl, Slideshare, Wikia, Wikipedia, or WordPress
9. Aggregators: FriendFeed, iGoogle, My Yahoo!, Reddit, Yelp, or Digg

10. RSS: RSS 2.0, PingShot, FeedBurner, or Atom
11. Livecasting: BlogTalkRadio, Live 365, TalkShow, Justin.tv, or SHOUTcast
12. Gaming: EverQuest, 4x4, Evolution, Entropia Universe, or World of Warcraft
13. Mobile: airG, AOL MOblie, CallWave, or Jumbuck
14. Virtual Worlds: Active Worlds, Kaneva, Second Life, There, or VIOS

There were significant differences among superintendents' familiarity and use of the 14 types of social media. Productivity applications and search tools were determined to be the forms of social media superintendents are most familiar with and using the most. They are least familiar with virtual worlds, mobile, gaming, and livecasting.

The research shows some fairly predictable results. It's likely not surprising that gaming is near the bottom of the familiarity/use ranking, but some may find it surprising that so few, 13 superintendents, have reported ever participating in online gaming and only two report regular participation. It's also probably not unexpected that productivity and search applications are the dominant forms of social media being used by superintendents. Even though 100% of superintendents reported having heard of productivity and search applications, there were still two respondents who reported never having used productivity applications, and seven who reported never using search tools. Similarly, nearly four percent report not being regular users of productivity applications, and 7.7% do not regularly use search tools.

It was also remarkable that familiarity/use of social networks ranked fifth and microblogging ranked seventh. Digging into the data, 60.2% of superintendents use social networks, such as Facebook or LinkedIn, regularly in their personal lives. This is only slightly higher than the 56.2% who use these social networks in their professional lives. All 201 superintendents completing this portion of the survey report having heard of microblogging such as Twitter. Slightly over half of these superintendents, 50.2%, use microblogging professionally. However, 57 superintendents still report never having used microblogging or Twitter.

Organizational social media literacy is fast becoming a norm. It is interesting to reflect on the presence of social media in our professional lives and compare it with that of our staff and students. •

*Mike Redmond's interest in how superintendents use social media was the basis for his doctoral research, the findings of which were published in the spring of 2016. As he was working on his dissertation, colleagues often inquired about his findings, so he has offered to share them via the MASA newsletter.*

# Objectives:

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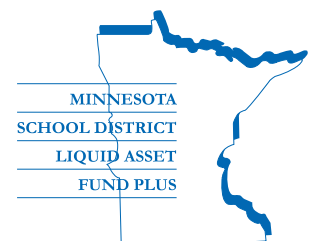
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# Leading the Minnesota Aspiring Superintendents' Academy



Bruce Klaehn  
Academy Facilitator  
Retired Superintendent

**H**ow and where does one learn to be an effective and successful school superintendent? Each of us would likely answer that question according to our own personal history, education, experiences and relationships. While requirements are in place to earn a license to become a superintendent, we know there is so much more needed in preparation for the demands of the job. The MASA Aspiring Superintendents' Academy,

a pilot program developed in partnership with AASA and NJPA, was designed to be a practical and relevant source for that additional preparation. In 2016, 5 two-day sessions were held with 23 attendees and a team of five coaches along with myself, Bruce Klaehn, as the Academy Master Teacher. MASA's Director of Professional Learning Mia Urick designed the sessions complete with outside presenters, and educational consultant Jane Sigford was a regular contributor as well.

Everyone agrees that, to one degree or another, this thought-provoking academy has provided training, mentoring and networking opportunities that will better prepare participants for their future in educational leadership. Here are some reflections from the coaches on their experience in this groundbreaking endeavor...



David Thompson  
Academy Coach  
Superintendent  
Stewartville Public Schools

### Three Questions

Three questions that all aspiring superintendents ask themselves are:

1. How do I prepare for my Superintendent interview?
2. What should I include in my Entry/Transition Plan?
3. What items should I have included in my new Superintendent's contract?

The Minnesota Aspiring

Superintendents' Academy helped cohort participants answer these questions by scheduling Kenneth Dragseth and Antoinette Johns to explain the topics referring to how to work with a search firm, how to prepare for a superintendent interview process, and what items to consider to be placed in a superintendent's contract. A panel of recently interviewed and hired Aspiring Superintendents' Academy participants presented valuable information regarding how they prepared for their interviews, what they included on their Entry/Transition Plans, how they "survived" the day long second

interview days, and the panel provided "interview tips" from what they learned through the interview process.

Cohort members were then given the opportunity to "interview" each other with the guidance of their Aspiring Superintendents' Academy coaches. These mock interviews used actual superintendent interview questions. The "interviewees" were asked interview questions by their cohort team members and observed by their cohort coaches who provided "helpful hints" to help "interviewees" to understand different perspectives and challenge their answers. This interview activity was well received and valued by the participants.



Deb Henton  
Academy Coach  
Superintendent  
North Branch Area Public  
Schools

### Values Driven Practice

When moving their organizations forward, superintendents encounter support, skepticism, turbulence, excitement—all of these reactions from stakeholders, nearly at the same time. There are questions from expected and unexpected sources about why the superintendent is recommending a particular course of action. No matter how realistic, superintendents are thought to have the answers. Thus, it is essential for superintendents to know their values and that of the organization in order to inspire others to action.

Our aspiring superintendents have been challenged to reflect on their values. Reading *Start with Why* by Simon Sinek assisted them in that effort. With a clear definition of "why," superintendents can determine if a given initiative is aligned with the values they hold and that of the organization. When those elements are in synch, the chance of success grows. Next steps become clear and indecisiveness is minimalized. According to Sinek, getting the "why" right will motivate others to take action.

The aspiring superintendents cited Sinek's book often throughout the course of the academy as they recognize the significance of knowing their purpose and values. His message resonated with this group, including the coaches. Sinek's book was just one of many prompts for the aspiring superintendents to examine their values, yet an important one as this next generation of aspiring leaders may be called on to build hope and trust in their organizations as superintendents.

*Aspiring Superintendents Academy  
continued on page 29.*



Dennis Carlson  
Academy Coach  
Retired Superintendent

### **Navigating the Politics of a New Superintendent**

Before you even arrive at your new job as superintendent, internal office politics are alive and well established. Who is friend, or relative, of whom? Who is in what clique? Where is the rumor mill active? Who applied for the superintendency internally and wasn't hired? About you being hired as the new superintendent - "I have a friend who was at his/her last school and he/she said..."

External politics are also well established with unions - both negotiations and disciplining staff will be challenging, school board members - raising taxes and board elections are especially trying, community members from the far left or far right - a transgender student in competitive sports will be the test, state legislators - strong education bills will be promoted by one party, opposed by the other, and even national politics will enter your schools. I recall strong criticism from some when President Obama gave his first back to school address on school TV monitors.

Awareness is a learned skill. Learn to really listen and to observe body language and your environment. Whenever possible seek common ground among those with differing views and work to find a solution to the issue through compromise.

Two last pieces of advice:

1. Sleep on the big political decisions – rest assured, half of your citizens will approve, half won't.
2. If in doubt, whenever possible, call a Snow Day – it will raise your popularity with staff and students immediately (unfortunately, however, not with working parents).



Lynne Kovash  
Academy Coach  
Superintendent  
Moorhead Area Public Schools

### **Instructional Leadership**

It has been my pleasure to work with our group of Aspiring Superintendents. It is so gratifying to see the growth in our groups as well as in our group of coaching superintendents. The future is great with our strong cohort in the superintendent cohort.

We've had the opportunity to explore, discuss and practice different ideas and thinking. My passion has always been in instructional practices. Our leadership matters in providing the vision, direction and focus on all students and their achievement as well as their success as learners and

thinkers. We were able to read books and able to discuss them in our groups and with the whole group. From John Hattie, Gary Marx, Larry Cuban and Simon Sinek we looked at instructional leadership from many different perspective. I know a few of our aspiring superintendents left the sessions with lots of ideas and thoughts about instructional leadership.

As the program started we had many goals and aspirations. We explored the idea of developing an effective leadership team and organizational structure. This is vital for the work we need to do to help every student see succeed. As a group we had lively discussions about the future of education and the way that we can all be instructional leaders in our districts.

For coaches, we had the opportunity to work together with our group members to learn from thought leaders and others in our field to improve instructional practice. We looked at ways to align district standards, curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development. We looked at ways to transform teaching and learning. I believe we all became better leaders and thinkers in our respective practices. We learned from thought leaders, provocative readings and discussion and from each other. I truly believe this group of aspiring superintendents are ready to take that next step with confidence and knowledge.



Scott Staska  
Academy Coach  
Superintendent  
Rocori Public Schools

### **Building a Superintendent's Professional Network and Seeking Mentoring**

The Aspiring Superintendents' Academy has afforded a tremendous opportunity for participants to build a professional network of peers and colleagues. Much like a university cohort, the Academy brings together colleagues and peers who have common goals and interests to work together, get to know each other, and to learn from each other's experience.

The fact that the interests are all focused around a specific professional leadership role makes the cohort even more powerful and meaningful. Although the timeline will be different for each participant in regard to assuming a superintendent role, the contacts and relationships formed in the Academy will potentially remain as long-lasting connections.

Participants have grown from casual acquaintances as the Academy opened to cheerleaders and strong supporters of each other as the Academy draws to a close. The general interactions, shared learning experiences, professional opportunities, and scope of time together encouraged the

*Aspiring Superintendents Academy  
continued on page 31.*

# Congratulations to the 2016 Minnesota Aspiring Superintendents' Academy Participants!

The 2016 Academy consisted of five 2-day on-site sessions at the MASA offices in January, March, May, September, and November. Each participant had a coach who provided individual support and facilitated a smaller coaching group between sessions. Topic focal areas included: System Leadership, Accountability for Student Success, Communication and Political Skills, Finance & Budget, and Career Management.

We are grateful to our Master Teacher and facilitator Bruce Klaehn, Retired Superintendent (Dover-Eyota Schools); our Trends Presenter, Educational Consultant Jane Sigford; and our coaching team: Dennis Carlson, Retired Superintendent (Anoka-Hennepin Schools); Deb Henton, Superintendent, North Branch Area Public Schools; Lynne Kovash, Superintendent, Moorhead Area Public Schools; Scott Staska, Superintendent, Rocori Public Schools; and David Thompson, Superintendent, Stewartville Public Schools.

Our Academy participants this year were from a variety of districts and positions throughout Minnesota. Though diverse in background and perspective, they shared the qualities of passion for education and commitment to leadership. The 2016 Academy participants were:

- Marsha Baisch, Assistant Superintendent, St. Cloud Area Schools
- John Bezek, Assistant Superintendent, Shakopee Public Schools
- Val Rae Boe, Principal, Northeast Metro Intermediate 916
- Judith Brockway, Principal, New York Mills School District
- Gwen Carman, Superintendent, Carlton School District
- Katie Clarke, Director of Teaching and Learning, Worthington School District
- Renee Corneille, Principal/District Assessment Coordinator, St. Anthony-New Brighton School District
- Barbara Duffrin, Executive Director of Educational Services, Farmington Area Public Schools
- Melissa Eidsness, Assistant Superintendent of Learning & Accountability, Moorhead Area Public Schools
- Annette Freiheit, Superintendent, Pine City Public Schools
- Liann Hanson, Principal, Belle Plaine Schools
- Matthew Hillmann, Superintendent, Northfield Public Schools
- Rev PM Crowley Hillstrom, Director of Educational Equality, Osseo Area Schools
- Cheryl Johnson, Executive Director, Goodhue County Education District
- Callie Lalugba, Principal/ Chief Academic Officer, Harvest Network of Schools
- Jeremy Larson, Principal, Moorhead Area Schools
- Craig Peterson, Principal, Warroad High School
- Leadriane Roby, Assistant Superintendent, Richfield Public Schools
- Lisa Sayles-Adams, Assistant Superintendent, Saint Paul Public Schools
- Joseph Slavin, Principal, North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale Schools
- Bryan Strand, Principal, Barnesville Schools
- Lori Volz, Deputy Superintendent, Albert Lea Area Schools
- Wendy Webster, Director of Community Services and Communications, St. Anthony-New Brighton School District

Congratulations to all of our Academy participants for their professional growth and thank you to all who make this program something of which we are proud!

## Aspiring Superintendents Academy from page 29.

formation of bonds that are foundational to the development of professional networks and collegial interaction.

The unique structure of the Academy, with participants having an experienced superintendent serving as a coach, also lends to a very natural transition into a professional mentoring setting. The participants have already engaged in the opportunity to connect with a colleague with some experience. The participants have grown to understand the value of sharing ideas, consulting others, and having an experienced individual to whom they can direct questions or seek advice. The practice and opportunity provides a very smooth and natural adjustment to the mentoring processes supported by MASA.



Jane Sigford  
Academy Thought Leader  
Educational Consultant

### Thinking and Being a Thought Leader

As aspiring educational leaders it is important to think, dream, expand our ideas, explore possibilities, network, and have fun doing so. My role in the Aspiring Superintendents' Academy was to be a thought leader, facilitate these processes and to create "productive discomfort."

Topics we examined were: individual educational philosophies, role of

superintendents five years ago, now, and five years from now; problems vs. dilemmas; the fractal nature of change; real life case studies drawn from current issues; politics in education; the politics of race and the achievement gap; instructional leadership; and future-focused instructional leadership.

Participants read several books throughout the course of the program to stimulate discussion. Participants were also asked to reflect individually and in their respective groups.

Educational leaders are trapped by what has been successful in the past as though that will be successful in the future. Are we "captive of the cognitive?" as stated by Dr. Ken Robinson? Dr. Ken Robinson, educational professor and consultant, said that "One of the perils of standardized education is the idea that one size fits all and that life is linear." I would extend that idea and say we also treat schools as though learning is linear—elementary leads to middle to high school as though they are straight lines on a flow chart. Not true! Learners are not robots to be programmed with 1's and 0's to come to an end point. Learning occurs in moments of "ahas" and connections. To quote Gary Marx in his book *21 Trends for the 21st Century*, education needs to "foresee the intractability of wicked problems" that the world is facing.<sup>p. 41</sup> Because these trends lead to careers that we have never heard of and because we are "surrounded by a world filled with discontinuities, we desperately need to stay in touch with societal trends and how they might affect us."<sup>p. 15</sup>

It is the job of educators to be in the vanguard of thinking about these big issues. It's time for educational leaders to tout our expertise and toot our own horns. I call it "touting" and "tooting". An Academy such as this one gives reflective leaders the time to engage in What ifs? What nows? Whys? It gives people time to become Future-Focused Instructional Leaders.

As educational leaders in all positions, from superintendent to paraprofessional, we need to step out of our comfort zone and do something differently if we are to get different results. Years ago, my German professor and I had a disagreement. Our final exam was to take a novel we had read in German, find the root words, and put them on index cards. Then find the permutations of that word with prefixes and suffixes. We had a HUGE stack of cards at the end. I asked him what the purpose was. My mistake! Never question a German professor. He said that learning a language was learning a skill like pounding nails into any board. It's the same skill as a carpenter pounding nails and building a house. I replied that I'd rather be building a house. "Just do it, Fraulein." When I turned in my cards after a week of work, I wrote on the slip, "I'd still rather be a carpenter and see where I've been and where I'm going." My straight A became a C!

My point is that we have to stop just pounding any nails into any boards. We need to have a vision and we need to design new "houses" with more flexibility, unique spaces, and possibilities. We need to teach and support our leaders on this journey. •

## Federal Advocacy from page 13.

Representative Ellison's and McCollum's offices. We also met with Senators Franken and Klobachar. We found each person to be engaging and willing to listen to our concerns.

Our group finished our trip with a visit to the US Department of Education. Our main message to this group was one we heard loud and clear from Representative Kline, the key author of ESSA. The message was to implement the law as intended by Congress and to not overstep their authority.

Thank you to the members of MASA and MASE for the opportunity to represent you in Washington D.C. •



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## MASA Calendar

### 2017

#### January 1

MASA Jobsite Renewal

#### January 11

MASA Great Start Cohort  
MASA Offices, St. Paul

#### January 19

MASA Foundation  
Board Meeting  
MASA Offices, St. Paul

#### March 2-4

AASA National Conference  
on Education  
New Orleans Ernest N.  
Morial Convention Center

#### March 8

MASA Board of Directors  
MASA Great Start Cohort  
At Ruth's Table  
Marriott NW, Brooklyn Park

#### March 9-10

MASA/MASE Spring  
Conference  
Marriott NW, Brooklyn Park

#### June 15-16

MASA & MASE Board  
of Directors Retreats  
Marriott NW, Brooklyn Crowne  
Plaza Minneapolis West, Plymouth

#### July 1

MASA Membership Renewal

#### August - TBD

MDE Back-to-School  
Conference

#### September 30-October 1

MASA Board of Directors  
Duluth, MN

#### October 1

Great Start Cohort  
MASA Foundation  
Golf Tournament  
Duluth, MN

#### October 2-3

MASA Fall Conference  
Duluth, MN