

# Leaders FORUM

Fall 2016

## Opportunities to Personalize Our Learning in the New School Year



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

**W**elcome to a new school year! To me, and I'm sure to all of us, this is the most exciting time of the year as students and staff return with enthusiasm and focus for what lies ahead. In our districts, we have prepared our staff for new initiatives

and in some cases a re-commitment to prior initiatives that need to be implemented with fidelity. A part of our responsibility is to provide direction and prepare our staff with motivating messages that focus on doing what's best for students that can carry forward throughout the year. In anticipation of the new school year, we prepare for new opportunities in our districts and the same is true for MASA as we prepare for new opportunities for our members.

At the June Board retreat for MASA, board members heard from Dr. Jim Rickabaugh on the topic of "Tapping the Power of Personalized Learning." Personalized learning has been discussed for decades and leaders have been pursuing ways to implement a personalized learning plan for our students through a myriad of ways. We are now beginning to create learning environments that facilitate flexible and collaborative classroom spaces and many districts are implementing one-to-one technology or supporting bring-your-own-

device to maximize 21st Century learning experiences more now than at any other time in history.

While school district leaders look for avenues to create, support and attempt to make personalized learning experiences scalable for our teachers and students, so too does MASA look for ways to make professional growth and development personalized and timely. One of my priorities for MASA is for our association to provide adequate resources and support for quality professional development opportunities for all administrators. That priority also aligns with one of the strategic goals for MASA that states, "by 2017, MASA will coordinate professional learning that meets the needs and interests of each member." One way MASA is meeting this goal is by providing an opportunity to support each region financially for professional development tailored to member needs if the region applies for funding.

MASA is also meeting this goal by providing personalized professional development opportunities. Last spring was MASA's first attempt to provide a just-in-time personalized learning experience meant to be meaningful and relevant for members. It was titled, "The UnConference Session." This approach will be used again this fall. The Edcamp/UnConference is an opportunity for all of our members to design their own learning experience by exploring the topics we will determine ourselves at

*Opportunities to Personalize Our Learning continued on page 10.*

## What's Inside

- 2 **MASA Business Partners**
- 3 **Executive View**  
Moving Towards Balance In Our Lives
- 4 **MASA Fall Conference Preview**
- 5 **MASA Foundation**  
Dale G. Jensen Classic Golf Tournament
- 9 **MASA Board of Directors**
- 10 **Online Resources**
- 11 **MASA Region Leaders**
- 12 **Regional PD Grant Program**
- 13 **Awards**  
Polaris Leadership & Richard Green Scholar
- 15 **Legislative Update & MASA Committee Meeting Dates**
- 16 **Technology**  
The Evolution to Team Leadership in Education Technology
- 18 **Professional Assistance Team**
- 19 **Minnevat**  
Minnevat! and Moonshot Thinking – the Conversation Continues
- 20 **Legal Issues**  
Political Activity of School District Employees - An Election Year Q & A
- 23 **Put Me in, Coach...Notes for Mentors**  
Our Greatest Challenge
- 24 **MASA Mentors**  
2015-16 Mentors Thank You & Year 2 Program Option
- 26 **Invest in MN**  
Points of Engagement for Community Leaders
- 27 **Research to Practice**  
What's New at CAREI for the 2016-17 School Year?
- 29 **Sleep and Start Time**  
School Start Time Road Map
- 33 **Best Practices**  
Why School Referenda Fail: Research and Best Practices for Success
- 36 **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.

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

Hiller Commercial Floors  
Kraus-Anderson Construction Company  
National Joint Powers Alliance  
Nexus Solutions, LLC  
NWEA

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

Ehlers  
Infinitec  
PMA Financial Network, Inc.  
Robert W. Baird & Co.

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

MSDLAF+/PFM Asset Management, LLC  
Springsted Incorporated

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

Johnson Controls, Inc.  
The Horace Mann Companies  
Lifetouch  
PeopleAdmin

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

ATS&R Planners/Architects/Engineers  
Cunningham Group Architecture, Inc.  
DLR Group  
Kennedy & Graven, Chartered  
Marsh & McLennan Agency  
Milliken & Company  
PFM Financial Advisors  
SchoolFinances.com  
Teachers On Call  
Wold Architects & Engineers

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

Ameresco, Inc.  
Architects Rego & Youngquist, Inc.  
Big River Group  
CAREI  
College of St. Scholastica  
Cooperative Purchasing Connection  
CTS Group  
Discovery Education  
Donlar Construction  
Education Minnesota ESI  
Fisher Tracks, Inc.  
Foster, Jacobs & Johnson, Inc.  
GLTArchitects  
Hallberg Engineering, Inc.  
ICS Consulting  
IEA, Inc.  
Infinite Campus, Inc.  
InGensa, Inc.  
KFI Engineers  
Knutson, Flynn & Deans, P. A.

Lexia Learning Systems, Inc.  
LHB, Inc.  
Lightspeed Technologies, Inc.  
McKinstry  
Minnesota Comp Advisors  
MLA Architects  
Northland Securities, Inc. Financial Advisors  
Pro-Tec Design, Inc.  
R.A. Morton & Associates  
Ratwik, Roszak & Maloney, PA  
Renaissance Learning  
Rupp, Anderson, Squires & Waldspurger, PA  
Skyward, Inc.  
Sodexo  
TIES  
TSP Architects & Engineers  
Unesco Corporation  
Vaaler Insurance, Inc.  
Widseth Smith Nolting

# Moving Toward Balance In Our Lives



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

**E**arlier this summer I shared the following in our MASA weekly update. I received some positive feedback and felt it was well worth it to have these thoughts included in our newsletter.

The message focuses on committing to finding more balance in our lives. I know that as dedicated professionals, you spend countless hours working on behalf of the students and staff that you serve. Jonathan Lockwood Huie, in an article entitled "*Finding Balance in Life Beats Moderation, Eight Ways to Balance Your Life*," suggests ways to achieve balance.

1. Balance activity with serenity. Exercise and rest are both essential to a healthy and joyful life.
2. Balance wealth with simplicity. The best things in life truly are free, but there is also a place for material accomplishments - both for your own sake and for the sake of the world. Avoid the clutter of collecting excess possessions, but treat yourself with a few special items, trips, and other benefits of the modern world.
3. Balance persistence with innovation. Albert Einstein is sometimes quoted as saying, "Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results." Practice, patience, and persistence are essential to success in life, but recognize when the time comes to stop what you are doing and to search for a different route toward your life goals.
4. Balance community with solitude. Life success requires teamwork with a community of like-minded companions, yet you must also allow time for solitude - time for contemplation, time for relaxation, and time to be your own self with no pressure to conform or to please

others.

5. Balance familiarity with adventure. Adventure is like the seasoning on your meal - life is monotonous and boring without adventure, yet there is also a crucial place for the familiar. Physically and emotionally comfortable surroundings are essential to your wellbeing. There is no place like a comfortable home from which to launch your adventures and to which you return - either as the victorious hero or in shameless defeat, ready to recharge and set out on the next adventure.
6. Balance constancy with change. Tradition lends a comforting structure to life. Imagine if at each meal you had to decide on which side of the plate to place the fork. Doing what our parents did before us and their parents did before them, creates a stability and eases the small details of life. However, constancy is also habit, and there is a time to question all old habits - perhaps consciously renewing them, but hopefully often deciding to make new choices.
7. Balance leading with following. There are times to follow, but also times to raise your own torch and lead, as well as times to choose to disengage. Life is too short to fight all the battles. Choose your causes wisely, and then choose whether you need to become a leader of the cause.
8. Balance being of service - both to this generation and to generations yet unborn - with renewing your vitality by play and celebration. A life without service is not likely to be fulfilling, but you must charge your own batteries - physical, mental, and emotional - before you can inspire, motivate, and serve others.

It might be worth your time to think about these eight ways and to work to implement them. I hope you are successful this year in bringing more balance to your life!

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! •

## Leaders Forum

Fall 2016

Volume 51, Number 1

*Leaders Forum* is a publication of the Minnesota Association of School Administrators, © copyright, MASA. No endorsement of products or services is intended. Send materials to be considered for publication to:

### Associate for Leadership Support and Communications

Dave Christians  
MASA, 1884 Como Avenue  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108  
(651) 789-4061  
(866) 444-5251  
[dchristians@mnasa.org](mailto:dchristians@mnasa.org)

### Executive Director

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

### Professional Development Director

Mia Urick  
(651) 645-7231

### 2016-17 Officers

<b>President</b>	Scott Thielman
<b>President-Elect</b>	Curt Tryggestad
<b>Past President</b>	Jeff Ronneberg
<b>Treasurer</b>	Jamie Skjeveland

### 2016-17 Board of Directors

<b>Region 1</b>	Jeff Elstad (2016-19)
<b>Region 2</b>	John Cselovszki (2013-19)
<b>Region 3</b>	John Landgaard (2013-19)
<b>Region 4</b>	Missy Eidsness (2016-19) Doug Froke (2016-18) Jeremy Kovash (2011-17)
<b>Region 5</b>	Mark Diehl (2014-19) Lee Westrum (2016-17)
<b>Region 6</b>	Pam Miller (2011-17) Scott Staska (2015-18)
<b>Region 7</b>	Gregg Allen (2015-18) Reggie Engebritson (2015-18)
<b>Region 8</b>	Christopher Mills (2016-19)
<b>Region 9</b>	Jane Berenz (2014-19) Connie Hayes (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)

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

# FALL CONFERENCE PREVIEW



A “best practice” is a method that reliably leads to desired results. Great school leaders create effective systems that adapt to rapid and pervasive change, provide a culture supporting risk-taking and experimentation, and nurture a climate of possibilities. A best leadership practice in school districts manifests itself in strong systems that support those targets and therefore excellence for all students. Join your colleagues this fall as we share our own regional best leadership practices.

**Networking, Networking, Networking!** There will be numerous opportunities to socialize with colleagues you already know, as well as grow your professional network with fellow administrators from around the state. On Sunday afternoon, golfers will enjoy the **MASA Foundation Golf Tournament Mixer**. The tournament is newly named the Dale G. Jensen Classic to honor Dale’s many years of spearheading this important fundraiser. Information to register to golf can be found at [www.mnasa.org](http://www.mnasa.org). Sunday evening after dinner, we’ll gather for a casual Welcome Reception. We will announce the golf tournament results, so all the winners will get their bragging rights early in the conference!

**Inspiring Keynote Speakers!** Monday will feature a keynote address from **Dave Weber**, who will present one of his most frequently requested programs, “Sticks & Stones Exposed: The Truth Behind Words & Relationships.” The high demand for this program is due to its impact on the culture and climate of a school and the resulting improvement in student achievement, through the creation of a positive learning community. Tuesday will feature MASA’s 2016 Richard Green Scholar **Dr. James Johnson**, presenting his research “An Evaluation of Implementation and Effectiveness of Professional Learning Communities in Minnesota Public Schools.” Dr. Johnson’s presentation will inform us of the proper understanding of professional learning communities’ (PLC) concepts and practices. His study sought to determine if PLCs were being implemented effectively based on best practices described in research by: describing and contrasting the characteristics of PLCs employed in public school districts in Minnesota, the districts’ duration of use of PLCs, and barriers teachers and administrators have encountered when implementing PLCs.

**Customize Your Experience!** Individualize your professional learning with ten different breakout sessions presented by your fellow MASA members to choose from - and visit Monday’s Exhibit Fair. With more than 80 exhibitors offering the innovative products and services, you’ll discover the latest educational technology available for your students and communities.

**Celebrate Your Colleagues!** Throughout the conference we will be celebrating the service of our colleagues. In addition to celebrating our members’ years of service with milestone pins, we will present the 2016 Richard Green Scholar scholarship to **Dr. James Johnson** (special thank you to Cunningham Group Architecture, Inc.) and the 2016 Polaris Award to **Dr. Jim Hess** (special thank you to Ehlers).

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

**Edcamp!** Join us on Monday afternoon for our Edcamp, an opportunity for all of our participants to design their own conference experience by exploring the topics you determine. Our Edcamp subcommittee will be on hand to help participants arrange for the conferencing spaces and to extend invitations to the discussions. Our members ARE our experts, and here is a great chance to share knowledge and ideas.

**2016 MASA Fall Conference**  
**Our Best Leadership Practices**  
**October 2-4, 2016**  
**Madden's on Gull Lake, Brainerd, MN**  
[www.regonline.com/2016masafallconference](http://www.regonline.com/2016masafallconference)

## Meet Your Keynote Speakers...



Dave Weber



James Johnson

## Schedule At-a-Glance

### Sunday, October 2

- 9 am-4 pm • MASA Great Start Cohort II
- 10-11:30 am • Registration Open - Madden Inn Lobby
- 11:30 am • Foundation Golf Tournament
- 3-5 pm • Registration Open - Madden Inn Lobby
- 8-10 pm • Welcome Reception

### Monday, October 3

- (Registration open 7:30 am)
- 8:30-10:30 am • Keynote Speaker: Dave Weber
  - 10:30 am-3:30 pm • Exhibits Open
  - 11 am-noon • Breakout Sessions I
  - Noon-1:30 pm • Lunch
  - 1:30-2 pm • Dessert Reception in Exhibit Hall
  - 2-3 pm • Edcamp/Unconference
  - 3-3:30 pm • Exhibit Hall Break & Prize Drawings
  - 3:30-4:30 pm • Edcamp/Unconference

### Tuesday, October 4

- (Registration open 8:30 am)
- 9-10 am • Breakout Sessions II
  - 10:15 am-12 pm • Keynote Speaker: Dr. James Johnson  
MASA Business Meeting  
2016 MASA Service Recognition
  - 12pm • Lunch Buffet

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





## 2016 Golf Tournament!



If you registered for the MASA Fall Conference be sure to also register to play in the annual MASA Foundation Golf Tournament. Register online at: [www.regonline.com/MASAFoundationGolf](http://www.regonline.com/MASAFoundationGolf).

The tournament is newly named the *Dale G. Jensen Classic* to honor Dale's many years of spearheading this important fundraiser. All conference participants are invited to play, no matter your skill level!

The tournament will be held at the **Pine Beach West Golf Course** at Madden's on Gull Lake.

Plan to be at the golf course about 30 minutes early (11:30 am) to check-in and participate in the putting contest. Donate \$5 at the golf check-in desk for 4 chances to putt. Each golfer may participate twice. Each hole-in-one is worth one entry into the grand prize drawing. This year there will be two putting contests each with a grand prize of a \$150 gift card to Madden's on Gull Lake!



## Register and Donate Today!

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

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

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

The MASA Foundation is proud to sponsor MASA's Professional Assistance Team (P.A.T.). The P.A.T program directly supports the Foundation's mission of leadership development and individual support by meeting the immediate need of MASA members to confidentially discuss issues, seek advice, and receive valuable coaching from experienced and trusted MASA colleagues. Meet the 2016-17 P.A.T. members on page 20.

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

### *Help us meet our goals:*

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

You can donate by registering to play in the 2016 Foundation Golf Tournament at [www.regonline.com/MASAFoundationGolf](http://www.regonline.com/MASAFoundationGolf).

## *Thank you to the 2016-17 MASA Foundation Board of Directors!*

*Dan Brooks, President*  
*Jamie Skjeveland, Treasurer*  
*Eric Williams, President-Elect*  
*Eric Bartleson*  
*Don Bungum*  
*Rob Cavanna*  
*John Christiansen*

*Marty Duncan*  
*Peter Haapala*  
*Deb Henton*  
*Mike Hoheisel*  
*Dale Jensen*  
*Antoinette Johns*  
*Jim Johnson*

*Lynne Kovash*  
*Charlie Kyte*  
*Janet Mohr*  
*Fred Nolan*  
*Jeff Olson*  
*Allen Ralston*  
*Diane Rauschenfels*

*Harold Remme*  
*Chris Richardson*  
*Charles Rick*  
*John Thein*  
*Rachel Udstuen*  
*Ed Waltman*  
*Gary Amoroso, Executive Director*

# BUILDING A BRIGHTER FUTURE



*Building Design + Construction* magazine ranks  
Kraus-Anderson #6 nationally in construction of K-12 schools.



**KRAUS-ANDERSON®**

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



# get to KNOW US



**"Hi."**

As a service cooperative, NJPA holds competitively solicited cooperative contracts ready for use by educational, governmental, and nonprofit entities. NJPA cooperative purchasing brings buyers and suppliers together for efficiency and savings.

[NJPAcoop.org](http://NJPAcoop.org)



**NJPA**  
National Joint Powers Alliance®

A Proud MASA Premier Partner!

# TRANSFORM YOUR CLASSROOM

HILLER COMMERCIAL FLOORS

Transform your Classroom to an environment conducive to learning with Milliken Carpet Tile and Hiller Commercial Floors.

This ultra performance carpet tile features:

1. Cushioned Back which extends the life of the carpet by 40%.
2. Cushion relieves fatigue allowing the instructor to stand in front of the class for a longer period of time.
3. Cushion improves acoustics by 50% over hard-backed carpet and 12x over VCT.
4. State of the Art Smart Stain resistance Chemistry that lasts the life of the carpet. Very easy, no detergent cleaning.
5. Able to be installed over abatement chemical residue, VAT, black adhesive, high moisture levels without reaction or costly remediation.
6. Permanent antimicrobial treatment that lasts the life of the carpet.
7. 25 year warranties for wear, stain resistance, edge ravel, loss of adhesion to the floor, snags, delamination, curling, cupping, pattern degradation, color fastness.
8. Premium Nylon construction using Type 6,6 nylon. Considered the best fiber for commercial use.
9. Passes the TARR Federal traffic rating test with the highest score "Severe Traffic".

All this for the same or lower cost as other carpet tiles in the market. And the real added bonus: Superior state of the Art styling to give your rooms a "Wow" factor emphasizing school colors and styles to enhance the learning environment.

Hiller's also offers low maintenance LVT non wax tile, VCT, Rubber, weight room floors, sheet vinyl gym floors and many other flooring options.

We cover the entire state of Minnesota and work to build long term relationships through excellent, quick service and expert installation in an on time manner. Please call to see this innovative line products.



REMIX 2.0  
Backbeat

Milliken



Serving Minnesota Since 1948

Proud members of MASA, MN School Boards Assoc, MASBO, MREA, MASMS, MN Engineers Guild, Rochester Area Builders, IREM

Hiller Commercial Floors  
2909 South Broadway  
Rochester MN 55904

Dave Bahr  
507-254-6858 (cell)  
dbahr@hillercarpet.com

Max Bahr  
507-319-3322 (cell)  
mbahr@hillercarpet.com



# 2016-17 MASA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## **President**

**Dr. Scott Thielman**  
Superintendent  
Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose  
Schools  
214 1st Avenue NE  
Buffalo, MN 55313-1697  
Phone: (763) 682-8707  
sthielman@bhmschools.org

## **President – Elect**

**Dr. Curt Tryggestad**  
Superintendent  
Eden Prairie Schools  
8100 School Road  
Eden Prairie, MN 55344-2292  
Phone: (952) 975-7011  
ctrygg@edenpr.org

## **Past President**

**Dr. Jeff Ronneberg**  
Superintendent  
Spring Lake Park Schools  
1415 81st Avenue NE  
Spring Lake Park, MN 55432  
Phone: (763) 600-5020  
jronne@district16.org

## **Treasurer**

**Dr. Jamie Skjeveland (16 - 17)**  
Superintendent  
Crosby-Ironton Schools  
711 Poplar Street  
Crosby, MN 56441  
Phone: (218) 545-8817  
jskjeveland@ci.k12.mn.us

## **Region I**

**Jeff Elstad (16 - 19)**  
Supt. Comp. Grp. Rep.  
Superintendent  
Byron Public Schools  
1887 2nd Avenue NW  
Byron, MN 55920-6035  
Phone: (507) 696-2592  
jeff.elstad@byron.k12.mn.us

## **Region II**

**John Cselovszki (13 - 19)**  
Supt. Comp. Grp. Rep.  
Superintendent  
Sleepy Eye Public School  
400 4th Avenue SW  
Sleepy Eye, MN 56085  
Phone: (507) 794-7903  
john.cselovszki@sleepyeye.  
mntm.org

## **Region III**

**John Landgaard (13 - 19)**  
Supt. Comp. Grp. Rep.  
Superintendent  
Worthington School District  
1117 Marine Avenue  
Worthington, MN 56187  
Phone: (507) 372-2172  
john.landgaard@isd518.net

## **Region IV**

**Missy Eidsness (16 - 19)**  
Greater MN Central Office  
Component Group Rep.  
Asst. Supt. of Learning &  
Accountability  
Moorhead Area Public Schools  
2410 14th Street South  
Moorhead, MN 56560  
Phone: (218) 284-3315  
meidsness@moorheadschoools.org

## **Doug Froke (16 - 18)**

Supt. Comp. Grp. Rep.  
Superintendent  
Detroit Lakes Public Schools  
702 Lake Avenue, PO Box 766  
Detroit Lakes, MN 56502  
Phone: (218) 847-9271  
dfroke@detlakes.k12.mn.us

## **Jeremy Kovash (11 - 17)**

Service Provider Component  
Group Representative  
Executive Director  
Lakes Country Service Coop.  
1001 East Mount Faith Avenue  
Fergus Falls, MN 56537  
Phone: (218) 739-3273  
jkovash@lcsc.org

## **Region V**

**Mark Diehl (14 - 19)**  
Greater MN Technology  
Component Group Representative  
Director of Information & Tech.  
Services Little Falls Community  
Schools  
1001 5th Avenue SE  
Little Falls, MN 56345  
Phone: (320) 632-2000  
mdiehl@lfalls.k12.mn.us

## **Lee Westrum (16 - 17)**

Supt. Comp. Grp. Rep.  
Superintendent  
Wadena-Deer Creek Public  
Schools  
600 Colfax Avenue SW  
Wadena, MN 56482  
Phone: (218) 632-2155  
lwestrum@wdc2155.k12.mn.us

## **Region VI**

**Pam Miller (11 - 17)**  
Greater MN Curriculum  
Component Group Rep.  
Director of Teaching and Learning  
Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose Schools  
214 1st Avenue NE  
Buffalo, MN 55313  
Phone: (763) 682-8777  
pmiller@bhmschools.org

## **Scott Staska (15-18)**

Supt. Comp. Grp. Rep.  
Superintendent  
Rocori Public Schools  
534 North 5th Avenue  
Cold Spring, MN 56320  
Phone: (320) 685-4901  
staskas@rocori.k12.mn.us

## **Region VII**

**Gregg Allen (15 - 18)**  
Supt. Comp. Grp. Rep.  
Superintendent  
Mesabi East School District  
601 N 1st Street West  
Aurora, MN 55705  
Phone: (218) 229-3321  
gallen@isd2711.org

## **Dr. Reggie Engebretson (15 - 18)**

Greater MN Sp. Ed. Component  
Group Representative  
Executive Director  
Northland Learning Center  
201 13th Avenue South  
Virginia, MN 55792  
Phone: (218) 741-9201  
rengebretson@northlandsped.org

## **Region VIII**

## **Dr. Christopher Mills (16 - 19)**

Supt. Comp. Grp. Rep.  
Superintendent  
Stephen-Argyle Central Schools  
PO Box 68  
Stephen, MN 56757  
Phone: (218) 478-3315  
cmills@sac.k12.mn.us

## **Region IX**

## **Jane Berenz (14 - 19)**

Supt. Comp. Grp. Rep.  
Superintendent  
Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan  
Public Schools  
3455 153rd Street West  
Rosemount, MN 55068  
Phone: (651) 423-7749  
jane.berenz@district196.org

## **Connie Hayes (15 - 18)**

Supt. Comp. Grp. Rep.  
Superintendent  
NE Metro 916 Intermediate District  
2540 East County Road F  
White Bear Lake, MN 55110  
Phone: (651) 415-5656  
connie.hayes@nemetro.k12.mn.us

## **Dr. Wayne Kazmierczak (15 - 18)**

Metro Central Office Component  
Group Representative  
Dir. of Finance & Operations  
White Bear Lake Area Schools  
4855 Bloom Avenue  
White Bear Lake, MN 55110  
Phone: (651) 407-7516  
wayne.kazmierczak@isd624.org

## **Darren Kermes (11 - 17)**

Metro Sp. Ed. Component Group  
Representative  
Executive Director  
SouthWest Metro Intermediate  
District 288  
792 Canterbury Rd., Ste. 211  
Shakopee, MN 55379  
Phone: (952) 567-8102  
dkermes@swmetro.k12.mn.us

## **David Law (16 - 18)**

Supt. Comp. Grp. Rep.  
Superintendent  
Anoka-Hennepin School District  
2727 Ferry Street North  
Anoka, MN 55303  
Phone: (763) 506-1000  
david.law@anoka.k12.mn.us

## **Kimberly Pavlovich (16 - 17)**

Metro Curriculum Component  
Group Representative  
Director of Secondary Curriculum  
Anoka-Hennepin School District  
2727 Ferry Street North  
Anoka, MN 55303  
Phone: (763) 506-1135  
kimberly.pavlovich@anoka.k12.  
mn.us

## **Josh Swanson (14 - 17)**

Metro Technology Component  
Group Representative  
Assistant Superintendent  
Eden Prairie Schools  
8100 School Road  
Eden Prairie, MN 55344  
Phone: (952) 975-7797  
jswanson@edenpr.org

## **Retiree Representative**

## **Dr. Mary Ann E. Nelson (12 - 18)**

3832 West Calhoun Parkway  
Minneapolis, MN 55410  
Phone: (612) 836-0120  
maryannvanhouten@msn.com

## **MASA Executive Director**

**Dr. Gary Amoroso**  
1884 Como Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55108  
Phone: (651) 645-6869  
gamoroso@mnasa.org

## **MASA Director of Professional Development**

**Mia Urick**  
1884 Como Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55108  
Phone: (651) 645-7231  
urickm@mnasa.org

# Did You Know?

## MASA Offers a Variety of Online Professional Learning Opportunities and Resources



Each year, MASA's Executive Development Committee works to identify and address the professional learning needs of our members. In addition to our traditional conferences and workshops, the MASA website is equipped with a variety of just-in-time online professional learning options and leadership resources, including:

Whitewater Learning, is not a MASA product, but we recommend it as an affordable online library of high-quality modules that align with state and national competencies and offer pre-approved teacher and administrator CEUs.



ExpertEase. A catalog of short online videos on a variety of education leadership topics. These videos provide certification of participation that can be used when renewing teacher licensure. Videos are available to all MASA members free of cost via the Infinetec website.

What We Are Reading. Our book blog contains book reviews, book notes, and discussion questions. This is a great resources for staff development exercises, a teaching tool during lectures, or if you simply enjoy a good book.



Voice of MN Education blog. Each week we publish a blog post or video from Gary Amoroso to inform our members of organization news, share legislative updates, or feature our colleagues as guest bloggers.



Professional Assistance Team (PAT). MASA members may need advice or consultation as they run into new or difficult situations. The PAT members have offered to use their experiences to help their colleagues navigate these situations. You can find a list of PAT members on the MASA website, and may contact anyone of them as you seek assistance.

### *Opportunities to Personalize Our Learning from page 1.*

the fall conference. Most of us reject the one-size-fits-all notion in which you attend a conference to sit-and-get information that may or may not be relevant to your personal professional growth. We would rather adopt a process by which individuals support the skill development and capacity building necessary for continued learning. Our members ARE our experts, and this is a great chance to share knowledge and ideas.

This year, the school district I serve, Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose, had the opportunity to have Kevin Honeycutt serve as our keynote speaker at our District Welcome Back Program. Many of you heard Kevin speak at the MSBA winter conference a few years ago. He spoke about the "Challenges and Opportunities for Today's Learning Mind". One of the points he emphasized was to engage learners by letting them help us navigate the content of curriculum through new uses of technology. He also encouraged us to use the students' talents to help everyone in the classroom. The same can be true for MASA members if we use the talents of the members to help everyone in our association grow in their own professional development.

The UnConference can do just that; it will afford members

who have questions or who have been researching topics of interest to share their expertise and experiences with everyone who is interested in the topic. It also affords members the opportunity to sit in on a topic that they are interested in exploring but haven't had the time to begin researching. The goal is to connect learners with others who have like interests and would otherwise not have known of similar experiences or interests. It is MASA's intention this fall to support you by organizing and providing dedicated time and space for you to accrue skills and make choices in pursuit of meeting your personal and professional growth and development goals and interests. Whatever topic you engage with, we look forward to your participation and leadership in these sessions.

It is an honor to serve as your MASA President and I look forward to maximizing our students' educational experiences as well as our members' experiences. I hope everyone has a great start to the school year and I look forward to your involvement in helping yourselves and your colleagues in personalizing your learning.

Have a great year! •

# MASA REGION LEADERS

## Region 1

Chair, Beth Giese, Superintendent  
Cannon Falls Area Schools  
giese.beth@cf.k12.mn.us

Past Chair & MASA Executive Committee  
Liaison, Chair-Elect, Jeff Elstad,  
Superintendent  
Byron Public Schools  
jeff.elstad@byron.k12.mn.us

Secretary-Treasurer, Suzanne Riley,  
Executive Director  
Southeast Service Cooperative  
sriley@ssc.coop

Edward Harris, Superintendent  
Chatfield Public Schools  
eharris@chatfield.k12.mn.us

Mark Matuska, Superintendent  
Kasson-Mantorville Public Schools  
m.matuska@komets.k12.mn.us

Michael Redmond, Superintendent  
Goodhue Public School  
mredmond@goodhue.k12.mn.us

Benjamin Barton, Superintendent  
Caledonia Area Public Schools  
ben\_barton@cps.k12.mn.us

Jen Hegna, Director of Info. & Learning  
Technology  
Byron Public Schools  
jen.hegna@byron.k12.mn.us

SSC Staff: Kari Kubicek, kkubicek@ssc.coop

## Region 2

Chair, Bill Adams, Superintendent  
Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton School  
District  
badams@isd2835.org

Treasurer, Tom Lee, Superintendent  
Waseca Public Schools  
leet@waseca.k12.mn.us

MASA Board Rep., John Cselovski,  
Superintendent  
Sleepy Eye Public School  
john.cselovszki@sleepyeye.mntm.org

## Region 3

Chair, Luther Heller, Superintendent  
Montevideo Public Schools  
lheller@montevideoschools.org

Chair-Elect, Dennis Laumeyer,  
Superintendent  
Benson Public Schools  
dlaumeyer@benon.k12.mn.us

Secretary, Ryan Nielsen, Superintendent  
Canby Public Schools  
ryan.nielsen@canbylancers.org

MASA Board Rep., John Landgaard,  
Superintendent  
Worthington School District  
john.landgaard@isd518.net

Fiscal Host, Cliff Carmody, Executive  
Director  
SWWC Service Cooperative  
cliff.carmody@swsc.org

Region 3 Staff, Shelly Maes, Manager –  
Member Services  
SWWC Service Cooperative, shelly.maes@  
swsc.org

## Region 4

Chair, Jeremy Kovash, Executive Director  
Lakes Country Service Cooperative  
jkovash@lcsc.org

Doug Froke, Superintendent  
Detroit Lakes Public Schools  
dfroke@detlakes.k12.mn.us

Dan Posthumus, Superintendent/Principal  
Wheaton Area Schools  
dposthumus@wheaton.k12.mn.us

## Region 5

Chair, Dave Fjeldheim, Superintendent  
Sebeka Public School  
dfjeldheim@sebaka.k12.mn.us

Secretary/Treasurer, Paul Brownlow,  
Superintendent, Verndale Public School  
District  
pbrownlow@verndale.k12.mn.us

Past President & MASA Board Rep., Lee  
Westrum, Superintendent  
Wadena-Deer Creek Public Schools  
lwestrum@wdc2155.k12.mn.us

MASA Board Rep., Jamie Skjeveland,  
Superintendent  
Crosby-Ironton Schools, jskjeveland@  
ci.k12.mn.us

Paul Drange, Director of Regional Programs  
Nat'l Joint Powers Alliance  
paul.drange@njpacoop.org

## Region 6

Chair, Raymond Queener, Superintendent  
Cambridge-Isanti Public Schools  
rqueener@c-ischools.org

Chair-Elect, Rob Prater, Superintendent  
Hinckley-Finlayson Public Schools  
rprater@isd2165.org

Past Chair, Daniel Bittman, Superintendent  
Sauk Rapids-Rice Public Schools  
daniel.bittman@isd47.org

Treasurer, Matthew Bullard, Superintendent  
BBE Public Schools  
mbullard@bbejaguars.org

Secretary, James Johnson, Superintendent  
Monticello Public Schools  
jim.johnson@monticello.k12.mn.us

MASA Board Rep., Scott Staska,  
Superintendent  
Rocori Public Schools  
staskas@rocori.k12.mn.us

Sp. Ed. Comp. Group Rep., Janell Bullard,  
Director of Special Education  
MAWSECO  
jbullard@mawseco.k12.mn.us

Curriculum Comp. Group Rep., Pam Miller,  
Director of Teaching & Learning  
Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose Schools  
pmiller@bhmschools.org

MASA Board Rep., Scott Thielman,  
Superintendent  
Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose Schools  
sthielman@bhmschools.org

## Region 7

Chair & MASA Board Rep., Gregg Allen,  
Superintendent  
Mesabi East School District  
gallen@isd2711.org

## Region 8

Chair & MASA Board Rep., Chris Mills,  
Superintendent  
Stephen-Argyle Central Schools  
cmills@sac.k12.mn.us

Bruce Jensen, Executive Director  
Northwest Service Cooperative  
bjensen@nw-service.k12.mn.us

James Guetter, Superintendent  
Red Lake County Central & Red Lake Falls  
Schools  
rlccsupt@gvtel.com

## Region 9

Chair, John Schultz, Superintendent  
Hopkins Public Schools  
john.schultz@hopkinsschools.org

Brian Corlett, Superintendent  
Central Public Schools  
bcorlett@central.k12.mn.us

Connie Hayes, Superintendent  
NE Metro 916 Intermediate District  
connie.hayes@nemetro.k12.mn.us

Julie Frame, Executive Director  
Executive Director  
julie.frame@metroecu.org



# REGIONAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAM

The MASA Board of Directors has established two grant programs to support the regional professional development needs of its members.

## **Basic Regional Grant**

Each of the nine MASA regions is eligible to annually receive a \$750 grant to support professional development within the region. To access the basic grant, the regional leadership team must request the funds by sending a written communication to the MASA Executive Director requesting the funds and briefly describing how the grant will be used. The Executive Director has discretion over approval of the basic grant.

## **Major Project Regional Grant**

In addition to the basic grant funds, MASA will dedicate \$15,000 per fiscal year (July 1 – June 30) to support professional development for three regions per year with \$5,000 per region. Eligible regions will rotate. The regional rotation schedule has been determined by lottery with Region 6 at the end of the rotation due to the region receiving a pilot grant in FY2015-16. The first rotation is as follows:

- 2015-16 Region 6 (Pilot Grant)
- 2016-17 Regions 1, 2, and 5
- 2017-18 Regions 3, 7, and 8
- 2018-19 Regions 4, 6, and 9

The professional development topic/content is at the discretion of the region members, but regions are encouraged to take into consideration the input and needs of all MASA component groups.

Regions wishing to participate must notify MASA by July 1 of the fiscal year in which the region is eligible and provide a description of the professional development that will be supported by this funding. The request must come from the Regional Leadership Team. Find your Regional Leaders at [www.mnasa.org/regionleaders](http://www.mnasa.org/regionleaders) and on page 11.

Regions not wishing to participate, or not ready to participate, may decline. The designated funds will be held in reserve for one year, after which the funds will not be available to the region until the next “rotation.”

The regions receiving funding will present their outcomes at a conference the year following the funded year.

Registration is still open for the 2016-17 Great Start Cohort (GSC)! We currently have 20 cohort members registered - don't miss out on this year-long professional learning opportunity as enter your new role as a school administrator!

MASA is committed to providing excellent professional development that will support you in your professional practice. As a member of the GSC, you will have the opportunity to meet other new leaders, receive information from seasoned leaders, and develop practical skills designed

to help you be successful in the first year of your new position. In addition to the five traditional workshops (linked to statewide conferences for travel and schedule ease), participants will also receive access to the GSC Online Toolbox filled with supporting documents and videos on popular topics. Continuing Education Units will be granted for each session in the series. Whether you are an experienced administrator or are new to your leadership role, this workshop series is a wonderful opportunity to network with your colleagues and enhance your skills.



Register online today at: [www.regonline.com/greatstart](http://www.regonline.com/greatstart)

Here are the remaining dates for the 2016-17 Cohort:

**Sunday, October 2 at Madden's on Gull Lake in Brainerd**

The day before the MASA Fall Conference

**Wednesday, November 16 at Cragun's Conference Center in Brainerd**

The day before the fall instructional leadership conference

**Wednesday, January 11 at the MASA offices**

The day before the Minnesota School Boards Association winter conference

**Wednesday, March 8 at the Minneapolis Marriott Northwest**

The day before the MASA/MASE Spring Conference

MASA is grateful to Springsted Incorporated for their continuing support of the Great Start Cohort!

## AWARDS

# James Hess Receives Polaris Leadership Award



Dr. James Hess  
Superintendent  
Bemidji Area Schools

The Minnesota Association of School Administrators (MASA) has named Dr. James Hess, Superintendent of Bemidji Area Schools, the recipient of the MASA Polaris Leadership Award. Superintendent Hess will be honored for his exemplary school leadership and a lifetime of balanced achievement inside and outside of education at a statewide recognition ceremony to be held at the MASA Fall Conference, October 2-4, 2016,

in Brainerd, Minnesota.

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

Dr. Hess has helped create three new community preschools to address the needs of at-risk learners; provided for the educational needs of all children by passing a bond constructing 100 new classrooms and two new schools; assisted the Legislative Committee in rewriting the State School Finance Formula to recognize relative costs of students’ educational programs by weighted pupil basis; and worked with community groups to pass three operating levy referendums which added opportunities to maintain reasonable class sizes, operate all-day, every-day kindergarten, and replace aging school buses.

Dr. Hess has 37 years of education administration experience, ranging from principal to executive director to superintendent, and has been serving Bemidji Public Schools since 2004. Dr. Hess has been involved in several educational and community organizations such as: MASA,

*Polaris Leadership Award continued on page 17.*

# James Johnson Named Richard Green Scholar



Dr. James Johnson  
Superintendent  
Monticello Public Schools

The Minnesota Association of School Administrators (MASA) has named Dr. James Johnson, Superintendent at Monticello Public Schools, the 2016 Richard Green Scholar. Dr. Johnson will present his research, “An Evaluation of Implementation and Effectiveness of Professional Learning Communities in Minnesota Public Schools” at the MASA Fall Conference, October 2-4, 2016, in

Brainerd, Minnesota.

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

Prior to his position as Superintendent at Monticello Public Schools, Dr. Johnson served as the district’s Assistant Superintendent and Middle School Principal. He has also served as an administrator in the New Prague School District. Jim also was a teacher in the Sartell School District.

Dr. Johnson earned his Doctor of Education in Educational Administration and Leadership from St. Cloud State University in May 2016. He earned his 6th Year Certificate and Master of Science from St. Cloud State University. He received his Bachelor of Science from the University of Minnesota.

Throughout his professional career Dr. Johnson has been interested in professional development and firmly believes quality professional development is the key to continuous professional growth among educators. His passion in this area led him to leadership opportunities as a teacher and was critical to his calling to administration. Recently, Dr. Johnson’s doctoral study focused on professional learning communities as the critical vehicle for creating a culture in our schools that will lead to the goal of continuous improvement. •



## *The Point of Performance*

**We work with K-12 clients to develop and implement 21st-century facility improvements for long-term success.** Our team of experts has been delivering performance for over 25 years, bringing meaningful solutions to public sector clients in the Midwest. Our comprehensive approach to planning, funding, design, energy conservation, construction and commissioning has helped define Nexus Solutions as *The Point of Performance*.



**Learn how we can help you:**

**Mike David** 612.747.1003 | **Brent Jones** 763.350.5212 | [NexusSolutions.com](http://NexusSolutions.com)



# 2016 Elections and 2017 Session Preview



Valerie Dosland  
Government Affairs Director  
Ewald Consulting  
MASA Lobbyist

While the prospects of a special session have become less likely, focus now turns to the November elections. While there is no statewide office on the ballot, the focus is high on the presidential race. However, it's important to remember the entire Minnesota House and Senate is also up for re-election this year. The last several elections have shown that anything is up for grabs, with control of the House and Senate changing each election cycle. This election has us again pondering what the makeup of the legislature will look like.

Currently, Republicans have a 73-61 majority over their DFL counterparts in the House. The Republicans have six retiring members while the Democrats have four retiring, and five members running for the State Senate. For the House Democrats to retake the majority, they will need to retain the nine vacated seats and win elections in seven seats currently held by Republicans.

In the Senate, Democrats currently have a 39-28 majority over their Republicans counterparts. Senate Democrats have eight retiring members, one member running for Congress, and the Senate Republicans have four retiring members. For Senate Republicans to flip the majority, they would need to retain the four vacated seats while picking up six seats that are currently represented by a Democrat.

Even though a lot of focus is spent on re-election bids, legislators are also spending time looking at issues for the next legislative session. First, working groups are meeting to look at student discipline and teacher licensure and we expect recommendations to be brought forward next session. The Legislative Auditor is doing an evaluation on standardized student testing and most likely will have recommendations for legislative changes.

Looking to the 2017 session, the legislature and the governor must pass a new two-year state budget. Because of the veto of the tax bill a number of issues remain on the table – most notably a proposal to address agricultural land, bond referendums and property taxes. Other issues that will hold our focus continue to be the per-pupil formula and an unresolved fix to address the instability in the Teacher Retirement Association fund.

While you focus on the start of the school year, this time of year also provides you a good opportunity to connect with elected officials and new candidates running for office. They seek every opportunity to talk to voters and love to

hear from you (particularly during an election year) – it's an opportunity to educate candidates about your issues as they relate to your school district and the students you serve. •

## MASA Committee Meeting Dates

The meeting dates for the 2016-17 MASA Committees have been announced!

### Executive Development Committee

Monday, October 24, 2016  
10 am - 2 pm

### Legislative Committee

Tuesday, November 1, 2016  
10 am - 3 pm

### Nominating Committee

Wednesday, November 2, 2016  
11 am - 1:30 pm

### Federal Advocacy Committee

Monday, November 21, 2016  
11 am - 1:30 pm

All meetings will be held at the MASA Offices in St. Paul.

Please RSVP to [dchristians@mnasa.org](mailto:dchristians@mnasa.org).

We will also have video teleconferencing available for committee members who need to attend remotely!

Visit [www.mnasa.org/committees](http://www.mnasa.org/committees) for a full listing of all the MASA Committees!



## MASA Twitter Chats

#MNMASA Second Sunday

of the Month @ 8 pm

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

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

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

# The Evolution to Team Leadership in Education Technology



**Josh Sumption**  
Director of Technology  
SW/WC Service Cooperative

In the earliest days of technology in schools, infrastructure usually consisted of a lab full of Apple IIe computers used for word processing and simple interactive learning activities such as Oregon Trail and Number Munchers. In those days, personal computers were the newest advent in the world of technology and schools were adopting them at a rapid rate. There were no concerns about digital citizenship; we mostly worried that students (or teachers)

would be sticking their fingers through the center hole of the 5 ¼ floppy disk. In some schools, teachers were put on special assignment for an hour or two per day to take care of the computer labs and make sure everything was in working order and troubleshoot issues with their nearest service center if necessary. Overall, systems seemed to run dependably and were normally relevant and cutting-edge for about eight years without a question. Life seemed good and computer technology was progressing quickly for the time.

Thirty years later, and here we are. Apple IIe computers can be seen in museums, and are a distant memory or an unknown concept for many. We've seen enterprise-class networks develop and interconnect our districts in ways we couldn't have imagined in the 1980's. The Internet delivers an endless supply of information, media, classroom resources, with exponentially increasing bandwidth demands every year. Schools also need to monitor for digital threats and inappropriate material. Software systems are continually collecting and analyzing data on all components of our educational ecosystems and providing us with trend and analysis information that is driving the instructional and administrative decisions we are make every day. Educators and students are mobile, and have ready access to devices. Some schools now have a device to student ratio that exceeds 1 to 1 and in some cases is quickly approaching 2 or 3 to 1. The days of scheduling time to use the computer lab are over, and the technology is now in student and teacher hands. Even the smallest wearable technologies have many times the computing power and storage capacity than the Apple IIe computer we relied on years ago.

Remember how that teacher on special assignment could keep the technology running for a couple hours each day? That too, is a distant memory for school districts across Minnesota and the nation. As technology has evolved and made our lives easier to manage, the complexity of maintaining, servicing and training end users on proper implementation and integration of those technologies has

also significantly increased. As use and dependability that schools have on technology has continued to increase, so too has the expectations and reliance on the school technology department. School district technology leaders of the past two decades have seen some of the most dramatic and



Apple IIe Computer

radical changes in responsibility and demands of almost any leadership position within our school systems. Technology directors have seen their role switch from one of desktop computer installation and troubleshooting technician to being a role of leadership, supervision, and decision-making, along with dramatically different professional development paths in technical support or technology integration roles. Technology implementation within our schools is now truly a team effort, even in the smallest of Minnesota's rural school districts, where the technology director might still be a teacher on special assignment for a couple hours per day.

The key to success in providing a technology environment that is going to successfully serve our school systems falls on two simple, but very complex components: relationships and professional development.

Relationships are all about ensuring that the school district has a great team of people working together, from the technology leader, support staff, and instructional technology integrationists to external components such as personnel in a regional cooperative or contracted support from a business. All of the state-of-the-art technology can be purchased, but if the district lacks the right combination of staff with the right skills in place to make those components work together, the district has nothing but a lot of expensive machinery. As a technology leader, one of the biggest challenges is finding the right talents and personalities in people, and applying those skills and knowledge to support an enterprise-class system on a school-class budget. In the days of the Apple IIe, schools were more concerned about the names students were adding to headstones and the leader board in the Oregon Trail than trying to bring our technology staff together to work towards the common good of our schools.

Once the right people are in place, appropriate and timely professional development is critical. In the last ten years, how many different operating systems, devices, software and web-based applications have you used? How much

***The Evolution to Team Leadership in Education Technology continued on page 17.***

## *The Evolution to Team Leadership in Education Technology from page 16.*

training and experimentation did it take before you felt comfortable operating those technologies? How many times did you call your school's technology department needing assistance, expecting them to have the answers? How much time and budget was your technology department allocated for professional development to become experts in that new technology? Normally the answer to the latter is "not much, if any." While we cannot expect to create in-depth expertise in every application or system that is in place within our schools, we do need to provide our technology staff members with the ability to research, problem-solve, make contacts and coordinate the support or correction of issues. When incorporating professional development opportunities for technology staff, the focus should be on the most broadly used software and devices to build up a great internal support system for the technologies in use, but also to focus on broader skill sets such as project management, service level management and customer service. These types of professional development needs reflect the very radical changes in the school district technology leadership roles that we have seen within the last ten years.

Today's school technology leaders also need to think beyond purely technology infrastructure decisions but must focus on the overall educational goals of the school district and then help apply the roles, tasks and responsibilities to technology department staff to help support those goals. Going a step further, the Consortium for School Networking (CoSN), has developed a framework of essential skills that technology leaders should possess and has developed a nationally recognized certification process around the framework, the Certified Education Technology Leader (CETL) certification.

The process of preparing for and taking the CETL examination is a very rigorous process and one that validates a technology leader's skillsets in administering a word-class, 21st Century education technology environment. The job of technology leader is no longer confined to simply keeping computer labs in operating condition and the administrative systems running, it has expanded to enhancing and supporting the education of every student in our schools at an individualized level, quite the drastic shift from where we were just three decades ago. •

## *Polaris Leadership Award from page 13.*

Lakeland Public Television Board of Directors, Joint Economic Development Commission, St. Philips Church Lector, Bemidji Symphony Orchestra supporter and guest conductor, Bemidji Noon Rotary Club, Paul Harris Fellow, and assisted with planning and preparation for Bemidji Day at the Capitol. Dr. Hess has also served as a guest lecturer at Bemidji State University, Moorhead State University, St. Cloud State University, Colorado State University, and the University of Northern Colorado. In 2008, Dr. Hess was selected as the MASA Region 8 Administrator of the Year and the Region 8 Administrator of Excellence.

Dr. Hess received his doctorate's degree in educational leadership and policy analysis from the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley, Colorado. He received his master's degree in elementary administration and a bachelor's degree in elementary education from Northern State College in Aberdeen, South Dakota. •



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)

A promotional banner for the National Conference on Education. It features a green background with a white pencil and a green tag that says "REGISTRATION NOW OPEN". The text "NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON EDUCATION" is visible in the top left corner. Below the tag, the text "Registration &amp; Lodging Now Open!" is written in bold. Further down, it says "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/". Below that, it says "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." At the bottom, it says "Don't forget your lodging reservations - registration open now at: www.nce.aasa.org/hotel-travel/". A blue "SAVE THE DATE" button is also present. The bottom of the banner says "The MASA State Breakfast will be held at 7:30 am on Friday, March 3, 2017, at the Hilton New Orleans Riverside."



## SCHOOL DISTRICT LAW GROUP

We welcome the opportunity to work with public school districts and bring them our rich history of responsive, creative, practical, and high quality legal services.

### Education Law

Greg Madsen, gmadsen@kennedy-graven.com  
Tim Palmatier, tpalmatier@kennedy-graven.com  
Maggie R. Wallner, mwallner@kennedy-graven.com  
Adam Wattenbarger, awattenbarger@kennedy-graven.com

### Construction

Peter Mikhail, pmikhail@kennedy-graven.com  
James M. Strommen, jstrommen@kennedy-graven.com

### Real Estate & Business

Sarah J. Sonsalla, ssonsalla@kennedy-graven.com  
Doug Shaftel, dshaftel@kennedy-graven.com

### Finance & Bonds

Jenny Boulton, jboulton@kennedy-graven.com  
Martha Ingram, mingram@kennedy-graven.com

470 U.S. Bank Plaza, 200 South Sixth Street, Minneapolis, MN 55402  
Phone 612.337.9300 • Fax 612.337.9310 • Toll Free 1.800.788.8201 • www.kennedy-graven.com

## 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  
dhenton@isd138.org



**Jerry Nesland**

Office: (218) 894-2439  
Cell: (218) 640-0267  
Home: (218) 385-3194  
jnesland@fed.k12.mn.us



**Jeff Olson**

Cell: (507) 340-0628  
Home: (507) 934-9195  
jolsontncp@gmail.com



**Patty Phillips**

Cell: (651) 357-0996  
pattyjphillips@gmail.com



**Carl Wahlstrom**

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

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

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

- Answers to questions regarding your role as a 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.*

## Minnevate! and Moonshot Thinking – the Conversation Continues

by Mia Urick, Director of Professional Learning, MASA

In a recent post on Singularity HUB entitled, “Why We Need Moonshot Thinking in High School Education”<sup>1</sup>, Alison E. Berman writes:

*“With about 20% of teens dropping out of high school and 5.6 million Americans between the ages of 16-24 (that’s 1 in 7) disconnected from both school and work, it isn’t too wild to say that we have an engagement crisis in the US.*

*This lack of engagement comes at a high cost to the economy and to taxpayers, who spend \$93 billion dollars annually on disconnected youth (those not in school or working) and \$1.6 trillion over their lifetime.*

*But that spending isn’t preparing the population to thrive in today’s workforce.*

*In fact, 40% of U.S. companies cannot find qualified candidates to fill their jobs, and employers spend more on skills training annually than universities and government combined.*

*... Put simply, moonshot thinking is when you approach a huge challenge (like disengaged high school students) with a radical solutions-oriented mindset. In this mindset, the focus is on creating solutions that can make 10x improvements to the problem rather than 10% improvements.*

*Moonshot thinking motivates teams to think big by framing problems as solvable and encouraging ‘anything is possible’ dialogues around how to solve the challenge.”*

In December 2013, MASA began a conversation called “Minnevate!” During 2013-14, we hosted regional discussions designed to explore and bridge the space between our visions for the future of Minnesota’s schools and the realities of today. We gathered dialogue data using the World Café hosting model and coded and reported that data in our first (2013-14) report. (Find a link to the report at [minnevate.mnasa.org](http://minnevate.mnasa.org).)

MASA members are our state’s education experts and it is appropriate that they convene the conversations about the future of Minnesota education. MASA has always intended that Minnevate! exist as a place for conversation, ideas, and commentary – NOT an “initiative” that would result in a report that would be read by few, that would get dusty on a shelf, that would be devoid of meaning. We often say that Minnevate! isn’t a “thing;” it’s not a committee you have to be on, or a finite product—or a conversation that belongs to a select few, no more than public education belongs to a select few. Minnevate! exists as a place to figure out where we are now, where we want to go, and how to get there. Minnevate! is our place for Moonshot Thinking. It’s that simple, and of course that complex.

The MASA leadership continues to be committed to Minnevate! The current MASA Strategic Plan features the strategy: “Through Minnevate!, we will foster relationships with all stakeholders to create and advocate a common public education agenda in Minnesota,” and specifically the action step: “Develop a common understanding of purposes of education and solicit feedback.”

This fall, we will once again be visiting our MASA Regions to add an additional data layer to the Minnevate! conversation. For the upcoming meetings, our theme will be, “Understanding the ‘public’ in public education: Community voices about the value of schools,” with the intent of examining citizen perspectives on the value of schools to communities, important student outcomes, and priorities for the future. Our lead facilitator will be Aaron Ruhland, Director of Learning and Accountability for the Orono Schools. Aaron has contributed to Minnevate! over the past two years as an MASA member and will also use the data from this set of focus groups to support his doctoral dissertation.

We have asked superintendents throughout the state to identify potential participants who have a broad knowledge and perspective of school purpose and goals with the hope of convening focus groups with a participant majority of community members. Participants who are district leaders and staff, as well as school board members, will be welcomed with open arms, but we want to be very intentional about harvesting the voices of the wider community. We have suggested that members from school districts’ curriculum advisory councils who possess broad knowledge and perspective about school purpose and goals would be good candidates for this conversation.

We will once again collect the conversation data (participants’ comments will be confidential), code it, and report it as additional data for the Minnevate! conversation.

Thank you to our MASA members and our wider community for your support of and participation in what we believe is a significant opportunity to bridge the gap between our current reality and a collective vision for the future of education in Minnesota. •

### References

1. <http://singularityhub.com/2016/09/02/why-we-need-moonshot-thinking-in-high-school-education/>

### Did You Move?

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.

# Political Activity of School District Employees - An Election Year Q & A



Gregory S. Madsen  
Education Law Attorney  
Kennedy & Graven, Chartered

**N**ovember elections—particularly in the wake of a rancorous presidential campaign or when a referendum is on the ballot—create unique dilemmas for public school districts. They must remain politically neutral without impermissibly infringing upon their employees’ rights to free speech and association. This sometimes delicate balance can be maintained if certain legal principles are followed.

Public school board members and school district employees should understand that the law limits, to some degree, their right to personal political expression. State law prohibits school district funds from being used to support political candidates, parties, or issues. The Minnesota fair campaign law forbids school district board members and employees from using “official authority or influence to compel a person to apply for membership in or become a member of a political organization, to pay or promise to pay a political contribution, or to take part in political activity.”

The same law, however, specifically prohibits school districts from imposing or enforcing additional limitations on the political activities of their employees. Outside of district board rooms and school classrooms, board members and employees may otherwise engage in political activities on the same basis as other citizens. The First Amendment guarantees all citizens the right to free expression on matters of public concern. Campaign literature and speech regarding political issues presumably address matters of public concern and thus constitute protected speech.

Given this framework, school districts often face the following questions:

**Q: What may teachers say to parents or students at school regarding the election?**

A: At school, teachers may provide parents and students with factual information, such as when and where to vote. They may not, however, tell parents or students how to vote (i.e., “yes” or “no” on an issue or for a particular candidate) while working in their official capacities as teachers (i.e., during instruction, before or after school activities, and conferences).

**Q: Where and when may teachers wear buttons?**

A: A federal court has ruled that a school district may ban teachers from wearing political campaign buttons while

working because wearing “political paraphernalia may improperly influence the right of students to learn in an environment free of partisan political influence.” *Weingarten v. Bd. of Educ. of City Sch. Dist.*, 680 F. Supp. 2d 585 (S.D.N.Y. 2010). However, in the absence of a policy prohibiting political buttons at school, teachers generally may wear buttons to work just as they would anywhere else—provided that the buttons do not result in disruption to the educational environment or do not have a coercive influence on students or other staff.

**Q: May teachers place signs on their lawns?**

A: Yes.

**Q: May school district employees engage in political fund raising activities?**

A: School district employees may participate in private fund raising activities. However, state law prohibits them from using their official authority or influence to coerce others to take part in the fund raising activities.

**Q: May teachers write letters to newspapers?**

A: Teachers have the right to express their personal opinions and may do so in the media. While they may identify themselves as school district teachers, they also should make it clear that the letter expresses only their own personal beliefs. The letter should not be written on school district letterhead and, if sent by e-mail, should not come from a school district computer. School district funds may not be used to support a political candidate or promote a position on an issue. Using school district supplies or equipment would be tantamount to using school district funds.

**Q: May school district employees serve on political campaigns or committees?**

A: Yes. School employees enjoy the same rights to free speech and involvement in political activities as private citizens. However, they must participate in the capacity of

**Political Activity of School District Employees  
continued on page 21.**

### Are You Receiving Our Communications?

Let us know if you are not receiving any of our following publications:

- Weekly eUpdates
- General emails
- Quarterly newsletter
- Members Only website passwords

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



## ***Political Activity of School District Employees from page 20.***

a private citizen and not as an official representative of the school district.

### ***Q: May political groups or committees meet in school district buildings?***

A: They may if permitted by school board policy and on the same basis as other political groups and committees. In other words, if the school district allows one political group to use its facilities, then it must make the facilities open to all political groups.

### ***Q: May teachers distribute political literature via district and school mailboxes?***

A: The ability of teachers to use school mailboxes for political purposes depends largely on individual district policy and practice. Generally, teachers' mailboxes are school district property and are designated as nonpublic forums. This means the district has the authority to restrict access to its mailboxes so long as the restrictions are viewpoint neutral and reasonably based upon the purpose served by the mailboxes. See *Educ. Minn. Lakeville v. Indep. Sch. Dist. No. 194*, 341 F. Supp. 2d 1070 (D. Minn. 2004).

In most schools, the purpose of teacher mailboxes is to facilitate district business. Materials endorsing a particular candidate or issue do not relate to school business. Also, allowing private expression in a nonpublic forum may imply government endorsement of that expression. "Avoiding the appearance of political favoritism is a valid justification for limiting speech in a nonpublic forum." *Id.* at 1076.

The status of a nonpublic forum may be changed, however, if it is opened for public discourse, even of a limited nature. Thus, if a school district opens its teachers' mailboxes to political campaign literature for one candidate or one particular party, it ultimately may be required to allow distribution of political literature for all candidates and all parties. This would result in the mailboxes becoming a mode for political debate and discourse, contrary to their original intent.

### ***Q: What may a school district say in district, school, or classroom newsletters?***

A: Such newsletters may provide information about where and when the election will be held. They also may provide factual financial data about the district if a referendum is on the ballot. However, the newsletter may not advocate for a specific candidate or position. Again, the underlying principle is that school districts may not expend district funds to support a particular political viewpoint.

### ***Q: May school district employees contact parents and students from their home telephones or home computers and urge them to vote for a particular candidate or position?***

A: The ability of school employees to engage in such activity depends upon whether home telephone numbers and home e-mail addresses are deemed public directory information under the district's data privacy policy. If the information would be available to any citizen, then district employees may use it to communicate with parents and students in this manner. If, however, the information is not available to the public as directory information, school employees may not use the telephone numbers and email addresses to communicate with parents or students on political matters unless the numbers are obtained from some other public source such as a telephone book.

### ***Q: Do the rules change when a school district employee is off-site and out in public?***

A: Generally, yes. While school district employees may not advocate a specific political position on school premises during the school day while on duty, they may certainly, in their personal capacities, engage in political activities on the same basis as any citizen. •

*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.*

*Greg Madsen is an attorney and shareholder at Kennedy & Graven, Chartered, who practices education and employment law, and is certified by the Minnesota State Bar Association as a Labor and Employment Law Specialist. For more information, please contact him at (612) 337-9305 or [www.kennedy-graven.com](http://www.kennedy-graven.com). This article is an update to a Fall 2008 Leaders Forum article by former Kennedy & Graven attorney Charles E. Long.*

© Gregory S. Madsen (2016). Used by permission.



**Infinitec**  
infinite potential through technology

*The mission of Infinitec is to advance independence and promote inclusive opportunities for children and adults through technology. We are a member-based organization currently supporting school districts in Minnesota, Illinois, Kansas and Pennsylvania.*

Infinitec offers four pillars of service:

**Training and Education** includes online professional learning with **paraprofessional required trainings** and testing for credit. Districts can utilize the **Private Content** feature to integrate internally developed trainings into the online platform. The **ENGAGE** tool helps districts create, administer and track online learning paths as assignments or recommendations.

**Information Services** consists of extensive web and hard copy assistive and instructional technology resources, including a database analysis system for selection of mobile device apps and InfiniTEXT, a searchable instructional materials collection for qualified K-12 students with print disabilities.

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

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

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

Listen + Plan + Design + Execute

# PROVIDING SOLUTIONS FOR SCHOOLS



## WE BRING INNOVATIVE INFRASTRUCTURE AND FINANCIAL SOLUTIONS TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS

As a trusted partner, FJJ specializes in complicated and challenging educational facility projects. We take the time listen carefully to what the schools and their communities want, plan around those needs and goals, design to the highest standards, and execute our projects with precision.



**Minneapolis, MN**  
1400 Van Buren St NE  
Suite 130  
Minneapolis, MN 55413  
612-437-9416  
Arif Quraishi

**Duluth, MN**  
525 Lake Avenue South  
Suite 222  
Duluth, MN 55802  
218-348-0751  
Jeff Schiltz

**Fargo, ND**  
2201 12th St N  
Suite E  
Fargo, ND 58102  
701-371-2948  
Dave Bergeron

**Sioux Falls, SD**  
4305 S. Louise Avenue  
Suite 204  
Sioux Falls, SD 57106  
605-261-5616  
Mike Hubbard

### Our Greatest Challenge



**Denny Smith**  
Leadership and Development  
Trainer

If I were the all benevolent dictator of education in America and was asked to address the greatest challenge we face today, it would be this: Student Behavior. It's a problem across the board. Disruptive students are destroying the learning environment for those who want to learn in far too many classrooms across the country. Even in our more affluent districts where the behavior isn't as threatening or serious as in other schools, three or four students can destroy the academic atmosphere

their teachers are trying to create and have no apparent desire to change their behavior.

The purpose of this article isn't to fix the blame for the problem but to encourage us to fix the problem. It is the single most important challenge we educators face today and one of the greatest deterrents to academic success. Let's address it with a sense of urgency.

Let me preface my remarks with a story of a conversation with a friend at a party. She told of a dysfunctional acquaintance with two preschool age children headed down that same path, wondering what was ever to become of the kids. I jokingly said, "I know the solution. Wait ten or fifteen years and we can blame it on public education."

The report "A Nation at Risk" published in 1983 stated that "Our society and its educational institutions seem to have lost sight of the basic purpose...and high expectations and disciplined effort needed to attain them....That we have compromised this commitment is, upon reflection, hardly surprising, given the multitude of often conflicting demands we have placed on our Nation's schools and colleges." (Google "A Nation at Risk." It is great food for thought.)

I will be the first to admit that I don't have many answers. It is not the purpose of this article to give advice but rather to encourage all of us to prioritize the issue and to work aggressively to find alternatives to the status quo. We need to create schools that maintain a climate conducive to academic excellence for those who want to learn while finding alternative methods and venues for those students who do not function well in a traditional school setting.

Perhaps it is time to place more attention and devote more energy to those who behave in class and respect their opportunity to learn and grow. It is not the top students who need our focus. They are in the advanced classes with others who want to learn and respect an academic atmosphere and they will do just fine. It is the middle of the road students who are hurt most by the disrespect and disruption of the four or five students in each class who choose not to respect structure and order and discipline. We need to advocate for the students who do behave and honor their right to a quality education.

None of this means that we ignore the needs of our students at risk. Most educators have a strong desire to help all students become successful, happy and productive members of society. We have poured a huge amount of energy and financial resources towards that objective but the plain and simple truth is that what we are doing is not working. This is not an indictment of education or of society in general, but a call to action by everyone to work together to resolve the issue. If nothing changes, nothing changes.

A single article is not going to scratch the surface of our educational challenges, but I invite you to think about two things. First and foremost, and a top priority, is to determine what to do with the disruptive and even violent students in our current settings.

Teachers have a passion for teaching and learning but are frustrated by having to put up with constant disruption with seemingly no support. You as educational leaders have to work with teachers to develop clear and concise discipline policies with equally clear and concise consequences for students who stand in the way of other's opportunity to learn. It is imperative that teachers document and report disruptions consistently. If students push the envelope on a regular basis but are not quite to the point of being removed from class, that needs to be documented by every teacher. Students are rarely disruptive in just one class but show patterns of disrespect. All teachers documenting the minor but repeated disruptions of individual students would support disciplinary intervention from counselors and APs. That would take a huge burden off of the teachers and afford them the opportunity to do what they love to do -- teach.

We can address alternatives in another article, but let's reflect on this for a moment. For most students, brick and mortar schools with rows of desks and traditional teaching methods are wonderful. Most educators fit that mold. But we really need to look for alternative educational venues and curriculums for those who will perhaps never succeed in a traditional setting. It would benefit all students.

As we begin a new school year we can apply a little of Henry Ford's philosophy. When he told his engineers to develop a V-8 engine they told him it was impossible. He answered, "You don't understand. I want you to design a V-8 engine." After working on the project for six months the engineers echoed that it was an impossible undertaking. Henry repeated, "You don't understand. I want you to design a V-8 engine." The V-8 engine became a reality.

By making student behavior one of your school's top priorities, good student behavior, quiet and well ordered classrooms and the academic excellence you aspire to will become a reality. •

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



## 2015-16 MASA MENTORS

*Thank you to all of our MASA mentors for 2015-16!*

**Bill Adams**, Superintendent, Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton

**Sheri Allen**, Superintendent, Mankato

**Ben Barton**, Superintendent, Caledonia

**Jim Behle**, Retired Superintendent, St. Michael-Albertville

**Kathy Belsheim**, Superintendent, Ogilvie

**Dan Bittman**, Superintendent, Sauk Rapids-Rice Public

**Tom Bruels**, Superintendent, St. Clair

**Jannell Bullard**, Director of Special Education, MAWSECO

**Paul Carlson**, Superintendent, New London-Spicer

**Cliff Carmody**, Executive Director, SW/WC Service Cooperative

**John Engelking**, Superintendent, Proctor

**Linda Gardner**, Director of Special Services, Hopkins

**Beth Giese**, Superintendent, Cannon Falls

**Wayne Gilman**, Retired Superintendent, Pine City

**Matt Grose**, Superintendent, Deer River

**Larry Guggisberg**, Superintendent, Roseau

**Ed Harris**, Superintendent, Chatfield

**Deb Henton**, Superintendent, North Branch

**Bob Jaszczak**, Superintendent, Kittson

**Lynne Kovash**, Superintendent, Moorhead

**Tom Lee**, Superintendent, Waseca

**Jean Lubke**, Executive Director, Equity Alliance MN

**Kate Maguire**, Superintendent, Osseo

**Chris Mills**, Superintendent, Stephen Argyle Central

**Mike Munoz**, Superintendent, Rochester

**Jerry Ness**, Superintendent, Fergus Falls

**Ray Queener**, Superintendent, Cambridge-Isanti

**Nan Records**, Regional Low Incidence Facilitator, Nat'l Joint Powers Alliance

**Mike Redmond**, Superintendent, Goodhue

**Jeff Ronneberg**, Superintendent, Spring Lake Park

**Lisa Snyder**, Superintendent, Lakeville

**Deron Stender**, Superintendent, Virginia Minnesota

**Jason Ulbrich**, Executive Director, Eagle Ridge Academy

**Greg Vandal**, Partner, PEER Solutions

**Daron VanderHeiden**, Superintendent, Hutchinson

**Deb Wanek**, Superintendent, Pelican Rapids

**John Widvey**, Retired Superintendent, Worthington

### **MASA Mentor-Mentee Year 2 Program Option**

Thank you to all of our mentors for their great work in assuring that our newest MASA members have the support they need for successful practice in their first year. This is essential work - we know that if leaders experience success and support, they are far more likely to stay in their roles, and that sustained practice translates into student success.

Last year, MASA extended our mentor support to all MASA members in all MASA component groups. And this year, we are pleased to add a second year mentoring benefit.

The MASA Board has authorized mentoring arrangements to be extended, if conditions warrant, beyond the one-year mentoring arrangements.

An application requesting extended mentoring arrangements is required and must be submitted to the region coordinator of mentoring services.

A request for extended mentoring arrangements may be made by the Mentor, the Mentee, or by the Mentee's School District. If approved by the region and the MASA staff, MASA will provide a \$500 stipend to the region for this support.

You can request an application form for extended mentoring from your MASA Regional Leadership Team, which can be found at [www.mnasa.org/regionleaders](http://www.mnasa.org/regionleaders).

What does a school district do to find great staff?



Minnesota Schools Jobsite Online is an effective, inexpensive way for school districts to advertise job openings on the internet.

Find us at:  
[www.mnasa.org](http://www.mnasa.org)

Jobsite Online is a service of the  
Minnesota Association of School Administrators  
1884 Como Avenue • Saint Paul, MN 55108  
Call: (651) 789-4062 • Fax: (651) 645-7518  
[www.mnasa.org](http://www.mnasa.org) • [jobs@mnasa.org](mailto:jobs@mnasa.org)

## Where you see energy costs, we see opportunities

### Your Trusted Sustainability Partner

#### Comprehensive Services

- Energy/Operational Efficiency Improvements
- Long Term Facilities Maintenance Projects
  - > Indoor Air Quality
  - > Deferred Maintenance
- Renewable Energy
- Vendor-neutral Solutions
- Funding/Capital Strategies
- Guaranteed Results

#### Free Consultation

#### Call Today!

612.315.6930 | [ameresco.com](http://ameresco.com)



Energy  
Efficiency

Renewable  
Energy

Energy  
Analytics

© 2016 Ameresco, Inc. Ameresco and the Ameresco logo, the orb symbol and the tagline "Green. Clean. Sustainable." are registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. All rights reserved.

# Points of Engagement for Community Leaders

## ***“What is community engagement?”***

***Community engagement is a two-way street where the school, families, and the community actively work together, creating networks of shared responsibility for student success. It is a tool that promotes civic well-being and that strengthens the capacity of schools, families, and communities to support young peoples' full development.”***

*- Community and Family Engagement, Principals Share What Works, MetLife Foundation, NASSP, NAESP*



Shari Prest  
President  
ARK Associates

**“W**hat can I do?” may be the most important question you ask yourself in your lifetime. The second most important may be, “What else can I do?” In other words, what can I do beyond what I am doing now to make the world a better place for everyone? What can I do to close the learning and income gaps so that all people have an equal opportunity for success? These questions can be addressed

through engagement in education – not only the education that takes place in our schools, but more importantly, the education that takes place in our homes and communities.

The question of our purpose—or what we can do—to improve our world was explored as long ago as the recording of ancient scripture; it was the inspiration for the best seller, “The Purpose Driven Life”; it is the theme of Justin Bieber’s “Purpose” tour. As human beings, the desire to make a difference seems hard-wired into us. However, in this age of unimaginable conveniences, massive consumerism, and the inundation of media, we often fail to look beyond our daily occupations and toward our collective futures. The truth is we all have the capacity to make the world better...for someone.

The Search Institute outlines 40 developmental external and internal assets that support the healthy development of adolescents. (See them all at [search-institute.org](http://search-institute.org).) Among those assets are the following:

- Family support

- Other adult relationships
- Caring neighborhood
- Parent involvement in schooling
- Community values youth
- Service to others
- Adult role models
- Youth programs
- Creative activities
- Religious community

If you are wondering how to engage with learners or learning and where to start, following are some suggestions.

- Ask your local school board, superintendent, principal, teacher or parent teacher organization to describe the needs and opportunities for volunteers.
- Become active with local mentorship or befriender organizations (i.e. Big Brothers/Big Sisters).
- Initiate a book shelf or reading hour in an underserved neighborhood.
- Offer to tutor kids in skills or academics where you excel. Invite a parent to observe.
- Hold open tutoring, math, or reading sessions in the local library or other public place.
- Hold a monthly or quarterly neighborhood picnic or pizza party where kids and adults can participate in activities together and get to know each other.
- Begin a summer and/or afterschool program in which children can participate while parents gather in another area to hone their own skills and develop a social network.
- Hold local talent shows, music shows, art shows, etc. that encourage children’s participation.
- Provide meaningful opportunities for youth of all ages to volunteer.

There is a role for everyone. Our children need you to be actively engaged in supporting learning through the opportunities you and your communities offer inside and outside of the school setting. •



# What's New at CAREI for the 2016-17 School Year?



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

On behalf of the Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement (CAREI), welcome back to the start of another school year! Whether you are just beginning your career as a school administrator or are a seasoned veteran, the start of a new school year is always an exciting time filled with new opportunities and challenges. For those of you who are not familiar with CAREI, we are a research center that serves as the link between research and practice in Minnesota schools PreK-16 and other

agencies interested in applied educational research. CAREI partners with local, state, and national service agencies and policy makers to improve outcomes for all learners. We have set an ambitious goal that we want our services to impact 80% of school districts within three years! The 2015-16 school year was an exciting year for CAREI! Here is a look back at what we accomplished “by the numbers”:

- 43 [districts](#)<sup>1</sup> joined the CAREI Assembly
- 4 CAREI Assembly meetings were held with a 96% satisfaction rating.
- 175 people attended CAREI Assembly meetings in person.
- 60 people attended CAREI Assembly meetings via Webex.
- 1 [Standards Based Grading Literature Review](#)<sup>2</sup> was written and disseminated to CAREI members.
- 1 [math resource guide](#)<sup>3</sup> was developed and disseminated to CAREI members.
- 1 [Statewide Needs Assessment](#)<sup>4</sup> on research, evaluation, and assessment was completed and disseminated statewide.
- 13 presentations were given to professional organizations about the importance of research, evaluation, and assessment.
- 8 Research Watch electronic newsletters were disseminated and opened 848 times throughout the year.
- 1 Twitter account (@CAREIUMN) created with 32 tweets.
- 10 CAREI [affiliates](#)<sup>5</sup> were added.
- 2 bills were authored in the MN Legislature to provide funding for statewide technical assistance in the areas of research, evaluation, and assessment.
- 1 bill [#3275 \(Dahle\)](#)<sup>6</sup> received a hearing (also see: [slides](#)<sup>7</sup> & [one-pager](#)<sup>8</sup>).
- 14 new external sales projects were awarded.

### Statewide Needs

The basis for much of our work last year and moving into future years was the completion of a Statewide Needs Assessment focusing on research, evaluation, and assessment.

A large percentage of survey respondents indicated **their school's or district's capacity to effectively use data to guide educational decisions was fair or poor**. Despite substantial motivations and efforts to use data, most educational systems in Minnesota lack the capacity to meet their own needs for data-based decision making. In addition, those who responded to the interviews and surveys consistently indicated a lack of resources and expertise to support their efforts. To truly leverage state and local investments, **professional educators require infrastructure to build capacity and efficiencies to use data that improve educational outcomes**. Historically, CAREI coordinated with educational agencies located in the twin cities metropolitan area. The proposed solution will expand the mission and accessibility of CAREI. It will provide resources to policy makers and educational agencies throughout the state; especially those in **rural and high need communities** who were historically underserved. CAREI will enable the use of evidence and data at all levels of the education system and foster high-value partnerships. In its expanded role, CAREI will continue as an impartial and independent hub for applied research and educational improvement. It will bring others together to define their values, goals, objectives, policies, and programs. It will provide services and resources to facilitate high quality research, evaluation, and assessment practices among its partners.

### The Importance of Evaluation in Education

One finding from the needs assessment was 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%). Why is evaluating programs and policies so important? The answer is fairly simple – to determine whether the program or policy had the intended effect in order to guide decision-making. Large-scale evaluations in education help us improve policy. Smaller-scale evaluations at the local level help guide decision-making and allocation of resources based on outcome data. Learning how or why a policy or program does or does not work is central to program improvement.

These days, we have a tendency to want a quick turnaround on data to answer our questions. Most people want to conduct program evaluations quickly and with minimal expense. However, in education, quicker isn't always better. We need to consider the logistics of the program to be studied and what we hope to learn. Many educational programs or frameworks are multi-faceted and complex and require several **years** of implementation before all of the components are fully implemented. In addition, sometimes new programs take time to achieve the desired outcomes. That means that we need to collect data, often from multiple sources, over an extended period of time. Yet, educators can be impatient. The field of education has a long history of “swinging

*What's New at CAREI continued on page 28.*

## Proudly serving Minnesota's K-12 schools for 35 years!

### MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL DESIGN

HVAC • Plumbing • Fire Protection  
• Lighting • Power Distribution

### COMMISSIONING/RECOMMISSIONING

New Construction • Existing Systems  
• Retro-Commissioning • LEED®

### ENERGY SERVICES

Energy Modeling • Energy Tax Deduction Analysis •  
Energy Studies

### FACILITY ASSESSMENTS

Inventory Lists • Life Cycle Analysis • Improvement Costs

WHITE BEAR LAKE, MN

651.748.1100



**HALLBERG  
ENGINEERING**

Mechanical / Electrical / Commissioning / Energy

DULUTH, MN

218-729-9202



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

A Minority-Business Enterprise (MBE)

## BUDGET FRIENDLY SOLUTIONS FOR K-12 OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE

### We can help you . . .

- ▶ Manage Operations and Maintenance Costs
- ▶ Improve Facility Utilization
- ▶ Enhance Access, Safety, and Security
- ▶ Secure Additional Funding

[WidethSmithNolting.com](http://WidethSmithNolting.com) | Architects & Engineers



**WIDETH  
SMITH  
NOLTING**

Let's discuss your next project.  
Contact Brent Dammann, AIA

701.795.1975 | [Brent.Dammann@wsn.us.com](mailto:Brent.Dammann@wsn.us.com)

### What's New at CAREI from page 27.

pendulums" –adopting new programs and practices one year and abandoning them after a year or two of implementation to move on the next "educational fad." The result is that programs are not given enough time to demonstrate the intended results, and staff suffers from "initiative fatigue."

What's the solution to the swinging pendulum of initiatives? Program evaluation is often used as part of implementation science. Implementation science is the study of methods that influence the integration of evidence-based interventions into practice settings. Implementation science helps answer the following questions. Why do established programs lose effectiveness over days, weeks, or months? Why do tested programs sometimes exhibit unintended effects when transferred to a new setting? The real message around implementation science is that effective intervention practices or models coupled with ineffective or inefficient implementation will result in ineffective, unsustainable program and outcomes! Implementation science focuses on stages of implementation over time and implementation "drivers" that provide the infrastructure needed for effective implementation that support high fidelity, effective, and sustainable programs.

CAREI uses an implementation science framework to assist districts in program evaluation efforts. Districts who belong to the CAREI District Assembly have access to four, high-quality professional

development and networking sessions per year with either on-site or remote access. Along with discussing and disseminating applied educational research across a variety of important areas, we intend to focus on program evaluation in the upcoming year to build capacity within our member districts. For more information on CAREI or joining the CAREI District Assembly, please visit our new website at [www.cehd.umn.edu/carei/](http://www.cehd.umn.edu/carei/). Please contact me at [kgibbons@umn.edu](mailto:kgibbons@umn.edu) if you want more information about CAREI or if you have certain topics you would like covered in future newsletters! •

#### Related Links:

1. [www.cehd.umn.edu/carei/assembly/member-districts.html](http://www.cehd.umn.edu/carei/assembly/member-districts.html)
2. [https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B\\_KVqfYZXywdSGR1RVpjSEs1M28/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B_KVqfYZXywdSGR1RVpjSEs1M28/view)
3. [https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B\\_KVqfYZXywdS2drcEFYa2F5M-mdHMU9EdmNTZmdDbUYzWFJj/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B_KVqfYZXywdS2drcEFYa2F5M-mdHMU9EdmNTZmdDbUYzWFJj/view)
4. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B6xTvnFr2KjaUGtqTTZnTF9vendsSUVt6m4y-Nlhaa3paNk5z/view>
5. <http://www.cehd.umn.edu/carei/people.html>
6. [http://mnsenate.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view\\_id=1&clip\\_id=353](http://mnsenate.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=1&clip_id=353)
7. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B6xTvnFr2KjaNjBnbGxiQzF0bjZqdWx1djlX-WXlxY01GVIB3/view>
8. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B6xTvnFr2KjaZk9HLU5wRnROSEpfRV-V4dHhMRk4zd1gwWjdr/view>

# School Start Time Roadmap

Created for the Minnesota Association of School Administrators



John Garcia, MD  
Pediatric Sleep Specialist  
Gillette Children's Specialty  
Healthcare

Many schools in Minnesota have moved from whether a later high school start time is indicated to how this can be implemented. The empirical research of Kyla Wahlstrom Ph.D. from the CAREI Center at the University of Minnesota is well-known to educators nationally. Reliable evidence links the 8:30 AM and later high school start time to decreased teen car crashes, decreased depression and improved academic performance.

The insight of Dr. Wahlstrom has identified these three areas closest to the hearts of teen parents. Translating Dr. Wahlstrom's work into change in schools has been the work of many over the past several years. This translation recognizes that each school lies upon a readiness for change continuum. Readiness for change is multifactorial. Factors include the tolerance of change in the larger community, willingness of superintendents to spend political capital, presence of support from medical and educational experts, as well as openness of parents to struggle and dialogue. The motivation for change is unique in each community. Negative outcomes imagined by opponents to change are often not borne out in reality. Two groups often resisting change are parents of younger children and athletics enthusiasts. As Mark Twain said, "I've had a lot of worries in my life, most of which never happened." Strategies for implementing change are reviewed here.

When the issue of school start times was first discussed, there was some consideration of advocating for state legislation that would enact an 8:30 AM or later start time for high schools. This was in part driven by knowledge of the experience in other states. For example, in Pulaski County, Arkansas the later school start time was initiated not by local school administrators but by the State Commissioner of the Department of Education. In conversation with Twin Cities school officials, it became clear that state-level action would disregard a core value of Minnesota school systems—local control. Recognizing local control while simultaneously encouraging a later school start time in as many high schools as possible, as quickly as possible, has been a creative tension. It has required the concurrent use of diverse strategies including education through use of a tool kit, leading discussions with parents, and working collaboratively with school administrators to help craft a message specific to local needs. The strategies for changing

the start time are as diverse as the schools. This is in part due to the lack of research in measuring outcomes associated with a given strategy<sup>1</sup>.

The MN Sleep Society School Start Time work group emphasizes a continuum of change model that begins with awareness supporting commitment leading to action whose ultimate fruition is leading others to move along the same continuum. A similar continuum is well known to schools. The National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) uses very similar language in its promotion of cultural pluralism that it calls "Awareness to Commitment to Action"<sup>2</sup>. To facilitate movement along the continuum the MN Sleep Society work group is creating a Tool Kit. The Tool Kit is a valuable resource especially when encountering someone early in the continuum of change known as precontemplation. It provides foundational resources when encountering those who might endorse ineffective strategies such as trying harder to sleep or using caffeine to combat tiredness. Once these sometimes formidable cultural stumbling blocks have been patiently deconstructed, healthy science-based realities are there for the asking. One of the most powerful is none other than the Center for Disease Control arguably the most powerful voice of biomedical reason in America. The CDC's own movement on the continuum was fostered by several of the members of the MN Sleep Society work group in 2014, leading the CDC to recommend that

"...middle and high schools push back start times to 8:30 a.m. or later. Noting insufficient sleep is common among high school students and is associated with several health risks such as being overweight, drinking alcohol, smoking tobacco, and using drugs – as well as poor academic performance."

The early action phase is known as preparation. In the preparation phase three groups come together: first, school officials, board members and teachers; second, parents and teens; and third, experts and medical providers. Early conversations with teachers from elementary, middle schools, and high schools can quickly address concerns. Teachers may be concerned about loss of time with their own young children. Experience speaks otherwise. Teachers with a later school start time can still adjust their schedule to complete work in the morning. Others follow the lead of their students and get more sleep. In practice, teachers have not substantially resisted this change<sup>1,3</sup>. Listening sessions led by the school board are a creative strategy.

*School Start Time continued on page 30.*



## School Start Time from page 29.

### Stages of Change: Applied to School Start Time



### Understand the Applying the Stages of Change

This theory of change assumes people have differing degrees of motivation and readiness to change which determines their place on this continuum. Different stages of change require different informational needs and approaches in order to move people to the following stage. People may go through these stages predictably or they may drop back or jump forward, skipping stages.

Information at the early stages of precontemplation and contemplation stages would focus on the research facts, risk for teenagers on continuing the current behavior and positive outcomes of adjusting to a later start time. At the preparation and action phases, the focus is identifying resources for changing school start times in the form of the toolkit and talking to other school districts and communities who have changed their start times.

**Precontemplation (Not Ready):** There is no intention to change behavior in the near future (people believe children are lazy and should simply try harder to go to sleep earlier)

**Contemplation (Getting Ready):** Aware that the problem exists and start to consider the pros and cons of not taking action (People learn about the biological changes that occur in teenagers and the positive outcomes of a later school start time which include less car crashes and sport injuries, improved mental health, less substance use and better academic performance)

**Preparation (Ready):** Intend to take action in the immediate future (People look for ways to overcome barriers like busing, athletics and changing work and child care schedules to accommodate a change to a later school start time)

**Action:** Definitive action is taken (People in the community adapt to the new start time)

**Maintenance:** Effort is taken to maintain behavior (People prevent returning to earlier start times due to busing or other scheduling issues)

*Adapted from Prochaska J, Norcross J. Systems of psychotherapy - A transtheoretical analysis. 7th edition. Brooke's & Coles CA 2010.*

Sessions give parents an opportunity to lift up issues that might not have been apparent when scenarios were drafted. Parents of younger children may emphasize issues such as after school child care since starting school earlier for younger children also means ending the day earlier. Getting up earlier means putting children to bed earlier which decreases evening family time<sup>4</sup>. While after school activities are important to some, they may not stand up in light of the biologic realities of sleep debt and its well-documented consequences. In addition, some schools have seen improved athletic performance<sup>3</sup>. Building on the pre-existing studies identifying the association between sleep deprivation

and poor psychomotor coordination, recent studies have revealed that sleep deprived athletes are injured more frequently. In one example injuries were four times more common in players reporting six hours of sleep than those getting nine<sup>5</sup>. Teens talking about their own experiences of insufficient sleep and its consequences provide a “report from the trenches” point of view that can move a group of listeners from disagreement about the finer details to action energized by empathy. In the Twin Cities experience the inclusion of local pediatricians provided validity. While regional sleep experts can be helpful, the history of trust that local pediatricians provide acts as a foundation for quick and sustained action. Minnesota pediatricians are supported by both the August 2014 American Academy of Pediatrics Policy Statement and the June 2016 American Medical Association Statement on School Start Times as well as the Minnesota Sleep Society. In the planning phase, transportation issues are addressed. There are plenty of examples of changes in transportation being cost neutral or better. In fact, cost savings as a result of increasing the number of busing tiers was “the most prominent benefit (and may have been the real driver for the change in some cases)”<sup>1</sup>.

In time the listening sessions have gathered their information. Pros and cons have been weighed. Few things are more tedious than a process trapped in endless preparation phase. This is similar to a doctor ordering endless tests to be sure of a diagnosis while the patient is suffering from a debilitating disease for which effective treatments are known. In the end a leader should make a conscious public decision. This is called a *go point* by Michael Useem<sup>6</sup>. Dr. Chace Anderson, in his 2015 presentation to the Wayzata board, had the courage to recognize that the future has no time of 100% certainty and comfort<sup>3</sup>. The go point marks the transition from preparation to action. There has been enough success in the action phase in Minnesota to describe a timeline, with details in the Tool Kit and a summary provided as follows. Late spring through fall, a stakeholder group is formed and meetings are held. Several different scenarios should be drafted for the purpose of discussion. A recommendation is presented to the decision authority (the superintendent or the school board) by late November. In early December, the school board discusses the recommendation and/or alternative scenarios. A decision to shift/not shift the start time is made. Announcing the plan to change the school start time should be made swiftly as parents need to declare their amount of child care payroll deduction prior to the first of the year. The change is implemented in the fall of the upcoming school year.

Maintenance is the next step on the continuum. There is an insidious creep towards chaos to which the best of human nature stands in resistance. In the school start time ethic the creep comes in the form of apparently reasonable

**School Start Time continued on page 31.**

## School Start Time from page 30.

requests for the addition of zero hour classes and before school practices. Once we have learned the consequences of insufficient sleep these requests should be granted as temporary solutions rather than ongoing commitments.

Some say that a tipping point is approaching. Over the past several years early adopters have helped prove the benefits of a later start time. A group ethic is within reach for MASA. Can we respect local school control and simultaneously reach a consensus *go point*? •

### References

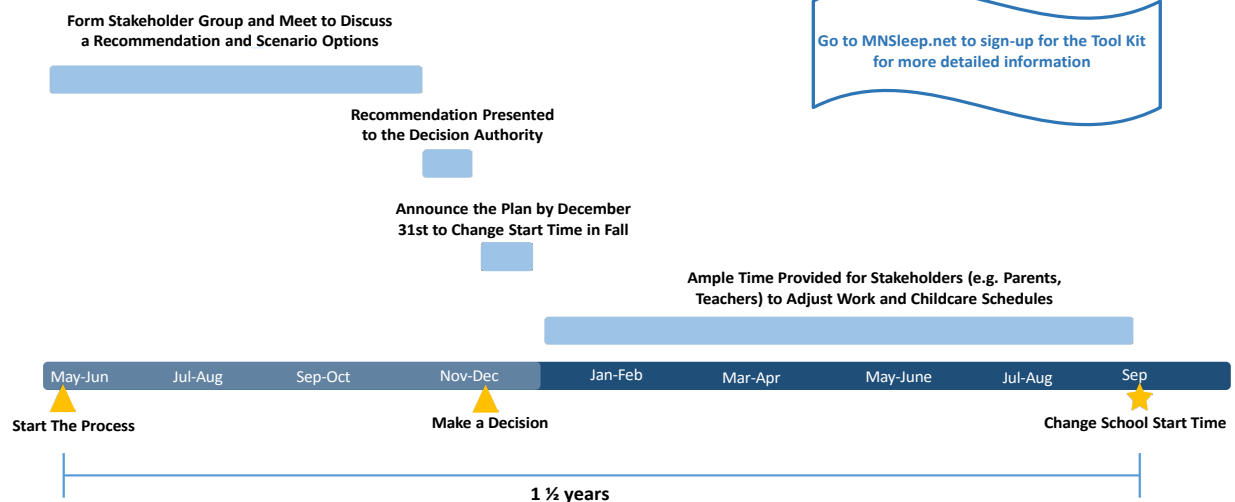
1. Owens J, Drobnich D, Baylor A, Lewin D. *Blueprint for Change School Start Time Change Report*. The Children's National Medical Center Blueprint for Change Team. April 14, 2014.
2. Katz L, Wishne B. *Awareness to Commitment to Action*. Knowledge Center. National Association of Independent Schools Website.
3. Anderson C. *School Start Time Recommendation Presented to the Board of Education*. Wayzata Public Schools. December 5, 2015.
4. Croman J. *Wayzata Board Changes School Start Times for 2016-2017*. News Leader. December 15, 2015
5. Milewski M et al. *Chronic Lack of Sleep is Associated with Increased Sports Injuries in Adolescent Athletes*. J Pediatr Orthop. 34(2) 2014.
6. Useem, Michael, *The Go Point: When it is Time to Decide*, Three Rivers Press, 2006

John Garcia, MD, authored this article on behalf of the Minnesota Sleep Society. Garcia is a pediatric sleep specialist at Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare in St. Paul.

Contact the Minnesota Sleep Society at [secretary@mnsleep.net](mailto:secretary@mnsleep.net) for more information.



## Timeline For Implementing School Start Time Change



Independence • Initiative • Integrity



Our goal is to provide the highest quality advice to enable our clients to raise, invest and manage the resources they need in the most cost-effective manner possible.



**The PFM Group**  
Financial & Investment Advisors

**Contacts:**

**PFM Financial Advisors LLC**

**Public Financial Management, Inc.**

**Myron Knutson**  
Managing Director  
knutsonm@pfm.com

**Jessica Cameron**  
Managing Director  
cameronj@pfm.com

**Kristin Hanson**  
Director  
hansonk@pfm.com

**Matthew Schnackenberg**  
Senior Managing Consultant  
schnackenbergm@pfm.com

**Heather Casperson**  
Senior Managing Consultant  
caspersonh@pfm.com

**Arcelia Detert**  
Senior Managing Consultant  
deterta@pfm.com

**Mark Peroutka**  
Senior Managing Consultant  
peroutkam@pfm.com

**PFM Asset Management LLC**

**Donn Hanson**  
Director  
hansond@pfm.com

**Carole Loehr**  
Senior Managing Consultant  
loehrc@pfm.com

**Brian Johnson**  
Senior Managing Consultant  
johnsonb@pfm.com

800 Nicollet Mall, Suite 2710 • Minneapolis, MN 55402 • 612.338.3535 • 612.338.7264 fax  
[www.pfm.com](http://www.pfm.com)

Public Financial Management, Inc. and PFM Financial Advisors LLC are a registered municipal advisors with the SEC and the MSRB under the Dodd-Frank Act of 2010. PFM Asset Management LLC is registered with the SEC under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940. A copy of our Form ADV, Parts 2A & B is available upon request.

## Exceptional leaders never stop learning.

You mentor teachers and new administrators.

We mentor educators on every step of their journey.

Hamline School of Education offers the region's broadest array of graduate education programs.

- **Doctorate of education**
- **Administrative licensure:** principal, superintendent, director of special education
- **Master's degrees:** education, English as a second language (ESL), literacy education, natural science and environmental education, teaching, and teaching English to speakers of other languages
- **Fifteen additional licenses and 13 certificates** in areas such as autism spectrum disorder, bullying prevention, ESL, and reading

Learn more about programs for developing teachers and leaders at [hamline.edu/EdMentors](http://hamline.edu/EdMentors).





# Why School Referenda Fail: Research and Best Practices for Success



Don E. Lifto  
Consultant  
Springsted Incorporated

Results of tax referenda over time vary significantly from state to state for a variety of reasons. In any given year, however, upwards of 50% of all school referenda seeking operating money or bonding are unsuccessful. Some factors such as demographics, the economy, anti-tax politics and the presence of organized opposition are contributing factors and out of a district's control. Other factors, including harnessing research-

based best practices and understanding how to capture and effectively use available data sets are mostly or fully within control of leadership and the school board. Below are 10 key research-based factors associated with unsuccessful referenda. And if you are wondering why not the "Top 10 Tips for Winning," read on after going through the list below!

### Why School Referenda Fail...

1. Lack of unanimity and support from school board  
Split school boards, factions of the school board working against the referendum or perceptions that the school board is not united and supportive negatively impact referenda. Split school boards give the uninformed within the community a reason to oppose.
2. Lack of alignment in ballot proposal  
Alignment in a school district's ballot proposal has two dimensions: (1) how the new money is going to be used; and (2) the tax impact associated with the requested investment in the public schools. It is critically important that the school board and administration get both components of alignment right. One way to inform the decision about the ballot proposal is to use a well-designed scientific, random-sample survey.
3. Failure to demonstrate a compelling need and consequences (positive and negative) of the referendum  
Unlike political campaigns, in which voters can identify with party affiliation and perceptions about the past record and qualifications of the candidate, school referenda are reliant on information alone: (1) What is being proposed? (2) How will the money be used? (3) Why is it necessary; and (4) How much will it cost me? To convince voters to voluntarily raise their taxes to invest in public schools requires clear and compelling information. No voter should go to the polls uninformed.

4. Controversy, lack of trust or "climate" issues within the school district and between the school district and the community

Contentious issues are part and parcel to the business of running a school district and more problematic in times of financial stress. It is incumbent on the school board, administration and staff to be mutually supportive, proactively anticipate and solve problems before they become unmanageable, initiate quality control systems and work to strengthen relationships internally and within the community to offset the negative impact of inevitable distractions.

5. Poor public relations, communications or hostile local media

Research clearly demonstrates the importance on effective and ongoing communications and public engagement as a foundation from which to launch a successful referendum. Maintaining a respectful and positive relationship with local media is also linked to success over time.

6. Referendum conducted prematurely

It takes the time it takes to get it right. Waiting until the school district is ready, with the prerequisite foundation in place, is best practice if the school board has the luxury of having a legitimate choice about moving forward now or waiting until the school district is better prepared and positioned for success.

7. Inadequate planning, execution and commitment of resources (time, talent and treasure) by school district

Planning and execution of successful referenda are complex, challenging and dependent on good planning and commitment of human and financial resources. Coordination between the school district's administration of the referendum and the advocacy work of the campaign committee is paramount.

8. Inadequate planning, execution and commitment resources (time, talent and treasure) by campaign committee

Executing successful referenda is complex, challenging and dependent on good planning and the commitment of human and financial resources. Most successful school referenda are dependent upon a grassroots advocacy group organized to support the referendum proposal in coordination with the school district. Planning and executing a winning campaign requires commitment, expertise and

*Why School Referenda Fail continued on page 35.*

# Objectives:

## SECURITY • LIQUIDITY • YIELD



Since 1984, MSDLAF+ has offered competitive investment options to Minnesota schools and related entities. As you proceed through the coming months, please remember that MSDLAF+ provides:

- Unlimited number of accounts and no minimum investment requirement
- Check writing, next day ACH, and same day Fed wires
- Variable and fixed-rate investment options
- Professionally managed portfolios
- A simplified manner of monitoring collateral
- A dedicated client service team
- Minnesota Association of School Administrators, Minnesota Association of School Business Officials, and Minnesota School Boards Association serve as the sponsors of MSDLAF+

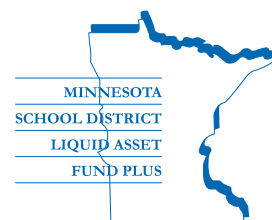
### For further information contact:

**Donn Hanson**  
Director  
612.371.3720  
hansond@pfm.com

**Carole Loehr**  
Senior Managing  
Consultant  
320.202.1421  
loehrc@pfm.com

**Brian Johnson**  
Senior Managing  
Consultant  
612.371.3750  
johnsonb@pfm.com

**Amber Cannegieter**  
Key Account  
Manager  
717.213.3871  
cannegietera@pfm.com



*This information is for institutional investor use only, not for further distribution to retail investors, and does not represent an offer to sell or a solicitation of an offer to buy or sell any fund or other security. Investors should consider the investment objectives, risks, charges and expenses before investing in any of the Fund's series. This and other information about the Fund's series is available in the Fund's current Information Statement, which should be read carefully before investing. A copy of the Fund's Information Statement may be obtained by calling 1-888-4-MSDLAF or is available on the Fund's website at [www.msdlaf.org](http://www.msdlaf.org). While the MSDLAF+ Liquid Class and MAX Class seek to maintain a stable net asset value of \$1.00 per share and the MSDLAF+ TERM series seeks to achieve a net asset value of \$1.00 per share at its stated maturity, it is possible to lose money investing in the Fund. An investment in the Fund is not insured or guaranteed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or any other government agency. Shares of the Fund are distributed by **PFM Fund Distributors, Inc.**, member Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) ([www.finra.org](http://www.finra.org)) and Securities Investor Protection Corporation (SIPC) ([www.sipc.org](http://www.sipc.org)). PFM Fund Distributors, Inc. is a wholly owned subsidiary of PFM Asset Management LLC.*

sufficient resources, particularly in the “Big Three.” (communications, canvassing and GOTV) Poor execution of GOTV, resulting in lower than optimal turnout of key voter targets, is often a contributing factor to defeat.

9. Demographics and socioeconomic factors

There are many demographic and socioeconomic factors that affect the outcome of referenda. Examples would include the age, education, affluence of the community or the number of public school families within the school district. The health of the economy and consumer confidence in the months leading up to a referendum not only influence the outcome, but also help the school district and campaign committee understand how steep the challenge is in terms of being successful on Election Day.

10. Critical or unexpected events

Factors totally outside of the control of the school district can occur and adversely affect the outcome of a referendum. These critical or unexpected events could range from a stock market crash, (“Black Monday”) to a critical international, national or local event (9/11) to efforts to torpedo the school district’s proposal by organized opposition.

**So inquiring minds want to know...**

Why emphasize these ten, research-based factors associated with unsuccessful school referenda rather than focusing on

the positive in terms of the “Top 10 Tips for Winning” as referenced in the opening paragraph?

Two reasons: (1) First, while the professional literature is replete with such “how to” lists (including some I have authored!), the tips are often anecdotal rather than research-based, and they tend to be tactical (e.g., our teachers took out an advertisement in the local paper) rather than “big picture” strategic. (2) Second, experience over time has taught me that starting with broad factors associated with unsuccessful referenda motivates school leaders to process how each factor will or could influence a future referendum in their unique environment, and then to strategically plan to eliminate or minimize the potential negative impact of a given factor. The challenge and opportunity for school leaders is to understand and factor into the equation contextual factors (e.g., wealth, age, education level) not within the district’s control and then to act strategically on the mirror images of the factors listed above, developing a comprehensive referendum plan on a foundation of research and best practice. •

*Don E. Lifo, Ph.D., is a consultant with St. Paul-based, Springsted Incorporated, an independent municipal advisor serving school districts, cities, counties and non-profits. Prior to his work at Springsted, Lifo served as a superintendent for 25 years in rural, suburban and intermediate school districts. He is a co-author of two books on referendum planning, is a frequent presenter on referendum topics at AASA, NSBA and ASBO and has had more than a dozen articles published in national journals.*

**From the Northwoods to the Southern Prairie**

Proudly serving Minnesota schools for over 27 years.

**Focusing on all areas of School Law**

- Labor Negotiations and Employment Law
- School Business Affairs
- Special Education
- Student Discipline
- Construction and Land Acquisition
- Investigations
- Safe and Supportive Schools Act Training

**NOW SERVING as bond counsel for Minnesota schools**

You need guidance. We give direction.

**Ratwik, Roszak & Maloney, P.A.**

A Law Firm Dedicated to Your Needs

730 Second Avenue South, Suite 300  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402  
Phone: (612) 339-0060 | Fax: (612) 339-0038  
[www.ratwiklaw.com](http://www.ratwiklaw.com)





1884 Como Avenue  
Saint Paul, MN 55108

1ST CLASS MAIL  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
TWIN CITIES, MN  
PERMIT NO. 212



PLEASE RECYCLE THIS NEWSLETTER



# MASA Calendar

## 2016

**October 1-2**  
MASA Board of Directors  
Madden's Conference  
Center, Brainerd

**October 2**  
MASA Great Start Cohort  
MASA Golf Tournament  
Madden's Conference  
Center, Brainerd

**October 2-4**  
MASA Fall Conference  
Madden's Conference  
Center, Brainerd

**October 24**  
Executive Development  
Committee  
MASA Offices, St. Paul

**November 1**  
Legislative Committee  
MASA Offices, St. Paul

**November 2**  
Nominating Committee  
MASA Offices, St. Paul

**November 11-12**  
MN Aspiring Superintendents  
Academy  
MASA Offices, St. Paul

**November 16**  
MASA Great Start Cohort  
MASE New Leaders Cohort  
Cragun's Conference  
Center, Brainerd

**MN November 16-18**  
Curriculum Leaders of MN/  
Technology Leaders of MN  
(CLM/TLM) Conference  
Cragun's Conference  
Center, Brainerd

**November 21**  
Federal Advocacy Committee  
MASA Offices, St. Paul

**December 7**  
MASA Board of Directors  
MASA Offices, St. Paul

## 2017

**January 11**  
MASA Jobsite Renewal

**January 11**  
MASA Great Start Cohort  
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

**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