

Leaders FORUM

Fall 2010

What's Inside

Teaming for Success

As another school year gets underway, it strikes me that we will all be working to have more effective teams in order to maximize the success of our students. Teams like regional collaborations of school districts, our boards of education, our administrative cabinets, our professional learning communities, and our parent groups, will all need to be highly functioning in order for us to offer quality programs and services to students in the most efficient manner possible. We also need to have effective teams of MASA members working to make our organization as vibrant and effective as possible. Best practice suggests that these teams need to focus on at least three areas.

First, a clear vision needs to be put in place. Teams seem to work well together when there is a common purpose that members “buy in to.” In our world today, this purpose and direction is shaped by data and relevant information. Jim Collins, the author of *Good to Great*, indicated that sometimes we need to confront the



Jeff Olson
St. Peter Public Schools
Superintendent
MASA President

“brutal facts” in order to “get people on the bus” in moving our teams forward.

Second, there needs to be a comprehensive plan of execution. This plan includes specific and measurable goals, a strong commitment for attaining the goals, and a design requiring members to collaborate and work together to achieve the goals. Rick Dufour calls this “aligning systems, structures, processes, and practices... to support the organization’s purpose, vision, and goals.”

Third, our teams need to measure results to determine if the goals are being achieved and if our vision and mission are being implemented. Two critical questions come from this measurement: (1) what do you do if you are meeting your goals?; and (2) what do you do if you are not meeting your goals? By assessing effectiveness on the basis of results, teams will be in a position of continuous improvement and will be more effective in meeting intended outcomes.

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CONFERENCE NEWS

The Art and Science of Leadership

Some people argue that leadership is a science while others will argue that leadership is an art. Those of us who have been in the field for a while know that it requires both science and art to be a good leader.

During this school year, 2010-11, the theme of the MASA conferences will be the "Art and Science of Leadership." We hope to help our members look at leadership from both of these perspectives.

Much research supports the science of leadership and those of us who know the critical functions of leadership ultimately will be able to create excellent organizations that are well lived. You have to have the solid underpinnings of science in order to be a good leader.



Charlie Kyte
Executive Director
Minnesota Association of
School Administrators

But, for those of us that have been around for a while, we also understand the art of leadership. It is the timing of decisions, the nuances of your vocabulary as you communicate, and picking the right issues to resolve at the right times. This is the art that comes from long experience. We also plan at the MASA conferences this year to have our experienced members share those events in their careers that have helped them to understand that leadership is also an art.

With the experience of our members and the education garnered from strong professional development presenters, we hope that our members, via the MASA Conferences, will stand better ready to serve the children of our state and the communities in which they serve.

Teaming for Success Continued from Page 1

forward our common purpose of providing the best education possible for the students of Minnesota. Please feel free to contact me with any ideas, questions, or concerns you may have as we work to achieve this purpose.

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

We Wish You a
Wonderful Start to
the School Year!
From the Staff at
MASA!

Leaders Forum

Fall 2010

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The Minnesota Association of
School Administrators
presents



Plan to attend the 2010 MASA Fall Conference

October 3 - 5
Madden's on Gull Lake
Brainerd, Minnesota

*"The more complex society gets, the
more sophisticated leadership must
become."
(Michael Fullan)*

Leadership is both an art and a science, and when we examine leadership excellence, we must embrace the characteristics of both. School leadership reflects the increasingly complex environment in which schools exist. The science of school leadership relates to the evidence resulting from observation, study, research, and characterization of vetted practices that reliably predict success. The art of school leadership is about developing the wisdom and experience that supports the more nebulous intuition. Join your colleagues at the MASA Fall Conference this October as we examine the Art & Science of Leadership and learn to support yourself as a leader and a human being -- using both art and science!

Conference Highlights ...

- Golfers will enjoy the MASA **Foundation Golf Tournament Mixer** on Sunday afternoon. The tournament offers fun, prizes and an afternoon on Madden's beautiful Pine Beach West Course. All conference participants are invited to play.
- Celebrate the service of our honored peers at the Sunday evening **Awards Banquet**. In addition to celebrating our members' years of service with pins marking their milestone years, we will present the 2010 Richard Green scholarship to Mary Ann Nelson and the Polaris Award to Harold Remme.
- We begin with the premise that great leaders are made, not born. But it takes more than a "sit and get" experience; it takes hard work, personal risk-taking, and critical thinking about how you inspire and motivate others. Engaging leaders use questions to set direction, put the right people in the right positions, and ensure resources are allocated to the highest priority, while engaging people to stretch beyond what is comfortable to maximize results. Join our Monday morning keynote presenter **Gary Cohen** for a rich, energetic, interactive session about exceptional leadership.
- New this year! Would you like a more focused conference experience? Join the "conference-within-a-conference" **leadership strand: "Leading Self, Others and Organizations in Complex Times."** Facilitated by our 2007 Richard Green Scholar, Superintendent Mark Wolak and our morning keynote speaker Gary Cohen, the strand will provide a number of sessions of reflective, interactive work that will engage and inspire participants. Participants electing this strand will attend the conference general sessions and, during choice session time, will meet as a group for more focused work. This strand is limited to twenty-five participants, so register early!
- Members' partners are invited to get acquainted and gather for golf, walks, bridge, shopping or whatever else might sound inviting. The **Partners' Coffee** Monday morning is just the place to make plans!
- The **Exhibit Fair** is a convenient way to visit with representatives of companies offering the latest products and services of value to school leaders.
- Smaller group **Breakout Sessions** offer cutting-edge information on a variety of topics, including successful partnerships, math intervention, 403(b) compliance, organizational management studies, leadership coaching, facilities, school board relationships, curriculum, NCLB corrective action, strategies for leading reform, the international achievement gap, and more!

**Thank you to our Major Conference Sponsors:
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Getting Minnesota Back on Track Hard Decisions Ahead for the new Governor and Legislature

Everyone is now aware of the substantial budget deficit facing the state of Minnesota. We will soon have a new governor and legislature and it will be their job to figure out how to position Minnesota for the future. They have macro choices in front of them. One is to have us all experience some pretty significant pain as they get the budget problem for the state corrected within the next year and a half or so. The second choice is to continue to dodge and wiggle through faux budget fixes that shift and delay payments and provide partial solutions that only delay the pain. This second choice will easily eat up six to eight years and not leave Minnesota in a very prosperous position.

As our new governor and legislators begin thinking about their solutions, they will surely recognize that part of the solution will involve creating new and steadier streams of revenue and part of the solution is going to be some budget tightening on the part of all government institutions.

They may well want to reflect on comparative situations in California and Texas who approach taxation and government spending in significantly different ways.

California:

In California the state government has relied heavily on income taxes and corporate taxes for state revenue. The problem with this approach is that in good times significant amounts of new money come in the state coffers and politicians cannot help themselves but to spend the money, thus increasing the cost of government. Then in recessionary times, the flow of income tax and corporate tax quickly diminishes and the state is put into a very big financial shortfall. That is what California is experiencing right now.



Charlie Kyte
Executive Director
Minnesota Association of
School Administrators

To further exacerbate the situation in California, they have a very burdensome political process that does not allow the legislature and the governor to easily come together to solve budget shortfalls. The legislature has been deadlocked for months and the governor recently was threatening to move all state employees back to minimum wages.

California's economy, while large and often robust, depends a lot on producing goods that people purchase during great times but avoid when times get tough. A

significant part in California's revenue comes from taxes on the import industry. When America buys fewer goods, less are shipped through the California ports, thus squeezing the California economy. The unemployment rate in California is twelve percent.

Texas:

Contrast this situation with what is happening in Texas. Texas, like all other states, relies on revenue from quite a few sources. However, a major source of income is the consumer-based sales tax, which is set at eight and a half percent. On the other hand, Texas does not have an income tax and has a very low corporate tax rate. The consumer-based tax (sales tax) provides a much steadier income stream. It is based on consumption, and while consumption goes up or down in good and difficult times it does not have the extreme swings as the income tax. Thus, Texas' state government has not experienced anywhere near the shortfall of revenues that other states have experienced.

In addition, in Texas, power at the state level is held in the hands of just a few people including the governor, the senate majority leader and their speaker of the House of Representatives. Three people can

Continued on Page 5

Getting Minnesota Back on Track Continued from Page 4

get together and make decisions on changing the size of Texas government and then quickly carry it out. We might argue that this is not participatory enough, but when Texas recently had to cut their state government by 10% it was done quickly and efficiently and their budget was balanced again.

Furthermore, Texas has relied in recent years on intellectual based manufacturing. Sometimes people forget that Texas, the home of the American cowboy, is also the center of technological manufacturing, engineering, and financial accounting. These high skill, high education jobs have provided a very strong underpinning for the Texas economy and they will continue to do so. Texas' unemployment rate is under 8%.

We show the more extreme examples of California and Texas, not to say that Minnesota should be like either one, however, as Minnesota looks to balance its budget for the future we recommend that it be done quickly so that we can return to a time of prosperity rather than to have a slow strangling recovery of half measures.

Last year in the MASA legislative platform we included a recommendation that Minnesota rely more heavily on a consumer based revenue system that requires everyone to pay, with the wealthy, who consume more, paying more as well. This system should be broad, covering many services and clothing, and would produce more revenue. At the same time, Minnesota could reduce their reliance on corporate income taxes thus, strengthening the business climate in Minnesota.

A strong business economy does rely on a well-educated workforce. We have to find ways to strengthen our education systems at the elementary, secondary, and collegiate levels. At the same time we strengthen these systems they must become more efficient. Many of the laws and rules the state of Minnesota has enacted have decreased efficiency. These laws often protect adults serving in these

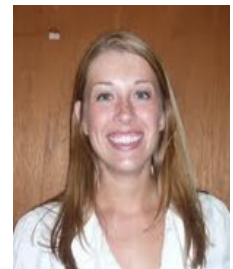
systems and not necessarily honoring the needs of the young people who need to gain an education.

The new governor and legislature in Minnesota are going to have some hard decisions in front of them. We hope they roll up their sleeves and take the necessary hard steps to balance Minnesota's budget and get Minnesota back on the road to prosperity.

STAFF PROFILE

Welcome Aimee!

We are pleased to welcome MASA's newest staff member, Aimee Ranallo. Aimee is an Associate for Leadership Support, providing primary administrative assistance to the MASA Executive Director, MASA and MASE Boards of Directors, Committees, Regional Leaders, and the MASA Foundation Board of Trustees. She will produce many of MASA's e-communications, informational materials, and newsletters; members will quickly recognize "aranallo@mnasa.org" in their incoming email.



Aimee is a Mankato State University graduate with a bachelor's in mass communications, and her internship at the Linder Radio Network prepared her well for MASA's media initiatives. She earned glowing recommendations from her previous employers, where she provided communications support for a manufacturer, a realtor, the City of Mankato, and Mankato Public Schools. Aimee's first day at MASA was August 30, so she has weathered her first State Fair on Como Avenue! She is a newlywed living in Oakdale, but she remains loyal to the community of Mankato, where you can find her every Tuesday evening on the softball field.

Beyond Orientation Helping New Leaders Build Relationships

Are you welcoming new leaders into your school district this year? How can you convey all the information they need to be effective? How can you prepare them to successfully navigate the challenges?

Start by being purposeful and systematic. Review your district's last three years. What was accomplished? How were successes celebrated? What were the challenges? How were they overcome? What were the controversies? How were they managed? How did stakeholders respond? What would you have done differently? What do you see on the horizon? What are the expectations for the new leader? Be sure to consider your new leader's background: What were the accomplishments and challenges in their former school or organization?

Going through this review process will uncover important themes to convey. Consider how to best convey each topic: Should it come from you, or should it come from a principal, a teacher, a parent, a student, a community leader? Should it be conveyed through a report, a presentation, through direct observation, participation in a meeting or a class, or just over coffee?

Start with the basics, such as:

- Vision, mission, goals
- Organizational structure: schools, enrollment, departments
- Student assessment data and trends
- Financial data and trends
- Political: district boundaries, demographics, legislative and community support

Most of the basic information is readily available to the public, and your new leader has probably already reviewed it in one form or another. Compiling the



Kelley Stange
Director of Communications
Houston Schools

information and presenting it personally provides an opportunity to emphasize important points, and answer any questions.

Review major initiatives, such as:

- Instructional initiatives
- Referenda
- Negotiations
- Capital projects

How did the processes work? What were the expectations? What were the results? What was learned? What would you do differently?

Give some thought to relationships the new leader will need to develop, and resources from whom they can benefit. Identify the contributions of each individual to the work of the district. Arrange personal introductions to key individuals such as:

- Faculty and staff
- Parents and students
- School board
- Community leaders
- Key contacts at the Minnesota Department of Education
- Resources (MASA, MSBA, MASSP, MESPA, MASBO, MinnSPRA, etc.)
- Key leaders in neighboring districts
- Legislators

So far, we've covered the bare essentials. They'll get your new leader off to a good start. It's important to check in often to see where you can fill in the gaps. Schedule a time to meet regularly, and be available to help.



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Arif Quraishi

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Collective Bargaining Agreements in Difficult Financial Time

School districts continue to face challenging financial times, and hardly a day passes without a reminder that administrators and school boards have to find new ways to do more with less. As you constantly strive to reduce expenses without adversely affecting the quality of the students' education, remember to consider where most of your district general fund dollars are allocated – in the terms and conditions of employee collective bargaining agreements (CBA). I gave a presentation at the Kennedy & Graven Back to School Legal Update for School Administrators and suggested concepts for administering and negotiating collective bargaining agreements in difficult financial times. Some concepts to consider are discussed below.

Eliminate costly past practices. Long standing, consistent past practices which relate to the employees terms and conditions of employment may be binding upon districts even if there is no language in the CBA addressing the matter. Examples include practices allowing employees to leave before their duty day ends on Friday and moving teachers on steps and lanes effective the first date of a new contract period, even though the contract is not settled.

Begin to identify costly past practices now and plan a strategy for elimination of past practices during the next round of bargaining. Since elimination of binding past practices must be done in accordance with PELRA, you should consult your district's legal counsel in advance.

Meet and confer, not negotiate. Do not turn the "meet and confer" obligation into a "meet and negotiate" process. "Meet and confer" can be used effectively to identify, discuss and reach a mutual understanding with teachers on issues which are not terms and conditions of employment. Do not let



Gloria Blaine Olsen
Attorney
Kennedy & Graven

"meet and confer" evolve into a negotiations session over terms and conditions of employment. This can turn into prolonged negotiations before formal bargaining over terms and negotiations commence.

Use available discretion. Carefully analyze terms of your CBAs and take cost saving measures that do not necessitate changing terms of the current CBA or changing a binding past practice. Examples of possible cost saving measures include

reducing extended teacher contract days, elimination of overtime, and elimination of discretionary costs.

Decide grievances wisely. Sometimes unions file a large number of work rule interpretation grievances months before formal negotiations begin in order to put pressure on the district. Grievances should be settled when possible on a fair and reasonable matter. But do not feel undue pressure to settle grievances if the district has to "give up too much." Often, settlement of outstanding grievances during negotiations can be achieved on a reasonable basis.

Teacher January 15 settlement deadline. If the teacher union's best offer in January, 2011 is not acceptable, do not feel undue pressure to settle before the January 15, 2011 settlement deadline. Analyze the cost of the one-time penalty and compare to the cost of settling the 2011-2013 agreement on the union's terms. The public now seems to be more understanding and supportive of districts missing the January 15 deadline. In lean financial times, the earlier settlements often are more costly for districts than the later settlements.

Educate stakeholders about finances. It is important that stakeholders have some understanding of the limited financial resources. Employees, parents, the public and the unions will better understand the dis-

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Collective Bargaining Agreements Continued from Page 8

trict's proposals if they are aware of the financial rationale behind those proposals. Start soon to educate these stakeholders about the district finances including state funding shifts, per pupil state aid, excess levy referenda, costly state and federal mandates, inability to use restricted funds for general fund purposes, the need for a general fund balance, the high cost of reducing class sizes, and other relevant factors. Education efforts do not "take" after one isolated attempt and lack credibility if begun during negotiations.

Costing of "language" and "money" proposals. In addition to the traditional costing of financial proposals and packages, districts should cost out language proposals, whenever possible.

Many proposals which negotiations committees refer to as "language" proposals actually cost money. Therefore, reasonable attempts should be made by the district to cost out union language proposals, even if the union challenges the district's costing method and characterizes the estimated cost as speculative.

Settling too soon. Negotiation of a CBA is a dynamic, complicated, emotionally charged process. Reaching agreement on complex and crucial issues often is a slow and painful evolution. Do not become impatient and settle too soon. In difficult financial times, the earlier settlements tend to be higher and the later settlements lower.


Consider TAIL costs. Be careful not to focus exclusively on the cost of the CBA being negotiated. Ignoring the TAIL costs on subsequent contracts is a costly mistake. While it is essential to keep the cost of the CBA being negotiated reasonable, it is crucial not to settle by agreeing to provisions that will have significant detrimental financial impact on subsequent contracts. Such provisions include: delayed salary schedule increases (making a salary schedule increase effective towards the end of the contract sometimes on the last day of the contract); step movement effective toward the end or on the last day of the contract;

elimination of some steps; adding a step beyond the highest paid step; retiree insurance benefits; and severance payments, payoff of unused leave upon resignation.

Teachers setting the trend. Sometimes the teachers' contracts and benefits are used as a standards (by both districts and unions) to determine the level of non-certified employees contract provisions and fringe benefits. This may not be an economical or reasonable approach. Teachers' level of education and responsibility justify higher compensation than most non-certified employees. Fringe benefits should be considered part of total compensation, especially now with school district

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LEADER'S TOOLBOX

iPod Learning for Pre-K Jump Start to Kindergarten

Knowing that many of the students entering kindergarten in our school had limited preschool experiences, I applied for a grant through Education Minnesota entitled “Jump Start to Kindergarten.” The goals set for this program were to promote academic and social readiness, promote parent involvement, and to build relationships with the students, their families, and the staff at Hawthorne Elementary School.

The motivation to improve the academic statistics at our school comes from the connections made with students and their families during my two years here at Hawthorne Elementary School. The families truly care about the success of their children, but don't always have the necessary tools to achieve this success. We felt like we could make a big difference through the implementation of this program.

With the ever-changing advances in technology, the school district is focused on integrating technology into our classroom instruction such as through the use of SmartBoard technology. In addition, we need to educate our students for the 21st century with a curriculum that appeals to children who are digital natives.

Through our grant, all students were originally going to be provided iPod Nano's, which are a lower-end MP3 player designed for sound. Personally, I have an iPod Touch – a state-of-the-art MP3 player that has a touch screen and can play video. We thought this would be a much better tool for the students to be able to use. After some further consideration a letter was sent explaining the background and goals of the program to local businesses and social organizations asking for donated funds to upgrade from the iPod Nano's to the iPod Touch. The response was incredible, allowing us to purchase twelve (12) iPod Touches directly from Apple with a one-year warranty. In addition, we were able to buy protective cases for each iPod Touch.



Pictured above: Albert Lea's Hawthorne Elementary School students working with their new technology.

While incorporating technology into the classroom is important, we did not want to neglect the importance of hands-on learning and thinking. We don't want students to think that it's okay to rely so heavily on technology that they don't have to think. Therefore, the iPod is designed to be another tool that can supplement the learning process for our students.

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I-Pods for Pre-K

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After the Jump Start to Kindergarten program is complete, my colleagues and I would like to integrate the iPod Touches into our day-to-day kindergarten classroom instruction. We are able to download leveled books onto the iPods. Our goal is to have students read these books during their independent learning time. We also plan on using the iPods to increase and support the vocabulary growth of our English Language Learners.

At the time of this article, we are nearing the end of a very successful “Jump Start to Kindergarten” program. The student learning and connection with this new iPod technology has been evident. This has

truly been a “jump start” to their education evident with the results. This program has received so many compliments from colleagues and parents in addition to our enthusiastic students. We look forward to relaying the results once they’re known, and hope to reapply for our grant to continue this program in the future.

-Heather Leach, Albert Lea Kindergarten Teacher

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Better Yet Improving Education in Difficult Times

This is the beginning of the conversation. Over the course of the next few months, you can expect updates about the situation, surveys about what you are doing, and information about what your colleagues are doing to meet the challenge. Please actively participate in the conversation.

There is an old saying: “When your friends and your enemies are telling you the same thing, you had better listen.” Right now, the supporters and detractors of public education are telling us that, in order to survive, public schools will need to become significantly more efficient and effective. They will need to be different. That’s a hard message to accept, because Minnesota’s schools have always been a source of pride. They have been among the best in the world, but in order to keep them and to keep them good, it is time to change—change dramatically.

On August 4, the Minnesota Department of Education and MASA brought together a panel of experts to talk about the scope of change that will be necessary for public education, and to share some possibilities for the future. The panel included five metro and outstate superintendents, the Commissioner of Education, and the Program Finance Director for the Minnesota Department of Education. Superintendents provided information about the ways they are currently creating greater efficiency within their districts like sharing services, forming corporate partnerships, and increasing online learning.

The panelists explored a variety of possibilities for the future, such as eliminating transportation or food services, statewide negotiations with employee groups, four-day academic weeks, alternating days of on-site and on-line learning for secondary students, exporting the support of athletic programs to the community, adding flexibility to PELRA, adapting school calendars, etc.



Shari Prest
Ark Associates

All of the panelists agreed there are no “financial windfalls” on the horizon. Tom Melcher, Program Finance Director, reminded the panel of the limitations of current cost saving measures. For example, school administration comprises only four percent of districts’ budgets. Therefore, cutting some of that amount may be negligible in addressing the enormous fiscal crisis facing the state and its schools. The only places the state can realistically address the deficit is through funding for human services and education. Even within those areas, structural changes will have to be dramatic.

The Minnesota Office of Management and Budget projects a \$5.7 billion deficit for the biennium, not including \$1.8 billion in interest payments. There are no easy solutions. According to Greg Abbott of the Minnesota School Board Association (MSBA) Journal, even if state payments of 50 percent were shifted into the next biennium, our deficit would still be \$4.1 billion. Add racino money, cut local government aid completely, put a sales tax on clothing, tax the rich, and cut \$1 billion from both human services and education (\$500 per pupil), and we would still have a \$100 million deficit.

MASA is challenging its members to take leadership and have courage to change the structure of their schools in ways that will improve the quality of education and be drastically more efficient. It’s a big challenge!

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| Jim Schmitt | 651-223-3028 | jschmitt@springsted.com |



Springsted

springsted.com
800-236-3033

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Are You Paying Attention to Your Own Learning?

A long time ago, George Land published the book, “Grow or Die: the Unifying Principle of Transformation.” In it, Dr. Land suggested a concept that has become a foundational belief for organizational leadership: growth is the most basic drive through which “all biological, physical, chemical, psychological, and cultural processes are intrinsically equivalent.” Everything grows or it expires. This notion has resonated through the years; you will hear the concept come up through change gurus like Michael Fullan (“living systems must change and grow or they will die...”), John Kotter, John Maxwell, and others.

As leaders, we are reminded often that we are accountable for change, for the positive growth of our systems and staff, for influencing modification in public policy, and most of all, for positive outcomes for kids. It could be said, that in times such as these, when resources are scarce and demands ever-increasing, that being charged with leading positive change is fairly daunting. However, maybe we should look at our accountability for change as a wonderful thing: an expectation that even in tough times, our communities are not asking us to “hold the line,” they are asking us to be part of the solution that will bring the change that makes things better.

We have heard some of our members suggest that they might need to curtail their own professional development in order to save resources, and we wonder about the wisdom in that. We know that not developing ourselves does not mean we stay the same; it means we suffer. If we don’t transform we die. We at MASA urge you to start this new school year thinking about your own professional growth and what goals you might set for yourself this year. Research is rich with evidence linking the professional development of educators and student success. How accountable are you for your own learning?

In challenging times, access to innovative ideas and better practices is essential to addressing increasing

needs, and the richest environments for experiencing those things is in the reflective company of colleagues who are also trying to find solutions in the context of quality collegial conversation and excellent learning experiences. Won’t you join us this year in our learning community? Here is an update on some of our plans:

MASA Fall Conference – The Art & Science of Leadership **Sunday – Tuesday, October 3-5, Madden’s**

Leadership is both an art and a science, and when we examine leadership excellence, we must embrace the characteristics of both. School leadership reflects the increasingly complex environment in which schools exist. The science of school leadership relates to the evidence resulting from observation, study, research, and characterization of vetted practices that reliably predict success. The art of school leadership is about developing the wisdom and experience that supports the more nebulous intuition. Join your colleagues at the MASA Fall Conference this October as we examine the Art & Science of Leadership and learn to support yourself as a leader and a human being -- using both art and science! Find registration information on the MASA web site: www.mnasa.org.

Fresh Start Workshop – Final Installment of the 2010 Series **Tuesday, October 19, MASA Offices**

The Fresh Start series was developed especially for school leaders in mid-career (though all MASA members are welcome to attend). The series takes place during the calendar year with the final session in the fall. The October 19th session features a wonderful agenda of topics including: Developing a Strong School Culture of Trust, Becoming an Expert Meeting Facilitator, and Contract Negotiations for a Collaborative School Culture. Everyone is welcome; find registration info on the web site. We are grateful

Continued on Page 15

Your Own Learning
Continued from Page 14

to ATS&R for their gracious support of this series.

Fall CLM Conference
Wednesday - Friday, November 17-19, Cragun's

The 2010 conference of the Curriculum Leaders of Minnesota (CLM) will center around assessment and grading. We are pleased to announce that our keynote speaker will be Ken O'Connor. Join us this fall and explore leading your organization in the direction of improved practices in assessment and grading by examining these topics: Monitoring for Student Learning, Defining Formative Assessment, Aligning Grading Practices, Communicating Student Progress, and Learning Ramifications that Come From Grading Practices. Registration materials are available on the MASA web site.

Great Start Workshops - Training for New Leaders
*** Only 3 Sessions Remaining!**

October 20, MASA Offices

The second session will focus on community stakeholders, long range planning, your role as a superintendent, legal hot topics and HR basics. Come and see the MASA offices and meet the staff!

December 1, MASA Offices

During the third session of this series, we will have a day full of sessions on working with your union leaders and contract negotiations, building a district culture of leaders, legal hot topics, and school finance.

March 16, Northland Inn, Minneapolis

The final session will help you bring your first year to a close. Topics to be covered include school board elections, data retreats and how to tie them to student achievement, facility financing options, and special services. The annual MASA spring conference follows this workshop (March 17-18).

All sessions are planned to support new leaders' successful first years of practice. We appreciate the

support of Springsted Incorporated in providing these workshops.

School Finance Elections
Monday, December 6, Venue at Cray Plaza
(formerly Galtier Plaza), St. Paul

School Finance Elections: A Comprehensive Planning Model for Success is a workshop based on the book of the same title authored by our presenters, Dr. Don Lifto, Senior Vice President at Springsted Incorporated, and Dr. Brad Senden, Managing Partner at The Center for Community Opinion and Political Designs. The workshop's content represents a marriage of research and successful practice, emphasizing systems and strategies rather than specific campaign tactics and allowing school leaders to elevate their thinking to a more comprehensive and long-range vision of election planning. See the MASA web site for registration materials. This workshop is a partnership of MASA and Springsted Incorporated.

Save the Date!

New Stages for Sages Retirement Workshop
Thursday, December 2, MASA Offices

The New Stages for Sages workshops provide information, support, and advice for our members who are considering retirement. Workshop topics include: Dealing with Lifestyle Change, Financial Planning and Legal Issues, To Recareer or Not to Recareer, Family Issues, Sharing Your Own Wisdom Gained from Your Career, and Conversation with "Retiree Mentors" (Those who have been through it!) The New Stages workshops are provided with the gracious support of AXA Equitable. Registration is coming soon.

At Ruth's Table

Wednesday, March 16, Northland Inn

At Ruth's Table is an annual conversation among practicing and aspiring education leaders who are women, an opportunity to gather for learning,

Continued on Page 21

BOARD DEVELOPMENT

MASA Establishes a Professional Assistance Team (P.A.T)

A very important part of the work of MASA is to provide outstanding service to the members of the association. Besides a strong professional 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.

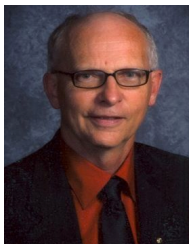
To that end, MASA has established a five member Professional Assistance Team (P.A.T) to help members across the state.

The Professional Assistance Team members will take confidential calls and contacts from any MASA member. They can help with personnel situations, school board relationships, communities' communications and a variety of other situations that members of MASA may run into from time-to-time.

Each of the MASA Professional Assistance Team are highly experienced school leaders with a reputation for being able to navigate complex situations. The members of the team 2010-11 are listed below.

The Professional Assistance Team is one more way in which MASA is seeking to serve the members of the association so that they can be successful leaders of Minnesota's K-12 schools.

Hallberg Engineering is sponsoring the Professional Assistance Team.



Jerry Nesland
Work: (218) 894-2439
Cell: (218) 640-0267
Home: (218) 346-3197
email: jnesland@fed.k12.mn.us



Patty Phillips
Work: (651) 748-7411
Cell: (651) 357-0996
Home: (651) 735-1772
email: pphillips@isd622.org



Harold Remme
Work: (507) 359-8401
Cell: (507) 276-3990
Home: (507) 359-4728
email: hremme@newulm.k12.mn.us



John Tritabaugh
Work: (320) 398-5585
Cell: (320) 493-7426
Home: (320) 845-7259
email: john.tritabaugh@kimball.k12.mn.us



Carl Wahlstrom
Cell: (952) 807-8906
Home: (952) 435-2893
email: retiredsupt@charter.net

Have you renewed your membership?

Membership materials have been mailed. For more information or additional membership materials, contact the MASA office at (651/645-6272 / 866-444-5251 or members@mnasa.org) or visit our web site at (www.mnasa.org).

Quality Conferences
Network of Your Colleagues
Skill Development Workshops
Publications
State and National
Legislative Advocacy
Legal Consultation and Much More!

"The Fresh Start Series"



For the third year in a row, MASA is offering a professional development opportunity created especially for our members in their mid-career professional season. The "Fresh Start Series" is shaped to address the skill-building and networking needs of Minnesota school leaders with approximately four to eight years of experience. It's not only for superintendents! These sessions are great for curriculum leaders, directors, and anyone who could benefit from these sessions.

After all... "The Best Part is in the Middle"

ONLY ONE SESSION REMAINING!

Session IV - Tuesday, October 19 MASA Offices

10-11:30	Developing a Strong School Culture of Trust
11:30-12:15	Lunch and Discussion
12:15-1:45	Become an Expert Meeting Facilitator
1:45-2	Break
2-3:45	Contract Negotiations for a Collaborative School Culture
3:45-4	Wrap Up and Evaluation

Review the program and take this chance to gather with colleagues, sharpen your skills, discover new inspiration and find a Fresh Start in your career!

Registration forms and details can be found on the MASA website at www.mnasa.org

This program is offered to you through the gracious support of

ATS&R

Planners/Architects/Engineers

"The Great Start Workshops"



**For New Administrators
Series of 4 Workshops
Various Locations
Whole Day Format**

This program is offered to you through the generous support of



Get your school year off to a Great Start with workshops featuring the wisdom of experienced superintendents on topics that will give you practical and immediately applicable assistance as you begin your new career. When you attend, you will receive a \$50 voucher for use towards a future MASA workshop or conference and two books to assist you during your first year.

October 20 Great Start Workshop II MASA Offices, 8:30-3:30

The second session will focus on community stakeholders, long range planning, your role as a superintendent, legal hot topics and HR basics. Come and see the MASA offices and meet the staff!

December 1 Great Start Workshop III MASA Offices, 8:30-3:30

During the third session of this series, sessions will focus on working with your union leaders and contract negotiations, building a district culture of leaders, legal hot topics and school finance.

March 16 Great Start Workshop IV Northland Inn, Minneapolis, 9-3:30

The final session will help you bring your first year to a close. Topics will include school board elections, data retreats and how to tie them to student achievement, facility financing options and special services. (The annual MASA spring conference follows this workshop: March 17-18)

Whether you are an experienced superintendent or new to the superintendency, this workshop series is a wonderful opportunity to network with other new superintendents in Minnesota and offers a chance for us to get to know you better.

Registration forms and details can be found on the MASA website at www.mnasa.org

MASA Workshops are Open to all MASA Members, not only Superintendents. Register for your workshop today!

Parents United for Public Schools Announces Parent Leadership Boot Camp Initiative

Since Parents United for Public Schools was founded in 2002 it has become clear how important a niche it fills for families of public school children. We educate and empower parents who are increasingly frustrated by the financial struggles in their school to the reality that school policy and funding are subject to a political process that is often opaque and responsive to the loudest voices. Policy often is dictated by the next election rather than the needs of the next generation. Change will only be made by increasing the public's knowledge of how education policy/funding decisions are made and increasing their capacity to influence those decisions.

With support from the Blandin Foundation, Parents United proudly provides this unique opportunity for public school parents.

Being untrained in the basics of education funding, school governance, the legislative process and the knowledge of how to intervene in these processes makes parents and families, particularly those of color and recent immigrants less able to provide effective input in these decisions. The Parents United Leadership Boot Camp is specifically designed to increase these capacities. The Boot Camp will prepare a cadre of knowledgeable community leaders to have a laser focus on Minnesota's leadership in quality E-16 education as well as the skills to effect needed change.

One-day training sessions will be offered in 10 geographically diverse locations throughout Minnesota over a two-year period and will include school governance and funding, the interface of the legislative process with school policy making, and the nuts and bolts of advocacy.

Parents United will integrate these new leaders into



Mary Cecconi
Executive Director
Parents United

our existing parent network and provide continued support to them with follow-up sessions, additional training, analysis of proposed legislation, and planned interactions with legislative and education leaders. These individuals will become credible local resources who can show their communities the link between legislation and local schools.

Parents United will offer this intensive, highly-focused training program for parent leaders who wish to effect change at the state and federal levels. Teams of local parent leaders are being recruited to participate in this civic leadership opportunity.

Who should attend?

Four Boot Camps have been scheduled before the 2011 legislative session. Northfield (9/25), Frazee (10/2), Cambridge (10/9) and Grand Rapids (10/13). Each Boot Camp is limited to 20 participants and the most successful Boot Camps will draw from multiple school districts within a region.

The ideal candidate to attend a Leadership Boot Camp is:

- A “go to” parent, the one others rely on to know what is happening in the district.
- An emerging or experienced leader, one who may have worked on a site or district committee or on a levy campaign.
- Interested in how their local schools fit into the larger statewide public school system.
- A community participant who is connected with other groups—church, work, PTA, etc.

Continued on Page 19

Parent Leadership Boot Camp Continued from Page 18

- Interested in making a difference for their schools and community.

How do I find out more?

Recruiting is currently underway and if you are interested in registering a team or for more information please contact Mary Cecconi at mary@parentsunited.org or call 651-999-7391.

-Mary Cecconi, Parents United

Over the past seven years, we have built Parents United into a "go-to" source for education information not only for parents but also for policy makers, community leaders and the media. We are sought after for our expertise, for access to our extensive citizen network, and for our willingness to work with a multitude of child and education centered organizations.

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. Districts can post unlimited vacancies, for all levels of positions, for a small annual fee. People looking for positions can browse those jobs at no cost.

School Districts: at Minnesota Schools Jobsite Online, you can

- Post jobs
- Manage Applications
- All Online!

The Jobsite's applicant site streamlines the hiring process for both school districts and applicants. Applicants for licensed positions complete an online screening form that member districts can use to electronically screen applicants according to their own criteria.

Applicants may post their credentials (transcripts, license, letters of recommendation, etc.) to the site.

For most school districts, the annual subscription cost is less than the cost of advertising just one position in the newspaper. And the jobsite postings and applications are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Rates are determined according to district size.

Visit us on the "net:"
www.mnasa.org

Jobsite Online is a service of the Minnesota Association of School Administrators
1884 Como Avenue • Saint Paul, MN 55108
Voice: 651/645-6272 • Fax: 651/645-7518
<http://www.mnasa.org> • jobs@mnasa.org

Make Plans to Attend ...

2010 Minnesota Administrators for Special Education Fall Leadership Conference



October 27 -29 at Cragun's Resort, Brainerd

Join us to learn how the brain functions, learns and interacts with the environment. Explore adult learning, considerations for students who have special needs, current research in neuroscience in the areas of mental health, behavior, instruction, and early childhood education, as well as the neuroscience of leadership.

Dont' miss the wine tasting event and auction to benefit the MNSELF!

Watch your email for registration materials coming soon! For questions, please contact the MASE office at (651) 645-6272.

Collective Bargaining Agreements Continued from Page 9

group health insurance contributions at such a high rate. Do not assume all non-certified employees should receive the same insurance benefits, retiree health insurance, severance pay, district contributions to 403(b) simply because the teachers have them.

Consider local employment market. Non-certified employees level of salary and benefits can be compared to other school districts, but should also be compared to other non-school district local and state employees, both private and public sector. Since school districts compete with private employers in hiring, it is reasonable to use private employers rates of pay and benefits as a justification for the district proposals.

Prepare for union pressure. Unions are skilled at putting significant political pressure on the district when negotiations are prolonged or difficult. Unions communicate with the employees and public to exert this pressure. Districts reactions to such tactics are often to do nothing, which can be a mistake. Districts can honestly, fairly, and objectively communicate the parties proposals, rationale for the district's position and cost of the parties proposals. However, administrators should consult with district legal counsel to confirm that such communications are not an unfair labor practice.

Total package offers. Making a total package offer earlier rather than later in the negotiations process, and definitely before going to mediation, is often a good negotiations strategy. At some point in negotiations, the parties will have tentative agreements on the items that are easier to resolve. When salary, benefits and a couple other important items remain open, the district should consider making a total package proposal covering all open items. Negotiating total packages encourages the union and district to make decisions about priorities. Package proposal help avoid the "item by item" effect where the unions get districts to agree to resolve each of the unions' issues in isolation. When only the final costly items of salary and benefits are left to resolve,

the district may have given up its ability to trade and compromise.

Avoid "me too" clauses. "Me too" clauses are provisions that tie a term in one CBA to the term in another CBA. For example, a paraprofessional agreement may state that any increases in health insurance benefits contained in the district teachers CBA will automatically be applicable to the paraprofessionals. "Me too" clauses should be avoided because they operate to the detriment of the employer, and relieve the union of any duty to negotiate for some benefits.

The next round of bargaining seems far away. But thoughtful and creative planning for administration and negotiations of CBAs will contribute to cutting costs. Start NOW.

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.



Charlie Kyte Announces Retirement



Charlie Kyte, Executive Director of MASA, has announced to the MASA Board that he plans to retire on October 1, 2011. He will have served for 11 years in the role of Executive Director. During his tenure, MASA has become a strong voice for public education in the state of Minnesota

and an important influence legislatively at both the state and federal levels.

"This position has given me a chance to not only serve the school leaders of Minnesota for their professional needs but also allowed me to have some degree of influence on the direction of public education in our state," stated Charlie Kyte, MASA Executive Director.

Charlie went on to say "This position has given me the opportunity to interact with college presidents, legislatures, the governor, leaders of many other associations in education and other sectors of government. It has been a challenging but enjoyable time in my career."

"Charlie Kyte has done an exceptional job in leading the Minnesota Association of School Administrators over

the past ten years," said Jeffrey Olson, MASA President. "His vision, passion for education, attention to detail and service to membership have been instrumental in MASA becoming the leading educational organization in the state of Minnesota. We wish Charlie all the best as he transitions to retirement and thank him for his dedicated work on behalf of MASA members."

Upon retirement Charlie plans to continue to do some consulting work but also wants to spend more time with his family and traveling. He and his wife Dianne have two grown daughters and four grandchildren. He is looking forward to having time to watch these grandchildren grow and mature.

The officers of MASA have developed a plan to search for a new Executive Director. Over the next several months they will seek applicants, interview, and hopefully hire a new director in time for that person to be introduced at the Spring MASA/MASE Conference in mid March. The new director would assume duties sometime between July 1, 2011 and October 1, 2011.

Timeline for selecting a new Executive Director

- Information/posting of position vacancy.
- MASA accepts applications, December 1, 2010-January 28, 2011.
- Interview process, February 14-March 9, 2011.
- New Executive Director hired, March 10-11, 2011.

Your Own Learning Continued from Page 15

networking, and idea sharing. Each practicing education leader is encouraged to bring a guest who is a woman considering a career in education leadership. At Ruth's Table is a partnership of MASA and Minnesota State University Mankato, Department of Educational Leadership.

MASE/MASA Spring Conference Thursday-Friday, March 17-18, Northland Inn

Mark your calendar for the Spring Conference. We will continue our theme of the Art & Science of Leadership, and our general session speakers will include Milton Chen, Senior Fellow at The George

Lucas Educational Foundation and author of Education Nation. In addition, we will have awards presentations, several receptions, the Exhibit Fair, and the MASA Foundation Silent Auction.

Emerging Leaders Conference Thursday, March 24, TIES

What is one of the most important things you can do as a leader? Identify your replacement and mentor them! MASA is collaborating with MASSP, MASE, and MESPA to provide a day-long workshop for anyone who is exploring a role change into a leadership position. We urge you to encourage your staff members to participate in this important opportunity. Registration will be available later this fall.

MASA FOUNDATION

MASA Members Benefit from Foundation Funding

The mission of the MASA Foundation is to enhance the leadership development of educational administrators, to encourage and support individuals interested 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 foundation is an endowment fund, built over time by member pledges and fundraising events such as the fall golf tournament and spring silent auction. It is governed by a Board of Trustees and it disseminates approximately \$6,000 in grants each year.

MASA members are encouraged to request Foundation grants. The process is simple: send a written request to MASA Executive Director Charlie Kyte that states the purpose for which the grant will be used and the amount of funding desired. Individual grants of about \$750 are available. A grants subcommittee of the Board of Trustees reviews requests as they are received and applicants are notified within a fairly short time frame.

Grants have been used to support professional development through individual coaching,

conferences, and unique experiences such as travel. We will be featuring some of our grant recipients in future newsletters.

In addition to individual grants, Foundation funds have been used to support the incubation of MASA's three "stages" workshop series: Great Start for new leaders, Fresh Start for midcareer leaders, and New Stages for Sages Workshops for members considering retirement.

Thanks to all who have contributed to the Foundation—as a donor, with a pledge, by naming the Foundation as beneficiary of your MASA life insurance benefit, or by serving on the Board of Trustees. As resources to support professional growth become more scarce, the work of the Foundation becomes even more important!



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Phone: 612/977-3500 - dlrgroup.com

SCHOOL FINANCE ELECTIONS A COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING MODEL FOR SUCCESS

School Finance Elections: A Comprehensive Planning Model for Success is our workshop based on the book of the same title authored by our presenters. The workshop's content represents a marriage of research and successful practice, emphasizing systems and strategies rather than specific campaign tactics and allowing school leaders to elevate their thinking to a more comprehensive and long-range vision of election planning.

Dr. Don Lifto, Senior Vice President at Springsted Incorporated, and Dr. Brad Senden, Managing Partner at The Center for Community Opinion and Political Designs, have consulted with dozens of school districts running revenue cap and debt issuance elections from New Jersey to California. In 2010, they were featured

presenters on referendum topics at AASA, NSBA and ASBO. Their articles have appeared in many national publications. This workshop will be beneficial to school districts planning an initial debt issuance or revenue cap, or to those coming back for another try after a lost election. It will also feature invaluable strategies in preparing for and conducting a school finance election.

WORKSHOP INFORMATION:

Monday, December 6, 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Venue at Cray Plaza (formerly Galtier)

380 Jackson Street, Third Floor

Saint Paul, MN 55101

Registration information can be found on the MASA website: www.mnasa.org.



Mark Your Calendar!

The 2010 MASA Foundation Golf Tournament is right around the Fairway!

The annual MASA Foundation Golf Tournament is fast approaching. Mark your calendar for **Sunday, October 3**. It will be held at Madden's Resort in Brainerd.

NEW THIS YEAR! MASA Foundation *Mini* Golf Tournament/ Fundraiser. **Monday, October 4** at Pirate's Cover Mini Golf Course in Baxter.

See you in Brainerd!

Save The Date! SCHOOL FINANCE ELECTIONS: A COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING MODEL FOR SUCCESS

*Monday, December 6, 2010
Venue at Cray Plaza, St. Paul*



NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
EDUCATION

*Take Your Leadership to New Heights: The National Conference on Education™
Denver, CO • February 17-19, 2011*

The National Conference on Education is the place to learn new approaches and challenge your thinking. At the conference you will get a 360-degree perspective from public school

systems large and small, urban, suburban and rural, and you'll have the opportunity to talk to your peers face-to-face about their best practices. In addition, a visit to the NCE Marketplace will allow you to see first-hand the products and services that offer solutions to your day-to-day school system needs.

Registration and Housing open on July 1st - mark your calendar and visit www.aasa.org. See you in Denver!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2010... September

22-24

AASA Legislative Advocacy Conference
Ritz Carlton Pentagon City
Arlington, VA

October

2

MASA Executive Committee Meeting
10:30 am-11:30 am
Madden's Resort, Brainerd
MASA Board of Directors Meeting
1-4:30 pm
Madden's Resort, Brainerd

3

MASA Board of Directors Meeting
Continues
9-11:30 am
Madden's Resort, Brainerd
MASA Foundation Golf Tournament
Madden's Resort, Brainerd

3-5

MASA Fall Conference
Madden's Resort, Brainerd

6-8

Teacher Leader Institute: Enhancing
Capacity, Effectiveness & Excellence in
Teacher Leaders
Madden's Resort, Brainerd

19

Fresh Start Workshop IV
10 am- 4pm
MASA Board Room, St. Paul

20

Great Start Workshop
9am-3pm
MASA Board Room, St. Paul

27-29

MASE Fall Leadership Conference
Cragun's Resort, Brainerd

November

4

Federal Advocacy Committee Meeting
10 am-2 pm
MASA Board Room, St. Paul

8

Nominating Committee Meeting
10 am-2 pm
MASA Board Room, St. Paul

11

AASA Women in Leadership Conference
Ritz Carlton Pentagon City
Arlington, VA

15

Newsletter Submissions Due

17-19

Curriculum Leaders of Minnesota Fall
Conference
Cragun's Resort, Brainerd

25-26

Thanksgiving Holiday
MASA Offices Closed

30

Executive Development Committee
Meeting
10am- 2pm
MASA Board Room, St. Paul

December

1

Great Start Workshop III
9am- 3pm
MASA Board Room, St. Paul

4-7

TIES 2010 Education Technology
Conference
Hyatt Regency Hotel, Minneapolis

8

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

14

Member Services Committee Meeting
10 am-2 pm
MASA Board Room, St. Paul

24, 27 and 31

Winter Holidays
MASA Offices Closed

2011... January

3

Winter Holiday
MASA Offices Closed

4

Minnesota Legislative Session Begins
Minnesota State Capitol, St. Paul

6

Foundation Board of Directors Meeting
MASA Board Room, St. Paul

12

MSBA Early Bird Workshops
Hilton Hotel, Minneapolis

13-14

MSBA Winter Convention
Minneapolis Convention Center, MN

February

15

Newsletter Submissions Due

17-18

AASA National Convention on Education
Denver, CO

March

16

MASA Executive Committee Meeting
9-10:45 am
Northland Inn, Brooklyn Center
MASA Board of Directors Meeting
11am- 4 pm
Northland Inn, Brooklyn Center

17-18

MASA & MASE Spring Conference
Northland Inn, Brooklyn Park

24

Emerging Leaders Conference
TIES, St. Paul

April

21

Foundation Board of Directors Meeting
MASA Board Room, St. Paul

22

Spring Holiday
MASA Offices Closed

May

13

Newsletter Submissions Due

30

Memorial Day Holiday
MASA Offices Closed

June

TBD

Board of Directors Retreat
Venue TBD, St. Paul



CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



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PERMIT NO. 212