

Carol Johnson is 2002 MN Superintendent of the Year

MASA has named Dr. Carol Johnson, Superintendent for the Minneapolis Public Schools, the 2002 Minnesota Superintendent of the Year.

As the Minnesota honoree, Dr. Johnson is a candidate among other state winners for National Superintendent of the Year, to be announced at the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) convention, February 15 – 17, 2002 in San Diego, California.

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

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

Dr. Johnson was selected for this honor by a panel of representatives

from a variety of Minnesota education organizations.

Dr. Johnson has been superintendent for the Minneapolis Public Schools since 1997. With an enrollment of 50,000 students, Minneapolis is the largest district in Minnesota, serving its urban community with over 100 schools. The fourteenth largest employer in the State of Minnesota, the Minneapolis school district has an annual budget of \$600 million and a workforce of 8,000.

Minneapolis’ students speak eighty different languages; twenty per cent are English language learners. Seventy per cent of Minneapolis’ pupils are students of color. Sixty-eight per cent of Minneapolis’ students receive free and reduced lunch, and fourteen per cent benefit from special education services.

The Minneapolis Public School Board nominated Dr. Johnson for the Superintendent of the Year Award. “Carol’s unusual skill set and dedication to improving urban education make her deserving of this award,” says Board Chairperson Catherine Shreves.

“She is candid about the problems facing her urban school district of Minneapolis, willing to be held accountable, and authentic in her work to develop collaborations on many levels to improve the odds for achievement of the many youth and children in our district. During her tenure as Superintendent, Carol has galvanized both internal and

external support of the Minneapolis Public Schools’ District Improvement Agenda, because it is clear that the Minneapolis Public Schools alone cannot do this work.”



Carol Johnson

Dr. Johnson is especially noted for her ability to communicate effectively with all members of the community, inspiring collaboration and building strong connections with the school district. With her leadership, the district has established a number of important initiatives, such as increasing student performance across all groups. “We believe that if students are learning in school, they will have gained the basic skills that they need in life, will be prepared for a good job in the 21st century; and will be lifelong learners,” states Dr. Johnson. “Minneapolis Public Schools has developed grade-level Superintendent of the Year ...

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Checking Our Bearings



Jerry Jensen

by Jerry Jensen,
MASA President
and
Superintendent,
Lake City Schools

Another school year is flying by, and it is already the holiday season! I hope all of you were able to enjoy quality time with family and friends!

It is hard to imagine that my term as MASA president is nearly half over. This year has already provided me with numerous opportunities to represent MASA while engaging with various groups.

Some of the year's highlights include the start-up of the Academic Leadership Forum, implementation of the powerful EduPortal resource, a great Fall Conference, and the Board of

Director's development of strategies to improve MASA. Most of my priority goals for this year are progressing through the work of our Director, the Board, or the standing committees.

Being part of the leadership team of an organization that is moving ahead at a rapid pace is very exciting! I believe it is healthy, however, to occasionally check our bearings. Two documents played a critical role in the recent development of our organization, and they serve as solid anchor posts to help guide our direction.

In December of 1999, a strategic plan for MASA was adopted with the following strategies:

1. MASA will develop and implement a public relations plan to assure becoming the preeminent voice for public education.

2. MASA will develop and implement a plan to establish a statewide agenda addressing the needs of all Minnesota children.

3. MASA will develop and implement a plan ensuring all members receive quality services and support.

Each strategy identifies a number of action plans that drive implementation. The Board of Directors, at their December meeting, compared our current improvement goals with those of the strategic plan.

The second document was generated as a result of Strategy #2 in the plan. A "Children's Agenda" for MASA was developed in July of 1998 by a group of distinguished members of our organization. A summary of their work is located on the web **Our Bearings ... Continued Page 3**

Listening to Life as It Flies By



Charlie Kyte

by Charlie Kyte
MASA Executive
Director

I've been taking more than my fair share of good-natured ribbing from the MASA staff lately. They accuse me of not listening close enough when

they give me information. I, on the other hand, am sure I'm listening closely and believe that they are providing the information in such a way that it is very difficult for me to interpret.

The scary part is that Jeanna, Mary and Stephanie, here in the office, sound very much like my spouse

Dianne. In fact, they also sound a like my mother when she used to talk to my dad. Mom used to accuse dad of selective hearing. Dad used to just claim he was going deaf.

In reality, there are so many things going on at once it's very possible for information to be coming at you, which you simply can't internalize. I suspect many MASA members, as they go about their busy jobs, run into the same problem.

There are days when a typical school leader/administrator deals with thirty or forty different issues with many of them quickly moving in and out of focus as they appear and then reappear during the day.

Principals are calling with issues, board members are sending in emails, it's starting to snow outside and you are only five minutes away from the next committee or negotiation meeting.

The other day Jeanna said the number '496' to me. I just replied by saying, "okay." Then she said, "Do you know what I'm talking about?" To be honest, I didn't know if she was telling me if we had 496 members, or if it was a telephone prefix, or something completely different.

After she brought me up short (in a nice sort of way) she pointed out that '496' was the value of stock **Listening ... Continued Page 3**

Leaders Forum

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Charles Kyte

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Leaders Forum is your newsletter and we encourage your input! If you have ideas or an article to share, please contact Mia Urick, MASA's Director of Communications and Professional Development (contact information listed above).

Listening ...Continued from page 2

that she and I both owned and it was now worth \$4.96. She was probably reporting to me on how much money she was making. I didn't have the heart to tell her that I bought the darn company at \$33.00 a share. If it was \$4.96 or \$14.96 I had still lost my shirt.

As we go through the hustle and bustle of our lives it is important to occasionally tell yourself to "slow down" and to take a few moments to enjoy yourself. Find an opportunity now and then to wander the halls and talk to the kids. Find an opportunity to sit down for lunch with the clerical staff and talk about babies and children, the turning of leaves and other non-school issues.



Happy
Holidays
from all of us at MASA

Life flies by quickly and it's important for hard driven, type A people to occasionally slow the pace down and enjoy themselves. Like me, you could actually try to figure out what the number 496 means the first time somebody says it to you! •

Our Bearings ...Continued from page 2

site under "What's New". I encourage you to take the time to read this document as a reminder that very few conditions have significantly improved for our children since 1998. I believe the "Children's Agenda" still serves us very well as we establish priority initiatives and develop positions on proposed policy or legislation.

As I mentioned, the Executive

Committee and Board of Directors are checking our bearings, but your feedback would also be most welcome and valuable. Consider where we have been, and where we are going, as an organization. If you sense a course adjustment is needed, convey your thoughts to anyone on the leadership team. An engaged membership is key to our success. Have a Joyful Holiday Season and a Happy New Year! •

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Superintendent of the Year ... Continued from Page 1

expectations and standards that include state requirements of the Profile of Learning. (Our) standards exceed the state standards by providing for greater depth of learning and understanding for all students. We believe access to the high standards should be equitable across the district; and that our teachers should be given adequate time and training to implement and assess the standards in their classrooms. Likewise we are committed to communicating more regularly with parents about their student's progress toward meeting the graduation requirements of the Profiles of Learning. High standards for all, with a customized delivery system and timeline (based on the needs of individual students) is key to our implementation success."

This commitment to higher standards comes with a significant price tag. To provide the fiscal

resources necessary to accomplish district goals, Dr. Johnson led an initiative to establish the Better Schools Referendum Campaign, which will raise \$42 million in 2002 and will continue through eight years. Each time Dr. Johnson has campaigned for a levy, levels of support has grown as residents, 82 per cent of whom do not have children in the Minneapolis Schools, recognize the importance of the commitment to increasing achievement. In addition, Dr. Johnson spearheaded successful private fundraising campaigns to enhance arts, science, math, and technology instruction. She helped secure a \$10 million Annenberg Challenge Grant to integrate arts throughout the curriculum, a strategy that has improved student attendance, engaged children in learning, and improved academic achievement. Minneapolis' middle school science program will be strengthened by a recent \$655,000 grant from Medtronic Foundation,

base on the district's success in revitalizing the K-6 science program.

As the Minneapolis Schools receives support from the wider community to support higher educational standards, Dr. Johnson has worked to develop a seamless accountability framework designed to improve quality. This includes initiatives such as "Our Strategic Direction," a document that states the district's vision and overall goals, such as accelerated achievement for all students; mutual trust and involvement with students, families, and the community; and student achievement accountability for everyone. The "District Improvement Agenda" sets shorter-term objectives related to the main goals. The "School Improvement Planning Process" provides each school with a quality **Superintendent of the Year ... Continued Page 5**

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Superintendent of the Year ... Continued from Page 4

improvement cycle of monitoring and evaluation, planning, and implementation in alignment with the district improvement goals. "School Improvement Feedback" includes two key processes: written feedback on the plan itself, and a Performance Conversation in which a team of district support people meet with the school's team to look at what they are planning, how well it aligns with the District Improvement Agenda and the school's data.

"Building on the success of our community conversations, we have become more intentional about community engagement and partnerships," says Dr. Johnson. "We promote the idea that 'Education Is Everyone's Job' and that the community's continued support is critical for Minneapolis Public Schools to achieve our goal: academic excellence for all students. Our vision is that Minneapolis Public Schools will be safe, orderly environments where students, staff and families share high expectations for academic achievement and personal behavior. Likewise, we envision a community in which everyone helps create a mutually respectful, fair and caring environment where diversity is valued."

Dr. Johnson holds doctoral and master's degrees from the University of Minnesota, and a bachelor's degree from Fisk University. She participated in the Harvard University Superintendent's Summer Seminar in 1997. Before becoming Superintendent for the Minneapolis Schools, she was Superintendent for the St. Louis Park (Minnesota) Schools; and Associate Superintendent and Assistant to the Associate Superintendent for the Minneapolis Schools.

Springsted Incorporated, public finance advisors, is sponsor of the Minnesota Superintendent of the Year program. ServiceMASTER and the American Association of School Administrators are co-sponsors of the National Superintendent of the Year award program. •

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Leadership Forum Provides Training, Tools, Support



Kris Bryan Nielsen

by Kristine
Bryan Nielsen
Executive Director

Today's school administrators work in a fast-paced, chaotic and complex environment. In this environment, change, whether positive or negative, is their constant companion.

The accessibility of data to the general public makes the job of the administrator both easier and more difficult. Now more than ever before, the decisions made by administrators are scrutinized, analyzed and criticized by their constituents as well as by the general public.

With these challenges in mind, the Minnesota Administrators Leadership Forum has been

developed and is continuing to evolve. A partnership of the Department of Children, Families and Learning, the Minnesota Association of School Administrators, the Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals and the Minnesota Elementary School Principals' Association, the Forum provides training, tools and support to Administrators at all levels across the state.

The generosity of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Blandin Foundation, supplemented by matching contributions of staff, resources, and support from CFL has made the program possible. Over the course of three years, over 1,600 public and private school administrators in the state will receive training. In addition, all administrators in the state may take

advantage of the new Minnesota EduPortal. The EduPortal is a private, password protected, document-sharing repository. In addition to enabling administrators to have information they want (via their input) word-searchable and at their fingertips, the EduPortal provides the opportunity for various cohort groups to share information and communications in one central location through private "folders." The Forum is able to provide this service at no charge to administrators during the course of the grant project. If you are a Minnesota school administrator and have not yet learned how to access the Minnesota EduPortal, please contact your district superintendent's office or MASA.

The Forum's Regional Mentors are a **Forum Provides Training ...**
Continued Page 7

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MASA Provides Legal Representation

by **Charlie Kyte**
MASA Executive Director

MASA provides legal representation for members on issues associated with their employment. With a phone call to MASA Executive Director Charlie Kyte, you can seek political assistance, help with finding ways to process difficult issues in your district and reviews of your contract.

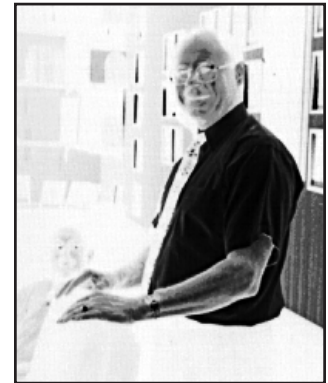
When legal help is actually needed, the excellent attorneys representing MASA become involved. Neal Buethe and Lee Friedman of Briggs and Morgan provide legal representation for members. The help they provide is confidential. They have a high level of skill in

working through legal issues for our members.

MASA provides an initial \$700 in legal consulting services for every member. In addition, the association carries a legal defense insurance policy to provide up to another \$3,000 to pay for legal services. Also, for each year an administrator is a continuous member of AASA they earn an additional \$500 annually of legal support up to a maximum of \$5,000. Finally MASA provides another \$500 for each year of continuous membership in MASA up to a maximum of \$5000.

A new member to MASA and AASA could be provided a minimum of \$4,700 in legal

support. A member with ten or more years of continuous membership would be entitled to \$13,700 of support through participation in the associations.



Charlie Kyte

If you feel that you are in need of political advice or just need someone with which to share the concerns and frustrations of your job, feel free to pick up the phone and call Charlie Kyte at 651-645-6272. •

Forum Provides Training ... Continued from Page 6

critical component of the program. Fourteen retired and practicing administrators and one technology guru make up a statewide team that provides support and mentoring to Forum participants on issues of technology, standards and general school improvement. These mentors are linked to Forum participants electronically and they also provide on site support.

Another exciting web-based tool is the CLASS website. CLASS is available for public use through the CFL site and has been used by this year's Forum training cohort. The site enables easy access to district and school test scores and financial information and quickly and easily puts this data into charts and tables that are very valuable for communications, planning and reflection, particularly in the areas of curriculum development and staff training.

Forum training participants also take the staff of a school site through the

TAGLIT (Taking a Good Look at Instructional Technology) survey. This web based tool surveys leaders, teachers and students on the use of technology for instruction. All members of the school community complete the survey on line and the result is a final report that provides fodder for planning, improvement and grant writing.

One goal of the Forum is to get technology in the hands of administrators. All Forum training participants are given a handheld computer and a portable keyboard. Special software has been developed and is being piloted with the first year Forum training participants. This software is a powerful tool to use for staff appraisal on the desktop or laptop computer. Actual note taking and scoring of staff appraisals may also be completed on the handheld computer.

The overarching goal of the Forum training is to facilitate reflective practice based on data. As school

leaders become more reflective, they will develop the skills needed to make the best possible decisions based on data, and will learn to facilitate a climate of learning in their schools and districts. Reflective teaching in the classroom in such a climate will ultimately lead us to the most powerful classroom change and to improved and increased learning for students.

By the end of the current school year, well over 400 Minnesota administrators will have directly participated in Forum training. The waiting list for 2002-2003 is growing quickly. Applications and registrations will become active in March. For further information please contact Kris Bryan Nielsen at kbnielse@ties.k12.mn.us. •



Visit the CFL web site:
<http://cfl.state.mn.us>
and click on the
CLASS icon on the left
side of the main page.

***The CLASS web site
is up and running!***

Stephen Kjorness Receives Morris Bye Award

Stephen Kjorness, Retired Superintendent for the Westbrook-Walnut Grove Public Schools, received the Morris Bye Memorial Award at the 2001 MASA Fall Conference, "Our



Steve Kjorness

Leadership Community—Strengthening our Purpose; Energizing our People; Enhancing our Performance," on September 30 in Brainerd, Minnesota.

The Bye Award is presented annually to a superintendent with a minimum of twenty years of successful administrative experience serving Minnesota public schools. The recipient must demonstrate strong educational leadership, a lifelong commitment to the development of all students, and foster innovations in education to enable students to develop personal skills and values such as perseverance, responsibility, and

leadership.

Throughout his career, Mr. Kjorness has been able to successfully balance the constraints of a limited budget that responds to community and School Board expectations. He keeps his focus on student welfare, teacher welfare, and program quality. During his term as Superintendent, the Westbrook-Walnut Grove Schools have faced no cuts in programs or personnel due to budgetary constraints.

Since Mr. Kjorness joined the Westbrook-Walnut Grove School Districts, the schools have been awarded numerous accolades, including two Minnesota Rural Education Association Profiles of Excellence awards. The districts have been recipients of a School for Change grant award, and have been named as a Redbook Magazine top school in America.

Mr. Kjorness has been a leader in many innovations in his schools. Westbrook-Walnut

Grove Schools were among the first to implement block scheduling in Minnesota, created the Prairie Smoke Barbecue Sauce entrepreneurship business, and was the site for the Dance Education Initiative.

The Westbrook-Walnut Grove Public Schools have been paired for eleven years, and are now in the process of completing final consolidation criteria. Mr. Kjorness credits much of his success to a "dedicated faculty and staff who have worked strongly together in providing our students an excellent education."

Mr. Kjorness holds bachelor's, master's and Sixth Year degrees from Mankato State University. Retired at the end of the 2000-2001 school year, Mr. Kjorness has served Minnesota schools as an administrator since 1971, including more than eleven years as Superintendent. A veteran of the United States Navy, Mr. Kjorness has been active in the schools and his greater community. He has held leadership positions on the Minnesota High School League, the Minnesota State Tele-Media Board of Directors, and is the current chair of the Southwest Telecommunications Advisory Board. He is active with the Walnut Grove Lions, the Westbrook Kiwanis, American Legion, and Veterans of Foreign Wars. Mr. Kjorness was named to the Minnesota State High School Coaches' Hall of Fame this year.

The Morris Bye Memorial Award was created in 1988 by the family of Morris Bye to recognize the efforts and important work of superintendents throughout Minnesota. Bye was a former MASA member who served as Superintendent in the Anoka School District from 1943 to 1964.

MASA Awards Recognize Outstanding Leadership



Administrators of Excellence Award
Kay E. Jacobs Award
MASA Distinguished Service Award
Morris Bye Memorial Award

Each year, the MASA/MASE Spring Conference provides an opportunity to recognize outstanding members who are dedicated leaders and advocates for children and Minnesota education. We encourage you to consider nominating yourself or a colleague for recognition. Nominate someone who you feel reflects the qualities of a leader who is committed to education and who is an exemplary representative of MASA.

Information packets with nomination forms for the awards are available on the MASA web site (www.mnasa.org). Simply open the packet and follow the instructions.

Nominations are due by February 1, 2002.

Let us Become “Child Oriented”

by **Charlie Kyte**
MASA Executive Director

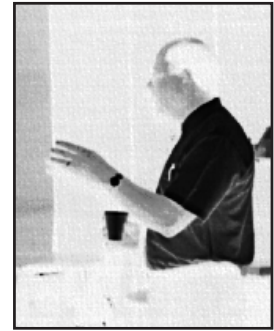
The mantra of accountability and quality become ever louder at the state and national levels. To measure systems and children we see more and more mandated testing systems coming onto line. Most of these testing programs, including those that were originally designed and operated by school systems, are not nearly “child oriented” enough. We too quickly break down the processes of instruction in order to test our children and we are too lax in utilizing the results to improve our children’s instruction.

We now do a significant amount of state mandated testing in Minnesota every year. Another grade level is added to the MCA test program every year or two. And now we hear of the requirements that may be mandated by the federal government to test all students each and every year. Most of these

tests are designed to rank school systems and to rank schools. The results of state tests are barely released before they hit the front page of the newspapers. The list of every school district is offered up in the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* and the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* with each school ranked as being good or bad. Our testing system pays little attention to the fact it is a different group of students each year that is being tested and that these students contain a wide range of variables in their lives.

We know that when we test children of one grade level in a school, the instruction for other children is also interrupted. When third graders spend several days taking their MCA tests, the culture of the school is shifted and the quality of instruction for first graders, second graders, fourth graders and fifth graders all deteriorates. The rotation of classes and the routines of the school are interrupted.

To the degree that this interruption is significant at the elementary schools, it is even larger at middle schools and again larger when students are at the high school level.



Charlie Kyte

Can you imagine testing eleventh graders in the near future? These are the same eleventh graders that are inter-mixed in classes with tenth and twelfth graders and include students that are in post secondary settings. One can see how quickly the entire learning culture of a school would break down.

So what might be done?

An important policy consideration is that all testing should have as its primary purpose the improvement of instruction of children. Secondary purposes may include
Child Oriented ...
Continued Page 12

Nominations Open for MASA Leadership Positions

Nominations are open until February 1, 2002, for the MASA offices of:

2002-03 MASA President-Elect

The President-Elect serves one year, followed by one year as President and one year as Past President. In the year of presidency, a student from the President’s district will receive a \$1,000 scholarship. All members located in “A” districts are eligible. In addition, candidates must:

- be an MASA member, in the “active” category
- be a practicing administrator
- have five years of successful administrative experience in Minnesota

- be committed to MASA and its goals
- have time available to represent MASA for three years (2002-2005).

Accountabilities of this office include:

- Participates in MASA Executive Committee and Board meetings
- Assists the President in providing general leadership to the organization
- Performs all duties of the President, in absence of the President
- Participates on the Strategic Planning Team
- Recommends appointments of all standing committee members, including Chairs-Elect.

2002-2005 MASA Treasurer

The Treasurer serves a three-year term. All active MASA members are eligible.

In addition, you must:

- be a MASA member, in the “active” category
- be a practicing administrator
- have five years of successful administrative experience in Minnesota
- be committed to MASA and its goals
- have time available to represent MASA for three years (2002-2005).

Accountabilities of this office include:

- Participates on the Board and Executive Committee.
- Represents and promotes MASA.
- Participates on the Strategic Planning Team.

Nominations Open ...
Continued Page 10

Welcome New Members

Ms. Carol Aenne
Administrative Assistant
Red Lake Schools

Dr. Nancy Allen
Director of Curriculum
Bemidji Area Schools

Mr. Rick Allen
Consultant
MN Public School Employee
Health Care Initiative

Mr. Gary Amoroso
Superintendent
Lakeville Area Schools

Mr. Robert Bangtson
Superintendent
Goodhue Schools

Ms. Kathleen Barth
Account Manager
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Mr. Gordon Baumgartner
Superintendent
Clinton-Graceville-Beardsley Schools

Dr. Colleen Baumtrog
Exec Director Special Education
Minneapolis Schools

Mrs. Jane Berenz
Director of Elementary Education
Rosemount-Apple Valley-
Eagan Schools

Ms. Patricia Blaisdell
Director of Human Resources
Winona Area Schools

Ms. Gwen Borgen
Superintendent/Principal
Badger Schools

Ms. Nancy Borman
Human Resources Manager
Chaska Area School Resources

Mr. David Bottem
Superintendent
Barnum Schools

Mrs. Susan Brash
Assistant Superintendent
of Elementary Education
Osseo Area Schools

Dr. C. Cryss Brunner
Associate Professor
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Dr. Barbara Burke
Director of Special Services
White Bear Lake Schools

Ms. Shelley Burkhardt
Director, Student Support Services
Rochester Schools

Mr. Dennis Carlson
Director of Community Education
Anoka-Hennepin Schools

Mr. John Currie
Director of Secondary Education
Rosemount-Apple Valley-
Eagan Schools

Mr. Norman Dutot
Superintendent
Warren-Alvarado-Oslo Schools

Mr. Dave Eberhardt
Special Education Coordinator
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Mr. Jerome Enget
Superintendent
Wadena-Deer Creek Schools

Ms. Cheryl Freund
Executive Director
Faribault Schools

Ms. Beverly Fritz
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Superintendent
Pine Point Schools

Mr. Harlow Hanson
Assistant Superintendent
Fairmont Area Schools

Mr. Marshall Herfindahl
Student Member

Mrs. Susan Hoeft
Community Education Director
Grand Rapids Schools

Mr. Bruce Houck
Superintendent
Russel-Tyler-Ruthton Schools

Ms. Debra House
Assistant Superintendent
Stillwater Area Schools

Mr. Alve Jemtrud
President
Education Minnesota ESI

**New Members ...
Continued Page 11**

Nominations Open ... Continued from Page 9

- Assists the Executive Director in developing the annual budget.
- Reviews and approves monthly expenditures.
- Signs checks for the payment of invoices.
- Manages investments for the Association.

2002-2003 Presidents-Elect for the Superintendent, Central Office Administrator, and Service Provider Instructor or Administrator Component Groups

The Component Group President-Elect serves one year, followed by one year as President.

(In accordance with the MASA Special Education Administrator Component Group bylaws, the President-Elect of Minnesota Administrators for Special Education [MASE] serves as the MASA Special Education Administrator Component Group President-Elect.)

Service Provider, Special Education, and Central Office Component Group Representatives to the MASA Board of Directors

Component Group Representatives to the MASA Board serve a three-year term. These Directors will replace the Component Group Board Representatives who are completing their terms June 30, 2001.

**Nominations Open ...
Continued Page 11**

New Members ... Continued from page 10

Dr. Alan Jensen
Superintendent
Elk River Schools

Mr. Russ Johnson
Interim Superintendent
Clearbrook-Gonvick Schools

Mr. Jon Kainz
Vice President
Doncar Construction

Mrs. Doris Karls
Director of Community Education
Stillwater Area Schools

Mrs. Judy Knudtson
Director of Curriculum
Albert Lea Area Schools

Mr. David Krenz
Superintendent
Wabasha-Kellogg Schools

Mr. Keith Kupcho
Implementation Coordinator
Corporate Health Systems, Inc

Mr. Daniel Kuzlik
Executive Director
of Community Education
Minnetonka Schools

Mr. Jeffrey Lindstrom
Superintendent
Walker-Hackensack-Akeley Schools

Dr. Elisabeth Lodge Rogers
Assistant Director of Student Services
St. Cloud Schools

Dr. Linda Madsen
Facilitator of Teaching & Learning
Forest Lake Area Schools

Ms. Debra Miller
Director of Special Education
Marshall Schools

Mr. Jonathan Miller
Assistant Superintendent
Big Lake Schools

Ms. Janet Mohr
Superintendent
Frazee-Vergas Schools

Mr. Gerald Ness
Superintendent
West Central Area Schools

Mr. Larry Noble
State Director
North Central Association

Ms. Karen O'Brien
Director
Intermediate School District 917

Mr. Barry Olson
Superintendent
Blooming Prairie Schools

Mr. David Pace
Superintendent
Breckenridge-Campbell-Tintah Schools

Ms. Nancy Penn
Director of Community Education
St. Peter Schools

Dr. Dennis Peterson
Superintendent
Minnetonka Schools

Mr. Ernest Pines
Director of Community Education
South Washington County Schools

Dr. Kathy Radmer
ALC & Community Ed Director
Redwing Schools

Mr. Steve Rassier
Superintendent
Minneota Schools

Ms. Deborah Rathman
Principal-Architect
Ankeny Kell Architects

Mr. Allan Schwartz
President
IndiVisual Learning

Mr. Mark Shellinger
Superintendent
Rochester Schools

Dr. Hugh Skaja
Executive Director of Human Resources
St. Cloud Schools

Ms. Jill Skarvold
Director of Special Services
Moorhead Area Schools

Ms. Lynnea Snodgrass
Coordinator Special Education
Osseo Area Schools

Mrs. Deborah Wanek
Superintendent
Henning Schools

Mr. John Yeamen
Superintendent
Crosby-Ironton Schools

Dr. Marcia Ziegler
Assistant Superintendent
St. Michael-Albertville Schools

*We're glad to
have you with us!*

Nominations Open ... Continued from Page 10

After this election, MASA will hold a second tier of elections for representatives of any MASA regions that are not represented on the board.

The Nomination Process:

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

We encourage you to nominate yourself or a colleague who you feel would be a strong leader for MASA.

If you nominate a colleague, please contact your nominee to ask them whether or not they are interested in running for the position—and so that they know you have nominated them!

Nomination forms and the lists of eligible candidates are available on the MASA web site (www.mnasa.org). Simply go to the site and print the form you need to nominate your candidate. Fill out your nomination and return it to the

MASA office via mail or fax. You may also email your nomination to members@mnasa.org.

Candidates will be presented to the membership at the spring conference. In accordance with the MASA and Component Group bylaws, nominations will also be taken from the floor at that time.

Nominations must be received by MASA by February 1, 2002 in order to process nomination responses. Thank you for supporting your Association. •

Child Oriented ... Continued from Page 9

accountability and school ranking. A relatively simple suggestion would include:

- Concentrate all testing to a few short periods. Wouldn't it make sense to test third, fifth, seventh, eighth, tenth and eleventh graders all on the same couple of days in all the school districts of Minnesota? Do it once in the fall and again in the spring. Terminate instruction for all practical purposes for those few days and get the testing over with. Then concentrate on instruction and student learning the rest of the time.
- Demand very short turnaround time on tests. Schools should receive results of tests in no more than four weeks time. This way, teachers are still teaching the same students and can examine the results, find the weaknesses in the instruction and make changes in curriculum immediately.
- Minimize the length of tests. We often are so interested in testing every single area that we create tests that are simply too long. Asking students to take the fifth grade MCA tests for a period of three to four days makes little sense. It makes

even less sense when the results of tests can't be turned around quickly enough that teachers can utilize them. To test students in March and get the results in July is senseless. Not only does it not improve instruction it also wastes significant amounts of state and education dollars. This is to say nothing of the lost time for instruction and the wasted energy on the part of the staff.

- Provide professional development for teachers and administrators so that they can understand how to interpret the tests, understand how test results can be used to improve curriculum and to improve the instruction of their children.

Recently, the national associations of the elementary and secondary principals combined with AASA and the National Education Association commissioned an impartial study of what was needed to produce high quality state testing systems. These organizations commissioned an independent panel of experts who in turn have issued nine requirements that states must follow if they are to have meaningful and high quality testing systems. This report, which is

readable and concise, is posted on the MASA website (www.mnasa.org). Read it at your convenience and discuss the requirements with your teachers and with state policy makers.

If we do not intervene soon we will become an education system which spends all of its time testing the children and none of its time educating them. Although the phrase comparing the education of children to the fattening of cattle has been overused recently, it is still worth repeating again. A wise old rancher in Wyoming once said, "You can't fatten cattle by weighing them."

And, no, you can't educate children just by testing them. There is a place for well thought out concise tests administered in such a way that the impact of the testing causes a minimum disruption to the learning environment of schools. We can condense testing periods. We can turn test scores around quickly. We can provide excellent professional development for teachers so they know how to interpret the tests and to utilize them to improve instruction.

Right now we have a system designed by adults to serve adults. It is spread out throughout the year for the adults so that it isn't too big of a job to mail out the tests, administer them and collect them. It is designed to serve the testing companies so they have a great deal of time to score the tests. The testing experts are well served by spending months and years creating way too many tests when a shorter testing regimen would do the job.

Let's get our testing system back under control. Let us either pass legislation or take executive action as necessary to halt the craziness of too many tests. We can still produce system accountability while we use tests most appropriately to improve the instruction of our children. •

Plan now to attend...

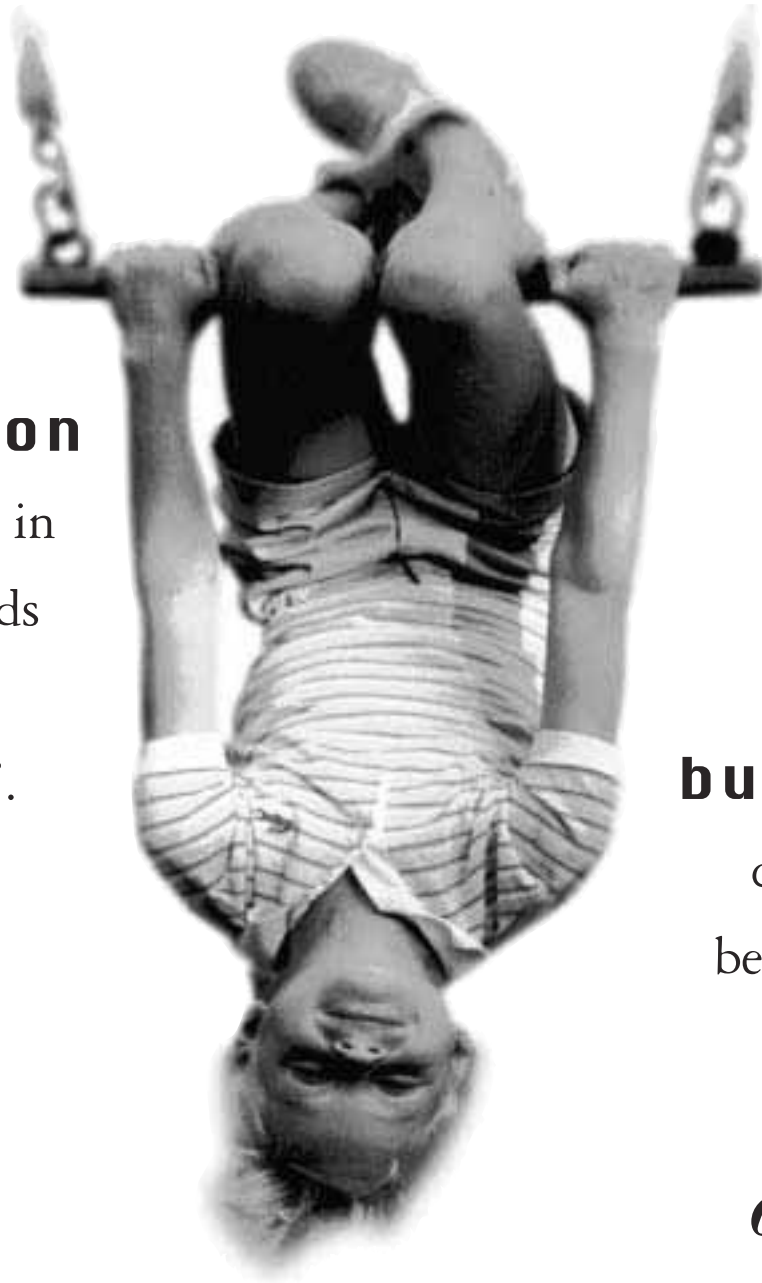


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MASA Leadership Day at the Capital

by Charlie Kyte
MASA Executive Director

We are planning another rally at the state capitol in early March of 2002. It will include participation by school superintendents, central office administrators and special educators. The gathering is currently scheduled for March 6th. Information firmly setting the date will be available soon.

Our rally last year was the first large concentrated gathering of the leaders and managers of Minnesota's public schools in several years. We had an excellent

rally, a high profile press conference and many meaningful meetings with legislators. We could feel our presence at the capital and our messages were heard clearly.

Once again, this year we will work in cooperation with AMSD, SEE, MREA, RAMS, MASE, the Lake Superior school districts and others. We will bring forward a forceful message on the importance and value of public schools to the economic future and democratic wellbeing of our state. We thank all the associations in

advance for their willingness to help and cooperate with this effort.

The legislative session this year will be short. It begins January 29 and will probably end in mid-April. We are scheduling our leadership gathering strategically in early March. It will come just after the February revenue forecasts are made public and shortly before legislative committee deadlines occur. Mark your calendars now for March 6th. In the near future, we will confirm the date for the rally for school leaders at the capital. We look forward to your participation. •

Briefing Examines State Revenue Impact on Schools

by Barb Nicol, APR
Barbara Nicol Public Relations,
MinnSPRA President

On December 10, four members of the MinnSPRA (MN School Public Relations Assoc.) Board were invited to attend a special briefing on the state of Minnesota's budget. The briefing was given by the state Department of Finance. Many thanks to MASA and MSBA (MN School Boards Assoc.) who arranged the briefing. Also in attendance were nearly 100 educational leaders from around Minnesota.

Because K-12 funding is increasingly reliant on the state's financial outlook, this briefing included information critical to districts' planning efforts—both in terms of budget and in terms of communication with school communities.

Following are key points our group gleaned from that briefing.

1. Recession will have a permanent impact.

The recently announced \$1.95 billion state deficit forecast for June 2003 is only the beginning of

a longer term problem that extends through at least 2005. We are in a national recession, from which lost revenues will never be regained—even when the economy begins to grow again. The solution will require permanent tax and spending changes. If the problem is ignored in the short term, it will be even worse in the long term.

2. State revenues are a volatile funding source for schools.

The state's three major revenue sources—individual income taxes, corporate taxes and sales tax—are all down dramatically; they are directly affected by economic cycles of growth and recession. Politicians will face difficult decisions about cuts in spending and increases in revenue during the upcoming election year. While the

Department of Finance has urged quick action coupled with long-term planning, the political reality may be different.

3. "Cuts only" scenario requested by Governor.

The Governor has asked staff to show him a budget solution based solely on spending cuts before he will even consider tax increases. Since K-12 spending will represent 40% of the state's budget next year, it is hard to imagine K-12 spending won't be affected by whatever solution that is proposed. We cannot assume K-12

The Department of Finance Powerpoint presentation is available. The power point presentation made to school leaders on Monday, December 10th is available by contacting the MASA office. If you want a copy, we will e-mail it to you. Please contact us at members@mnasa.org.

funding is a sacred cow, and should plan accordingly.

4. School districts are stuck between a rock and a hard place.

In September and October, 2001, 24,000 Minnesotans lost jobs; many of these represent some of our schools' neediest

State Revenue ...
Continued Page 17

Building Project? Tips from One Who Has Been There! *The first installment of two about building projects ...*

by John R. McClellan
General Manager
Cadre Securities, Inc.

Is your enrollment increasing? Are your buildings in need of upgrading? Do you have major security or safety concerns? Can you house all of the new programs being required? Sound familiar? If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, you may want to review the following information.

Building projects can actually be fun as well as challenging if you understand what is involved and IF you have an adequate amount of time to complete the project.

How and where do you start?

1. Time:

All major construction projects require more lead-time than you

think! Because a school year in most districts is cyclical, you need to plan accordingly. September 1 does not fit with a new fiscal year or calendar year, but it does signal the start of a new school year.

2. Needs must be based on facts:

Many school facilities are built to accommodate increases in enrollment. Some are remodeling projects to update while others have needs for safety or to accommodate pairing or consolidation. Whatever the reason, here are two basic components that need your consideration.

Student Enrollment:

You can do the projections or you can hire it out. Either way, you need sound assumptions to build your projections. Such things as building starts, land zoning, number of live

births in the county, number of school children per family, amount of land available to be developed, metro council rules and regulations (if applicable), lot size requirements, and cost of homes being constructed are all critical factors in determining your future classroom needs. Don't ever forget to consider the miles of new sewer lines recently installed in your district.

Facility Utilization:

After you have determined there is a space need, what or whom is the facility being designed to accommodate? Here are some questions for your consideration.

1. Will class size requirements change during the next several years? If so, what does this do to brick and mortar requirements?

**Building Project ...
Continued Page 19**

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State Revenue ... Continued from Page 17

families. Schools will once again be asked to do more with less. Keeping school services at levels that communities expect—either due to referendum promises or otherwise—will become increasingly challenging as the revenue available is stretched thinner and thinner.

More information on these issues is available at the Department of Finance web page: <http://www.finance.state.mn.us>—click on “Financial forecasts and Economic updates.” Questions can also be directed to Peggy Ingison, Department of Finance Assistant Commissioner/State Budget Director, who was one of the briefing presenters (651-296-2438, peggy.ingison@state.mn.us).

Many thanks to Joan O’Fallon (Robbinsdale: joan_ofallon@rdale.k12.mn.us), Susan Brott (White Bear Lake: skbrot@wbl.whitebear.k12.mn.us) and Eileen Harvala (Hopkins: eileen_harvala@hopkins.k12.mn.us), who attended the briefing with me and helped develop this message for you. •

**Have you surfed the
MASA web site
lately? It features
up-to-the-minute
news for our
members! Visit us at
www.
mnasa.org**



MASA Recognizes Leadership and Service Congratulations Award Recipients!

MASA service pins and certificates were presented at the 2001 Fall Conference. We proudly recognize these MASA members for their years of leadership as administrators or superintendents.

30 Year Superintendent (Gold Pin with Sapphire):

Cornelius Smit, Superintendent, Murray County Central Schools

25 Year Superintendent (Gold Pin with Ruby):

Gary Shaw, Superintendent, Kerkhoven-Murdock-Sunburg Schools

20 Year Superintendent (Gold Pin):

Don Lifto, Superintendent, Northeast Metro 916

Harold Remme, Superintendent, New Ulm Schools

Roger Rueckert, Superintendent, Zumbrota-Mazeppa Schools

15 year Superintendent Certificate:

Rollie Morud, Superintendent, Bemidji Schools

10 year Superintendent Certificate:

John Franzoia, Superintendent, Royalton Schools

Antoinette Johns, Superintendent, Brooklyn Center Schools

35 Year Administrator (Silver Pin with Diamond):

John Widvey, Superintendent, Worthington Schools

30 Year Administrator (Silver Pin with Sapphire):

Les Martisko, Executive Director, South Central Service Cooperative

Phil Moye, Consultant

Marvin Niedan, Superintendent, Canby Schools

25 Year Administrator (Silver Pin with Ruby):

Martin Avelsgaard, Superintendent, Lake Superior Schools

Diana Kasper, Director of Administrative Services, Chaska Schools

Stan Mack, Superintendent, Robbinsdale Schools

Gary Nytes, Executive Director, North Central Service Cooperative

Lonnie Smith, Director of Business Services, Lakeville Schools

James Techar, Superintendent, Mt. Iron/Buhl Schools

Terry Tofte, Superintendent, Northfield Schools

20 Year Administrator (Silver Pin):

Ric Dressen, Superintendent, Alexandria Schools

Phil Johnson, Superintendent, Pillager Schools

Dan Kaler, Superintendent, North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale Schools

Richard Lorenz, Superintendent, NRHEG Schools

John Messelt, Superintendent, Kimball Schools

Pamela Myers, Superintendent, Westonka Schools

Larry Werder, Superintendent, Browerville Schools

15 Year Administrator Certificate:

Todd Cameron, Superintendent, Barnesville Schools

John Hornung, Superintendent, Nicollet Schools

Kay Worner, Superintendent, Sartell-St. Stephen Schools

10 Year Administrator Certificate:

Palmer Anderson, Superintendent, Lakeview Schools

Anthony Boyer, Superintendent, LeCenter Schools

James Hahn, Superintendent, Pierz Schools

John Landgaard, Superintendent, Central Schools

Marcia Love, Superintendent, Plainview Schools

Mary Ann Straley, Superintendent, Glencoe-Silver Lake Schools



MASA's Online Site Makes Handling Job Applications Easy



Fred Kunze

by Fred Kunze
Director, Educator's Applicant Site Online

Are you aware that there has been a "blue light" special for a year now from MASA? This great bargain is tailor-made for you if you are looking for an easy, efficient, and cost effective way to post jobs and find candidates. This is the time to subscribe or renew!

This special deal is the Minnesota Schools Jobsite Online companion set of Internet web sites—Job Site and Applicant Site. These two MASA sites make posting jobs and looking for talented teachers a snap. District searchers and HR departments love it! Over 180 districts subscribed to the dynamic duo of sites last year. Have you taken advantage of it yet?

The Educator's Applicant Site Online is a "freebie" when you subscribe to the MASA Jobsite Online. That's

right, shoppers—a 2-for-1 "blue light special!" The low cost and high benefits related to the Applicant Site make subscription a "no brainer." You pay for access to the Job posting site and you also get to use our powerful search engine at the Applicant Site to look for candidates for free!

Districts looking for candidates for administrative, teaching and support positions have a one-stop place to search. The easy and efficient use of the Applicant Site by any subscribed district can be quickly learned in minutes. Below are just a few of the ways to use the Applicant Site:

Use the electronic power of the MASA database search engine to find qualified applicants.

District leaders can find candidates in the Applicant Site by searching for a candidate's interest in your job posting, by their educator's license type, by experience, by GPA, or any of the 14 search criteria in the Applicant Site database. Just click a couple of buttons! There were over 1,500 applicants in the database at the height of the hiring season in 2001. Our search engine doesn't even break a sweat when it takes your orders and provides you with a list of people who want your job! There were candidates from all over the world with a myriad of skills and experiences to offer districts. The simple and quick search method is illustrated below by a search for candidates who have shown their interest in a job number your district will have posted at the Job Site.

Important Note: You must have an "E" in front of the job number indicating that your district uses the Applicant Site to search for candidates via your job numbers.

1. Login at the Applicant Site using your user name and password for this year.
2. Enter your job number. The next screen shows all of the (14) search categories. At the top of the search categories page, find the job posting box and enter your job number (an example would be E1234).
3. Start the search engine working. Scroll to the bottom of the search page (you could enter more search criteria, but it will narrow the number of candidates) and click on the search button.

Handling Applications ...
Continued Page 21

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.

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.

Jobsite Online is a service of the
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<http://www.mnasa.org> • members@mnasa.org

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Building Project ... Continued from Page 16

2. Will there be any community needs that can and should be served?
3. Will the facility “always” be needed to serve only elementary or secondary students?
4. What additional program needs may be coming down the line in the area of special education, gifted, or federally funded programs?
5. What will the role of parents and volunteers be in the future? Lunch services? Kindergarten? Preschool? Post-secondary? Senior citizens?

Now that you have completed the enrollment projections based on solid assumptions that you have shared with your school board, it is time to evaluate what you have. What do you have in the way of good and/or adequate facilities?

You may want to conduct a quick and easy survey involving your administration and maintenance

people to get on paper what they see as “basic needs.” You may also want to get your architect involved at this point so you can start getting some advice on current building codes and space requirements, as well as “ballpark” construction costs.

You can arrange to pay the architect by the hour or defer it until you pass the bond issue. Firms such as ATS&R are willing to work with you on this as they can see the big picture.

After you collect all of this data and you have your enrollment projections, it is time to share it with the school board at a public meeting. You may want to do this at a work session first so no one is surprised.

With the presentation of data, you or the school board may want to consider forming a facility use committee. The purpose of this “grass roots” committee is to:

1. Review enrollment trends—past, present, and future

2. Assess the district’s current capacity to house the projected number of students and programs for the next “x” years.

The Facility Committee:

I encourage you to use a wide cross section of the community and staff. You may want (depending on size) a total of 18-25 people with at least one-half being citizens. I always encouraged staff representatives to be residents of the school district. Senior citizens, local city council, secondary and elementary staff, and the administration should be included. Each elementary building should have at least one parent representative and secondary schools should have two representatives (as there are usually fewer secondary buildings).

I also encourage you to have your architect as a resource person present at all meetings. The last two bond issues I was involved with, we included a consultant (Roger Worner of Worner Consulting), who took the minutes, expressed his opinion when asked, and at times acted like an assistant to the committee chair. The chair was always a citizen—not

Building Project ...
Continued Page 20



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Building Project ... Continued from Page 19

the superintendent or school employee.

When the board authorized and later (by two meetings) charged the committee with a clear and concise mission as to what it wanted the committee to do, it also gave them a timeline that included periodic reports back to the school board. These reports were made by the consultant, committee chair, and school board representative, if there was one on the committee.

Usually this committee would be charged in October/November with a recommendation requested approximately 16-18 months later.

This means if the committee meets monthly and wants to tour the school facilities, meet with outside experts, conduct an informal meeting or two, or visit sites outside of their district, they will have enough time, but there will be additional meetings along with the monthly meetings. Usually a committee like this will need 20-30

meetings. It is a big commitment!

Recommendations to the School Board:

When it is time and the committee has narrowed its recommendations to a "plan," the chair and a few committee members usually present their findings, options, and recommendations to the school board.

The recommendations will include:

- A statement on the enrollment projection
- Safety issues existing today
- Upgrades needed
- Additional space needs
- Sites
- Technology
- Roofs, walls, parking lots
- Security
- Community needs and wishes
- Flexibility of facilities

The school board will then thank the committee and dismiss them. They will most likely turn the recommendations over to the superintendent and administration for review and recommendations.

The administration will be given two months to review, clarify, support or recommend modifications to the committee recommendation.

During this time, the school board should ask their legal counsel for an opinion on when they could run a bond referendum. They will most likely also want to get in touch with Bond counsel to determine the legalities of an election and to establish the parameters of what the district's debt service is, postings, ballots, election judges, etc. At the same time, if it appears that an election is going to be conducted, you will need to determine the amount to be submitted to the voters for approval. Don't forget to **Building Project ... Continued Page 21**

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Handling Applications ... Continued from Page 18

4. See a list of candidates interested in your job. View each name, date online, phone, city, state, and e-mail. Clicking on a name brings up a screen with all of their professional information. Note: When a blank page appears, then no candidate has placed your job number in their posting box.

That is it—four easy steps! It takes a lot longer to write than to do. As Buddy Holly *almost* said, “It’s so easy to”...find a candidate! You can also bring up all of the candidates by NOT selecting any criteria, just scroll down to the bottom and click on the search button. You will see a list of all of the candidates in the database at that time.

View a candidate’s professional license electronically.

The Applicant Site has a link directly to the individual candidate’s license at the CFL. It is so simple! Just one click on the license number and the license instantly pops up, revealing the name, areas of certification and expiration date of the license.

View a candidate’s credentials electronically.

Candidates are encouraged to put additional files on line with our support site, ReferenceNow. There is a small cost to candidates, so this is an option. When a district’s search reveals an interesting candidate, their name will be in a list. Clicking once on their name brings up their profile. At the top of the profile will be the words, “View this applicant’s ReferenceFile through ReferenceNow” (and ReferenceNow will be in blue). One click on “ReferenceNow” will bring you to the ReferenceNow screen where you have three easy ways to call up the electronic documents of the candidate. They may be read on screen or printed. All MASA subscribing districts

have access to the MASA portion of the ReferenceNow site. There is no additional cost to access the credentials electronically.

Share the joy of searching for candidates.

Easily share the joy of searching for candidates throughout the district. No more box of papers being shipped from school to school! A subscribing district may issue the user name and password to buildings within their district. A principal may search for a candidate from the comfort of their office. The HR department or Superintendent does not have to find a host of candidates and then send a box around to schools or have a committee meet to rummage through the box!

Get help from a human with a heart at the Applicant Site!

Just like at the Job Site (where Dependable Dennis Rens patrols), the Applicant Site actually has

someone you can e-mail or talk to on the phone if you need help! Yes, a real, live human! No pushing numbers on your telephone, going on hold, or being referred to another department. Just dial 763-792-6690 or MN toll free at 1-877-373-9494 and leave a message describing your problem and leaving your full phone number. Friendly Fred will call you back! Fred is very understanding and patient. You’ll never see a smirk on his face from any question you ask or problem you need solved! It is also possible to have a training session from Fred for those who use the Applicant Site! Such a deal, no wonder the blue light is spinning!

From a cost to benefit angle, you can’t go wrong by subscribing (or renewing) to the MASA Minnesota Jobs Online web site. Subscribe to the Job Site and you automatically get access to the Applicant Site. You’ll have two separate passwords, but you won’t get two separate bills! You will get two friendly people to help you and you’ll be twice as efficient! The more districts posting jobs the better the sites will work for us all. •

Building Project ... Continued from Page 20

consider a separate question for the operation of the new facilities.

The school board may want to participate in scheduling a series of public meetings for the purpose of presenting the recommendations to the public for additional input and reaction.

Getting the new facility is only half the challenge. Getting additional operating money to actually open, light, heat, insure, staff, and maintain is the other part of the challenge.

At about this same time, you will

need to start thinking about what to do if you receive voter approval! What happens after you have taxpayer approval to issue bonds? What do you do? To whom should you be talking?

I will start at this point in the next issue:

What is the role of the FA? IA? What about construction managers? Who pays the bills and when? How involved should the superintendent or business manager be in a construction project? What about exclusive union contracts? How do you select an architect? See the next issue of *Leaders Forum* for answers to these questions and more! •

More Info on the ‘Net

The Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning—Division of Agency Finance and Management Assistance offers a number of documents such as “Minnesota School Construction Trends” on their web site. Visit them at <http://cfl.state.mn.us/FACILIT/facilit.htm>.

CHAMPIONS FOR *children*

Talking About School Finance ... The Changes and What They Really Mean



Shari Prest

by Shari Prest
Ark Associates

The way our schools are funded changed as a result of the 2001 special legislative session. The transition is a complex process, and not all elements of the new law are

commonly understood or fully interpreted. Following are some talking points that may help you share the impact of the new funding and taxation system with your constituents.

The 2001 legislature provided minimal increases.

- The per student formula allowance used in computing basic per pupil unit revenue increased from:

√ \$3,964 in fiscal year 2001 to \$4,068 in fiscal year 2002 (2.6%).

√ \$4,068 in fiscal year 2002 to \$4,601* in 2003 (2.6% new revenue**).

* This number includes only \$104 new dollars to most school districts. It also includes a \$415 transfer from referendum income to state aid, and a \$14 roll-in of Assurance and Mastery funding into the basic formula.

** Total state supported revenues per student will increase an average of 2.6% in fiscal year 2002 and 4% in fiscal year 2003 across the state, according to the Department of Children, Families and Learning.

The legislature transferred \$415 of referendum, supplemental, and transition revenue to the basic

allowance formula.

- Districts currently receiving less than \$415 per pupil unit in these categories will receive a net increase in revenue per pupil unit to make up the difference between \$415 and the current revenue per pupil unit.

- Property taxes will decrease as a result of this referendum shift from property taxes to state aid revenues.

• The new legislation will allow
School Finance ...
Continued Page 26

Champions for Children™ PR Online

Champions for Children™, a collaboration of MASA, the Minnesota Elementary School Principals' Association (MESPA), and the Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP), has provided you with *Educational Leader Promotional Portfolios* to assist you as you relate to your publics. In the past, they were mailed to you as part of your professional organization's mailings. Some of you have suggested that you would like to have materials available online so that you can adapt those intended as handouts for your constituencies and circumstances. Others of you have said that they get lost in the bulk of the mailings. We appreciate your suggestions and have responded. The *Educational Leader Promotional Portfolio* pieces are now available to you online at www.mnasa.org and www.massp.org. Simply click on the Champions for Children™ icon. Members of MESPA may call 651-917-4286 or 1-800-642-6807 to request hard copies. If you have any questions related to the location or contents of the materials, please contact Shari Prest at sprest@arkassoc.com or phone her at 952-890-2851.

Public relations is a crucial component leading to the success of school leaders and those they lead. The following topics are currently online for your use:

- Set One: *Influencing Elections*
- Set Two: *Indirect Letters to the Editor*
- Set Three: *Working Together for Success*
- Set Four: *Talking About Violence*
- Set Five: *Ready, Set, Summer (photo-ready handout included)*
- Set Six: *Safety at School*
- Set Seven: *Communicating with Legislators*
- Set Eight: *Primary Messages (photo-ready handout included)*
- Set Nine: *What Do We Do?*
- Set Ten: *Talking Tests*
- Set Eleven: *Focus on Focus Groups*
- Set Twelve: *Spring into Summer*
- Set Thirteen: *Filling the Gap Together (photo-ready handout included)*
- Set Fourteen: *Preparing for the Legislative Session*
- Set Fifteen: *Creating a Public Relations Organization*
- Set Sixteen: *Summer Surge*



Thank You Conference Sponsors !

A special thank you to our friends in business who sponsored portions of the 2001 MASA Fall Conference. Your participation means MASA is able to offer a higher quality conference and participants' professional development is enhanced. You make a difference for Minnesota education!

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and

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MASA Plans for MSBA's 2002 Leadership Conference

MASA is planning a number of activities in conjunction with the MSBA 2002 Leadership Conference in Minneapolis on January 17th and 18th. If you plan to attend we look forward to seeing you there.

Superintendents Meeting with Commissioner of Education

We have set up a meeting for Commissioner Jax to meet with the school superintendents on Friday morning January 18th. The meeting will be from 9:00 to 9:50 in room 205 C-D. We've asked a small panel of representative superintendents to interact with the commissioner by asking her several questions that will be of interest to us as a group.

MASA Superintendents' Component Group workshop

After the meeting with Commissioner Jax, MASA superintendents are invited to a short workshop and discussion

on developing positive board-CEO relationships and creating a high performance board. A panel of superintendents will interact with MASA Executive Director Charlie Kyte as he presents his thoughts on developing a relationship with a board of education. This workshop is scheduled for 10:00 to 10:50 in room 205 C-D.

Workshop for New/Newer Superintendents

There will be a special workshop for new and newer superintendents on Thursday, January 17th from 1:00 to 3:00 in room 205 C-D. This workshop is designed to help superintendents survive the January to May budget setting and staffing processes which every school goes through. We will help superintendents to set up a participatory and comprehensive process for establishing a budget. We will further help superintendents understand the steps and timelines that must be followed in making changes to staffing levels in their district. Superintendent Frankie Poplau of the New Prague Schools and Director of Personnel Marv Swanson of the Richfield Schools will present this workshop.

Information was sent out regarding this workshop to each of the first and second year superintendents. If others are interested in attending, please contact the MASA office and we will fax you out a registration form. There is a \$25.00 registration fee for this workshop.

Stop at the MASA Exhibit Booth

MASA will have an exhibit booth at the convention. Stop in and visit the MASA staff and receive more information about the MASA Online Job and Applicant site. We look forward to meeting with you. •



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MASA Retiree Dues Announced for 2002-2003

At a recent MASA Board of Directors meeting, the Board reconsidered their action and have restructured the dues for MASA Retirees for next year at a level very similar to what the dues structure for retirees was in the past. The new dues structure will be as follows:

Honorary Retiree \$0 annually

Active Retiree I \$20 annually
(Active Retiree members receive communications, newsletters and MASA services.)

Active Retiree II \$50 annually
(Members in this category receive life insurance in addition to the benefits services listed above in the Active Retiree I category.)

The life insurance benefit provided to retirees of MASA is an excellent value. At an annual cost of \$30, every retiree

is entitled to \$3,000 of life insurance no matter what your age. Many retirees actually continue to purchase the life insurance, but identify the beneficiary as the MASA Foundation. The Foundation in turn provides scholarships to students across the state and scholarships to members as they seek further educational opportunities.

MASA values its retirees and hopes that retirees of the organization will maintain an active contact with members who are still working in educational leadership roles. Your experience, sense of history, and mentorship are valuable in helping to guide the educational administrators of today. Your support of these administrators is valued and appreciated.

The annual membership drive will begin this spring, after Spring Conference. If you have questions in the meantime, please contact the MASA office at 651/645-6272 or members@mnasa.org •

Minnesota EduPortal is a Hit!

New Services Enhance Powerful of Online Info Access

MASA is happy to announce that well over half of Minnesota's school districts are enrolled to use the Minnesota EduPortal. We are grateful to the leaders who have facilitated enrollment within their organizations.

Here at MASA we continue to add information to the EduPortal. We have also trained a number of people from other state associations to help us build the EduPortal resources. And soon MASA members will have access to a private folder, accessible by special password, which will provide information especially pertinent to our members.

If your district is not yet enrolled to access the EduPortal, there is a simple process by which you can go onto the system. Email Mary Law at the MASA office (mrlaw@mnasa.org) and she will send you information you need to get started. We urge you to make the EduPortal available to your team. Remember, there is no cost to access this valuable tool. Once you see its potential, you will be impressed with the many applications it can provide to your district leaders.

Additional EduPortal Services

There are three additional services beyond the basic EduPortal that you may want to consider using. These services are fee-based and we believe they are a good value. We will soon be offering regional information sessions about these services, but here is a sample:

- **Your Own District Collaboration EduPortal**

This system would allow you to put all of the information from your district into a single online repository that is fully

searchable. Districts already working with this service typically put their policy manuals, building handbooks, summary-testing information, curricula, and board meeting agendas/minutes into the system. Thus, administrators and others are able to locate information through a "key word search" and the district is able to upgrade the system at any time quickly and easily.

- **Translation Service**

This service allows districts to

communicate with non-English speaking families through the use of many standard communications that are translated into a large number of different languages. It provides a low cost way of communicating about topics such as reduced lunch, schedule changes, parent/teacher conference notices, and permission slips. All can be sent home in the family's native language. A large number of school districts across the United States are already using this service and we are able to provide it to districts in a cost-effective way.

EduPortal ...

Continued Page 26

What is the EduPortal?

The Minnesota EduPortal is a private, web-based information/document/communication-sharing network. By using the EduPortal, Minnesota school administrators can access a totally word-searchable library of information of value in their professional roles.

Using a standard web browser, administrators are able to quickly access information such as Minnesota statutes and rules, "best practices" content, reflective writing, research, and statistical reports. And each and every document is completely word-searchable, down to the last footnote.

Through the generosity of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Blandin Foundation, every school administrator in every Minnesota school district will have access to the Minnesota EduPortal *at no cost*.

Who decides what material is available on the EduPortal?

The EduPortal is a joint effort of MASA, MASSP (the Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals), and MESPA (the Minnesota Elementary School Principals Association), in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning. In preparation of the EduPortal launch, our staffs have been locating information about educational research; laws and statutes; regulations and financial information. Also, representatives of a number of Minnesota education associations have been trained to enhance that information with material pertinent to their own cohort groups. All that material has been moved into the EduPortal. But we're not finished, and we never will be! This dynamic site will always be "under construction," as new material becomes available.

We also look to you for inspiration. Please feel free to tell us what you would like to see on the site. •

EduPortal ... Continued from Page 25

• Research Service

The Educational Research Service (ERS) will provide districts and administrators searchable access to all of their research online through the Minnesota EduPortal. A district can purchase this information at a lesser expense through the Minnesota EduPortal than they can buy the ERS service. We've arranged for a sixty-day free trial of all the ERS information, provided within the Minnesota basic EduPortal. After 60 days, districts would need to subscribe to this service in order to obtain it.

Prices for the various premium services are noted in the box at right. If you are interested in any of these services please contact Mary Law at her email address or give her a call at 651-645-6272. She will be glad to provide you with additional information and help to schedule an appropriate person from your district for training in the near future. •

For online information about the Minnesota EduPortal, visit the MASA web site at www.mnasa.org and click on the EduPortal icon.

Collaboration EduPortal - \$1,750/year

- Single multi-user name/password per district and one Author license
- One-time \$500 registration fee for Author training workshop

Translation Library of Educational Policy and Compliance Forms

- Single multi-username/password per district

| District ADM | Price |
|---------------------|---------|
| 1-499 | \$ 400 |
| 500-1499 | \$ 625 |
| 1,500-2,499 | \$1,075 |
| 2,500-4,999 | \$1,800 |
| 5,000-9,999 | \$2,750 |
| 10,000-24,999 | \$4,700 |
| 25,000+ | \$6,500 |

Research Service

- Annual rates for ERS EduPortal Subscriptions, 2001-2002: Subscription Fee based on Size of District.

| | |
|---------------------------------|----------|
| Less than 500 students | \$ 400 |
| 500 to 1,499 | \$ 600 |
| 1,500 to 2,499 | \$ 800 |
| 2,500 to 4,999 | \$ 1,000 |
| 5,000 to 9,999 | \$ 2,500 |
| 10,000 to 19,999 | \$ 2,500 |
| 20,000 to 34,900 students | \$ 3,250 |
| 35,000 to 49,999 | \$ 4,000 |
| 50,000 to 74,999 | \$ 4,750 |
| 75,000 to 99,999 | \$ 5,500 |
| 100,000 to 199,999 | \$ 6,250 |

School Finance ... Continued from Page 22

districts that were receiving the maximum referendum revenue allowed in fiscal year 2002 to raise its referendum allowance by \$247, if approved by local voters.

Different districts will receive different revenue increases.

- Revenue increases will vary from district to district, based on:
 - √ enrollment changes,
 - √ student demographics, and
 - √ the amount of local referendum in place.
- \$415 of referendum income per pupil unit was converted to state aid. Therefore, districts that were collecting less than \$415 from local referenda experienced a greater increase.
- Some districts will actually receive a decrease in total state-supported funding, due in part to declining enrollment.

School districts can "supplement" the state aid formulas by proposing levy referenda asking their voters to increase property taxes.

- Operating referenda provide additional funds to operate the educational program and can be authorized by the voters.

- More than half of Minnesota's 341 school districts will propose referenda this year.
- To promote funding equity, school districts are limited as to how much additional funding can be derived from the referendum option (typically \$837 per pupil unit). •

Mark Your Calendar for this Important Workshop! **Changing Politics in the Middle of a Stream**

with Bill Morris and an expert panel who will help us look outside the "education box," offering their perspectives on how public education can succeed—at the polls and at the Capitol.

Thursday, February 21, 2002 • 8 am - 1 pm
at the St. Louis Park Recreation Center

Watch your mail for details!

Maintenance Supervisors' Association Offers Certification

The Minnesota Association of School Maintenance Supervisors (MASMS) is a local organization established to promote education, training, and networking opportunities for the maintenance personnel in Minnesota Schools.

The Directors of Buildings and Grounds first began pooling their talents in the early 1960's when six local Directors would get together to discuss issues and solve day-to-day operational problems. Today the membership is in excess of 600 members and vendors serving the educational sector.

The Certification Programs that MASMS selected were for the diversity of tasks that maintenance personnel encounter on a daily basis. The diversity of tasks and the increased responsibilities have created new demands on the Directors of Buildings and

Grounds, as well as their staff. The programs selected by the MASMS Board of Directors will increase the professionalism of their departments.

The Certification Programs will be given for two areas of expertise, the Certified Plant Engineer (CPE), and the Certified Plant Maintenance Manager (CPMM). The vision is to have the Directors of Buildings and Grounds become CPE's; and key custodial personnel, such as head engineers or lead engineers, become CPMM's. Investing in the people who maintain the largest block of public real estate in the State of Minnesota is just another example of how MASMS can make our schools a better place to educate future leaders.

The Certification Programs are endorsed by the Minnesota

Department of Children Families and Learning, and funding for these programs can be taken out of Health and Safety monies. The cost of these programs is \$450 each and will include course material, reference books, instructors, and testing. The program will be broadcast live from the DCFL Facilities in Roseville. Classes will begin in mid-January and will be given weekly for eight weeks. The education sessions will be interactive and broadcast to host satellites in the State.

For more information on Certification Programs, please contact: Fred King, V.P. of Education and Training for AFE, at fking@inspec.com or call directly 763-546-3434.

For information on the MASMS Certification Programs, please contact Jim Fredricks at 320-363-6006, College of St. Benedict; Mike Condon at 952-906-2539, Minnetonka ISD #276; or Cliff Buhman at 952-928-6006, St. Louis Park ISD #283. •

Thank You Golf Tournament Sponsors

The MASA Foundation Golf Tournament at Fall Conference was a great success, thanks to the following sponsors . . .



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Siemens Building Technology

Calendar 2002

January 1
New Year Holiday
MASA Offices Closed

January 17 - 18
MSBA Convention
Minneapolis

January 17
New Superintendents' Workshop
Minneapolis
Convention Center,
Room 205 C-D
1 - 3 pm

January 18
Superintendents' Meeting with Commissioner Jax
Minneapolis
Convention Center,
Room 205 C-D
9 - 9:50 am

January 18
Superintendents' Component Group Workshop
Minneapolis
Convention Center,
Room 205 C-D
10 - 10:50 am

January 29
2002 Legislative Session Begins

February 6
Board Meetings
MASA Office

- Executive Committee
9 - 10:45 am
- Board of Directors
11 am - 4 pm

February 15 - 17
AASA National Convention
San Diego

February 21
Changing Politics Workshop
St. Louis Park
Recreation Center
8 am - 1 pm

March 6
(date to be confirmed)
MASA Day at the Capitol

March 29
Spring Holiday
MASA Offices Closed

April 17
Board Meetings
Radisson South Hotel,
Bloomington

- Executive Committee
9 - 10:45 am
- Board of Directors
11 am - 4 pm

April 18 - 19
MASA/MASE Spring Conference
Bloomington

May 27
Memorial Day Holiday
MASA Offices Closed

June 24 - 25
Board Meetings
Madden's on Gull Lake,
Brainerd, MN

- Executive Committee
June 24
9:30 - 11 am
- New Officer and Board Orientation
June 24
11 am - 12 noon
- Board of Directors
June 24
1:30 - 5:30 pm
June 25
9 am - 12 noon

Remembrance, Happiness, and Hope for the New Year

The holidays are always a time to stop and count our many blessings. This year, our celebrations are marked by remembrance, too, for all we endured as a nation this autumn. Our hearts go out to the families of the victims of September 11. How it must be to experience everyday life after such a tragic, senseless loss—how it must be to experience the holidays in the midst of such sadness.



Stephanie and Tony Kastanos



Maggie Law

This year at Fall Conference, MASA President Jerry Jensen spoke about how we were all changed by September 11—and how we are all the same, too. He talked about how school leadership is about hope for a better world, and how kids will lead us there.

We have had a number of requests for the text of Jerry's speech. We will print it at the end of this column. It strikes us that Jerry's message is a good one for the holidays—we need to hope, and we need to experience our joy.

On September 12, MASA staff member Mary Law and her husband Mike received a call that would bring them the greatest kind of joy—they had been chosen to adopt a new baby. On October 25, Margaret Rose Andrea (Maggie) Law was born. We all think she is perfect—and each of us is certain that she like us best above all.

On October 13, our colleague Stephanie Schaefer married Tony Kastanos. Although the popularity poll rages about who Maggie likes the best, we are all fairly certain that Steph is Tony's favorite. We are all working very hard to help Steph

remember her new last name.

We hope you, too, have had occasion to experience joy this holiday season. And as 2002 begins, we wish you happiness, hope, and above all, peace.

Here is the text of Jerry's message:

When we began planning this conference, we didn't know that each of us, our students and their families, our communities, our country, and even our world would be so changed by a few moments in time on September 11. But though we are different because we have been touched by this tragedy, we are the same because we still believe in many important things, including our students and the hope for their future. Our profession is about hope for a better world, and so it is fitting that we have come together for this conference. Our lives will not only go on; they will get better. Our country will not only survive; it will thrive. Our kids will not only grow and learn; they will lead us all into a better world. Please join me now in a moment of silence to remember those whose lives have been touched by the tragedies of September 11. •