

# Leaders FORUM

Spring 2015

## A commitment to provide our students with an **EQUITABLE EDUCATION**



Lynne Kovash  
MASA President and  
Superintendent  
Moorhead Area Public Schools

Every student deserves and desires equity and opportunity. Our students come to us from a variety of cultures and backgrounds. As our district undergoes major changes or faces new challenges and

opportunities, we need to have conversations and take action to provide an equitable education for all students. Our district's strategic priorities address equity through our work to provide programs and services to eliminate race and socioeconomic indicators as predictors of student success.

We need to look at eliminating educational barriers based on gender, race/ethnicity, national origin, color, disability, age or socioeconomic conditions. We may not understand or see the barriers that face our students, therefore, we need to listen and discuss with our students and families to gain a perspective of the types of barriers they face. I believe open and honest conversations with all of our stakeholders may help us understand those barriers. Do we provide opportunities in academics, arts and athletics that are inclusive of all students?

It also is important to provide equal educational opportunities, and we need

*As advocates of a world-class education for Minnesota's children, MASA's members serve as the leading voice for public education, shape and influence the State and Federal education agenda, and empower leaders through high quality professional learning, services and support.*

to ensure that historically underserved or underrepresented populations meet the same rigorous standards as expected for all our students. As much as we have discussed and debated No Child Left Behind, this law has provided a framework to provide a foundation of equity for all students. The beginning discussion of this law has focused on raising the bar for all students. The implementation of such a far-reaching law has provided all of us with opportunity and challenges. We need to embrace our work and continue to learn and discuss equitable educational opportunities.

As we were revising the belief statements for MASA's strategic plan, the board of directors felt strongly about addressing the achievement gap. The belief statements also address our membership's vision for equity through these statements:

- A world-class education for all students is our highest priority;
- Public education is the cornerstone of American democracy;
- Leadership creates a collective responsibility for positively impacting student achievement, opportunity and future success;
- Leaders must continually improve their practice; and
- We must eliminate the opportunity, expectations and resource gap that allow the achievement gap to persist.

We must all work together with our students, families and communities to make sure this becomes a reality for all students in Minnesota.

### Equity

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## Continuous Improvement & Performance Appraisals

***"It is in your best interest, for a number of reasons, to participate in a formal performance appraisal process on a yearly basis."***



Gary Amoroso  
Executive Director  
Minnesota Association of  
School Administrators

We are approaching the time of year when I recommend that our members begin to wrap up the performance appraisal process for the year. I feel it is vital that each of you participate in a performance appraisal process on a yearly basis.

Too often I hear from one of our members that the board wants to evaluate them. The challenge comes in with the fact that in prior years the board had not done an evaluation. There is no record of formal feedback and that can be a disservice to our members. It is in your best interest, for a number of reasons, to participate in a formal performance appraisal process on a yearly basis.

If we believe in continuous improvement, then we must model the behaviors associated with it. I want to emphasize, regardless of your position, it is important that you participate in a yearly process

that results in feedback from those responsible for making employment decisions on you. The feedback received can be invaluable as you nurture the various relationships within the district you serve in.

MASA and the Minnesota School Board Association (MSBA) worked in a collaborate fashion to create a model superintendent evaluation process. Though this process is geared toward the position of superintendent, I believe that a number of the operating principles are valid for any position. Following are examples of these operating principles identified by MASA and MSBA.

1. The process must provide opportunities for personal and professional development. The process must address the whole person and be oriented towards continuous improvement.
2. The focus must be to improve performance and not prove incompetence. The process is established on the premise of providing feedback for growth, not on finding evidence of shortcomings.
3. The process is ongoing and connected to school district/school improvement goals. An evaluation is a process and not a once a year event.

The process referenced in this article is an example of a performance appraisal system, and you can access this model and other superintendent evaluation resources in the "members only" section of the MASA website. If you are comfortable using a different model that is great. The important point is that it is in your best interest to fully participate in a performance appraisal process on a yearly basis.

I look forward to connecting with the membership during the upcoming MASA/MASE Spring Conference and spring regional gatherings. Please feel free to contact me if I can be of assistance regarding this or any other matter. Have a fantastic spring!



### Leaders Forum Spring 2015

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## **pulling together** *leading strong school communities*

**W**e have all heard the saying, "It takes a village to raise a child," but do we know whether or to what extent we are engaging our "villages" on behalf of our students? The fragmentation of our communities is an issue, not only for our schools, but for other community entities, as well as for individuals themselves. As leaders, we must consider how to shape and shift the conversations with our communities to include and involve all segments of our society to come together and create a common future for our students and their families. We all aspire to being a part of a healthy, inclusive, whole community in which strong relationships form a powerful infrastructure that supports us all. Join your colleagues this spring and explore, "**Pulling Together ~ Leading Strong School Communities.**"

### **C**onference Highlights

Networking, networking, networking! There will be numerous opportunities to socialize with colleagues you already know, as well as grow your professional network with fellow administrators from around the state. Gather in the Fireside Room for the Welcome Reception on Wednesday evening, dine with new faces during meals, and learn together during general sessions and breakouts. Thursday's keynote speaker, John McKnight, will present "Where Change Begins," discussing community relationships and the positive impact they can have on students. Individualize your professional learning with a variety of breakout sessions! We are pleased to welcome our returning speakers, Jean Strait and Tammie Pate, who will be presenting Friday's two-part workshop that will provide knowledge, skills, and perspective to grow cultural competency for participants and teams. With over 80 exhibitors offering the innovative products and services, you'll discover the latest curriculum and technology available for your students and communities. And don't forget the Annual MASA Foundation Silent Auction, featuring our NEW online bidding app! Throughout the conference we will be celebrating our 2015 award recipients and retirees. We encourage you to take advantage of this excellent professional development opportunity! Please contact the MASA offices with any questions.

John L. McKnight

Dr. Jean Strait

Tammie Pate



## **2015 MASA/MASE Spring Conference**

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# Redesigning to Meet Student Needs



Kathy Kelly  
Superintendent  
Columbia Heights Public Schools

Reducing racial and socioeconomic disparities in academic achievement has proven to be a stubborn and complex challenge for school districts throughout the country. Like many other districts, the demographics in Columbia Heights Public Schools has shifted over the past decade as the free and reduced lunch rate has increased from 40% to over 80% and the percentage of students of color

has grown from approximately 35% to over 75% of the total student population. While the Columbia Heights Public School District has struggled to close system gaps, teaching gaps, and resource gaps that negatively impact student achievement, the District has also had periodic success within particular schools in closing these gaps resulting in increased student achievement. Over the past three years, Valley View Elementary has been recognized as one school that is overcoming the odds. Lessons and insights drawn from Valley View Elementary's redesign process include the following.

**Systems:** The impact of poverty and historical racism is complex and pervasive in society and as a result the response in education cannot be simplistic. Basic needs such as hunger and the impact of stress must be addressed simultaneously with the work to maximize academic growth. Social, emotional and physical support must be woven into the academic fabric of the school day. Examples of system changes at Valley View Elementary include an all-day every day kindergarten experience, K-2 tier I reading intervention, school-wide behavior programs, and co-teaching of math and reading. Valley View has worked very closely with the District to achieve full implementation of these and other system changes. Turnaround efforts require a sustained focus on reaching deep implementation across all classrooms of key change initiatives.

**Leadership:** Not surprisingly, leadership may be the single most important variable in schools that are beating the odds. Valley View has a very strong leader who has created a clear vision of attaining excellence for the school. Great principals build great schools but they don't do so alone. The Principal has built a system of shared leadership in which teachers regard themselves as part of the decision making body of the school and integral agents of change. This shared ownership of addressing challenges creates an energy that has overcome the paralysis of the status quo. Years of effort that result in incremental improvements are usually required

before reaping the full impact of effective initiatives. Strong principals like this one create leaders throughout their buildings who can sustain confidence in the vision that all students can learn and that hard work by all will ultimately lead to success.

**Data:** Data is powerful for measuring the impact of the work at the individual student, classroom, building, and district levels. When nearly all data is formative, teachers and building leadership teams base decisions on what to do next on the response of student rather than unalterable plans. At Valley View Elementary teachers use data to create individual learning plans for all students, plan small group instruction, and identify areas of greatest need for grade levels and the building as a whole.

**Collaboration:** Reducing gaps is challenging work and can overwhelm districts, buildings, and individual teachers. Columbia Heights Public Schools have found that it is not isolated excellence in teaching that turns a building around, but rather teams of teachers who work well together to narrow gaps in teacher effectiveness that otherwise exist in schools. Shared co-teachers at each grade level build consistency and strong communication across classrooms. Teams of teachers at Valley View Elementary work closely during daily common prep time with administrators to problem solve and learn from each other and as a result gain insights and become more effective faster.

**Culture of Academics:** Noticeable at Valley View Elementary is the daily attention that is paid to creating classrooms where focused attention is valued and practiced. Expectations for students are consistently high across classrooms for both behavior and academic effort. At the same time, relationships are strong and built on a shared purpose of achieving goals set by teachers and students. This combination of respectful relationships and high expectations pervades every corner of the building.

**Equity development:** Valley View Elementary has a strong equity team that works with the principal to recognize and address racial assumptions and power structures that negatively impact student achievement. Individuals work to be aware of gaps in their understanding of how racism insidiously influences thoughts and actions. Common beliefs and agreements among staff exist to provide equitable access to all students. PLC groups review their data through an equity lens and discuss student progress in an asset based manner.

**Diverse Learners...**  
**Continued on page 13**



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# The Importance of a DIVERse Team



Sheri Allen  
Superintendent  
Mankato Area Public Schools

The benefit of having diverse perspectives in district leadership is that our system's mindset broadens to thrive in our multicultural community. It is important to be inclusive of all families in our school community so we are successful. As part of Mankato Area Public Schools' Strategic Roadmap, community connectedness is one of the strategic directions that defines our work. It is everyone's responsibility to engage multiple

perspectives in decision-making so families see our investment in them. The most talented people need to be with our students every day. Leadership throughout our district comes from everyone, and there is a commitment to continued staff growth and success. As a result, there is a focus on the well-being of students and families as we continue to build a collaborative culture that ensures all students learn as we focus on results. When working with multiple perspectives, experiences, and cultures, it is important to recognize systems suffer when leaders don't respond to their changing environment. The representation and voice of all is integral to the success of every student. The goal is that every student graduates to something and has life options.

### Building a Collaborative Culture

It is important to give permission to lead, learn, and fail. Failure is feedback and an opportunity to learn and grow. By providing an environment that allows for feedback, our team can utilize their strengths to take risks in the spirit of continuous improvement. Approaching our work with a growth mindset models learning for our students. Michael Fullan and Andy Hargreaves define community as "collegiality and individuality are not incompatible." Both can, and should, go together so all can work to understand our school community. If staff is always learning, especially as it relates to students, results will be seen. Learning must be collaborative, not in isolation, and this is evident in our Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Community leaders and partners help us identify how to best meet the needs of our student population as we prepare them for career and college.

### Developing Staff Capacity, Accountability and Skills

The need to continuously develop leadership skills and talents of all of our staff is recognized. Capacity is as important as competence. We strive to build the capacity (meaning the potential each of us has to do more and

be more than we are now) of staff as individuals as well as our collective whole. Mankato Area Public Schools preK-adult administrators work as a collaborative team to support systemic learning and collegial conversations. Each administrator brings diverse perspectives, experiences, and backgrounds to the district, and through those lenses we continue to hone how we provide leadership and learning for our staff, students, families, and community. This time together fosters a growth-mindset within our team and affords the opportunity to learn from each other. As Richard Daft states, "If everybody is the same, you won't have the diversity that you need to survive. You need to have different attitudes, different ways of thinking and doing things."

### Cultivating Authentic Relationships

Authentic relationships are key to a strong learning community. It is important to remember we are people as well as professionals. It's key to take the opportunity to build relationships beyond the work setting whenever possible. This will help build upon our commitment to trust that each of us is doing what is in the best interest of all students by being part of our community in multiple ways.

The word diversity has so many meanings depending upon each person and their experiences. We are a growing community and we celebrate our opportunities. Our amazing staff and community partners work together to, "assure learning excellence and readiness for a changing world" on a daily basis. We are making a difference.

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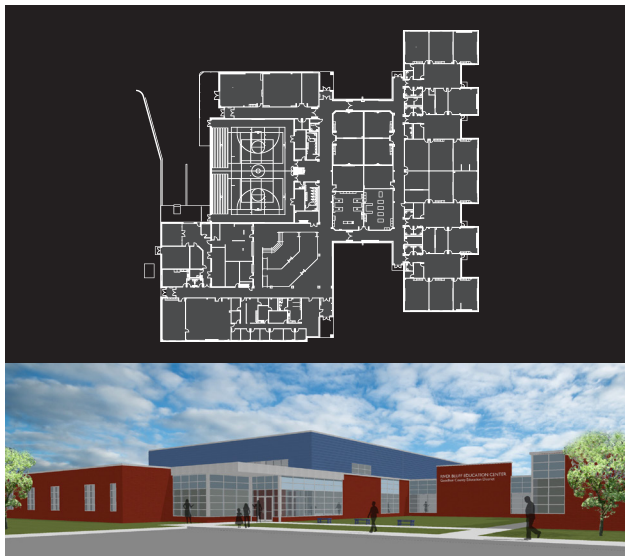


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# Communicating with Diverse Audiences

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*“I know that you believe you understand what you think I said, but I’m not sure you realize that what you heard is not what I meant.” Robert McCloskey*

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Jackie Johnston  
Director  
Eastern Carver County Schools

School districts are becoming increasingly diverse. The Census Bureau projects that by the year 2100, the U.S. minority population will become the majority with non-Hispanic whites making up only 40% of the U.S. population. Minnesota’s population that is nonwhite or Latino is projected to grow from 14 percent in 2005 to 25 percent in 2035. With some counties seeing over a 600% increase per the Minnesota State Demographic Center, school

leaders have a responsibility to examine their district policies and practices.

Knowing what lens you are using when you communicate with families and community members from differing cultural backgrounds will help you hear and understand more clearly. Increasing your understanding about other cultures will help you identify false assumptions you may be making that affect your communication and lead to a willingness to be vulnerable in intercultural intersections and to be open to learning.

Intentional strategies are important when communicating across cultures. Communication is a two-way street and the most important part of that is what you bring to the table. You can only change your own behavior. Therefore, self-awareness is critical; what biases and assumptions do you bring to the conversation? Project Implicit was founded as a multi-university research collaboration in 1998 by three scientists; Tony Greenwald (University of Washington), Mahzarin Banaji (Harvard University), and Brian Nosek (University of Virginia). It was incorporated as a non-profit in 2001 to foster dissemination and application of implicit social cognition via an instrument called Check your own biases and assumptions: Implicit Association Test. Not only will it help you understand your lens on culture, it could be used as a tool to foster interesting dialogue with staff (<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>).

Communicating across cultures also requires the use of language parents can understand, whether that is sending information home in the families’ native language, using an appropriate reading level or being aware of and avoiding the use of education idioms and jargon. It is wise to use a

cultural specialist, one who studies and understands these concepts, to help navigate written communication.

Time ordering of interactions can cause a lot of confusion. Some cultures, like the dominant US culture, are monochronic and typical discussions relate to one topic only; Latin American Countries are dominantly polychronic, typically handling several topics at the same time with no perceived structure to the discussion.

Does the culture have high-context or low-context messages? In high context cultures many things are left to inference as the group has a shared understanding of meaning. In low-context cultures, specific and carefully chosen words are very important, since words are taken at surface value and meaning.

Power distance can create another barrier to cultural understanding and communication. In a high-power distance culture, there is a fear of confrontation with a “superior” – inequity is expected. In low-power distance cultures there is a consultative relationship and more power-neutral interdependence. With a high-power distance culture, silence doesn’t equate to understanding or agreement, but in a low-power distance culture silence implies acquiescence.

Other stumbling blocks to consider when engaging in personal communication are:

- Sharing space - how close or far one is positioned to another is a cultural norm.
- Touch – the rules for touching vary from culture to culture.
- Eye contact – in some cultures this is a sign of respect; in others it signals disrespect.

Understanding and communicating across cultures takes a willingness on everyone’s part. Mutualism is a doctrine positing that mutual dependence is necessary for social well-being, and where *everyone benefits and no one is harmed*. Building the future on a foundation of mutualism changes everything we do. It asks more of us, but the benefits are significant. It demands that we consciously make a routine practice of first evaluating our actions, behavior, decisions, thinking, and new ideas with a thoughtful inspection of the implications and benefits to all concerned. As district

**Diverse Audiences...**  
**Continued on page 13**



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## Addressing Unconscious Bias



Jean Strait  
Director  
Center for Excellence in Urban  
Teaching  
Hamline University

As educators, when it comes to addressing our own biases in content knowledge, we believe we are pretty accurate in self-assessment. However, when it comes to educator beliefs and cultural knowledge, it's clear many of us aren't aware of what we don't know. Beliefs that practicing educators hold about diverse students and families have a direct impact on the students we teach. In a recent study by Nelson and Guerra (2014) of 111 teachers and educational leaders in Texas and Michigan, beliefs held about culturally, linguistically and economically diverse students and families were assessed. The results revealed that the majority of participants had a general awareness of culture, but held a number of deficit beliefs about students and families they served.



Tammie Pate  
Program Coordinator  
Center for Excellence in Urban  
Teaching  
Hamline University

Personal beliefs are a greater predictor of a person's behavior than professional knowledge (Bandura, 1986) so when an educator's personal beliefs are in conflict with professional knowledge, the educator will unconsciously act through

those personal beliefs (Pohan and Aguilar, 2001). This phenomenon is known as unconscious bias. How can we identify our individual knowledge of culture and understand how we apply that cultural knowledge? We need to look at our own perspective in a humane, respectful way just as we would examine someone else's perspective. Cultural competence requires both a deep cultural knowledge and a process for 1) surfacing, 2) challenging and 3) reframing deficit thinking (Nelson and Guerra, 2014). Research shows that even with a safe space for reflection, it takes educators three to five years to transform belief systems (Goldenberg, 2014; Meier, 2015; Barvosa, 2014).

Educators need to begin by surfacing our beliefs about culture, diversity and racism. We can do this by recognizing and identifying that everyone experiences life through their own unique cultural lens. Conversations, education and experiences that allow for conscious examination of our personal beliefs enable us to personally challenge deep rooted views. Our first step is to move beyond our refusal

to acknowledge the costs and benefits associated with one's racial and cultural identity. Let's look at an example. Many white teachers we have worked with identify themselves as color blind. They go on to tell us that color blindness is a positive thing, and by ignoring color, racism is minimized. This is a normative view held and taught in American Schools and is used as an operational concept for many educators, business people, lawyers and health care workers. However, if we acknowledge that we function based on our own experiences, then the first thing we need to understand is that everyone sees color and race, EVERYONE. The difference is that color blindness is a privilege for whites while it may be a means for survival and navigation for people of color. Rosenberg (2004) argues that color blindness allows people to deny that race, especially skin color, has consequences for a person's status and well-being. Color blindness then provides the ability to shut down any need to discuss inequality (Ullucci and Battey, 2011).

Individually, educators need to understand ourselves as racial beings. Our behaviors, beliefs, customs and ways of getting things done are all culturally and racially specific. THIS IS NOT A BAD OR WRONG THING; it is acknowledging we are all different. What we need to be conscious of is that these same things, either consciously or unconsciously, rest within a hierarchically biased power system where privilege is used to keep people at different places in the continuum. When we are neutral and allow color blindness to continue, then the experiences of people of color/people other than ourselves are invalidated and ignored. This is what needs to be changed. Many worry that seeing race makes them racist. Ullucci and Battey (2011) define racism as having three components:

1. A group that deems itself superior to all others;
2. The group has the power in which to act out that superiority; and
3. Enacting racism benefits the group in power while negatively affecting others.

Being color conscious, or color aware is acknowledging difference, not superiority. Teel and Obidah (2008) assert that as critically reflective and responsive educators, we need to be aware of race, the possibility of our own racism and racism of others, and the significance of these perceptions in the teaching and learning process. Here are a few questions to consider:

1. In which ways does color consciousness matter in your school? Classroom?
2. How do teachers who are colorblind affect their students?

**Unconscious Bias...**  
**Continued on page 13**

## Unconscious Bias... Continued from page 12

As educational leaders, our primary aim should be to develop teachers who are either moving toward color consciousness or deconstruction color blindness in some way.

### We would like to hear from you

Drop us a note as you reflect on your own practices. Can you think of an instance where you were aware of:

1. Race;
2. The possibility of your own racism and racism of others;
3. The significance of these perceptions on your teaching, leading and learning.

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### For further reading:

Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and Action: A social cognitive theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

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## Diverse Learners... Continued from page 6

This list is not definitive; other important influences that have resulted in successful turnaround efforts at Valley View Elementary include family engagement, extended learning time, attention to the language development of all students and the adoption of a uniform code of conduct and dress. The re-design that works at Valley View Elementary and as a district is far from done. There is still much to do and learn. However, we do believe that the ideas enumerated here were transformative in the redesign of an elementary school to meet the needs of diverse learners.

## Diverse Audiences... Continued from page 10

leaders, we have a responsibility to take the first step and make increased communication a priority if we want to 'establish mutualism as the final arbiter' (Debbe Kennedy).

Interested in learning more about communicating with diverse audiences? Watch Jackie's ExpertEase video, *Communication with Diverse Audiences*, available on the Infinitic website.

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## Levering Technology to Focus on Learning



Howard Pitler  
Executive Director of Digital Solutions  
McREL International

Leveraging Technology to Focus on Learning Mobile technologies are an integral part of our daily lives. Where is the closest gas station? Ask Siri. Which toaster is best for my needs? Check customer reviews on Amazon.com. Going out to dinner with friends? Ask Yelp for a good restaurant within five miles of your house, make reservations on OpenTable, and forward the reservation to your friends, complete with driving directions. Mobile technologies

have made our lives easier and are transforming the way we work and get things done. It isn't about the device, but what the devices allow us to do. How can we translate this savvy use of technology into classroom learning experiences?

Too often, there is little similarity between the very connected world we live in and the world inside of a school. What does it look like when a school's technological experience does mirror the real world?

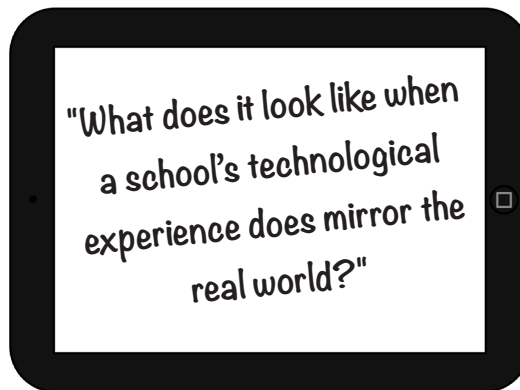
In Sue Scott's 8<sup>th</sup> grade language arts class at Preston Middle School in Fort Collins, Colorado, students work and create in ways that would be unlikely in a non-technology-infused environment. It is important to point out that students' projects are not about technology; specific learning goals are accomplished around writing, researching, communicating, collaborating, and presenting. Technology is merely the enabling factor.

Recently, Mrs. Scott worked collaboratively with the district's instructional technology trainer, Rhonda Summerlin, to develop what they dubbed the "Passion Project," in which students focused on a topic or idea they were passionate about. Layers of technology were embedded in the project, but only as a means toward the end.

First, students brainstormed using [Google Docs](#), reflecting on things they really wanted to learn, research, create, or discover. Students individually narrowed the topics down to three top choices and completed a free write on individual goals and how they would get there, any help they would need and how they would work on it weekly, what might be

easy and what might be difficult about the project, and what would need to be done in class versus outside of school. They shared their writing with their teacher via their class assignment folder and added it to their digital portfolio. Students used [Blogger](#) to post weekly about their chosen projects, including their successes, setbacks, valuable research, etc. They also enriched their blog posts with pictures, videos, and other media. In addition, they used [Diigo](#) to help them conduct their research, highlighting and annotating relevant articles in the cloud. Diigo also allowed them to create collaborative groups and share their research with their teachers.

Students reviewed goals every three weeks, looking at what they had accomplished and what they needed to do before the next checkpoint. They used a rubric in their class assignment folder for the checkpoints and conferenced with Mrs. Scott and Ms. Summerlin to show evidence of goal completion.



Each student created a two-minute digital presentation of their work to pitch their ideas to their peers, parents, and teachers. They created these presentations with no coaching, in order to measure growth in presentation skills as compared with their final presentations.

Using [Blendspace](#), the students created digital portfolios of their passion projects, which included brainstorming and goal setting

documents, valuable research, Pitch time presentations, a link to their blogs, and pictures and videos of them in pursuit of their passion.

In preparation for final presentations, students watched exemplar presentations by kids their age, such as [TED Talks](#) and [Ignite](#)-style presentations. They used [TodaysMeet](#) to record the pros and cons of the presentations as well as other observations. They then collaborated on Google Docs as to what their final presentations should include and created rough outlines. The outlines became the bases for the presentation scripts, which they also created in Google Docs and shared with peers, who used the commenting feature to give feedback. They then revised their presentations. The students developed rubrics for their final presentations via Google Docs with guidance from their teachers, using

**Leveraging Technology...**  
**Continued on page 18**

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# The Risk of "Reply to All": Email and the Open Meeting Law



Greg Madsen  
Education Law Attorney  
Kennedy & Graven, Chartered

As the use of electronic communications escalates, all school leaders—superintendents, administrators and board members alike—must consider the legal implications of using email to conduct public business.

The use of email by school officials and board members to communicate with each other may raise a question about whether a “meeting” has taken place under the Minnesota Open Meeting Law and whether they have arrived at a consensus outside of lawfully-noticed school board meetings by using email.

A 2009 advisory opinion from the Department of Administration discussing the circumstances when email communications among a quorum of board members or a committee of board members may be an Open Meeting Law violation is particularly instructive.

In the opinion, the Commissioner addressed an email sent to board members of the Metro Gang Strike Force, which was established by the legislature to establish “multijurisdictional task forces and strike forces to combat gang and drug crime.” Following an inquiry from the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* about an editorial the newspaper was preparing, a Minneapolis deputy police chief sent an email with an attached letter to all 13 Strike Force advisory board members as “a matter of high importance” and asked them to review the letter. The email stated “[t]here is some critical information that I think can help prevent further issue with [task force] operations if we act quickly enough.” The deputy police chief’s letter raised several issues and stated “I would like the board to consider issuing a statement similar to” a paragraph he drafted and included. At least seven advisory board members responded to the deputy police chief with comments about the letter and sent copies of their responses to all board members. Later that same day, the advisory board chair issued a press release containing substantially the same content as that proposed in the letter attached to the email sent by the deputy police chief and emailed the board members about the action that had been taken.

The Open Meeting Law requires that “[a]ll meetings, including executive sessions, must be open to the public.” Minn. Stat. § 13D.01. Although the legislature does not define “meeting,” the Minnesota Supreme Court has described the “quorum rule” as follows:

“Meetings” subject to the requirements of the Open Meeting Law are those gatherings of a quorum or more members of the governing body . . . at which members discuss, decide, or receive information as a group on issues relating to the official business of that governing body.

*Moberg v. Indep. Sch. Dist. No. 281*, 336 N.W.2d 510, 518 (Minn. 1983).

Applying the quorum rule to the facts of the case, the Commissioner found that the advisory board’s actions violated the Open Meeting Law, and rejected the board’s arguments that the press release was part of the advisory board chair’s day-to-day duties and that he was merely disseminating information to board members.

In support of the opinion, the Commissioner stated that “[s]even of the [13] Advisory Board members, more than a quorum, expressed their opinions to all other Board Members about whether the Board should act, what action it should take and who should act on the Board’s behalf. . . . Here, a quorum of the Advisory Board, in addition to receiving information, commented on and provided direction to the [chair] on a matter relating to the official business of the Board.”

The Commissioner acknowledged that Minnesota courts have not ruled definitively on the issue, but concluded that the actions of the advisory board constituted a “meeting” that was required to be public under the Open Meeting Law. The Commissioner did say that it would have been permissible for the deputy police chief to send his email and suggested letter only to the board chair, and for the board chair to have issued the press release “without consulting a quorum of the Board.” The Commissioner also stated that “one-way communication between the chair and members of a public body is permissible, such as when the chair or staff sends meeting materials via e-mail to all board members, as long as no discussion or decision-making ensues.” The opinion closes with a plea to the legislature for greater clarity in this area:

**Reply to All...**  
**Continued on page 17**



## Reply to All... Continued from page 16

The Commissioner urged the Legislature to provide guidance in the OML on issues arising from the widespread use of email and other forms of communication. It would be helpful to clarify specifically what kinds of email communications are permissible.

Until new or different guidance comes from the courts or the legislature, school officials and board members must guard against the temptation to address issues of public interest by taking email "shortcuts" instead of arriving at a consensus through discussions at lawfully-noticed school board meetings.

*Greg Madsen is an attorney and shareholder at Kennedy & Graven, Chartered, who practices education and employment law, and is certified by the Minnesota State Bar Association as a Labor and Employment Law Specialist.*



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## THE BUDGET BREAKDOWN



Valerie Dosland  
EWALD  
MASA Lobbyist

The 2015 session, which began January 6, is underway and all eyes are towards what will happen with the state budget. So far, the House Republicans, Senate Democrats, and Governor Dayton appear to be far apart on priorities.

The first step in that process is the release of the Governor's budget recommendations. In mid-January, Governor Dayton released his budget

and proposed an overall state budget at \$42 billion, an increase of \$1 billion. Over 75% of that is toward E12 education and health and human services. Governor Dayton proposed an additional \$373 million for E12 education with a majority of it going toward efforts he hopes will close the achievement gap.

Under Dayton's proposal, school districts would receive only a one percent per year pupil increase as well as full funding for school breakfast for students from pre-k to grade three. Dayton also recommended \$109 million to phase in a voluntary statewide pre-K program. This proposal comes with a number of policy provisions and has raised many questions about whether or not the funding is sufficient to cover the costs of initiating a statewide pre-K program.

While the House and Senate budgets will not be out until mid-April, we are beginning to see proposals rolled out to highlight each body's respective priorities.

Senate Democrats unveiled their package of education priorities early February. Interestingly, a formula increase was not highlighted but Sen. Chuck Wiger, Chair of the E-12 Budget Division, said that would very much be part of their package.

The Senate DFL legislative priorities include a Senate universal pre-K proposal; extending alternative facilities to all school districts, free breakfast for pre-K to grade three, expansion of student services including guidance counselors, psychologists, social workers, and nurses, and pathways to college

We have yet to see details of the House funding priorities for K-12 education. However, they recently unveiled their early learning priorities. In contrast to the Governor and the Senate, the House priority is to target funding for early learning to at-risk children through early learning scholarships.

House Republicans are also undertaking an effort to make changes to LIFO and are moving a bill to require teacher evaluation to be used in determining lay-offs. Their proposal also includes measures to tackle teacher shortages and give districts flexibility to allow local community experts to provide instruction—especially in career and technology areas.

Now is the time to be in touch with your local legislators. You help them understand the impact their decisions have and this provides you a good opportunity to make your concerns heard. Thanks for all you do to stay connected during session!

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## Leveraging Technology... Continued from page 14

the rubrics to create their final digital presentations and practicing in rotations with different peer groups for feedback.

In a culminating event, Preston Middle School invited the community to hear the students' presentations in a TED Talk/Ignite-style event. Students had 3-5 minutes to talk about their passion projects with their digital presentation playing in background. Later, students reflected on the experience on their blogs.

This is just one example, among many, in which technology enhanced students' experiences of learning, creating,

and producing in the classroom. The Framework for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning focuses on having students create, innovate, problem-solve, think critically, communicate, and collaborate. When we leverage the power of technology, as Mrs. Scott and Mrs. Summerlin did, we are truly preparing our kids well.

*This article was originally published on the McREL International blog and is reprinted with permission. McREL is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, research-and-development organization that studies what works best in teaching and education leadership and translates the findings into practical and effective guidance, professional development, and coaching for educators and leaders.*

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## INSIGHTS AND IMPLICATIONS

### *Mining Data from Scientific, Random-Sample Surveys*

Written by Don E. Lifo and Chris Deets

A group of senior administrators in a suburban district were stumped with what they read. The charge from the superintendent was to carefully review an 80-page workbook of detail from a scientific, random-sample phone survey, which provided a wealth of data compared and contrasted demographically. Specifically, they were to look for eye-popping surprises or significant differences of more than 15 percent between demographic groups (for example, responses from males vs. females or young respondents vs. older respondents).

As they mined the survey analysis, a team member spotted a data point that qualified for further review based on both criteria. A random-sample of 300 registered voters had been asked the following question:

“Would you be more likely or less likely to support a school operating referendum if you knew that some of the money would be used to improve instruction for students who were behind in reading achievement?”

The data summary detailed in the survey workbook provided the team with a broad range of comparative statistics based on multiple demographic characteristics such as parent status, age, geography, frequency of past voting behavior, education level, household income, housing type, and length of time living in the school district. The data point that jumped off the page, however, was the stark difference in the results based on gender. When women responded to the reading instruction question, a strong 76 percent said they would be “more likely to support a school operating referendum.” Men, however, barely eclipsed a majority threshold tipping the scales at an unenthusiastic 54 percent support. As the group focused on this starkly different response, their shared but not yet spoken question was, “22 percent difference by gender – what’s this all about?”

#### **Survey methodology and analysis**

Many school districts have designed and administered scientific, random-sample surveys to collect feedback for a broad range of planning needs. Phone surveys are commonly administered to random samples ranging from 200 respondents in the smallest school districts up to as many as 600 respondents in large, more diverse communities. The vast majority of school surveys can obtain excellent data from a sample of 300-400, producing an acceptable error of measurement typically in the +/- 4.5-5.5 percent range. In using this engagement tool, school districts can probe such topics as general satisfaction, support for elements of a strategic plan, where constituents get their

information about the public schools, or residents’ tax tolerance for a future operating or debt issuance referendum.

To maximize the investment of time and money in conducting a scientific, random-sample survey, our experience would emphasize two key methodologies that can be harnessed to enhance the quality of the data analysis and the potential to translate survey findings into value-added planning by the school district. First, it is important to understand that the power of the data analysis available post-survey is directly related to the richness of the demography in the sample from which the random calls are drawn.

There are two ways to achieve rich demographic analysis: (1) ask a lot of demographic questions in the survey and hope respondents answer them accurately and honestly (e.g., “How old are you?” or “Are you a registered voter?”) or (2) merge public and commercial databases into the registered voter data base such that data analysis can be drawn from the demography in the file without having to ask for the information during the phone interview. In our experience, the second approach produces the best results and also makes for a shorter phone call and higher percentage of respondents finishing the interview.

The second recommended methodology is to “roll up your collective sleeves” and be strategic and thorough in analyzing the demographic detail contained in a survey workbook. Maintaining a 40,000-foot perspective in a PowerPoint presentation of major findings is a good place to start, but is not a substitute for thorough data analyses. Best practice is to systematically sort through the survey findings, peeling back the demographic layers, and focusing on large percentage differences and surprises similar to the reading achievement example. Processing the data in this way produces a broader, richer understanding of which data are most important and provides the fuel that propels effective planning post-survey. One data analysis tool we have used with success is the Insights and Implications model.

#### **Insights and implications**

Turning hard data into actionable strategies and objectives is a process we call Insights and Implications, which is a somewhat complex process at first blush, but is ultimately simple and highly critical to a successful planning. Like a seasoned journalist, Insights and Implications probes for the “story behind the story” – processing the valuable data from the survey results, sorting through it to identify directional results compared by demography, and then identifying implications that may arise from acting (or, in some cases, not acting) upon the results.

**Insights and Implications...**  
**Continued on page 21**

## Insights and Implications... Continued from page 20

While generating data in the first place is essential, mining those data for insights that are actionable is critically important. The first step of data mining involves looking for large discrepancies and gaps in the percentages. These gaps serve as signals to your team that “something is there, we need to look closer, and try to understand.” More often than not, these gaps represent information that may be counter to prevailing assumptions; the larger the gap and the more counter-intuitive it is, the greater the need for analysis. As the data are mined and the gaps are identified, they are placed into the “Insights” column of the accompanying chart in order of the size of the gap from largest to smallest. Dividing insights from data is the first step in converting data into actionable information.

The second step is developing implications from the insights. This ensures the wisdom from our insights is translated into actions to help lay the foundation for a successful planning, whether that is a referendum or implementing a new strategic plan. Developing implications starts by asking two questions of each insight. The first question is “If we take action and ensure these percentages remain the same or even grow, would that help achieve the planning objective?” The second question flows naturally from the first, “If we take action and try to alter these percentages, would that help achieve our goals?”

The primary insight from the reading achievement example is that women care greatly about reading achievement. The implication is that women can be motivated by communicating that funds from a successful referendum will be allocated to address reading achievement. The deeper insight, however, is that men do not, at least on the surface, seem to place value on high reading achievement. We would counsel the team to consider whether it is true that a higher percentage of men don't seem to care about reading achievement. Or, is their response to the survey

question driven by lack of knowledge and exposure to the teaching and learning process? Could the campaign affect this dichotomy and capture more male supporters by getting them into the classroom and directly involved in the reading program, thereby moving the campaign in the team's direction?

Usually there are a number of insights gleaned from any set of data. However, we find focusing on a limited number that show the greatest discrepancy — and thus hold the greatest promise for action — is the best use of the team's resources.

### Research to practice

In processing the reading instruction gender gap through the Insights and Implications model, the superintendent posed a question to the group: “How many advisory committees do we have throughout the school district, and what is their gender makeup?” Not surprisingly, the answer was the district had more than a dozen advisory committees and females were overrepresented, making up close to 80 percent of the membership. The follow-up question was even more intriguing: “How much could we positively influence men's attitudes about reading instruction over time if they were equally represented on our advisory committees and we got them into our classrooms for reading instruction to a greater extent?” Focusing on data and processing the survey results through the Insights and Implications model resulted in a planning directive in this suburban district requiring that all advisory committees be gender balanced within one year. A “Reading with Dad” initiative was also launched. While just two small steps forward, these are examples of effectively translating research to better practice in data analysis while maximizing the value and positive impact of a scientific, random-sample survey.

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## New Twitter Chat for MASA Members! #MNMASA Sundays @ 8 pm

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

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

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

# Minneivate! Findings and Strategic Opportunities

An excerpt from the *Minneivate! 2013-2014 Activity Report...*

The Minneivate! project was explorative, qualitative, and normative in its taxonomy. The data collection and analysis conducted through the World Café method was used to provide inputs on our boldest visions for Minnesota's education futures and how we can generate pathways toward creating a collective capacity for realizing our bold visions. As with any qualitative research project, the findings are not necessarily generalizable, but serve to inform MASA and its members in the formation of their strategic directions, including an action agenda for Minnesota school administrators, legislative leaders, business leaders, and other key members of the communities its members serve.

While the World Café questions were designed to identify tangible visions, directions, and strategic actions, we were surprised that deep, intangible, core issues emerged that present themselves as strategic opportunities for MASA:

1. **Lead the conversation** about creating positive education futures in Minnesota, identify the champions, and identify the sources of innovation in our communities.
2. Attend toward **creating a culture of trust** between and among schools and the communities they serve.
3. **Develop a sense of urgency** for building positive education futures as opposed to maintaining a passive culture of compliance-only actions.

The practical implication of this work is that it provides guidance for MASA in its strategic planning cycle that will begin in late 2014. The Minneivate! project provides critical insight into the contexts in which MASA and its members can work to build a collective capacity to realizing our bold visions for education in Minnesota.

## Minneivate!

A Minneivate! project update (July, 2014) is now available for download at:  
<http://minneivate.mnasa.org>

The report contains a summary of the December 3, 2013 launch event as well as summary of the MASA regional Minneivate! meetings from last spring. A final report with an elaborated discussion and recommendations will be released later this year.

### Recommendations

*(MASA's past and present Richard Green Scholars, Minneivate! International Advisory Panel, and selected community partners were consulted on August 6, 2014 to contribute their perspectives to this section of recommendations.)*

While the Minneivate! project was designed to identify an action agenda for adoption by MASA, the leadership and cultural development aspects of this project's findings suggest that the organization can use the outputs of this project to help establish its longer-term strategic planning. More specifically, building upon the strategic opportunities presented above, MASA should adopt an agenda for action:

1. Lead the conversation and set a large, measurable vision for education in Minnesota as the state faces new, unpredictable futures.
  - a. Ask why questions that impact our futures (i.e., Why is the homeschooling movement growing? Why do we operate large special education programs? Etc.)
  - b. Investigate what and how questions (i.e., For what are we preparing kids? What is the evidence on creating systems change? How do we build capacities for change?)
  - c. Develop a theory of action for MASA's continued strategic engagement with its key constituents in Minnesota.
2. Continue Minneivate! conversations across the state, bringing communities and schools together in safe environments to build cultures of trust and cooperation.
  - a. Design a mechanism to bring more voices into the discussion.
  - b. Recognize and embrace divergent strategies for educational improvement.
  - c. Identify champions that can help lead the conversation and build a collective capacity.
  - d. Engage the sources of innovation in our communities that MASA and its members can leverage to further develop its strategic opportunities.
3. Establish measurement standards that can be used to monitor the efficacy of MASA's Minneivate! programming in relation to MASA's strategic priorities.
4. Understanding that leadership for change requires a significant commitment and lasting, supportive presence, pledge at least six years of resources to support MASA's work related to the Minneivate! strategic opportunities.

Minneivate!...

Continued on page 23

## Minnevate!...

### Continued from page 22

While the above action agenda outlines general, longer-term goals, specific, short-term actions should mirror the grassroots, cocreative spirit of the project's original design. These recommended next steps for MASA in 2014-2015 are centered on the engagement of its members as co-thought leaders in meeting the organization's Minnevate! strategic opportunities:

1. Establish work groups: Engage Richard Green scholars (and other identified thought leaders within the MASA community) to work from the Minnevate! data from 2014 and build the "next steps" for MASA in the form of a declaration and action agenda.
2. Develop focus groups: Continue the Minnevate! conversation in each of MASA's nine regions through facilitated focus group conversations, and drill down to specifics for actions and policy directions that can be carried out by MASA. This work should complement (and inform) the activities of the Richard Green scholars.
3. Come together at a summit: Convene a summit of experts (including MASA members) at the 2015 Back-to-School Leadership Conference to review and revise the recommendations crafted by the Minnevate! research team and the Richard Green scholars before formal adoption as an action agenda by the MASA Board of Directors.

What does a school district do to find great staff?



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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.

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# Congratulations!

## Minnesota Senator

**Leroy Stumpf,**  
2015 MASA  
Distinguished  
Service Award  
Recipient



**Beth Giese,**  
2015 MASA Kay E  
Jacobs Memorial  
Award Recipient

**Jana Hennen-Burr & Cory McIntyre,**  
2015 MASA Outstanding Central Office  
Leader Award Recipients

2015 Regional Administrators of  
Excellence Recipients:

Region 1, **Todd Sesker**  
Region 2, **Joseph Brown**  
Region 3, **Paul Carlson**  
Region 4, **Daniel Posthumus**  
Region 5, **David Fjeldheim**  
Region 6, **Deborah Henton**  
Region 7, **James Varichak**  
Region 8, **James Guetter**  
Region 9, **Sue Ann Gruver**

All of these individuals represent the leadership excellence found in MASA members: the willingness to risk, strong communication skills, a progressive change agent with high expectations for self and others, and their strong advocacy for Minnesota's children.

Our recipients will be honored during the 2015 MASA/MASE Spring Conference. You can learn more about the awards and the accomplishments of the recipients by reading the press releases available in the "newsroom" on the MASA website.

## Meet Your President-Elect Candidate



Scott Thielman  
Superintendent  
Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose  
Schools

It is an honor and a privilege to be nominated for MASA President-Elect. As a public school administrator having served in rural, suburban and urban school districts, I remain committed to being a strong, passionate voice for public education. I welcome the opportunity to serve our organization, you the members, and the MASA staff as we continue to advocate on behalf of all children. I also pledge to build strong supportive professional relationships that will serve superintendents and all of our component groups.

Over the past several decades, education has been under attack and it is apparent to me that education has been asked to heal all of society's ills and is expected to meet all of its perceived needs. As educational leaders, society expects us to find the cure for what ails it, predict what the future holds for our students and identify the path for student success. The expectations for education are changing faster than any period in history and it is our responsibility to create the opportunities our students need to succeed in a globally competitive market.

Due to the aforementioned expectations, it is critically important that MASA amplify and emphasize the need for investment in and support of public education. I believe that MASA members have and always will serve as the leading voice for public education in Minnesota. I also believe that we are prepared to provide the leadership needed to shape and influence the State and Federal education agenda.

I have identified the following priorities that I believe MASA should focus on to move our organization forward:

- Continue to advocate for adequate, equitable and sustainable funding for our students and schools from the state and federal government;
- Support the goals and strategies of the strategic plan;
- Provide adequate resources and support for quality professional development opportunities for all administrators;
- Advocate for support and focus on 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and authentic assessments for students; and
- Continue to be the unifying voice for public education by advocating for all students.

As tireless advocates of a world class education for Minnesota's children, I thank you for all that you do on a daily basis on behalf of your students, your schools and those you serve. I would truly appreciate your support of my candidacy for President-Elect.

## Did You Know? MASA Offers a Variety of Online Professional Learning Opportunities and Resources

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

- **Whitewater Learning.** An affordable online library of high-quality modules that align with state and national competencies and offer pre-approved teacher and administrator CEUs.
- **ExpertEase.** A catalog of short online videos on a variety of education leadership topics. These videos provide certification of participation that can be used when renewing teacher licensure. Videos are available to all MASA members free of cost via the Infinitec website.
- **What We Are Reading.** Each month our book blogger publishes a book review, complete with book notes and discussion questions. This is a great resources for staff development exercises, a teaching tool during lectures, or if you simply enjoy a good book.
- **Voice of MN Education blog.** Each week we publish a blog post or video from Gary Amoroso to inform our members of organization news, share legislative updates, or feature our colleagues as guest bloggers.
- **Professional Assistance Team (PAT).** MASA members may need advice or consultation as they run into new or difficult situations. The PAT members have offered to use their experiences to help their colleagues navigate these situations. You can find a list of PAT members on the MASA website, and may contact anyone of them as you seek assistance.





# Class is in session.

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- Sponsor, Minnesota Association of School Administrators
- Providing free Ronald McDonald® School Shows, 45-minute assemblies whose messages include anti-bullying, respect, and leadership

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# REFLECTIVE LEADERSHIP

## The Rewarding Career of School Leadership

Sandra Lewandowski reflects on her year as the Minnesota Superintendent of the Year



Sandra Lewandowski  
Superintendent  
Intermediate District 287

"What would you like to be when you grow up?" Adults often ask students this question when visiting K-12 schools. I don't know that I have ever heard a student answer, "I would like to be a school superintendent!" I know I certainly never aspired to be a school administrator during my formative years. Yet, after attaining my teaching degree and administrative license, a career in school leadership became more and more appealing. Through school leadership, I have had the rare privilege to work with dedicated educators to fulfill our highest calling: to lay the foundation for students that can create life-long success for them and their families.

This work has also been recognized by our wonderful school board, which is made up of representatives from the twelve-member school districts of Intermediate District 287. I was honored to be nominated by the Chair of our Board for MASA's Superintendent of the Year, and in mid-October was thrilled to receive a telephone call from Gary Amoroso who told me I had been selected to receive the 2015 award. My first reaction was emotional as I thought of the recognition for decades of work. I reflected on how my attention to building leadership skills over my career

had led to changes, improvements, and innovations--all with student success as the goal. I thought of specific students I have known over the years and hoped this award could be an ongoing symbol that we had taken the right path to better assure their adult lives would be successful.

As word has spread across my school district, the region, and the state, I have been gratified by the number of colleagues and friends who have communicated with me through calls, notes, and hugs. I even received word that a school board member from my central Minnesota hometown commented proudly that I was a product of their school district, despite my school days there being many decades ago. I will treasure these spoken and written words far into the future.

My adult sons have been characteristically funny and uncharacteristically complimentary. The best example is a Facebook post suggesting a Kickstarter campaign to clone me for use in other school districts. My extended family throughout Minnesota has cheered my accomplishments.

While one might never grow up aspiring to be a school superintendent, I certainly could never have designed a more rewarding career. It has been filled with remarkable students, amazing and talented colleagues, and leaders who work incredibly hard to improve the lives of our children. To be named as Minnesota's 2015 Superintendent of the Year will always be my most treasured recognition. I am grateful and humbled to represent our uniquely important profession.



### **MASA Foundation Grants Available!**

The MASA Foundation will provide up to 10 grants to members this year for

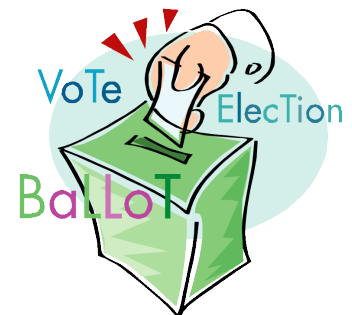
professional development experiences that you would not be able to access through your district or that are unique learning opportunities. Grants can range from \$500-\$750. To apply, simply submit a one page summary of your intended experience and either mail or fax it to the MASA offices (651-645-7518)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

### **Watch Your Email for Election Ballots!**

This year's elections will again be conducted electronically.

Electronic ballots will be emailed during the week of March 16th. Be sure to watch your email for your login information and voting instructions.

Ballots need to be completed by Monday, April 13th.



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**MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

**MDE Back-to-School  
Leadership Conference**

August 4 - 5, 2015

Minneapolis Marriott Northwest, Brooklyn Park



**If you wanted to spend your days  
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become a firefighter instead of  
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To register, visit <http://www.the-breakthrough-coach.com/pages/calendar.php>

# Calendar of Events...

## 2015

### March

11

MASA Great Start Cohort V  
Minneapolis Marriott NW, Brooklyn Park

11

At Ruth's Table  
Minneapolis Marriott NW, Brooklyn Park

11

MASA Board of Directors Meeting  
Minneapolis Marriott NW, Brooklyn Park

12-13

MASA/MASE Spring Conference  
Minneapolis Marriott NW, Brooklyn Park

20

2015 Springsted School Finance Elections  
South Central Service Cooperative,  
North Mankato

27

2015 Springsted School Finance Elections  
Washington Educational Services Bldg.,  
Brainerd

### April

3

MASA Offices Closed

### June

18-19

MASA Board of Directors Retreat  
The Depot, Minneapolis

### August

4-5

MDE Back-to-School Conference  
Minneapolis Marriott NW, Brooklyn Park

### September

27-29

MASA Fall Conference  
DECC, Duluth

### November

18-20

CLM Fall Conference  
Cragun's, Brainerd



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