

# Leaders FORUM

Summer 2016

## Leadership & Vision Does Not Require Perfection



Jeff Ronneberg  
MASA President and  
Superintendent  
Spring Lake Park Schools

As I look back at this past year as President of MASA, I am so appreciative of the opportunity it presented to meet so many superintendents and district leaders I otherwise may not have met. It is truly amazing to learn of the efforts

being taken to improve the engagement and learning of students in school districts in every corner of Minnesota.

No matter the size or location of the districts we serve, we share the opportunity and challenge of initiating and sustaining change. We also share, as I have learned in conversations with colleagues across the state, a deep commitment to meeting the unique needs and aspirations of each child we serve.

As leaders, we provide the expectations and a vision of the future that our students, their families, and our staff may not yet see as possible. We do this while navigating the varied interests of diverse constituencies. Too often, as we respond to questions and concerns that come with leading change, we allow self-doubt to creep in as we expect perfection from ourselves. Michael McKinney has captured the essence of our work as educational leaders so well in the following blog:

### *It Isn't About Being Perfect* by Michael McKinney

*We need to get over the notion that a leader is a perfect person with a set of qualities that are balanced and in perfect alignment. And to be less makes you, you know ... a manager. If that were the case we might as well forget about being a leader. We're just not up to it. And yet life goes on and people do lead—in spite of themselves. And their humanity gives us all hope that we too can lead, influence, have an impact, and create meaning.*

*A good leader is a person that knows their weaknesses, makes (sometimes really stupid) mistakes, admits them, makes an effort to do better, and moves on. In spite of their own inadequacies they jump back in every day and work for a cause bigger than themselves. The challenge is not in avoiding mistakes; it is in knowing how to deal with them when they are made.*

*A good leader knows they can't do it on their own. They have limitations. They need the support and effort of those around them. In fact, they put people on their team specifically because they are lacking in one area or another. A leader doesn't let their weaknesses hold them back.*

*A good leader understands that leadership development is a life-long process of continual learning; continual improvement. Being a leader isn't a place you arrive at. It is something you grow into and grow with if you are going to be effective. Leadership without growth is not sustainable. If you are in it for*

*Leadership & Vision continued  
on page 18.*

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## MSHSL Constitutional Amendment



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

**A**s you have heard over the last few months, MASA is attempting to change the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) Constitution. We are trying to secure two permanent seats on the MSHSL Board of Directors. This

would be equal to the number of permanent seats held by the MSBA and MASSP. This past winter the MASA Board of Directors approved the following resolution:

*Whereas, 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; and*

*Whereas, The MSHSL was created by superintendents in the spring of 1916 to promote amateur sports and to establish uniform eligibility rules for interscholastic contests; and*

*Whereas, Co-Curricular activities including all the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) sponsored activities are a vitally important part of the educational programs offered to our public school students; and*

*Whereas, The MSHSL is a respected and important organization serving the students of Minnesota; and*

*Whereas, The school district superintendent functions as the chief executive officer of the schools that have membership in the MSHSL; and*

*Whereas, The superintendent advocates for the needs of all students; and*

*Whereas, The superintendent is ultimately responsible for the implementation of MSHSL rules and regulations within the school district;*

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved;

*The Minnesota Association of School Administrators (MASA) requests that the MSHSL Constitution be amended in order to allocate two designated seats for superintendents on the MSHSL Board of Directors.*

In order for the MSHSL Constitution to be amended, there needs to be a vote of member schools. There are approximately 520 MSHSL member schools. Each member school has two votes. One is a designated school representative and the second is the designated school board representative. In order for the election to be valid, at least seventy-five percent of the eligible voters must cast a ballot. For the question to pass, two-thirds of the ballots cast must vote yes. This is a very high standard, but one that I know can be achieved with the support and focus of all of our members.

You have been asked to update the information regarding whom the designated school and school board representative is for each school in your district that is a member of the MSHSL. You are asked to identify these individuals when you submit your 2016-2017 MSHSL membership materials. Please make sure you complete the appropriate form and return it with your MSHSL membership materials.

Thank you for your attention to this very important matter. We will continue to update you on the progress of this process as time

### 2016-17 MASA Committee Sign-Up

The 2016-17 MASA Committee Sign-up is now available at: [surveymonkey.com/r/masacommittees1617](http://surveymonkey.com/r/masacommittees1617).

**The sign-up will close at 4 pm on July 1, 2016.**

Committee terms are for two years. If you are currently serving your first term year, you will continue on that committee for the second term year. Refer to the 2015-2016 committee list at [mnasa.org/committees](http://mnasa.org/committees) if you are unsure of your current committee standing.

### Leaders Forum

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

# MASA/MASE SPRING CONFERENCE THANK-YOUS

Thank you to everyone who helped make the 2016  
MASA/MASE Spring Conference a success!



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



## MASA Foundation Spring Fundraiser



**T**hank you to everyone who participated in the MASA Foundation Spring Fundraiser! With your generous donations we raised \$4,760 to the MASA Foundation.

The two regions with the highest giving amounts were Region 5 and Region 2, who respectively received \$400 and \$200 in professional development funds.

A special thank you goes out to Robert W. Baird & Co. for their matching donation!

## Save the Date!

**2016 MASA Fall Conference**  
Sunday-Tuesday  
October 2-4, 2016

Madden's Conference Center, Brainerd

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

## Thank you to all of our donors!

**Gary Amoroso**, Executive Director, MASA

**Dan Anderson**, Superintendent, Maple River, Region 2

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**Eric Williams**, Exec. Director, Nova Classical Academy, Region 9

# Did You Know?

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

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

Whitewater Learning, is not a MASA product, but it recommend it as an 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.



Weather in Minnesota can be unpredictable. There are the inevitable days when school leaders must make weather-related decisions. MASA has been pleased to add an important new resource to our members' toolboxes for monitoring the weather.

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

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

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

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



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# 2016 Session Update - Final Budget Agreements



Valerie Dosland  
Government Affairs Director  
Ewald Consulting  
MASA Lobbyist

The 2016 Legislative Session adjourned on Monday, May 23. Here are some of the highlights from this year's session:

### Supplemental Budget

The Supplemental Budget Conference committee finished their work on the E12 provisions early Sunday morning and a final supplemental budget bill was one of the last bills adopted by the House and Senate before adjournment.

The overall spending in the E12 bill was approximately \$80 million for FY17. The agreement also includes a provision to direct early repayment of maximum effort loans and limit one-day election bonds. The voluntary pre-kindergarten pilot is the big-ticket item in the bill with a \$25 million appropriation.

Other major appropriations include:

- \$12 million for student support grants.
- \$4.9 million to extend an equity increase to non-metro school districts.
- \$7.5 million to address the teacher shortages.

The supplemental budget bill is almost 600 pages long so I've extracted the relevant articles for your convenience, you can find them at [www.mnasa.org](http://www.mnasa.org). You can also find a full summary of the significant E12 budget and policy provisions included in the conference committee agreement on the MASA website.

### Omnibus Tax Bill

The Omnibus Tax Bill also came together early Sunday morning. The tax bill includes a 40% credit to farmers for school bond taxes paid each year as well as \$6 million in aid to school districts that qualify for the maximum effort loan program.

### School Board Vacancy/Election Bill

After a lot of worry and delay, the Omnibus Elections Bill is on its way to the Governor for final enactment. The bill includes the following provisions regarding filling a school board vacancy:

- Allows a school board to make an appointment to fill a vacancy but requires an election be held the next November. If the vacancy occurs within 90 days before election day, the special election must be held on or before election day of the following year. If the vacancy occurs within 90 days before election day in the third year of the term, no special election is required.

- Allows a school board that has already scheduled a special election prior to the effective date to cancel the election if the absentee balloting period has not yet started.
- Permits the voters to reject a board appointee by petition of at least five percent of the number of voters who voted in the district at the most recent state general election.

### Omnibus Pensions Bills

After a lengthy delay, an omnibus pension bill was passed by the Legislature. However, the bill does not include the full sustainability package as originally proposed by TRA. TRA's original proposal would have called for a 1% employer increase, a 1% COLA reduction for retirees and an elimination of further COLA triggers. However, because of the cost of the employer contribution increase, which would have been funded by the state, the House and Senate decided at this point state funding was not available to move forward with the full TRA proposal. Instead, the bill includes a limited version of the sustainability package proposed by TRA:

- A COLA reduction for current retirees from 2% to 1% effective January 1, 2017 for one year only.
- An elimination of future COLA triggers.
- Does not include a proposed 1% employer increase in the original TRA proposal.

Other items of interest:

- TRA's interest rate assumption is lowered from 8.5% to 8%, which occurred for all other public retirement plans during the 2015 legislative session.
- TRA's payroll growth assumption is lowered from 3.75% to 3.5%, which occurred for all other public retirement plans during the 2015 legislative session.
- Updates the future salary increase assumption to incorporate the recommendations of the plans' 2015 experience study results.

### Health Insurance Transparency Act Changes Not Agreed To

The House State Government Finance budget provisions included three changes to the HITA statutes (a repeal of the requirement that school districts seek a PEIP bid; allow school districts to have health insurance contracts up to 5 years in length and removal of the ability for a local representative to unilaterally enroll in PEIP). Through conference committee negotiations these provisions were not accepted as part of the final agreement. •

# Nominations Open for 2017 Superintendent of the Year

Nominate a colleague for the nation's most prestigious award for school system leaders.

MASA invites nominations for 2017 Minnesota Superintendent of the Year. The recipient of this prestigious award will be a candidate among other state winners for National superintendent of the Year. The 2017 National Superintendent of the Year will be announced at the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) National Conference on Education in New Orleans, Louisiana, March 2-4, 2017.

Now in its 30th year, the AASA National Superintendent of the Year Program pays tribute to the talent and vision of the men and women who lead our nation's public schools. The program is designed to recognize the outstanding leadership of active, front-line superintendents. Any superintendent, chancellor or top leader of a school system in Minnesota who plans to continue in the profession may be nominated.

Candidates are assessed on the following criteria.

- **Leadership for Learning:** creativity in successfully meeting the needs of students in his or her school system.

- **Communication:** strength in both personal and organizational communication.
- **Professionalism:** constant improvement of administrative knowledge and skills, while providing professional development opportunities and motivation to others on the education team.
- **Community Involvement:** active participation in local community activities and an understanding of regional, national and international issues.

Recent recipients include: 2016 Daniel Bittman, Sauk Rapids-Rice Public Schools; 2015 Sandra Lewandowski, Intermediate District 287; 2014 Kate Maguire, Osseo Area Schools; and 2013 Jeff Olson, Saint Peter Public Schools. For a complete list of past award recipients, visit Recognition on the MASA web ([www.mnasa.org](http://www.mnasa.org))

**Nominations are due Aug. 1, 2016.** For more information, please contact [quinn@mnasa.org](mailto:quinn@mnasa.org). To place a nomination, visit the AASA website at [soy.aasa.org](http://soy.aasa.org).

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# Is Your District Moving to the Cloud?

**"When the platform changes, the leaders change."**

- Seth Godin



**Doug Johnson**  
Director of Technology  
Burnsville-Eagan-Savage School  
District

**C**an technology directors be as reactionary as other professionals working in education?

Most of us, I believe, have the reputation for doing our best to push the envelope, to create change, to foment revolution in our schools. Or at least educational technology writers and popular speakers at technology conferences would lead one to that conclusion.

But at heart, might we "techies" be deeply resistant to change as well?

I get this feeling most strongly when I hear about technology departments raising barriers rather than creating possibilities about new resources especially when the objections seem rather spurious (security of GoogleApps, bandwidth for YouTube, predators on Facebook, licensing of Skype, etc.). Are the concerns real or are they raised to keep technology departments from doing something different, jeopardizing our roles, responsibilities, control, and budget?

Is anyone ever happy about new directions that may significantly change one's job, require new skills, shift the power structure, and raise questions about one's usefulness? What happens in the technology department:

- When individual workstations using the Chrome OS can be maintained by restoring a common, simple image since settings and individual files will all be stored online?
- When security and backup becomes the responsibility of an application server provider not the district technology department?
- When voice and video become more important than data flowing through the networks?
- When content filters can be easily bypassed or students get Internet access using their own cellular accounts, not the school's?
- When network reliability, adequacy and security become so mission-critical for all staff and students that the individual district cannot assure the quality of service necessary?

Among the biggest changes technology directors must

recognize is the move to cloud-based services. Whether it is Gmail replacing Exchange, the Foliate Library System being hosted by a regional technology center, or having firewall service being provided at the ISP level, a growing number of technologies are being outsourced.

The move to cloud over the past 10 years or so has proven to be a great move. Districts that have moved resources to the cloud:

- *Realize real cost savings.* In the blog post linked below from 2010, I estimated a \$200,000 a year potential cost savings by moving to GoogleApps for education for a district of 7,200 students. While your mileage may vary, "free" is always less expensive than "paid."
- *Provide greater access and convenience for users.* The ability to create, access, and edit one's files from any location with Internet access is much better than toting that laptop or carrying files on an easily lost flash drive. By using Google Docs or Office 365, there are no file compatibility problems between home and school or between lab and lab within a school building! Collaboration among students and class assignment workflow is greatly facilitated by cloud-based applications and storage.
- *Give users greater security and privacy.* While online data breaches when they happen get lots of press, cloud-based data services have proven to be secure. History has shown that data loss more often occurs through social engineering phishing scams, stolen laptops that are not secured, or the use of too simple and too seldom changed passwords. The growing sophistication of hackers creates the need for expertise in data security that is beyond the scope of most school technology departments. A question I often ask is "Do you keep your money under your bed, in a safe in the basement, or in a bank?" and then ask, "Should you trust your data on your computer's hard drive, on a local file server, or in a secure site in the cloud?" It's a good analogy.
- *Provide greater reliability of service.* Our district's pipe to the Internet is reaching "5 9s" reliability. It works 99.999% of the time. And we are adding a redundant fiber link in a separate physical location to remove the threat of the errant backhoe digging up a line.

Regardless of size, every school district in Minnesota and the nation is seeing technology becoming more vital to the everyday functions of education. I would argue that the very

***Is Your District Moving to the Cloud? continued on page 25.***

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## PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE TEAM

A very important part of the work of MASA is to provide outstanding service to the members of the association. Besides a strong professional development component, MASA wants to stand ready to help members as they navigate the many complex situations that they face on a day-to-day basis. The five member Professional Assistance Team (P.A.T.) is made up of highly experienced school leaders who will use their expertise to help their colleagues when they need consultation and/or advice. The members of the 2015-2016 P.A.T. are listed below...



**Deb Henton**

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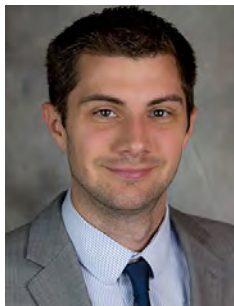
These individuals will take confidential calls and contacts from any MASA member. The only case in which information may be shared is in the event that a situation is complex enough that you may require legal assistance and will be directed to the Executive Director of MASA.

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

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

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

# Gender Identity: New Guidance from Agencies and Courts



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

Access to restrooms, locker rooms, and other facilities for transgender and gender non-conforming individuals is an increasingly contentious social and legal issue. Public polarization on this topic is evidenced by the recent backlash to a North Carolina law requiring people to use public bathrooms that correspond with the sex on their birth certificate, and, on the other side, the reaction to Target's announcement of a policy allowing

transgender customers to use the bathrooms that align with their gender identity. The issue is particularly sensitive in school settings, where concerns about bullying, privacy, and social acceptance are often heightened. The law surrounding this topic remains unsettled, but recent guidance from federal agencies and courts indicates that schools could face legal challenges when they prevent transgender students from using facilities aligned to their gender identity.

The bedrock of this discussion at the federal level is Title IX, which provides that “[n]o person . . . shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program receiving federal financial assistance.” 20 U.S.C. § 1681(a). The U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights (OCR) has interpreted this sex discrimination prohibition to extend to claims of discrimination based on gender identity. But the Department’s regulations contain an exception that permits schools to have “separate toilet, locker room, and shower facilities on the basis of sex,” so long as “facilities provided for students of one sex are comparable to such facilities provided for students of the other sex.” 34 C.F.R. § 106.33.

The federal regulation is unclear, however, in its application to transgender and gender non-conforming students. But on May 13, 2016, OCR and the Department of Justice (DOJ) issued joint guidance to schools, clarifying that with respect to restrooms and locker rooms, “[a] school may provide separate facilities on the basis of sex, *but must allow transgender students access to such facilities consistent with their gender identity*” (emphasis added). OCR has consistently taken this position in recent years. Note that under the agency guidelines, private, alternative restrooms may be made available to students who voluntarily seek additional privacy, but schools may not require transgender students to use private facilities when other students are not required to do so.

Additionally, the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals recently

reversed a lower court and held that it would defer to OCR’s interpretation. In *G.G. v. Gloucester Cnty. Sch.*, a sophomore student notified the school that he was a transgender boy. (4th Cir. 2016). School officials were supportive and took steps to ensure that that the student was treated as a boy by teachers and staff, including allowing him to use the boys’ restroom. The student used the restroom for several weeks without incident, but, responding in part to community pressure, the school board passed a resolution limiting the use of male and female restroom and locker room facilities to the corresponding biological sexes, with alternative private facilities available for transgender students. The district court dismissed the student’s Title IX suit, holding that the regulations allow schools to limit bathroom access on the basis of a student’s birth or biological sex. The Fourth Circuit reversed the dismissal, finding the regulation ambiguous and deferring to OCR’s guidance requiring schools to treat transgender students consistent with their gender identity.

Some courts have reached similar conclusions to the Fourth Circuit, while others have construed Title IX more narrowly. Compare *Doe v. Reg’l Sch. Unit 26*, 86 A.3d 600 (Me. 2014) with *Johnston v. Univ. of Pittsburgh*, 97 F. Supp. 3d 657 (W.D. Penn. 2015). None of these decisions are binding on Minnesota schools, but the Fourth Circuit decision, combined with the new guidance from OCR and DOJ, reflects the emerging state of the law. While the landscape could shift through further judicial review or the passage of new legislation, for now, school districts should be cognizant of the fact that limiting transgender and gender non-conforming students’ use of facilities aligned to their gender identity may open districts to claims of discrimination. •

*This article is intended to provide general information with commentary. It should not be relied upon as legal advice. If required, legal advice regarding this topic should be obtained from district legal counsel.*

*Adam Wattenbarger is an education law attorney with the law firm of Kennedy & Graven, Chartered. For more information, please contact him at (612) 337-9300 or [www.kennedy-graven.com](http://www.kennedy-graven.com).*

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### Be Your Own Best Coach



Denny Smith  
Leadership and Development  
Trainer

Socrates once said that all learning is self-learning. The same can be said for your personal and professional growth. You can attend the seminars, read the books, listen to the motivational speakers but in the end any growth that you experience depends on your decision to change combined with your effort to make it happen. Motivational speaker Joel Weldon reminds us that, "If it's to be, it's up to me."

That doesn't discount for one minute the importance of attending seminars and MASA events, reading self-help books and making ongoing growth a way of life. But it still boils down to one thing -- your determination to continually evolve personally and professionally. Someone once jokingly asked a member of a self-help group, "If it's self-help, why do you need a group?" Attending MASA events serves as a great battery charger, but the educational benefits of membership and the interaction with other professionals are also ultimately important.

So what do you do after the motivational speaker leaves? We leave the conference all pumped up about making a difference and being the best we can be, but putting the ideas into action is the ultimate determiner of growth and change.

Before we introduce our four steps to self-coaching, let's revisit a couple of ideas from previous articles. Learning "How to Carve a Duck" is a powerful tool. It entails identifying a specific skill you wish to master, like more patience, then monitoring your behavior. Each time you find yourself acting impatiently, carve it away. When you shave away impatience, you move towards a calm and patient demeanor. The second is to work on "mindfulness," that is becoming totally aware of your current thoughts and actions and making conscious decisions to practice the leadership style you aspire to. If you combine these two concepts with strong determination, you will experience ongoing and unlimited growth.

So let's explore four steps to becoming your own best coach. The first is desire. Your desire to react with patience has to be stronger than your urge to fly off the handle. Your desire to maintain a calm tone of voice has to trump your desire to be right or to get in the last zinger. The desire must be accompanied by determination and these two realizations: One is that change takes time and everything is not going to be mastered by Tuesday afternoon. The second is that you will blow it once in a while so cut yourself some slack, welcome yourself to the human race and make a concerted

effort to get back on track.

The second step is to embrace this rule: "No excuses." One of Dr. Wayne Dyer's last books is *Excuses Be Gone*. He conducted live seminars on the subject that included individual coaching sessions with some of the participants. Many had experienced horrendous circumstances and as he helped them navigate their life stories, he did not let them off the hook. That didn't mean they were responsible for what happened to them but it did hold them totally accountable for the way they currently respond to their experiences.

Another component of this step is to understand why you get upset. We have a tendency to blame others and say, "You know what that other person did. Who wouldn't be upset," or "My kids drive me up a wall. You would get upset, too." Eric Butterworth, one of my favorite authors, admonishes that the reason you get upset is because you are upset able." That's a tough one to deal with but once you assume that responsibility, change takes place quickly.

The third is really the crux of self-coaching and we can steal terminology from Madeline Hunter for this one -- "Monitor and Adjust." Constantly be aware of the way you are thinking and behaving and if it is not what you want, pull in the reins, bring yourself under control and respond with "emotional intelligence." One definition of emotional intelligence is "Skill in perceiving, understanding, and managing emotions and feelings," which is one of hundreds you can get off the internet. The one I like is "The ability to keep yourself under control even when you don't want to." This is a skill that takes ongoing awareness and extreme diligence to master, but it is indeed achievable.

A huge component of self-coaching is to take advantage of the power of visualization. You can picture and visualize yourself being the calm, patient, competent and confident person you want to be and let your creative subconscious help fulfill the completion of those pictures. This is especially important to do when you do slip. When you blow it (and you will) take a deep breath and say to yourself, "Hey, that's not like me. I am patient and competent and I handle situations in a calm and confident manner." Then mentally rehearse reacting calmly and confidently in similar situations in the future.

The fourth step to self-coaching can be summed up by the old joke about the violin player who jumped into a cab in New York and asked the driver, "How do I get to Carnegie Hall?" The cabbie replied, "Practice, practice, practice." These are skills, and like all skills, they take practice to master and

*Be Your Own Best Coach continued on page 25.*

# 2016 MASA ELECTIONS

## Election Results



Curt Tryggestad  
MASA President-Elect  
Superintendent  
Eden Prairie Schools

**C**ongratulations to the following candidates who have been elected to MASA leadership positions. Board representatives are elected in a general election by the MASA members and will serve a three-year term beginning July 1, 2016.

### President (2016-17)

**Scott Thielman**, Superintendent, Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose (was President-Elect in 2015-16 and will assume office as MASA president)

### President-Elect (2016-17)

**Curt Tryggestad**, Superintendent, Eden Prairie

### MASA Treasurer (2016-17)

**Jamie Skjeveland**, Superintendent, Crosby-Ironton

### Region 1 Superintendent Comp. Group Rep.

**Jeff Elstad**, Superintendent, Byron

### Region 2 Superintendent Comp. Group Rep.

**John Cselovszki**, Superintendent, Sleepy Eye

### Region 3 Superintendent Comp. Group Rep.

**John Landgaard**, Superintendent, Worthington

### Region 4 Superintendent Comp. Group Rep.

**Doug Froke**, Superintendent, Detroit Lakes

### Region 5 Superintendent Comp. Group Rep.

**Lee Westrum**, Superintendent, Wadena-Deer Creek

### Region 8 Superintendent Comp. Group Rep.

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

### Region 9 Superintendent Comp. Group Reps

**Jane Berenz**, Superintendent, Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan

**David Law**, Superintendent, Anoka-Hennepin

### Metro Curriculum Comp. Group Rep.

**Kimberly Pavlovich**, Director of Secondary Curriculum, Anoka-Hennepin

### Greater MN Technology Comp. Group Rep.

**Mark Diehl**, Director of Information & Technology Services, Little Falls

### Greater MN Central Office Comp. Group Rep.

**Missy Eidsness**, Assistant Superintendent of Learning & Accountability, Moorhead

### AASA Governing Board

**Daniel Bittman**, Superintendent, Sauk Rapids-Rice

**John Cselovszki**, Superintendent, Sleepy Eye

**Lynne Kovash**, Superintendent, Moorhead

Newly elected leaders will participate in an orientation with the full MASA Board of Directors this summer. MASA appreciates these leaders for their commitment to MASA and Minnesota education, and offers them thanks and best wishes as they begin their terms of service.

Special thanks to all MASA members who participated in the election process!

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# 2016-17 MASA TRANSITIONS

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## Retirements

**Jim Behle**, St. Michael-Albertville  
**Cathy Bettino**, Pine River-Backus  
**Dan Brooks**, Sauk Centre  
**Robert Doetsch**, Buffalo Lake-Hector-Stewart  
**Wayne Gilman**, Pine City  
**Bob Gross**, Brainerd  
**Linda Gulbranson**, Red Lake  
**Peter Haapala**, Carlton  
**Dan Hoverman**, Mounds View  
**Allen Jensen**, Ashby  
**Jerry Jensen**, United South Central  
**Barb Knudsen**, Lakeville  
**Gary Kuphal**, Plainview-Elgin-Millville  
**Julie Ladwig**, Waseca, Retiring in Dec.  
**Brad Madsen**, Dawson-Boyd  
**Tammy Nielsen**, Northwest Regional Interdistrict, Retiring in Nov.  
**Mark Nohner**, Fosston  
**Nan Records**, Sherburne-N Wright Special Education Coop.  
**Jerry Reshetar**, Grand Meadow-Glenville-Emmons  
**Chris Richardson**, Northfield  
**Warren Schmidt**, Rothsay  
**Wallace Schoeb**, Blackduck  
**Al Stoeckman**, Menahga  
**Erin Talley**, Elk River  
*Thank you for your service to education and congratulations on your retirement!*

---

## District Changes

**Brad Bergstrom**, Human Resource Director, Austin to Superintendent, Thief River Falls  
**Paul Besel**, Principal to Superintendent, Grand Meadow  
**Ronald Bratlie**, Superintendent, Cromwell-Wright to Interim Superintendent, Rothsay  
**Gwen Carman**, Early Childhood Professional Development Facilitator, Northland SpEd. Coop to Superintendent, Carlton  
**William Crandall**, Superintendent, Cook County, also serving as Superintendent, Lake Superior  
**Dave Endicott**, Superintendent, Walker-Hackensack-Akeley to Pine River-Backus  
**Kevin Enerson**, Principal, Le Sueur-Henderson to Superintendent, Pipestone  
**Keith Fleming**, Principal, Austin to Superintendent, United South Central  
**Anne Marie Foucault**, Director of Curriculum/Principal to

Superintendent, St. Michael-Albertville  
**Annette Freiheit**, Principal, Hayfield to Superintendent, Pine City  
**Ed Graff**, Superintendent, Anchorage, AK to Minneapolis  
**David Hansen**, Principal to Superintendent, Buffalo Lake-Hector-Stewart  
**Kevin Hedstrom**, Superintendent, Norman County West to Principal, Mahnomon  
**Matthew Hillman**, Director of Administrative Services to Superintendent, Northfield  
**Shannon Hunstad**, Principal, Pillager to Superintendent, Lancaster  
**Bill Ihrke**, Principal to Superintendent, Plainview-Elgin-Millville  
**Phil Johnson**, Superintendent, Willow River  
**Michael Kolness**, Superintendent, Ada-Borup to East Grand Forks  
**Allyson Kuehn**, Principal, Annandale to Director of Special Education, Sherburne-N Wright Sp.Ed Coop.  
**Laine Larson**, Superintendent, Thief River Falls to Brainerd  
**Chris Lennox**, Assistant Superintendent to Superintendent, Mounds View  
**Nathan Libbon**, Principal to Superintendent, Cromwell-Wright  
**Mark Lundin**, Superintendent, Norman County East to Blackduck  
**Emily McDonald**, Director of Equity & Innovation to Executive Director of Teaching & Learning, Lakeville  
**Joe Meyer**, Principal to Superintendent, Murray County Central  
**Ryan Nielsen**, Principal/Superintendent, Lake Benton to Superintendent, Canby  
**Alan Niemann**, Principal, Foley to Superintendent, Ashby  
**Rob Nudel**, Principal, Frazee-Vergas to Superintendent, Norman County East  
**Luther Onken**, Superintendent, staying on part-time at Fulda & Murray County Central and moving to part-time at Lake Benton  
**David Pace**, Superintendent, East Grand Forks to Greenway  
**Jerry Reker**, Superintendent, Butterfield-Odin  
**Kevin Ricke**, Principal, Lake Park Audubon to Superintendent, Fosston  
**Shane Tappe**, Principal, Ashby to Superintendent, Dawson-Boyd  
**Kevin Wellen**, Superintendent, Menahga  
**Patrick Westby**, Superintendent, West Central to Sauk Centre  
**Terrance Wilding**, Principal, New Mexico School for the Deaf to Superintendent, Minnesota State Academies  
**Shawn Yates**, Superintendent, Norman County West  
**Dean Yocum**, Superintendent, Hill City to Brandon & Evansville

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# Engagement...Does it Matter?



Shari Prest  
President  
ARK Associates

As part of the collaborative journey to improve student achievement, close the learning gap and prepare the World's Best Work Force (WBWF), MASA recognizes the importance of engaging parents, communities, lawmakers, and – most importantly – students, in public education and local schools. In fact, MASA and its members have committed to the goal of “foster[ing] relationships with

all stakeholders to create and advocate a common public education agenda in Minnesota” (MASA 2015-2017 Strategic Plan).

Wonderful things are happening all across Minnesota for students and the stakeholders that support them. Following are just a few of the many and varied examples of initiatives and innovations taking place in and around our public schools.

**Burnsville, Eagan, Savage ISD #191** will celebrate the eighty-nine parents who have completed the eight-week FIRE (Family Involvement for a Rich Education) program in which moms and dads, originally from Somalia and Spanish-speaking countries, attended eight weekly meetings to learn about the American educational system and how they can support their children's learning at school and home. The goal is to form a stronger partnership of parents and school staff that will benefit students and their academic success.

“Filled with new knowledge and tools, your participation in the FIRE Academy conveys strong convictions about the hopes and dreams you have for your children's education and future,” Superintendent Joe Gothard told parents at the ceremony. “Our goal is to reduce historical gaps in achievement. When we look at students' race, socioeconomic level or English language proficiency, we have one strong message: all students can learn and succeed, and it is our collective responsibility to guide our children towards making the most of their educational opportunities.”

At the FIRE graduation ceremony, parents shared their deep trust for schools (how they see them as a “second home”), how they understand so much more about school and how they know to help prepare their children for college.

**Fergus Falls Public Schools ISD #544** engaged area manufacturers and raised \$350,000 for the district to update their old agriculture shop into a modern manufacturing learning lab so students will be exposed to manufacturing

of the 21st century. The district has developed a STEM Academy where students take language arts, math, science, and fabrications (welding) as a cohort group. In their senior year, each student will complete a capstone project. This was all developed in collaboration with area manufacturers. Students are “free agents” courted by industry to enter into that industry's field.

The innovation and energy of engagement is boundless in the Fergus Falls School District and community. One hundred businesses participate in the Adopt-a-Class program each year. New and improved facilities are supported by local businesses, governments, fundraisers, and partnerships. According to Superintendent Jerry Ness, the district is currently working with two senior care facilities that are providing all the equipment and instructors so their students can take a Certified Nursing Assistant (CAN) course. They will work as interns in the facilities.

**Duluth Public Schools ISD #709** Superintendent Bill Gronseth says his district is energized and healing from the difficult issues of long-range facilities planning and the closing of some schools.

According to Superintendent Gronseth, “Engaging people in conversation began a reset to see schools as a reflection of the community. In the process, we were purposeful about being inclusive.” Some of the results of those conversations— involving over 2,000 citizens—are an Ojibwa immersion program, a new enhanced anti-bullying program, the passage of a two-tier levy program, and being honored with a District Gold Medal award by the National School Public Relations Association for the district's “Think Kids: Community Vision and Priorities” initiative.

We need school leaders to engage and inspire all district stakeholders to play a role in supporting teaching and learning that will prepare students and communities meet the challenges of the future. Together, we can improve student achievement, close the learning gap, and prepare the world's best work force. •

***“Ideals such as love, kindness, respect, service and courage are critical to our future. Parents teach it to their children, teachers encourage it in their students, and we all depend on it to ensure healthy communities.”***

- Kevin Godden, *The Triumph of Teamwork* (blog)



**Leadership & Vision continued from page 1.**

*the long-term, you have to be teachable, not perfect.*

*Perfection doesn't qualify you as a leader, but knowing what to do about your inadequacies, foibles, quirks, weaknesses, and blunders makes it possible.*

There are wonderful leaders across our state, doing outstanding work. We will make great things happen within and across our districts not by striving to be perfect, but by sharing ideas, working collectively, and creating the conditions for innovation within and across the school districts we lead.

Most importantly, I believe we simply need to be humble enough to continually learn and grow in the work that we do, and ask one another for ideas and help.

Thanks for the work that you do! Thanks for the opportunity to lead MASA this past year! •

*Blog resource: [www.leadershipnow.com/leadingblog/followership/](http://www.leadershipnow.com/leadingblog/followership/)*



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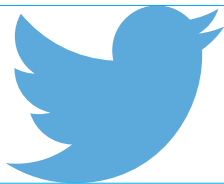
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**Are You Moving?**

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



**Twitter Chat for MASA Members**

**#MNMASA Second Sunday of the Month @ 8 pm**

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

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

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

# Priming the Superintendent Pipeline

by Mia Urick, Director of Professional Learning, MASA

An essential part of MASA's mission is to "empower leaders through high quality professional learning," and we address that commitment in many ways, supporting the needs of our members at each career phase. This year, we have had the opportunity to support our colleagues who wish to explore becoming superintendents. The Minnesota Aspiring Superintendents' Academy offers a cohort professional development opportunity focusing on developing a professional practice in the superintendency that is grounded on evidence-based knowledge, skills, and dispositions that contribute to successful capstone leadership.

MASA is grateful to the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), the National Joint Powers Alliance (NJPA), and the Minnesota Service Cooperatives for their support in making this program possible.

The rationale for offering the content is to beef up the "pipeline" of future leaders who are prepared to be successful in the superintendency.

We have evidence that the "supply and demand" of qualified superintendents is an issue of concern, and that this has been on the radar for a while. In the Fall, 2007 issue of the AASA Journal of Scholarship and Practice, Jerry Robicheau and Jean Haar offered their study on the "[Supply and Demand of Minnesota Public School Administrators](#)"<sup>[1]</sup> and suggested that, "Given the importance of effective school leadership in connection with the challenges that exists in today's schools, administration preparation programs as well as school districts should be attentive to the potential pool of candidates for school administration positions."

We also know just from our own anecdotal evidence (and member data) here at MASA that turnover is still an issue for a lot of districts, and that the pool of candidates for filling open superintendencies seems to be a bit smaller. The "shortage" is a ubiquitous topic—just do a Google search on "superintendent shortage" and you will find lots of states and organizations weighing in. One [resource of note is AASA's survey](#)<sup>[2]</sup> from the last State of the Superintendency study that asserts that we don't have enough superintendents in the "pipeline."

So, it seems that it would be in the best interest of districts to support beefing up the supply of well-prepared superintendents, but that is a general, "greater good" kind of application. Where it gets personal is when you talk about succession. School districts tend not to be terribly good at succession planning, for many reasons. Again, the cybersphere is chock full of articles and books on the topic.

Andy Hargreaves writes in his forward to Dean Fink's book on succession planning in education, [The Succession Challenge: Building and Sustaining Leadership Capacity Through Succession Management](#).<sup>[3]</sup>

"We are finally waking up to at least some of the challenges of leadership succession in education. After decades of complacency, when we acted as if our leaders would stay at their posts forever, we now realize that the Boomer generation of leaders is moving on and that about half of our existing leaders (the exact numbers depend on the study) will be retiring very soon."

Hargreaves highlights a culture we all know well — one where mission, initiatives, strategic planning, etc. go by the wayside with unsustainable leadership. And of course there are all kinds of research out there that provides evidence of the benefits of sustained leadership.

So, feeding the pipeline generally and helping districts with succession planning are the short answers to why we are offering the Academy. I don't know that we are terribly good at either of those things (yet). But if it makes us feel better, neither is corporate America. For example, a [Stanford B-School study](#)<sup>[4]</sup> showed that leaders believe "that succession planning is vitally important, but the majority do not think that their organizations are doing enough to prepare for eventual changes in leadership, nor are they confident that they have the right practices in place to be sure of identifying the best leaders for tomorrow."

Of course, the culture has deeply embedded traditions and processes that could both help and hinder the process of succession planning in a public organization, but it is our hope that we can work together to prime the pipeline of excellence in leadership of our public schools.

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

We are grateful to our Master Teacher and facilitator Bruce Klaehn, Retired Superintendent (Dover-Eyota Schools); our Trends Presenter, Educational Consultant Jane Sigford; and our coaching team: Dennis Carlson, Retired Superintendent

*Superintendent Pipeline continued on page 27.*

# The Educating Community: How Villages Raise Their Children



John McKnight  
Co-Director  
Asset Based Community  
Development Institute  
Northwestern University

In the spring of 2015, MASA invited John McKnight to speak at the conference and engage in some follow-up work with interested districts around the topic of leading an Educating Community. The following text is an excerpt of John's writing on the topic, as well as a progress report on the five Minnesota school districts working on initiatives to engage community members in the education of children and youth.

Throughout North America, one of the most popular mottos is the African saying, "It takes a village to raise a child." Hardly anyone disagrees with its premise. However, there are very few "villages" that actually engage in this practice. Child raising is thought to be largely the domain of families and schools. However, a village is much more than family or school and holds more educational resources than either.

The educational assets of the village include the knowledge of neighborhood residents, the clubs, groups and associations that are citizen-based learning environments and the local institutions (businesses, not-for-profits and government bodies). They all provide incredible learning opportunities. It is these community educational assets that are activated in a village that raises its children. However, in most communities, these invaluable resources are unused and disconnected from the lives of young people.

There is a forgotten history of village child raising. In our neighborhood research we have discovered this history by asking people over fifty years of age to describe their experiences in their neighborhood when they were children. Most of these people respond in a similar fashion. They say that things have changed a great deal in their neighborhoods since they were children. They remember how various people on the block taught them all kinds of things from singing to stamp collecting to bicycle repair to history. They also remember how the people on the block expected them to "behave" and would tell their parents immediately if they stepped over the community boundaries. Finally, they speak of their sense that they were the children of all the people on the block or neighborhood.

When we ask people under the age of 40 to tell us about their childhood neighborhood experiences, we rarely hear the story told by their seniors. Instead their story is about school, youth groups (from Boy Scouts to gangs) and

programs. Their neighbors have vanished from the story.

It appears that in one to two generations, villages have lost their power to raise children. Their functions have largely been transferred to schools. This transfer is reflected by the fact that in the last generation, schools have been asked to take responsibility for the health, safety, food, recreation, behavior, moral values and entrepreneurial development of young people. Viewed from the school perspective, this transfer has created teachers who often feel overwhelmed by all of these responsibilities. This transfer of community functions to the classroom has so distorted the teacher's role that she or he is diminished in capacity to teach those things for which they were prepared – the basic educational curriculum.

The transfer of community functions to schools has been a lose-lose history. The community has become impotent and often angry at the behavior of young people with whom they have lost touch. The school has become overburdened as it attempts to be an all-purpose child raiser that fails at this impossible task. As a result, school community tensions are increased as schools try to respond by getting parents to support the school rather than seeking community initiatives that would result in the village restoring those functions that allow it to raise a child.

The resolution of this school community dilemma depends upon identifying and mobilizing the educational capacities of the residents, associations and institutions in the neighborhood. Surprisingly, every neighborhood is rich with these educational resources. However, very few communities are organized to identify and connect these resources to the young people. A village with the capacity to raise children must first be able to identify the three most important teaching resources in the neighborhood:

- The knowledge of local residents (knowledge local residents hold that they are willing to teach young people).
- The neighborhood associations (the clubs, groups, organizations and associations to which the local residents belong).
- Local institutions (businesses, not for profits and government institutions that include libraries, parks, schools, museums, etc.).

In many places, a common description of a local community is that it is a "welcoming community." A related definition

*The Educating Community continued on page 21.*



*The Educating Community continued  
from page 20.*

would be an “educating community”— a place where all of the learning assets of individuals, associations, and institutions are identified and mobilized to create a village that raises its children. There are at least three steps that lead to an “educating community”:

1. **Partners in Education:** The organization for carrying forward the vision of an “educating community” includes as many educating partners as possible. These partners can include neighborhood associations, other interested associations, the library, the local newspaper, the community foundation, the local government, the chamber of commerce, the school, etc. While local school leaders might be key to initiating the partnership, it may be that they’re better positioned to initiate and inspire the community teaching resources rather than taking a leading role.
2. **Identifying the Community’s Educational Resources:** In many communities, the “village” is not raising the children because the local educational assets are not visible. An initial goal of the Partnership for Community Education is to make visible the invisible resources and to identify their willingness to take on a community education role. This “visibility” could include identifying: 1) the teaching knowledge of residents in the neighborhood; 2) the associations in the community and their willingness to become an educational resource and 3) the array of institutions and their willingness to join in the educating process.
3. **Connecting the Educational Resources:** Once the Partnership has identified the vast array of educational resources, the next step is developing methods that connect them to young people. The task is to weave young people into the fabric of the adult community so that they can learn and also become contributors to the community’s life.

In recent years several leaders of institutions and professionals have become very clear that they will not be able to fulfill their goals if the community is not organized to fulfill its unique functions.

Professionals in the health field have been active for years in energizing local neighborhoods to undertake health-giving activities because they know that medical care is a very limited tool for improving health.

In many progressive communities, the police leadership is very clear about their limits in dealing with crime. They have developed community policing as a method to support neighborhood organizations that will take on functions providing security that police cannot begin to provide.

In many cities, elected officials and department heads understand that unless local neighborhoods are organized to

take on productive functions, the city or town will decline. This is because they know that local government has clear limits of its capacity, at best, to create safe, healthy, economic neighborhoods. Without organized productive citizen action, the government will fail.

It is much less clear that school professionals understand what health, police and municipal officials see so clearly. Often, they are still trapped in a paradigm in which the school dominates the field of education by indicating that the key question is, “How can the community help the school?” In this era, the key reform question is how can the community recover its educational functions so that schools can once again be respected partners in community progress.

This is a new educational era. Villages must recover their capacities to raise children if schools are to become all that they can be. An effective school of the future will be a Partner in that community recovery. When that recovery is achieved, the village will be able to say, “These are our children. We care for and educate them. Our school is our best ally as we pioneer the new work of becoming a village raising our children.”

### **Our Minnesota Pilot Districts**

Over the past year, five Minnesota districts have worked to initiate elements of an educating community. Below is a brief summary of their work to date.

#### **LaCrescent-Hokah Public Schools**

LaCrescent-Hokah has a summer child care program at an elementary school for elementary age students. In the summer of 2016 they will introduce a new activity during the lunch hour of this program. The initiative will recruit local community members to come and teach the students whatever topics/skills identified by the community members.

#### **Moorhead Area Public Schools**

Moorhead is developing a program working jointly with some local parks that have programs for children. The focus is especially on parks in more disadvantaged neighborhoods. They would like to engage parents in the program by having them read to or play with the children. Teachers and social workers would be on site working with the children and engaging the parents. This engagement can give parents a better experience in working with the school personnel. The district is working with AmeriCorps volunteers and will try to get them to collect cultural stories from various neighborhoods, and these stories would then be introduced into the school program.

#### **Watertown-Mayer Public Schools**

Watertown-Mayer has just completed a strategic roadmap. It includes the ability to make strong connections with local assets. They will begin doing learning work that includes

*The Educating Community continued on page 27.*



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## 2015-16 MASA BUSINESS PARTNERS

### Special thanks to our 2015-16 MASA Business Partners!

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

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# MINNEVATE

*This summer, Minnevale! is*

## On the Road Again!

by Mia Urick, Director of Professional Learning, MASA

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

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

The MASA leadership is committed to Minnevale! in its many forms ... dialogue, idea archive, inspiration source, provocation, etc. The current MASA Strategic Plan features the goal: “(By 2017) Through Minnevale!, we will foster relationships with all stakeholders to create and advocate a common public education agenda in Minnesota,” and specifically the action step:

“Develop a common understanding of purposes of education and solicit feedback.”

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

For the upcoming meetings, we will ask superintendents to support Minnevale! by identifying participants who are members of your school district curriculum advisory councils who will be interested in participating in a dialogue about school purpose and goals. We will once again collect the conversation data (participants’ comments will be confidential), code it, and report it as additional data for the Minnevale! conversation.

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

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### *Is Your District Moving to the Cloud? continued from page 9.*

complexity and mission-critical nature of technology in schools has increased to the point our in-house staff cannot be expected to have all the skills needed to keep servers, networks, administrative systems, security protections, and account provisioning in an ever growing number of educational programs working reliably.

I rather doubt the need for technology leaders will decrease in the immediate future. As the importance for some tasks diminish, new tasks crop up. But some jobs *will* increase in value while others decrease. While we would all like strategies for securing our positions in our organizations, blocking progress isn’t one of them. •

Resources:

*“Computing in the Clouds,” Leading & Learning, Dec/Jan 2009/10.*

*“Where are the savings in using GoogleApps?” Blue Skunk Blog, February 5, 2010.*

*“The Changing Role of the Technology Director,” Educational Leadership, April 2013.*

*“Boiling frogs, GoogleApps and School Change,” Blue Skunk Blog, Sept 26, 2011.*

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### *Be Your Own Best Coach continued from page 13.*

ongoing persistence to experience them as a way of life.

So become your own best coach. Determine the skills you want to tweak, develop a strong desire to master them, and accept no excuses. When you slip, be kind to yourself as you mentally rehearse your future behavior. Develop an awareness of how you are thinking and reacting in the moment, then monitor and adjust as necessary. Keep in mind that you are a warm and wonderful work in progress as you start your journey to Carnegie Hall. Practice, practice, practice.

Let’s close our year together with four of the most wonderful words in education: “Have a great summer.” •

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

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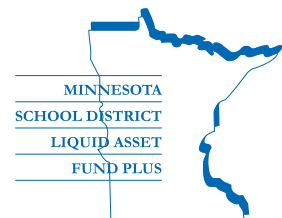
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## ***Superintendent Pipeline continued from page 19.***

(Anoka-Hennepin Schools); Deb Henton, Superintendent, North Branch Area Public Schools; Lynne Kovash, Superintendent, Moorhead Area Public Schools; Scott Staska, Superintendent, Rocori Public Schools; and David Thompson, Superintendent, Stewartville Public Schools.

Our Academy participants this year are from a variety of districts and positions throughout Minnesota. Though diverse in background and perspective, they share the qualities of passion for education and commitment to leadership. Our coaches often remark that working with this group gives them great confidence in the quality of leadership in the next generation of superintendents. The 2016 Academy participants are:

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

As of the publishing of this newsletter, three of our participants have either begun a superintendency or have accepted superintendencies beginning in the 2016-17 school year:

- Gwen Carman, Carlton (started in January, 2016)
- Annette Freiheit, Pine City
- Matthew Hillmann, Northfield

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

*Resources:*

[1] [www.aasa.org/uploadedFiles/Publications/Journals/AASA\\_Journal\\_of\\_Scholarship\\_and\\_Practice/Fall07FINAL.pdf](http://www.aasa.org/uploadedFiles/Publications/Journals/AASA_Journal_of_Scholarship_and_Practice/Fall07FINAL.pdf)

[2] [www.aasa.org/uploadedFiles/Resources/files/pipeline%20press%20release\\_FINAL\\_PDFL.pdf](http://www.aasa.org/uploadedFiles/Resources/files/pipeline%20press%20release_FINAL_PDFL.pdf)

[3] [us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/the-succession-challenge/book233823](http://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/the-succession-challenge/book233823)

[4] [www.gsb.stanford.edu/faculty-research/publications/2014-report-senior-executive-succession-planning-talent-development](http://www.gsb.stanford.edu/faculty-research/publications/2014-report-senior-executive-succession-planning-talent-development)

## ***The Educating Community continued from page 21.***

an asset based community development orientation. This will result in an action plan. A small pilot project could be developed.

### **Clinton-Graceville-Beardsley School District**

Clinton-Graceville-Beardsley has developed a school foundation. It can make small grants to groups outside the school district. This might involve an investment in engaging high school students and retired residents as intergenerational “welcomers” for new residents. A summer ABCD club for interested high school students may be created. It might convene at a local café, focus on non-athletic skills and especially involve students who are not yet heading to college. The superintendent is attempting to explore how music can be an asset for connection in the community.

### **Austin Public Schools**

In Austin, a community-school consortium conducted focus groups with students, parents, community members and community associations regarding factors that influence student achievement. Then, a group of community leaders and school representatives analyzed the focus group data settling on five areas of work. One of these areas involves providing, “equal access to opportunities which encourage our learners to explore areas of personal interest and prepare for post-secondary education or career.” The idea is that readiness must be based on the passions of students. A task group to pursue the “equal access” goal has been created. It involves community and school leaders. Issues the task force will examine include:

- What assets are currently available to students
- What are new opportunities that can be developed?
- What are the barriers?
- What evaluative measurements are appropriate?

Their goal is to create community opportunities for skill and vocational development. •

# MASA Calendar

## 2016

### June 16-17

MASA Board of Directors Retreat  
Madden's Conference Center, Brainerd

### August 9-10

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

### August 10

MASA Great Start Cohort  
Marriott NW, Brooklyn Park

### September 16-17

MN Aspiring Superintendents Academy  
MASA Offices, St. Paul

### October 1-2

MASA Board of Directors  
Madden's Conference Center, Brainerd

### October 2

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

### October 3-4

MASA Fall Conference  
Madden's Conference Center, Brainerd

### November 11-12

MN Aspiring Superintendents Academy  
MASA Offices, St. Paul

### November 16-18

Curriculum Leaders of MN/  
Technology Leaders of MN  
(CLM/TLM) Conference  
Cragun's Conference Center, Brainerd

## 2017

### March 2-4

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

### March 8

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

### March 9-10

MASA/MASE Spring Conference  
Marriott NW, Brooklyn Park

### September 30-October 1

MASA Board of Directors  
Duluth, MN

### October 1

MASA Board of Directors  
Great Start Cohort  
MASA Foundation Golf Tournament  
Duluth, MN

### October 2-3

MASA Fall Conference  
Duluth, MN



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