

Doing More with Less Challenges Members and Districts

by Antoinette Johns,
2003-04 MASA President and
Superintendent,
Brooklyn Center Schools

It seems newspapers, email information, and our educational lives are being consumed by NCLB and high stakes testing. Recent news once again raises the issue of just how complex a process it is to develop standards, tests, and instructional curriculum that are valid, reliable, aligned and are appropriately interpreted.

NCLB came about at the federal level a full year before we in Minnesota were receiving information or direction from the prior Department of Children, Families and Learning. Our state Department of Education has inundated us in the last year with paraprofessional standards and testing regimens, comparative district data reports, Highly Qualified Teacher requirements, and additional licensure processes in HOUSSE, field testing expectations for the development of new NCLB tests. Our state legislature has also required new standards and hence new curriculum, which then require new tests, instructional materials, and staff development. They are also the ones who enacted a requirement of three to five designations of "quality" in our district comparative data report, which has been interpreted as the "State Star Report Card." President Bush and

Ken Meyer, Assistant Secretary of Education, who met with about ten educators in Minnesota and Secretary of Education Rod Paige, who met with Superintendents last month, may believe that NCLB is adequately funded, but I have yet to talk with a Superintendent who believes their district is receiving sufficient additional funding to meet all of the obligations under NCLB, let alone responding to the new state standards and curriculum needs.

Furthermore, data presented at the Minnesota Department of Finance on Monday, March 1st left one wondering if there would ever be additional funding to meet normal cost increases such as heat, electricity, facility insurance - minimal employee salary and insurance increases. They projected no new revenue available to us through the next biennium despite the improving economy; because there is no job recovery, and there are continued losses in capitol gains and sales tax revenue projected.

Several challenges exist for us as a state organization as we work our way through all of these issues:

- We must do more with less. But how or should we?
- We must assure ourselves, teachers, and the children who take high stakes tests that they are valid, reliable and interpreted

correctly.

- We must work with the legislature in Minnesota and members of Congress to assure that they enact laws that stand the test of reason. . .as they too are accountable.



Antoinette Johns

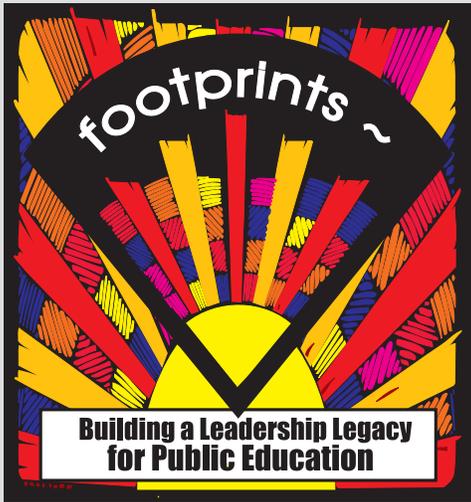
- We must continue to speak with reason and in a collaborative spirit with the Department of Education if we want to have standards, tests, and evaluation tools used on schools and districts reflect the best interests of all parties involved.
- Doing more with less is not the answer if Minnesota and America want an educated, productive work force. The nation has prioritized spending and chosen priorities other than funding previously made commitments such as IDEA. If that were

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MASA and MASE present



The MASA/MASE 2004 Spring Conference April 1 - 2

Sheraton Bloomington Hotel
(formerly the Radisson South Hotel)

Footprints - Building a Leadership Legacy for Public Education

School administration is a challenging pursuit, undertaken in an atmosphere of constant change. How do school leaders create lasting improvement and inspire innovation and excellence? Join your colleagues this spring and explore the nature of building a legacy of leadership. Don't miss this important event!

A special thank you to our major conference sponsors:

- Rider Bennett
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Conference Highlights

Keynote speaker **Michael Fullan** is the Dean of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto. Recognized as an international authority on educational reform, he is engaged in training, consulting, and evaluating change projects around the world.

Small Group Breakout Sessions will examine topics such as collective bargaining, school safety, technology, school elections, federal issues, and more.

The Exhibit Fair is a convenient way to visit with representatives of companies offering the latest products and services. Don't forget to shop the **Silent Auction**.

Relax after a day of learning at Thursday afternoon's **Leaders' Reception**. A special treat will be entertainment by the **Roseau High School Jazz Band!**

Speaker **Joseph Murphy** is a professor of educational leadership at Vanderbilt University. His work centers on school improvement, with special emphasis on leadership and policy.

Don't miss our **Legislative Panel Discussion** featuring Minnesota's education lobbyists. Get the insider's report—and find out what's on the radar for 2005.

Friday's luncheon speaker **Art Rolnick** is Senior Vice President and Director of Research for the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis. He will discuss his recent paper on the importance of publicly funding early childhood development.

Registration materials have been mailed. For more information and registration materials, see the MASA web site (www.mnasa.org) or call us at 651/645-6272

Late Breaking News ...
Governor Tim Pawlenty will address conference participants at lunch on Thursday, April 1.

MASA's Direct Member Services Provide Valued Support

by **Charlie Kyte**,
MASA Executive Director

An important function of MASA is direct service to members. As an association, MASA provides direct consultation to members facing decisions and challenges in their district, reviews of contracts, legal support and insurance protection. These are individual services that are in addition to the larger group professional development efforts of the association.

As Executive Director, I answer phone calls and emails on a regular basis from members. Questions range from dealing with personnel situations, operational challenges, community politics, and just plain loneliness and frustration. I am glad to interact with members on a regular basis and I encourage members to contact me. In addition, regional leaders are often asked to interact with members in their area when they are facing specific challenges.

MASA provides legal assistance to members as necessary. A considerable number of times when members call asking for legal assistance, they actually need

political advice to work through complex situations with staff, boards or communities. In other cases, actual legal advice is necessary and is always provided. MASA retains the services of the Briggs and Morgan Law Firm. They work with individual members when legal intervention is required. Often, legal support involves providing job protection for members when necessary.

Another individual service of MASA is that of contract review and contract support. Members can email or fax their contracts to the MASA office. I will do a thorough review of the contract and will make a number of suggestions regarding ways in which the contract should be strengthened or improved. On occasion, I will also interact with Board committees on behalf of members if that is found to be helpful. Sometimes, questions regarding contracts require a deeper level of legal advice and in those cases the contract questions are referred to the MASA attorneys who provide advice and consultation.

Finally, MASA provides protection to members with life insurance and

professional liability insurance. The MASA Board of Directors has been wrestling with the issue of professional liability insurance because our carrier, Horace Mann, has chosen to discontinue providing this type of insurance for school administrators nationwide. However, the liability insurance protection is in place until September 1, 2004 and MASA is working to find another provider for this insurance. A final decision by the MASA Board of Directors should be made regarding professional liability protection at their Board meeting this spring.

In some ways, the professional liability insurance that is provided by MASA is redundant, because Minnesota statute requires every school district to provide liability protection for its officers and employees. However, the additional coverage provided by a professional association is a comfort to members, especially when a situation finds a school administrator and their school boards at odds with each other.

MASA also provides a small life insurance policy for each of its members. This policy in the amount of \$3000 is provided not only to active MASA members but also to retired members who pay the modest retired member annual membership dues.

MASA is glad to be able to provide a comprehensive set of services to individual MASA members and is finding that the members are using the services. •



Charlie Kyte

Participate in the tenth annual MASA Foundation

Silent Auction

at the 2004 MASA/MASE Spring Conference
Thursday, April 1 • Sheraton Hotel, Bloomington (formerly the Radisson)

This popular Foundation fund-raiser provides resources for opportunities that would otherwise not exist. To be successful, we need members to contribute or solicit auction items which might be attractive to our colleagues. Items might include:

- a week's stay at your cabin
- tickets to a favorite sport, theater, or musical event
- art work...a painting, jewelry, sculpture, etc.
- a meal for four at your home
- a motivational presentation
- new small appliances
- etc., etc., etc.!

Donate, shop, or both!
It's for a good cause and
your contribution is tax deductible.

Let's make this year's auction more successful than ever—won't you please help? Please fill out the auction section on your registration form or call the MASA office—651/645-6272. Thank you!

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Leaders Forum

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Director of Communications

Mia Urick
MASA

1884 Como Avenue
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108
(651) 645-6272
FAX (651) 645-7518

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Charles Kyte

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funded at the promised level of 40%, Minnesota could restore the cross-subsidy we are currently taking from the general fund.

Instead the legislature has chosen to cut ECFE, eliminate the Special Ed. inflationary increase, and reduce compensatory as examples. Ultimately these cuts do reach classrooms, preschool K-12.

If Minnesota legislators chose a small tax increase, we could address funding needs in education. Over \$120 Million dollars allocated for education are not being spent because enrollment declined faster than predicted and those dollars are being used to offset the revenue deficit.

We need to continue advocating on behalf of children or Minnesota's economy will suffer forever.

- High stakes testing is complicated and requires not rushing the development and implementation. This week the decision was made to not change the MCA assessments incrementally, but rather to introduce completely new assessments and delay using them till 2006. These are steps in the right direction. However, we are then required to teach the new set of standards and then test with Profile of Learning Standards, although the MDE says there is a lot of commonality. We are cooperating with field testing and we will continue to work with them through committees on development of assessments.
- The Minnesota legislature and congress are seeing MASA members even more often than

in the past.

Meetings have been established with Minnesota leadership on a regular basis. We also have meetings set with Senator Coleman and Congresswoman McCollum and we are setting up more. As we implement NCLB and new standards, additional issues are being identified and they are the ones who need to know the unintended consequences we are experiencing. The Legislative Auditor's report is a valuable tool to use in our discussions. Congress can encourage the D.O.E. to interpret the law with less rigidity until they can modify NCLB, which we must require them to address.

In Minnesota we can also communicate the need for laws to be less prescriptive, especially when there are no dollars for implementation—and it is said that Minnesota honors local control. Each of us has to communicate with our local elected officials if we are to influence the full legislative or congressional body.

- Constantly we have voiced our expectation that the MDE should work with us, not impose upon us. Lately there have been more requests for our input, on several committees, (report card, District Wide AYP sanctions) and for feedback sessions. We are being called upon and seen as people who will raise questions, hold them accountable as we are held accountable, and we will discuss tough issues seeking solutions. As MASA President, I want us to influence what is requested of us to implement in Minnesota. We must be at the table for discussion.

All of the above requires extra hours and tasks of each of us. I know how difficult it is to carve this out of your day and personal life, but doing so is critical to the future of quality public education for every child to reach their dream in Minnesota. Thank you for all you are doing to support MASA's efforts. •

Can I Use That? Fair Use Under the Copyright Act



Julie Finch

by Julie L. Finch,
Attorney,
Rider Bennett

Politics. Religion.
File Sharing.
Mention any of
these and a lively
discussion is likely
to follow. The near
daily stories of
subpoenas and

lawsuits involving music and movie downloads is starting to make lawyers (at least copyright lawyers) welcome at dinner parties. Society is struggling with finding a balance between what can be done technically with digital files, and what can be done legally with those same files. Content owners are taking their fight against what they perceive as piracy to the schools. Content owners, particularly the entertainment industry, recognize that schools can be powerful and practical allies in their fight against piracy, and are struggling with how best to gain the cooperation of education professionals.

The entertainment industry has tried both punishment and rewards to gain the assistance of schools. On the punishment side, the industry has started lawsuits against universities to attempt to get them to actively limit student file sharing. On the reward side, the Motion Picture Association of America recently announced that it is giving Junior Achievement \$100,000 to deliver an anti-piracy message to 900,000 students in grades 5-9.

Schools present a unique challenge to content owners because schools themselves regularly engage in activities that, but for the fair use defense, would be considered copyright infringement. Schools

also have daily access to, and influence over, a group of people believed to be some of the biggest abusers of copyrights. Whether a content owner is likely to use a punishment or reward approach in gaining cooperation from a school in the anti-piracy fight has a lot to do with whether the content owner views a school's own activities as abusive of the fair use defense. A school which is viewed as playing fast and loose with the fair use defense is more likely to be a litigation target than one which is viewed as taking the limitations of the fair use defense seriously.

The concept of "fair use" takes a use that is normally considered infringing, and says that the use is allowable because it is in the public's best interest. The test for whether a use is "fair" is found in the copyright act and attempts to balance the interests of the public and the interests of the copyright owner. The test has both a "purpose" element and a "balancing of interests" element. Historically schools have had tendency to look at the "purpose" part of the test, and overlook the balancing element. By statute, a fair use must have some purpose similar to *criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching, scholarship or research*. If the first part of this test is met, then the interests of the parties are balanced by analyzing: 1) the purpose and the character of the secondary use; 2) the nature of the copyrighted work (is the work primarily fact or fiction); 3) the amount and substantiality of the work used; and 4) the effect on the market for the work.

Historically, schools have had a tendency to interpret fair use to mean that everything done in connection with a school setting is

fair use because it is done for educational purposes. For a variety of reasons, including the temporary nature of much schoolwork and the difficulty in obtaining timely licensing arrangements with copyright owners, this broad approach, on a practical level, generally worked.

But the times they are a changing. The senior class sells CD's containing cuts of popular songs to fund the class party. The booster club sells CD's and videos of the bands performance at last season's football games. The sixth grade class creates a multimedia project, complete with background music and images taken from the Internet. The after school program shows Disney videos on Friday afternoon. Whether or not courts will treat these activities, particularly those that generate revenue, as having an "educational purpose", remains to be seen.

At the same time, on the content owner's side of the equation, there are serious market attempts to make it both affordable and timely to obtain a license to use the copyrighted material. Therefore what used to be impractical from a cost and timing standpoint is becoming possible.

It is both unwise, and potentially expensive, for a school to rely solely on the "purpose" portion of the fair use test. When a creative work, such as music, is used, and there is a viable means to obtain a license to use the work, two of the four balancing factors will weigh against a fair use finding, *even if the use is made for educational purposes*. If a substantial portion of the work is used, three of the

Copyright ...
Continued Page 10

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Ted Blaesing is MASA President-Elect Nominee



Ted Blaesing

Dr. Ted Blaesing has been nominated for MASA President-Elect for 2004-05. He has been superintendent for the White Bear Lake Area Schools since 1993, and was honored as the

2001 Minnesota Superintendent of the Year. He is a dedicated educator who is especially noted for his ability to communicate effectively with all members of the community, building strong connections with the school district. During his tenure, White Bear Lake has been recognized for its high quality programs aimed at improving student learning.

Another significant aspect of Dr. Blaesing's commitment to excellence in education is the value he places on professional development for teachers, other educational leaders, and other district staff. He inspires their continued learning and development by his own example. He is actively involved in a number of professional associations, and participated in the 1998 Fulbright Seminar in Germany for US Superintendents.

He comments on the profession of educational leadership: "The finest choice of careers that one could make is clearly choosing to be an educator. The pressures and responsibilities of being a public servant have never been greater. However, we choose to serve because we believe and are committed to

A Message from Ted Blaesing ...

Given the strong legacy of leadership MASA has experienced, it is truly an honor to be nominated for the position of MASA President-Elect. Being a part of this professional, collegial organization has benefited me greatly over the years. I am proud to represent the MASA membership and look forward to serving on their behalf.

The single institution with the greatest unifying and dynamic influence on the American way of life is the public school. Our public schools not only serve the public, but they also shape who we are as a public, as a nation. Yes, our founding fathers wanted an educated citizenry, but they wanted first and foremost to ensure that our shared values were passed on from one generation to the next. Today, in this era of calls for more accountability and financially driven politics, we need to remind ourselves of this critically important purpose. Without strong public schools we will simply become a society whose sole purpose is an examination of our fiscal profitability and not one of a citizenry living in harmony focused on the common good. The future of our democracy itself depends on keeping public schools strong and supporting their improvement.

I believe that here in Minnesota, MASA is the organization to help lead the charge against those out to discredit public schools. Our students, our profession, our democracy depend on it. I thank you for the opportunity to serve on your behalf as we all champion our students, staff and this great institution we call the American public school. •

the value of our nation's most prize resource, its public schools."

Dr. Blaesing holds a doctoral degree from the University of Iowa, and master's and bachelor's degrees from the University of Northern Iowa. Before becoming Superintendent for the White Bear Lake Area Schools, he was Superintendent of Schools in Beloit, Wisconsin;

Associate Superintendent of Management Services for the Davenport (Iowa) Community School District; Assistant to the Director of the Institute for School Executives at the University of Iowa, and Secondary School Principal for the Olin Consolidated Schools. •

MASA Members Represent Minnesota On the New AASA Governing Board

by **Charlie Kyte,**
MASA Executive Director

The Governing Structure of the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) has recently been changed to include direct representation from each state on a set of regional governing boards for our National organization. The country has been divided into ten regional areas. Within each region, the participating states have members on a Governing Board based on the number of AASA members in each state.

Minnesota elected four members to the AASA Regional Governing Board for the upper Midwest.

These members include Jerry Jensen of Lake City, Eric Bartleson of Winona, Mike Kremer of Hopkins and Barb Pulliam of St. Louis Park. Since Barb Pulliam has recently left for a new Superintendent assignment in Georgia, MASA President, Toni Johns of Brooklyn Center, is filling her position for the remainder of this year.

The first meeting of the new Governing Board was held on the day preceding the National Conference on Education in San Francisco in late February. The next meeting will be held in mid-July.

The new Regional Governing

Board structure is an important stepping-stone to national leadership. Each of the regions will be able to appoint one member to the AASA executive committee. That person must be a member of the regional Governing Board as a requirement of becoming an Executive Committee member. Further, all future President-Elects of AASA must also first serve as a Regional Governing Board member.

The Regional Governing Group to which Minnesota belongs includes representatives from the states of Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota as well as Minnesota. We are pleased that four delegates to this AASA Governing Board will ably represent Minnesota. •

Place Midwest Dairy here

Copyright ... Continued from Page 6

four balancing factors weigh against fair use.

In evaluating a fair use defense, schools also need to keep in mind that copyright is really a bundle of rights: the right to reproduce, distribute, display, publish and create derivative works. Each one of these rights is separate and distinguishable from the others, and is capable of being sold, licensed or transferred independent of the other rights. This means that making a copy of a work may be a fair use for a school project, but further copying and distribution of that work outside the school may not be a fair use.

Aside from tearing your hair out, there are some practical steps that schools can take to minimize their exposure for copyright infringement claims. Well-written usage policies can help give direction to teachers, staff and students. In-service training can keep teachers up to date on fair use and licensing issues. And, perhaps, most importantly, staying informed about services offering content licensing arrangements for schools. •

Prepared by the law firm of Rider Bennett, LLP. This article is only a general summary of the topics discussed here and is not a substitute for legal advice. If you have any questions regarding these topics, please call (612) 340-8900. © 2003, by Rider Bennett, LLP.

MN School Leaders will See Significant Change in the Next Few Years

The job of CEO/Superintendent of public schools is often held by long term, skilled and mature leaders. However, the demographics at present are indicating that we will see significant turnover in the educational leadership ranks within the next few years.

In analyzing the ages of members of MASA we find that over 2/3 of the members are over fifty years old. The breakdown by ages is as follows:

Age	Number of members	Percent of members
Over 60	57	11
50 – 59	328	63
40 – 49	114	22
30 – 39	28	6

527 total members

MASA members include school superintendents, assistant superintendents, central office administrators, special education directors and service coop directors.

We must continue to prepare the new generation of leaders as our maturing leaders move toward retirement.

Place Ratwik here

Place Horace Mann here

MASA Mounts Federal Advocacy Effort



Charlie Kyte

by **Charlie Kyte,**
MASA Executive Director

Willmar Superintendent, Kathy Leedom, and Edina Special Services Director, Penny Kodrich, head MASA's Federal Advocacy Group. This group, made up of over thirty MASA members from across the state, has become engaged in understanding and influencing federal legislation as it pertains to education. The group

has worked to become more knowledgeable about IDEA, NCLB and other federal initiatives. They are preparing to meet with Minnesota's Senators and Congressmen in the near future.

As part of this effort, MASA President-Elect, Ric Dressen of Alexandria, and MASA Executive Director, Charlie Kyte, participated in a round of federal briefings in Washington, DC early in January. They were invited to participate by our national organization, AASA.

Ric and Charlie attended briefings at the U. S. Department of Education and with the Majority and Minority Leadership of the "Education and The Workforce Committee" of the U. S.

Congress. They also met personally with the staffs of Senators Coleman and Dayton, and of Representatives Ramstad and Collin Peterson.

Ric and Charlie also had the opportunity to work with AASA members from several other states in formulating AASA's National Legislative agenda. AASA continues to be a strong voice for public education at the national level.

Future activities of the committee include arranging personal meetings with Senator Dayton and Senator Coleman here in Minnesota. The committee is looking for a first hand chance to share with them our concerns, and our hopes, for federal education legislation. In addition, the Federal Advocacy Group's members will be seeking meetings with each of the eight Congressmen from Minnesota Committees of the U.S. House of Representatives and will have an influence in shaping the federal education agenda. Representatives Klein and McCollum are members of the "Education and The Workforce."

As the Federal government continues to exert more influence over the governance of public education, it is imperative that organizations such as MASA begin an effort to be a voice from Minnesota. We want our Representatives in Washington to have a clear understanding of how national legislation affects our public schools. •

**Place Kraus
Anderson here**

Place St. Mary's here

Contact Information for Minnesota's Federal Legislators

Senators:

Senator Norm Coleman

<http://coleman.senate.gov>
Washington: (202) 224-5641
St. Paul: 651-645-0323
Mankato: 507-625-6800

Senator Mark Dayton

Washington: (202) 224-3244
Fort Snelling: (612) 727-5220
Biwabik: (218) 865-4480
East Grand Forks: (218) 773-1110
Renville: (320) 905-3007

Congressmen/women:

1st Congressional District

Congressman Gil Gutknecht

<http://www.gil.house.gov>
Washington: (202) 225-2472
Rochester: (800) 862-8632
Rochester: (507) 252-9841
Fairmont: (507) 238-2835

2nd Congressional District

Congressman John Kline

<http://www.house.gov/kline/>
Washington: 202-225-2271
Burnsville: 952-808-1213
Burnsville: 888-808-6644

3rd Congressional District

Congressman Jim Ramstad

<http://www.house.gov/ramstad/welcome.htm>
Washington: (202) 225-2871
Minnetonka: (952) 738-8200

4th Congressional District

Congresswoman Betty McCollum

<http://www.house.gov/mccollum/>
Washington: (202) 225-6631
St. Paul: (651) 224-9191

5th Congressional District

Congressman Martin Sabo

<http://www.house.gov/sabo/>
Washington: (202) 225-4755
Minneapolis: (612) 664-8000

6th Congressional District

Congressman Mark Kennedy

<http://markkennedy.house.gov>
Washington: (202) 225-2331
Buffalo: (763) 684-1600
Hugo: (651) 653-5933
St. Cloud: (320) 259-0099

7th Congressional District

Congressman Collin Peterson

<http://collinpeterson.house.gov>
Washington: (202) 225-2165
Detroit Lakes: (218) 847-5056
Marshall: (507) 537-2299
Montevideo: (320) 269-8888
Red Lake Falls: (218) 253-4356
Redwood Falls: (507) 637-2270
Willmar: (320) 235-1061

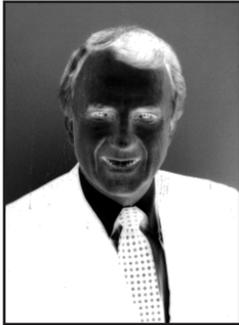
8th Congressional District

Congressman James Oberstar

<http://www.oberstar.house.gov>
Washington: (202) 225-6211
Duluth: (218) 727-7474
Chisholm: (218) 254-5761
Brainerd: (218) 828-4400
North Branch: (651) 277-1234

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MASA Foundation Supports Professional Development



Dale Jensen

by Dale Jensen,
President, MASA Foundation

The MASA Foundation continues to move ahead with exciting new initiatives supporting Minnesota educational leadership. With total funds of approximately \$85,000, we are well on our way to having the resources to provide significant opportunities for our members, but of course we depend on continuing financial support to actualize these important goals.

One of the primary goals of the MASA Foundation is to promote leadership development among Minnesota's school leaders. In support of that objective, the Foundation Board's permanent endowment will be invested to develop opportunities for MASA members to further their education in educational administration. Earnings will also be used to provide outstanding programs in professional development to new members and mid-career members.

The Foundation is in the process of working on several proposed programs:

In the Mid-Career Experience program, approximately ten to twelve members annually would receive resources to attend a high-impact career enhancement program. We have approached the Minnesota Business Partnership for their help in identifying ten to twelve businesses that would be willing to commit to supporting the program. The Foundation has met with representatives of MASA's Special Education and Central Office Component Groups for their ideas about appropriate experiences for a person from each of these groups. We have a commitment from Columbia University to place five superintendents in their Summer Superintendent Seminar and we believe Harvard University will guarantee several slots in their program as well.

The Foundation has dedicated resources to develop a New Leader Academy. Christine Weymouth, former Assistant Superintendent at Edina, is leading the development of this program. She is interviewing members regarding needs and working with the MASA staff to develop a program that will support those first challenging years of school leadership.

The Foundation is able to move in this direction because it has spent a number of years raising the principal to begin the endowment through personal gift campaigns, the Fall Foundation Golf Tournament, and the Spring Silent Auction. Our sincere thanks to everyone who has supported this work. And of course, we encourage your continuing support.

What could be more fulfilling than the knowledge that your contribution to the MASA Foundation directly supports the ongoing tradition of high quality leadership for Minnesota's schools?

I would like to help!

Here is my pledge for my annual contribution to the MASA Foundation Endowment Fund.

I will pledge:

_____ \$ 50 Annually

_____ \$ 100 Annually

_____ Another Amount Annually (please specify)

All gifts are tax-deductible.

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Telephone

Email

Thank you for your pledge.

We will send you an invoice this fall, so you can honor your pledge in time to claim the tax deduction for the calendar year. The MASA Foundation is a 501(c)3 organization.

Thank you!

The Foundation is asking current and retired MASA members to participate in a four-year pledge commitment of a minimum \$50 per year as a small way of giving back to their profession. If you haven't made a commitment already, please consider filling out the pledge form (above) and sending it to MASA.

If each MASA member pledges their support, a minimum of \$200,000 new dollars for the endowment can easily be raised in the four-year period. But more importantly, the Foundation will use this demonstration of support to approach companies who do business with schools to ask them for their financial support for the endowment as well.

It is within our power to create an important source of funding to benefit the school administrators of MASA. Please consider carefully what the Foundation Board is trying to accomplish on your behalf and pledge a minimum of \$50 or more dollars a year for four years. •

**Place Inst. Environmental
Assessment here**

Parent’s Right to Know ~ “What and When”

by Forest J.C. Hertlein, Ph.D.,
Federal Programs Manager
TransACT Communications, Inc.

A major requirement of No Child Left Behind is to keep parents informed and involved regarding their child’s education. Parent awareness and involvement is referred to by the U.S. Department of Education as one of the “four pillars” of the NCLB act. However, recent comments from a variety of sources indicate there is a feeling that schools are “not forthcoming” with all information and options that must be made available to parents. Due to the multiple “touch-points” in which parent communication is required, districts should evaluate their NCLB parent communication strategy to assure that no notice is overlooked or left unsent. The following is a discussion of two major NCLB communication requirements relating to highly qualified staff and reporting AYP status.

Highly Qualified Teachers

Initial reports indicate there is wide variation among states regarding the number of staff that currently meet the new federal definition for being highly qualified. Alaska reports that 16% meet the definition and Minnesota identified 96% as highly qualified. Wisconsin reported the highest

percentage at 98.6%.

Regardless of a state’s status for collecting and reporting such data, districts that receive Title I funds must inform all parents of children attending schools that receive Title I allocations of their right to inquire about the qualifications of the child’s teachers. The notice must go to all parents at that school regardless of the program their child is participating in, such as general education, Special Education, or English language development. The requirement for this notice applies to schools operating schoolwide and targeted assistance programs whether or not adequate yearly progress has been made and regardless of the ability of the school to calculate or report AYP due to enrollment size. The requirement also applies to schools that receive Title I funds to operate ANY program such as before and after school programs, summer school, or use such funds to pay any portion of a staff member’s salary or to purchase any instructional supplies or technology. Parents must be informed of their right to request their child’s teacher’s qualifications annually at the beginning of each school year even if 100% of the school’s staff is highly qualified.

Parent Awareness ...
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Parent Awareness ... Continued from Page 16

Reporting teacher qualifications to parents upon their request applies to all teachers that teach core academic subjects in the school. These teachers may include those who are otherwise exempt from satisfying the definition of highly qualified IF those staff are providing core academic instruction for any portion of the day. For example, a health or physical education teacher providing reading instruction through a program such a *Success for All* must satisfy the federal “highly qualified” requirement if they are providing the only reading instruction a student receives. Parents have the right to request and receive the qualifications of such teachers and the school must initiate notice to the families of all students who are taught four or more consecutive weeks by any teacher who is not highly qualified. This includes any teacher or substitute who teaches four or more weeks who is part-time, long-term, new, or a veteran employee. NCLB requires that such notice must be provided in a timely manner. A definition of timely is not provided so districts should consider adopting written procedures to assure such notice is distributed uniformly throughout the district.

Although parent notification regarding highly qualified staff applies to schools receiving Title I funds, all teachers must be highly qualified by 2005-06. Districts must report progress toward meeting this goal and this information must be included on the annual NCLB report card.

Accountability Reporting

There are three levels of accountability reporting required by NCLB to inform parents about state, district, and school performance. Many state departments of education produce an on-line annual report card from which parents may view performance of schools and districts from across their state. NCLB also requires each district to annually prepare and widely distribute a local report card to the community and “to all schools and parents of children attending those schools”. In addition to the district report card, schools receiving Title I funds that have not made adequate yearly progress for two or more consecutive years, must assure that each parent of a child enrolled in the school receives additional information in a timely manner.

The parent notification must include:

- What it means to be identified as in need of improvement
- What are the reasons for this identification
- What is being done by the school, the district, and the state to change the status
- How parents can become involved in the improvement process
- A statement of the parent’s right to request transfer of their child to another school or, if eligible, supplemental educational services

Parent Awareness ... Continued Page 20

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The district should determine the first point of contact for parents who want clarifying information regarding a school's performance prior to making decisions about transferring their child or supplemental services. Most districts identify the school as the most logical place for a parent to make initial inquires regarding reasons why the school was identified for improvement. Scores and percentages can be clarified and parent fears and misunderstanding can be addressed. If a parent wishes to pursue school transfer or supplemental services, the responsibility for follow-up is vital to confirm, plan, and document district and parent decisions. The communication loop must be managed in a timely and sensitive manner.

It is important for all districts to develop a system to keep track of all the new parental notifications and follow-up that is required. By setting a standardized system early in the process, it will make notification process easier. The most popular time of year for parental notification is often the beginning of the school year with the first-day packet containing a number and variety of forms.

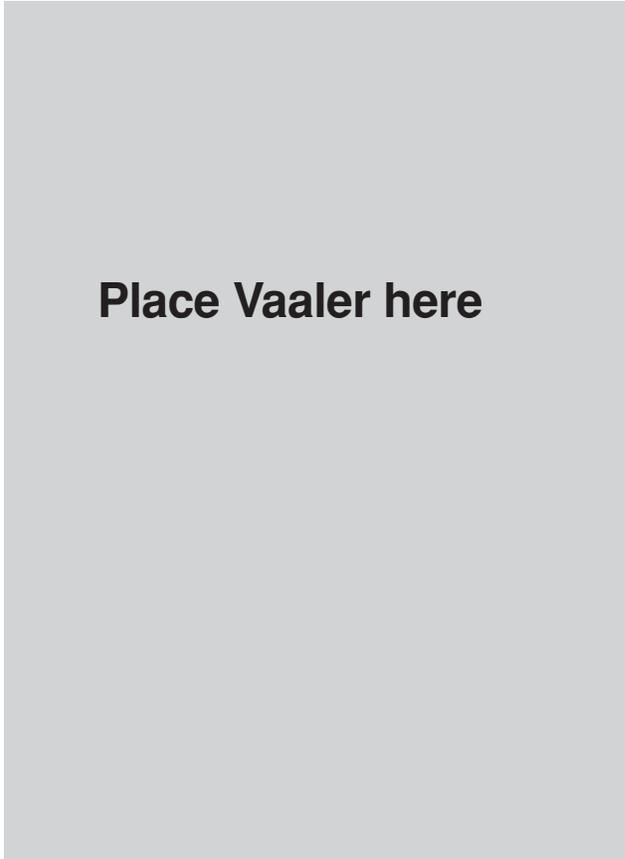
In order for the NCLB notifications to be more effective, it would be best to consider a communication strategy that does not combine the notices with all of the other forms that must be read and signed. The best preparation is to become familiar with NCLB notification requirements and timelines (http://www.mynclb.com/pdfs/NCLB_Parent_Notifications.pdf) and to assign responsibility for informing parents to the appropriate level or department.

It is recommended that a common set of notices be made available throughout the district to meet the NCLB requirement that "information must be in an understandable and uniform format". One valuable resource for meeting this requirement is the collection of parent notices available on-line at www.mynclb.com. The collection is also available in a growing number of languages to assist districts communicate with parents in a language they understand.

If you have any questions or comments, email forest@transact.com or contact MASA at (651) 645-6272.



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Have You Renewed Your Jobsite Membership?

MASA's Jobsite Online can save you money and help you recruit the best and brightest staff members for your district. It is tailor-made for you if you are looking for an easy, efficient, and cost effective way to post jobs and find candidates. Now is the time to subscribe or renew!

The Jobsite Online is a companion set of Internet web sites—Job Site and Applicant Site. These two MASA sites make posting jobs and looking for talented educators a snap.

We recognize that money is tight in most school districts and that some districts believe hiring will be at a minimum. In reality, there are always vacancies and job changes. In a year when finances are tight, the changes often come later in the summer and an online service helps you to quickly find applicants when they are needed.

This job service is cost effective. You can eliminate the need to make direct contact with placement bureaus and colleges. In the case that a variance is needed, the MASA Jobsite

qualifies as a widespread advertising vehicle eliminating the need to advertise in major newspapers. For the price of one ad in the Star Tribune or the Des Moines Register, you can nearly pay for the entire use of the MASA Jobsite for an entire year.

In addition, the MASA Jobsite lists all school district administrative job postings **free of charge to all school districts in the state**. Just call Jeanna Quinn at MASA (651-645-6272) or email her at members@mnasa.org. Jeanna posts jobs each Friday.

The real strength of this on-line job and applicant site comes with full participation of the districts in Minnesota. With strong district participation, applicants also flock to the site. Thus, it is easier for the districts to find quality applicants and we create a win-win situation.

The hiring season will soon be heating up. Let the Jobsite help you fill those positions with "bright new members for your brilliant school district team!" •

What does a school district do to find great staff?



Minnesota Schools Jobsite Online is an effective, inexpensive way for school districts to advertise job openings on the internet. Districts can post unlimited vacancies, for all levels of positions, for a small annual fee. People looking for positions can browse those jobs at no cost.

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

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

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

Jobsite Online is a service of the
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School Districts:
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- Post jobs
- Manage Applications
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Here's a Tip!

- Accurate enrollment forecasts are vital to school district planning.
- When projecting enrollment for future years a school district can use fall enrollment or average daily membership (ADM).
- Districts receive revenues based on their ADM at the end of the school year.
- Districts that experience an enrollment decline during the year should consider using the ADM for enrollment projections and staffing.
- You can learn more about state and national enrollment projection trends at the National Center for Education Statistics: <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/projections/>.
- This tip is brought to you by SchoolFinances.com. Contact either Jim Sheehan at 952-435-0990 or Ann Thomas at 952-435-0955 for assistance with enrollment projections.

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Calendar 2004

March 31

Board Meetings

Sheraton Bloomington
(formerly the Radisson)

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

April 1 - 2

**MASA/MASE Spring
Conference**

Sheraton Bloomington
(formerly the Radisson)

April 4

Daylight Savings Time Begins

April 9

Spring Holiday

MASA Offices Closed

April 14

**MASA Foundation
Board Meeting**

11 am, MASA Board Room

April 20

Region Meeting

Rochester

May 14

**Summer Newsletter
Submissions Due**

May 31

Memorial Day Holiday

MASA Offices Closed

June 17 - 18

MASA Board Retreat

Madden's

*Mark your
calendar ...*

MASA 2004 Fall Conference

October 3 - 5

Madden's on Gull Lake,
Brainerd

Plan to attend!



*You can always find up-
to-date calendar
information on the MASA
web site at
www.mnasa.org.*

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Did you know that the MASA web site has hot links to a wide variety of state and national education associations? Visit us at www.mnasa.org!

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