

The Leadership of MASA

by Jerry Jensen,
2001-02 MASA President and
Superintendent, Lake City Schools

My year as president of MASA has been everything I had hoped it would be, and more! Thinking back over the events of this year, I have vivid memories of the September 11 attacks, a struggling economy, conferences full of quality speakers and topics, debut appearances of the EduPortal and the Leadership Forum, and Carol Johnson being named Minnesota Superintendent of the Year. And who could forget our Day at the Capitol where we stood shoulder to shoulder with the House and Senate leadership as they declared their commitment to public education and their determination to protect our funding?

In addition to specific events and highlights, we made progress on many of our organizational goals. A mentorship program for members new to central office administration, or new to Minnesota, is taking shape on a regional level. MASA's governance structure has been reviewed and recommendations are being developed to ensure fair representation through a less complicated system. MASA continues to strengthen our legislative voice and is recognized as one of the leading education organizations in the state.

These are only a sampling of the year's events and accomplishments. It has been an honor to serve as president during these exciting times, but I must confess that any

leadership I provided pales in comparison to the overall leadership found in the organization.

Executive Director Charlie Kyte is a tireless advocate for MASA and most effectively speaks on our behalf, constantly moving the goals of the organization forward. Office personnel, Mia Urick, Mary Law, Stephanie Kastanos, and Jeanna Quinn do a great job with daily operations, planning of conferences, and all the other duties that make the organization run smoothly. Thank you, Charlie and Staff, for all you do!

The Executive Committee (Past President Greg Vandal, Treasurer Toni Johns, and President-Elect Ken Dragseth) and the Board of Directors have provided quality leadership by setting policy and direction for MASA. It has been fun to observe the quality of the decision making process when so many quality leaders put their heads together! Thank You!

Our working committees are the engines that drive the organization. They actually take the organizational goals from the conceptual stage, through a planning process, and into full implementation. Their quiet and steadfast leadership fuels many of our successes. Thanks to the committee chairs and their committee members!

Last, but surely not least, I appreciate the leadership of the membership at large. From the

president's perspective, I have been most impressed by the awesome wealth of leadership abilities found in our membership. Each of you has so much to offer, and as more members become actively engaged in the organization, we will see our voice for public education continue to grow stronger.



Jerry Jensen

Ray Kroc, Founder of McDonalds, once said, "The quality of a leader is reflected in the standards they set for themselves." I believe this is at the core of why MASA is continuing to experience success. The high standards you set for yourselves in your daily work is evident in the standards and quality of leadership you bring to MASA. I would like to thank each of you for your contributions on behalf of students, your school districts, MASA, and public education.

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Affordable Housing – The Second Biggest Issue for Education



by **Charlie Kyte**
MASA Executive Director

Properly financing schools is the biggest issue! The second is providing affordable housing for families. Shortages of such housing are endemic all across Minnesota. It is causing significant

problems for educators and for the families and children who we are making an effort to educate.

The shortage of affordable housing leads to the movement of families on a regular basis, as they cannot obtain housing, rental or owned, in a price range that they can sustain. Thus, the poorest of our families live in one apartment for a period of time and then are forced to move to another and then another. This is causing a significant portion of the movement of poor children between schools in urban and rural areas. We need to have a larger source of rentable housing that poor families, and the families that are the next step up economically, can afford to stay in.

Once a family has located in a place where they can put down roots, their children can then establish relationships within the community and their school. It is impossible to successfully educate children who live in poverty if they are moving from teacher to teacher multiple times during the year.

The problem with affordable housing also extends to housing that is built for individual ownership. With housing codes pushing up the cost of housing and scarcity driving the price up, much of the housing stock that becomes available is simply out of the price range of working class families. We can't expect working families in the metropolitan area to be paying \$200,000 plus for homes. Nor can we expect families in our rural areas to be paying over \$100,000 for homes when

in fact their income does not nearly justify those levels of home expense.

The shortage of housing also contributes to our inability to have new educators establish themselves in their communities. Without available housing, at affordable price levels, young teachers are not able to obtain quality housing.

Let's say that a young teacher is married and their spouse is working a half-time position. Their combined income will be less than \$45,000. That makes it very difficult to put together a down payment and then sustain payments on a home if that home has a cost basis above a certain level.

It is incumbent on us as a society to find ways to provide housing that can be purchased or rented at a rate that is sustainable for young families and for our poor families.

There are several ways to do this. One is to provide the funding for housing

cooperatives and encourage local units of government to take steps to reduce the cost of that housing. They can do this through simplifying building codes, reducing lot sizes and with tax increment financing. Housing coops can allow purchase of individual townhouses, twin homes or individual homes with a requirement that the homes be sold back to the coop. The reason for this is to prevent persons from buying subsidized lower cost housing and then quickly turning around and selling for a significant profit. A coop can allow the housing value to go up at a reasonable rate.

Another factor that can be used in a cooperative housing development is "sweat-equity," in which future home owners provide some of the construction labor. They are also encouraged to complete the homes after the basic unit has been constructed.

Housing ...
Continued Page 3

Have you renewed your membership?

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

- ✓ Quality Conferences
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The Results are In—Congratulations to Elected Leaders!



Antoinette Johns
2002-03 MASA
President-Elect

Congratulations to the following candidates who have been elected to MASA leadership positions:

2002-03 President-Elect:

Dr. Antoinette Johns,
Superintendent, Brooklyn Center
Schools

Toni begins her three-year term on July 1 as President-Elect, then continues as President for 2003-2004 and Past President for 2004-2005.

Treasurer:

Ms. Constance Hayes, Superintendent, LaCrescent-Hokah Schools

Central Office Component Group Representative to the MASA Board of Directors:

Ms. Sandra Kovatch, Director of Curriculum, South Washington County Schools

Housing ... Continued from Page 2

Another way to increase affordable housing is to provide low interest rate loans. Also, financial incentives to investors can be accomplished with tax credits, tax reductions or other means. The state of Minnesota could take a leadership role by designating areas in need of affordable housing and creating the kind of incentives that would bring individual investors and corporations into the investing pool.

An especially effective approach is to provide incentives to companies employing lower income or immigrant employees to invest in housing in the communities in which manufacturing plants are located. In return, we can lower the tax obligations on the industries. This creates a win-win situation: building the businesses in our communities; providing housing; and strengthening these communities at the same time.

If we don't develop a number of strategies to increase the rental and owned housing stock of our state, we will find that it is more difficult to attract young educators to live in our communities. We will find it more difficult for families to establish themselves in a single residence over time. If we invest, we create the conditions possible for children to be successful in school.

While not every family in our state will be able to own their own home, the pride associated with home ownership generally leads people to become better community members. They feel they have a greater investment in protecting and building their community and using it wisely. This is an educational issue. •

Service Provider Instructor/Administrator Component Group Representative to the MASA Board of Directors:

Dr. Dorothy Suomala, Assistant Professor, Moorhead State University

Special Education Component Group Representative to the MASA Board of Directors:

Mr. Daryl Miller, Director of Special Education, Robbinsdale Area Schools

Superintendent Component Group President-Elect:

Mrs. Kathryn Leedom, Superintendent, Willmar Schools

"The superintendency is an occupation of service that a person could not fully understand without having served in that capacity. Therefore, it is only through other superintendents that some ideas, thoughts, emotions, situations, etc. can truly be debated, discussed, and appreciated. I am honored to be in line to lead colleagues in the essential dialogue pertaining to our unique role of service as superintendents. Thank you very much for your confidence in me to lead our component group." —Kathy Leedom

Central Office Component Group President-Elect:

Mr. Marv Swanson, Director of Personnel & Administrative Services, Richfield Schools

Service Provider Administrator/Instructor Component Group President-Elect:

Mr. Gary Nytes, Executive Director, North Central Service Cooperative

"Greetings to all MASA Service Provider Component Group members! Thank you very much for the honor of representing all of us, as President-Elect of our Group. I look forward to working with our 2002-2003 President Rob Cavanna, and to an exciting 2003-2004! I am sure Rob has some interesting ideas for the coming year, and my efforts will support his. My two-year goal will be to get 100% involvement from our Component Group by creating an atmosphere that beckons participation. This is going to be fun!" —Gary Nytes

Special Education Administrator Component Group President-Elect (MASE President-Elect):

Dr. Gary Lewis, Director of Special Education, River Bend Education District

MASA appreciates these leaders for their commitment to MASA and Minnesota education and offers them congratulations as they begin their terms of service. •

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Celebrate Success...and success will catch on!



Shari Prest

by Shari Prest
Ark Associates

The accomplishments that you take for granted are news to your publics. Those may include such simple highlights as the number of students who receive the perfect attendance

award, or more complex victories like an increase in the number of high school students taking more challenging courses. The successes may involve you, the school/district staff, district parents, community businesses, or students. Following are five easy steps to ensure that your schools accomplishments are widely known and celebrated.

1. Bring together a small group of staff and students one to three times a year to compile a list of successes that will reflect well on the school/district and community.

2. List the highlights under three categories: student, staff, and school/district/community. Think of success in a broad variety of ways. For example:

- Student
 - ✓ improved school attendance
 - ✓ external and internal awards or recognition
 - ✓ increased number of students involved in community service
 - ✓ improved test scores
 - ✓ increased participation in academic, sporting, and arts organizations
 - ✓ improved student/staff access to current technologies
 - ✓ student participation on governing/leadership boards and councils
 - ✓ increased attendance of parents at parent/teacher conferences

- Staff
 - ✓ positive administrator profiles, awards, special training, etc.
 - ✓ annual teacher of the year nominees' profiles
 - ✓ increased level of training and education of teachers/administrators
 - ✓ exceptional staff volunteerism
 - ✓ external and internal recognition awards or recognition
- School/District/Community
 - ✓ increased number of district volunteers
 - ✓ increased involvement of businesses in school partnerships
 - ✓ increased community contributions to schools
 - ✓ evidence of community support for school/district facilities
 - ✓ external recognition the school/district receives

3. Follow each listing with all of the ways that the "good news" can be shared with the community. For example:

- ✓ school/district newsletters
- ✓ personal note
- ✓ press release
- ✓ school calendar
- ✓ special event
- ✓ cable show
- ✓ letter to the editor
- ✓ celebratory program
- ✓ presentation to local service groups
- ✓ publicly exhibited posters
- ✓ mass mailing
- ✓ promotional items (i.e. buttons, banners, t-shirts)

4. Delegate the communication of each item to the logical person. For example: communicating rising standardized test scores to parents might be assigned to the editor of the school/district newsletter; sharing improved

Success ...

Continued Page 5

Summer On Your Side

by Shari Prest, Ark Associates for Champions for Children™

The varied and flexible schedules school administrators often experience during the summer months provide you with the opportunity to develop the relationship between your school(s) and the community. Here are some ideas for you and your staff:

- Let students, parents, legislators, and other community members know what you will be working on over the summer months.
- Hold focus groups to gauge constituents' satisfaction level and to identify areas of potential or concern.
- Hold a monthly coffee for community members to familiarize themselves with school programs, building(s), and leadership.
- Send a note every day to a constituent. Some examples: thank a volunteer, commend a student, or invite a visitor.
- Provide all parents with a local resource list for summer activities and services.

Go to www.mnasa.org and click on Champions for Children™ for a copy-ready parent/student handout: "Summer Surge...for student success."



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

Leadership ... Continued from Page 1

Thank you, also, for giving me the opportunity to serve as your president! It has been an exciting year and an honor to represent you! I especially thank Greg Vandal for his help as I transitioned into this office, and for his leadership as president and past president. Looking ahead, I am confident MASA will be in good hands under the capable leadership of next year's

president Ken Dragseth, president-elect Toni Johns, the Board of Directors, working committees, component groups, Charlie, and his staff!

MASA is alive and well, so as we head into the summer months, I urge you to take good care of yourself. Take time to enjoy the nice weather, your favorite outdoor activity, quality time with family and friends, and take time to relax! Have a great summer!! •

Success ... Continued from Page 4

results with the media might be assigned to the person responsible for external communications; informing students of improved scores might be assigned to the editor of the student paper, all teachers, and building administrators. The principal, superintendent, and/or board chair might compose letters to the editor congratulating the board, staff, and students on the results of their

commitment to continual improvement.

5. Assign a completion and assessment date for each item.

In one five-step brainstorming/planning session you can map out a variety of ways in which everyone in the organization can use the knowledge they have to advocate for public education. If you and those you work with don't broadcast the message of school success, who will? •

Are You Moving?

Now is the time of year when many of our members are on the move! Help us keep track of you (and therefore keep your MASA benefits and services coming to you!). Just give Jeanna a call (651/645-6272), fax her a note (651/645-7518), or email her at members@mnasa.org and she will update your records.

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Minnesota Administrators Leadership Forum II Begins



Kris Bryan Nielsen

by Kristine
Bryan Nielsen,
Executive Director,
MN Administrators
Leadership Forum

The 2002-2003 cohort of the MN Administrators Leadership Forum training and mentorship program has begun!

Participants are now working on their first training days, where they will gain experience with the Forum's software, learn about working with their technology mentors, and experience web-based tools for data driven decision making, such as the Minnesota EduPortal and the CLASS website.

The initial training experience will be followed this fall and winter by three days of regional workshops hosted by the Forum's Technology & Standards

mentors and the regional coordinators of the Minnesota Educational Effectiveness Program. This second phase of training will include opportunities for participants to

- define and develop a vision of data-driven leadership
- work with other administrators to explore the impact of using data
- continue to refine their definition of the role of leader in a data rich and changing environment
- utilize a personal digital assistant (PDA) as both a personal and instructional tool
- understand and utilize software for teacher evaluation
- continue to practice using the PDA as an instructional tool

- continue to utilize web-based tools for improving instruction

Administrators who registered late for admission to the 2002-03 cohort and were not admitted were automatically placed on the waiting list for the 2003-2004 Forum.

The Minnesota Administrators Leadership Forum is a partnership of CFL, MASA, the Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals, and the Minnesota Elementary School Principals' Association. The Forum provides training, tools and support to Administrators at all levels across the state.

For more information about the Minnesota Administrators Leadership Forum, please visit their website at <http://www.mn-admin-forum.org/main.html> •

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The Art of Positive Leadership

by **Charlie Kyte**
MASA Executive Director

Many MASA members are wrestling with very difficult situations in their school districts. We have spent months downsizing schools because of declining enrollments. We have experienced budget shortfalls, difficult contract negotiations and contentious school board meetings. It is easy for one to become cynical and negative. Yet, the true leaders not only remain positive themselves, but also lift their staffs, students and communities.

The art of positive leadership is relatively easy when times are good. When people are content, money is plentiful and there are

few contentious issues, it does not take a great effort to stay positive yourself. However, when times are difficult, the act of "leadership" is more important than at any other time.

A wise mentor once told me to always look at the cup as being half full rather than half empty. He said that during difficult times, leaders must focus on core missions, articulate the missions to their constituents and point the way to a better future.

It has always amazed me how strong the role a leader has in lifting people around them. In spite of all the difficulties, remember that you have to show positive hope for the future. Create the symbolic acts of

celebration for your organization. Help your community understand the inherent and basic good that a strong educational system provides to them all.



Charlie Kyte

As you go forward into the next school year, position yourself personally to remain positive. Create the aura of leadership that will help to lift the people around you.

In this vein, I offer the following inspiration, courtesy of our friend Dave Metzen:

Leadership Quotes by *Dave Metzen*

"Most everyone can make a buck, but not everyone can make a difference."

"Stopping change is like holding your breath, if you succeed you die!"

"Never try to teach a pig to sing. It won't work and it annoys the pig."

"Leaders: We have a moral responsibility to be positive. Your people cannot function if you are negative."

"The time to be out in your community is after you lost the game."

"You cannot make people happy. However, you can create an environment for happiness." •

Minnesota Administrators Leadership Forum Update



The Minnesota Administrators Leadership Forum is a partnership of CFL, MASA, the Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals, and the Minnesota Elementary School Principals' Association. The Forum provides training, tools and support to Administrators at all levels across the state.

Our statewide Forum for 2002-2003 is full! We are excited about the response and the updates to our training curriculum for the coming year. If you wish to be placed on our priority waiting list for the 2003-2004 cohort group, please fill out and submit the form on the registration page of our website at www.mn-admin-forum.org.

Pre-registration for those on the waiting list will begin in March, 2003. Watch for a letter detailing registration instructions next winter.

The Forum is open to licensed, practicing school administrators.

If you have specific questions, please feel free to contact me via email with those questions.

*Kris Nielsen, Forum Director
kris@mn-admin-forum.org*



School District Elections: Increased Controversy, Heightened Scrutiny



Gloria Olsen

by Gloria Olsen
Attorney
Rider, Bennett,
Egan & Arundel

The outcome of school board member elections, bond referenda and excess levy referenda has never been more crucial to

the quality of public education in Minnesota. As these elections become more visible and controversial, the election-related activities of school district board members, administrators and other employees are being subjected to increased scrutiny. This article provides a brief discussion of some of the more common issues that may arise.

Minnesota Law Addresses The Political Activities Of School Board Members And District Employees

There are meaningful legal limitations on the political activities of school board members and school district employees on behalf of their school districts:

An employee or official of [a school district] may not use official authority or influence to compel a person to apply for membership in or become a member of a political organization, to pay or promise to pay a political contribution, or to take part in political activity. A political subdivision may not impose or enforce additional limitations on the political activities of its employees. (Minn. Stat. §211B.09)

School board members and district employees are therefore prohibited by law from using official authority or influence to affect school board member elections or referenda. They may, however, engage in individual political activities on the same basis as any citizen.

This means, for example, that a superintendent could not use his or her position to attempt to influence parents or students to join a campaign to elect or defeat a certain school board candidate. On the other hand, the superintendent has the freedom to engage in political activities as a citizen. The superintendent would be free to express his or her personal view that passage of an excess levy referendum is vitally important for the district, or that it is excessive and unnecessary. Minnesota's Attorney General has specifically recognized that board members and district employees may express their views orally and are free to appear before citizens groups to support a school board decision and advocate approval

of a bond issue. Similarly, a board member or employee could participate as an individual citizen in a vote "yes" or vote "no" committee as long as the board member or employee did not use official authority or influence to compel others to take part in the political activity.

Generally, the question that must be asked of every political activity of a board member or employee is: "Does this act constitute the use of official authority or influence as a school district official or employee," or is it a political activity of the individual? If the answer is that it is an individual political activity, it is permissible.

**District Elections ...
Continued Page 10**

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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District Elections ... Continued from Page 8

School District Resources

Minnesota's Attorney General has recognized that school districts may expend a reasonable amount of district funds to inform the voters in the district of facts pertinent to the election. Thus, a school district may spend reasonable amounts of money to prepare and distribute factual literature about an upcoming bond or excess levy referendum. The district may also spend reasonable amounts of money to sponsor and promote a public forum where all candidates for the office of school board member are allowed to present their views. However, the district cannot use public funds to advocate one side of an election question without affording the dissenters the same opportunity to present the other side. The policy behind this principle is that the school district's public funds belong equally to the proponents and opponents of any election question. The most simplistic example of acceptable district-sponsored literature would be "Vote On November 10." However, district-sponsored literature that stated "Vote Yes For Our Schools" would not be acceptable.

Use of School District Facilities

Committees of private citizens working to support a bond or excess levy referendum often will ask to use school district facilities to conduct

their activities. A school district generally cannot deny equal access to its facilities, but it can require that the use of district facilities will not interfere with the educational objectives of a school district. Thus, if a "vote yes" committee is allowed to use school district facilities, permission cannot be denied to a "vote no" committee. School districts should have policies on equal access and use of district facilities. (See MSBA/MASA Model Policies Nos. 801 and 902.) All requests to use district facilities by political committees should be governed by these policies.

Distributions To Staff and Students

Political committees often ask to distribute campaign literature or fliers to school district staff and students. The district can control the time, place and manner of these distributions. School districts should have policies related to the distribution of materials on school district property. (See MSBA/MASA Model Policies 904 and 505.) Again, all requests to distribute material to staff and students

should be handled in accordance with these policies.

In summary, the following guidelines govern the political activities of board members and employees.

- The school district will maintain neutrality as to all political campaigns.
- The school district will not expend public funds or resources to advocate for particular candidates or for only one side of an issue.
- The school district may expend reasonable amounts to inform voters of facts pertinent to an election, bond issue or referendum.
- The school district recognizes the rights of students and employees to participate in political campaigns and issues, elections and public service and the right of students to pursue an education conducted in a suitable academic environment. •

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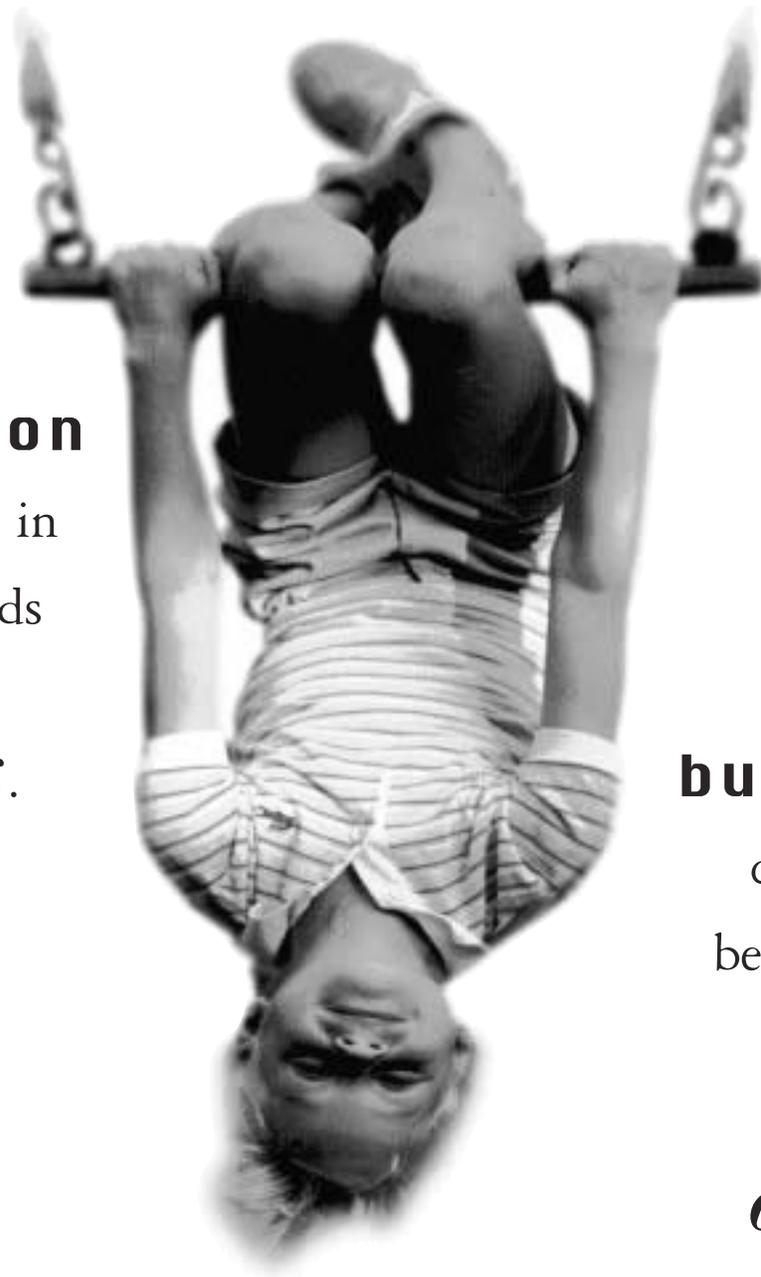
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by Fred Nolan
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Congratulations to the Eden Valley-Watkins 8th Grade Class on their outstanding

performance on the recent Basic Standards testing. Ninety-seven percent (97%) of the eighth graders passed the math test on the first try and 95% passed the reading test on the first try. It is the effort of each 8th grade student who tried his or her very best on the test which resulted in so many passing.

The outstanding efforts of these eighth graders really paid off for them, I believe, because there are six supporting factors that led up and

surrounded their achievement on the testing dates in February. A number of people have asked me what I think are the reasons for the continued success at EV-W on the Basic Standards tests. I have thought about this, because for three years in a row we have been achieving in the 90% range and above, and two years out of three we have been number one in the math passage rate in the entire state.

These six factors are not one magic bullet. They are a series of individual, but important actions that add up to a sum greater than the whole. Here is what I think they are:

1. A very supportive community and environment for education. The EV-W community supports education, supports schooling and teachers, and does not have barriers to overcome such as a high percentage of students for whom English is a second

language or a high percentage of students who have experienced generations of discouraging poverty.

2. Everyone in the EV-W school district from the school board through the administration through teachers through ed. assistants and custodians knows that the Basic Standards are important. These are basic skills which students ought to be able to master before graduation. Schools have an absolute duty to teach and have students learn these basic skills. The principal and staff are very clear in communicating with the 7th and 8th grade students the expectation that they are to pass this test, that they can rise to the challenge.

3. EV-W School District has an excellent teaching staff. I cannot

**Two Top Ten ...
Continued Page 13**



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Two Top Ten ... Continued from Page 12

overemphasize how important it is to attract, retain, and reward excellent teachers. We have excellent teachers K-12.

Specifically, we have teachers in the junior high reading and mathematics department who reach out and engage youngsters and truly have them believe they can succeed.

4. EV-W School District has an excellent K-12 curriculum process. This curriculum process works in all curriculum areas. Teachers do research to find the best practices. The teachers take the studies seriously and take the results seriously. Just one example: the last math study changed the way the elementary school groups its students. There are no "low groups." We have a high group at each grade level, and we mix all the rest of the students into two heterogeneous groups. With the help of educational assistants, teachers work with students of varying ability in these classrooms so no student gets left behind in a

"dummy group." This is part of the reason the math scores are so strong now that those students are entering eighth grade.

5. EV-W School District has learned the power of small group and individual tutoring. In January, everyone at the high school who has a spare hour is tutoring students individually who need an extra boost. Teachers on prep, educational assistants and even the superintendent tutor students. The reading and math teachers coach us on the techniques and provide the materials for us. We meet two to three times a week with our student(s) in January. As much as it provides the skills to the students to pass the test, it reinforces how important this is and provides them confidence that they can do the job.
6. EV-W School District realizes that testing days are like getting a team ready for "the big game." The coaches, led by Head Coach-Principal Larry Peterson, have to know each individual student and

how to get the optimal performance from each student on game day. It starts with having breakfast for all students on that day. It starts by finding out their preferences for having food with them, having pop with them or not. It includes having volunteers who can provide individual testing opportunities for those who want individual testing. Having the math test read to you is not a sign of weakness in math. It starts by telling the students to take as much time as possible on the test and reinforcing that nearly everyone who keeps testing into the afternoon passes the test. In subtle and not so subtle ways, Head Coach Peterson and his assistants get the team ready.

But ultimately the players win the game. The eighth graders have come through again for the third year in a row. This is now over 180 students who have successfully achieved on "game day." These students are now on their way to graduation with the High Standards and the graduation credits required at EV-W. Many of them will be ready to take concurrent enrolment classes and thereby get a head start on their career in life.

Passing the Basic Standards test is one key point in their journey. And what a great game the eighth graders played. •

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*Mark your calendar
for the 2002
MASA Fall Conference*
**September 29 - October 1
Madden's on Gull Lake
Brainerd, MN**

Make plans now to join your colleagues for the 2002 MASA Fall Conference at Madden's. Conference highlights will include compelling speakers on cutting edge topics. And of course, you will find powerful small group sessions, the Sunday golf tournament, the awards event, and much more! Watch your mail... registration materials will be mailed in August. For more information, please call the MASA office at 651/645-6272.

Fall Conference Lodging — Options are Many

Member feedback has indicated that it is helpful to have a number of lodging options for the fall conference. Members have also asked to have lodging registration information available as early as possible to facilitate the travel plans. Enclosed in this newsletter you will find a copy of the Madden's lodging form with descriptions of the various levels of accommodations as well as information on blocked Brainerd hotels. This information will also be available on the MASA web site—www.mnasa.org. Resort information is also available at www.maddens.com. See you there!

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MASA and SchoolFinances.com Create a Partnership

by **Charlie Kyte**
MASA Executive Director

With this edition of the *Leaders Forum*, I am pleased to announce that MASA and SchoolFinances.com are business partners. For the past several years SchoolFinances.com has been working to assist Minnesota school districts in several critical areas. These areas include enrollment and demographic planning, revenues planning, management reports in the finances, staffing, and demographics, and primarily in the area of financial planning.

At this time 57 Minnesota school districts have implemented the Financial Planning Model that SchoolFinances.com has developed and markets. SchoolFinances.com is not engaged in a great deal of marketing. On the contrary, most of the new districts that come to SchoolFinances.com are the result of superintendents and business managers who are using the Financial Planning Model and recommending it to their colleagues.

Dr. James Sheehan, retired Assistant Superintendent from the Rochester, Minnesota school district, started

SchoolFinances.com in 1998. Ann Thomas became a partner in 2001 and they both live in Lakeville.

After hearing so many great comments from Minnesota Superintendents, I decided to visit with Jim and Ann to hear first hand why they are so successful. While visiting with them it was apparent to me that MASA should work closely with them. They are singularly motivated to help school districts and staff members become proficient in using management systems and information.



Charlie Kyte

To quote Superintendent Kathy Leedom of Willmar, “The Financial Planning Model is a great addition to the superintendent’s tool box. The model provides information that readily assists decision-makers in formulating plans based on data rather than hunches. In essence, the model organizes multiple sources of data into a blueprint for constructing numerous well-founded decisions. The model is a key tool for data-driven decision-making.”

Superintendent Howard Carlson of Delano offers this comment, “Predicting how a district’s financial situation looks over a 3-5 year term is of vital importance. A solid prediction allows Superintendents, Business Managers and School Boards to see the effect of various decisions and protects them from “surprises”. The Financial Planning Model (FPM) is a great tool to use in completing this task because it is easy to implement and provides numerous options to graphically represent the data. The FPM requires minimal experience with spreadsheets and can be easily used by any administrator.”

SchoolFinances.com is currently planning to become involved in contracting for selected Business Management activities in school districts. With the loss of so many key staff members through retirement or RIF, it is apparent that more districts will be outsourcing some of their business services.

Visit their web site at www.schoolfinances.com to read other user comments and to learn about all their services including enrollment planning. SchoolFinances.com also has an Excel Training program that includes a CD and that is offered through email and includes programming tips designed for use in school districts; information is available about this on their web site.

I encourage districts to contact SchoolFinances.com when you have a need for management and planning services. •

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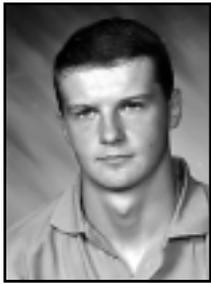
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Minnesota High School Juniors Win Discover®Card Scholarships



Christopher Dobson



Katherine Hagsten



Violeta Jimenez



Katherine Kruse



Nan Lin

Discover®Card is awarding nearly \$1.5 million in scholarships to high school juniors as part of the Discover Card Tribute Award® Scholarship Program. This year marks the 11th year of the Tribute Awards Program. Awarded in cooperation with the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), scholarships are awarded to high school juniors who have demonstrated excellence in many areas of their lives.

This year, recipients were selected from a pool of nearly 7,500 applicants. While students must maintain a minimum 2.75 cumulative grade point average to qualify, they must also demonstrate accomplishments in three of four areas: special talents, leadership, obstacles overcome, and community service.

MASA coordinated the state panel of judges who based their selections on information from



Jena Sazama



Emma Schmidgall



Zachary Smith

application materials submitted by each student. Chris Huber, retired Superintendent of the Spring Lake Park Schools chairs the judging process. Judges represent Minnesota's education, business, and community leaders.

Minnesota's state scholarship recipients are:

Christopher Dobson
Staples-Motley High School

Nisha Fernandes
Thomas Jefferson High School,
Bloomington

Katherine Hagsten
Hibbing High School

Violeta Jimenez
Central High School, St. Paul

Katherine Kruse
Patrick Henry High School,
Minneapolis

Nan Lin
Mounds View High School

Jena Sazama
Perham High School

Emma Schmidgall
Robbinsdale Cooper High School

Zachary Smith
Nevis High School

State winners are awarded \$2,500 scholarships and go on to compete for nine regional scholarships, each worth \$25,000. The national award winners are recognized at an event held each summer. This year's national winners were announced in

June at a ceremony at Discover Financial Services' headquarters in Illinois.

"Discover Card has been committed to the continuing education of high school students for more than ten years," said David Nelms, President of Discover Financial Services, Inc. "Unlike other scholarship programs, we offer this scholarship to high school juniors so that students and their families have more planning time to reach their educational goals."

Once the student graduates high school, scholarship funds may be applied to various education or training programs such as any certification of licensing in a trade, a two year technical program, an associate's degree, or a four year degree at a college or university in any field of study.

"We at MASA are pleased to participate in the Discover Card Tribute Award® Scholarship Program," says MASA Executive Director Charlie Kyte. "The great number of applications we receive each year are reflective of the remarkable students we have in Minnesota. I know the judges have a tough task choosing the recipients each year because these kids are all winners."

Applications for the 2003 program for students becoming high school juniors in the fall of 2002 will be sent to high schools in September, 2002. Applications also will be available on the AASA website beginning October 1, 2002. The application materials will indicate the specific deadline for receipt of applications at AASA. The deadline is typically in January each year. •

Not Pictured: Nisha Fernandes

2003 Superintendent of the Year Nomination Forms Now Available

Nominations are now open for the 2003 Superintendent of the Year. Established in 1988, this award recognizes a superintendent who has demonstrated all-around outstanding leadership.

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

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

AASA has mailed nomination materials to local school board presidents who have requested them. Nomination forms are also available on the AASA website (www.aasa.org). AASA will mail application packets to all public school superintendents this summer.

Completed applications are sent to AASA and must be postmarked by September 30, 2002.

AASA then screens the applications and forwards the Minnesota nominees to MASA, where a panel of representatives from a variety of Minnesota education organizations selects the state recipient.

The Minnesota honoree is then a candidate among other state winners for National Superintendent of the Year. The national recipient will be recognized during the first general session at the National Conference on Education, February 20-23, 2003 in New Orleans. Four national finalists receive cash awards and medallions. In addition, the National Superintendent of the Year personally presents a \$10,000 scholarship to a deserving student from his or her high school alma mater.

The program is open to all U.S. public school superintendents. Springsted Incorporated, public finance advisors, is sponsor of the Minnesota Superintendent of the Year program. ServiceMASTER and the American Association of School Administrators are co-sponsors of the National Superintendent of the Year award program.

More information is available from Darlene Pierce, AASA, 1801 N. Moore Street, Arlington, VA 22209-1813, 703-875-0736 or dpierce@aasa.org.

St. Louis Park School Superintendent Named to National Board

MASA is pleased to announce that Dr. Barbara Moore Pulliam, Superintendent of the St. Louis Park Schools, has been named to the Executive Committee of the American Association of School Administrators (AASA). Barbara was officially sworn in on May 3 at the AASA Leadership Conference in New Orleans, and took office on July 1, 2002.



Barbara Moore Pulliam

A 12-year member of AASA, Barbara was appointed to the two-year, at-large term on the 13-member board by AASA President-Elect Bill Hill, Superintendent of the Deer Valley Unified School District in Phoenix, Arizona.

Barbara has been the Superintendent for the St. Louis Park Schools since December, 1997. Prior to that position, she was Associate Superintendent of Education and Equity in Rockford, Illinois.

Barbara holds an Ed.D. from Vanderbilt University, a master's degree from Eastern Michigan University, and a bachelor's degree in from Western Michigan University.

Barbara's leadership activities have included: chair, AASA Suburban Schools Advisory Committee, 1999- 2004; AASA Women's Caucus, 1993- present; member, Midwest Association of School Superintendents; Advisory Board Member, Harvard University Graduate School of Education Principals Center Advisory Board; Professional Development Committee, Minnesota Association of School Administrators; Vanderbilt University Alumni Association Board of Directors; Women of Achievement Award, TwinWest Chamber of Commerce Member.

Our sincere congratulations to Dr. Pulliam as she begins her term of office. •



Make plans to attend the
**AASA 2003
Annual Conference
& Exposition**

February 20 - 23, 2003
Ernest N. Morial Convention Center
New Orleans, Louisiana

www.aasa.org/rce

Calendar 2002 - 03

July 14 - 17
**AASA Rural/
 Small School Conference**
 Renaissance
 Harborplace Hotel
 Baltimore, MD

July 21 - 24
**AASA Suburban School System
 Leaders Conference**
 The Biltmore,
 Providence, RI

August 14
**MASA Summer
 Leadership Workshop**
 Radisson South, Bloomington

August 15 - 16
MSBA Summer Seminar
 Radisson South, Bloomington

August 16
**Fall Newsletter
 Submissions Due**

September 2
Labor Day Holiday
 MASA Offices Closed

September 28 - 29
Board Meetings
 Madden's on Gull Lake,
 Brainerd, MN

- Executive Committee
 September 28: 9:30 - 11:30 am
- Board of Directors
 September 28: 1 - 5:30 pm
 September 29: 9 - 11:30 am

September 29 - October 1
MASA Fall Conference
 Madden's on Gull Lake,
 Brainerd, MN

November 5
Election Day

November 15
**Winter Newsletter
 Submissions Due**

November 28 - 29
Thanksgiving Holiday
 MASA Offices Closed

December 4
Board Meetings
 MASA Office

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

December 23 - 25
January 1
Winter Holidays
 MASA Offices Closed

February 5
Board Meetings
 MASA Office

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

February 14
**Spring Newsletter
 Submissions Due**

February 20 - 23
**AASA National Conference
 on Education**
 New Orleans

April 2
Board Meetings
 Radisson South, Bloomington

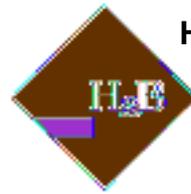
- Executive Committee
 9 - 10:45 am
- Board of Directors
 11 am - 4 pm

April 3 - 4
**MASA/MASE Spring
 Conference**
 Radisson South, Bloomington

April 18
Spring Holiday
 MASA Offices Closed

May 16
**Summer Newsletter
 Submissions Due**

May 26
Memorial Day Holiday
 MASA Offices Closed



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Just to Ponder ...

“There are many skills and attributes tests don’t measure. For example, standardized tests do not measure a child’s motivation to understand new material and perform well in school. They also will not measure a child’s creativity or curiosity, nor the ability to cooperate in a group, challenge assumptions, or complete in-depth projects. None of these characteristics are tested, yet they are all essential skills for further education, workplace preparation, and life in general.”

—Frontline: Testing Our Schools: Parents’ Guide, PBS



A Grandfather is Born

Congratulations to Charlie and Dianne Kyte on the birth of their first grandchild, Anna Murphy. Anna came into the world two weeks early on May 23. Anna lives with her Mom, Stefanie (Charlie and Dianne’s daughter), and Dad, Matt, in Detroit, Michigan. She recently completed her first trip on an airplane to see her grandparents in Northfield.

All reports are that Anna is sweet, beautiful, and obviously a genius. (And in case you can’t tell from the photo, she bears more than a little resemblance to her grandfather Charlie.) •

Charlie and Anna

RECOGNIZING *excellence*

Community Honors Superintendent of the Year Carol Johnson

Members of the Minneapolis Public Schools' Community gathered on May 22 to honor their students and their leader. Student representatives received certificates recognizing outstanding attendance, and Dr. Carol Johnson was honored as 2002 Minnesota Superintendent of the Year.

It was a fitting combination. Of the many initiatives Carol has led in Minneapolis, those supporting student attendance have been especially important. Minneapolis' students speak eighty different languages; twenty per cent are English language learners. Seventy per cent of Minneapolis' pupils are students of color. Sixty-eight per cent of Minneapolis' students receive free and reduced lunch, and fourteen per cent benefit from special education services. At the recognition event, Carol thanked parents and community members for their efforts to make school attendance a high priority for their children.

Carol was named Superintendent of the Year by a panel of representatives from a variety of Minnesota education organizations, based on her outstanding leadership in a number of areas, such as:

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

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

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

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



Carol Johnson addresses community members.



School is Priority One — Dr. Johnson and a “few” of the award-winning Minneapolis kids agree.

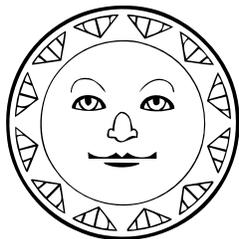


John Nefstead of Springsted Incorporated presents the Superintendent of the Year plaque to Carol Johnson.



Two outstanding leaders: Carol Johnson and John B. Davis visit at the awards reception.

Attending the MSBA Summer Seminar?
Come a day early and take advantage of these great learning opportunities.



The Minnesota Association of School Administrators
presents a professional development opportunity ...

MASA Summer Leadership Workshop

Wednesday, August 14, 2002
Radisson South Hotel, Bloomington

(The CFL seminar will not be held this year.)

Program

8 - 9 am _____ **Registration and Continental Breakfast**

9 - 9:50 am _____ **Welcome and Keynote Speaker**

The Opportunities and Challenges of Minnesota's K-12 and Post-Secondary Systems Working Together

James H. McCormick
Chancellor, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities

10 - 11 am _____ **Breakout Session 1**

- **Enrollment and Revenues Planning**

Jim Sheehan and Ann Thomas, SchoolFinances.com

- **Where is Minnesota Now with ESEA?**

Assistant Commissioner Jessie Montano and Matt Mohs, MN CFL

- **Promising Curricular Innovations**

- **Intro to the Superintendency**

Ken LaCroix

11:10 am - 12:10 pm _____ **Breakout Session 2**

- **Enrollment and Revenues Planning (Repeated)**

- **Where is Minnesota Now with ESEA? (Repeated)**

- **School District Cash Management**

John McClellan, Ambac Securities, Inc.

- **Internal/External Communications**

Robert Noyed, Communication Resources for Schools

12:10 - 1:30 pm _____ **Lunch**

1:30 - 2:30 pm _____ **Breakout Session 3**

- **Effective School District Communications**

Robert Noyed, Communication Resources for Schools

- **Reflective Principal Appraisal:**

Using the 21 Competencies to Facilitate Improving the Leadership of Your Buildings

Kris Bryan Nielsen, Minnesota Administrators Leadership Forum

- **A Status Report on PSEO**

Ric Dressen, Alexandria; Mike Benedetto, Monticello; and Rick Bleichner, Battle Lake

- **A Financial Planning Model for MN School Districts**

Jim Sheehan and Ann Thomas, SchoolFinances.com

2:45 - 3:45 pm _____ **Breakout Session 4**

- **Effective School District Communications (Repeat)**

- **Recent Supreme Court Decision on Vouchers:**

Legal and Political Implications for MN

- **Moving to a New Job: Developing an Entry Plan**

Barbara Pulliam, St. Louis Park; and Charles Kyte, MASA

- **Working with Your School Board**

Kathy Leedom, Willmar; and Jerry Jensen, Lake City

Summer is here and it's a great time to take time to network with your colleagues and brush up on your leadership skills. Make plans to attend the MASA Summer Leadership Workshop! We will begin the day with a general session where we will hear MnSCU Chancellor James McCormick's perspective on the collaboration of Minnesota's Post-Secondary and K-12 systems. Then our participants will have a full menu of breakout sessions to round out the day.

Special Sessions of Particular Interest to New and Newer Superintendents:

Each breakout session block includes a session especially formulated to meet the needs of new and newer superintendents. The special sessions are highlighted on the program schedule at left.

Registration Fee:

\$95 (all checks payable to MASA)

Includes program, materials, lunch and breaks

Getting There

The Radisson South Hotel is located on the Northwest quadrant of I-494 and Highway 100 in Bloomington. From I-494, take Highway 100 North, exit at Industrial Boulevard/77th Street and go west two blocks. The address is: 7800 Normandale Boulevard, Minneapolis, MN 55439, and the phone number is 952/835-7800. More information on the Radisson is available at www.radisson.com/minneapolismn_south. For information about the Bloomington Area, visit their website at www.bloomingtonmn.org.

Registration Form -MASA Summer Workshop

Registration Deadline: August 7, 2002

Name: _____

District: _____

Email: _____

Phone (with Area Code): _____

Return this form with your payment to:

MASA • 1884 Como Avenue • St. Paul, MN 55108

Ph: 651/645-6272 • Fx: 651/645-7518 • members@mnasa.org

Cancellations made before or on August 7 will be charged a \$20 cancellation fee. No refunds for cancellations made after August 7, 2002. **No-shows will be billed.**

Thank you—see you at the workshop!