

## **Media Advisory**

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### **Mary Ann Nelson is MASA 2010 Richard Green Scholar**

(St. Paul, Minn.) -- The Minnesota Association of School Administrators (MASA) has named Mary Ann Nelson, Adjunct Faculty, Education Leadership Program, Capella University, as its 2010 Richard Green Scholar. Dr. Nelson will present her research, *An Exploration of School Board-Superintendent Relationships*, on Tuesday, October 5 at MASA's annual statewide convention of school administrators.

MASA, with the support of Cuningham Group Architecture, established the Richard Green Scholars Program in 2006 to honor the scholarly work and professional development of Minnesota school leaders. The program is an annual recognition of the research, writing, and presentation of a paper reflecting the practice of excellent school leadership. Scholar candidates apply for the program and a subcommittee of the MASA Executive Development Committee selects the recipient.

Dr. Nelson has been an MASA member since 1985, and has worked for 33 years in Minnesota schools as a teacher and high school, district, and state level administrator. In January of 2007, she retired from the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) as an assistant commissioner for academic excellence. Prior to joining MDE, she completed 9 years as a superintendent of schools in Fridley, preceded by 9 years as an assistant superintendent for instruction in St. Louis Park, 6 years as an assistant principal and acting principal for the Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan Schools, and by teaching high school English. After 19 years of working directly with school boards in two different school districts, serving on a charter school board and a hospital board of trustees, she is very engaged in the nature of board relationships.

"I'm very interested in improving board relationships," says Dr. Nelson. "Since I mentor graduate students doing their dissertation research, the timing seemed right to do an exploratory study about superintendent-school board relationships, a topic that impacts the superintendent's capacity to lead the school district."

Former recipients are

2006: Dr. Diane J. Rauschenfels, Superintendent, Proctor Schools, for her research, *"Promoting Ethical Educational Leadership,"*

2007: Dr. Mark Wolak, Superintendent, Mahtomedi Schools, for his study, *"Advancing Professional Practice for School Superintendents: Linking Effective Research with Effective Implementation,"*

2008: Dr. Karen Orcutt, Superintendent of the Orono Schools, for her work, *"Characteristics of Resiliency in Leadership: Implications for Personal and*

*Organizational Coping and Adapting Abilities,"* and

2009: Dr. Jay Haugen, Superintendent of the West Saint Paul-Mendota Heights-Eagan School District, for his analysis, "*Clear goals and transparent accountability: A public campaign for school improvement.*"

Information about the scholars program and copies of the research papers are available online at <http://www.mnasa.org/212410113115826690/site/default.asp>.

“MASA members value life-long learning,” says MASA Executive Director Charlie Kyte, “and a critical focus for us as a professional association is the promotion of personal and professional development. Our goal is to support a professional learning community that inspires critical thinking and assessment of practice, and to recognize the importance of collegial relationships in professional development. The tradition of the presentation of our members’ work at conferences is a reflection of those values, and Mary Ann’s research is a fitting model of the dedication to scholarship that is at the root of innovation in the practice of educational leadership.”

The Richard Green Scholars Program was named to honor former Minneapolis Superintendent Richard R. Green, who modeled innovation and distinction in the child-centered practice of exemplary school leadership.

The program is sponsored by MASA's business partner member, Cuningham Group Architecture. "For many years, the business community has preached the mantra of 'schools should act more like business,'" says Cuningham President Tim Dufault. "In reality, the business world of today needs to act more like schools. Workers in the twenty-first century face increasing pressure from world forces demanding that they be more flexible, adaptable and capable of change. This need for flexibility forces the worker to adapt and learn as a critical part of the success of their business in a global economy. The Richard Green Scholarship allows school leaders to research and share their expertise on this evolving world as both teacher and learner."

MASA is a professional organization whose mission is to establish the statewide agenda for children, serve as the preeminent voice for public education, and empower members through quality services and support. MASA members are school superintendents, directors of special education, other central office school administrators, regional administrators, and higher education administrators and professors from throughout Minnesota.