

NEWSLETTER

The Voice of Middle Level and High School Principals

2011 Winter Conference “Education Opens Doors” Successful, Educational, Informative and Entertaining!

“Education Opens Doors!” was the theme of the 2011 MASSP Winter Conference. One of the highlights of the conference was the message shared by Governor Dayton and Commissioner of Education Brenda Cassellius.

The Commissioner actually joined us twice for the conference, first sharing her thoughts and background at the third general session and later with the Governor on Friday during the fourth general session. I was impressed with her friendly and outgoing personality and the fact that she has first-hand experience as a teacher, principal, assistant superintendent and superintendent which I believe will help guide her as commissioner at this extremely critical time for education in Minnesota. My impression is that we can expect the Department of Education to move toward providing more support and less focus on mere compliance monitoring, particularly in regard to testing and the MCA tests in general.

The Governor also has a background in education, having spent a few years as a teacher in New York City. He spoke of the hard work and dedication involved in teaching. Governor Dayton spoke to the issue at hand regarding the 6.2 billion dollar budget shortfall and shared thoughts regarding how the state will move forward and the importance of public education in that process. Both Governor Dayton and

Commissioner Cassellius spoke in support of public education and the important and difficult role principals hold in moving the state forward. The Governor and Com-



Joann Knuth, Commissioner Brenda Cassellius, Governor Mark Dayton and Roger Aronson meet at the recent MASSP 2011 Winter Conference in Minneapolis.

missioner received an extremely warm ovation by the principals in attendance as we appreciate their time and support for MASSP.

One of the goals I shared with members at the closing of the conference was to connect with your local and state elected officials. I encourage principals to invite mayors, city council members and state legislators into your school to connect and share your vision and goals for the future, as well as your concerns for what stands in the way of success for our students.

Thank you to all those members who shared expertise at the Winter Conference by presenting in breakout sessions and to all those members in attendance. Thanks also to our wonderful MASSP staff for all of the hard work that went into preparation and the coordination of this event. Take care and enjoy the rest of our Minnesota winter weather. Ω

Pete Olson
MASSP President

As schools and principals are asked to do more with less, principals are looking for ways to continue to meet the needs of their students. In order to support the efforts of the membership, MASSP recently held the 2011 Winter Conference. Through useful, thought provoking concurrent sessions, member principals and their staff provided best practices

and shared programs they have developed to increase student achievement. Our greatest resource has always been our members, and we are thankful that members are willing to share their successes with others.

Sessions spanned a wide variety of topics and interests whether you needed information on Quadrant D lessons, RtI, use of data, technology, grading, or PLC’s.

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Thinking About. . .

by Joann Knuth
Executive Director



Over the past few weeks I have had an opportunity to hear our education leaders. Education Secretary Arne Duncan spoke at the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce luncheon whose theme was: "Wanted: Prepared Workforce; Needed: Education Reforms." The next week Governor Mark Dayton and Commissioner Brenda Cassellius spoke at our MASSP Winter Conference, sharing their vision for public education. Last week the Governor revealed his "7-Point Plan for Achieving Excellence."

Conclusion: Education, PK-20, is at the top of national and state leaders' priorities with an intensity that has not been present in previous administrations. The priorities for these three leaders and the Minnesota Chamber are aligned, with a few critical twists.

Secretary Duncan began by complimenting Minnesota for its nation-leading public education system. Our history of reform is strong: a state leading in PSEO options, top ACT scores reflecting rigorous curriculums such as College in the Schools, Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate programs, and Charter Schools.

However, "complacency is our enemy" and we can no longer rest on our history. Today we have the largest achievement gap in the country. "That is morally indefensible."

Regarding Minnesota's application for a Race to the Top Grant, "Minnesota did not move out of its comfort zone. Minnesota is not feeling a sense of urgency." He is challenging us to move from complacency to innovation. It is his intention to reauthorize ESEA this year. He labeled NCLB punitive and unsuccessful, a law that narrowed the curriculum. He wants to change the culture growing out of that law from punitive to innovative and invest one billion dollars in programs that support well rounded education.

Secretary Duncan identified his top priorities to be: invest new resources in early childhood education; establish clear transparency around data which includes tying student data to teachers; attract great talent to education especially to remote and urban communities to close the achievement gap; set high expectations for all students, meaning to graduate career and college ready.

He ended his speech by calling "teachers and principals the unsung heroes." He is on target with that message; however, his school reform agenda, embedded in RTTT, did not reflect that. We are fortunate that the chair

of the U.S. House Committee on Education and the Workforce is chaired by John Kline, Congressman from Minnesota's 2nd Congressional District. He is not a fan of NCLB and, by the title change of this committee, he is tying our country's economic vitality to education.

Both Duncan and Kline have a strong sense of urgency to improve results for all students, to close the gap, and to ensure students graduate prepared for post-secondary education.

These are the goals MASSP articulated in June, 2007 in *Bridge to Higher Learning: A New Vision for Minnesota's High Schools in the Global Information Age*. They continue to be our goals. We called for focusing on the prize of post-secondary completion for all, and detailed ten building blocks calling for reform and achieving success for all students.

Governor Pawlenty described our high schools as obsolete, fostering the "academic loitering" of students. We have a new governor in town who, in a speech during his inaugural celebration said, "...we have had reform with less. Now let's see what reform is when we support it at adequate levels."

During the campaign Dayton promised increased funding for education every year he is governor. He is rolling out his budget February 15, and he is including increased resources for education. In addition he is appointing a Governor's Commission on Better School Funding. Representative Grieling will be involved, as she was with the commission Pawlenty appointed to evaluate and recommend changes to K-12 funding. That Blue Ribbon Commission's report identified a two billion dollar need. The "New Minnesota Miracle" was shelved.

Commissioner Cassellius calls for three issues to be addressed in funding PK-12: adequacy, equity and elimination of disparities across the state. With a 6.2 billion dollar deficit, we cannot expect huge increases in education funding, but over time and with the leadership of our new governor and commissioner we will look forward to a "simplified and ambitious plan, "Governor Dayton's" Better Schools for a Better Minnesota."

This 7-Point Plan for Achieving Excellence begins with Funding Education for the Future⁽¹⁾, investing in early childhood and all-day kindergarten, in strategies that close the achievement gap. He is calling for Better Early Childhood Education⁽²⁾, expanding to a pre-K-12 system. Thirdly, the plan seeks to Close the Gap⁽³⁾, and fund those many bright spots around the state, examples of excellence and innovation, recognize them and share best practices.

Joann Knuth
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Legislative and Legal Updates

by Roger Aronson, MASSP Attorney and Lobbyist

What's all the fuss about tenure?

Labels are all the rage these days. Complex issues and concepts are reduced to a short phrase. The intent varies, depending on the group applying the label. Sometimes the label is positive and sometimes negative. The approach ranges from blatant to subtle. Think about some examples: death tax, school choice, pro life, freeze, tax reform, NCLB, special ed, race to the top, —the list is endless. One approach is to attach a negative connotation to an otherwise positive concept. A recent example involves lawyers. The American Trial Lawyers Association was forced to change its name as a result of a campaign against it. The insurance industry was successful at connecting the label “frivolous lawsuits” to “trial lawyers”. As a result, the organization needed a new logo and identity and became the American Association for Justice. Same lawyers, different label.

Tenure is one of “labels” currently undergoing a subtle attack. Most principals and teachers rarely think about their tenure rights. Many principals take them for granted while others may be unaware of them. Student achievement, student conduct, school funding, the achievement gap, pay freezes and the kid waiting outside your office are all more pressing.

Employment discharge statutes are quite common. Most states provide teachers and principals with some form of employment protection. Interestingly, the word “tenure” does not appear in the Minnesota Education Code. Minnesota calls these protections the “continuing contract” law. To make matters more complicated, Minnesota has two discharge statutes. Minneapolis, Duluth and St. Paul have their own statute which differs slightly from the act covering the rest of the school districts in Minnesota. In the end, both statutes outline a process for discharge that involves standards of proof and a general framework of the basis for firing someone.

At its core, the statute basically protects teachers and principals from “arbitrary discharge”. Not all discharge. School districts do retain the right to discharge teachers and principals; they simply have to comply with the standards set out in the statutes. The standards are applied on a case-by-case basis before a neutral arbitrator. From time to time the process may yield

a questionable result, but overall the system works very well. The statute is a simply a safety net. Most of the time people don't fall and need the net. But when they do, it can be a life-saver. The fact that most people take it for granted is evidence that it must be working correctly.

Minnesota law provides two forms of discharge. The first covers serious misconduct. The standards are typical of egregious misconduct and include immoral conduct, conviction of a felony, willful neglect of duty and conduct that requires immediate removal. These forms of misconduct are generally “single incident” matters and are not linked to performance. The statute also includes a form of performance-based discharge. This provides for discharge based on inefficiency, violation of directives and regulations, or any unbecoming conduct, which materially impairs the teacher's educational effectiveness. Under this portion of the statute the teacher or principal is afforded one opportunity to remediate the behavior. Failure to do so will result in discharge in serious cases.

Would we have better principals and teachers without these statutes? Most of the opinion is supported by anecdote and experience. There is no data to support such a claim. In fact, tenure is probably of little connection to student achievement. These statutes are more about climate in the workplace. Generally, we presume that people act in good faith. Assuming everyone behaves well, we wouldn't need protections from arbitrary behavior. But what happens when the board is vindictive? What happens when the superintendent is dealing with someone unfairly? In the end, these statutes do not come into play in the thousands of employment relationships in public education. In the most egregious cases the result is swift. When a principal or teacher engages in serious misconduct the case generally doesn't go to a hearing. These cases involve resignation and prompt board action typically followed up by an action on the individual's license. Some behaviors are simply indefensible and, more importantly, intolerable in public education. In the performance cases the district or the principal have to make a record, build a file and then take appropriate action.

It isn't a bad system and it certainly is better than the alternative of no system of protection from arbitrary discharge. Ω



MASSP's logo has a new look with detail added to the traditional logo. While the former logo clearly identifies Minnesota, it did not say what “ASSP” is. With the Board's adoption of the new, modified logo people will know we are the Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals, established in 1925.



Coordinators's Report

by Mary Pat Cumming
MASSP Coordinator

Have You Done It Yet?

Each time I write an article or speak at the Summer or Winter Conference, I implore you to reach out and connect with your local and state representatives and share stories of the impacts of legislation and funding. At the recent Winter Conference, Governor Dayton, Commissioner Casellius, Roger Aronson, and I echoed that message and presented a challenge. I put forth that same challenge to those of you who were there, and extend it to all MASSP members.

Here's the challenge:

Before the Summer Conference, contact your local and state repre-

sentatives via email, phone or in person to promote education topics.

Your **email address** should be familiar to your senator, because if it's

"If we are not the voice for education and the needs of our students in Minnesota, who is?"

not, then someone else's is. Your **fingerprints** should be on the door knob or window of your state representative's office, because if they aren't, then someone else's are. Your **name** should

be familiar to your state senator, because if it's not, then someone else's is. If we are not the voice for education and the needs of our students in Minnesota, who is? We need to be the "squeaky wheel", the fingerprints the CSI black light can detect, the email address that clutters the in-box on behalf of our students.

If you don't know who your US House and Senate members are or where they are located, use your NASSP website at <http://www.principals.org/LegislativeAdvocacy> and under the 'Inside' section in the middle of the page, click on the Principal's Legislative Action Center. For Minnesota, on the same NASSP page, click on "State Issues" on the top header. The Minnesota Legislator Search is located on the left hand side of the page.

So, in June, we'll check in to see if you've "done it yet." Take 5 minutes to make the call and invite your representatives to engage in conversation or to tour your building. Ω

Candidates for MASSP Secretary



Jeanette Swanson

My name is **Jeanette (Jeanne) Swanson**, and I am a proud member of the Southeast Principals Association and am honored to be a candidate for MASSP Secretary.

I have been an educator for 32 years, including 18 years administrative experience as an Assistant Principal and Principal of Waseca High School and have enthusiastically advised Waseca High School's Student Council during that same time period.

I am a native of Waseca and received my B.S. and M.S. degree as well as my administrative licensures from Minnesota State University, Mankato.

My husband Vance and I have been blessed with three children Colby, Peter, and John Patrick. Other than keeping busy with family, my hobbies include music, reading, walking, swimming and attending school activities.

While education is facing many challenges it is an exciting time to be involved in the possibilities they may present. Minnesota Principals will be at the forefront. I believe I have the leadership skills, experience, and passion to serve Minnesota Principals in leading the charge. I would greatly appreciate your vote. Ω



Karen Wollak

I'm **Karen Wollak**, and I'm running for MASSP secretary!

I have been an administrator for twenty years at various levels. I have worked at the middle school level, the high school level, and now I'm principal at an alternative learning center.

I have also been a member of Capitol division for 16 years. I have served as secretary, vice-president, and president of Capitol division. I am currently serving on the board of directors for the division.

I am running for two important reasons: One reason is to give back to a wonderful organization that has served me both personally and professionally. MASSP has offered "meet & greet" opportunities, viable workshops and conferences, outstanding central office support, and outstanding legislative support. Secondly, during these tough economic times, schools are doing more with less. We need to tell our stories of success and achievement. We need to tell our communities and our legislators that public education is making a positive difference. We need to inspire others and inspire one another.

I would greatly appreciate your support for MASSP Secretary! Ω

Minnesota Principals of the Year ⁵



Efe Agbamu

Efe Agbamu has been the principal of Park High School in the South Washington County School District since 2007. Prior to that she led St. Paul Highland Park Senior High School.

Efe is an inclusive leader who challenges herself and her staff to make real their vision for Park High School's 1,850 students. "The vision is to prepare all students, everyday, for college whenever and wherever they choose to go." To that end she has implemented the IB Program and AVID at Park. Within 3 years, the high school has doubled the number of students taking IB/AP courses to 1,500 students this year. They have moved away from remedial courses to intervention classes using RTI core assumptions as a framework.

In 2009 Park was the recipient of the Minnesota Academic Excellence Foundation Spotlight Award. To support teachers, Efe started a new probationary teacher group which meets monthly to share strategies and practices around the Charlotte Danielson 4 Domains of Practices. They implemented a 9th grade academy. Their PLC conversations are focused on student work and in 4 years the students' proficiency in math rose from 39% to 61% and reading proficiency rose to 85%. They have many programs and much data to share, which they do with strong parental communications.

Perhaps, Mark Porter, Superintendent of South Washington County Schools says it best: "Dr. Efe Agbamu has a commitment to students and their success that is truly remarkable. She refers to all students at Park High as 'Park High Scholars' and treats each as one of her own." Their success is her unwavering top priority. The respect and relationship between Dr. Agbamu and her students is indeed unique in a school of over 1,800. Ω



Jeff Sherber

Jeff Sherber is principal of Monticello Middle School, with an enrollment of 970 6th-8th grade students. Since Jeff assumed that position 10 years ago, he has sought to help his students and staff realize their potentials in themselves through his commitment to them. He implemented the National Middle School Association's "This We Believe," focusing on 14 points of an exceptional middle school. In addition, he used BRIM research to guide the school in measuring themselves, not against others, but measuring to be the best statewide and nationally. They have a no-excuses commitment to providing the best education in the country.

Jeff works with their Leadership Team to get 100% engagement of staff in one of 5 committees that work on their strategic plan with measurable objectives yearly and long-term: 3-5 years. His leadership provides a clear vision of where the school is going and what they are striving to achieve for every student.

Strong parental involvement, student involvement with the Student Advisory Representative Program, means the whole community is invested in the success of their students. The analysis of successful practices and the use of data are at the heart of school decision-making. Every staff member is involved in a PLC, literacy skills are incorporated into every classroom. And personalization is most influential: academic personalization and social personalization. Every spring they conduct a "good-news calling blitz." Every teacher is responsible for calling 15 students' homes to share good news. They keep track of the calls so every one of the 970 students receives a call. The result of Jeff's leadership is that every cohort of students at Monticello scores significantly above the state averages in math and reading.

Jeff is described by his colleagues, staff and board members in the following way: "He is a great mentor and the type of leader who leads by example by loving all kids and being passionate about education." Ω

Winter Conference. . .continued from front page

Governor Dayton and Commissioner of Education Brenda Cassellius were also a part of the conference. We are honored that they both would attend and share information on their expectations and support for education. Both have experience in the schools and seem to understand and support our efforts in helping students to succeed. Their presence and support was appreciated by the membership.

The MASSP Winter Conference offers the opportunity for school administrators to interact with presenters and other members to discuss issues and topics of interest and adapt what they learn to their own buildings. If you were not able to attend this year's conference, plan on attending the Summer Conference at Breezy Point Resort, June 14 - 17, 2011. Ω

Nan Mizuhata
MASSP Director of Professional Development

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!
Summer Conference 2011 — "Principle Essentials for Principals"
June 14 - 17, 2011 — Breezy Point Resort

The Evaluation of Minnesota's School Principals Well Received

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MASSP, partnering with MESPA, MASA and BOSA, has published *The Evaluation of Minnesota's School Principals*, a professional development and evaluation process for school principals.

The impetus for this ambitious effort came out of growing pressure from communities and the legislature to address issues of accountability and performance of educators. MASSP and our partnering associations, in a desire to stay ahead of mandates, embraced the opportunity to develop a model that would be a valuable and legitimate tool for improvement.

This model is based on the framework of the Minnesota Principal Competencies found in Minnesota Administrative Rules/Chapter 3512, containing the Core Leadership Competencies for Minnesota administrative license. Three members from each of the professional education associations, representing geographic, gender and ethnic diversity, were invited to join together in the creation of this evaluation process. Also, key to the Task Force work was the leadership of the Board of School Administrators, Stan Mack, Executive Director and Mary Mackbee, BOSA Chair, who brought the knowledge and process of that state board to the creation of the document.


The Task Force was facilitated by Greg Vandal, retired superintendent from Sauk Rapids/Rice, and current educational consultant, who guided deep discussions of the Task Force over five months and multiple meetings. He was also the chief author.

Dr. Vandal presented *The Evaluation of Minnesota's School Principals* at the Winter Conference, giving an overview of the process and an executive summary. A major goal of the Task Force in developing this model was to make it adaptable for districts and principals. It outlines a comprehensive process for professional development and evaluation which may be implemented according to superintendent and principal unique circumstances.

The evaluation process is framed around the Core Competencies in Administrative Rule. These seventeen individual competencies and nearly 100 component parts have been re-framed into seven Core Leadership Competencies: Strategic Leadership; Instructional Leadership; Managerial Leadership; Cultural Leadership; Communication Leadership; School Community Leadership; and Ethical and Professional Leadership.

It is these seven Leadership Competencies that focus the principal's leadership, vision and goals for his or her school in discussion with the superintendent. Another key component of the document is a section detailing examples of evidence the principal can site to document progress toward meeting his or her professional development and school goals.

A copy of *The Evaluation of Minnesota's School Principals* has been mailed to all elementary and secondary principals and superintendents. Association Executive Directors Fred Storti and Joann Knuth have been meeting with Roger Aronson, the Minnesota Business Partnership, the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce, and key legislative leaders. MASSP expects that *The Evaluation of Minnesota's School Principals* will meet or exceed any legislative mandate calling for evaluation. Roger Aronson is working with legislators on this issue.

Thank you to members of the Task Force and Greg Vandal, the facilitator. A special thank you goes to MASSP members of the Task Force for their leadership and commitment in bringing this initiative to fruition: David Adney, Principal of Minnetonka High School; Jeff Bertrang, Principal of GRW High School, Winthrop; Trish Perry, Principal of New London-Spicer Middle School; Paul Peterson, Principal of St. Peter High School (and intern with BOSA); Mary Mackbee, Principal of St. Paul Central High School (and Chair of BOSA) and Joann Knuth, MASSP Executive Director. 



Principal Mike Duffy receives a congratulatory plaque, from Joann Knuth, Executive Director of the Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals, commemorating Byron High School being honored with a Blue Ribbon School Award for Excellence from the U.S. Department of Education. The school was one of six in Minnesota to win the Blue Ribbon award this year, and it was the only high school. Principal Mike Duffy says only 23 Minnesota high schools have won the award since it began in 1982. The high school scored in the top 10 percent on state standardized tests in reading, writing and math. It also routinely beats the state average on ACT tests.



From the Field

By Nicholas J. Miller
Associate Professor
Educational Administration
St. Cloud State University

I am in the process of teaching a leadership class at St. Cloud State University, and as I prepared my curriculum I read about the attempt of the Eden Prairie School District to redraw school boundaries to better meet the needs of the lower performing students. Melissa Krull who is the superintendent has come under extreme pressure from a group of parents who oppose the redrawing of lines.

I wondered why a veteran and successful superintendent would take the risk to put herself in a situation that has the potential to become very controversial. I contacted her and asked if she would be willing to talk to my students about how she arrived at her decision.

As you may recall I wrote an article last year that addressed the issue of courageous leadership. I have long believed that courage has to be one of the qualities that great leaders hold.

Melissa came to my class last week and explained her reasons for tackling a very difficult subject with her community. The answer was surprisingly simple-it is the right thing to do. I and my students were very impressed with not only her courage but also her commitment to do the right thing for all of the students.

You all have read about the turmoil that this decision has created. I left the classroom last Saturday with a tremendous amount of respect and admiration for Superintendent Melissa Krull.

In our positions of leadership we are often asked to make very difficult decisions. Often these decisions do not make us popular with some people. Great leaders make the hard and right call no matter the personal consequences. I encourage each of

you to follow the situation in Eden Prairie and learn from Melissa and her unwavering courage to do the right thing even in the toughest circumstances. We all can learn from her and her commitment to the children in her district.

I also have been following numerous situations that have occurred in state schools in the past year that have drawn media attention. I know of three hazing situations that have made news in the area newspapers and television stations. All of them have been handled extremely well by school officials. Nonetheless these situations have required much time and significant resources.

What can we as principals learn? As I have thought about these situations I have emphasized to my students the need for school leaders to constantly repeat the message about hazing to activity directors, staff and students. I think that we all assume that our coaches will remember to annually make sure that the hazing situation will be addressed. Coaches are very busy with other stuff and sometimes fail to adequately cover this difficult subject. I encourage each of you to make sure that your entire staff takes the time regularly to talk with students about this issue. The bottom line is that the buck stops at the principal's office. You are the one who is held accountable.

We often assume that our staff will know what needs to be done. We also assume that they clearly understand our expectations. I always dedicated a large amount of time to the first fall faculty meeting so that I could cover every single item that I knew needed to be addressed. Teachers want to work in their rooms and we often give in to that pressure.

I encourage each of you to begin making a list of everything that needs to be covered so that you will be ready in the fall. If you have a law suit you want to be able to say that you spent the appropriate time to train your staff. The first meeting is the best time because everyone is at that meeting. I also suggest that you take attendance and have each teacher sign that he or she attended. On two occasions in my career I was able to prove that our staff was made aware of a particular topic or policy at that opening meeting and the law suit was avoided. The bottom line is this...if you expect it tell them. Don't assume that your staff knows what you are thinking.

I have found that my students who are training for leadership positions are much more successful when they are encouraged and mentored by successful practicing school leaders. My students who self select and want to get into this profession for the wrong reasons are often unsuccessful.

This past school year I was unable to grant a number of students the letter for licensure for the principalship. I believe that our students are much more successful when you seek them out and encourage them because you see qualities in them that you feel are essential for success. I am very grateful to the many of you who build leadership capacity in your staff and then encourage some of your teachers to pursue the licensure program. If you find quality candidates on your staff and feel that they would be strong leaders please encourage them to investigate some of the programs in the state. We all have a responsibility to give back to the profession. All of you amaze me with your dedication to your schools and your willingness to give yourselves for others. The profession has become more difficult but the quality of the leaders in our schools is better than ever. Ω

Contact Nick Miller by emailing him at njmiller@stcloudstate.edu.

What Does Research Say is Effective in Addressing Bullying? ⁸

It is not uncommon for schools to use a variety of approaches to address bullying, such as schoolwide assemblies or zero tolerance policies. But are these approaches effective in creating long-term, lasting change in the bullying rates at school? Research shows that both of these approaches are not effective. So what is?

Although research into bullying prevention is still relatively new, a review of existing bullying prevention programs and feedback from educators in the field have identified ten strategies that represent “best practices” in bullying prevention and intervention.

Focus on the school environment. To reduce bullying, it is important to change the climate of the school and the social norms with regard to bullying. It must become “uncool” to bully, “cool” to help out students who are bullied, and normal for staff and students to notice when a child is bullied or left out. This work should be done schoolwide, not just in one or two classes.

Assess bullying at your school. Often, adults are not very accurate when estimating the nature and extent of bullying at their school. For this reason, it is most helpful to administer an anonymous survey to your students. This will show you how prevalent bullying and its forms are at your school.

Garner staff and parent support for bullying prevention. Bullying prevention is most effective when the entire school community, from the bus drivers to the teachers to the parents, is on board.

Form a group to coordinate your school’s bullying prevention activities. Bullying prevention efforts seem to work best, if they are coordinated by a representative group within the school. This coordinating team (which might include an administrator, a teacher from each grade, a member of the non-teaching staff, a school counselor or other school-based mental health professional, a school nurse, and a parent) should meet regularly to establish bullying prevention plans for the school.

Train your staff in bullying prevention. All administrators, faculty, and staff at your school should be trained in bullying prevention and intervention. In-service training can help staff to better understand the nature of bullying and its effects, how to respond if they observe bullying, and how to work with others at the school to help prevent bullying from occurring.

Establish and enforce school rules and policies related to bullying. Although many school policies and procedures prohibit bullying, they don’t clarify expectations for bullying behavior. Developing simple, clear rules about bullying can help to ensure that students are aware of adults’ expectations, and they will know that adults will help if they are bullied.

Increase adult supervision in hot spots where bullying occurs. Bullying tends to thrive in locations where adults are not present or are not attentive. Once school personnel have identified hot spots for bullying from the student surveys, look for creative ways to increase adults’ presence in these locations.

Intervene consistently and appropriately in bullying situations. All staff should be able to intervene effectively on the spot to stop bullying. Designated staff should also hold separate follow-up meetings for the child who is bullied and the child who bullies.

Focus class time on bullying prevention. It is important that bullying prevention programs include a classroom component. Teachers should set aside time each week to discuss bullying and peer relations with students. Bullying prevention is most effective with students when it is integrated into their classroom time.

Continue these efforts over time. There should be no end date for bullying prevention efforts. Bullying prevention should be woven into the entire school environment.

By following these ten strategies identified as “best practices” in bullying prevention, you will be well on your way to reducing bullying at your school and providing a safe, supportive learning environment for your students. Ω

SAVE THE DATE!

Bullying Prevention Summit

March 7, 2011

**Presented Jointly by
MASSP • MESPA • Hazelden
Location: TIES Building**

**Registration information is available on
www.masssp.org at the dropdown menu item
“Professional Development” under “Events”.**

Junior Achievement's Finance Park — FREE!

JA Finance Park introduces students to personal financial planning and career exploration. It is designed to be taught to middle grade students by classroom teachers. At the culmination of this program, students visit JA Finance Park to put into practice what they've learned about economic options and the principles of budgeting. Assisted by their teachers and a staff of trained volunteers, they have the opportunity to actually develop and commit to a personal budget.

Finance Park Online will be made available to at-risk schools in Minnesota at NO COST this year! This innovative new program, focused on budgeting, money management and investments, features high quality classroom curriculum and a unique online simulation.

Junior Achievement of the Upper Midwest is one of only two in the country that have developed this exciting delivery method.

The programmatic cost of this program is \$26 per student, but this free offer at **no cost** this school year is because of private funding received from Wells Fargo, Thrivent, and Great Lakes.

As a part of the program, teachers will receive a curriculum guide, students will receive workbooks and will utilize an online simulation to put all their learning to the test. JA staff will work closely with teachers to make sure the experience is a success for all participants.

This program is relevant for 8th – 12th

grade levels. JA Finance Park online can be utilized in a variety of classes: economics, business, FACS, and math. It is correlated to state standards in the areas of social studies, language arts and mathematics.

Schools that have a free and reduced lunch percent of 40% or more will be given priority. You may use an online form to sign up for this program. The form can be accessed at:

<https://jaum.wufoo.com/forms/201011-ja-fp-online-program-request/>.

If you have any additional questions about this program or this unique opportunity, please contact JA's Jennifer Kmecik at jkmecik@jaum.org or call 651-255-0036. Ω

Lawyers in the Schools Program

The Civic Education Committee, of the Minnesota State Bar Association (MSBA), creates free lesson plans every year for each of the four major civic holidays, Constitution Day (September), Election Day (November), Presidents' Day (February) and Law Day (May). The Committee also recruits legal professionals to visit classrooms all throughout Minnesota on those days to present the lesson plan and bring their real world experience to students.

If you are looking for something different to do for Presidents' Day this year, the Lawyers in the School program is a great addition to your Social Studies lesson planning and available at no cost to your school. The lesson plan this year is called The New New Deal.

Students will:

- **compare** today's financial crisis with the Great Depression.
- **learn** about President Roosevelt's New Deal and his attempt to solve the social and economic issues faced by American citizens.
- **design** their own, modern solutions to resolve current social and economic problems in the U.S.

Contact Tamara Patton, Civic Education Manager at the MSBA, at tpatton@mnbbar.org or call 612-278-6309 to schedule an activity for your school. Visit our website for a list of schools and legal organizations that already participate and take advantage of our **Lesson Plan Idea Bank** – <http://www.mnciviced.org>. Ω

Joann Knuth. . .continued from page 2

In 2001 a law was passed to ensure students read by 3rd grade – Reading Well by 3rd Grade is point 4. To accomplish these goals, Dayton says we must Support Teaching⁽⁵⁾, including alternative pathways to quality teacher licensure and establishing a statewide teacher performance evaluation and support network. MASSP, along with MESPA, MASA and BOSA, now has a comprehensive principal evaluation and professional devel-

opment process for superintendents to implement.

Better Testing⁽⁶⁾, calls for assessments that measure growth of students rather than the current AYP system which relies on "statistics for dummies" (the Governor's words).

Finally, a Department of Education that provides Educational Leadership and Support⁽⁷⁾ for schools and repositions MDE to sup-

port teachers, schools, and districts. This will be a department focused on instructional leadership rather than compliance, which will still be a key function.

These changes are welcome and, I believe, reflect a new leadership that deeply understands our state's prosperous future depends on strong, adequately funded public schools. Ω



Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals



Calendar of Events — 2010 - 2011

March or April.....Board of Directors Meeting.....Location TBD

June 14, 2011Board of Directors Meeting.....Breezy Point Resort, Breezy Point, MN

June 14-17, 2011Summer ConferenceBreezy Point Resort, Breezy Point, MN

Minnesota Association of Honor Societies State Convention

February 17, 2011 — TIES - Grand Hall
Craig Hillier - Speaker

Minnesota Association of Student Councils “Jammin’ to Leadership”

April 9-11, 2011 — Walker High School
Alvin Law and Monte Selby - Speakers

MASSP Officers

President	Peter Olson	Princeton High School	Princeton, MN
President-Elect	James Smokrovich	Grand Rapids Senior High School	Grand Rapids, MN
Secretary	Jeffrey Drake	Battle Lake High School	Battle Lake, MN
Coordinator	Mary Pat Cumming	FAIR School Downtown	Minneapolis, MN
Past-President	Donald Johnson	Owatonna Senior High School	Owatonna, MN

MASSP Board of Directors

Capitol Division	John Bezek	Tartan Senior High School	Oakdale, MN
Capitol Division	Karen Wollak	Tartan Senior High School	Oakdale, MN
Central Division	Mike Carr	Sartell - St. Stephen High School	Sartell, MN
Central Division	Alan D. Niemann	Foley Senior High School	Foley, MN
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Hennepin Division	Jeff Ridlehoover	Wayzata High School	Plymouth, MN
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Northern Division	Helen Kennedy	Crookston High School	Crookston, MN
Southeast Division	Greg Berge	Lincoln High School	Lake City, MN
Southwest Division	Don Yrjo	Redwood Valley High School	Redwood Falls, MN
Western Division	Nels Onstad	West Central Area Secondary School	Barrett, MN
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Capitol Division	Elizabeth Block	Cottage Grove Middle School	Cottage Grove, MN
Central Division	Erich Martens	Sauk Rapids-Rice High School	Sauk Rapids, MN
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Southeast Division	Marsha Langseth	Southwest Middle School	Albert Lea, MN
Southwest Division	Wade Mathers	Redwood Valley Middle School	Redwood Falls, MN
Western Division	Nels Onstad	West Central Area Secondary School	Barrett, MN

Minnesota State High School League Representatives

John Hamann	Underwood High School	"A" Representative	Underwood, MN
Luanne Wagner	St. Francis High School	"AA" Representative	St. Francis, MN

**Members enjoying themselves at this year's Winter Conference
Watch www.massp.org for a new slideshow of photos
that will be online soon!**

