



Southeast  
Service  
Cooperative

# *Connections*

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# Creativity for Wellness

By Katie Schmitt,

Development & Innovation Specialist

I know how challenging it is to be a working professional, wife, mother, and creative. For many years, art took a back burner to other demands in my life - like raising my daughter and paying bills. I've figured out how to get into the studio more and, to my surprise, things did not fall apart at home or work.

As a creative thinker, I like to blend priorities and tasks to see if I can get the most out of my time. I recently created a worksheet to explore how to blend my love of crafting, art, and design with my wellness goals. Using the 7 Dimensions of Wellness as a



framework, the worksheet focuses on leveraging creative pursuits to improve health and wellness outcomes.

Being creative within the 7 Dimensions motivates me to take

action in areas that have fallen off my priority list. I'm sharing it with you (see link below) so that you can maximize your creative time while paying attention to the 7 Dimensions. I suggest that you identify one dimension to focus on and create a simple action step - like a 30-day plan to blend crafting or making and one wellness dimension.

The benefits of making art transcend the studio and show up at work and at home with my family. Crafting and making reduce stress, promote mindfulness, increase capacity for problem solving, and re-energize me. I hope you find this to be a valuable tool on your wellness journey.

## New Wellness Resource for Creatives

Are you a crafter, DIYer, artist, or maker who is looking to reduce stress, increase wellness, and carve out more time to do the things you enjoy?

We've created a new tool to help you explore the 7 Dimensions of Wellness through crafting, making, DIY, and other creative pursuits. [Complete this form to get the worksheet.](#)

## Student Loan Forgiveness Program

"My life has definitely changed for the better since I started saving on my student loans. I no longer worry about my loan forgiveness plan because it is so simple to work with Fiducius!" *Sara, Byron Public Schools*

Join your fellow SSC member, Sara, in feeling relief from student loan stress! We are continuing to partner with Fiducius to help you understand your finances, ensuring you maximize your student loan savings.

It's easy to get started today by registering online and scheduling time to speak with an Advisor. Receive your no-obligation Student Loan Financial Wellness Plan by [clicking here](#).



**How will you recharge this summer?  
Do you want to relax and boost your creativity?**

## ***Carved Panel Painting Online Course***

### **Create wall worthy art.**

Designing a composition is one of the most difficult tasks in painting. For this course, a design is carved onto the panel before it is shipped to you. The relief carved onto the panel creates a guide. You can focus on making something you will be proud to display.

### **Customize your color palette.**

Use the color palette recipes from the course or create a custom color palette that matches your style.

### **Fit the course into your schedule.**

You don't need give up an entire day or weekend to attend a workshop. All of the instruction is online so the course fits into your life.

### **Course Features:**

- Video Lessons, Tutorials, and Technique Demos
- Step-by-Step Instructions
- Carved panel shipped to you
- Printable Resources
- Lead by Katie Schmitt, artist and SSC's Development & Innovation Specialist

## **Choose your design.**

### **4 Carved Panel Options**



**Lilac Pop**

Size: 11x14 in.



**Lotus**

Size: 12x12 in.



**Spiral Jetty**

Size: 16x16 in.



**Stone Orbit**

Size: 16x16 in.

**Course details are available at:  
[www.ssc.coop/art](http://www.ssc.coop/art)**

**REGISTRATION OPENS IN SUMMER**

**Get on the Wait List**

**Save \$20**

Join the wait list to get priority registration when the course opens this summer. Be sure to provide your summer email address so you don't miss out on the special \$20 off discount for employees of SSC member organizations. No payment is required to get on wait list.

**Buy One.  
Give One.**

When you purchase the course, a carved panel is also created for a school-aged child. "Give One" panels will be distributed to K-12 classrooms in the fall. Your purchase increases access to arts education in southeastern Minnesota.

# 5 Knowledge Bowl Teams Advance to State

*Chatfield, Northfield (2 teams), Rochester Mayo, and Rushford-Peterson*

By Katie Hartman

The 2019 Senior High Knowledge Bowl Regionals, sponsored by the Southeast Service Cooperative, were held on March 4, 2019 at the Wood Lake Meeting Center in Rochester. The following area teams competed after advancing from Sub-Regionals. A total of 115 teams (55 in Tier AA and 55 in Tier A) participated in Sub-Regionals on February 13, 15, 19 and 22, 2019.

Tier AA Regional consisted of teams from: Albert Lea, Northfield (6 teams), Rochester Mayo (2 teams), Red Wing, Triton, and Winona.

Tier A Regional consisted of teams from: Chatfield (2 teams),

*Awards went to the following teams:*

- 1<sup>st</sup> place (Tier AA) – Rochester Mayo Gold
- 1<sup>st</sup> place (Tier A) – Chatfield 1
- 2<sup>nd</sup> place (Tier AA) – Northfield Chestnut
- 2<sup>nd</sup> place (Tier A) – Rushford-Peterson 2
- 3<sup>rd</sup> place (Tier AA) – Northfield Milk
- 3<sup>rd</sup> place (Tier A), and unfortunately not advancing to state, went to Spring Grove 1

Lewiston-Altura, Rushford-Peterson, Spring Grove (2 teams), and St. Charles.

The top three teams from Tier AA and top two teams from Tier A advanced to the State event at Cragun's in Brainerd on April 10-11.

The Minnesota Service Cooperative Knowledge Bowl competitions are interdisciplinary academic contests for students. The Senior High Knowledge Bowl is for students in grades 9-12. This competition provides a format for student growth centered around academics.

Dover-Eyota, Goodhue, Kenyon-Wanamingo, Kingsland, Lanesboro,

## Teams Placing at Regional

### Tier A



1st place - Chatfield 1

### Tier AA



1st place - Rochester Mayo Gold



2nd place - Rushford Peterson 2



2nd place - Northfield Chestnut



3rd place - Spring Grove 1



3rd place - Northfield Milk

## State Knowledge Bowl Results

### Tier A:

Chatfield 15<sup>th</sup> Place\*

Rushford-Peterson 18<sup>th</sup> Place

### Tier AA

Rochester Mayo 11<sup>th</sup> Place

Northfield Chestnut 17<sup>th</sup> Place

Northfield Milk 18<sup>th</sup> Place

\*24 teams competed in each tier

**Chatfield's Brainy Bunch:  
Learn What it Takes to  
Compete in Knowledge  
Bowl!**

Chatfield's *Gopher Tales* recently published a piece by team member and budding feature writer, Larissa Martin. Click [here](#) to read it...

# Take Good Care

By Angie Ellsworth,  
SSC Faculty Member

Today is one of the best days. The “Sunshine Cart” is making rounds through our elementary school. 5th grade student leaders are learning hospitality skills as they offer special treats, supplies, or care items to each adult they see. “Would you like to choose a day brightener?” Staff respond with smiles, thanks, and hugs. We all shine a little brighter and our hearts are a little fuller on days like today.

Taking care of staff while involving students “charges me up”! Over the years I have witnessed the impact of taking care of each other...the strength, trust, and unity it creates in our school community. Because we are devoted to caring for others each day, it is important that we nurture and take care of ourselves, too; taking a break from what consumes

us, so we can return with a renewed passion.

Edutopia.com reader Alex Shevrin Venet compiled a [list of self-care strategies](#) from other Edutopia readers, including things to sustain you through the day, as well as ways to recharge as soon as you get in the car. Some pretty creative ones, like keeping folders (hard copy and email) of kind notes and thank you’s from students, parents, and colleagues and pulling it out when feeling low. Not to mention having a stash of good chocolate in your drawer (or knowing who *has* that drawer!).

And if you're the kind of person who gets “charged up” by caring for your staff and colleagues, check out [this link](#) for additional ways to support staff health and balance, including ideas for basic needs, belonging, competence, significance, and fun.



So if you happen to visit our school, you might get in on a flavor infused water buffet, staff oasis, Minute to Win It games, or Turkey Bowling. Just follow the laughs and the sunshine.

*Angie Ellsworth, MS, LSC, LSW is a behavior coach for Rochester Public Schools as well as an SSC Faculty member. Through her faculty role at SSC, Angie facilitates professional learning opportunities in several areas including behavioral management, mental health, cultural competency, and suicide prevention.*

If you are interested in bringing Angie to your district, please contact Kari Kubicek ([kkubicek@ssc.coop](mailto:kkubicek@ssc.coop)) at SSC.

## Classroom Resource: Mental Health Check In Chart

By Kari Kubicek

Looking for a simple and easy way to check in with your students about their mental health? According to a recent article on MSN.com, Erin Castillo, a Bay Area teacher, uploaded a post to Instagram that went viral about a tool she uses in her classroom to check in on how students are feeling. They can write their name on the back of a sticky note and place it in whatever section that best describes how they're feeling without their names being visible.

Interested in implementing this strategy in your own classroom? Click [here](#) for a free downloadable version.



## Save the date for the 32nd Annual Young Authors, Young Artists Conference!

On May 21-23, over 1,000 students in grades 3-5 from public, private, and home schools across southeast Minnesota will converge in Rochester for a conference that promotes student enthusiasm and competence in written and visual communication. Students will learn from and work with authors, poets, illustrators, artists, journalists, book crafters, sculptors, and others in sessions that expose them to the art and joy of writing and creating.



Young Authors  
*Young Artists*



Please [visit our website](#)  
for more information

## Principal Networking Forum

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 at SSC  
9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

SE MN Principals are invited to join their colleagues for a Principal Networking Forum on June 12, 2019, at Wood Lake Meeting Center. This event will be an opportunity for area principals to engage in facilitated conversations related to challenges and issues they face in leading their schools/districts.



Southeast  
Service  
Cooperative

Click [here](#) to save  
your free seat now.

### Forum Overview:

- Mental Health keynote - SSC Faculty member Angie Ellsworth will speak about mental health challenges faced by both students and staff and how to address these issues as well as provide some tips and tools for building a system of support
- Panel on mental health support best practices
- Free lunch in which participants can network and continue discussions

### No charge to attend; Admin CEUs provided.

Stay after for a dessert session sponsored by Marco highlighting top trends or strategies to overcome top tech challenges.

Don't forget to check out what SSC can bring to you in the form of customized professional learning opportunities. Our experienced faculty members facilitate high quality, interactive sessions developed to meet your organization's specific professional learning interests.

Click [here](#) for a full listing of our faculty and content areas. For more information on any of SSC's Professional Development offerings, contact Kari Kubicek at [kkubicek@ssc.coop](mailto:kkubicek@ssc.coop) or (507) 281-6668.

# PLC 2.0 Ignite Workshop: “Collaboration for Impact”

By Kari Kubicek

SSC is partnering with FIRST Educational Resources to offer the PLC 2.0 Ignite Workshop: “Collaboration for Impact” on Friday, May 3, from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM at SSC. This low cost workshop is an opportunity for district and school leaders to explore the PLC 2.0 Model which is the focus of the Learning FIRST PLC 2.0 Summer Institute on August 5 and 6 at Kasson-Mantorville High School. Both districts who have had staff participate in past FIRST Institutes as well as those who have not are encouraged to attend this session.

Schools across North America have invested time, effort, and resources into creating collaboration time and developing intervention systems to support the needs of all learners. While the research on educators collaborating to examine and improve their practice is clear, the practice of educators working together, and the impact this collaboration has to change the learning experience for students

and educators is less conclusive. School learning communities continue to look for practical tools and support to deepen their impact, all while living the realities of today’s demands as an educator.

Grounded in the foundational elements that make professional learning communities successful (culture, relationships, equity, and leadership), Garth Larson (and Cale Birk virtually) will take school and district leaders through the following PLC 2.0 questions to maximize observable impact in their own context:

- What’s our vision of a learner?
- What’s our reality?
- What’s our learning?
- What’s our observable impact?
- What’s our customized support?



PLC 2.0 moves districts and schools beyond research to PRACTICE and OBSERVABLE IMPACT--the type of impact that we can observe in our classrooms.

During this interactive, hands-on workshop, participants will explore the PLC 2.0 model and understand how it can help educators move from research to practice to **OBSERVABLE IMPACT** within every classroom.

To register for this workshop, click [here](#).

## Save the Date

### Crisis Management and Communication with Rick Kaufman August 8, 9:00 – 11:00 AM at SSC

Rick Kaufman, an 18-year veteran of school communications and public relations, serves as the Executive Director of Community Relations for Bloomington Public Schools. He formerly served in this same role for Colorado's largest public school system, where he led the Crisis Response Team to the Columbine High School tragedy in April 1999. Rick is a nationally respected consultant on Crisis Management and Communications, Media Relations, Community Engagement, Communication Planning, and Tax Levy/Referendum Campaigns.

# Exciting Times at SSC

By Steve Sallee

This past December, we did some strategic planning with our Board of Directors and staff to set priorities, focus energy and resources, strengthen operations, and ensure that employees and other stakeholders are working toward common goals. Three priority areas came to the forefront - curriculum supports, mental health, and workforce development. We were also asked to focus on three criteria for possible solutions and/or services within each that include 1) value to members, 2) potential for revenue, and 3) the opportunity for collaboration. Our work will continue in other areas as well, but it does give us focus moving forward, both within existing programs and as we explore new ideas.

## Curriculum Support

We have been looking at different options to help support our members and I'm happy to report that SSC and Build Your Own Curriculum (BYOC) negotiated a discount pricing contract and announced a partnership on February 18th. In the first month following this announcement they have done 19 presentations to one or more of our member districts, and 8 southeast Minnesota districts have already committed to move forward this summer. Want to learn more about this award-winning web-based management system and framework that provides the structure for you to plan, create, align, report, and evaluate your school's curriculum?

Contact Kari Kubicek at [kkubicek@ssc.coop](mailto:kkubicek@ssc.coop).

## Mental Health

We are committed to promoting mental health as a critical part of overall wellness and professional development. In the past year, we offered learning opportunities for Trauma Responsive Schools, as well as piloted a Trauma Informed Instruction Microcredential, and support in this area will continue. We also are continually expanding our customized PD faculty options in areas related to mental health, resiliency, stress reduction, suicide prevention, and more. Find a perfect presenter for your agency by contacting us. In the meantime, we are busy analyzing what we've done in the past and looking for new ways to support our members in the future in this very important area. This includes actively looking for new partnerships that will benefit our members. If you have needs or ideas on how we can support you, we would love to hear them.

Contact Amy Grover at [agrover@ssc.coop](mailto:agrover@ssc.coop).

## Workforce Development

Many new initiatives have grown out of our work with STEM Forward, as we hear from multiple stakeholder groups (schools, businesses, higher education, etc.) that there are gaps in the career pipeline that need innovative and immediate solutions. Partnerships with regional Perkins Consortia, Workforce Development Inc., Rochester Area Chamber of Commerce, GRAUC, SciMathMN, CEDA, SE MN Together, and others have led us to several collaborations.

Initiatives that have emerged include the development of the CTEam (Career and Technical Education Team), coordination of two Career Pathways Summits, co-hosting of Manufacturing Week for 350+ students, hiring of a shared Regional Workforce Development Liaison, and dedicating more staff time to this topic.

One of the primary "pain points" that we identified was that connection between high schools and business/industry. While most districts provide career awareness activities, only 5% of schools in southeastern Minnesota are able to coordinate robust job shadow experiences. SSC has become increasingly aware that districts are ready to start or grow their experiential work-based learning opportunities, and that we are perfectly positioned to assist. We are seeking grant support to fund a multi-tiered system of support for a regional job shadow pilot program in our region.

Finally, we are in the early stages of customizing a flexible, user friendly, online software portal designed to facilitate the process of placing high school students in well-matched job shadow programs. It creates efficiencies at the local and regional level for educators and employers to ensure that the experiences are meaningful. Sound like something your district or business would be interested in?

Contact Sarah Ness at [sness@ssc.coop](mailto:sness@ssc.coop).

# Peer Learning Opportunities Abound at Upcoming Educator Forum

By Sarah Ness

Of all the innovations and interventions employed to date through STEM Forward districts, none has created more impact and interest and laid the foundation for an academic culture shift than the peer-to-peer learning opportunity for all K-12 educators at the Fall and Spring Educator Forums. Please join us on Wednesday, April 24 at SSC's Wood Lake Meeting Center to learn from your peers on new and hands-on

approaches to make, play, tinker, and learn the latest and most popular curriculum, lessons, activities, tools, and technology available for educators. Enjoy peer-to-peer breakout sessions on lessons and activities that the 2018 Outstanding Educators learned. Also learn how sponsor Nasco's February grant recipients implemented lessons in their classroom and how you can replicate these them (see below!) There will also be an emphasis on the upcoming science standards changes, virtual reality, and STEM elementary educator support.

## 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Makers of Tiny Houses Bring Big Ideas

Byron - Two doors down from Hannah Blumenshein's 7<sup>th</sup> grade classroom you can hear the increasing sounds of excitement.



Some students are moving about the classroom with building materials with huge smiles. Other students huddle in small groups pointing at their projects, tinkering, and conversing. Ms. Blumenshein's students are engineering tiny homes.

During this six-week class, students in Ms. Blumenshein's class focus on making cross-curricular and relevant connections using the Tiny House movement with their city's building and zoning codes/law (civics), creating and adhering to a budget (finance), area, perimeter, and geometry for prototyping (math). Ms. Blumenshein's project based learning activity puts the designing into the hands of students. They dive deep into understanding how (and why) science, technology, engineering, and math concepts are used in the everyday world and their community.

Hannah will present a video of the lesson taught, student testimonials, and a short presentation to her peers from around southeast Minnesota at the STEM Forward Spring Educator Forum in an effort to spark STEM innovation in other classrooms.

## 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Classroom Takes on Escape Room Challenge



Kasson – Jessica Marquardt presents the conclusion of her rock classification unit in the style of an escape room game, complete with a backstory and a series of academically aligned challenges that students must solve by working together in this fun and innovative new approach to teaching.

Escape room challenges are a great way to wrap up an instructional unit. Rather than end with a multiple-choice test after a lesson, students work together to solve a game using the knowledge they have acquired over the course of the unit. This is a much better way for students to not only demonstrate their learning, but to acquire many other soft skills as well.

Ms. Marquardt will share a video of the lesson taught in her classroom, student testimonials and a short presentation at the STEM Forward Spring Educator Forum.

[Register for the Spring Educator Forum](#)

## Try STEM Forward for \$400



Sign your district up to try STEM Forward for the next three months for only \$400! Enjoy peer-to-peer professional development for K-12 educators at the Spring Educator Forum (no limit to the number of registrations), two Full Advisory Meetings where district administrators learn about STEM Innovation happening in partnering schools and other local resources available to support your STEM educational goals, and experience one working

committee meeting for either STEM professional or workforce development. Over the past year, STEM Forward participants have received over 400 hours of free professional development, priority access to grants and STEM resources, and exclusive opportunities for classroom grants.

[STEM Forward Participation Agreement](#)

### Upcoming STEM Forward Events

#### April 24 – Full Advisory Board Meeting

(Workforce Development, Inc. STEM Innovation Presentation)  
Audience: K-12 administrators, post-secondary & higher education partners, community stakeholders

#### April 24 – Spring Educator Forum

Audience: K-12 educators, administrators, post-secondary & higher education partners, community stakeholders

#### May 8 – Professional Development or Workforce Development Committee Meetings

Audience: District/stakeholder appointed representatives

#### June 26 – Full Advisory Board Meeting

@ Local 6 Pipefitters & Plumbers Union  
Audience: K-12 administrators, post-secondary & higher education partners, community stakeholders

#### September 5 – WSU Education Village Open House

#### October 1 –7 – Manufacturing Week

Audience: K-12 educators interested in having their students group shadow local manufactures, curriculum, and planning assistance available

#### November 13 – Fall Educator Forum

Audience: K-12 educators, administrators, post-secondary & higher education partners, community stakeholders

#### April 8, 2020 - Spring Educator Forum

Audience: K-12 educators, administrators, post-secondary & higher education partners, community stakeholders

Please welcome the following new members of STEM Forward!

Austin Public Schools  
Rushford-Peterson Public Schools  
Wabasha-Kellogg Public Schools

## HOW GOOD IS YOUR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN?

ics | CONSULTING, INC

Without an updated and accurate Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), emergencies and disasters, rather than proactive municipal capital planning, drive capital improvement expenditures. Reactionary capital investment practices increase the likelihood of higher equipment and construction costs, and ultimately a lower quality of life for your community residents. An accurate CIP allows municipalities to match their capital facilities plan with the needs of their community.

ICS partners with cities and counties throughout the state to help

them identify, create, manage, and implement CIPs to help address their deferred maintenance and long-term facility needs. Our team can help you identify, prioritize, fund and effectively implement a variety of deferred maintenance projects from building exteriors to mechanical systems. Steps in capital improvement planning include:

- Review any existing CIPs
- Complete an asset inventory
- Project identification and prioritization
- Cost estimating
- Project funding options and budget creation
- Project implementation and on-going capital improvement planning

CIPs provide your communities with transparency on all facility-related needs over time. Matching these facility-related needs with your community's financial capacity results in a clear financial path for your community's future. If you would like more information on capital improvement planning, contact Josh Cowdery with ICS Consulting, Inc. at [josh.cowdery@ics-consult.com](mailto:josh.cowdery@ics-consult.com) or (612) 702-1411.

# Resolute Effort Necessary to Tackle Workforce Shortage

*Local Business Leaders Take a Methodical Approach to Find Ways to Attract and Retain More Workers*

By Sarah Ness

The workforce shortage is evident. The outlook continues to show similar trends into the future. Part of southeast Minnesota's challenge stems from an extremely low unemployment rate coupled with a number of career pathways that lack the number of qualified workers in the pipeline to fill them.

This talent shortage led three regional organizations to create a shared liaison position to facilitate efforts to evaluate the root causes and develop a coordinated effort to alleviate it. Lori Wright is leading the effort on behalf of Rochester Area Chamber of Commerce, Southeast Service Cooperative, and Workforce Development, Inc., to determine the specific workforce needs of regional businesses in southeast Minnesota, connect those businesses to local resources, and share identified needs back to businesses. By intentionally creating a methodical approach to attracting and retaining more workers by listening to our local businesses, we can also inform the college and career preparatory work being done at our K-12 schools.

A systemic approach is crucial to creating lasting impact. Southeast Minnesota is currently experiencing the crunch from the large number of unengaged community citizens, under skilled workers, baby boomers retiring, fewer young people available to replace retirees, and youth that are not aware of well-paying careers that exist in their own communities. In addition, there are organizations independently approaching this issue in silos due to

limited regional efficiencies, processes, and resources.

Many of the great careers that are key to the economic vitality of southeast Minnesota are in agribusiness, healthcare, information technology, and manufacturing. According to DEED's Occupations in Demand tool, there are over 275 occupations showing relatively high demand in southeast Minnesota, with training and education requirements ranging from short-term on-the-job training to postsecondary education to advanced degrees (see chart below).

employees they already have, increasing starting pay, allowing flexible work schedules, and realizing younger employees put a high value on working for companies that create meaningful and inclusive work environments.

Rochester Area Chamber of Commerce, Southeast Service Cooperative, and Workforce Development, Inc.'s deliberate approach, working in conjunction with K-12 school districts, business and industry, collaborative groups, local colleges and universities, and local government, should help

Occupations in Demand by Typical Required Education in Southeast Minnesota, 2017 with (Median Hourly Wage)			
High School or Equivalent	Voc. Award or Assoc. Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Graduate/Advanced Degree
Combined Food Preparation & Serving Workers (\$9.82)	Registered Nurses (\$30.03)	Elementary School Teachers (\$25.33)	Medical Scientists, Except Epidemiologists (\$30.59)
Personal Care Aides (\$11.51)	Nursing Assistants (\$13.71)	Secondary & Middle School Teachers (\$28.44)	Nurse Practitioners (\$52.64)
Retail Salespersons (\$10.47)	Licensed Practical & Licensed Vocational Nurses (\$21.38)	Medical & Clinical Laboratory Technologists (\$33.01)	Physician Assistants (\$57.32)
Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers (\$21.62)	Electricians (\$29.96)	Software Developers, Applications (\$42.61)	Pharmacists (\$63.96)
Janitors & Cleaners (\$13.18)	Heating, Air Conditioning, & Refrigeration Mechanics (\$24.38)	Software Developers, Systems Software (\$43.96)	Child, Family, & School Social Workers (\$28.80)
Laborers & Freight, Stock, & Material Movers, Hand (\$14.62)	Medical Records & Health Information Technicians (\$23.37)	Computer Systems Analysts (\$36.98)	Healthcare Social Workers (\$29.78)
Cashiers (\$10.08)	Surgical Technologists (\$25.39)	Financial Managers (\$49.07)	Physical Therapists (\$39.66)
Stock Clerks & Order Fillers (\$12.06)	Emergency Medical Technicians & Paramedics (\$18.35)	Computer Programmers (\$47.46)	Clinical, Counseling, & School Psychologists (\$36.02)
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers (\$17.11)	Radiologic <X-Ray> Technologists (\$33.03)	Industrial Engineers (\$37.22)	Nurse Anesthetists (\$91.60)
Home Health Aides (\$11.69)	Machinists (\$21.34)	Accountants & Auditors (\$28.88)	Chiropractors (\$32.67)
Cooks, Restaurant (\$11.63)	Industrial Machinery Mechanics (\$22.95)	Computer & Information Systems Managers (\$51.68)	Education Administrators, Elem. & Secondary (\$46.36)
Teacher Assistants (\$12.15)	Automotive Service Technicians & Mechanics (\$20.28)	Medical & Health Services Managers (\$50.03)	Family & General Practitioners (\$89.55)
First-Line Supervisors of Food Prep & Serving Workers (\$14.74)	Computer User Support Specialists (\$24.34)	Computer Network Architects (\$55.60)	Dentists, General (\$88.38)
Medical Secretaries (\$20.21)	Industrial Engineering Technicians (\$22.43)	Human Resources Specialists (\$25.22)	Internists, General (\$84.70)
Medical Assistants (\$19.23)	Police & Sheriff's Patrol Officers (\$28.36)	Industrial Production Managers (\$44.39)	Psychiatrists (\$91.38)

Source: DEED Occupations in Demand

Some area businesses have already become creative in recruiting and retaining efforts. New approaches include paying more attention to the

southeast Minnesota stand out among other communities that are facing the same talent shortages. Contact Lori Wright at [loriwright@workforcedevelopmentinc.org](mailto:loriwright@workforcedevelopmentinc.org).

# Over 800 Members Participate in Annual Member Walking Challenge

By Nicole LaChapelle-Strumski

Winning teams have been announced in SSC's 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Walking Challenge, in which over 800 individuals from 24 SSC member organizations competed. 15 Southeastern Minnesota School Districts and nine Local Government Members participated in two separate steps-based challenges. The contest is held each January.

## *Winners in the School District Challenge included:*

**Wabasha-Kellogg** – 1<sup>st</sup> Place, **Goodhue** – 2<sup>nd</sup> Place, **Grand Meadow** – 3<sup>rd</sup> Place. The remaining teams, which each received an honorable mention, are listed in the order of their ranking: PEM, Rochester, Red Wing, Fillmore Central, Byron, Lewiston-Altura, Stewartville, Kasson-Mantorville, Lyle, Austin, Southland, and LeRoy-Ostrander. Red Wing won the Participation Award.



Members of Wabasha-Kellogg's winning team.

W-K Wellness Coordinator Ashely Scheel shared, "The Wabasha-Kellogg Falcon Steppers thrive off of competition and take this contest seriously! This year we doubled the amount of participants compared to last year. Last year, our technology coordinator/math teacher, Mike Schumacher, calculated how many steps we would need to win. He then set personal goals for each participant. This year we continued with that strategy. It is enjoyable to see walking habits continuing after the challenge and hearing that a



Members of Red Wing's winning team.

person lost 5 pounds during it. The walking challenge has built comradery, new relationships, and is a major talking piece at Wabasha-Kellogg!

Red Wing schools found they were able to recruit more walkers by adding in

## *Winners in the Local Government Challenge included:*

**Fillmore County** - 1<sup>st</sup> Place, **Freeborn County** – 2<sup>nd</sup> Place, **Rice-Steele 911 Center** – 3<sup>rd</sup> Place. The honorable mention placements included – Goodhue County, City of Albert Lea, Mower County, City of Spring Grove, Workforce Development, and City of Byron. City of Spring Grove won the Participation Award.

a building vs. building challenge. Their wellness coordinator, Tara Nelson shared, "It was fun to see the number of steps come in from each building. Buildings would meet after school to get steps in."



Five of Fillmore County's champion walkers.

Fillmore County team member Debbie Grebin shared, "I thought the challenge was great. What a great way to start the new year getting moving. It was very motivating to know that I had to get my steps in. I was walking every hour when I could and then on my breaks, so it definitely made me get up and get moving. Also, in the mornings when my alarm went off at 4:15 AM, I knew I couldn't hit the snooze button, as I knew I had to get those steps in!"

Stephanie Jaster, Wellness Coordinator at The City of Spring Grove, stated, "We all enjoy walking and we are more accountable when it is a challenge. We always need this extra push during the winter."



City of Spring Grove's team members.

If your organization would like to participate in this year's challenge, contact Nicole LaChapelle-Strumski at [nlachapelle@ssc.coop](mailto:nlachapelle@ssc.coop).

# School Classroom Safety:

## 9 Steps to Minimize Risk

By Dan Fitch, IEA

Teachers and students spend most of their school day in classrooms. These rooms are often transformed into welcoming environments thanks to hardworking and creative teachers. Considering how much time is spent in classrooms, they must also be safe environments. Places where students can learn, and teachers can teach without worrying about getting hurt in an accident.

Most classroom safety violations can be avoided by keeping classrooms clean, neat and well organized. So as teachers prepare their rooms for the start of school—and maintain them throughout the year—they should be aware of these violations and safety hazards. Consider sharing these 9 classroom safety tips with your teachers to help build a safe and secure environment:

- **Keep Exits Clear.** Make sure all classroom exits—both doors and windows—remain clear from obstructions and clutter.
- **Safe Ladder Use.** When putting up decorations or accessing materials on high shelves, always use a ladder. Do NOT stand on chairs, stools, or desks. Choose the appropriate ladder and follow ladder safety guidelines.
- **Hang Decorations Properly.** Avoid hanging things from light fixtures and sprinkler heads. Do not block exit signs or obstruct any exits with your decorations.
- **Keep Hazardous Materials Out Of Reach.** Hazardous materials, such as cleaning supplies and chemicals used for instruction, should be properly labeled and securely stored. You should also know where to find safety data sheets addressing how to properly treat exposure to hazardous materials you might have in your classroom.
- **Eliminate Tripping Hazards.** Do not leave unattended drawers or cabinet doors open. Make sure chairs are



pushed in when students are moving around. Keep items put away when not in use to prevent tripping.

- **Be Aware Of Electrical Cords.** Make sure electrical cords are not running through high-traffic areas, walkways, and doorways. Do not fasten cords with staples, hang from nails, or suspend them with a wire. Don't cover them with rugs or mats.
- **Do Not Overload Electrical Circuits.** Do not plug two extension cords or two surge protectors together. If your surge protector keeps resetting, you are overloading it! Be careful how many devices you are plugging into one outlet. And remember, extension cords are for temporary use only.
- **Use Care When Lifting Heavy Objects.** When setting up a classroom, rearranging things, or moving heavy items like textbooks, use safe lifting techniques to avoid injury.
- **Post An Evacuation Plan Near The Door.** Ensure all students are familiar with the exit routes in case of emergency. Post a resource for evacuations in the room, such as a map detailing the specific classroom location and highlighting the various exit routes available. After all, the closest exit may be behind you!

For more information on classroom safety, contact Dan Fitch at the Institute for Environmental Assessment at (507) 281-6692 or [Dan.Fitch@ieainstitute.com](mailto:Dan.Fitch@ieainstitute.com).

## Facilities Management Town Hall - June 13

SSC will host the annual Town Hall for Facilities Management on Thursday, June 13, at SSC's Wood Lake Meeting Center.

This year's session, sponsored by Hiller, will kick off with a presentation from MDE's Sarah Miller.

Participants will be able to attend several breakout sessions.

### Break out session topics include:

- Radon Testing & Indoor Quality
- Video Surveillance
- State Fire Inspector (evacuating)

# SSC Upcoming Events

## April

### Spring Educator Forum

April 24

### Board Meeting

April 24

### Cultural Competency:

#### Beginning the Journey

April 29

### Suicide Prevention:

#### Doing Something

April 29

### Office Professional Academy

#### Webinar - Social Media:

#### The Fundamentals

April 30

## May

### Office Professional Academy

#### Technology Session -

#### Microsoft Excel

May 8

### Board Meeting

May 15

### Office Professional Academy

#### Technology Session -

#### Google Products

May 17

### Office Professional Academy

#### Webinar - Embracing Change

May 21

## June

### MASA Region 1 Spring Session

June 12

### Office Professional Academy

#### Webinar - Managing Stress for

#### Positive Change

June 12

### Principal Networking Forum

June 12

### Facilities Management

#### Town Hall

June 13

### Office Professional Academy -

#### Written Communication

June 18

### Board Meeting

June 26

## Long-Term Care Insurance Opportunity From the Minnesota Service Cooperatives

*Brought to you by ACSIA Partners LLC, a national leader in long term care planning*

Demographic and societal changes have made long-term care planning a necessary part of the financial planning process. Regardless of your age, you shouldn't dismiss long-term care insurance without learning about it. Long-Term Care Insurance can help you protect your nest egg, maintain control over where you receive your care, and reduce stress on family members.

### Why You Should Consider Coverage:

- **Access to coverage** – Your health is the key to whether you are approved for this coverage. Health can change at any time, and prevent you from being able to apply in the future
- **Affordability** – Premiums are calculated by your age, so the cost of waiting to apply as you get another year older is significant as coverage becomes more expensive
- **Discounted rates** – Apply through MN Service Cooperative to receive a 5% premium discount

**Attend an Upcoming Informational Webinar to Learn More:**

**Friday, April 19, 12:00 PM**

**Tuesday, April 23, 9:00 AM**

**Saturday, April 27, 10:00 AM**

# SSC Board Actions and Information

In addition to routine fiscal and routine business actions, the Board took the following actions in recent meetings. Complete SSC Board of Directors meeting minutes are available on the SSC website at [www.ssc.coop](http://www.ssc.coop).

## February

- Approved SSC-MSBA Contract for Superintendent Searches
- Approved SSG-SSC Contract for curriculum support (Build Your Own Curriculum)
- Approved the 2017-18 Pool Self-Insured Policy Settlement Recap Document
- Approved the award of SSC Banking RFP to US Bank and designate US Bank as a depository for SSC Funds

- Approved the proposed payroll system change

## March

- Approved investment for Workplace Learning Connection
- Approved the resignation of Miranda Schornack, Advocate and ELD Specialist for SE/Metro Regional Center of Excellence
- Approved the elimination of the Program Manager—Outreach position effective April 1, 2019
- Approved the posting for Administrative/Communication Assistant position

## SSC Welcomes New Board Members



### Jean Roth

Jean is currently serving her second term as a school board member at Zumbrota-Mazeppa Public Schools. Jean, a retired Speech and Language pathologist, has three children and six grandchildren. She enjoys time with her family, traveling, sewing, reading, and digging in the dirt. Jean has recently completed the requirements to be called a Master Gardener.



### Monica Sveen-Ziebell

Monica has served on the Plainview-Elgin-Millville School Board since 2012. She's currently the Board Chair. Monica, an Administrator at Mayo Clinic and her husband, Craig, have three children. Her sons, Zachary and Brady, are in college, and her daughter, Aubrie, is in high school. Their family also includes three dogs. Monica enjoys spending time with her family, traveling, and attending sporting events. A great outdoor enthusiast, Monica also loves bicycling.

## SSC Board of Directors

**Theresa Arrick-Kruger**, Chair  
*Houston County*

**Mary Blair-Hoeft**, Vice-Chair  
*City of Byron*

**Lynn Gorski**, Treasurer  
*City of Owatonna*

**Brein Maki**, Clerk  
*Lewiston-Altura Public Schools*

**Karla Bauer**  
*Kenyon-Wanamingo Public Schools*

**Carol Cravath**  
*Plainview-Elgin-Millville Public Schools*

**Don Leathers**  
*Austin Public Schools*

**Jason Marquardt**  
*Mabel-Canton Public Schools*

**Rob Mathias**  
*Stewartville Public Schools*

**Jean Roth**  
*Zumbrota-Mazeppa Public Schools*

**Monica Sveen-Ziebell**  
*Plainview-Elgin-Millville Public Schools*

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