

Cooperative Connection

March 2007

Southeast Service Cooperative

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*Adding value...
maximizing resources*

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www.ssc.coop

Technology literacy, integration made easy

Getting your professional development in technology literacy and integration has become handy, easy, affordable, and most importantly, **relevant**.

Through a \$99,635 grant from the Minnesota Department of Education, the following districts are led by Southeast Service Cooperative in a training program: Byron, Dover-Eyota, Grand Meadow, Kasson-Mantorville, Kenyon-Wanamingo, La Crescent-Hokah, Lewiston-Altura, Mabel-Canton, Pine Island, Plainview-Elgin-Millville, Randolph, Red Wing, Ridgeway Community School, Rochester Catholic Schools, Southland, Stewartville, Triton, and Zumbrota-Mazeppa.

The collaborative will have a regional subscription to InfoSource Learning, a web-based training resource. In order to use technology effectively and efficiently in the classroom, teachers must first learn technology -- how to use a computer and the Internet. The next step is incorporating the use of technology into the learning environment.

To provide the training and tools needed to enrich the education environment, InfoSource Learning offers an online solution that includes individualized needs assessment and prescribed technology literacy training, tracking, reporting, and tools that help teachers work more efficiently and meet proficiency targets.

InfoSource's How to Master system offers courses in three content libraries. The Digital Literacy Library offers courses designed to develop skills in computer fundamentals, living online, and key applications, (including all Microsoft Office products). It features



prescriptive training, meaning that each module begins with an individual skill assessment and then assigns lessons only in the areas in which the learner shows a need for improvement.

The National Educational Technology Standards for Teachers Library contains training designed to address the performance indicators included in NETS•T, developed by the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE). The library includes training mapped to ISTE NETS, with courses and content features that help educators acquire the subject matter needed to meet these standards and become more comfortable using computers and software applications to facilitate administrative tasks and to make teaching more effective.

The Integrating Technology in the Classroom Library includes training courses and content features for educating teachers, staff, and school officials on how technology can be incorporated into the learning environment and why it is beneficial to do so. Courses explain how computers and related technologies can have a deep impact on how students learn, teachers instruct, school officials manage, and parents become more involved.

The project schools will also form an Area Expert Trainer Network comprised of technology integrationists and content expert educators, to provide high quality, affordable training regionally, capitalizing on the numerous

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Spelling Bee winners advance to Multi-Regional Bee



On February 20, 2007, the Regional Spelling Bees for southeast Minnesota were held at

the Southeast Service Cooperative in Rochester. Two separate events were held—one at 9:00 am and one at 1:00 pm. Larry Stacy from Stewartville Public Schools served as the pronouncer/moderator of the events.

A total of 78 students representing 43 districts competed in the two bees. These students participated in classroom, school, and district level contests to advance to the regional level. Place winners from both the morning and afternoon sessions include the following:

First place

Ariana Guerra (grade 8) representing Albert Lea Public Schools
Haley Ryan (grade 8) representing Northfield Public Schools

Second place

Catherine Cojocar (grade 7) representing Rochester Catholic Schools
Kaia Sand (grade 8) representing Zumbrota-Mazeppa Public Schools

Third place

Ashley Bennefeld (grade 7) representing Austin Area Catholic Schools
Taylor Warner (grade 8) representing Kenyon-Wanamingo Public Schools

Fourth place

Staci Tiedeken (grade 8) representing Faribault Public Schools
Ellen Currier (grade 8) representing Rochester Public Schools

The first and second place winners will be participating at the Forum Communications Multi-Region Spelling Bee on March 22, 2007, at the Holiday Inn in St. Cloud. In addition, each first place winner received a \$200 savings bond and the second place winners received a \$100 savings bond. The third and fourth place winners will serve as alternates.

The winner of the Multi-Region Spelling Bee will advance to the 80th Annual Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, DC, May 30-31, 2007.



Ariana Guerra



Haley Ryan



Catherine Cojocar



Kaia Sand

Annual Young Authors, Young Artists Conference approaching

Each year, over 800 students in grades 4-6 from public and private schools across southeast Minnesota descend on the Rochester Community and Technical College campus for an exciting opportunity to learn and work with professional authors, poets, playwrights, composers, lyricists, illustrators, novelists, journalists, book crafters, and others. The Young Authors, Young Artists Conference promotes student engagement in the areas of written and visual communication, and is often an out-of-classroom experience that students remember for an entire lifetime.

This year, the conference is being held on May 16 and 17. Session topics range from character development to comic book creation to book arts to watercolor artwork to storytelling.

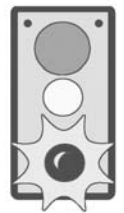
Presenters this year are a mix of new and old (as in returning for another year). We welcome back Jill Weese from Minnesota Book Arts, Blake Hoena, Dianne Gray, Bev Jackson, Mary McGrath, Jim Postier, Char Auge, Amy Christie, Terri DeGezelle, Angela Gustafson, Gwenyth Swain, as well as John Weiss, Jay Furst, Mike Dougherty, and Tom Weber from the Post-Bulletin.

We also look forward to getting to know our new presenters, including Loretta Ellsworth, Katie McKy, James Schattauer (Mr. Jim), Rick Ponzio, Linda Back McKay, Jane St. Anthony, Julie Jersild Roth, and Judy Hollister.

We are also pleased to introduce The Book Shelf in Winona, who will be organizing our book sale this year. They will have a wide selection of reading material for students to purchase,

including books published by our distinguished presenters. In addition, the Rochester Theater improv group will be entertaining students during their lunch break.

GREEN LIGHT
TO DRAW OR WRITE



All schools in southeast Minnesota are invited to bring a group of 4-6th graders to the conference for an experience unlike any other.

To download a copy of the 2007 Conference brochure, please visit the SSC website at www.ssc.coop. To request a hard copy of the brochure or with any questions, please contact Amy Grover at 507-281-6693 or via email at agrover@ssc.coop.

Junior High Knowledge Bowl teams earn top places

This year, 46 teams from 19 districts participated in Junior High Knowledge Bowl. Teams competed in Round Robin competitions in October, November and December. Each team then competed in the Sub-Regional competitions in January and the top nine teams from each tier advanced to the Regional competition.

The Junior High Knowledge Bowl Sub-Regional Competitions were held on January 9, 10, 16 and 17. The Tier AA Sub-Regional teams (number of teams) were from: Chosen Valley (3), Dover-Eyota (3), Kasson-Mantorville (2), Kenyon-Wanamingo (3), Pine Island (3), Red Wing (3), Winona (3). The Tier A Sub-Regional teams were from: Caledonia (1), Fillmore Central (3), Goodhue (3), Grand Meadow (1), Houston (3), Kingsland (3), Lanesboro (2), LeRoy-Ostrander (1), Mabel-Canton (2), Rushford-Peterson (3), Southland (1), Spring Grove (3).

The Junior High Knowledge Bowl Regional competitions were held on January 23 and 24 at the Southeast Service Cooperative. The competition consisted of 1 written round (60 questions) and 4 oral rounds (45 questions/round).

The Minnesota Service Cooperative Knowledge Bowl competitions are interdisciplinary academic contests for students. Junior High Knowledge Bowl is for students in grades 6-9. During the contest, teams of students compete in written and oral rounds by answering questions related to all areas of learning, typical of secondary educational programs. Questions test students' recall, problem solving, and critical thinking skills. This competition provides a format for student growth centered around academics. Teams consist of six students (six competing in the written round and five competing in each oral round).

Tier A-Top 9 Teams that Advanced Regional Meet on January 23

- Goodhue 3 - 1st Place**
- Houston 1 - 2nd Place**
- Spring Grove 1 - 3rd Place**
- Caledonia - 4th Place**
- Southland - 5th Place**
- Rushford-Peterson 1
- Lanesboro 1
- Grand Meadow
- Spring Grove 2

Tier AA-Top 9 Teams that Advanced to the Regional Meet on January 24

- Dover-Eyota 1 - 1st Place**
- Red Wing 1 - 2nd Place**
- Chosen Valley 2 - 3rd Place**
- Chosen Valley 1 - 4th Place**
- Dover-Eyota 2 - 5th Place**
- Kasson-Mantorville 1
- Pine Island 1
- Red Wing 2
- Red Wing 3

Top placing teams at regional event



Tier A 1st Place: Goodhue 3 - Front Row (L to R): Anne Heppelman (advisor), Jon Schmitz, Matt Loewen, Back Row (L to R): Michelle Poncelet, Anne Lodermeier, Meta Stern, Carolyn Johnson, Paula Marshall (advisor)



Tier A 2nd Place: Houston 1 - Front Row: Tyler Krage, Back Row (L to R): Carlie VonArx, Meredith Lee, Jessica Lorenz, Luke Jerviss, Will Lundberg, Kiel Koehler (advisor)



Tier AA 1st Place: Dover Eyota 1 - Front Row: Travis Schreier, Caleb Hammel, Back Row (L to R): Josh Hanson, Jon Miller, Kassie Fisch, Lonnie Yust (advisor)



Tier AA 2nd Place: Red Wing 1 - Front Row (L to R): Hannah Quinn, Alex Streff, Max Christenson, Back Row (L to R): Ally Brown, Ben Jones, Matt Quinn (advisor)



Tier A 3rd Place: Spring Grove 1 - Front Row: Kjersti Fried, Jon Lee, Back Row (L to R): Mary Deters (advisor) Joe Morken, Peter Zaffke, Lindsey Bratland



Tier AA 3rd Place: Chosen Valley 2 - Chris Jacobson (advisor), Zach Bouska, Erik Hilgren, Jake Pierce, Nathaniel Chase, Kevin Bren

AYP/School Improvement update

In collaboration with Minnesota Department of Education, Southeast Service Cooperative is providing a regional team of experienced, highly qualified staff to support schools and districts who find themselves on the “needs improvement” list. The SSC team will help those school and district teams identify why they are on that list and develop sound, strong plans to make effective improvements.

The process of school improvement begins with the school or district developing a required two-year plan that addresses the academic issues that caused it to be identified for improvement. The purpose of the improvement plan is to augment the teaching and learning in the school or district, so that greater numbers of students achieve proficiency in the core academic subjects of reading and mathematics. The school improvement plan provides a framework for analyzing problems, identifying underlying causes, and addressing instructional issues in a school that has not made sufficient progress in student achievement.

The Minnesota Department of Education’s new regional model puts the focus on providing support at the local and regional level to help more

schools and districts meet the requirements of NCLB by aiding in the development and implementation of those plans. The Southeast Service Cooperative’s team consists of Diane Schwinghammer, Heidi Knepper and Lesley Schellenberg.

Under this regional model, the Department of Education is working with Southeast Service Cooperative, and other Cooperatives statewide, to deliver assistance more directly and efficiently to our schools and districts. As a part of that effort schools and districts will work directly with the AYP Support Team from SSC to facilitate and monitor efforts to increase capacity and improve student achievement. This includes developing and implementing required improvement plans and providing technical assistance to schools identified as needing improvement.

Our Technical Assistance will focus on high quality professional development, supporting on-going formative evaluation, developing and supporting implementation of effective improvement plans, and succession planning to ensure maintenance of internal capacity.

The AYP Support Team at SSC has been working intensely with schools

since the beginning of January. Some of the work we have done with schools includes; 1) meeting with all 7 identified schools 2) building relationships with those schools, 3) facilitating AYP team meetings 4) providing technical assistance in developing improvement plans 5) providing a link between school/district teams and MDE 6) meeting with our counter parts from across the state and MDE leadership for training and networking 7) conducting a District-wide teacher workshop.

The deadline for submitting School Improvement Plans to MDE was February 15. Subsequently our work will include contacting the approximately 23 schools/districts that may potentially be identified on the AYP list for 2007-2008, continued support with the improvement process for our identified schools/districts, conduct or arrange regional and/or on-site workshops in areas such as, data education and support, TEAM training to build and support effective teams, and needs assessment training/process support. In addition, we are continually working to improve our knowledge base by attending training, workshops and symposiums in order to bring additional knowledge back to the Southeast Service Cooperative region.

Need playground equipment?

Southeast Service Cooperative (SSC) is pleased to offer you a new cooperative purchasing bid program for playground equipment. Bidding for playground equipment and playground installation can be an extremely time-consuming process, especially if you are working with volunteers.

SSC, through our joint-powers with Minnesota Regional Service Agency (MRSA), has produced a bid-generated contract with Midwest Playscapes featuring PlayWorld Systems play-

ground equipment. In utilizing this contract, you can save the time of going through the process of bidding, by simply taking advantage of the work we have already done for you.

This new contract offers an aggressive 17 % discount on all equipment and services. This pricing structure with Midwest Playscapes is only offered through the service cooperatives contract.

For more information, contact:



Southeast Service Cooperative
Dale Walston
507-281-6675
dwalston@ssc.coop

Midwest Playscapes
www.midwestplayscapes.com
Tom Witek or Bruce Pudwill
1-800-747-1452
playscapes@earthlink.net.

Science teachers work together to improve their craft

SSC and the Rochester Area Math Science Partnership have introduced an Inquiry-Based Science Professional Learning Community for our area science teachers as a part of our on-going grant project involving the 13 RAMSP districts. A professional learning community is an essential step in the professional growth of a teacher.

The goals of our PLC are to expand and share teaching strategies used in implementing inquiry in the classroom, work toward the direct alignment of the History and Nature of Science standards to the science curriculum, develop and implement inquiry-based action plans to practice specific teaching strategies in the classroom and monitor their level of success, and build a community of science leaders to serve as the point person for science and science teaching in their school.

The most exciting part about the PLC is the team that will be facilitating the sessions. Lee Schmitt is Professional Development Coordinator for the Center for Global Environmental Education in the Hamline University Graduate School of Education. A major portion of his work involves developing and implementing programs and courses for teachers in the areas of science content, inquiry strategies/best practices implementation, and standards-based science curricula. He has recently received major funding from the Math and Science Partnership Program to lead a statewide professional development program for teachers of science. Schmitt has 15 years of classroom experience as a science teacher, 15 years in teacher professional development, including long time service to the Science Museum of Minnesota, and is Wisconsin's 1990 Teacher of the Year.

Peggy Knapp is a faculty member in the Center for Global Environmental Education (CGEE), part of Hamline University's Graduate School of Education. Her work with CGEE focuses on place-based education, helping K-



12 teachers integrate curriculum through the organizing context of environmental education. Before coming to CGEE, Knapp was an award-winning correspondent and video producer, specializing in science and environmental issues. She appeared regularly on the national PBS science series, "Newton's Apple," and as a reporter and producer for CNN, covered environmental issues that took her from the bottom of the ocean to the tops of mountains.

In addition to monthly workshop sessions, participants of the cohort will be engaging in small action research projects, designed so that they can try things out with their students, come back together as a group of professionals to learn more, and then incorporate these concepts into future classroom activities. They will also be working on improving existing lesson plans to incorporate more inquiry in the classroom, and will have the opportunity to further explore Gateway to Mastery, a continuous improvement process for the science classroom.

Participating this year are: Mark Voyce and Kathy Serratore from Hayfield Public Schools; Sharie Furst, Cynthia Raan, and Renee Solberg from Kasson-Mantorville Public Schools; Lorraine Aaland and Brian Cashman from Pine Island Public Schools; Lea Sexton, Denine Voegeli, and Kari Donze from Plainview-Elgin-Millville Public Schools; Laura Anderson and Katie Schlaman from Rochester Catholic Schools; Patricia Nelson from Stewartville Public Schools; Cyndi Voegele, Lynn Haltvick, and Amy Woxland from Triton Public Schools; and Liz Quast from Zumbrota-Mazeppa Public Schools.

E2T2 Grant from page 1

skilled trainers available locally. This network will offer several advantages: 1) managed by the partners to directly address school-level and individual teacher identified needs; 2) financially manageable, using volume purchasing and area trainer expertise rather than importing "vendor trainers"; 3) strengthened internal capacity by bringing training directly to more educators in the school rather than sending a few staff out; 4) support for technology integrationists and staff development coordinators in effective design and delivery of relevant teacher training.

To support and strengthen our goals, the group will also implement a number of Best Practice Forums related to conducting technological needs assessment, planning, and using resources in delivering technology literacy and integration professional development.

INFOSOURCE FOR ALL SSC MEMBERS

InfoSource Learning licenses are available to all other SSC member districts, cities, counties, and organizations, too!

SSC has negotiated a reduced cost of \$25 per person for a 2-year license through a regional contract! That's only \$12.25 per person per year – huge cost savings when compared to traditional methods of technology training. There is no base cost ... you can have any number of employees licensed for the same low rate. This requires a 2 year commitment with a start date of April 1, 2007.

If you would like to discuss purchasing a block of licenses, please contact Amy Grover at 507-281-6693 or via email at agrover@ssc.coop.

Fast approaching cohort deadline for TAH grant

April 1st is more than April Fools' Day! It is the fast-approaching cohort application deadline for SSC's Teaching American History professional development grant. What an experience this is shaping up to be. Consider the questions and opportunities described below:

How much do you know about the US-Dakota Conflict of 1862? What were the real causes of it? What was it like to be a settler living in Acton, unaware of



The Minnesota River, at the Lower Sioux Agency Historical Site near Morton, MN

how life was about to abruptly change? And what of the Dakota themselves? Narrative accounts from the Dakota people are compelling and thought-provoking.

Wouldn't it be fascinating to walk the land where these events happened as part of Minnesota's other civil war, then benefit from scholarly interpretation? That is exactly what is planned for the cohort's first Summer Institute in July 2007! What a great way to invigorate your teaching and take a fresh perspective back to your students.



The Jeffers Petroglyphs near Comfrey, MN

As a cohort member, you have a chance to experience history first hand so that you can share the experiences with students! The US-Dakota Conflict and many other events will be featured in the professional development offerings available through this federal grant. This is not your typical professional development opportunity! SSC is partnering with Winona State University, the Minnesota Historical Society and the Southwest/West Central Service Cooperative to deliver a top notch experience for teachers.

You will build your content knowledge through studies of five core themes: political and constitutional history; the construction of American Democracy; Native American cultures; immigration; southern Minnesota as it relates to American history; and economics and commerce in American history.

Though this is a multi-year grant, cohort participants are only required to commit for a year at a time. The five core themes will be interwoven into a chronological approach, using the National/Minnesota History Standards' structure. A further breakdown of the multi-year content can be viewed in the FAQ document found at www.ssc.coop. The brief application form is also available on this site.

Participation is open to History teachers in southeast and southwest Minnesota. Once again, the cohort application



deadline is April 1st. This is a unique opportunity to immerse yourself in Minnesota history as it relates to our nation's history, and to facilitate student research using primary sources. So



Fort Ridgely Historical Site, near Fairfax, MN

don't be fooled on April 1st, apply to the cohort instead!

Complete information on how to participate can be accessed at www.ssc.coop under the Instructional Programs menu. All future grant updates will be posted on this site as well. For additional questions, please contact Bekka Meyer, Program Director, at rmeyer@ssc.coop, 507-281-6685; or Bari Amadio, Program Coordinator, at bamadio@ssc.coop, 507-281-6690.

Freeborn County Administrator Gabrielsen says goodbye

Freeborn County Administrator Ron Gabrielsen's last day on the job was Tuesday, February 27. Gabrielsen served 5 1/2 years with Freeborn County and is moving on to continue his professional growth and expand his career knowledge.

Gabrielsen served on the SSC's Administrator Advisory Committee since 2003 as a representative of SSC's CCOGA members.

We would like to thank Ron and wish him the best in his future endeavors!

Cooperative Purchasing with the Southeast Service Cooperative

SSC is a member of the Minnesota Regional Service Agency. The Cooperative Purchasing Program is a statewide purchasing pool delivered regionally



Office Supplies



Type of contract: Line item bid and vendor discount

OfficeMax

www.officemaxsolutions.com

Contact: Steve Reiter

1-800-839-8988 ext 5968

stevereiter@officemax.com

Prices are discounted an average of 57%. You will need to submit a tax exempt certificate and contact information in order to get setup. Online ordering is the preferred method for fast ordering and delivery. Free delivery. Orders placed on-line by 4pm are typically delivered next day. Frequent/bid item order requisition form is available for you. "Retail Connect" card available to purchase items at contract pricing in the retail stores.

School Supplies

Type of contract: Line item bid and vendor discount



School Specialty

www.schoolspecialty.com

1-888-388-3224

School Specialty offers a complete selection of classroom and art supplies. If you have not signed up for our special MRSA pricing, please contact us. We can offer you better pricing than you can receive on your own. You'll be eligible for a minimum 20% discount. Internet ordering is available. Free shipping. We have a frequent order requisition form available for you.

- Air Filters
- Audio Equipment
- Audio Visual Bulbs
- Audio Visual Equipment
- Building Bulbs
- Copier Equipment
- Copy Paper
- Family & Consumer Science Supplies
- Garbage Disposal Guard
- Industrial Tools
- Laminating Supplies
- Mobile/Wireless Phones
- Office Supplies
- Physical Education Equip
- Playground Equipment
- School Supplies
- Science Supplies & Equipment
- Software
- Software-Accounting
- Software-Reading
- Software-Writing
- Sound Insulation
- Technology-Hardware & Software
- TV/VCRs
- Vehicles

Cooperative Purchasing with SSC

Technology

Type of contract: General bid and vendor discount

TechDepot

www.techdepot.com

Contact:

Sean Raby

1-800-625-9866 ext 7259

sraby@techdepot.com



Large inventory of hardware and software. On-line ordering and free delivery.

Type of contract: General bid and vendor discount

CDWG

www.cdwg.com/mrsa

Contacts:

Michael Meier (866-282-6930)

michmei@cdwg.com

Oleg Krylov (866-770-0358) olegkry@cdwg.com



CDWG is a national known company for technology purchasing and offers a large inventory of hardware and software solutions. An additional discount of 2-13% off regular pricing.

Software

Adobe, Microsoft, FileMaker Pro, Symantec

Educational Resources

Type of contract: Contract price from manufacturer (Microsoft Select agreement pricing)

Educational Resources (1-800-610-5005)

www.edresources.com

We have specific pricing guides and contacts for Microsoft and Adobe. Reference to contract #20716 for the SSC price program. Other software offered at 10% discount

Audio Visual Bulbs

Type of contract: General bid and vendor discount

Scott Electric

www.scottelectricusa.com (1-800-442-4505)

sld@scottelectricusa.com

Scott Electric

Scott Electric offers a complete line of projector and stage projection lamps at discounted prices. This is one of greatest discount programs we offer! Send orders directly to Scott and request the Southeast Service Cooperative discount, or send them to us.

Audio Equipment

Type of contract: preferred vendor/discount

AUDIO ENHANCEMENT

Audio Enhancement

www.audioenhancement.com

1-800-383-9362

Classroom equipment for improving sound for students and/or teachers.

Audio Visual Equipment



Type of contract: General bid and vendor discount

Compview

www.compview.com

Contact: Scott Taylor

877-297-2068

staylor@compview.com

Epson projectors, carts, cameras, overhead projectors, interactive whiteboards. Free delivery on orders over \$500.

TV/VCRs

Type of contract: General bid and vendor discount

Radio & TV Equipment, Inc.

www.rteinc.net

Contact: Bruce Holtan

bruce@rteinc.net



TV, LCD, VHS players, DVD players, combination players, mounts, camcorders.

Laminating supplies



Type of contract:

General bid

OfficeMax

www.officemaxsolutions.com

Contact: Steve Reiter

1-800-839-8988 ext 5968

stevereiter@officemax.com

Fax order to Steve Reiter at 1-763-315-5172.

Laminating film, pouches and a laminator.

Cooperative Purchasing with SSC

Building Bulbs

Type of contract: General bid

JH Larson (1-800-292-7970)
www.jhlarson.com



J.H. LARSON
COMPANY

Be sure to mention you are a SSC member, you'll be eligible for discounted prices.

Industrial Tools



Type of contract:
Preferred vendor

ACME Tool Crib
www.acmetoolcrib.com
Contact: Brian Wavra
1-800-732-4287

ACME offers a complete line of industry standard tools for industrial arts shop class, buildings and grounds, bus garages, street and highway departments, as well as tools for all types of construction projects. Be sure to mention you are a SSC member - you'll be eligible for up to a 10% discount. Check out the complete online catalog for your convenience.

Air Filters

Type of contract:
General bid



FiltraTech

www.filtratechsys.com
Contact: Debi Hunter (952-516-7509)
dhunter@filtratechsys.com

FiltraTech is a "single source" supplier for all of your filtration needs. They can supply HVAC, water, grease, fluid and dust filtration to name a few.

Supplies & Equipment for: Family & Consumer Science, Physical Education and Science



Type of contract: General bid and vendor discount
NASCO

www.nasco.com
1-800-558-9595

Be sure to reference the following Nasco quote numbers on your purchase order to receive the 10% total discount (free shipping on orders over \$50).

Family & Consumer Science #06-55370
Science Supplies & Equipment #06-85219
Physical Education #06-87973
Health, Math, Ag #03-55369

Sound Insulation



Type of contract: preferred vendor/discount

Acoustical Surfaces

www.educationalacoustics.com
1-800-448-3134
info@educationalacoustics.com

Full range of noise control and soundproofing materials for schools. Mention you are an SSC member for discounts.

Playground Equipment



Type of contract:
General bid



Midwest Playscapes, Inc.

www.playworldsystems.com
Contact: Tom Witek (1-800-747-1452)
email: playscapes@earthlink.net

Full range of park, playground and recreational equipment, surfacing, athletic equipment, site amenities, installations and more. Free consultation, design, inspections. Leasing available. 17% discount on everything.

Software-Reading

Type of contract: preferred vendor/discount



Scientific Learning - Fast ForWord software

www.scilearn.com
Contact: Tony Galvin
1-592-942-7790
tgalvin@scilearn.com

Special software for improving reading skills of students of all ages.

Copy Paper

Type of contract: Bid

Southeast Service Cooperative

Contact: Dale Walston at 507-281-6675
dwalston@ssc.coop



Annual spring bid with pricing for color paper and Xerox white.

Cooperative Purchasing with SSC

Software - Accounting

Type of contract: Vendor discount

Banyon Data Systems

Banyon Data Systems
www.banyon.com

Contact: Jeff Christensen
1-800-229-1130
jeffc@banyon.com



Banyon Data Systems develops, instructs and supports a wide variety of software for cities, towns, villages, counties, public libraries, and other public entities. Discounted pricing based on municipal population. The smaller the community the larger the discount.

Software-Writing



Type of contract: preferred vendor/discount

Vantage Learning – MyAccess! software

www.vantage.com
Contact: Debbie Shaw
1-800-230-2213 x1239
dshaw@vantage.com

Special software for improving the essay writing skills of students of all ages. Contact us for a schedule of upcoming webinars.

Vehicles

Type of contract: bid

Nelson Automotive Group

Contact: Gerry Womer
1-800-726-7564 ext 123
gerrywomer@nelsondodgegmc.com



Contract mirrors the state contract for vehicles with deepest fleet discounts applied from all manufacturers, except this provides more options and can be used any time during the year.

Mobile/Wireless Phones

Type of contract: preferred vendor/discount

Midwest Wireless

1-800-545-3950



Any member, including employees' personal accounts are eligible for a 10% association discount.

Garbage Disposal Guard

Type of contract: preferred vendor/discount

Safety Enterprises

1-320-249-6244
www.safetyent.com



This garbage disposal guard is OSHA approved and provides a simple and effective engineering solution to the problem of accidental injury. Handcrafted from stainless steel, GARD-U is designed to last for the lifetime of the disposal unit. More details can be found in this brochure.

Copier Equipment

Type of contract: bid



Metro Sales, Inc.

Contact: Aaron Moeckly (507-285-0039)
amoeckly@metrosales.com
www.metrosales.com

Konica-Minolta

Contact: Carrie Perkins
A+ Imaging, Rochester, MN
507-292-8888
cperkins@aplusimaging.com



Bid generated contract with competitive pricing on Ricoh copier equipment and Konica-Minolta. Save time and money by taking advantage of the contracts SSC has with Metro Sales, Inc. and Konica-Minolta.

Southeast Service Cooperative www.ssc.coop



Dale Walston

210 Wood Lake Drive SE
Rochester, MN 55904
dwalston@ssc.coop
507.281.6675 or 800.657.6996 x 102
fax: 507.288.7663

e-Health Package: limited offer through March 31st!

This outstanding service is available to SSC Members for what amounts to pennies a day. The price offer is \$5.88 per person per year (or \$.49 per person per month). Just think of the tremendous rewards to an employee's health and productivity with this \$5.88 investment.

If your organization were to offer this service independently, it would cost \$30,000 per year. With SSC hosting this Mayo Clinic program, members share the cost and enjoy significant savings.

The e-Health Package Provides:

- Up-to-date feature articles from Mayo Clinic health experts
- Ask a Specialist with a growing library of questions and answers from Mayo Clinic experts
- Find it Fast tool for information on diseases and conditions, & a Search tool to locate information quickly
- Navigation bar with links to: Diseases & Conditions; Drugs & Supplements; Treatment Decisions; Healthy Living; Health Programs and Tools
- Interactive health content such as: 275 videos; 80 slide shows; 40



at Southeast Service Cooperative (SSC),
your health matters...



- quizzes; 7 calculators; 10 self-assessments
- Customized content for SSC member organizations
- An HRA, or Health Risk Assessment, tool. This is a survey tool used to identify health strengths and risks. An HRA recommends behaviors that improve health and wellbeing. This tool also provides aggregate reports about the health of your employees. There is significant evidence that identifying and addressing health risks is an essential step in stabilizing medical costs and improving whole person wellness.
- SSC staff is available to conduct a training to inform employees about utilizing the e-Health Package and online Health Risk Assessment.

LIMITED OFFER: Discount e-Health Sign-Up/Renewal Period

Through March 31, 2007, any SSC Member organization can sign-up or renew the e-Health Package service at the reduced rate of \$2.94 per person per

year, which will secure participation from the date of sign-up through March 31, 2008. Thus, by signing-up during the discount period, your organization could receive up to three bonus months of the service!

If an organization signs up **after March 31, 2007**, the SSC insurance pool-member rate increases to \$3.92 per person per year, and the non-insurance pool member rate increases to \$5.88 per person per year. Any organization signing up after April 30, will receive a pro-rated rate based on the month in which they sign up.

Remember: Your organization determines the number of employees eligible for participation in the HRA and e-Health Package, and employee family members over 18 years are also eligible to participate at no additional cost.

E-Health sign-up agreements are available at www.ssc.coop under Insurance Services, then Wellness Programs.

Steps to heart health: risk factors you can change!!!

Did you know?

- Tobacco Use- Increased risk of heart disease from smoking reduced 50% one year after quitting and equal to non-smokers after 15 years!
- Secondhand Smoke- Nonsmokers with hypertension and high cholesterol increase risk of heart disease with secondhand smoke exposure!
- High Lipid Levels- Obesity, lack of exercise, excessive alcohol and carb intake contribute to plaque formation!
- High Blood Pressure- Obesity, lack of exercise; excessive salt intake contribute to this "silent killer"!
- Physical Inactivity- Just 30 minutes of moderate exercise 5 times a week offsets this major risk factor for heart disease, obesity, high blood pressure and "bad" cholesterol. So what are you waiting for?
- Overweight/Obesity- Generally a body mass index over 25, women's waist greater than 35" and men's greater than 40" raise the risk for heart disease and diabetes!
- Diabetes- Studies show risk of the diabetic female dying from heart disease is increased 300-400%! Avoid or delay heart disease by controlling weight and cholesterol, lower blood pressure, and avoid smoking and smoke!
- Metabolic Syndrome- 3 of the 5 components of high blood pressure, high blood sugar, high triglyceride levels, low HDL cholesterol and abdominal obesity increase your risk of getting heart disease and diabetes dramatically and is more dangerous to your health!
- Stress, Depression and Lack of Social Support- can all contribute to heart disease if not recognized, controlled and treated appropriately!

Now that you know, it is up to you to take the next Steps to Heart Health!

SSC to host the third annual southeast MN regional art contest

The Freshwater Society of Minnesota, in conjunction with the Southeast Service Cooperative, is again sponsoring the art and scholarship contest to provide opportunities for regional senior high students to creatively celebrate the beauty of water, lament its environmental degradation, or illustrate its impact on the human condition.

The Water is Life! Art competition gives schools and students an opportunity to convey an important message through their creative talents. They also learn about and become involved in preserving our freshwater resources. Expressing meaningful and artistic ways to portray the importance of freshwater is the theme of the third annual WATER IS LIFE! Art and Scholarship Program.

All southeast Minnesota senior high schools have been invited to participate in the art contest. Local and metro judges will choose six semi-finalists to compete with semi-finalists from three other regions in Minnesota. Participating students, families, and art instructors will be invited to the regional exhibit and reception on April 25 at the Southeast Service

Cooperative, where the semifinalists will be announced. All 24 semifinalists will be invited to participate in the final judging and gala exhibit and reception on May 9 at the Freshwater Society Headquarters on the shores of Lake Minnetonka. Three \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded to the top finalists. A week-long exhibit, open to the public and featuring all the semi-finalists' artwork, will be held prior to the May 9th event.

For over 35 years, the Freshwater Society (FWS) has been a leading public nonprofit organization dedicated to conserving, restoring, and protecting freshwater resources and their surrounding watersheds. Through its program initiatives in freshwater resource management, groundwater and surface water stewardship activities, public education, conferences and publications, the Freshwater Society has been



a catalyst for understanding one of our most important natural resources.

To view some of the art work and activities from the 2006 art contest, please go to www.freshwater.org and follow the links to the 2007 Water Is Life Art Contest.

For more information about the Water is Life Art and scholarship program, contact Dick Riley at 507-281-6666; driley@ssc.coop or Jeanne Prok at (952) 471-9773.

The entry deadline has been extended to March 15!

SSC Board of Directors update

For more information about SSC Board meetings, you can read them on the SSC website at www.ssc.coop under the Board of Directors link.

December 2006

- Adopted policies recommended by the Policies Committee.
- Adopted the 2005-06 Annual Report.
- Adjusted the SSC mileage reimbursement rate to 48.5 cents per mile effective January 1.
- Appointed Mitch Lentz and Joe Pries to extend their positions on the SSC Board of Directors for one year.
- Accepted a grant award from the Minnesota Department of Education

under the Enhancing Education Through Technology Program for a two-year project with a focus on educator training in technology literacy and integration in the amount of \$99,635.

- Accepted a revised grant contract from the Minnesota Department of Education Division of School Improvement in the amount of \$320,000 for the period December 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007.
- Authorized a consulting contract with Learning Curve Consulting to provide AYP/School Improvement Coordination services.
- Hired Heidi Knepper as part-time AYP/School Improvement Coordinator.

- Scheduled the January Board meeting for Monday, January 29.

January 2007

- Elected Board Officers for 2007:
 - Joe Pries—Chairperson
 - Don Andring—Clerk
 - Mitch Lentz—Vice-Chair
 - Tom Heise—Treasurer
- Chair Pries appointed Board Members to Committees -- Finance, Personnel, Policies, and ByLaws.
- Established the monthly meeting schedule through January 23, 2008:

MNTAAB provides cost-effective cash-flow borrowing option

Hollywood Squares, one of the most successful game shows in television history, required celebrity panelists to answer questions either truthfully or with a fabrication. John Davidson, a regular on the show, always followed his answer with the most sincere of smiles and a reassuring “Trust me!” The contestant who was able to discern between the truth and a bluff in three adjoining squares achieved a winning tic-tac-toe. So what does Hollywood Squares have to do with cash-flow borrowing?

In 1993, the Minnesota School Boards Association, in cooperation with the regional service cooperatives, created the Tax and Aid Anticipation Bonds (MNTAAB) statewide cash-flow borrowing pool. The idea was to provide a cost-effective and administratively friendly alternative to stand-alone cash-flow borrowing. The program was designed to create economies of scale for Minnesota school districts and result in a lower AIC (All Inclusive Costs) for cash flow borrowing. MNTAAB has been very effective in this regard by keeping up-front costs reasonable and by selling attractively in the bond market with a large, pooled issue. In the vast majority of cases, this strategy resulted in districts paying lower interest rates.

All Fact and No Bluff

Had John Davidson endorsed the MNTAAB approach to cash-flow borrowing, he would have simply exhorted districts to “Trust me!” After all, the MSBA and the regional service cooperatives would not sponsor a cash-flow borrowing program for K-12 school districts that was not in their best interests. As financial advisors to the pool, however, Springsted knows that it will take more than “Trust me!” to make the case for MNTAAB.

It is a concern when information distributed to school districts, which is part truth and part bluff, potentially misrepresents the bottom line in terms of net cost to school districts. For example, some firms competing with MNTAAB focus only on issuance costs when comparing their stand-alone product to the pool, rather than comparing all-inclusive costs of the transaction.

Comparing All-Inclusive Costs

Let’s say your district is going to borrow \$4 million for cash flow and a competitor of the MNTAAB pool offers to do the transaction for what it characterizes as a lower cost to the district. Fact or bluff? Just comparing

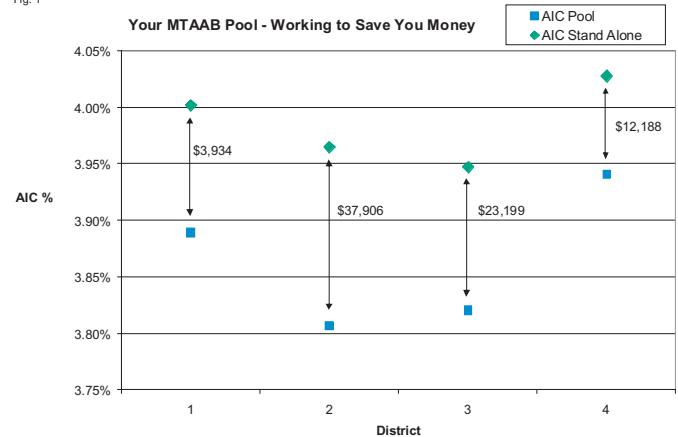
up-front costs can be misleading as some firms do not recognize or quantify compensation to the underwriter as part of issuance costs. Underwriters are compensated in all transactions – MNTAAB and stand-alone – and perform an important function of purchasing and then marketing the bonds to investors.

MNTAAB’s discount is at a fixed rate of .1% while stand-alone transactions typically compensate underwriters in the range of .2% to .5%. If a stand-alone proposal does not quantify payments to the underwriter up-front, the purchaser executes a premium bid and the underwriter’s compensation is taken from the transaction at closing before distribution of proceeds to the school district.

One of the best ways to compare costs of the MNTAAB pool to a stand-alone transaction is to calculate the All Inclusive Costs (AIC), which is the total cost of borrowing including interest, underwriter’s discount, and costs of issuance. It is similar to “APR” in the mortgage industry and is an accepted measure of total borrowing costs. Figure 1 compares the AICs of four school districts that sold stand-alone issues in 2006 to what they would have been had they borrowed with the MNTAAB pool. These four districts were selected because they all sold during the same week as the MNTAAB pool and the districts agreed to provide their closing documents so an accurate comparison could be made.

The calculation is difficult in any event but is further complicated because the MNTAAB pool in 2006 was a 12 month program and some of the issues illustrated are 13 months. The results that follow illustrate the issues as they were sold, comparing each to what would have been sold under MNTAAB to generate an identical amount of spendable proceeds. As illustrated, these districts would have saved anywhere from approximately \$4,000 to \$38,000 had they been in the pool. Trying to adjust the durations to reflect a 12 month

Fig. 1



“AIC” stands for “all inclusive cost” and equals the total of all costs of borrowing for each district. The dollar figures in the chart represent how much each district would have saved had they borrowed with MNTAAB. NOTE: District 2, 3, and 4 stand alone issues are 13 month terms versus MNTAAB’s 12 month term.

term for each issue causes a ripple effect in the elements of the comparisons making them complicated to do accurately and difficult to explain, but even if a very simplistic approach is taken by just subtracting one month of debt costs from each 13 month issue, all four districts would still have saved money in the MNTAAB pool.

Guaranteed Investment Contract

In addition to cost-effective borrowing, the MNTAAB pool provides participating districts with Guaranteed Investment Contract (GIC) option, which provides a good return and is both convenient and safe.

When you are planning for cash flow borrowing in 2007, remember that focusing on issuance costs alone tells only part of the story. When you calculate the All Inclusive Costs (AIC) of the transaction, MNTAAB has consistently been the best value for cash flow borrowing for the vast majority of Minnesota school districts.

Client representatives from Springsted are also prepared to assist school clients to execute individual cash flow borrowing transactions if there are unique circumstances that make that option more desirable. For more information about the MNTAAB statewide cash-flow borrowing pool or other cash flow borrowing needs, please contact one of the following client representatives at Springsted.

DeeDee Kahring at
dkahring@springsted.com
 Don Lifto at dlifto@springsted.com
 Jim Schmitt at jschmitt@springsted.com

SSC offers sessions on utilizing SMART board technology

The SSC is excited to host the following upcoming SMART Board Trainings:

Introduction to SMART Boards Beginner Session

For employees new to SMART Board Technology; no prior knowledge of SMART Boards necessary. The fee for this session is \$50 per person or \$200 maximum per organization. Two sessions have already been held but it is not too late to register as there are two more sessions scheduled as follows:

Tuesday, March 20 and Wednesday, March 21 - 5:00 to 7:00 PM.

All of the sessions listed below will be held Thursday, March 15 at the time designated below. The fee for each of the sessions is \$15 per person and registration is limited to 40 attendees per session.

9:00 - 10:15 AM - Ten Ways to Get SMART: Secondary (7-12) Specific

This session is intended for Secondary teachers, media specialists and secondary technology instructors who are currently using SMART Notebook and want to "kick it up a notch".

10:15 - 12:00 PM - Secondary SMART User Group

This session is for secondary teachers, media specialists, secondary technology instructors; designed to allow individuals to share strategies, ask troubleshooting questions, learn about the latest SMART Notebook Service Pack features and take away some tips and tricks.

1:30 - 2:45 PM - Ten Ways to Get SMART: Elementary (K-6) specific

This session is intended for elementary teachers, media specialists, and elementary technology instructors; will cover the same topics as the Secondary specific session described above.

2:45 - 4:00 PM - Elementary SMART User Group

For elementary teachers, media specialists, elementary technology instructors; will cover the same topics as the Secondary SMART User Group session including instructions for emailing web-sites, resources or files.

How to Register

Contact the SSC to request a brochure/ registration form; mail or fax (507.288.7663) form to the SSC OR email your registration information to: register@ssc.coop.

On-site training option

The SSC staff is also available to schedule on-site Introduction to SMART Board sessions for organizations who already possess SMART Boards. Five to ten employees can be trained at one time at a cost of \$125/instructional hour. Contact Bekka Meyer at rmeyer@ssc.coop or 507.281.6685 to discuss this option.

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Calendar

MARCH

Thursday, March 15
SMART Board Training Session
 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM at SSC

Tuesday - Wednesday,
 March 20-21
Senior High Knowledge Bowl Regionals
 8:30 AM - 3:00 PM at SSC

Tuesday, March 20
SMART Board Training Session
 6:00 - 8:00 PM at SSC

Wednesday, March 21
SMART Board Training Session
 6:00 - 8:00 PM at SSC

Thursday, March 22
Multi-Region Spelling Bee
 St. Cloud
 Tuesday, March 27

Insurance Training - HSA/VEBA/HRA, Affordability Plan
 2:00 - 4:30 PM at SSC

Wednesday, March 28
SSC Board Meeting
 5:30 PM at SSC

APRIL

Thursday, April 12
AAC Meeting
 12:00 PM at SSC

Tuesday-Wednesday,
 April 17-18
State Knowledge Bowl
 Cragun's Resort in Brainerd

Wednesday, April 25
Freshwater Art Contest Reception and Announcement of Semi-Finalists
 7:00 - 9:00 PM at SSC

Wednesday, April 25
State Knowledge Bowl Advisors Meeting
 8: AM - 12:00 PM
 iTV Meeting

Wednesday April 25
SSC Board Meeting
 5:30 PM at SSC

MAY

Wednesday, May 2
MASA Meeting
 11:00 AM - 3:30 PM at SSC

Wednesday - Thursday,
 May 9-10
Region V - EOY
 9:30 AM - 12:00 PM at SSC

Thursday, May 10
AAC Meeting
 12:00 PM at SSC

Monday, May 14
Phil Allmon Boot Camp Workshop
 8:00 AM - 11:30 PM at SSC

Tuesday, May 15
MDE - NSS
 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM at SSC

Wednesday - Thursday,
 May 16-17
Young Authors Young Artists Conference
 RCTC Campus

Thursday, May 17
MDE - EMAP
 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM at SSC

Wednesday, May 23
SSC Board Meeting
 5:30 PM at SSC

Monday, May 28
Memorial Day Holiday
 SSC Office Closed

JUNE

Tuesday, June 5
Town Meeting with Phil Allmon
 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM at SSC

Wednesday, June 13
Technology Fair
 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
 at Venture Computer Systems

Thursday, June 14
AAC Meeting
 12:00 PM at SSC

Wednesday, June 27
SSC Board Meeting
 5:30 PM at SSC



Board Update from page 12

- Wednesday, January 29
 - Wednesday, February 28
 - Wednesday, March 28
 - Wednesday, April 25
 - Wednesday, May 23
 - Wednesday, June 27
 - Monday, July 30
 - Wednesday, August 22
 - Wednesday, September 19
 - Wednesday, October 24
 - Monday, November 26
 - Wednesday, December 19
 - Wednesday, January 23
- Designated the Cooperative Connection and the SSC website www.ssc.coop as the official newspaper and the Rochester Post Bulletin as the official legal notice posting; and encourage members to publish Southeast Service Cooperative Board actions as a part of their individual Board minutes.
 - Accepted a second set of policy revisions recommended by the Policies Committee.
 - Accepted a report and recommendation from the Personnel Committee: 1) adjusted the Lead AYP Coordinator's compensation to be commensurate with program coordination duties, and 2) authorized the Executive Director to open a position and conduct a search for an Insurance Services Associate.
 - Renewed a contract with Mayo Health Management Resources for the eHealth Package for a second one-year period effective March 27, 2007.
 - Authorized the Executive Director to designate an SSC employee to serve, or to designate that the Executive Director will continue to serve, as a representative on the statewide VEBA Committee as required by IRS regulations.
 - Authorized participation with six other Service Cooperatives in contracting with Milliman Consultants and Actuaries for an analysis of the formula for calculating needed reserves for the rate stabilization reserve (RSR) and incurred but not reported (IBNR) funds; authorized the Executive Director to contract for additional related services as needed through June 30.

The **Cooperative Connection** is a publication of the Southeast Service Cooperative, published four times per year and distributed to members, associates, and the general public by request.

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For updated information and news, visit www.ssc.coop

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To send a fax dial 507.288.7663.

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