

# Cooperative Connection

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Southeast Service Cooperative

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## Water is Life Art Contest

### Julia Iverson - Kasson-Mantorville High School Artist - Scores Big at Scholarship Event

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

We are happy to announce that Julia Iverson of Kasson-Mantorville High School has been awarded a \$500 scholarship for her graphite drawing. She is a third place finalist for 2008. Julia and her family were in attendance on May 7 at the Freshwater Society's Excelsior, Minnesota campus when the announcement was made. Julia was also a semi-finalist in the 2007 Water is Life Art Contest.

Regional semi-finalists Alek Eglinton, Tae-Kyung, Brittany Kuschel, and family and friends were also in attendance at the 2008 scholarship announcement in Excelsior. Their works had been selected from 28 pieces of art judged April 2 at the Regional Event held at the Wood Lake Meeting Center located at the Southeast Service Cooperative.

The Water is Life Art Contest gives schools and students an opportunity to convey an important message through their creative talents. High school artists learn



*Winner Julia Iverson and her art teacher, Marilyn Fredrickson pose with Julia's winning artwork.*

about and become involved in preserving our freshwater resources. Expressing meaningful and artistic ways to portray the importance of freshwater was the theme of the fourth annual Water is Life Art Contest and Scholarship Program.

All southeast Minnesota senior high schools were invited to participate in the art contest. Local and metro judges choose four regional semi-finalists to compete with semi-finalists from other regions in Minnesota.

Two \$1,000 scholarships were awarded to the top two finalists. A week-long exhibit, open to the public and featuring all the semi-finalists' artwork, was held prior to the May 9 event.

*(See page 2 for more Freshwater Art information and regional winners' pieces)*

## Water is Life Art Contest

Continued from Page 1

For over 35 years, the Freshwater Society 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.



Regional winners pictured with Freshwater Founder Richard Gray, Sr. and judge Joan Nephew

To view some of the art work and activities from the previous contests, please go to [www.freshwater.org](http://www.freshwater.org) and follow the links to the Water is Life Art Contest.

For more information about the Water is Life Art Contest, contact Jeanne Prok at (952) 471-9773.

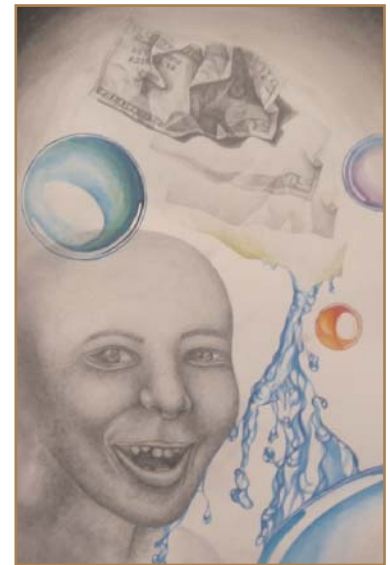
*Pictured to the right are images of the regional winner's artwork. Regional and top finalist, Julia Iverson's artwork can be seen on page 1.*



Brittany Kuschel, LaCrescent-Hokah, 10th Grade



Alek Eglinton, Caledonia Public Schools, 12th Grade



Tae-Kyung, Lourdes, 11th Grade

## Health and Safety Update

by Bob Tweten,  
Health & Safety Consultant



The annual "Health and Safety Town Hall Meeting" will be held in June, but the exact date has yet to be set. Audrey Bompstad, who is currently overseeing the Health and Safety programs for state school districts, will be providing information and interpretation of the 2008-2009 school year *H & S Letter and Attachment #99*. I will be in contact with southeast school districts as soon as a date and time has been confirmed by Audrey Bompstad.

If you have questions related to Health and Safety issues please continue to contact me at [btweten@ssc.coop](mailto:btweten@ssc.coop) or (507) 281-6663.



PaySchools™ is an online payment processing system that provides schools with an easy and efficient method to collect fees and receive electronic payments for school lunches, field trips, registration, prom tickets, t-shirts and any other school-related fees. PaySchools™ makes it possible for all schools to offer parents the convenience of online purchasing without incurring large administration or setup costs.

Parents access PaySchools™ through a link on the home page of their school district's website. They select the items they want to purchase and then pay for them using credit cards or electronic checks. Payments are automatically processed and the money is transferred to the school's local bank account(s).

PaySchools™ was created by the Iowa Association of School Boards.

## SSC Offering Online Learning For Member Schools

### With SSC Online, Students Can...

- ◆ Take courses that meet their needs for flexibility and individualized instruction.
- ◆ Make up credits, complete college entrance requirements or expand their learning opportunities to meet their own interests.
- ◆ Learn at their own pace and within their own schedules.
- ◆ Develop the technology and learning skills they will need for a lifetime of learning.



### Teacher Training

To teach online courses through this program, teachers must complete a Teacher Training Course. During this inquiry-based, hands-on course, participants will review and reflect upon examples of “best practice” in online learning. This process will take place in both face-to-face and online learning environments using Moodle course management tools. Participants will have one day of face-to-face training (Online Teacher Training Facilitation Session), followed by three weeks of online training where they will participate in and facilitate threaded discussions and online chats. The course will conclude with a final face-to-face session (Online Learning Certification session). The training course is scheduled as follows:

**Online Teacher Training Facilitation Session** ⇒ **Three week Online Course** ⇒ **Online Teacher Certification Session**  
 Tuesday, July 22, 9:00 AM to 3:30 PM  
 Wood Lake Meeting Center at SSC

Tuesday, August 12, 9:00 AM to 3:30 PM  
 Wood Lake Meeting Center at SSC

*Space is VERY limited, with only 10 to 12 spots available. One administrator and two teachers are encouraged to attend from each school registering.*

### Facts About the Online Learning Program

- ◆ The SSC Online Learning Project is certified by the Minnesota Department of Education to offer online curriculum to students in grades 9-12.
- ◆ SSC Online provides challenging educational opportunities for students who need credit recovery, advanced, additional or specialized courses, and/or a flexible learning environment.
- ◆ The courses offered through SSC Online provide a rich, multimedia environment for student learning, along with many opportunities for individualized learning.
- ◆ The courses require student involvement via online discussions, chats, projects and inquiry-based assignments, and include frequent contact with the teacher.
- ◆ The SSC Online Learning Project is a part-time, non-diploma program, so students will remain enrolled in their own districts while taking courses with SSC Online.

#### Contact:

Kari Kubicek, (507) 281-6668, [kkubicek@ssc.coop](mailto:kkubicek@ssc.coop) or Nicole LaChapelle, (507) 281-6674, [nlachapelle@ssc.coop](mailto:nlachapelle@ssc.coop) for more information on how to register for the training.

## Getting to Win – Win When Negotiating Benefits



by Bill Colopoulos,  
Health/Benefits Consultant

Few collectively bargained negotiations topics are as controversial and emotional as employee health

benefits. Yet the escalating cost of insurance premiums is challenging both the collectively bargained unit (CBU) and the employer's ability to pay for the current benefits plans.

Annual renewal exercises have become often futile attempts to "hold the line" on existing benefits plans – futile because there is no real way to protect the financial integrity of the traditional, richer plans, even in the short term. Pooling can help, but is not the answer all by itself. Even in the context of pooled plans – no matter how large, no matter how well managed – traditional plan designs will lead to higher, more inflationary costs.

The challenge of meeting insurance cost increases is now causing rifts within CBUs; pitting the old against young, senior against less senior employees, healthy employees vs. the less healthy. This partially explains why unions are turning to government interventions and mandatory pooling to gain control of their benefits plans – and commit the taxpayers to pay for them. These approaches are doomed to failure.

What both sides in a collectively bargained benefits agreement have to understand is that they are in the same boat and must work together to plan and execute strategies that will make health benefits more affordable for everyone. There can be no winners and losers. There can only be winners OR losers.

### Where to Begin

Employers and CBUs should both approach the issue of benefits negotiation from the perspective of each group making a commitment toward achieving certain mutual goals defined as:

- ♦ Making health benefits plans more affordable;

- ♦ Making them more accessible to the membership;
- ♦ Designing benefits that serve the needs of the total group – not just a few senior members.

Affordability is the key; a common interest both to CBU membership and employer plan sponsor must be recognized and used as guidance. That is the basis of where negotiations should start.

### How to Measure the Value of Benefits

MN Statute 471.6161 s 5 provides the basis for how employers and CBUs can go about structuring an objectively determined, mutual responsibility towards cost management of their health benefits.

#### **471.6161 GROUP INSURANCE; GOVERNMENTAL UNITS.**

*Subd. 5. **Collective bargaining.** The aggregate value of benefits provided by a group insurance contract for employees **covered by a collective agreement** shall not be reduced, unless the public employer and exclusive representative of the employees of an appropriate bargaining unit, certified under section 179A.12, agree to a reduction in benefits.*

In *Subd. 5.*, the term "aggregate value of benefits" refers to the value of negotiated health benefits programs. The statute requires that such value cannot be reduced unless both CBU and plan sponsor mutually agree to do so.

However, the statute does not explicitly define what is meant by the term "aggregate value of benefits" and in the absence of a specific definition, rather loose and arbitrary interpretations become possible. Moreover, unless a CBU and employer agrees to a definition, any benefit plan change could equate to a reduction, maintenance of or increase in the aggregate value of benefits. Not having an agreement in place could easily lead to controversy and disagreements between the CBU and employer plan sponsor.

If, however, definitional clarity is added to a collectively bargained agreement, both the group

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and plan sponsor can then regard their mutually agreed upon definition of the term “aggregate value of benefits” as a benchmark for measuring plan changes palatable to both sides in subsequent benefit negotiations.

### **Defining Aggregate Value of Benefits**

How should we define aggregate value of benefits? Ideally, the definition used should lead to a value that is:

- ♦Determined objectively;
- ♦Measured easily by readily available, objective data sources;
- ♦Easily communicated and understood by all benefit plan stakeholders.

The following suggested definition satisfies all of the above requirements:

**A.** Total benefits paid by plan during a policy year period, including any contributions made by the employer to a health savings account, VEBA and/or health reimbursement arrangement . . .

. . . Divided by . . .

**B.** The sum total of benefits paid and plan members’ out-of-pocket costs (deductible, co-pays, etc) under the benefits plan for the same policy year period.

Thus, (for example), if a benefit plan’s policy year payments (and employer VEBA contributions) totaled \$900,000 and the employees’ out of pocket expenses for the same period were equal to \$100,000, the aggregate value of benefits for that policy year would be equal to 90%.

Going forward into future plan years, the above formula would be used to determine the aggregate value of each plan year objectively; essentially quantifying the prescribed parameters of the value of benefit plan changes that could be made per MSA 471.6161 s 5 and defining what would qualify as a reduction in aggregate value of benefits and, therefore, subject to negotiation.

### **Impact and Meaning of the Definition**

One of the more obvious impacts of this definition is that it incorporates the effect of several types and levels of plan design change that can affect the aggregate value of benefits ratio used as the baseline for measuring future value targets in negotiations.

For example, in year two of our illustration, if total eligible expenses were to increase by 10%, but benefit payments were to increase by 15%, the net impact would drive the ratio upwards to 94.1%. Hence, our group would be exposed to the possibility of a benefit reduction adjustment of 4.1% applicable to the next plan year. Technically speaking, the employer plan sponsor could adjust benefits down 4.1% to maintain the agreed upon ratio of 90% - per the negotiated agreement language. However, if the employer wished to go under 90%, they would then have to seek our group’s approval under MSA 471.6161 s 5.

Likewise, if out of pocket expenses in our above example plan were to remain static next year and benefit payments were to increase by 10%, the group could expect an 8.2% increase in aggregate value of their benefit plan; again, without having to open up negotiations with the employer.

### **Practical Considerations**

However, from the employer’s perspective, an 8.2% increase in out of pocket expense exposure would be required to hold aggregate value of benefits steady at 90%. Therefore, with healthcare inflation and utilization increases impacting health benefits plans routinely and occasionally severely, the likelihood of employers being compelled to adjust benefits upwards is slight. Far more likely, the application of this formula would give employers the latitude to reduce benefits to hold aggregate value of benefits at the agreed upon initial ratio.

### **Bargaining Strategies**

The current lack of aggregate value of benefits definition in the 471 statute puts collectively bargained groups in somewhat of a precarious position. While seemingly holding the employer plan sponsor at bay regarding their ability to make benefit changes unilaterally, the law does nothing to mandate contributions to pay for whatever plan the

*Continued on page 6*

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group ultimately elects as their “Benchmark Plan”.

The law - and most current CBAs - also gives employers unilateral control over plan administrator selection, appointment of consultants, and control of any decisions that could lead to a potential increase in benefits.

Moreover, the “protection” afforded the CBU by MSA 471.6161 s 5, even without a definition agreement, may not be quite as impenetrable as one might think. In the absence of specific definitions in the statute itself, rulings for or against the CBU would depend on the courts and arbitrary rulings of judges who would be influenced by expert testimony. Theoretically, an employer could reasonably claim that some degree of plan design change would fall within the definition of aggregate value of benefits, as plan costs increase. Logically, whatever the increase in aggregate value may occur as a result of plan cost increase, it would not be zero. Therefore, it would appear that the employer, even should it come to a court ruling, would be given some latitude to make unilateral plan design changes without violating MSA 471.6161 s 5 as a result of plan cost increases alone. Therefore, it would seem to be in everyone’s best interests to have an agreement in place identifying what both parties will regard as the definition of aggregate value of benefits that will be used as the baseline for the adjudication of their negotiated benefits agreement.

### **Premium Contributions**

There is also the equally important issue of who pays what cost for negotiated benefits plans. These premium negotiated values are variables that fall outside of MSA 471.6161 s 5. While premium contributions may not define the benefit plan value of the plans, they do impact the decision made each year as to what benefits plan selections are offered and whether or not employees can afford to choose to participate in their employer’s health benefit program.

### **Fixed Dollar Contributions and Adverse Risk**

As premiums have increased dramatically in recent years, many public employer plan sponsors have shifted contributions to their single employees (often paying 100% of the single employee cost). At the same time, they have required employees with

families to pay a fixed contribution for extending health plan coverage to their family members. The logic used to negotiated this approach has been remarkably simple: an employee should be given the same contribution whether or not they have a family to cover. This has resulted in:

- ♦ Huge, unaffordable premium increases for family coverage,
- ♦ Fewer, less healthy families are able to afford or choose to elect family coverage,
- ♦ Poor risk selection has led to higher premiums for both single employees and employees with family coverage (overall, higher premium increases).

The incidence of (2) leading to (3) is known in insurance terminology as “adverse risk selection” – the ability of less healthy individuals to elect coverage in the relatively certain knowledge of its need – and the corresponding lack of healthy individuals electing coverage due to its high price.

The way to prevent adverse risk selection is to have both the employer pay a reasonable percentage of premiums instead of a fixed amount (70/30% employer-employee). This would mean that both the employer and employee would pay for premium increases going forward.

Ultimately, the percentage contribution approach would also help the employer, since both single and family premiums would benefit equally from a contributions strategy that preserved proper risk management guidelines, rather than cause

adverse risk that would drive up all rates dramatically.

The precedent for an employer paying more for an employee with family coverage than a single employee is firmly established in the private sector and is common even in many union-negotiated plans. Sheer practical necessity is often the overarching logic for this. That and the fact that being single isn’t always a permanent situation just as is the case with needing family coverage. Life changing events apply to us all. An interesting analogy for school districts would be the fact that all taxpayers must pay for schools – even those without children of school age.

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### Getting to Our Win-Win Strategy

What would a win-win strategy for both CBUs and Employer Plan Sponsors look like?

Policy	Main Benefactor (s)
Aggregate value of benefits = benefits paid plus employer contribution to VEBA or HSA divided by total eligible expenses.	Employer plan sponsor
70% employer premium contribution for family coverage vs. fixed dollar contribution.	CBU
85% employer premium contribution for single coverage vs. 100% paid by employer.	Employer plan sponsor
50% of deductible value employer contribution to single/family VEBA/HSA account.	CBU
Maintain two plan designs as choices for employees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Base plan (used to benchmark aggregate value of benefits);</li> <li>◆ Consumer health plan option.</li> </ul>	CBU/Employer plan sponsor

These five policies combine to form a strategy that will encourage the building and maintenance of a superior risk profile for most groups. It will also provide younger, healthier employees the chance to build equity in their own healthcare savings accounts rather than pay higher health insurance premiums for benefits plans they rarely use. It will

also preserve the current base plan for the older, less healthy employees.

### The Lynchpin

The key to the success of this strategy is employer-employee contribution conversions to the indicated levels.

In the first case, the 70% employer premium contribution for family coverage assures that everyone – no matter which plan option best meets their needs – will find their contribution affordable. The result will be the group will get good participation in both plans; which is the key to maintaining a good risk profile and minimizing future rate increases. Ultimately, this is what will maintain the affordability of BOTH plan options going forward.

In the second case, a 15% token rate contribution by employees for single coverage will cause no financial hardship for the single employee, nor adversely affect the group’s risk profile. But it will eliminate wasteful incidences of employees being double covered. Those that are covered as dependents under other health benefits plans will simply choose not to enroll in the group’s plan, thus saving the employer money that can then be better spent elsewhere on healthcare related expenses (retiree healthcare contributions, e.g.).

Fixed dollar contributions for family coverage contributions is a failed funding policy that reflects one’s best interests: neither the employer nor the CBU. It also poses a certain threat to the financial integrity of the group’s plan and will result – eventually – in abnormally low family participation, adverse risk selection, and ultimately, abnormally higher costs for everyone, including single employees covered under the plan. No pooling scheme, voluntary or mandatory, can alter this fact. This is a critical internal funding issue that must be addressed at the individual employer level.

## Teaching American History Gearing Up for a New Year

by Kari Kubicek and Shelley Rinkel



*SE and SW cohorts and project staff stand outside of the home of Henry Sibley.*

What better way to bring Minnesota History into the classroom than through real life experience and collaboration with other Minnesota teachers facing the same challenges and expectations!

This year's *Blufflands and Prairies: Southern Minnesota's Place in the Fabric of America's Story* project programming ended with a networking trip to the Twin Cities. The Southeast and Southwest cohort groups spent a day at the Minnesota Historical Society utilizing the library to find primary source documents related to history topics as well as their own lessons. The groups also learned more about the Lesson Study piece of the project, which is a major focus of the 08-09 programming year. Lesson Study is a structured process in which a group of teachers identify an instruction problem, plan a lesson using primary resources, teach the lesson (one member of the group teaches the lesson while the others observe), evaluate and revise the lesson and share the results with other teachers.

By collaboration and an emphasis on lesson revision, the insights of several teachers are brought to bear on the problems of effectively teaching challenging historical concepts. Lesson Study methodology is widely used in Japan and has been credited

for the shift from "teaching as telling" to "teaching for understanding" in Japanese mathematics and science classrooms.

During the March networking trip, the groups were treated to an "amateur theatrical" performance on daily life and culture in the early 19th century by the Living History Society of Minnesota, staged at the James J. Hill House. A brief tour of the railroad magnate's late 1800s home followed.



*Members of the SE and SW cohort groups trudge through the snow at Fort Snelling.*

The following day, the groups toured Fort Snelling and the Sibley House. The home dates from the era when the American Fur Company operated a regional trade with the Dakota, between 1825 and 1853 and belonged to Henry Hastings Sibley, the company's regional manager.

The Teaching American History Project is preparing for its second year of programming. Although three members of the cohorts chose not to continue with the project, we are pleased to announce that two individuals have joined the cohort group: Kelly Larson from Lake Benton, Minnesota, teaches 6th grade Minnesota History at Lake Benton Elementary School, and Gail Bungum from Sargent, Minnesota teaches 6th grade Minnesota History at Kasson-Mantorville Intermediate School.

A four-day Summer Institute will be held July 7-10. There will be intensive classroom training as well as touring, research and sightseeing to bring the subject areas to life. The final day of this event will include a 90 minute diesel powered train excursion on the Osceola and St. Croix Valley Railway to allow the cohorts a chance to experience passenger railroading to the scenic St. Croix River Valley.

Programming topics for the coming year will include U.S. Industrialization, Forests, Fields and the Falls, Minnesota Industries, U.S. Immigration and Minnesota Immigration. A major focus of the coming year will be Lesson Study.

The following session topics and timeline have been tentatively planned for the coming year and will be offered in both the southeast and southwest regions: November - U.S. Civil War and Reconstruction with lessons on "Boys in Blue" and Reconstruction; December - a workshop focusing on the Dakota War and American Indian Policy; January - Digital Resources and an introduction to the Minnesota Digital Library online, as well as "America Becomes a World Power"; February - "The Emergence of Modern America from 1900-1920's" workshop including a focus on progressivism. Another networking event will be scheduled for March which will include a final Lesson Study discussion and archive training at the Minnesota Historical Society.

If you have questions or would like more information on this project, visit the grant project website at [www.blufflandsandprairies.org](http://www.blufflandsandprairies.org) or contact Kari Kubicek, (507) 281-6668, [kkubicek@ssc.coop](mailto:kkubicek@ssc.coop) or Nicole LaChapelle, (507) 281-6674, [nlachapelle@ssc.coop](mailto:nlachapelle@ssc.coop).



## Meet Southeast Service Cooperative's Newest Staff Members



**Katie Sue  
Cunningham**  
Program Assistant

Originally from Rochester, Katie Sue began in April as SSC's

newest program assistant. Besides serving as the receptionist, Katie will assist various staff members with projects. Katie Sue graduated from Century High School, and is currently enrolled in Rochester Community and Technical College in the Business Management and Marketing program. She will graduate in Spring of 2009. Katie Sue's family includes an older brother, and her parents, who are a great inspiration to her. Katie Sue is a dance instructor at Rochester's Allegro School of Dance and is a coach for the Century High School Winter Competitive Dance Team. She also serves as a volunteer for Paws and Claws Humane Society. Katie stated, "I have not been here very long, but already I feel like I am part of the team. Everyone has been so friendly and welcoming."



**Nicole  
LaChapelle**  
Communications &  
Program Assistant

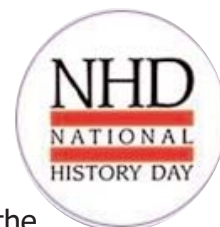
A native of Milwaukee, Nicole moved to

Minnesota when she enrolled at Winona State University, where she received her degree in Public Relations. Her parents, and older brother still live in the Milwaukee area. Nicole comes to SSC with 7 years experience in the non-profit arena, having been the Assistant Director of the Winona County Historical Society. She left there to fulfill her dream of taking a trip around the world. Now living in Lewiston, Nicole will be responsible for many marketing and communications projects, and will support several other programs. She is thrilled to be working at SSC, and shared, "This is such a wonderful place to work! The people, projects, and everything SSC stands for add up to a great environment." Nicole enjoys hiking, cooking, traveling to new places, and making the most of each day.

## St. Francis of Assisi Students Make Their Own History

Five 8th grade students from St. Francis of Assisi earned a trip to the National History Day competition at the University of Maryland at College Park from June 14-19. The group (made up of Hanna Cody, Nora Laskowski, Maria McGlinch, Carrie Schweyen, and Megan VanDeVoorde) was invited to attend this event after placing second out of 47 teams in the Junior Division Performance Category at the Minnesota State History Day competition in late April. Their performance was entitled "The Stolen Generation: A Broken Circle, a Missing Link," and covered the half-caste children of Aborigine parents in Australia.

Dennis Schreiber, a 7th and 8th grade teacher at St. Francis, a Teaching American History (TAH) cohort member, and the head of the History Day programming at the school, credits the TAH grant project for the success of his program. "The success of my students would not be possible without the TAH grant project that has sent Jessica Ellison from the Minnesota Historical Society to mentor my students this year and last year in the History Day process. The honor it is bringing to our students and our school is tremendous."



Congratulations to Dennis and his students!

## Information About Your Health and Health Plan at Your Fingertips

Exciting news! You have access to the new and improved myBlueCross online member center. You can get all the information you need about your health plan, your costs, and your health in one place. Here is a preview of a few things you can do:

### Find

Search for a doctor by location, specialty, gender or language, and easily access cost and quality information (when available). You can search for conditions and treatments, compare formulary and brand prescription drug costs, and look up medical cost estimates.

### Track

Check a claim's status, see a claims summary, deductible and out-of-pocket maximum status, and view your medical expenses year-to-date.

### Learn

Get answers to your health questions from the extensive and reliable library of medical information. Research conditions, use the health tools, quizzes and calculators, browse health topics and request personalized content, get healthy lifestyle tips, and much more.

### How to Register

Registering is easy and free. All you need is your member ID card.

Visit the website at:

**[www.bluecrossmn.com/mnservcoop](http://www.bluecrossmn.com/mnservcoop)**.

Click "register for access today" and follow the instructions. After you register, you will have immediate access to the site, including your personal information.

If you have already registered for the site, enter your current user name and password in the "sign in" box.

### Return Often

Get to know myBlueCross and use it as your one easy stop for good health throughout the year.

## David Thompson Wins Regional Administrator of Excellence Award

Dr. David Thompson, superintendent of Stewartville Public Schools, has been named an Administrator of Excellence by the Minnesota Association of School Administrators (MASA). Dr. Thompson was selected by his peers because of his leadership, concern for students, and his active involvement in professional and community affairs. The honor was extended to Dr. Thompson at the April 3-4 MASA/MASE Spring Conference.

Dr. Thompson's achievements reflect his ability to lead important changes in the educational system. He has

served as Stewartville's superintendent since 2000.

An active MASA member, Dr. Thompson currently serves as the Region I Chairperson and is a member of the Legislative Committee. He has also been recipient of the MASA Kay E. Jacobs Memorial Award.

Dr. Thompson is also a member of the Southeast Service Cooperative's Administrative Advisory Council.

An active member of the community, Dr. Thompson is the United Way Campaign Chair and a member of the



*MASA Award Winner, Dr. David Thompson*

Stewartville Chamber of Commerce, Lions Club, and Kiwanis.

Each year MASA recognizes members for their contribution to public education. MASA is a professional organization of Minnesota's school leaders.

## SSC Creating a New, More Powerful Website



Southeast Service Cooperative is pleased to announce that its new website is slated to be unveiled on September 1, 2008.

The website, which will be created with and hosted by Schoolwires, will have an entirely new look, and boast many new options for users.

Schoolwires was chosen for its ease of use, impressive list of options available, excellent customer service support, and great reviews from its current users.

SSC staff will be hard at work this summer to improve the usability of the site, and will

introduce new features such as RSS feeds to make it a dynamic site that will help members stay abreast of information of interest to them.

If you have any suggestions for additions or features to our new site, please contact either Amy Grover, (507) 251-7410, [agrover@ssc.coop](mailto:agrover@ssc.coop), or Nicole LaChapelle, (507) 281-6674, [nlachapelle@ssc.coop](mailto:nlachapelle@ssc.coop).

## Recent Board Actions

### March 2008

- ◆ Nicole LaChapelle was hired in the full-time position of Communications and Program Assistant effective March 24, 2008.
- ◆ In response to discussions with the AAC and members, staff have been preparing to address a common need among member school districts for a resource and mechanism to provide students with access to course options the school district currently doesn't offer. We are arranging with Northeast Service Cooperative to serve as an extension of the Northeast Online Learning Program
- ◆ Elizabeth Lawson was designated as an alternate MSC Board representative in the event additional representation is necessary.
- ◆ Mark Packard was designated as an alternate MSC Board representative in the event additional representation is necessary.
- ◆ Tom Heise will continue in his four-year term as MSC Board representative from March 22, 2006 through June 30, 2009.
- ◆ Katie Cunningham was hired as a part-time Program Assistant starting on April 28, 2008.
- ◆ Approval of the leasing arrangements with Apple Tree Dental, a non-profit organization, effective May 1, 2008 for an initial two-year term, renewable annually, with a 60-day termination clause; lease amount to be based on square footage and rates for office and warehouse spaces.
- ◆ The School Health Insurance Pool 2008 Plan Year Renewal rating formula and plan was adopted as recommended by the Renewal Committee.
- ◆ The City of Bricelyn was approved as a member in the category of Government Unit Member, effective May 1, 2008.

For more information about SSC Board meetings, you can read them on the SSC website at [www.ssc.coop](http://www.ssc.coop) under the Board of Directors link .

### April 2008

- ◆ Don Andring was designated as the MSC Board representative for a term beginning July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2011.

## Wellness Programming Needs? Contact SSC!

by Kari Kubicek

SSC offers several opportunities and services for its members relating to the development and implementation of wellness programming. We know that time, money, and staffing are three major challenges when implementing wellness programming. SSC is here to provide assistance and support in facing these challenges. Read on to find out more about what assistance we can offer your group.

### EmbodyHealth

The EmbodyHealth online health resource is **free** to SSC insurance pool members through June 30, 2009. The EmbodyHealth website provides individuals the most current health information, tailored to their interests with a variety of tools and features. A valuable feature of the website is the Health Risk Assessment. This online survey tool will provide individuals a personalized look at their health and behaviors and upon completion, provide strategies and resources for reducing health risks and maintaining health strengths. Signing your organization up for EmbodyHealth and encouraging your employees to utilize this service is an easy, no-cost way to emphasize health awareness among your employees and to assist you in planning your wellness initiatives.

### Health Fair Planning Assistance

As part of its member services, SSC offers assistance in the planning and execution of health fairs. We can help you determine how you want your organization's health fair to look, advise you on what you will need to execute a successful health fair, provide

literature and other resources to display at the fair, and provide you with equipment and training to offer biometric testing at the health fair.

### Funding Opportunities

SSC distributed an invitation to our member organizations to apply for the Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Worksite Initiative Grant in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Health. Five member organizations were awarded \$1,000 each to support the development of policy or environmental changes that support health promotion in their organizations: Fillmore County, Kingsland Public Schools, Lincoln Choice K-8 School of Rochester Public Schools, Northfield Public Schools, and Wabasha County. These five organizations have developed programs and initiatives with the help of this funding. SSC staff are considering possible funding incentives to support health insurance pool members with health promotion programming. We'll keep you posted.

### Wellness Incentive Items

SSC offers a variety of incentive items at great member rates such as the Mayo Self Care Guide, pedometers, and more. Organizations can purchase these items at reduced rates for their wellness programs. Visit our website at [www.ssc.coop](http://www.ssc.coop) to view these items and place an order.

We encourage you to take advantage of SSC's health promotion services. Please visit our website or contact Kari Kubicek, (507) 281-6668, [kkubicek@ssc.coop](mailto:kkubicek@ssc.coop), to find out more about these services.

## SSC's New Walking Work Station



Schmidt-Goodman's Mark Munson demonstrating the workstation for SSC staff.

Mark Munson from Schmidt-Goodman Office Products recently trained Southeast Service Cooperative's staff on how to use their new Walking Workstation. Mark explained that walking on the station at a very slow rate of 1.5 miles per hour, for only 5 minutes per hour, for 6 hours, burns more calories than working out at an aerobic level for 45 minutes. The reasoning behind this is the metabolism never has a chance to lower when spending a portion of each hour moving your body.

Staff members found it easy to type while walking at the station. It differs from a treadmill as it is designed to operate at a slow pace. It is also much quieter than a traditional treadmill.

Invented by the Mayo Clinic's own Dr. James A. Levine, the workstation promises to add a whole new dimension to workplace wellness.

## Member spotlight... Kingsland School District



Thanks to their new wellness programs, Kingsland School District employees are enjoying a greater sense of community, fitness, and health. Begun this past January, the new initiatives were precipitated by Business Manager, Kathy Beevers, and Middle School Physical Education and Health Instructor, Denise Montgomery. These women wrote a proposal and were awarded the Minnesota Department of Health's Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Worksite Initiative Grant.

Kingsland purchased pedometers from SSC for all of their employees who were interested in participating in their newly started Steps Program. Monthly step logs were issued and employees recorded their total steps walked each month. Kathy shared, "Walking is a low-impact activity that can be done by

almost everyone. We have learned that step counting is a great way to keep active, aiming towards a goal of 10,000 steps per day." Kingsland employees have embraced the program, with over 10 million steps recorded each month.

To keep things interesting, and people motivated, everyone who participates in keeping their step logs is eligible to win prizes in the drawing that is held at the end of every month. Area businesses have been very generous in donating the prizes.

A very popular part of Kingsland's wellness program has been their twice-monthly "Walker Spotlights". These feature a photo of a participating walker and interesting facts about their personal fitness regime, including tips and what

keeps them motivated.

The goal of the program is to encourage overall fitness, cut healthcare costs, and promote overall healthy living. Kingsland feels these factors will pay off with the staff becoming a happier, healthier, and more productive workforce.

The Steps Program is not the only way Kingsland makes wellness a priority. For the first time ever, they offered a flu shot clinic in the fall of 2007 through Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Minnesota. They are also users of Mayo Clinic's EmbodyHealth Program, which is free to all of SSC's Health Pool Members through June, 2009.

Congrats on your hard work!

## Work Completed on Annex, New Tenant Moving In

Work has recently been completed on refinishing SSC's entire annex. The area, which had featured once fashionable dark wood paneling, is now a bright and cheerful space with brand new floor and wall coverings, and new ceilings.

For the past 20-plus years, the space had been occupied by Squires Electric. When the owner retired, he offered SSC the option of purchasing the space first. The sale was completed in May, 2007, and SSC began looking for businesses to rent the space.

Now that the renovations are complete, Southeast Service Cooperative is pleased to announce that Apple Tree Dental will be moving into the annex in the upcoming weeks.



Apple Tree Dental is "a non-profit organization whose mission is to improve the oral health of people with special dental access needs. Our patients include low-income children and families, elderly nursing home residents, people with disabilities, and others who have serious dental needs."

SSC is currently building additional office space for Apple Tree in the building's warehouse.

Another reason SSC was pleased to purchase the annex space was for the additional parking. Parking can be a problem during busy days at SSC, and these new spots will help to alleviate the situation.



Before



After

# High Quality Professional Development



by Heidi Knepper

The Federal No Child Left Behind legislation provides us with a very specific definition of High Quality Professional Development. The NCLB definition of high quality Professional Development (found specifically in the [Title IX, Section 9101(34)] statute) includes many activities intended to improve the quantity and quality of Professional Development opportunities. The statute charges states and districts to:

- Improve teachers' knowledge of the academic subjects that teachers teach;
- Give teachers, principals, and administrators skills to provide students with the opportunity to meet state academic content standards and student academic achievement standards;
- Advance teacher understanding of effective instructional strategies;
- Give teachers of limited English proficient children, and other teachers and instructional staff, the knowledge and skills to provide instruction and appropriate language and academic support services to those children, including the appropriate use of curricula and assessments;

- Provide instruction in methods of teaching children with special needs;
- Include instruction in the use of data and assessments to inform and instruct classroom practice;
- Ensure that teachers, principals, parents, and administrators of schools participate extensively in the development of all these PD opportunities.

The School Improvement/AYP team at Southeast Service Cooperative has developed and scheduled many Professional Development opportunities from now through fall, which we think will help all of the districts in our region to follow the directives in NCLB regarding High Quality Professional Development. We have chosen our High Quality Professional Development opportunities based on the needs identified in completed School and District Improvement Plans, however, we feel that the opportunities being offered will benefit all of our members. Below are some upcoming highlights. A complete listing will soon be available on the Southeast Service Cooperative website, and is currently available via a flyer from any of the AYP/School Improvement Coordinators.

## Elementary Math

- \* Meeting MN Math Standards in the Elementary Classroom (Fall)
- \* Engaging Elementary Students in Developing Constructed Math Responses (Fall)
- \* Using Number and Operations Concepts to Foster Algebraic Thinking in Grades K-5 (August 20 & Oct. 8)
- \* 6A's to a Guaranteed & Viable Curriculum (as arranged)

## Middle School Math

- \* Engaging Middle School Students in Developing Constructed Math Responses (Fall)
- \* 6A's to a Guaranteed & Viable Curriculum (as arranged)

## High School Math

- \* Preparing Students for the MCAII/GRAD Assessment in Math (Fall)
- \* Engaging High School Students in Developing Constructed Math Responses (Fall)
- \* 6A's to a Guaranteed & Viable Curriculum (as arranged)

## Reading

- \* Best Practices of Reading Instruction (June 10 ½ day, Aug. 18, Oct, late afternoon)
- \* Book Study: When Kids Can't Read, (Fall)

## K-12 Leadership

- \* Data Retreats (as arranged)
- \* Use of the MCAII Educator Portal (Aug. 11 ½ day)
- \* Leadership Team Training, (Aug. 19)

## Collaboration

- \* ELL Learning Strategies (Dec. 8 & Feb. 2)

Please contact any of our AYP/School Improvement Coordinators if you have questions or would like further information regarding the sessions.

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## Lifetime Learning Announces Their 2008 Lifetime Library

by Steve Sborov,  
*Lifetime Learning*

Lifetime Learning has made the Lifetime Library available to Southeast Service Cooperative members for the past year. SSC members will continue to receive special pricing for the Lifetime Library.

The latest version of the Library offers schools more flexibility than

ever. The audio and video portions of the Library are now streamed over the Internet, reducing the need to install it on servers. Also, the new Management System is now available...with new features including new reporting and scheduling features. It's easier than ever to assign Assessment Tests, and group students into classes and categories that make it easier to monitor student progress.



For more information, or to schedule a time for an in-house demonstration, please call Steve Sborov, National Sales Manager at (612) 600-8301.

## Are Your Job Descriptions Up to Date?

by Jim Schmitt,  
*Springsted Incorporated*

When school district superintendents and business managers think about financial advisory companies, they normally focus on the traditional activities such as bonds, cash flow borrowing, operating levy calculations, and other financing options. Like other financial advisory companies, Springsted provides a full compliment of bond services. What sets Springsted apart is the breadth of resources and planning tools available through our Management Consulting Services (MCS) division.

Among the services available through the Minnesota Service Cooperatives is our classification and compensation service. This service can be used to update job descriptions; assign comparable worth values; submit pay equity reports on behalf of the school district; conduct market surveys to determine if the salaries currently being paid by the school district are competitive with other public and private employers in a

selected area; provide an evaluation tool for employee evaluations; provide a database that is used to maintain job descriptions; and comparable worth values after the study has been completed.

One of the unique features of Springsted's service is that several of these options are stand alone so you can choose to do one, some, or all of the options noted above. The most common request for services in school districts includes updating job descriptions and assigning comparable worth values. However, there are some school districts that have Springsted only assign comparable worth values or only submit their pay equity report.

Maintaining job descriptions for school districts has become increasingly difficult due to the budget reductions that many school districts have faced in recent years. School personnel have additional responsibilities assigned to their positions and often their job descriptions have



not been updated to reflect those changes. At the same time, school personnel may not have time to update job descriptions. Springsted's classification and compensation service relieves the school district of much of the work associated with updating their job descriptions and provides a user friendly option for future maintenance of job descriptions and comparable worth reporting.

Beginning in 2008, Springsted is also providing an Excel-based, performance evaluation system that ties back to the job descriptions and individual goals and provides a valid and convenient way to link position responsibilities with the performance review system.

For information, to schedule a demo, or pricing, contact Jim Schmitt, Vice President/Client Representative, (651) 223-3028, [jschmitt@springsted.com](mailto:jschmitt@springsted.com).

## Senior High Knowledge Bowl Teams Compete for Trip to State

by Kirsten Kuehl

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. 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 five students (five competing in the written round and four competing in each oral round).

This year, 91 teams from 31 schools participated in Senior High Knowledge Bowl. Teams are divided into Tier A and Tier AA districts. Teams competed in Round Robin competitions in December, January, and February.

Each team then competed in the Sub-Regional competition in March and the top twelve teams from each tier advanced to the Regional Competition.

The Senior High Knowledge Bowl Sub-Regional competitions were held February 26, 27, March 4, 5.

The Tier A Sub-Regional teams (and number of teams) were from: Caledonia (1), Cannon Falls (3), Chosen Valley (3), Dover-Eyota (3), Fillmore Central (3), Glenville-Emmons (3), Goodhue (3), Grand Meadow (1), Houston (2), Kenyon-Wanamingo (5), Kingsland (3), Lanesboro (1), Lewiston-Altura (1), Mabel-Canton (2), Pine Island (3), Rochester Off Campus (1), Rushford-Peterson (3), St. Charles (3), Southland (2), Spring Grove (3), Stewartville (2), and Triton (2).

The Tier AA Sub-Regional teams were from: Austin (5), Kasson-Mantorville (7), LaCrescent (5), Northfield (3), Plainview-Elgin-Millville (6), Red Wing (3), Rochester Century (2), Rochester Mayo (4), and Winona (3).

The Senior High Knowledge Bowl Regional competition was held on March 11 and 12 at the Southeast Service Cooperative. The competition consisted of one written round (60 questions) and five oral rounds (45 questions/round).

The 12 Tier A Regional teams included one team each from: Caledonia, Cannon Falls, Dover-Eyota, Fillmore Central, Grand Meadow, Houston, Kenyon-Wanamingo, Pine Island, Rushford-Peterson, Southland, Spring Grove, and Stewartville.



The 12 Tier AA Regional teams (and number of teams) included: Austin (2), LaCrescent (1), Northfield (2), Red Wing (1), Rochester Century (1), Rochester Mayo (4), Winona (1).

Five teams advanced to the State Knowledge Bowl Meet at Cragun's Resort in Brainerd on April 17-18. The three Tier A teams were: Cannon Falls, Dover-Eyota, and Houston. The two Tier AA teams were: Northfield Gold and Rochester Mayo Gold.

Houston placed 4th and Dover-Eyota placed 6th, earning individual medallions at State. The top 48 teams out of over 700 teams in Minnesota advance to the state event.

These five teams put forth a solid performance at the State Meet and we would like to congratulate the team members and their advisors on their success!

### Faribault, Kenyon-Wanamingo, and Randolph Chosen for Statewide Pilot Project

Recently, 3 districts from our region were selected to participate in a pilot project coordinated by SSC, commissioned by the MDE, and funded by a grant from the National Governor's Association. As part of this experience, 132 K-12 teachers from Faribault, Kenyon-Wanamingo, and Randolph, along with 444 other teachers from 13 other districts across the state completed the Surveys of Enacted Curriculum, designed to help them align their instructional content to the state mathematics standards and to examine their teaching practices. Leadership teams from each district later convened at a two-day Data Retreat where

they analyzed their math data to identify needs, gaps, and trends in curriculum, instruction, and student achievement, and to set goals and develop an action plan for improvement. The project was a huge success and we applaud these districts for their hard work and dedication.

Go to [www.ssc.coop/sec/](http://www.ssc.coop/sec/) or email Amy Grover at [agrover@ssc.coop](mailto:agrover@ssc.coop) for more information about SEC. For more information about Data Retreats, email Diane Schwinghammer at [dschwinghammer@ssc.coop](mailto:dschwinghammer@ssc.coop).



Faribault



Kenyon-Wanamingo



Randolph



# Top Placing Teams at Regional Knowledge Bowl

## Tier A Teams



**1st Place: Dover Eyota 1**  
 (l to r) front: Kelsie Fisch, Tom Wick, back: Brandon Schmidt, Coach Tom Theye, Anna Baron, Travis Schreier.



**2nd Place: Cannon Falls 1**  
 (l to r) Zeke Pederson, Bryan Malone, Thyra Bierman, Mitch Carpenter, Coach Anne Mellesmoen.



**3rd Place: Houston 1**  
 (l to r) Ellen Gustafson, Meredith Lee, Dru Rischette, Morgan Lehmann, Zach Stackhouse, Coach Krin Berg.



**4th Place: Filmore Central Silver**  
 (l to r) Coach Bradley Holten, Steve Daskam, Joel Soma, Paula Skaggs, Jacob Ferden, Ally Lynne, Coach Frank Tribon.



**5th Place: Rushford Peterson 1**  
 (l to r) John Klungtvedt, Mike Wolter, Coach Mary Wolter, Carina Schiltz, Kean Fallon, Andrew MacKenzie.

★  
 Indicates team went on to the State Competition.

## Tier AA Teams



**Team Name: Northfield Gold**  
 (l to r) Coach Troy Cohrs, Charlie Behr, Sam Estenson, Eric Emmons, Al Kaplan, Dan Mellstrom.



**Team Name: Rochester Mayo Gold**  
 (l to r) Coach Susan Wolfe, Phil Becher, Mladen Gajic, Garrett Flick, Andrew Peters, Sandip Suresh, Coach Jake Giesen.



**Team Name: Austin Scarlet**  
 (l to r) Coach JoAnne Canfield, Anthoony Hernandez, Stephen Brockman, Dustin Fillard, Sarah Chao, Skyler Vilt.



**Team Name: Rochester Mayo Green**  
 (l to r) Coach Susan Wolfe, Sam Westreich, Sam Hagedorn, Seth Hays, Amrik Donkena, Moira Moynihan, Coach Jake Giesen.



**Team Name: LaCrescent Hokah 1**  
 (l to r) front: Hannah Rackers, Sam Beeson, back: Coach Jim Hermes, Katie Jensen, Kaylee Knowles, Brandon Kuschel.

## Cojocaru Repeats...Represents Southeast Minnesota at National Spelling Bee



*Catherine Cojocaru will be representing Southeast Minnesota at the National Spelling Bee.*

Catherine (Cat) Cojocaru, an eighth-grader at Holy Spirit School in Rochester, won the 2008 Multi-Regional State Spelling Bee on March 11, 2008 in St. Cloud. The Bee lasted 15 rounds and Catherine correctly spelled "tortuosity" to become champion.

Cojocaru will be one of four spellers from Minnesota who

will compete May 29-30 at the national event in Washington, D.C. She also advanced to the National Spelling Bee last year! We wish her the best of luck as she returns to represent us in D.C.

Cojocaru placed first at the Regional Spelling Bee, held at SSC's Wood Lake Meeting Center, which qualified her for the state contest. There she met 24 other students who advanced from six other Service Cooperatives across Minnesota.

The Multi-Regional State Spelling Bee was sponsored by Forum Communications, Minnesota Timberwolves, and the Minnesota Service Cooperatives.

The Annual Scripps National Spelling Bee gathers the winners from all of the state competitions, moving them through initial rounds, including a written test, before the finals are televised nationally.



### Unlock Your Creativity!

SSC is very excited to be offering the Young Authors Young Artists Conference again with this year's theme of "Unlock Your Creativity." Close to 800 students and 100 chaperones are expected to participate in the event which includes 20 sessions presented by professional writers and artists. Watch for a full report in our next newsletter!

### IEA's 17th Annual Bloodborne Pathogen Training & Health Update for School Professionals

**Wednesday, August 13, 2008  
8:30AM - 2:30PM**

Crowne Plaza Minneapolis North  
(694 & Shinglecreek Parkway)  
2200 Freeway Boulevard  
Brooklyn Park, Minnesota

#### Topics will include:

- ◆ Bloodborne Pathogens
- ◆ Immunization
- ◆ Funding and more!
- ◆ Air Quality Index & Asthmatics
- ◆ Infectious Disease
- ◆ MRSA

This training and health update is geared to school nurses, athletic directors, and special education staff. Continuing Education Units (CEUs) are available. If you would like more information, visit

[www.ieainstitute.com/topics.cfm](http://www.ieainstitute.com/topics.cfm) or contact Megan Rooney, (800) 233-9513, [meganr@ieainstitute.com](mailto:meganr@ieainstitute.com).



# Calendar

## May

*Monday, May 19*  
8:00 AM-4:00 PM

**Engaging Elementary Students in Developing Constructed Math Responses**

*Tuesday, May 21 & Wednesday, May 22*  
RCTC Heintz Center 8:00 AM-4:30 PM

**Young Authors, Young Artists Conference**

*Friday, May 23*  
9:00 AM-3:00 PM

**MDE Accountability Forum**

*Wednesday, May 28*  
5:00 PM-8:00 PM

**SSC Board Meeting**

## June

*Thursday, June 5*  
9:30 AM-11:30 AM

**Legislative Wrap-Up Session**

*Tuesday, June 10*  
8:00 AM -4:30 PM

**Region V**

8:00 AM-12:30 PM

**Best Practices of Reading Instruction**

*Wednesday, June 11*

St.James Hotel, Red Wing  
8:00 AM-4:30 PM

**HVED Principals' Retreat**

*Thursday, June 12*  
8:00 AM-4:30PM

**Region V**

St.James Hotel, Red Wing  
8:00 AM-4:30

**HVED Principals' Retreat**

12:30 PM-3:00 PM

**AAC Meeting**

## June continued

*Wednesday, June 18*  
9:00 AM-12:00 PM

**Region V**

*Thursday, June 19*  
9:00 AM-12:00 PM

**Region V**

*Tuesday, June 24*  
9:30 AM-3:00 PM

**SEMNET Board Meeting**

*Monday, June 23*  
8:30 AM-3:00 PM

**MDE (In)Formative Assessment**

*Wednesday, June 28*  
5:00 PM-8:00 PM

**SSC Board Meeting**

## July

*Monday, July 7*  
9:00 AM-3:00 PM

**Teaching American History Summer Institute**

*Tuesday, July 8*  
9:00 AM-3:00 PM

**Teaching American History Summer Institute**

*Tuesday, July 22*  
9:00 AM-3:30 PM

**Online Teacher Training Facilitation, Day One**

*Wednesday, July 30*  
5:00 PM-8:00 PM

**SSC Board Meeting**

## August

*Friday, August 1*  
Mall of America 8 AM-7 PM  
**Gathering of Champions**

*Monday, August 11*  
8 AM-4:30 PM

**AYP Educator Portal**

*Tuesday, August 12*  
9:00 AM-3:30 PM

**Online Teacher Certification-Final Day**

*Thursday, August 14*  
9:00 AM-1:00 PM

**CCOGA Pool Renewal Meeting**

*Monday, August 18*  
8 AM-4:30 PM

**Best Practices of Reading Instruction**

*Wednesday, August 20*  
8:00 AM-4:30 PM

**Using Number and Operations Concepts to Foster Algebraic Thinking in Grades K-5**

*Wednesday, August 27*  
5:00 PM-8:00 PM

**SSC Board Meeting**

## September

*Wednesday, September 3*  
8 AM-4:30 PM

**MDE-NCLB Fiscal Management Training**

*Thursday, September 18*  
4:00 PM-5:30 PM

**Knowledge Bowl Advisors' Meeting**

*Wednesday, September 24*  
5:00 PM-8:00 PM

**SSC Board Meeting**

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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- Call toll free, 1-800-657-6996, then an option:
- 1 . . .Cooperative Purchasing
  - 2 . . .Dental Reimbursement
  - 3 . . .Staff Development
  - 4 . . .EHSM
  - 5 . . .Student Academics & Conferences

**We want to be there when you call, so try dialing us directly at the numbers below.** Our voice mail system allows you to leave a detailed message if the person you're calling isn't able to answer right away. If you don't know who you need to talk with, dial (507) 288-1282 and one of our staff or our auto-attendant will direct you from there.  
**To send a fax dial (507) 288-7663.**

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