

Cooperative Connection

Spring 2014

Southeast Service Cooperative

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Southeast Service Cooperative Annual Legislative Breakfast



By Amy Grover

The Southeast Service Cooperative in conjunction with MASA Region 1 held its annual legislative breakfast on Saturday, February 1, at Rochester Century High School. Dover-Eyota Superintendent Bruce Klaehn designed the format last year, and it was so well received we repeated it this year. Bruce also did an expert job moderating the event. He and the other presenters kept the forum very positive and constructive. Legislators were enthusiastic listeners and asked us to continue this forum next year. The event was highlighted on KTTC on the evening news, featuring interviews with Senator Carla Nelson as well as Superintendents Todd Sesker and Mike Redmond.

Twelve legislators attended the forum; six senators and six representatives. They were: Representative David Bly (Northfield), Representative Steve Drazkowski (Mazeppa), Representative John Petersburg (Waseca), Representative Kim Norton (Rochester), Representative Mike Benson

(Rochester), Representative Jeanne Poppe (Austin), Senator Matt Schmit (Red Wing), Senator Vicki Jensen (Owatonna), Senator Dave Senjem (Rochester), Senator Kevin Dahle (Northfield) and Senator Dan Sparks (Austin).

The key themes of this year's forum included:

1. Funding Equity – We repeatedly thanked the legislators for the funding increases from the 2013 session. We found great interest on the part of the legislators to address the “Donut Hole” issue, and to continue work on the education funding system as a whole. According to Senator Vicki Jensen, she is “authoring a bill to correct the Donut Hole situation. It was not intentional, it was an oversight, and one that can easily be corrected. We just need to ensure that our solution doesn't have other unexpected impacts.”
2. Facilities Task Force – Legislators appreciated some of the examples we presented regarding

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Legislative Breakfast continued from page 1

our inability to keep up with facility maintenance and replacement. Facilities funding tools are not consistent or equitable across the state, and we strongly endorsed the work of the Task Force. Within this discussion was also finding ways to fund the needs of schools for security and technology. Representative John Petersburg said “It is time for us to reevaluate our funding mechanisms. It’s time to go back to square one and redesign things with the best interest of our students in our mind.”

3. **Bullying** – A very healthy and lively discussion took place, with a clear agreement that whatever bill is passed needs to be realistic in nature and funded accordingly. We asked that any bill consider and address the role of parents in the oversight of students over 24 hours. Superintendent Michael Munoz stated “I believe that you should not develop a policy because one, or a few, are doing something wrong. It sends the message that we are all doing something wrong. That’s not the basis for good policy making.”
4. **Common Core & Testing** – The improvements in testing from 2013 were positive. Let’s not go backwards. Let’s learn from the issues of one curriculum for all that has been so problematic for NCLB. Let’s remember that test scores are carrying too much weight

“Congratulations on a job well done by all the folks involved with this annual forum! It is clearly one of the best legislative forums in the entire state as it is very well organized and allows both formal and informal exchanges between school officials and legislative officials. I can hardly wait for the next one.”

**- Brad Lundell, Executive Director,
Schools for Equity in Education**

and are not necessarily direct indicators of lifelong success for all students, or of those who teach them.

Bruce stated this viewpoint succinctly when he said “Just because we can come up with a number for a kid, that doesn’t mean that is how we should measure him or her. Just because we can does not mean that it’s in the best interest of education. When we go to make the big decisions we have to do so with a philosophy in mind.” Representative David Bly also shared that he “was a teacher for 30 years, working with students that were not succeeding in the traditional school environment. Many had fallen behind as early as 2nd grade. We need to remember that all students learn differently and we need to offer different pathways.”

5. **Mandates** – A specific presentation suggested reducing Type III van training to once every three years, and a common theme was to use this session for the further

reduction of some outdated and unnecessary mandates.

We thank the following superintendents for preparing and presenting information about the local impact with several education funding and mandate issues: Superintendent Bruce Klaehn (Dover-Eyota Public Schools), Superintendent Craig Junker (Lake City Public Schools), Superintendent Todd Sesker (Faribault Public Schools), Superintendent Beth Giese (Cannon Falls Public Schools), Superintendent Rich Dahman (Medford Public Schools), Superintendent Chuck Ehler (Rushford-Peterson Public Schools), Superintendent Mike Redmond (Goodhue Public Schools), Superintendent Mark Matuska (Kasson-Mantorville Public Schools), and Superintendent Mark Roubinek (St. Charles Public Schools).

Literacy...the link to learning achievement

By Lori Mack

Just about everyone agrees that literacy is the foundation for overall learning achievement.

Students move through their elementary years learning foundational literacy skills that will assist them in understanding increasingly complex text and to eventually write with sophistication. What needs to happen to achieve this goal for all students? Above all, teachers, administrators, literacy leaders, and instructional coaches must be on the same page and have a firm understanding of how to assess and increase instructional capacity to reach school literacy goals for all students.

"We feel like our reading program is disjointed. We don't want any reading instruction to fall through the cracks."

– Elementary Teacher

So where do you start?

Help is here! After working with teachers and administrators for the past two years as your regional literacy specialist, and hearing comments such as those listed above, it's clear to me that what districts are asking for is an onsite, objective literacy assessment

of what is actually occurring for reading and writing instruction in their schools. Districts are requesting written reports about literacy instruction currently in place, along with specific recommendations for possible areas of improvement.

This initial concept has developed into a comprehensive school- or district-wide literacy assessment of current practice, recommendations for follow up, and literacy coaching to provide research-based strategies and instruction to help schools set literacy objectives and goals to deliver onsite coaching support.

"Our middle school students are not showing the growth we would like to see in our literacy scores."

– Middle School Principal

How does it work?

The full *School-Wide Literacy Assessment and Development Process* generally begins with the *Baseline Literacy Inventory*. This online inventory is delivered to all stakeholders, including administrators, teachers, instructional coaches, specialists, and student support personnel. Results are emailed to the contracting district and drive future development services the district

may need. The *Baseline Literacy Inventory* also helps to identify teachers' perceived needs for literacy instruction.

The next step is the *Literacy Walkthrough* observation. I spend time at your school conducting classroom visits using the *Literacy Walkthrough Look-For Checklist*. Twenty to 40 minutes in each classroom is essential for observing literacy instruction. Depending upon the number of classroom visits required, this process takes a day or two to complete. I often make classroom visits on my own, but welcome the opportunity for an administrator, teacher leader, or curriculum specialist to join me for classroom visits.

Following onsite walkthroughs, the findings are compiled and I generate a comprehensive *Literacy Observations & Recommendations Report* with itemized observations and research-based recommendations curated specifically for your school. This report is emailed to your designated contact person(s) and a phone chat, conference call, or videoconferencing session is scheduled to discuss the results.

What's next?

Based on your school's specific needs, professional development or instructional literacy coaching may be your next step. Onsite literacy coaching is an effective

Literacy continued on the next page

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way for a teacher to engage in embedded professional development by working with the coach in instructional goal setting, lesson planning, guided practice or co-teaching, and time to reflect, make adjustments, and plan next steps for teaching and learning. The recommendations in the report help you form decisions regarding resources, assessments, and interventions your school may need to consider.

“The literacy assessment provided us a road map to guide our conversations about literacy programming at our school. It prompted conversations about assessments to guide our instruction, explore the scope and sequence of literacy instruction and review the resources needed to get it done.”

– Jay Woller
LaCrescent-Hokah Principal

More about the Literacy Walkthrough using the Look-for Checklist

This *Literacy Look-for Checklist* is a set of best practice look-fors for literacy instruction. Literacy look-fors provide a procedure for assessing the combined instructional capacity of a collection of teachers, rather than focusing on just one teacher.

The look-fors are grouped into six categories:

- Instructional Practice and Management
- Teacher-Managed Literacy Instruction
- Classroom Evidence of Reading and Writing Instruction
- Student-Managed Literacy Work
- Classroom Artifacts to support Literacy
- School Wide Literacy Artifacts

Each category contains an itemized list of look-fors. An observer wouldn't expect to see all items on the checklist in a given visit, but it helps with noting evidence of each category.

The Value of the Literacy Observations & Recommendations Report

This report incorporates a history of communications regarding literacy needs and the results of the *Baseline Literacy Inventory*. Anecdotal notes and the *Literacy Look-For Checklist* work together to form a snapshot of instruction relating to literacy. Remember that instructional observation is done in approximately 20-40 minute snippets. Teachers are prepared to have me in their classrooms at scheduled times throughout the school day. I observe literacy instruction, curriculum materials, student literacy areas, and gather information by noting classroom artifacts and, when time permits, by chatting with the teacher.

Each set of look-fors in each category contain written

observations and research-based recommendations for opportunities for improvement. At the end of each report you'll read anecdotal notes concerning literacy and instructional strengths observed at each school site and suggestions for next steps to support students in reaching their literacy goals.

Using distance technology, stakeholders debrief this report with me, and I help them plan next steps to explore and implement suggested recommendations.

Job-Embedded Coaching

Often school districts are looking for job-embedded professional development to assist with strategy implementation. This development phase is personalized and responsive to each site's identified needs. Coaching **supports** rather than evaluates teachers and administrators. I often meet with teachers 1:1, or in small groups to focus instruction. Another option is whole staff professional development based on identified needs that will benefit the whole staff.

So the answer to shoring up your foundation to student achievement – literacy – is, *Help is here!* To learn more about the *School Wide Literacy Assessment and Development Process* please give me a call or email, and let's begin our literacy journey together.

Lori Mack, (507) 281-6691,
lmack@ssc.coop.

Wood Lake Meeting Center remodeling complete; hosts Chamber networking event

We were delighted to welcome around 75 guests to the Wood Lake Meeting Center for the Rochester Area Chamber's April 4 AM Espresso networking event. This was the first opportunity the majority of our guests had to view our completely remodeled and expanded meeting center.

Wood Lake features nine rooms available for rental and our staff is committed to anticipating customer needs and to exceeding expectations for service. Our space is the ideal location for conducting business; including trainings, seminars, and meetings of most any size.

The meeting center has been very busy since our re-opening, hosting



Guests participating at the Chamber's AM Espresso Networking event. (For more images of our new space, please see photos at right.)

a variety of renters as well as SSC's own Professional Development and Student Academics events.

Contact Wood Lake Meeting Center Coordinator Peggy Merkel if you're interested in renting space. She can be reached at (507) 281-6666 or pmerkel@ssc.coop.



SSC welcomes two new board members



Beth Lawson served on the Stewartville School Board from 2000 – 2010 and was re-elected in 2012. She is a Licensed Dental Assistant Supervisor at the Mayo Clinic. Beth and her husband are the parents of three adult daughters. She loves to spend time with her family, including her brothers and sisters who are located all over the country, and travel to her cabin in northern Wisconsin.



Mary Blair-Hoeft represents the City of Byron, where she has worked for 16 years. She has served as its City Administrator for the last five of those years. She and her husband have two daughters and live in rural Byron along with their horses, dogs, and cats. Mary enjoys attending her daughters' activities, reading, and camping.

Young Authors, Young Artists Conference fills to capacity!

The 2014 Young Authors, Young Artists Conference has met capacity, and no is longer accepting registrations. Thank you to all the schools who are participating this year.

Did you miss registration this year? No worries, as next year we hope to extend to a three-day conference!



ACA reporting requirements pave the road ahead

By Bill Colopoulos

How will employers meet their ongoing ACA reporting obligations? What kind of resources will be necessary? Who will likely provide these resources?

Employer ACA compliance efforts have so far been directed at understanding the rules and how they will impact their organization's health plan. However, as employer shared responsibility provision deadlines loom closer, it will be important for employers to understand and obtain the resources they will need to meet their ongoing compliance reporting requirements.

Measurement period payroll tracking

Determining who is eligible for health benefits is the first, most basic task all employers must perform to determine their ACA status. According to ACA rules, that means assigning and conducting ongoing measurement tests with data produced most easily (and routinely) by payroll/human resource information systems (HRIS) (1). The administration of measurement and stability periods (eligibility duration period) will require a continuous process that will also be used to meet ACA reporting requirements.

Moreover, most new, variable hour and/or seasonal employees will require their own initial measurement periods. It will be impractical to attempt to measure, track and administer their eligibility by any means other than payroll data.

The good news is that 90-95% of all required eligibility measurement



data resides in payroll and HRIS records. Even better news: most payroll administrators have already, or are in the process of developing the resources necessary for meeting ACA data requirements. In fact, some payroll systems already offer employers the ability to project their ACA eligibility and affordability testing data using different combinations of measurement/administrative and stability periods.

As the date for employer shared responsibility reporting compliance draws nearer, employers should take steps to ensure that their payroll and/or HRIS systems have in place or are developing new ACA technologies and will be in place, tested for accuracy and able to track and accumulate employee data beginning in 2014.

Employers should give themselves and their payroll administrator plenty of lead time to ensure that the necessary resources are in place and operational prior to their compliance effective date.

ACA tax reporting services

Similar to measurement period reporting being done best through payroll, ongoing tax and employee reporting processes specific to the

ACA will be best be done by business tax accountants. Working with payroll data extract information and health plan information, tax accountants, working closely with HR benefit administration, will assist employers in meeting their IRS and employee reporting requirements under IRC 6055 and 6056 (1) (see attached reporting requirements summary).

Employers should similarly check with their tax accountants to ensure that their tax reporting resources will be upgraded to provide services designed to meet their ongoing, soon-to-be-routine ACA reporting requirements.

As the ACA rules continue to evolve and as reporting deadlines draw nearer, it will be critically important for employers to have the professional resources in place that will allow them to calculate and report their employee plan, eligibility and affordability data – on a routine basis.

(1) Approved ACA hours worked equivalency formulas include: daily = 8 hours, weekly = 40 hours and monthly = 130 hours. These equivalencies may be used in lieu of tracking actual employee hours for designated periods applicable to the measurement periods

(2) Reporting is scheduled on a calendar year basis; regardless of health plan year, and will begin in 2015.

For more information, please contact Bill Colopoulos, (507) 281-6690, bcolopoulos@ssc.coop

Bill is Southeast Service Cooperative's Health Benefits Consultant.

Lake City Public Schools and the City of Byron take top spots in SSC's Walking Challenge!

By Nicole LaChapelle

Over 800 members from twenty-five member organizations competed in SSC's Walking Challenge. Seventeen southeastern Minnesota school districts and eight city and county members participated in two separate steps-based challenges.

Winners in the School District Challenge are as follows: Lake City – 1st Place, Pine Island – 2nd Place, Zumbrota Mazeppa – 3rd Place. The rest of the teams, which each received an honorable mention are listed in the order of their ranking: Stewartville, Plainview-Elgin-Millville, Lewiston-Altura, St. Charles, Grand Meadow, Kingsland, Fillmore Central, LeRoy-Ostrander, Dover-Eyota, Rochester, Rushford-Peterson, Kasson Mantorville, Cannon Falls, and Caledonia.

Lake City Wellness Coordinator, Johanna Majerus, shared, "The Walking Challenge is a great way to motivate colleagues to start moving and begin living an active lifestyle. It was fun to go to work and share our Fitbit (activity tracker) results from the previous day, encouraging each other to increase and reach our goals. Hopefully Lake City Public School employees continue to remain active and keep their healthy habits they've established." Johanna added, "We have a competitive bunch of employees. In past years we started the challenge great but then fizzled out. This year our fit bits arrived with 2 weeks left and generated excitement!"



Members of the Lake City Public Schools' Walking Challenge Team

For the second year in a row, the City of Byron was the winner in the City/County division. The rest of the rankings are as follows: the City of Kasson – 2nd Place, the City of Owatonna – 3rd Place. Honorable mention placements include – Freeborn County, the City of Albert Lea, Rice/Steele 911 Center, Owatonna Public Utilities, and Wabasha County.

Marie Peterson, Wellness Coordinator at the City of Byron, noted, "As our group becomes more and more focused on healthy living, the same core group that we have had all along starts asking, 'When is the next walking challenge?' That is really fun and encouraging to hear!"

The contest, which ran the month of January, was based on the number of steps walked by participating members. A trophy will be awarded to Lake City School District and the City of Byron. Certificates will be presented to all teams who participated. Awards will be presented at SSC's Spring Health Forum, which takes place on Monday, April 28.



Members of the City of Byron's Walking Challenge Team

Five Knowledge Bowl teams advance to State

By Kirsten Kuehl

106 teams participated in Senior High Knowledge Bowl during the 2013-14 season. Thirty schools from across southeast Minnesota fielded teams that began competition in December.

The top three teams from tier AA and top two teams from tier A advanced to the State Knowledge Bowl Competition. The event was held April 10-11 at Cragun's Conference Center in Brainerd. The teams that advanced were from: Medford, Northfield, Plainview-Elgin-Millville, Rochester Mayo, and St. Charles.

Teams participated in three round robin competitions from December - February. Teams were divided into two tiers and took part in Sub-Regionals in March. These competitions were held March 18-19 at the Rochester Community and Technical College, Heinz Center. Twelve teams from each tier advanced to Regionals on March 21 and 24 at the Southeast Service Cooperative. The top three teams from each tier received trophies for their school and individual medallions for each team member.

Twenty-four teams, from two tiers (48 total) competed with teams from across Minnesota. Teams consist of five students (including the alternate). All



Plainview-Elgin-Millville's 3rd place A division (2nd runner up) team pictured at the State Competition

team members work together on a 60-question written round. Four team members compete in five oral rounds. At the state meet, four person teams compete against one another in one written and five oral rounds of interdisciplinary questions for a total of 285 questions. Success at the competition requires the ability to work as a team, as well as to recall information quickly in a variety of areas of study. Knowledge Bowl is sponsored by eleven Service Cooperatives around the state.

914 teams from 290 school districts throughout Minnesota participated in Senior High Knowledge Bowl this year.

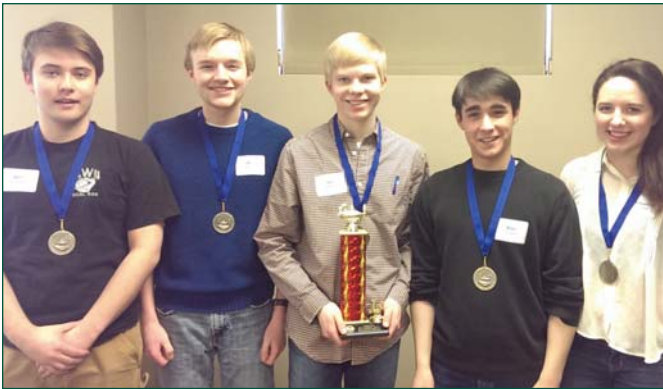
The teams that advanced to State are pictured on page 8. Plainview-Elgin-Millville was the 2nd runner up in the A division. Congratulations to these teams on their great showing!

Schools that participated in Senior High Knowledge Bowl were:

Albert Lea, Austin, Caledonia, Cannon Falls, Chatfield, Dover-Eyota, Fillmore Central, Goodhue, Houston, Kasson-Mantorville, Kenyon-Wanamingo, Kingsland, LaCrescent, Lanesboro, Lewiston-Altura, Mabel-Canton, Medford, Northfield, Pine Island, Plainview-Elgin-Millville, Red Wing, Rochester Mayo, Rochester Off Campus, Rushford-Peterson, Southland, Spring Grove, St. Charles, Stewartville, Triton, and Winona.

Southeast Minnesota Knowledge Bowl placements at State

Tier AA



Northfield - 13th

Coach Troy Cohrs, Ben Andrew, Abe Cooper, Ian Iverson, William Kruse, Rosalind Lutsky



Rochester Mayo - 7th

Coach Jake Giesen, Coach Craig Savolainen, Alex Findlay, Robert Kitaoka, Michael Poeschla, Keaton Schmitt, Nathan Weinschenker

Tier A



Medford - 18th

Coach Theresa Buendorf, Lucas Cronin, Chase Hanson, Dwight Hellevik, Michael Holmblad, Noah Parrish

Teams from southeast Minnesota made a great showing at 2014 State! Teams from PEM, Medford, and St. Charles represented Tier A. Teams from Northfield and Rochester (Mayo) represented Tier AA.
(Please note that team members are listed alphabetically.)



Plainview-Elgin-Millville - 3rd

Coach Michael Heppner, P. J. Aarsvold, Dillon Clark, Matt Folkert, Peter Huber, Lucas Simonson



St. Charles - 16th

Coach Theo Derby, Ethan Harne, Laura Kramer, Adam Muschler, Jake Otterson, Lucas Reisdorf

Pacelli Catholic School 8th grader is the Southeast Minnesota Spelling Bee Champion

By Katie Sue Cunningham

Twelve spellers (six from each Regional Spelling Bee) competed in the Final Spelling Bee on Tuesday, February 25 at SSC. These twelve students were narrowed down from 77 students from 37 districts throughout Southeast Minnesota who participated in the two Regional Spelling Bees on February 11, coordinated by SSC. After 37 rounds and 3 hours and 15 minutes the winner was declared.

Shane DeSilva, an 8th grade student from Pacelli Catholic School in Austin was declared the champion after correctly spelling the word *polymythy*. Shane is also the first male winner since 2005.

Shane advances to the 87th annual Scripps National Spelling Bee on May 25 – May 31, 2014. He won an expenses paid trip (for himself and one adult) to Washington, D.C. (donated by SSC). He also received a first place trophy, *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* (provided by Scripps National Spelling Bee), 2014 United States Mint Proof Set (The Samuel Louis Sugarman Award from Scripps), a one-year subscription to Britannica Online Premium and *Valerie's Spelling Bee Supplement Booklet*.



(From left) Christine Farnberg, 2nd Runner-Up, Olivia Sailer, 1st Runner-Up, Shane DeSilva, Champion

Olivia Sailer, an 8th grade student from Wabasha-Kellogg Public Schools, was the 1st Runner-Up. Olivia received a trophy, and *Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary* (donated by Merriam-Webster) and *Valerie's Spelling Bee Supplement Booklet*.

Christine Farnberg, a 7th grade student from Rochester Catholic Schools, was the 2nd Runner-Up. Christine received a trophy, and *Valerie's Spelling Bee Supplement Booklet*.

Other students participating in the Southeast Minnesota Final Spelling Bee were:

- Miranda Cox from Mabel-Canton, 8th grade
- Shenali DeSilva from Pacelli Catholic, 6th grade
- Eleanor Hinchcliffe from Austin, 7th grade
- Emily Jacob from Plainview-Elgin-Millville, 8th grade
- Spencer Lavelle from Wabasha-Kellogg, 8th grade

- Renee Lechner from Kingsland, 7th grade
- Benjamin Lee Su from Byron, 6th grade
- Noah Mitchell from Rochester Friedell, 6th grade
- Hannah Pahs from Northfield, 8th grade

The Spelling Bee competitions in southeast Minnesota are sponsored and coordinated by SSC.

Tips for positive behavior on the bus

By Katie Schmitt

It is essential that bus drivers and schools work together to create a positive bus riding experience for students. In the Driver's Seat is a training program for managing student behavior on the bus that can be used for individual or group trainings. This training program is used by many Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) schools.

There are three guiding principles to prevent unwanted behavior:

- 1. Expect Good Behavior**
High expectation for good behavior and teaching rules for riding the bus go a long way

in preventing inappropriate behavior.

- 2. Connect with Students**
Build a rapport with students by knowing students by name and giving positive feedback.
- 3. Protect Students from Harm**
Bus drivers should employ skills and tactics like scanning, monitoring, physical presence, pre-correction and positive practice to prevent inappropriate behavior.

It is also important to correct misbehavior. This training program provides information on how to correct behavior and deliver



consequences – immediately, consistently, objectively, and calmly.

In the Driver's Seat is one of many resources provided by the PBIS library for loan to PBIS schools. If you would like more information on this training program, other library resources or how to become a PBIS school, contact me at kschmitt@ssc.coop.

SSC hosts School Safety and Security Forum

by Kari Kubicek

SSC hosted a School Safety and Security Forum on March 4, at which 50 individuals, including administrators, facility managers, school counselors, health and safety consultants, and teachers, attended presentations provided by staff from the Minnesota School Safety Center.

The Minnesota School Safety Center (MnSSC) was created in 2007 at the recommendation of a legislative advisory task force on school and staff emergency/all hazard preparedness. The center addressed many critical gaps between education and public safety in school emergency planning resources and training. Federal funding expired in 2011, and the center closed. In May 2013, the Minnesota Legislature,

recognizing its value and importance, re-established the MnSSC.

The Minnesota School Safety Center (MnSSC) serves as an essential school safety resource to schools, law enforcement, emergency responders and community partners by providing information, guidance, training, and technical assistance for all-hazard safety planning for schools.

MnSSC staff provided presentations and resources related to the following topics at the March 4 forum:

- Crisis Management Planning for Schools
- Safe School Assessment Training
- Active Shooter/Intruder Protocols

- Threat Assessment Process in Schools

The presentations may be accessed on SSC's website by clicking [here](#).

Safety and security has emerged as a high priority for SSC member organizations and SSC is looking for ways to support our members in this area. A survey was distributed at the forum requesting input from participants on their needs related to safety and security. SSC staff plans to use this feedback along with information obtained from our membership to provide professional development opportunities that will assist our members in meeting their safety and security needs.

Math Science Partnership professional development opportunities for 2014-15 school year

By Kari Kubicek

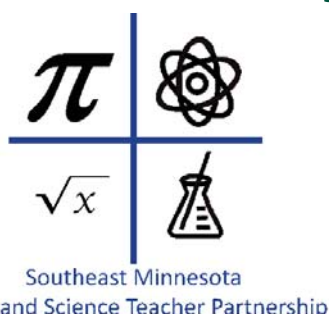
SSC, in partnership with Winona State University and Hamline University is offering exciting professional development opportunities for grades 4-6 math and science teachers and for 8th grade and high school earth science teachers through the Math and Science Partnership grant program.

This programming has been made possible through an award by the Minnesota Department of Education to assist teachers in improving content knowledge and pedagogical techniques to more effectively implement the Minnesota Mathematics and Science Academic Standards with the goal of improving student learning.

Inquiry in STEM Education professional development for grades 4-6 math and science teachers

Program Description

The primary objective of this STEM workshop is to focus on activities that promote understanding and integration of scientific and mathematics concepts. The facilitators will begin with hands-on experiments and connect them to real world science applications that emphasize certain mathematical topics relevant to grades 4-6. Participants will experience standards-based activities that help students build understanding of patterns and promote inquiry in the classroom. The major emphasis will be on analyzing mathematical patterns from real-life science applications including matter,



motion, energy, engineering, and the metric system. A technology component will be built into some of the workshops.

Dates of Programming – All sessions will run from 8:00 AM to 2:30 PM

August 13 & 14, 2014

November 6, 2014

March 12, 2014

Classroom Visits

In addition to the four workshop days, the facilitators will visit individual schools that have three or more teachers participating in the programming. These visits will allow for a more customizable approach for each school.

Target Audience

This workshop is applicable for 4-6 grade teachers interested in learning how to enrich their courses by combining scientific and mathematical content. School teams (Professional Learning Communities) of science and/or math teachers will find the most benefit from this workshop. However, individuals (math or science) may also apply (math participants do not need to have any scientific specialty/background and conversely science teachers do not need to have any math specialty.)

Goals/Learning Objectives

- complete hands-on experiments and activities to connect math to real-world scientific phenomena;
- collect and organize data, communicate the essential features of the data, and interpret the data in a meaningful way; including tables, pictures, and common graphical displays;
- analyze patterns and create models
- express relationships and patterns in graphical displays and tables clearly and correctly in words.
- use models to solve real-world problems and understand the limitations of models in making predictions and drawing conclusions;
- use logical reasoning by studying mathematical patterns and relationships relevant for students in grades 4-6; and
- use appropriate mathematics to describe and solve quantitative problems.

Presenter Bios

Nicole Williams, Ph.D., teaches in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at Winona State University, Winona, Minnesota. She has been a professor at WSU for ten years and is interested in strengthening teachers' understanding of mathematics through rich investigative activities. Outside of school, she has collaborated with elementary and middle school teachers developing curriculum and implementing

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standards-based activities. These activities have been presented at NCTM conferences and published in *Teaching Children Mathematics* and *Mathematics Teaching in the Middle School* journals.

Andrew Ferstl, Ph.D., teaches in the Physics Department at Winona State University, Winona, MN. He has been a professor there for 14 years which includes a rich history of STEM K-12 teacher preparation and professional development. For the past five years, he has been a weekly science volunteer in a third grade classroom and for the past three years, a weekly volunteer in a fifth grade classroom. He has developed standards-based curriculum for pre-service teachers based on best practices from several disciplines and looks forward to working with more teachers.

Earth Science professional development for 8th grade and high school earth science teachers

Program Description

Enrich your earth science curriculum while experiencing Minnesota geology first-hand. If you teach the middle and/or high school earth science standards, this workshop series is for you! Join your colleagues for a hands-on look at your regional geology/hydrology, investigate the content behind the earth science standards you teach, gather ideas and resources, and expand your own curriculum to incorporate more student-directed investigation and learning. The workshop series consists of three summer days in the field and three days spaced throughout the school year. Stipend, field notebook,



mileage and field transportation provided.

Dates of Programming

July 21, 22, and 23, 2014

8:30 AM to 3:30 PM

School year workshop dates TBA

Target Audience

8th grade and high school earth science teachers.

Participants will:

- experience Minnesota geology by investigating the features of our region
- delve into deeper content behind the earth science standards you teach
- share resources and strategies for teaching earth science concepts
- receive practice in earth science field research techniques
- actively collect and analyze field data
- review inquiry approaches for your classroom
- investigate field sites for possible use by your students
- develop a network of regional earth science teachers
- have the option to purchase two graduate semester credits from Hamline University
- receive a stipend, field notebook and mileage to Rochester, and

- ride around in a school bus and talk about geology for three days!

Lee Schmitt is Associate Director for Professional Development and faculty in the Hamline University School of Education. His work involves developing and implementing programs and courses for in-service teachers of science in the areas of science content, inquiry/best practices, and standards-based curricula. Schmitt has facilitated three MSTP Science Academies in Rochester, and in other regions of the state, related to elementary science content and elementary/secondary programs on the nature of science and engineering standards. He served on the boards of the Minnesota Science Teachers Association (MnSTA) and the Minnesota Earth Science Teachers Association (MESTA) and directed the statewide MnSTEP program (2007-09), and is the current MnSTA president elect. Schmitt has 15 years of classroom experience as a science teacher and 20 years in teacher professional development.

For information on how to sign up for either of these opportunities, contact Kari Kubicek at kkubicek@ssc.coop or (507) 281-6668.

Engineered wood fiber for playgrounds

By Katie Schmitt

It's time to get playgrounds ready for springtime fun. One of the best ways to ensure playgrounds are fun and safe is to refill surfacing materials. 79% of playground injuries are the result of falls to the surface below. Maintaining playground surfacing materials at the recommended depth of 9-12 inches reduces the frequency and severity of playground injuries.

The type of material is also important. Landscape mulch, while readily available, could cause serious harm to children if it contains metal debris, reclaimed wood from construction or pallets, large pieces and sticks, or poison ivy. It is better to use engineered wood fiber that is certified for playground use. According to ASTM F2075, engineered wood fiber is defined as "processed wood that is ground to a fibrous consistency, randomly sized, approximately 10 times longer than wide with a maximum length of 2 inches, free of hazardous substances and meets the criteria of this specification." If there are dyes or colors other than natural wood, the product is likely not made from virgin wood.

Information about SSC's Playground Surfacing Materials contract:

- This contract is the result of a regional, competitively solicited Request for Proposal conducted by Southeast Service Cooperative on behalf of members.



- Engineered wood fiber, made from virgin wood only, is manufactured and distributed by Crescent Landscape Supply, Inc. of Cadott, WI.
- Crescent Landscape Supply is a reputable company and has provided playground surfacing for several districts and cities, large and small, in Minnesota and Wisconsin.
- IPEMA (International Play Equipment Manufacturers Association) certified to meet ASTM F 2075-10a standard specification for engineered wood fiber for use as a playground safety surface under and around playground equipment. Contact Katie Schmitt at kschmitt@ssc.coop for a product sample.
- Place an order by submitting PO and order form directly to SSC. We will coordinate common delivery dates for loads less than 90 cubic yards to save members product and transport costs.

Rochester Chamber of Commerce's Educators in the Workplace Institute

The Rochester Chamber of Commerce will offer its Educators in the Workplace Institute June 23 – 25. This three-day, interactive workshop provides an opportunity for area educators to gain a better understanding of their community and participate in interactive work site visits.

The Institute will focus on the following Career Pathway Focus Areas:

- Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources

- Arts, Communications & Information Systems
- Engineering, Manufacturing & Technology
- Health Science Technology
- Human Services
- Business, Management & Administration

Goals of the Institute

- For teachers to learn what job skills are needed in the Rochester area through hands-on demonstrations and interaction with employers.

- For area employers to present workforce readiness issues and current employment opportunities to area teachers

Click [here](#) for more information.

Streamline your spring purchasing

By Katie Schmitt

Express is the new online marketplace for members to shop and compare products. Access to Express is free for all members and registration takes minutes. Once your account is verified, you can view vendor products and pricing. The price you see is the member discounted price.

Express offers flexible payment options, purchase order or credit card/p-card. All the member benefits contracted with vendors, including free shipping for many vendors and easy returns, still apply. And coming soon Express will be integrated with Smart Finance.

New Video Tutorials have been added to the site as well as a User Guide and FAQs. Requisition forms for School Specialty, OfficeMax, Nasco, and others will also be available as shopping lists in your Express

account. Staff can easily create shopping lists and share them with purchasing staff to place orders. Members don't need to enter a discount code when placing an order in Express. You won't question whether you received the contracted discounts. Express can conform to your organization's order approval process by creating a custom hierarchy. Staff can submit requisitions electronically with an automated request sent through email to his/her supervisor for initial approval. Once approved the order is submitted to the vendor.

Contact me at kschmitt@ssc.coop if you'd like more information, a demonstration or assistance in setting up approval workflow. Happy shopping!

Check out these vendors in Express:

BIO
CORPORATION

Bio Corporation

Dissection Specimens & Supplies

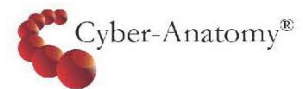
Discount: 5% discount of \$250 or more, free shipping



CDW-G

Technology Equipment

Discount: 2 to 13% off list price, free shipping



Cyber Anatomy/Science

3D Educational Software

Discount: Free 30-day trial, exclusive cooperative pricing



Midwest Technology Products Industrial Arts Supplies

Discount: 10% discount, free shipping



Minnesota Clay Company Clay, Glaze & Supplies

Discount: exclusive cooperative pricing



MNJ Technologies Technology Equipment

Discount: 7% discount, free shipping



Nasco

Classroom & School Supplies

Discount: 10 to 20% off specific catalogs, free shipping over \$50.00



OfficeMax Workplace

Classroom & Office Supplies

Discount: Average 57% off list price, free shipping



Reason

Technology Equipment

Discount: 45% off list price



School Specialty School Supplies

Discount: 36% off most catalogs, free shipping over \$49.00



Tierney Brothers Technology Equipment

Discount: 5 to 39% off list price



Recent Board meeting actions and information

Note: Complete SSC Board of Directors meeting minutes are available on the SSC website at www.ssc.coop.

In addition to routine fiscal and routine business actions, the Board took the following actions in recent meetings:

December 2013 Meeting

Accepted the report of the Canvassing Committee and declared the election of Carol Cravath and Elizabeth Lawson for the two Education positions and Mary Blair-Hoeft for the Government position for new 4-year terms from January 1, 2014 through December 31, 2017.

Accepted the withdrawal of the City of Mabel from the CCOGA Health Insurance Pool effective January 1, 2014.

Authorized the Executive Director to coordinate with the other health insurance collaborating Service Cooperative pools to manage network access fee administration, pool health administration fees, Service Cooperative preferred consumer directed health plan benefit terms such as out-of-pocket and deductibles, and handling of Healthcare Reform taxes and fees in relation to premiums.

Accepted the proposal of Tierney Brothers for purchase

of equipment, installation, and support for audiovisual and technology equipment and furnishings for the Wood Lake Meeting Center.

Accepted the proposal of Office Max for room furnishings, including chairs, tables, and other equipment and furniture for the Wood Lake Meeting Center.

Directed the staff and the Policy Committee to explore the feasibility of allowing use of alcoholic beverages for non-SSC hosted events in the Wood Lake Event Center in compliance and accordance with Minnesota Statute; seek legal assistance in this review, and form a recommendation for Board consideration.

Hired Scott Fitzsimonds as Centers of Excellence Data Specialist effective Friday, January 3.

January 2014 Meeting

- A Election of Officers for the Year 2014:
- Chair: Carol Cravath
- Clerk: Al Nelson
- Vice-Chair: Theresa Arrick-Kruger
- Treasurer: Susan Phillips

The Chair made Board Committee appointments for 2014.

Approved extension of the ACA compliance support contract with Next Generation Healthcare Economics to include subcontracting of services with Eide Bailly for ACA tax calculation and reporting, including provision of an integrated payroll-tax reporting tool.

Authorized the Executive Director to enter into a collaborative agreement with six other Service cooperatives to contract for a comprehensive actuarial review of the health insurance pools' financial and operational arrangements.

Adopted the 2012-2013 Annual Report; received staff outline of SSC goals and strategies 2013-2014.

Wood Lake Meeting Center Policy on Alcohol Use on Premises. The Policies Committee presented a proposed revision for first reading.

February 2014 Meeting

Accepted the settlement report for the 2012-2013 School Health Insurance Pool, and, pursuant to SSC policy on management of the Health Insurance Pools, credited calculated excess claims fund for eligible groups.

Approved transfer of \$400,000 from the School Health pool

Recent Board meeting actions and information continued...

RSR margin fund to the IBNR fund to be reserved for IBNR risk coverage.

Adopted the proposed WLMC policy.

Personnel:

1. Hired Eric Walston in a temporary position to support the Wood Lake Meeting Center expansion and other organizational needs;
2. Opened a new position of Operations Assistant.

Executed a one-year consulting contract, effective March 1, 2014, with markit to provide creative services and sales consulting for the Wood Lake Meeting Center.

Executed an agreement, effective March 1, 2014, with Crescent Landscape Supply Inc., located in Cadott, Wisconsin for

a regional purchasing program to obtain engineered wood fiber playground surfacing at a price of \$16 per cubic yard.

March 2014 Meeting

Personnel:

1. Promoted Nicole LaChapelle from Program Technician to Program Manager effective February 1, 2014;
2. Hired Eric Walston as Operations Assistant effective April 1, 2014;
3. Approved the termination of employment of George Sand effective March 4, 2014.

Dedicated the 2012-13 SSC employee group claims margin return as follows: partial distribution of deposits into employee VEBA accounts and the balance to cover costs to create a fitness area in the vacant north storage room.

April 2014 Meeting

School Health Insurance Pool. Board adopted the recommendations of the Formula Committee regarding the School Health Insurance Pool 2014-2015 Plan Year Renewal, including: 1) change in stop loss level to \$150,000 pool-wide, 2) rate adjustment formula, 3) dedication of RSR margin funds to be applied toward rate reductions, and 4) dedication of up to \$500,000 of RSR margin funds for local group wellness incentive programming subsidy.

Awarded the Southeast Service Cooperative 2014 Outstanding Service Award to Carol Cravath, who will receive the award at the July MSC Board Conference.

Surplus table cart finds new home and purpose at SSC-member district

During our meeting center remodeling project, we spent time sorting through items and determining if they were still needed, or if they should be replaced. Whenever we have surplus items, we make an effort to distribute them to our member groups.

Kenyon-Wanamingo's Paul Clauson gave us an update on an old table cart we had given his district. The cart was slightly modified, and is now used by an autistic young man to collect the district's recyclables. Paul shared that receiving the cart really made the young man's day.



Calendar

April

April 28
SSC's Spring Health Forum: Stress Management and Resiliency
 12:00 - 5:00 PM

April 30
ACA Compliance Seminar (CCOGA)
 9:30 - 11:30 AM

May

May 1
MASA Region 1 Spring Training Session
 8:30 AM - 1:00 PM

May 1
Gifted and Talented Educator Network - Perfectionism
 1:00 - 4:00 PM

May 1
Parent Network for Gifted and Talented Learners - Perfectionism
 5:30 - 7:00 PM

May 7
SMART Board for Substitute Teachers
 8:30 - 10:30 AM

May 7
Minnesota Early Indicator and Response System (MEIRS) Training
 12:30 - 3:30 PM

May 14
AAC Meeting
 12:00 - 3:00 PM

May 20 & 21
Young Authors, Young Artists Conference for Students in Grades 4-6

May 28
SSC Board Meeting
 5:00 - 8:00 PM

May 29
Spring Legislative Wrap Session 2014
 9:30 AM - 12:00 PM

June

June 3
Annual Town Hall Meeting for Health and Safety Funding
 9:30 - 11:30 AM

June 9
ACA Compliance Seminar (School Pool)
 9:30 - 11:00 AM

June 11
Introduction to the iPad
 8:30 AM - 2:00 PM

June 11
Academic Vocabulary Strategies Grades 6-12
 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

June 12
Google Apps: Forms, Sites, and Docs + Dropbox
 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

June 12
Academic Vocabulary Strategies Grades K-5
 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

June 16
Save Your License Monday
 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

June 17
9 Essential Skills for the Love and Logic Classroom
 8:30 AM - 3:30 PM

June 18
Presentations Galore and QR Codes
 8:30 - 11:30 AM

June 18
Unpacking and Implementing the 2010 Writing Standards in ELA and Content Areas Grades 6-12
 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

June 19
AAC Meeting
 12:00 - 3:00 PM

June 25
Apps, Apps, and More Apps
 8:30 - 11:30 AM

July

July 23
SSC Board Meeting
 5:00 - 8:00 PM

August

August 5
Formative and Summative Assessment with Technology
 8:30 - 11:30 AM

August 5
Developing a Learning Network for You
 12:30 - 3:30 PM

August 6
Exploring Creativity with Technology
 8:30 - 11:30 AM

August 6
Learning with an iPad for the Younger Student
 12:30 - 3:30 PM

August 13
Writing Bandits! Using Mentor Text to teach Writing, Grades 1-5
 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

August 15
AAC Meeting
 12:00 - 3:00 PM

August 20
Observation and Feedback Skills for Instructional Leaders (Day One)
 9:00 AM - 3:30 PM

August 20
SSC Board Meeting
 5:00 - 8:00 PM



SSC is a 2013 Recipient of the Alfred P. Sloan Award for Business Excellence in Workplace Flexibility.

Cooperative Connection is a publication of the Southeast Service Cooperative, published three times per year for members, associates, and the general public.

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Southeast Service Cooperative direct dial phone numbers, e-mails, and 800

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 or 1-800-657-6996 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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	Kari Kubicek	(507) 281-6668	kkubicek@ssc.coop	Program Manager
	Kirsten Kuehl	(507) 281-6670	kkuehl@ssc.coop	Program Manager
	Nicole LaChapelle	(507) 281-6674	nlachapelle@ssc.coop	Program Manager
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Pat Weir	(507) 281-6677	pat.weir@ieainstitute.com	Regional Manager	

SSC welcomes Eric Walston, Operations Assistant



Eric Walston officially joined SSC's staff as an Operations Assistant on April 1. Eric had been working at SSC on a temporary basis to help support

the re-opening of our expanded meeting center prior to applying for and being hired as a full time SSC employee. Eric's main duties are to provide daily internal operations support for the meeting center including assisting with room and meeting setup arrangements. Eric also assists with property and facility maintenance and conducts various administrative support tasks.

Originally from Rochester, Eric is a graduate of Mayo High School, and has a background in construction-related work. He and his wife Sara

have a three-month old son, Uriah. Eric enjoys playing softball and flag-football, and is also the drummer in his church's band.

Through the years, Eric has worked for SSC in a variety of capacities, including completing painting and carpentry projects. Eric noted that during those times he always thought about how great it would be to be an SSC employee, and at how excited he is now that this has come to fruition.