

Cooperative Connection

December 2011

Southeast Service Cooperative

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Learn how co-teaching can benefit all types of students with new session from SSC

by Heidi Knepper

Co-teaching is an increasingly popular strategy and one of the fastest growing inclusive school practices. However, the quality of what occurs in co-taught classes and the benefits for students—both those with and those without disabilities—vary considerably due to confusion about what co-teaching is and how it differs from other instructional practices. Co-teaching involves two or more appropriately credentialed professionals—usually two teachers or a teacher and a related services professional.

What Co-teaching is not...

In schools across the country, the term co-teaching sometimes defines



a situation where a classroom teacher conducts the same type of instruction as if he or she were alone. The second teacher, sometimes a special educator, acts as an instructional assistant for students with disabilities.

This should not be referred to as co-teaching, and will not produce the same research based results.

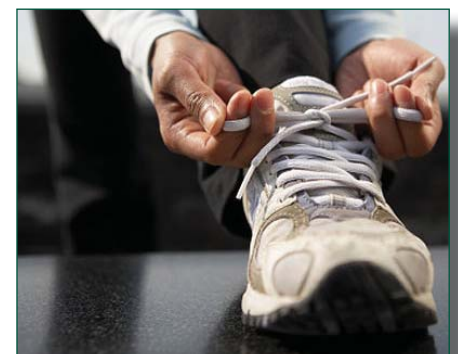
Co-teaching continued on page 6

Get ready, get set! Member vs. Member walking challenge begins January 1!

by Nicole LaChapelle

For the first time ever, SSC is coordinating a wellness challenge between all of our member groups! (Many thanks to Plainview-Elgin-Millville's Marcia Schultz for coordinating last year's challenge which included eight schools in SSC's Insurance Pool, and for planning assistance with this year's challenge).

Often, the winter months are the hardest time of the year to keep people motivated and excited about



exercise. Sometimes a bit of friendly competition can really invigorate not only your wellness program, but also increase morale and teamwork

Walking challenge continued on page 6



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A Message to SSC Members and Friends...



by *Suzanne Riley*

We try to be thoughtful and giving throughout the year, but this time of year our awareness of the good that we can each do is heightened by the holidays.

At SSC we experience great joy with each accomplishment that we know has served our membership well.

Member organizations recently received their annual report from us outlining usage of services and the resulting savings and other benefits. In aggregate, our 2010-2011 net service value to members calculated to \$3,830,976, which is a 4,761% return on membership fee investment of \$80,262. We think this is pretty good! The more SSC member organizations use administrative services, the greater our collective ability to share costs and save money. Just as importantly, the more

we cooperate in educational programming, the more value we all bring to students and teachers.

Thanks to all the students, teachers, administrators, board members, and associates who participate with SSC staff in growing and sharing cooperatively.

If you'd like to view our annual report and participation benefits study, I invite you to visit www.ssc.coop, click on "About SSC", then click on "SSC Documents."

KM Telecom contributes funds for Spelling Bee

by *Katie Sue Cunningham*

Local business, KM Telecom, will be the sponsor for the Southeast Minnesota Spelling Bee again in 2012.

Schools from throughout southeast Minnesota have registered to participate. Each school must register with Scripps and with the Southeast Service Cooperative.

Students in grades 5-8 will participate in classroom, grade-level, school and district Spelling Bees. The winners advance to one of the two Regional Spelling Bees offered on February 14, 2012, at SSC's

Wood Lake Meeting Center. The top twelve spellers (six from each Bee) will go on to the Final on February 28, 2012. The first place winner will advance to the Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, DC, in May, 2012.

If you have questions regarding the Spelling Bee, please contact Katie Sue Cunningham at (507) 281-6667 or kcunningham@ssc.coop.



“Second Generation” wellness programs

by Bill Colopoulos

“Second Generation” wellness initiatives use value-based premium and benefit incentives to target and encourage less healthy employees to become actively engaged in health improvement programs.

The goal of these new wellness programs is to improve the risk profile of the group by improving the overall health status of the employee population. This will lower the incidence of high cost claims, reducing the cost of the health benefits plan, also reducing absenteeism and improving productivity.

Second generation wellness programs use a combination of incentives: lower premium contributions and lower deductibles (for example) when employees actively participate in biometric screening programs and produce actual health improvement results, such as weight loss, lower cholesterol, etc.

Premium incentives are typically offered in two stages: one level of incentive for taking the biometric screening tests; another for achieving health risk reduction goals; usually in five lifestyle categories:

1. Body mass index (BMI)/ body composition (i.e., fat vs. muscle density)
2. Blood pressure
3. Glucose

4. Cholesterol
5. Tobacco

Benefit incentives can also be structured to accommodate biometric testing and achieving health risk reduction results. A percentage of deductible “forgiveness” can be applied for participation in the screening, with additional incentives provided for meeting or reaching targeted health risk results.

While premium incentives are easier to structure, they also cost plan sponsors and employees the most. The biggest advantages for both employer and employees are found with benefit incentives. Benefit promises that healthier employees rarely cash in on deliver a higher return on investment vs. premium penalties that cannot make up for unhealthy employee costs.

Second generation wellness programs are typically designed to comply with HIPAA privacy guidelines that heretofore may have discouraged wellness incentives. Second generation wellness programs follow these simple rules:

- All employees must be given a chance to participate *and succeed*.
- Premium incentives must fall into the “20% of total premium/benefit value” range required by HIPAA.



- All private health information must be protected.

Employers’ wellness incentives can be designed to produce effective results by embracing, rather than running away from, the HIPAA guidelines. That’s why new wellness incentive programs are flourishing and helping employees become healthier; reducing their overall healthcare expenditures by lowering their incidence of preventable illnesses.

Bill Colopoulos is a healthcare economist and consultant serving the Southeast Service Cooperative’s health insurance pools. He is an active member of the American Economic Association. Bill is available to present this material to all groups who are current members of the Southeast Service Cooperative.

Virtual Reality Education Pathfinder program opportunity offered through SSC

by Kari Kubicek

Southeast Service Cooperative is excited to introduce an innovative learning strategy with virtual reality to its districts. The **Virtual Reality Education Pathfinder (VREP)** is a partnership between government, education, and industry creating an ever-growing consortium of schools and businesses committed to bringing a new kind of learning and teaching to schools across the country. VREP works by capturing student interest through the use of Virtual Reality and 3D.

Students within the program are offered high school and/or college credit for their work and gain valuable 21st Century skills, including study, computer, and technical reading skills, as well as the ability to research, communicate, problem solve, work in teams, collaborate, manage their time, and access resources to accomplish important goals and objectives.

VREP is self-directed, giving students the freedom to decide what areas are of interest to them and what technologies to use. Working with peers within their own school and across the VREP consortia, students complete projects, research and design their own virtual programs, and



create 2D and 3D imaging that is then transferred into stereoscopic displays to create immersive virtual environments. Students and other viewers can then interact with the virtual environments, providing learning opportunities that engage today's learners.

Students in VREP are charged with creating virtual reality and 3D models, simulations and projects which serve several purposes around accelerating student learning.

Projects demonstrate their understanding of key, high-level national and state educational standards and expectations. Projects are connected to curriculum areas and grade level expectations, providing the opportunity for other students to understand key concepts and ideas through the use of VR and 3D.

VREP projects are connected to national and state standards and available via

a secure on-line library to all VREP schools and students, thus rapidly expanding the availability of high-quality VR and 3D applications for schools and children. **The program is demanding, and students are expected to provide presentations and clearly articulate what they have learned on short notice.** Students must show a willingness and desire to be independent learners and be willing to work in an environment where self-discipline and maturity are expected.

VREP Outcomes:

- Provide students with self-directed, interest-driven, project-based, rigorous learning in independent and collaborative environments in which they can learn and demonstrate technical skills, content expertise, teamwork, discipline, and 21st century communication and employability skills.
- Create a consortium of student-designers who develop and share virtual reality learning environments that assist others in their learning

VREP continued from page 4

of critical standards and competencies.

- Impact the role and perception of the teacher as “director of learning” to the role of the teacher as “facilitator of learning” through a very different approach to learning environments and approaches.

Impressive results are emanating from the initial set of pilot schools – formerly disengaged or minimally engaged students re-engage and improve their GPA, take increasingly difficult courses, and begin to see themselves as learners and capable students. At-risk, special education, high and low achieving students have all benefited from participation in VREP.

VREP is more about transforming learning and teaching than it is about technology. VR and 3D are simply vehicles for changing the traditional teacher-student relationships. VREP has no defined curriculum and requires no “lesson plans” from a teacher. Rather than trying to anticipate what students might need and building a structured plan for getting from A to B, VREP puts the learner out front. The idea is simple: Build a VR application that is educationally relevant and that demonstrates your learning. It is the teacher’s



Students using the VREP equipment

job to coach, support, facilitate, question, and challenge VREP students. Teachers spend their time applying their content expertise, asking probing questions, and working side-by-side with students as they work through problems and questions that have real meaning to them.

In short, VREP teachers and schools create the conditions for students to engage and be successful and then make sure that the traditional system with all its constraints stays out of the student’s way!

How to sign up for the program:

Districts interested in participating in the program should review and sign the VREP District Commitment Form and VREP Member Agreement Form and submit them to Kari Kubicek at SSC. These documents outline expectations for districts wishing to participate in the program including the participation and financial commitments.

A component of VREP Program district member commitment is a two-day VREP Training event. Each district must commit a team of up to five students and one to two adults to participate in the two-day training event scheduled for February 15, 2012, from 9:00 AM to 2:30 PM, and February 16, 2012, from 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM, at SSC.

SSC is also collaborating with Mayo Clinic’s Dr. Richard Robb and Bruce Cameron who specialize in virtual reality technology and its applications in areas such as biomedical engineering and biotechnology. Both of these individuals will be serving as advisors to SSC and our districts in the launch and implementation of the VREP Program.

Please visit our website to learn more about the VREP Program. You may also contact Kari Kubicek via email at kkubicek@ssc.coop or phone at (507) 281-6668 with any questions.

Co-teaching continued from page 1

What Co-teaching Is...

In co-teaching, both professionals coordinate and deliver effective instruction. Specifically they plan and use unique and high-involvement instructional strategies to engage all students in ways that are not possible when only one teacher is present. It is important to keep in mind that two qualified teachers or other professionals can structure instruction in a number of creative ways to enhance learning options for all students. With two teachers delivering instruction and increasing the instructional options for the students, all students have more opportunities to participate actively in their learning.



Co-teaching allows teachers to respond effectively to the diverse needs of their students, provides another set of hands and eyes, lowers the teacher-student ratio, and expands the professional expertise that can be directed to student needs.

If this sounds like something that would benefit the learning at your school, you are in luck!

SSC is offering a two-day co-teaching training on February 2 and 3, 2012. We will also offer the option to schedule some follow up coaching for your co-teachers on your site. More information about that will be discussed at the training. Registration is open and available on the SSC website. If you have questions or would like more information, contact Heidi Knepper, hknepper@ssc.coop or (507) 281-6669.

Walking challenge continued from page 1

at your organization. This contest is a step-based walking challenge, and requires participants to wear a pedometer and keep track of their steps.

Beginning January 1, participants will start wearing a pedometer and tracking their steps. Step counts are turned in to the person designated to keep track of steps at their organization (most likely the person in charge of the organization's wellness programming). Coordinators then send in the step totals and number of people participating that week to Nicole LaChapelle at SSC, who will send out weekly updates on team standings.

A winner in both categories will be announced on February 2. SSC will provide a trophy for the winning school and or/district and the winning city and or/county. They will be presented at the March 14 Health Forum, held at SSC's Wood Lake Meeting Center. The winning teams will also be featured in the March 2012 *Cooperative Connection*.

If members would like to offer additional incentives for their participants, that is optional. (For example: incentives for the top male/top female, most improved walker, etc.) Groups in SSC's Health Insurance Pools are welcome to use a portion of their

health promotion funds from SSC for challenge expenses.

SSC has inexpensive, quality pedometers available for our members at cost (\$6 each). If you would like to place an order, and receive them prior to the January 1st start date, please contact Nicole LaChapelle by Monday, December 19.

Please contact Nicole LaChapelle, nlachapelle@ssc.coop or (507) 281-6674 by Wednesday, December 28 if your group is interested in participating.

Wood Lake Meeting Center hosts successful Rochester Area Chamber of Commerce networking event

by Nicole LaChaeplle

On December 2, approximately 70 Rochester Area Chamber of Commerce Members attended the AM Espresso networking event, which was held at SSC's Wood Lake Meeting Center.

Attendees enjoyed a light breakfast, tours of the meeting center, SMART Board demonstrations, and the opportunity to network.

A majority of the attendees were unaware of the services SSC offered, and most had



not been to the Wood Lake Meeting Center previously. The Chamber's AM Espressos are a perfect opportunity to increase awareness of both SSC and the Wood Lake Meeting Center.

Southeast Service Cooperative Member Districts and Agencies receive a 40% discount and Rochester Area Chamber of Commerce Members receive a 10% discount on room rental rates.



SSC considering options for recently purchased land

The Wood Lake Meeting Center may soon have additional free parking to support an increasing clientele. Southeast Service Cooperative recently acquired the land directly east of the SSC building.

The Wood Lake Meeting Center has been somewhat a well kept secret until recently. The meeting center has been remodeled and equipped to provide clients and members with a state of the art place to meet and train. It also serves as Southeast Service Cooperative's site for Spelling Bee and Knowledge Bowl events as well as offering training for its member schools, cities, and



counties. The one thing lacking has been ample parking space.

Our goal is to make more parking the next major improvement next spring. Executive Director Suzanne Riley said that about half of the purchased property will become parking area. Director of Operations Dale Walston

managed the land purchase from Olmsted Medical Center, with assistance from the legal firm of Wendland Utz and from McGhie and Betts, Inc., a Rochester engineering firm that conducted a geotechnical study of the land.

The SSC staff and Board of Directors are looking for suggestions for possible uses of the remaining land. Board members would like to see the land used for educational and community benefit in the immediate future. To discuss this exciting new acquisition, please contact Suzanne Riley at sriley@ssc.coop or (507) 288-1282.

Highlights from Maintaining Sustainable Facilities Lunch and learn

by Katie Schmitt

On November 22, TREMCO National Financing Manager, Regina Martino presented information on building maintenance and project planning. She discussed how Tremco addresses the entire building envelope, budget implications and energy savings.

Maintenance, Repair and Restoration

- Actively monitor entire building envelope
- Invest in maintenance to catch and repair problems and to control costs
- Triage assets:
 - ✓ Rate condition based on severity of repair, costs, operational status and health and safety issues
 - ✓ Prioritize projects
 - ✓ It may not make sense to tackle the worst problem first
- Protect the insulation layer as it is typically the most expensive material in roofing
- Stop water and air leaks
- Don't replace roofs or equipment based solely on age; look at maintenance record
- Explore options and costs for repair, restoration and replacement

Watching the Bottom Line

- Protect your investment by reading and re-reading the fine print on contracts and warranties
- Consider the source:

- ✓ Who is making the recommendation for a total roof replacement?
- ✓ What is his/her level of expertise?
- ✓ What evidence can they provide to substantiate their claim/recommendation?
- You get what you pay for... award contracts based on "best value" rather than the cheapest price
- Avoid change orders (employ third-party experts to carefully review documents prior to bid)



Regina sharing her expertise with attendees.

- and award contract to professionals who are skilled and experienced)
- Implement energy saving projects that can fund other building projects
- Work as a team – administrators, finance managers and buildings and grounds directors – to develop and implement maintenance and project plans



Benefits of Tremco

- Tremco has experts on staff to assist with all aspects of project
- Tremco is a full service company offering:
 - ✓ Building inspections
 - ✓ Performance analysis of equipment
 - ✓ Project planning
 - ✓ Budget development
 - ✓ Grants assistance and project financing
 - ✓ Project coordination and management
 - ✓ Warranties, including repair warranties
- Tremco will work with other vendors and contractors on projects
- Discounts on Tremco roofing supplies through SSC's Cooperative Purchasing Program

For more information, contact Regina Martino, TREMCO National Financing Manager.
 Telephone: (651) 436-2440
 Email: rmartino@tremcoinc.com

What you need to know about ControlPay®

Advanced by Commerce Bank in a minute or less...

By Katie Schmitt



National Account Executive at Commerce Bank, Peter Oberle, provided an orientation to ControlPay® Advanced at SSC on November 17. ControlPay® Advanced is a secure, electronic transfer of funds using the Visa® network that is designed to replace check writing. The essential information from the session is outlined below.

Commerce Bank

- Missouri-based bank is similar in size to TCF
- ControlPay® Advanced is a stand-alone program; members do not need to change banking institutions

Vendors

- Vendors pay to participate in the program
- Vendors already build transaction costs into price of product/service
- Cash is king and vendors want money without delay

- 65-73% of vendors already accept Visa® in Minnesota, higher than most areas of US
- Growth of participation in small, local and regional vendors (i.e. auto repair shop)

Member Benefits

- No program costs
- Fewer checks to write and mail
- Commerce Bank pays members revenue share/rebate monthly based on volume
- Revenue share/rebate is approximately 1%
- Vendor enrollment team recruits vendors
- Keep your p-card programs
- Works with accounts payable software, including Smart Finance
- Training and ongoing support is provided by Commerce Bank

How to get started:

Simply provide Commerce Bank with a list of vendors and annual spend. They will check on vendor participation and feasibility for implementing the system for your organization.

Contact: Peter Oberle, National Account Executive at Commerce Bank

Telephone: (651) 688-7878

Mobile: (612) 281-9072

Email: Peter.Oberle@

CommerceBank.com

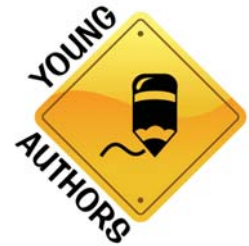
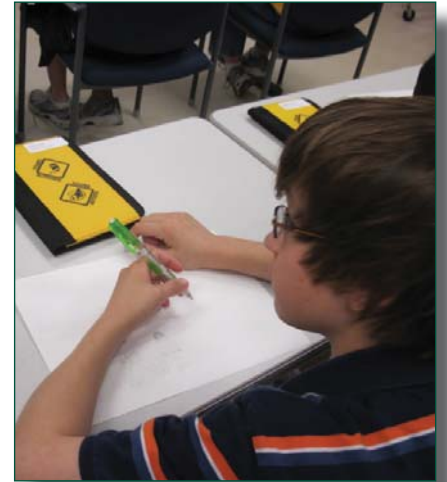


SSC holds first ever middle school level Young Authors, Young Artists conference

Southeast Service Cooperative hosted its first annual Young Authors, Young Artists Conference for seventh and eighth graders on November 10, 2011.

This goal of the conference was to expose students to writing and illustrating as an art form and to provide students an opportunity to express themselves in a positive and creative way. Four 50-minute sessions were offered. Topics included drawing characters, writing mystery stories, using your imagination and digital arts.

The conference had good attendance, with 102 students from 10 districts participating. One teacher mentioned, "My students have remarked that they had a really great time. Most, if not all, were writers, but they also found the art instruction fun." The conference will be held again in Fall, 2012.



Save the Date - 25th Annual Young Authors, Young Artists Conference - May 17 & 18, 2012

It is hard to believe that the students who attended SSC's first Young Authors, Young Artists conference are now in their late 30s! That fact is a testament to the popularity of this long-running celebration of the arts.

Next year's event, for students in grades 4 - 6, will take place May 17 & 18, 2012 at Rochester Community and Technical College.

Register by April 13 to receive the \$45 registration rate (\$50 for registrations received after April 13). To celebrate our 25th conference, there will be no charge for chaperones!



SSC's first Science and Nature Conference a great success!

SSC's newest student academic offering, the Science and Nature Conference, took place November 4, 2011 at SSC's Wood Lake Meeting Center. The successful conference was offered to students in grades two - four and was designed to provide children the opportunity to explore and learn about various science and nature topics.

Students took part in four sessions, which included:

- Bursting Bubbles
- Colorful Chemistry
- Not-So-Common-Animals
- A session from the University of Minnesota's Raptor Center

97 students from 10 school districts throughout southeast Minnesota attended.

A chaperone in attendance shared, "I want to thank you so much for offering a science and nature conference for younger students. Often, they are only offered for older students, but I think it's really important to expose the younger students to a variety of sciences as well."

Southeast Service Cooperative



Science & Nature Conference



Junior High Knowledge Bowl students match minds

by Kirsten Kuehl

The Junior High Knowledge Bowl season began in October. Forty-nine teams from 18 districts are participating in 2011-12.

Teams have participated in competitions in October, November and December at the Southeast Service Cooperative. In January all teams will compete in a Sub-Regional competition held at and in cooperation with Rochester Community and Technical College. Schools are divided by enrollment size and assigned to either Tier A or AA. Tier A

competes January 3, 2012, and Tier AA competes on January 4, 2012.

The top twelve teams from each tier advance to the Regional competition on January 17 (Tier A) and January 18 (Tier AA) at the Southeast Service Cooperative.

The following schools field teams:

Tier A: Caledonia, Fillmore Central, Glenville-Emmons, Goodhue, Grand Meadow, Houston, Kingsland, Lanesboro, Mabel-Canton, Rushford-

Peterson, Southland, Spring Grove

Tier AA: Dover-Eyota, Kasson-Mantorville, Kenyon-Wanamingo, Pine Island, Plainview-Elgin-Millville, Red Wing



Knowledge Bowl Invitational announced

by Kirsten Kuehl

The **Southeast Winter Knowledge Bowl Invitational** is scheduled for Monday, January 23, 2012 at the Southeast Service Cooperative, in response to school requests for more competitions. The meet will begin at 4:00 pm and end no later than 9:00 pm.

The Invitational is for both Junior and Senior High Knowledge Bowl teams. Registration is limited to 15 teams total. A minimum of 6 teams/level must register (otherwise SSC reserves the right to cancel the competition). One team is allowed per school (unless more spots remain).

First come, first served. Cost is \$75 per team which includes a light supper and a participation certificate to the top three teams.

Teams will NOT be separated into tiers. Competition will consist of one written round, followed by four 35-question oral rounds.

A registration form and more details will follow.

For more information contact: Kirsten Kuehl, kkuehl@ssc.coop or Katie Sue Cunningham, kcunningham@ssc.coop.

Rochester's Mayo High School's Planetarium – Available for class visits



Reservations are now being accepted for class visits to Rochester's Mayo High School's planetarium. Presentation times normally are scheduled between 9:30 AM and 2:00 PM. The planetarium has 54 permanent seats. Lessons are approximately 45 minutes in length. The cost is \$100 per program. Click here for more information.

Application window for Minnesota SW PBIS Cohort 8 is now open

The application window is now open for the Minnesota SW PBIS cohort 8. Applications can be accessed at the Minnesota PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports) website, www.pbismn.org.



What is SW PBIS?

Improving student academic and behavior outcomes is about ensuring all students have access to the most effective and accurately implemented instructional and behavioral practices and interventions possible. School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (SW PBIS) provides an operational framework for achieving these outcomes. More importantly, SW PBIS is NOT a curriculum, intervention, or practice, but IS a decision making framework that guides selection, integration, and implementation of the best evidence-based academic and behavioral practices for improving important academic and behavior outcomes for all students (*from www.pbismn.org*).

Need more information?

If you have questions or need assistance with your application please contact Heidi Knepper, hknepper@ssc.coop, (507) 281-6669.

Byron Superintendent Wendy Shannon receives Lamp of Knowledge award



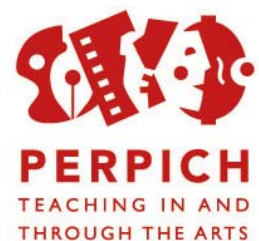
Congratulations to Byron Public Schools Superintendent Wendy Shannon, who was recently awarded the Rochester Chamber of Commerce's Lamp of Knowledge award. This honor is presented annually to recognize a Chamber Member business, agency, or organization that actively supports higher education partnerships in Southeastern Minnesota. Through Dr. Shannon's leadership and developing a culture of innovation, the Byron School District has helped create programs that encourage career pathways for students.

Application available for integration initiative: New teacher network in southeast region

The Perpich Arts Integration Network of Teachers (PAINT) builds capacity for collaborative arts integration through K-12 teacher professional development and funding to schools. With Perpich Center facilitation, teacher teams develop and implement arts-integrated units to increase and deepen student learning. They engage in collaborative professional inquiry to expand capacity for meaningful and rigorous arts integration; aligning standards and assessments; and examining and learning from student work. Guidelines,

FAQs, and the application can be accessed here.

Teams of 3 – 8 teachers are invited to apply. They must be based in a public school (K-12) in Dodge, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Rice, Steele, Wabasha, or Winona county. Teams must have at least one employed and licensed arts teacher (music, visual, theater, media, and/or dance) and at least one teacher from another content area. Administrative leader active support is also key.



The application will be available mid-December and is due February 22, 2012. The network will kick off with a summer institute in August 2012.

For more information, contact Alina Campana, Perpich Center for Arts Education, Alina.campana@pcae.k12.mn.us or (763) 591-4803.

Area high school students encouraged to submit artwork for “Work for Water” Scholarship Art Contest

The Freshwater Society is looking for high school students to create art that will inspire Minnesotans to take action to protect its waters through its *2012 Work for Water Art and Design Contest*. High School students have two opportunities to graphically and creatively convey the issue of urban runoff and therefore motivate others to respond through simple behavior change, while understanding why their actions are so important.

The *2012 Work for Water Art and Design Contest* builds on Freshwater Society’s seven successful years of the *Water is Life Art Contest* and will be held in partnership with Synergy & Leadership Exchange and the Minnesota Service Cooperatives. The *Work for Water Art and Design Contest* will not only highlight the importance of water in our lives, but also educate and provoke citizens to take simple everyday steps to protect our waters.

2012 Work for Water Art and Design Contest asks students to create graphic design, short videos, photos, paintings, drawings, etc., to be used as messaging tools for Freshwater Society’s Work for Water Campaign, a multi-



year campaign to engage Minnesotans in protecting water. Each contest will have regional and state honorees. Winning entries will be featured throughout the state on billboards, in public service announcements, websites, yard signs, t-shirts, etc. This art contest is open to all Minnesota public, private and home schooled 9th-12th grade students. The contest has been endorsed by the Minnesota Academic League Council and is listed in the 2011-2012 *Reach for the Stars* catalog.

2012 Work for Water Art and Design Contest Brochure (PDF). View the contest brochure for program details and submission guidelines.

Contest Dates and Deadlines:
All entries must be submitted to www.freshwater.org:

1st Contest:

- January 13, 2012 - entries due by midnight
- January 20, 2012 - regional finalists notified
- January 27, 2012 - state finalists chosen

2nd Contest:

- April 30, 2012 - entries due by midnight
- May 7, 2012 - regional finalists notified

*For more information on the contest visit **Synergy & Leadership Exchange** and/or the **Freshwater Society**.*

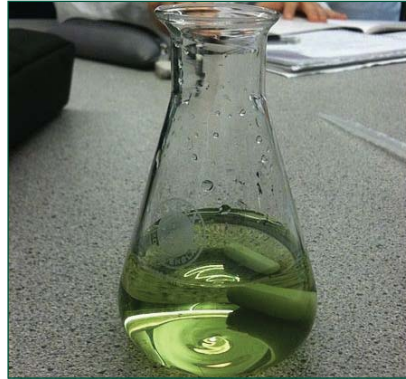
Acid neutralization units in schools

by Megan Rooney, IEA

Acid neutralization tanks are installed in educational facilities in order to capture and neutralize acidic/corrosive chemicals (low pH) prior to discharge to a publicly owned treatment works (POTW). Wastewater from laboratories is discharged into the tank, which contains limestone chips having a minimum calcium carbonate content of 85%. The liquid filters through this limestone media in order to raise the pH 7 prior to discharge to the municipal sewer lines. In schools, these tanks are installed in buildings with laboratory facilities in order to comply with the Minnesota Plumbing Code, (MN Rules, Chapter 4715.1600) which states:

“Chemical or industrial liquid wastes which are likely to damage or increase maintenance costs on the drainage system, shall be pretreated to render them innocuous prior to discharge into a drainage system, when required by the administrative authority.”

However, hazardous wastes are prohibited from being discharged to the sewer unless the local sewer authority grants prior approval and the discharge does not violate any local, state, or federal laws. Because there are no means of ensuring neutralization takes place prior to the liquid entering the publically owned treatment works (POTW) sewer lines, neutralization must occur prior to sewerage. The neutralization tank cannot be used for any corrosive waste treatment. Therefore, acid neutralization



tanks should be thought of as an “insurance policy” for municipal sewer systems and NOT as a hazardous waste treatment unit.

Required Maintenance for “Elementary” Neutralization Units

Minnesota Rules define an elementary neutralization unit as a device which is used for neutralizing wastes which are hazardous wastes only because they exhibit the corrosivity characteristic defined in part 7045.0131, subpart 4, or are listed in part 7045.0135 only for this reason; and meets the definition of tank, tank system, container, transport vehicle, or vessel (MN Rule 7045.0020 Subpt. 21).

An owner or operator of an acid neutralization unit must conduct inspections for malfunctions, deterioration, and discharge often enough to identify problems and correct them before they harm human health or the environment. Manufacturer’s recommendations may suggest checking the units every month, or every other month depending on use. The schedule may be based upon the rate of possible deterioration of the equipment and the probability of an environmental or human health

incident if any deterioration or malfunction or operator error goes undetected between inspections. The owner or operator of the unit shall maintain a written schedule for inspecting all monitoring equipment, safety and emergency equipment, security devices, and operating equipment. The inspection logs must be kept on file for three years. Manufacturers also recommend that the limestone in these units is replaced every two years.

Because the acid neutralization tank is not used for neutralizing wastes (as neutralization must occur prior to entry), the regulations for inspection do not apply, but should be followed as best management practices. These inspections may help identify problems with the tank and associated plumbing prior to potentially catastrophic issues, such as tank leakage or plumbing blockages. One metro-Minnesota district experienced a blockage near the inlet of the tank, resulting in a release of grey-water causing significant water damage to the classrooms located nearby. The total cost of clean-up was over \$100,000.

In addition, it is strongly recommended that any staff who may encounter these neutralization units (e.g. science instructors, custodians) be trained to maintain the units and prevent incorrect usage.

For any questions or assistance with acid neutralization tanks, please contact IEA at (763) 315-7900/(800) 233-9513.

Recent Board meeting actions and information

Future meetings of the SSC Board of Directors are scheduled as follows:

Wednesday, December 21
Wednesday, January 25, 2012 –
Regular and Annual Meeting

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

September 2011 Meeting

Established schedule and process for SSC Board Elections.

Authorized the Executive Director and the Director of Operations to pursue negotiations for purchase of land with parameters for terms established by the Board.

October 2011 Meeting

Received and accepted the 2010-2011 fiscal audit report presented by Kyle Meyers of Abdo, Eick & Meyers.

Approved the purchase agreement for acquisition of Lots 1, 2, and 3 in Block 4 of Wood Lake Park Second Subdivision, City of Rochester, in the amount of \$1,347,675 and authorize staff to incur related expenses as projected.

Approved the proposed remodel of the SSC main entrance for a cost not to exceed \$25,000.

Authorized the Executive Director to open a new position of Regional Education Specialist and initiate a search to fill the position as soon as possible.

November 2011 Meeting

Accepted a \$500 sponsorship from KM Telecom through the Rochester Area Foundation to underwrite part of the costs for the Southeast Spelling Bee winner to participate in the national competition.

Approved the 2010-2011 SSC Annual Report.

Scheduled the annual meeting to coincide with the regular January 2012 Board meeting. Completed the Board self-assessment and the Executive Director's performance review.

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

SSC to offer Save Your License Saturday - March 10

Will you need to renew your teaching license soon? SSC will offer Save Your License Saturday on March 10. The sessions will be held from 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM at SSC's Wood Lake Meeting Center. Attendees may register for as few or many sessions as they require.

The Minnesota Legislature, by statute, requires ALL teachers to evidence the four following areas to renew a license:

- **Positive Behavioral Intervention Strategies**

12:00 - 2:00 PM

Addresses positive behavioral intervention strategies.



- **Accommodations to Meet Graduation Standards**

2:00 - 4:00 PM

Addresses accommodation, modification, and adaptation of curriculum, materials and instruction to appropriately meet the needs of varied students in achieving graduation standards.

- **Reading Strategies**

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Addresses comprehensive, scientifically-based reading instruction to include instruction and practice in phonemic awareness, phonics and other word recognition skills, and guided oral reading for beginning reader, as well as extensive silent reading and vocabulary instruction.

- **Warning Signs of Mental Health Disorders**

8:00 - 10:00 AM

Addresses understanding of key warning signs for early-onset mental illness in children and adolescents.

Calendar

December

SSC Board Meeting

December 21
5:30 - 8:00 PM

January

Junior High Knowledge Bowl Sub-Regional at RCTC - Tier A

January 3

Junior High Knowledge Bowl Sub-Regional at RCTC - Tier AA

January 4

SMART Board Intermediate (For PC Users)

January 10
8:30 - 11:30 AM

Senior High Knowledge Bowl Round Robins

January 11, 12 & 13
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

SMART Board Advanced (For PC Users)

January 16
8:30 - 11:30 AM

Junior High Knowledge Bowl Regional - Tier A

January 17
8:30 AM - 2:30 PM

Junior High Knowledge Bowl Regional - Tier AA

January 18
8:30 AM - 2:30 PM

AAC Meeting

January 19
12:00 - 3:00 PM

SMART Board Beginners (For PC Users)

January 25
3:30 - 6:30 PM

SSC Regular Board and Annual Meeting

January 25
5:30 - 8:00 PM

MSTP Math Cohort Session

January 31
8:00 AM - 2:00 PM

February

MSTP Life Science Cohort

February 2
8:30 AM - 3:30 PM

Co-Teaching Through Purposeful Collaboration

February 2 & 3
8:30 AM - 3:30 PM

Legislative Forum and Breakfast

February 4
9:00 - 11:30 AM

SMART Board Beginners (For PC Users)

February 6
12:30 - 3:30 PM

Senior High Knowledge Bowl Round Robins

February 7, 8 & 9
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Regional Spelling Bees

February 14
9:00 AM and 1:00 PM

AAC Meeting

February 14
12:00 - 3:00 PM

Virtual Reality Education Pathfinder (VREP) Training Session

February 15
9:00 AM - 2:30 PM
February 16
9:00 AM - 4:30 PM

SMART Board Advanced (For PC Users)

February 21
3:30 - 6:30 PM

MASA Region 1 Administrators Winter 2012 Session

February 23
11:30 AM - 2:30 PM

SEMLAC School Leadership Team Training

February 28
8:30 AM - 3:30 PM

SMART Board Intermediate (For PC Users)

February 29
12:30 - 3:30 PM

Senior High Knowledge Bowl Question Review for Advisors

February 23
4:30 - 6:30 PM

Spelling Bee Final

February 28
9:00 AM

March

Save Your License Saturday

March 10
8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Senior High Knowledge Bowl Sub-Regional at RCTC - Tier AA

March 13

Senior High Knowledge Bowl Sub-Regional at RCTC - Tier A

March 14

SSC Health Forum - How to Survive Stress in the 21st Century

March 14
9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

AAC Meeting

March 15
12:00 - 3:00 PM

Senior High Knowledge Bowl Sub-Regional - Tier AA

March 16

Senior High Knowledge Bowl Sub-Regional - Tier A

March 20

MSTP Math Cohort Session

March 27
8:00 AM - 2:00 PM

MSTP Life Science Cohort

March 29
8:30 AM - 3:30 PM



SSC is a 2011 Recipient of the Alfred P. Sloan Award for Business Excellence in Workplace Flexibility.

Cooperative Connection is a publication of the Southeast Service Cooperative, published four 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

- 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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