

Cooperative Connection

Fall 2014

Southeast Service Cooperative

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SEMLAC districts shift focus in fourth year

By Kari Kubicek

Six schools districts are moving into their fourth year of a collaborative endeavor in cultivating professional learning within and across their districts through SEMLAC (Southeast Minnesota Learner Achievement Collaborative). These districts include Dover-Eyota, Kingsland, Lanesboro, Mabel-Canton, Plainview-Elgin-Millville, and Wabasha-Kellogg.

During the first three years of programming these districts learned and explored strategies for Professional Learning Community development, implementation, and sustainability. Each year, a full-day



professional development event was organized and brought together all 400 teachers, administrators, and licensed staff from the six districts. By pooling resources, participants have been able to learn from nationally recognized experts such as Thomas Many and Anthony Muhammad. In addition, resources have been invested in training leadership teams at each participating district to ensure successful use of PLCs.

SEMLAC continued on page 17

E-Procurement 101: Streamline purchasing with Express

By Katie Schmitt

What is Express?

Express is a new online e-procurement portal for SSC members, in collaboration with the Minnesota Service Cooperatives. Members can shop for products and complete orders securely online.

Why should we use Express?

Express was designed to easily connect members with discount pricing and contracted vendors, allowing users to search multiple vendors from one site to compare products and pricing, plan budgets, and place orders with multiple vendors from one check-



out. Express users enjoy improved efficiencies by saving time in placing orders, shopping, price comparisons, quote requests and order approvals. Members also save money by utilizing pricing discounts arranged through the cooperative purchasing service. Vendors in the system have been selected by bid/RFP following state procurement guidelines.

Express continued on page 16

Wood Lake Meeting Center renovation complete: Grand Opening Celebration October 21

By Peggy Merkel, Meeting Center Coordinator



Exterior Renovation

Work on the meeting center's exterior began in late August. A crew from Alvin E. Benike, Inc. has worked to create a new, easily accessible entrance and exterior to match our renovated interior. The entrance includes a new sidewalk leading to the double doors, a canopy, and a sitting wall. The update also includes a new coat of paint for the exterior and landscaping. The new, outdoor signage will be installed soon. We invite everyone to stop by and take a look!



Current Happenings

Wood Lake Meeting Center has been hopping since our reopening in February. We've hosted a lot of delightful guests in addition to the many individuals who have attended SSC events. Many have rented our facility for meetings

and trainings. Some of these are previous guests and many have been new. One thing they all agree on is that our new space is wonderful! We have also had our space used for a large sewing retreat and are looking forward to hosting our first expo this fall. If you or someone you know is looking for a space to hold a meeting or event, please ask them to contact us or feel free to share their contact information so we may reach out to them. Rental income earned on the Wood Lake Meeting Center is one of the ways to increase value to our members!

New Look on the Web

The new Wood Lake Meeting Center website, www.WoodLakeMeetingCenter.com, launched in late September. The site includes many images of our space and technology, lists the features and some uses of each room, and gives the viewer three options to contact our staff. We're available by phone, e-mail, and online chat.



Chamber Fall Showcase

Wood Lake Meeting Center, along with 30 local businesses, participated in the Rochester Chamber of Commerce Fall Showcase. This gave us an opportunity to share with Rochester Chamber Members and the public what Wood Lake Meeting Center has to offer. We took the opportunity to share a slice of the Wood Lake feel by taking along a few pieces of our furniture and showcasing our new website.

Business Development

As we've worked to expand our client base, we've discovered that many area businesses and individuals are unaware of the Wood Lake Meeting Center. We've increased our marketing efforts, and have updated our marketing materials, as seen here.



Grand Opening Celebration

We'll hold our Grand Opening Celebration and Rochester Chamber of Commerce Ribbon Cutting on Tuesday, October 21 from 4:00 – 6:00 PM. Regals Catering & Concessions will be providing food, and refreshments will be served. Please plan to join us!

SE-Metro Regional Center of Excellence



The Southeast Service Cooperative is home to one of six Regional Centers of Excellence (RCEs) in the state of Minnesota. The SE-Metro Center of Excellence was launched in 2012 with the Statewide System of Support (SSOS) providing support to Focus and Priority Schools. This partnership between the Minnesota Department of Education, the Regional Centers of Excellence, the Minnesota Service Cooperatives, and regional school districts creates a unique and customized team.

Following the success of the first year of implementation of SSOS, the Minnesota Legislature established a statute in 2013 to expand the RCE network, to enable this innovative partnership to have an even greater impact on improved student outcomes in Minnesota. The goal of this expansion is to increase Minnesota's collective impact on student achievement through regional partnerships that provide equitable access and cohesive, coordinated support. Three additional centers across the state were added to support the expanded work.

The six centers now include:

- SE-Metro at Southeast Service Cooperative in Rochester*
- Central Lakes at Resource Training and Solutions in Sartell*
- Northern Pines at Northwest Service Cooperative in Thief River Falls*
- Northern Sky at Northeast Service Cooperative in Mountain Iron
- Southwest Prairie at Southwest/South Central Service Cooperative in Marshall
- Western Lakes at Lakes Country Cooperative in Fergus Falls

**Original RCEs and continued SSOS support*

There are nine areas that the Regional Centers of Excellence will focus their efforts on this year:

Teacher Development & Evaluation	English Language Development	Community Engagement
Early Childhood Special Education	Statewide System of Support	MN Early Indicator & Response System
All Day Kindergarten	Standards Implementation	Post Secondary Success Transition

As the Director of the SE-Metro Regional Center, Ann Clark continues to support the SSOS and also expands her duties to include all nine initiatives. Registration information is available for the initiatives on the Southeast Service Cooperative website, www.ssc.coop, under Professional Development: Center of Excellence.

Please contact Ann for further information or questions.

Ann Clark, aclark@mnce.org, 507-696-7735.

SE-Metro Regional Center of Excellence: Statewide System of Support (SSOS)

The SSOS team continues its work with Focus and Priority Schools in Southeast Minnesota and the Metro area. With the expansion of the RCEs, Barb Marchetti has been named Team Coordinator and leads the daily work and support of the team. Two new members have been welcomed to the team Beth Sahli, Advocate/Special Education Specialist and Perry Wilkinson, Advocate/Equity and Math Specialist.

The SSOS team began working with new schools after the October 1 new school designations were announced. See below for more information regarding the outstanding award for Innovation in Government that was granted for the work done in SSOS over the past two years.



Standing: Andy Schalm, Kelly Frankenfield, Scott Fitzsimonds, Carol Swanson, Barb Marchetti. Sitting: Beth Sahli, Ann Clark, Perry Wilkinson.

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MDE's Regional Centers of Excellence program wins Innovation Award

MDE's Regional Centers of Excellence program recently won the University of Minnesota's Humphrey School of Public Affairs 2014 State Government Innovation Award. The awards recognize excellence in state government agencies and seek to encourage experimentation and innovation in Minnesota. Winners were judged based on a three-part set of criteria: innovation (40% of the score), impact (30%) and sustainability (30%). The winning agencies demonstrated significant improvements in service, progress, and impact of the program.

To be considered, agencies had to demonstrate a performance management system for accountability, evaluations and



Front: Brenda Cassellius, Commissioner, Jessie Montano, former Deputy Commissioner, Ann Clark, SE-Metro RCE Director. Back: Charlene Briner, Chief of Staff, John Gimpl, Regional Center Coordinator, Greg Keith, Director of School Support, Betsy Ziemer, SSOS Coordinator, Steve Dibb, Deputy Commissioner, Susan Burris, Central Lakes RCE Director, Cammy Lehr, Dropout Prevention, Toni Cox, Northern Pines RCE Director.

program budgets. The winning agencies showcased programs that used technology in creative

ways, targeted services to those most in need, and demonstrated collaboration and consolidation between organizations. An awards ceremony was held in August at the Minnesota History Center.

The Minnesota Department of Education put in place Regional Centers of Excellence to focus schools and districts on closing achievement gaps between students. Center directors, regional staff, the Department of Education and Service Cooperatives work collaboratively to raise student achievement through support for all students. There are 6 centers across the State of Minnesota, serving the communities around Rochester, Sartell, Thief River Falls, Marshall, Fergus Falls and Mountain Iron.

Staff, Board Members, and Administrator Advisory Committee Members help launch SSC into 2014-2015

By Amy Grover

On August 13, twenty-three staff members joined with members of the Board of Directors and superintendents serving on the Administrator Advisory Committee to kick-off our strategic planning for the 2014-2015 year. As part of our ongoing continuous improvement cycle, we use this invaluable time together to gain fresh ideas, garner input, encourage suggestions, and discuss concerns.

This summer, using tools from the LUMA Institute's handbook entitled, [Innovating for People: Handbook of Human-Centered Design Methods](#), our goal was to examine our overarching guiding questions, identify our bold steps and initiatives for the year, and brainstorm improved ways to meet member needs. Activities such as *Statement Starters* (an approach to phrasing



The "Bulls-Eye" Diagram the group created during our strategic planning session.

need statements that invites broad exploration), *Affinity Clustering* (a graphic technique for sorting items according to similarity), and *Bulls-Eye Diagramming* (a way of ranking items in order of importance using a target diagram), helped us narrow down our high need focus areas. We also used a process called *Walk-a-Mile Immersion* (a way of building empathy for people

through firsthand experience) to examine our online registration system. We discussed critical touch points and utilized a planning tool called *Rose, Thorn, Bud* (a technique for identifying things as positive, negative, or having potential) to determine what improvements could be made to enhance this experience for our workshop participants and training attendees.

Our work was unveiled in our Annual Plan, which was submitted for Board of Directors approval at the September meeting, and then distributed to our membership and on our website. We have determined that our primary focus will be on needs assessment, marketing, and customer service in the coming year. And, yes, you can expect some significant upgrades and improvements to our online registration system this year as well!

SSC welcomes volunteer Bob Knecht



SSC is delighted to welcome RSVP volunteer Bob Knecht to its team. Bob began volunteering in July and has been an invaluable support to SSC's staff members. Bob has since lent his knowledge and skills to a vast array of projects. Bob, a retired

CEO of Knecht Industries of Rapid City, South Dakota, and World War II vet shared, "As a volunteer at SSC I've had an all around pleasant experience. All the staff members are very kind and helpful." Bob added, "I've volunteered all my life and my favorite saying is, 'Life's best work is service to humanity.'" Bob added that he especially enjoys knowing how the work he's doing frees up SSC staff members' time to work on other projects.

SSC's Director of Planning, Amy Grover, shared, "It has been such a pleasure to work with Bob. He brings an incredible amount of

experience and knowledge and imparts his wisdom through mottos such as "management gets what it inspects, not what it expects" and "time versus potential." Even when Bob is deep into what other's might see as a mundane task, he is constantly brainstorming new ideas for ways that we can better serve our members. Always willing to lend a hand, he has become part of our team here at SSC, and we couldn't ask for a more enthusiastic volunteer!"

New reporting guidelines clarifies ACA compliance tasks

By Bill Colopoulos

The recently published draft tax reporting forms and instructions have clarified how employers must provide information to their employees and the IRS under the reporting rules in IRC 6055 (the individual mandate) and IRC 6056 (the employer mandate). These reporting rules also create a good argument for employers to take a “simpler is better” approach when defining the rules and tools they will use to track and measure eligibility under the new ACA rules for defining full-time employees.

Employers must begin tracking the required information beginning 1-1-2015; regardless of their plan year and/or transitional relief qualification.

By publishing its proposed reporting forms and instructions, the IRS has removed the barriers some HRIS and payroll systems were waiting for before they re-programmed their systems to capture the data their customers need to meet their reporting obligations. Going forward, the “new norm” will be that payroll systems will be modified to capture and report ACA compliance data.

Eventually, such data collation capabilities will be further developed to download employer information directly to the e-filing tools the IRS mandates be used by employers with 250 or more W-2 employees. This evolution means that most third-party calculators and reporting tools currently in use



will likely be retired as employer payroll systems come on line with replacement services. This makes sense from a number of perspectives; not the least of which is that the IRS would require payroll records to verify all compliance information submitted anyway.

In the near future, it is likely that companies will rely on their payroll systems to perform the following three key functions of ACA compliance:

1. Track, measure and report eligibility
2. Track and measure offer of coverage
3. Track, measure and report affordability

Many payroll systems have already been adapted to these tasks.

However, as a word of caution, it should be noted that the reporting draft forms and instructions are still evolving. More changes and revisions are likely. But in the meantime, employers should be taking steps to measure and collect their ACA compliance data; using interim reporting tools and calculators as necessary.

Simple is better

Simpler approaches for determining eligibility will reap dividends for employers. For 2015, employers will be able to take advantage of a simplified reporting method.

For employers making qualifying offers of coverage to 95% or more of their full-time employees, spouses and dependents, they will be able to use a simplified 6056 reporting method listing the following information for each employee:

- Employee’s name
- TIN
- Address
- Indicator code showing that the qualifying offer was made for all 12 months or the specific months that it was not made
- Statement that the qualifying offer applied for all 12 months and that during all 12 months the employee, spouse and dependents will not be eligible for a premium tax credit (for the Exchange) OR
- A statement showing for which months the employee, spouse and dependents may be eligible to claim a tax credit.

Simplified reporting does not apply to minimum essential coverage reporting under IRC section 6055 (for individual mandate reporting).

Who must file under IRC section 6056?

Applicable large employers who employ an average of 50 or more full-time and full-time equivalent

Positively PBIS

By Katie Schmitt, PBIS Trainer

Starting the year well is one of the keys to success with PBIS.

Teaching expectations sets the stage and ensures students understand how to behave in every setting at school. Getting students on the right track will help reduce problem behavior down the road. Be sure to take your time in teaching students and revisit the expectations throughout the year. Staff also need a refresher to continue implementing and sustaining PBIS.

Below is a beginning of the year checklist to help you make 2014-15 a great PBIS year!

PBIS Kick-off Checklist

For students, teach and review:

- Expectations and Rules for each established setting
- Rewards and Consequence procedures

Review the following with staff:

- Expectations, Rules
- Definitions of Problem Behavior
- Referral Form
- Minors vs. Major
- Referral Process
- Rewards
- Consequences
- Changes Made Based on Staff Survey Results

Make sure all staff have resources from prior year:

- Poster of expectations and rules



- Discipline Process Flowchart
- Referral Forms and Minor Infraction Sheets
- Lesson Plans for teaching expectation

Provide training for new staff:

- at new teacher meetings
- set up new staff with a PBIS mentor
- provide a PBIS manual, PowerPoint or video

Most importantly, have fun and work on the 5:1, positive:negative ratio!

PBIS Program Updates

Coaches' Sessions: Coaches play an integral role within PBIS teams. To support coaches, the SRIP hosts free Coaches' Sessions. Sessions provide information, resources and networking. Mark your calendar for Coaches Training dates: December 4 and April 23. The sessions are open to coaches in Cohorts 1-9. View the Coaches' Flyer for more information.

Cohort 10: Congratulations to SSC member schools selected for Cohort 10: Caledonia Elementary, Caledonia Middle School, Goodhue County Education District, Lyle Public School, and Red Wing High School!

Sustainability: On April 30, 2015 the Southern Regional Implementation Project (S-RIP) will host a free, all-day team training session in Mankato to support schools that have completed the cohort training cycle. Trainers share information on community involvement, sustainability, team buy-in, revitalizing PBIS efforts, and best practices. RSVP to Bob Braun at: Bob.Braun@swsc.org

Become a PBIS School: PBIS is a framework to help improve student academic and behavior outcomes emphasizing four elements:

- Data for decision making,
- Measurable outcomes,
- Evidence-based practices,
- Systems that efficiently and effectively support implementation

If your school is interested in becoming a PBIS school, visit the Getting Started webpage at pbismn.org or contact me for more information.

Applications for the 2-year SW-PBIS Implementation training are available in the fall and due to MDE in January.

Student conferences quickly fill to capacity! Conference capacities to be raised next year

SSC's Science & Nature Conference, for students in grades 2-4, will be held at SSC's Wood Lake Meeting Center on Friday, October 24. The Young Authors, Young Artists Middle School Conference, for students in grades 6-8, will follow one week later, on Friday, October 31.

We're delighted that both of these conferences filled to capacity in just one week. Due to this demand, conference coordinator Katie Hartman plans to increase the size of each conference next year.

Check our [website](#) for more information or feel free to contact Katie Hartman at khartman@ssc.coop, 507-281-6667



Southeast Service Cooperative



Science & Nature Conference



Wedding bells ring for SSC staff member



Longtime SSC staff member Katie Sue Cunningham married Ben Hartman on September 13 at the Barns of Old Glory in St. Charles. Katie's new email address is khartman@ssc.coop.

SSC Board President Carol Cravath receives MSC Outstanding Service Award

SSC Board President and PEM School Board Chair Carol Cravath was recently awarded the 2014 Minnesota Service Cooperative's Outstanding Service Award at the MSC Conference in Brainerd. Carol has served on the SSC Board since 2007, most of those years as Chair and earlier as Board Clerk. She continually explores ideas for serving both educational and local government entities. Carol has contributed so much to SSC through the years, making her an invaluable member of the team.



Carol (center) is pictured with MSC Board Chair Jodi Sapp (From South Central Service Cooperative) and Bruce Jensen (Director of Northwest Service Cooperative and Conference Host)

SSC recognized for exemplary workplace practices - named one of the top employers for work nationwide

SSC has been honored with the 2014 When Work Works Award for its use of effective workplace strategies to increase business and employee success. This is the sixth time SSC has received this honor. Out of all the winners (a total of 284), SSC ranked #11 nationwide.

This prestigious award, part of the national When Work Works project administered by the Families and Work Institute (FWI) and the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), recognizes employers of all sizes and types in the Minnesota and across the country.

“Consistently being honored with the workplace flexibility award for six years is testimony to the commitment of SSC’s Board of Directors and Staff to generate high productivity, quality service, and operational stability with flexibility as a key ingredient. A collaborative, trusting environment and individual accountability make it possible for us to make work fit within our busy lives. Flexibility in the workplace is just plain good business practice.” said Suzanne Riley, SSC’s Executive Director

The award is the result of a rigorous assessment. Worksites must first qualify in the top 20% of the country based on a nationally representative sample of employers. Two-



thirds of the evaluation of applicants comes from an employee survey. Applicants are evaluated on six research-based ingredients of an effective workplace: opportunities for learning; a culture of trust; work-life fit; supervisor support for work success; autonomy; and satisfaction with earnings, benefits and opportunities for advancement — all factors associated with employee health, well-being, and engagement.

“These employers are making work work in innovative and inspiring ways and set an example for employers both nationally and internationally,” said Ellen Galinsky, president of Families and Work Institute.

“The When Work Works Award recognizes organizations that foster a culture of workplace flexibility and effectiveness, which gives them a competitive advantage. Their practices set them apart from other

organizations,” said Lisa Horn, director of SHRM’s Workplace Flexibility Initiative.

For a list of winners check out this interactive map, which includes winning organizations by state: <http://www.whenworkworks.org/be-effective/2014-when-work-works-award-winners-state-by-state>

When Work Works is a national project that shares research results on what makes an effective and flexible workplace with the business community.

For more information about the When Work Works initiative and the When Work Works Award (formerly known as the Alfred P. Sloan Awards for Excellence in Workplace Effectiveness and Flexibility) visit www.whenworkworks.org.

The 2014-15 Knowledge Bowl season has begun

By Kirsten Kuehl

The annual Advisors' Meeting was held at the Southeast Service Cooperative on Tuesday, September 16, 2014. Current and new advisors attended. Dates for this season were discussed and were finalized after the meeting.

There are currently 54 junior high teams and 107 senior high teams. Participation continues to grow each year. In 2013-14, 50 junior high and 106 senior high Knowledge Bowl teams competed.

The junior high season began in October and culminates with Sub-Regionals and Regionals in January. Senior high Knowledge Bowl teams begin competitions in December with Sub-Regionals and Regionals in March. The competitions consist of 1 written round (60 questions) and 5 oral rounds (45 questions/round). Five teams from southeast Minnesota will advance to the state



competition on April 9-10, 2015 in Brainerd.

The five teams that represented our region at the 2014 State Knowledge Bowl were: Medford, Northfield, Plainview-Elgin-Millville, Rochester Mayo and St. Charles.

The Minnesota Service Cooperative Knowledge Bowl competitions are interdisciplinary academic contests for students. Junior High Knowledge Bowl is for students in grades 6-9.

Senior High Knowledge Bowl is for students in grades 9-12.

During the contest, teams of students compete in written and oral rounds by answering questions related to all areas of learning, typical of secondary educational programs. Questions test students' recall, problem solving, and critical thinking skills. This competition provides a format for student growth, centered around academics. Teams consist of six students for Junior High (six competing in the written round and five competing in each oral round) and five students for Senior High (five competing in the written and four competing in each oral round).

Information can be found at www.ssc.coop. For more information contact: Kirsten Kuehl, kkuehl@ssc.coop or 507-281-6670.

Sumdog is drawing more students!

By Kirsten Kuehl

Sumdog's free educational games motivate your students to practice math, reading and writing - while you have full control over what they learn. Many schools in southeast Minnesota have participated in this math game.

One teacher stated:
I absolutely LOVE this website! I cannot say enough about how user friendly it is. We have so much fun... Thank you!



Students love playing Sumdog's multiplayer games against others worldwide - while their teachers keep control over the skills they work on. As students play, they are asked questions, selected from hundreds of Common Core aligned skills.

The powerful learning engine builds an understanding of each student, tailoring questions to their individual needs, and guiding their progress.

Check out information about this fun math program for students at www.sumdog.com.

Dates for 2014-15 in our region are:

- November 7, 2014
- February 6, 2015
- May 1, 2015

Math Science Partnership programming delivers to area science and math teachers

By Kari Kubicek

Forty-eight southeast Minnesota math and science teachers are participating in programming offered through the Math Science Partnership (MSP) grant project during the 2014-15 school year.

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. The Southeast Service Cooperative, along with project partners Winona State University and Hamline University, are providing these exciting professional development opportunities for grade 4-6 math and science teachers and any level earth science teachers.

This year's programming was developed for two cohorts including a 4 to 6 grade math and science teacher cohort and another designed specifically for earth science teachers. The 4 to 6 grade math and science cohort members are expected to participate in five full day sessions that began with a two day session in August and continues with three full day sessions throughout the year.

The module facilitators will also visit the math and science cohort participants' districts to observe and assist them in implementing skills and resources that they have gained from the program.

The earth science cohort began programming in late July this summer with three full days of field work and will continue with three full day sessions scheduled throughout the year.

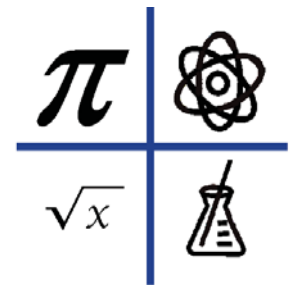
STEM and Inquiry-Based Mathematics

The primary objective of this STEM workshop is to focus on activities that promote understanding and integration of scientific and mathematic 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.

In addition to the five workshop days, the facilitators will visit individual schools based on cohort teacher request. These visits will allow for a more customizable approach for each school. A technology component will be built into some of the workshops.

The goals and learning objectives for this module include the following:

- complete hands-on experiments and activities to connect math to real-world scientific phenomena;
- collect and organize data, communicate the essential



Southeast Minnesota
Math Science Partnership

- 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.

This programming was developed and is facilitated by Nicole Williams, Ph.D., and Andrew Ferstl, Ph.D., both of Winona State University.

Earth Science Programming

The primary objective of this workshop will be for participants to join their colleagues for a hands-on look at regional geology

MSP continued on the next page

MSP continued from page 11

and hydrology, to investigate the content behind the earth science standards, to gather ideas and resources, and to expand participant curriculum to incorporate more student directed investigations and learning. The workshop series will consist of three summer days in the field and three days throughout the school year.

Participants in this module will:

- experience Minnesota geology by investigating the features of our region;
- delve into deeper content

- behind the earth science standards;
- 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 the classroom;
- investigate field sites for possible student use; and,
- develop a network of regional earth science teachers.

This program was developed and is facilitated by Lee Smith, Hamline University, and Toby Dogwiler, Ph.D., of Winona State University.

Please contact Kari Kubicek at kkubicek@ssc.coop with any questions about the MSP program.

Safety and compliance training and more for SSC Members with Scenario Learning



SSC has partnered with Scenario Learning to provide members the opportunity to ensure a safe environment for their students and staff with the following products:

- SafeSchools Training offers an online staff training and compliance management system and includes a library of 100% school-focused courses matched with a state of the art compliance management system,
- SafeSchools MSDS offers an online MSDS (material safety data sheet) management system that allows users to organize, update, and store chemical inventory lists and MSDS's into virtual binders, accessible from any computer with an Internet connection,
- SafeSchools Alert is an online incident reporting and tracking system that allows students, staff, and parents to confidentially report safety concerns to

your administration 24/7/365; and,

- SafeSchools Accident is an online accident tracking and first report of injury system that lets you record, investigate, and manage accidents and injuries anywhere on your campus, through any web-enabled device.
- SafePersonnel offers safety and compliance solutions for non-academic organizations including staff training, safety incident reporting and tracking and SDS management.

SSC has negotiated the discounted pricing outlined below for each of the above components for our member districts:

Product	Price	Minimum purchase
SafeSchools Training	\$5/FTE	\$400 minimum
SafeSchools MSDS	\$100/building	\$300 minimum
SafeSchools Alert	\$.50/student	\$400 minimum
SafeSchools Accident	\$195/building	\$400 minimum
SafePersonnel Training	\$10/employee	\$500 minimum

If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity, please contact Kari Kubicek at kkubicek@ssc.coop. We also encourage you to explore the SafeSchools and SafePersonnel website at www.scenariolearning.com.

Gifted and Talented Educator Network program offerings for 2014-15

By Kari Kubicek

We are excited to announce this year's program offerings through the Gifted and Talented Educator Network (GATE). The GATE Network offers assistance and support to districts as they continue to develop, modify, and expand programs and activities that benefit high ability learners at all grade levels. Its goal is to promote effective, thoughtful, and differentiated learning options for gifted children.

To help assist districts with vertically aligning their GATE program, we encourage elementary, middle and high school educators to join the network. Time will be set aside at the start of each session for participants to share their specific district's gifted and talented programming.

Program offerings for the 2014-15 school year are outlined below.

Gifted and ADHD: Finding the Hidden Treasures in Your Classroom – Thursday, October 23, 1:00 – 4:00 PM

The research focused on the potential of students who are gifted with ADHD has increased in recent years. Unfortunately, this population continues to be under identified in gifted classrooms. However, these students often demonstrate higher levels of creativity than their gifted peers without ADHD. Therefore it is important to approach education from a strength-based perspective as opposed to one focused on remediating weaknesses. In this session we examine the research



on students who are gifted with ADHD and the practical implications for educators as they construct classroom environments that foster creativity and learning to help these students reach their full potential

C. Matthew Fugate, Ph.D.

worked as an elementary teacher in the Houston Independent School District and served as a Gifted Coordinator and Magnet Coordinator prior to receiving his doctorate from Purdue University. During his time in Houston, he received his Masters in Educational Psychology, Gifted Education from the University of Connecticut.

Matthew's current research focus is in twice exceptionality examining the relationship between working memory and creativity in gifted students with characteristics related to ADHD as well as twice-exceptional secondary school girls and the coping mechanisms that they develop as they navigate both their academic studies and their interpersonal relationships. In addition, Matthew is part of a team focused on increasing research, identification, and servicing of gifted Native American populations.

He currently works as an education consultant and has presented to

parents, teachers, and schools in Arizona, Colorado, Indiana, Minnesota, North and South Dakota, Pennsylvania, Texas, and for the Sabah al-Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity in Kuwait on topics such as creativity, twice exceptionality, underserved populations, and Total School Cluster Grouping.

Psychological and Emotional Disorders and Gifted Children – Tuesday, December 2, 1:00 – 4:00 PM

Audience: School Psychologists, School Counselors, Teachers, Administrators, G/T Coordinators and Specialists

Understanding psychological distress and clinical disorders has become an important component of being an educator as more and more youth are identified with mental health disorders. We will look at the components of anxiety, depression, and autism spectrum disorder and how these diagnoses relate to gifted children. Learn identification of symptoms, preventative strategies, interventions, and communication techniques with parents and students to assist children in your classroom and school.

Teresa Argo Boatman, Ph.D., is a Licensed Psychologist in private practice in Plymouth, MN. She specializes in assessment of gifted children as well as interventions with families and children. Her clinical work focuses on helping children, adults, and families find solutions in their real world situations. In addition to her

Gifted continued on the next page

Gifted continued from page 13

counseling work, she consults with schools on establishing educational plans for gifted children. Dr. Boatman is the former president of the Minnesota Council for the Gifted and Talented and has spent years working with families in Minnesota on educational choices and emotional health for children and adults.

Opportunities for GT Learners to Explore Social Studies through the Minnesota Academic Standards – Tuesday, March 3, 1:00 – 4:00 PM

Audience: Teachers, GT Coordinators, Parents

Multiple opportunities for deep and meaningful learning connected to the revised social studies standards exist in Minnesota. This session will highlight benchmarks that provide possibilities for learners to explore civics, economics, geography and history. The Center for Social Studies Education (CSSE) website provides information for teachers and parents to engage K-12 learners with social studies through both projects and contests. Elementary students may participate in a Geography Fair, middle school students may create History Day projects, and high school students may participate in a Global Food Challenge – join us to learn about these as well as other programs for GT learners.

Jessica Winkelaar supports educators with implementation of the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Social Studies through the Center for Social Studies Education (CSSE). She is a Program Specialist in Education Outreach at the MN Historical Society and the Social Studies Content Specialist at the MN Department of Education.

Jessica spent nine years as a middle school social studies teacher followed by four years supporting educators through work with statewide organizations. She is a doctoral candidate in Social Studies Education at the University of Minnesota.

Helping Gifted Girls Grow Up: Tools to Navigate Adolescence and Beyond – Tuesday, April 28, 1:00 – 4:00 PM

Audience: Teachers, Counselors, Administrators, Parents, G/T Coordinators

This presentation will explore the influence of giftedness on the life experiences of teenage girls and women including: perfectionism, self-esteem, hiding talents, feeling different, “should’s”, and relationships with family and friends. Discussion will include tips on navigating stressors, taming perfectionism, and finding school or work/life balance. The goal of the session is to provide tools to support both parents and their children as they transition into adolescence and on to adulthood.

Megan Bearce, MA, LMFT, has more than 12 years of experience providing support and assistance to clients and specializes in working with overwhelmed career women, stressed out “supermoms”, gifted girls and super commuter couples. Megan is the author of *Super Commuter Couples: Staying Together When a Job Keeps You Apart* (Equanimity Press, 2013), a Midwest Book Awards finalist. She is a sought-after speaker and writer on topics including workplace trends, super commuter couples, perfectionism, gifted

girls and women’s issues and has been quoted as an expert source for stories in many media outlets including *US News & World Report*, *Forbes*, *Positive Parenting for Military Families* and *Profiles in Diversity Journal*. For more information, please visit www.meganbearce.com and www.supercommutercouples.com.

Registrants may either register for all four sessions for the year or individually. SSC Member cost for all sessions is \$225 and the non-member cost is \$245. Individual session fees are \$65 for SSC Members and \$75 for non-members.

If you are interested in registering for these sessions, please click [here](#). If you have questions regarding the GATE Network, please contact Kari Kubicek at kkubicek@ssc.coop.





DO YOU KNOW IF YOUR
TECHNOLOGY SPENDING
 IS TRULY

IMPROVING STUDENT LEARNING?

Southeast Service Cooperative has partnered with BrightBytes to help school leaders measure and drive the effectiveness of educational technology. This partnership helps the coop better understand the tools, resources, and services that YOU'D like to see in your area. Plus, it'll allow the entire region to leverage cooperative purchasing, bringing you the best tools to drive student learning.



WITH BRIGHTBYTES, YOU CAN:

-  **Use less than 1%** of your budget to ensure that the remaining 99% truly drive student learning.
-  **Attain greater transparency** into the district's technology spending
-  Drive better curricular design that **ensures that students are learning** the skills they need for college and career readiness
-  Improve results from professional development because of **better targeting of teacher gaps**

To learn more about how to get involved, please contact
Rob Residori, BrightBytes Educational Leader • rob.residori@brightbytes.net

Pricing for the BrightBytes Clarity CASE module is \$0.70 per student, based on the coop's strategic pricing.

Reporting guidelines continued from page 6

employees in the prior calendar year must file the required 6056 forms and furnish copies of the forms to each employee and the IRS.

What forms are used to report this information?

Forms 1094-C and 1095-C

When are the forms due?

The first reporting year of 2015 must be filed no later than 2-28-2016 (3-31-2016 for electronic filings). There will likely be updates

and revisions made between now and when the reporting deadlines arrive. However, it is prudent for all large employers to begin gathering the required information now to meet their reporting requirements.

DISCLAIMER

This information is intended for general information purposes only. It is not to be construed as legal or tax advice.

Any U.S. federal tax or other regulatory agency references made

herein are not intended to be used, and cannot be used, by any person or business entity for the purpose of avoiding any penalties that may be imposed by the IRS or any other governing agency, state or federal. Under IRS rules governing tax advice, a taxpayer may rely on professional advice to avoid federal tax penalties only if that advice is provided in a tax opinion that conforms to federal requirements.

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

Express continued from page 1

The Express/SMART Finance integration is now complete, so schools can access contracted discounts easily through SMART eR. The Express/Skyward integration is also nearing completion.

Recently added is a new Quote Request function for larger technology projects. Quote Requests are a great way to receive a quote from several of our technology vendors for large or custom orders. Members can specify product needs, track quote progress and receive quotes within Express.

Another great feature is the approval workflows. The Express can conform to your organization's order approval process by creating a custom hierarchy. Imagine staff requisitions being completed electronically, sent to the building supervisor for initial approval, and then submitted to the business manager for final approval - all electronically! Approving staff will receive email notifications when an order is waiting to be reviewed. That order can be approved, modified,

or declined and either passed back to the initial purchaser or on to the final approval. Once approved, Express will take it from there by submitting the order to each of the vendors added to the cart.

Your staff can also be set up as transfer cart users. This will allow them to shop for products and transfer the shopping cart to business office staff or department heads than can place the order within Express. This option keeps the purchasing card and/or PO in the hands of the business office staff.

Express support is available Monday through Friday. Great customer service is just a phone call or email away. Call 888-739-3289, Monday-Friday 8:00am - 4:00pm (Excluding Holidays) or email: express@purchasingconnection.org

How can I learn more about Express?

Contact me at kschmitt@ssc.coop for a tutorial via WebEx or in-person.

The links listed below, available at www.cpcexpress.org or www.ssc.coop, are a great place to start. [Video Tutorials](#) [Express User Guide](#) [Express FAQ](#) [Express Quote Requests](#) [Express: How to order in SMART eR](#) [Express: How to transfer a web order from SMART eR](#) SMART Finance and Skyward video training tutorials will be coming soon.

How do we sign up?

For schools using SMART Finance or Skyward, contact me or contact the Express helpline at express@purchasingconnection.org. We will help you set up the Express punch-out in your finance software and assist with training.

For members not utilizing SMART or Skyward, register online at www.cpcexpress.org or contact me to help you set up an approval workflow process or access the transfer cart option for staff.

SEMLAC continued from page 1

Evaluations have shown incredibly positive results. Administrators have felt that this was a very valuable investment and beneficial to all involved. Over the years, the structure and activities have been modified based on best practice, member needs, and teacher feedback.

While continuing to support effective PLCs, the primary focus for the next phase of this project will shift to **The Changing Role of Educators**. Through this theme, sessions will be developed and offered that cover topics such as student-centered classrooms, flipped learning, peer coaching, the use of online tools such as Schoology, building a culture of community, asking good questions, facilitating student dialogue, content area literacy, developing creativity skills, safety and security, etc.

2014-2015 Planned Activities

- **Common Professional Development Day – Monday, October 20, 2014, 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM.** This combined day is for all teaching and other licensed staff, as well as administrators, and is being held at Dover-Eyota High School for all SEMMLAC districts. The event will feature Dr. Phil Schlechty as the keynote speaker who will open the event addressing the entire group, followed by meeting with primary/intermediate, secondary, and administrator groups separately. Dr. Schlechty has written seven books and directs the Schlechty Center in Louisville, Kentucky, a center

devoted to positive school reform, leadership, and student engagement. Dr. Schlechty's focus will be on using PLCs as a tool in student engagement. During the specialized sessions, participants will have the opportunity to ask questions and learn specifically how to increase student engagement at their grade levels. Another component of the day will be various breakout sessions featuring a wide array of topics and teachers will be able to select what interests them most.

- **District Leadership Team Training – Tuesday, August 12, 2014 and Friday, January 23, 2015.** District teams of 5-8 individuals convened on August 12 at the first District Leadership Team Training for the year with Dr. Ed Porthan of Embracing Excellence. This training focused on the importance of observations, feedback, and growth, as well as identifying what and how to look for effective teaching strategies that result in learning. The January 23 session will be used to review information, discuss progress, and expand into brain-compatible classroom practices.
- **Teacher-to-Teacher Collaboration Opportunities.** Additional Teacher-to-Teacher sessions will be scheduled in February and March 2015 to further encourage inter-district dialogue and sharing. These half-days will be scheduled for smaller job-alike groups ("singletons") that typically do not have professional

colleagues to collaborate with at their own sites. Non-SEMLAC teachers will also be invited to further expand these networks, for a low non-member participant fee. These groups will include Music, Art, Spanish, ECFE, Counselors, Industrial Tech, Speech/Language Pathologists, Business, Health, and Title I/ADSI. Content-area specialists will be identified to facilitate these conversations, as well as provide specific information about best practices and instructional strategies.

Feel free to contact Kari Kubicek at kkubicek@ssc.coop with any questions about SEMMLAC.

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:

May 2014 Meeting

Approved and accepted the items on the consent agenda.

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

Approved the transfer of \$400,000 from the CCOGA Health pool RSR margin fund to the IBNR fund to be reserved for IBNR risk coverage.

Approved contracts with the following consultants for the 2014-2015 year: Lobbyist contracts with Capitol Hill Associates, Lindquist & Venum, National Strategies, Inc. and David A. Biegging Law Office PLLC; The Kinney Firm, and Creative Benefit Consultants for a final year.

Accepted a contract with Lakes Country Service Cooperative to provide Nicole LaChapelle's services as a SHIP Grantee trainer in conjunction with the

Minnesota Department of Health program.

Adopted the proposed membership and service fees for 2014-2015.

Accepted the application of ESV Region 5 for Associate Membership effective July 1, 2014.

Amended the Personnel Committee recommendation by adding continuation of a \$3,500 maximum allocation in 2014-2015 for bonuses under the same terms and conditions set for 2013-2014.

Adopted the recommendation of the SSC Board Personnel Committee for 2014-15 employee compensation.

Promoted Barbara Marchetti to the position of Center of Excellence SSOS Team Coordinator and adjusted her salary to an amount commensurate with the SSC wage guidelines.

Authorized staff to open the Center of Excellence positions of Special Education Specialist and Equity and Implementation Specialist and to fill these positions as soon as possible.

Accept a grant from the Minnesota Department of Education for the purpose of organizing and facilitating a Teacher Development

Community of Practice during the 2014-2015 year.

June 2014 Meeting

Approved and accepted the items on the consent agenda.

Accepted a grant contract with the Minnesota Department of Education for Year 4 Southeast/Metro Center of Excellence Statewide System of Support programming with federal Title I funds.

Accepted a grant contract with the Minnesota Department of Education to cover 2014-2015 expenses of the Southeast/Metro Center of Excellence in providing state initiative services to school districts with state funds.

Accepted grants from the Minnesota Agriculture Education Leadership Council and from the Rochester Area Math Science Partnership and Mayo Clinic to support 2014-2015 Mobile Science Lab programming.

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.

Nominated Mike Christensen for a new two-year term on the MSC Board of Directors. Ceased nominations and cast

Recent Board meeting actions and information continued...

a unanimous ballot for Mike Christensen.

Hired Bethany Sahli as Southeast/Metro Center of Excellence Data Special Education Specialist/Advocate effective Tuesday, July 1, 2014.

Scheduled the SSC summer strategic planning session for Board of Directors, Administrative Advisory Committee, and staff for Wednesday, August 13.

Approved the resolution committing to participation in the statewide 2015 School Health Insurance Pool Bid process.

Established the dates for the 2015 MSC Board Conference as Wednesday-Friday, July 8-10, 2015 and authorized the Executive Director to enter into a contract with Radisson Blu, Mall of America, to serve as the conference venue and caterer.

Authorized the Executive Director to contract with various construction contractors for completion of the SSC facility exterior remodeling, including paint, cement, brick work, and canopy.

Re-established the fee for the 2015 Young Authors Young Artists conferences at \$45 early bird and \$50 regular registration.

Adopted the 2014-2015 budget as proposed.

July 2014 Meeting

Approved and accepted the items on the consent agenda.

August 2014 Meeting

Approved and accepted the items on the consent agenda.

Accepted the recommendation of the CCOGA Pool Formula Committee, including: 1) adopting the 2015 Plan Year City/County Health Pool renewal formula, 2) increasing the specific stop loss level, and 3) authorizing the Executive Director to a) establish special conditions and adjustments for groups as warranted by unique group circumstances, and b) distribute a portion of the CCOGA Health Pool RSR Margin Reserve to 2015 pool member groups as a wellness incentive programming subsidy with parameters, protocol, and funding distribution to be established by the Executive Director.

September 2014 Meeting

Approved and accepted the items on the consent agenda.

Approved the membership resolution and joint powers agreement for Freeborn County Soil and Water Conservation District to participate in the CCOGA Health Pool effective 10-1-2014.

Adopted the 2014-2015 Annual Plan.

Established the 2014 election schedule (for 1/1/2015 Board service).

Held a closed meeting session in compliance with Open Meeting Law.

Received resignation from Kristin Scherman.

Accepted a grant contract amendment from the Minnesota Department of Education providing additional funding for Regional Center of Excellence services in the areas of ELA Standards Toolkit, ELD Data Analysis, and Teacher Development and Evaluation.

Approved the contract with Michael Coty to provide consulting and training to schools identified by MDE in the area of student learning goals development for a fee and pre-authorized expenses, with delivery of services to be conducted between September 8, 2014 and June 30, 2015.

Calendar

October*October 22***9 Essential Skills for the Love and Logic Classroom**

8:30 AM - 3:30 PM

*October 22***SSC Board Meeting**

5:00 - 8:00 PM

*October 23***Exploring Daily 5 and CAFE for Your Classroom**

8:30 AM - 2:30 PM

*October 23***GATE Network - Gifted and ADHD: Finding the Hidden Treasures in Your Classroom**

1:00 - 4:00 PM

*October 24***Science & Nature Conference**

8:30 AM - 2:00 PM

*October 28***Books for Science**

9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

*October 28***Preschool Book Arts**

1:00 - 4:00 PM

*October 29***The Flipped Classroom: Can It Work for Me?**

9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

*October 30/31***Observation and Feedback Skills for Instructional Leaders (Day 3)**

9:00 AM - 3:30 PM

*October 31***Young Authors, Young Artists Middle School Conference**

8:30 AM - 2:00 PM

November*November 4***MASA 1 Fall Session**

9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

*November 4***Clarity Informational Session**

1:00 - 2:00 PM

*November 5***Love and Logic: Advanced Topics for Classroom and School Culture**

1:00 - 4:00 PM

*November 6***Introduction to the iPad**

8:30 AM - 2:00 PM

*November 11***Echoes and Reflections: Leaders in Holocaust Education - Social Studies Teachers**

8:30 AM - 3:30 PM

*November 11***Echoes and Reflections Leaders in Holocaust Education: A Community Conversation**

6:30 - 7:30 PM

*November 12***Design in Five: Creating Meaningful Common Assessments**

8:30 AM - 3:00 PM

*November 13***Intermediate Excel 2010 for Windows**

8:30 - 11:30 AM

*November 15***iPads in the Classroom: Tips, Tricks and Apps**

8:00 - 10:00 AM

Grade 3-6 Educators

10:15 AM - 12:15 PM

*November 17***Marketing School Food & Nutrition Programs**

2:30 - 5:30 PM

*November 18***Introduction to Google Drive**

8:30 - 11:30 AM

*November 19***Enriching Our Classrooms: MN Native American Literacy Standards**

9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

AAC Meeting

12:00 - 3:00 PM

December*December 1***SSC Board Meeting**

5:00 - 8:00 PM

*December 2***Improving Literacy Skills using Foldables!**

9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

*December 2***GATE Network Session - Psychological and Emotional Disorders and Gifted Children**

1:00 - 4:00 PM

*December 9***Writing Bandits! Using Mentor Text to Teach Writing, Grades 2 - 8**

9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

*December 10***Winter Health Forum**

10:30 AM - 4:00 PM

*December 18***AAC Meeting**

12:00 - 3:00 PM

*December 29***SSC Board Meeting**

5:00 - 8:00 PM



SSC is a 2014 Recipient of the When Work Works Award its use of effective workplace strategies

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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