

Cooperative Connection

Fall 2015

Southeast Service Cooperative

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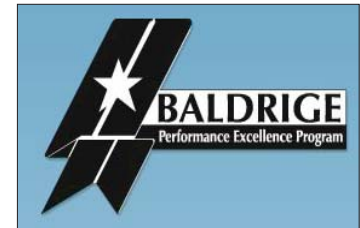
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SSC to employ Baldrige Excellence Framework to ensure growth

By Amy Grover

As always, the SSC staff are committed to moving programs to higher levels of service and quality. We conduct ongoing strategic planning activities and embrace continuous improvement. As we look forward to 2015-2016, we have organized our planning into two phases.

In August, the Staff, Board of Directors, and Superintendent Advisory Committee came together to discuss communications as it relates to SSC programs and



services. We used information gathered during extensive needs assessment surveys, as well as focus groups with our members, to facilitate our planning.

Our discussion led us to four key recommendations: 1) Improve the

Baldrige continued on page 12

Science and Nature conference delights 150 students

By Katie Hartman

The 5th Annual Science and Nature Conference for students in grades 2-4 was held on October 23, 2015 at SSC. 150 students from 11 school districts attended. This conference is designed to encourage students to experience and appreciate science and nature through hands-on learning. Students participated in four 60-minute sessions. Topics included simple circuitry, wind power, bubble creation, squid dissection, and reptile and amphibian discovery.



Southeast Service Cooperative
210 Wood Lake Drive SE
Rochester, Minnesota 55904
ph (507) 288-1282
fax (507) 288-7663
www.ssc.coop

SSC staff member updates

Donna Dickison joined the SSC team as Meeting Center Assistant in September. Donna assists with daily operations in the Wood Lake Meeting Center, including coordinating room and meeting arrangements. Donna also completes various other support tasks.

Donna has worked in the public sector, mainly with low income families, for her entire career. Prior to starting at SSC, Donna spent 24 years at Families First of Minnesota, most recently as the Child Care and Adult Food Program Coordinator.



Donna is originally from St. Cloud. She moved to Rochester in 1989. Donna and her husband Grant are the parents of two adult sons and grandparents of four boys. She

and her husband enjoy exploring the outdoors, attending their grandsons' sporting events, and traveling, especially to the islands of the Caribbean. Donna's bucket list includes skydiving, taking her entire family on a trip to see the ocean, and traveling to Tahiti.

When asked her thoughts on her new position, Donna stated, "I'm so happy to continue to work with the public." She added, "The people here are so welcoming and kind, I feel very privileged to be here."

Sue Haddad has officially joined SSC as an Organizational Assistant. Prior to this position opening, Sue had been working at SSC in a temporary capacity for the last 20 months. Sue's duties include handling accounts payable and support for accounts receivable and billing. She also offers miscellaneous administrative and instructional services support.

Sue has over 15 years of accounting and customer service related work experience with a background in telecom, real estate, manufacturing and retail. One of Sue's hobbies is decorating, which lent very well to

prior work in visual merchandising and home staging.

Originally from Winona, Sue and her husband Jon moved to Rochester four years ago. Sue has an adult son and daughter, and loves spending time at her cabin on the Mississippi, with friends and family, enjoying bonfires, barbecues, boating, fishing, and kayaking.

Sue shared, "After working alongside SSC staff through a temporary staffing agency for over a year-and-a-half, I am happy to finally be on board! It is refreshing to be



working with such awesome people, in a wellness-focused, professional organization – not to mention, one of Minnesota's 'Best Places to Work!'"

SSC's new Development and Innovation Specialist, Katie Schmitt



SSC is pleased to announce Katie Schmitt's promotion to Development and Innovation Specialist. Katie will focus on partnership building, member relations and new project/program development.

Katie has been part of the SSC team for six years, working most recently as a Program Manager. SSC's Executive Director Suzanne

Riley shared, "Katie's appointment to this new position at SSC will allow us to capitalize on her extensive background in strategic planning, program and partnership development, and her innovative thinking and leadership."

SSC staff members mourn the loss of colleague Joe Lutterman

The SSC staff lost our friend and colleague to cancer on September 13. Joe had been SSC's Operations Assistant since November, 2014. His obituary is reprinted here.

Joseph Anthony Lutterman was called to heaven on Sunday, September 13, 2015 from his home in Wasioja, MN. He was 61 years old.

Joe was born on October 25, 1953, in Jackson, Minnesota, to Vernon and Charlotte (Schott) Lutterman. He graduated from Dodge Center High School in 1971. He joined the U.S. Air Force in 1972, and was stationed in Tacoma, Washington. When he got out of the service, he attended college at St. Mary's University and Winona State University and graduated with a degree in Computer Science. He married Cindy Bute from Jackson, MN, on May 7, 1977. He worked as a computer programmer at IBM in Rochester, MN, as an Information Technology Department Manager at Wenger Corporation in Owatonna and he ended his professional career at Southeast Service Cooperative in Rochester, MN.

Joe is survived by his loving wife, Cindy Bute Lutterman, his daughter, Katy, and her husband, Niall McNeilus, from Dodge Center, MN; his son, Luke Lutterman, and his wife, Jill, from Sauk Rapids, MN; and his youngest daughter, Alison Lutterman from Rochester, MN.

He is also survived by his father, Vernon J. Lutterman, who lives in Hudson, WI; five grandchildren, Cohen and Andrew McNeilus, Blake,



Aidan and Isabella Lutterman. Joe also leaves six sisters and one brother, Kathleen (Dale) Romo, Villa Rica, GA; Melanie (Ben) Lovingood, Middleburg, FL; Mary (Arnie) Wilke, Woodbury, MN; Anne Lutterman, Hudson, WI; Elizabeth Allred, Tucson, AZ; Lynn (John) Dewall; Bill (Debbie) Lutterman, Hudson, WI. Additionally, Joe leaves Marge (Gary) Elzen, Faribault, MN; Ken (Linda) Bute, Jackson, MN; Ilene (Gordy) Ruskell, Jackson, MN; Dale (Liz) Bute, Sioux Falls, SD and Tom (Kelly) Bute, Rochester, MN. He also had forty nieces and nephews.

His mother, Charlotte A. Lutterman, who passed away in January, 2015, preceded him in death.

Joe's greatest joy in life was his family. He was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, son, and brother. He was a good man, a generous man, and a peacemaker. He believed in God and the goodness of others. He especially looked forward to and enjoyed helping others and Friday night evenings out with his wife and their friends Tom and Kelly Bute. He lived in rural Dodge Center, just a few miles from his parent's home. He

was a dutiful son and helped his parents daily without complaint. He enjoyed construction projects and especially building decks for others with his friend and brother-in-law Tom. His main interests included working in the yard, staying busy with his grandchildren by planting corn with Cohen, playing ball with Aidan, watching Cohen and Andrew play hockey, reading and playing with Isabella and watching Blake grow day by day.

Joe enjoyed following all Minnesota sports and was an avid Minnesota Twins, Vikings and Gopher fan. He was a very talented musician and enjoyed singing along with his family throughout the years. He initiated and organized the yearly family fishing trip to Canada for the sole purpose of uniting family. For eighteen years the fishing tradition has continued and a greater love of family has been the result, of which he is very proud. It was his wish that this trip continue on through the generations for many years to come. Joe loved life and lived it to the fullest. He had a contagious laugh, he cried, he danced, he sang and truly enjoyed the ride. In his last days on earth, Joe continued to teach us that love is what is important, to know and appreciate the greatness of a family, but most of all, to live a faith filled and honorable life. He left us all too soon, but he would say his blessings in life were abundant. He hated to leave us, but he fully accepted his assignment. It is easy to say that we are all better for having had him in our lives.

The Wood Lake Meeting Center is busier than ever!

By Peggy Merkel

Chamber Fall Showcase

Wood Lake Meeting Center highlighted our free off-street parking at the Rochester Chamber of Commerce Fall Showcase on September 14. Each visitor was offered a squeezable WLMC stress car. Nicole and Peggy enjoyed introducing the Wood Lake Meeting Center to potential users as well as receiving comments and compliments from past guests.



Peggy Merkel at the Wood Lake Meeting Center's Fall Showcase booth.

Flexible Catering

Meetings Made Affordable. Of course, this is the goal of many. Wood Lake Meeting Center is unique in our catering options. We do not have a kitchen or a list of caterers you are required to use. We offer fresh coffee with a variety of cream, sugar, and tea. We can also arrange for any food or beverage you would like for your meal while working within your meeting budget. We work with local caterers who provide quality meals at affordable prices. For additional savings and flexibility, we allow you to arrange and bring in food and beverage of your choice.

Aspen Room

Perhaps you have a small team that needs a place to meet, brainstorm, or work free from the distractions of your office. We are just the place for you. Our Aspen Room offers a board setting, complete with powered tables and adjustable swivel chairs. The room features dual projection for your presentation needs. One is a SMART Board, an interactive presentation board, which can also be used as a screen. The second is a large drop down screen. This room is equipped with videoconference capabilities to connect you virtually with anyone in the world!



The Aspen room

WLMC Happenings

It has been a busy summer at Wood Lake Meeting Center. Of course we have missed seeing our administrators, teachers, and students, but we have made many new friends who have made use of Wood Lake Meeting Center for a variety of meetings and trainings. We have enjoyed use by several new departments within Olmsted County. We also have a couple visits from MaxAbility (Southern Minnesota Disability Network). Maxability is a great networking event for SE MN employers and service agencies to collaborate to

provide employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

What are people saying about Wood Lake Meeting Center?

"As usual we had a great experience with our session. Always a great job!"

"You were readily available when we needed something or had questions. Very accommodating and pleasant to work with in making our day comfortable and enjoyable!"

For more information, or to book space in the meeting center, contact Peggy Merkel at pmerkel@ssc.coop or (507) 281-6666.

Maximizing incentives: Tips for PBIS schools

By Katie Schmitt

The purpose of rewards and acknowledgements in the PBIS framework is to recognize students for making appropriate behavioral choices and reinforcing school-wide expectations. It also serves as a training tool for staff to increase positive to negative feedback ratios with students.

Acknowledgement systems work best to support students in learning new behaviors. This gives schools the opportunity to keep things fresh. It's important to have a good understanding of where students are at with living out the school-wide expectations and identify one or two problems to work on based on behaviors by: location, type, time of day, day of the week, and grade levels.

Tips for developing your acknowledgement system:

- Design with school-wide consistency in mind
- Tie incentives to behavior expectations and/or academic goals
- Make it age-appropriate
- Vary rewards to maintain interest
 - o Frequency
 - o Short- and Long-term Goals
 - o Type of incentives
 - o Individual and Group
 - o Collaborative and Competitive
- Provide tangible and intangible rewards
- Involve students in identifying and developing incentives
- Get input from staff and faculty
- Include incentives for staff and faculty
- Experiment, evaluate and modify

Acknowledging Appropriate Classroom Behaviors

It is important to note that acknowledgement systems should not disrupt the flow of teaching and learning. Classroom teachers can experiment with options for recognizing students. Some teachers like using token economies, while others think it might damage a student's ability to develop extrinsic motivation. There is more research needed on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and correlating impacts on behavioral and academic performance. Getting a reward to a student immediately is not always necessary and delaying it can keep the learning going, although immediate acknowledgement is very helpful with younger students.

PBIS leadership teams can provide individual consultation with classroom teachers to customize the school-wide acknowledgment system to accommodate teaching styles and experience. Recognition efforts in the classroom should be part of a universal PBIS approach including: prevention, correction, 5:1 positive to negative interactions, building relationships, classroom logistics, and discipline procedures.

Examples of acknowledgements:

- Note home to parents or school principal
- Tickets or tokens
- Prize drawings
- Food
- School "bucks"
- Early out
- Pass privileges
- Socializing time
- Parking spots
- Mentor/Mentee opportunities
- School apparel
- Dress up days
- Homework pass
- Hold class outside
- Access to special student center (video game lounge, sofa at sports activity)
- Golden dustpan
- Hall of Fame
- Events: class parties, assemblies, field trips, mystery events, talent shows, picnics, carnivals, family/PTO nights

Final Tips for Success:

Keep it simple in the beginning and make it a team effort. Provide training and communicate how staff and students can ask for assistance and additional support. Be flexible, realistic, and remember, success takes time.

Not a PBIS School?

The next PBIS two-year training cohort (12) is set to begin in August of 2016. Applications will be available later this fall from MDE (visit pbismn.org for details). If you would like assistance as your school explores PBIS as part of your ongoing school improvement efforts, contact Katie Schmitt at (507) 281-6676 or kschmitt@ssc.coop or Kari Kubicek at (507) 281-6668 or kkubicek@ssc.coop.

Design a strategy to track appropriate behavior for individual students, groups and the entire class.

ClassDojo is a free, fun app to help with tracking and communicating behavior successes.



www.classdojo.com

Three SE MN schools selected to participate in School Climate Improvement Program

By Kari Kubicek

Three SE MN area schools were selected to participate in the School Climate Improvement Grant Program. This program is a partnership between the Minnesota Service Cooperatives (MSC), Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) School Safety Technical Assistance Center (SSTAC) and the National School Climate Center (NSCC) designed to support school climate improvement and bullying prevention efforts throughout the state of Minnesota. Zumbrota-Mazeppa, Spring Grove, and Red Wing have joined 17 other Minnesota schools in this opportunity.

Each of the above district's Leadership Teams completed a Readiness Assessment this summer, a tool designed to assist the leadership team to think critically about where their strengths are and identify areas of focus. A one-day training took place on August 18 at Metro ECSU in which the Regional Coordinators from each region along with principals or the school climate coordinator from the participating schools attended. The training included a look at the process of reviewing and utilizing the Readiness Assessment data, and an overview of the next steps of the program. This included background information on the launch of the Comprehensive School Climate Inventory (CSCI), a reliable and valid survey tool providing student, parent/guardian and school personnel perceptions of the school environment, including safety, relationships, support for learning, and the environment

within the school. The CSCI was open from September 21 through October 16 and students, teachers and parents from each participating school were asked to complete the assessment. A full-day training took place on October 28 in which regional coordinators from each region as well as principals and school climate team members from each participating district met to thoroughly review the CSCI report and discuss next steps and action planning based on the results.

Zumbrota-Mazeppa's Superintendent Gary Anger expressed how thrilled he is that ZM is a part of the School Climate Program. "We know that learning does not happen without positive relationships and culture. Thus, improving our culture will help us better serve our students and community," Anger stated.

Zumbrota-Mazeppa's K-6 Principal Quinn Rasmusson commented on how the program aligns with the district's focus, "Fostering a positive school climate and developing the culture of collaboration and openness is a district focus for us. We want to be able to serve our students, staff and community to the best of our ability. We felt that becoming involved in this program will put us in a good position to improve the education we offer."

This partnership's goal is to support educational leaders and school communities to engage in an effective school climate improvement process that supports students, parents/guardians and fellow school personnel learning and working together – under the

leadership of the principal – to foster even safer, more supportive, engaging and healthy schools that support school – and life – success.

School climate reform overlaps with and supports a range of improvement efforts that districts may already be involved with including PBIS, character education, SEL and/or restorative practices. This program is intended to recognize, honor and build on past and current improvement efforts in ways that are integrative and engage students, parents and school personnel to be co-learners and co-leaders of the improvement effort, under the principal's leadership.

Please contact Kari Kubicek at kkubicek@ssc.coop or (507) 281-6668 with any questions about the School Climate Improvement Program.

In addition to the work the participating districts are doing with the program, two School Climate Policy Institutes have been scheduled for October 29, 2015, and June 15, 2016. These institutes are designed for school district leadership teams that include superintendents, assistant superintendents, school leaders, and school board members, as well as for state education policy leaders. During the institute, participants will learn how current policies and procedures impact school climate. Everything from attendance policies to student discipline policies can affect school climate. District leaders will also learn concrete guidelines they can use to enhance district-wide school climate policies.

ACA compliance “Top Ten” recommendations for 2015

By Bill Colopoulos



1. Simplify employee health plan eligibility and affordability measurement methods.

Use the same methods that best meet the needs of the employer and employee when measuring eligibility and affordability.

2. Simplified eligibility and affordability measurement methods = simplified reporting.

Use a consistent personnel policy formula for measuring and tracking employee data. Manage your work force hours efficiently and consistently. Simplify complicated policies wherever possible. Segregate flex hours to be clearly above or below full-time hours.

3. Offer Minimum Essential Coverage to at least 70% of your full-time employees in 2015. This number expands to 95% in 2016 and beyond. Note simplified reporting is available

for groups who offer to 98% of their eligible employees.

- 4. Offer Minimum Value, Affordable Coverage** using contributions strategies that benefit both the employer and the employees. Compare costs of contributions vs. cost of assessments and availability of possible subsidies through MNsure.
- 5. Plan NOW to Avoid the Cadillac Tax:** Since the Cadillac Tax applies to the 2018 calendar year (regardless of health plan renewal dates) ALL groups are effectively only one renewal away from having their plans subject to evaluation under this new excise tax. This means you have one renewal cycle to put plans in place to help avoid the consequences of the tax.
- 6. Manage Spousal Coverage Offers:** Explore ways to encourage spouses who have coverage available through their employer’s plan to enroll in that program. Consider offering employee-child coverage options (not employee-spouse).
- 7. Encourage alternative retiree programs:** Help Medicare-eligible retirees to seek coverage through Medicare with supplemental plans.
- 8. Properly resource reporting efforts for 2015 and beyond:** Create and aggressively manage your 2015 ACA reporting work

plan. Be sure to identify what data you will need, where it will come from and what will be required to produce accurate 1094-C and 1095-C filings in a timely fashion. Put your finance managers in charge of this process.

- 9. Seek the right kind of help:** Be cautious when seeking outside help promising to “take care” of the ACA reporting function for you. Data gathering, in many cases, can only be done by you. Understand the roles and responsibilities of all advisors.
- 10. Consider getting professional tax filing assistance:** There are tax filing services that can submit the transmittal and return forms to the IRS for you. This may make sense for electronic filings. Make sure you engage a professional tax service for this function; being sure to understand what data requirements are associated with their service. Keep in mind that the quality of the filing will depend on the quality of the information you provide your tax service.

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

Bill is Southeast Service Cooperative’s Health Benefits Consultant.

SSC partners with Scenario Learning to offer safety and compliance training and more to members

By Kari Kubicek

SSC has partnered with Scenario Learning to provide member districts 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.

SSC has negotiated a special SSC Member District price resulting in up to a 50% discount on Scenario Learning products.

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 website at www.safeschools.com.

SafePersonnel – Safety and Compliance Training for Non-Academic Organizations

Scenario Learning also offers a suite of products developed specifically for non-academic organizations to assist city, county, and non-profit members in streamlining their staff training and policy administration. SafePersonnel is a suite of safety and compliance programs including online staff training, safety incident reporting and tracking, MSDS management, and accident tracking. These customized programs can be used by municipalities, hospitals, businesses, and other non-education related organizations to increase safety and compliance.

We encourage you to visit www.safepersonnel.com to learn more about this product. Questions? Contact Kari Kubicek at kkubicek@ssc.coop.



2015-16 Knowledge Bowl season begins

By Kirsten Kuehl

The 2015-16 Knowledge Bowl season started in October. Dates for the season have been set and can be found on the website.

Participation continues to grow. In 2014-15, 54 junior high and 111 senior high Knowledge Bowl teams participated. This means over 324 junior high and 555 senior high students!

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 Sub-Regional and Regional competitions consist of 1 written round (60 questions) and 4 oral rounds for junior high/5 oral rounds for senior high (45



questions/round). Five teams from southeast Minnesota will advance to the state competition on April 13-14, 2016 in Brainerd.

The five teams that represented our region at the 2015 State Knowledge Bowl were from: Dover-Eyota, Northfield, Plainview-Elgin-Millville, Red Wing, and Spring Grove.

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 open to 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 about the program can be found at www.ssc.coop. For more information contact: Kirsten Kuehl, kkuehl@ssc.coop or (507) 281-6670.

SSC offers Moodle hosting services and Moodle training for member districts

By Kari Kubicek

SSC continues to offer Moodle hosting services to member districts interested in facilitating online course content on a Moodle platform. A Moodle site requires a dedicated server and staff to administer and support users on the Moodle site. SSC's Moodle hosting service can provide districts a site to build and facilitate online course content without the worry of maintaining and supporting a Moodle server.

The Regional SSC Moodle site provides hosting of an unlimited



number of district-sponsored blended student courses and staff professional development courses on SSC's Moodle server. Regional decisions support the administration of the site including version upgrades and site settings. SSC administrative support includes course adds, student enrollments, password resets, and basic Moodle use assistance. Dependent on the overall Regional Moodle Site

usage, active user numbers may be limited.

If you district is interested in learning more about this opportunity, please contact Kari Kubicek at kkubicek@ssc.coop or (507) 281-6668.

Moodle Training

SSC also offers Moodle training opportunities to member districts. If interested in an SSC staff member traveling to your district to facilitate training for your staff, please contact Katie Hartman at khartman@ssc.coop or (507) 281-6667.

Three sources for STEM/STEAM you may not be using (but should be)

By Katie Schmitt

From Solar Robots to CNC and 3D Printing, SSC's Cooperative Purchasing Connection partners with companies to provide the supplies you need to be on the cutting edge and prepare students for exciting careers in science technology, engineering, arts and mathematics.



Two of our partnered-vendors, School Specialty and Nasco, carry a broad range of STEAM products for your classroom. We also offer exceptional opportunities with the following companies: Bio Corporation, Fargo 3D Printing and Midwest Technology Products. Each of these companies will work with you to provide the best product solutions for your STEM/STEAM curriculum.

Bio Corporation

Bio Corporation is your source for specimens and supplies. They are located in Alexandria, Minnesota. Bio Corporation has all the highest quality preserved specimens, live specimens, dissection equipment, safety equipment, educational movies, educational software CDs, anatomical charts and 3D models that you need at the lowest prices.

BIO CORPORATION Added Value:

Customers are able to return spent specimens to Bio Corporation (customer only need to cover the return shipping costs) for proper disposal. Some cities and counties identify scientific specimens as hazardous waste and Bio Corporation can help avoid additional disposal costs that could be placed upon customers.

Fargo 3D Printing

Fargo 3D Printing is a leader at providing a 3D printing turnkey solution. Their 3D printing pros will help get your classroom or organization up and running with 3D printing. They will help you choose the best 3D printers, software, and accessories for your situation. They offer on-site and virtual training options.

FARGO 3D Unique Perspective:

They use their products on a daily basis. They can tell you things the manual doesn't to help you get up and 3D printing fast.




Midwest Technology

Midwest Technology Products works to partner with educators to prepare the workforce of tomorrow. Setting the bar high for quality and service, Midwest provides an extensive line of industrial arts, career, and technology products.

Long-term Commitment to Excellence:

They celebrated 100 years of business in 2009. They provide personalized service to teachers and understand what it takes to help students succeed in the classroom and in the real world.

For more information on Bio Corporation, Fargo 3D and Midwest Technology Products, check out their vendor pages on the purchasingconnection.org website or the contacts below. Reference SSC's Cooperative Purchasing Connection to get your member discounts. If you have any questions or suggestions for CPC, please contact Katie Schmitt at (507) 281-6676 or kschmitt@ssc.coop.

Company <small>(click on the logo to visit their CPC vendor page)</small>	Products and Services	Discounts	Contact
	Dissection Specimen Equipment Anatomical Models Visual Aids	5% and free shipping on orders over \$250	Becky Hedstrom 800-222-9094 biocorp@rea-alp.com
	3D Printers Onsite and Virtual Training	5% off the list price for most items	John Schneider 866-326-3363 jschneider@fargo3dprinting.com
	3D Printers Automotive Hardware Small Engine Welding Design CNC Woodworking Metalworking Solar Kits Robotics Engineering	10% and free shipping on catalog items	Sarah Cruz 800-831-5904 scruz@midwesttechnology.com

Equating value in cooperative purchasing

By Katie Schmitt

Finding the right price for a product is important. Finding a great value, however, is an essential procurement strategy. Value is understood differently by each buyer. To formulate value, SSC's Cooperative Purchasing Connection examines product quality, price, use, timing, shipping, life-cycle, additional costs, service and benefits.

We listen to you, our members, to understand specifications and preferences for upcoming purchases. Every bid, request for proposal and agreement is designed to align with your

procurement needs and provide unmatched value.

The Cooperative Purchasing Connection consistently provides:

- Quality products and services
- Competitive pricing
- Exceptional customer service from cooperative staff
- Value added services that make vendors your partner in purchasing
- Variety in product lines
- Broad range of purchasing categories
- Convenience in ordering and getting the information you need
- Built-in sustainability – we are committed to members for the long-term.

It is an honor to serve our members in purchasing. Our goal is to help you maximize savings and value through this long-standing program. For information on the Cooperative Purchasing Connection, contact Katie Schmitt at (507) 281-6676 or kschmitt@ssc.coop.



SSC member schools named National Blue Ribbon Schools

We're proud to share that three of Minnesota's seven 2015 National Blue Ribbon Schools belong to SSC member districts! Nationwide, 335 schools received this designation.

Plainview-Elgin-Millville's 4-6 School, Rochester's Friedell Middle School, and Winona's Washington-Kosciusko School were each recently given the status of Blue Ribbon Schools by the U.S. Department of Education.

The National Blue Ribbon Schools Program recognizes public and private elementary, middle, and high schools based on their overall



academic excellence or their progress in closing achievement gaps among student subgroups.

The schools will receive their actual ribbons in a ceremony in Washington, D.C. on November 9 and 10.

Congrats to GCED on opening of ground-breaking school

Congratulations to the Goodhue County Education District on the opening of their 70,000 square foot River Bluff Education Center, which currently serves special needs students from Red Wing, Cannon Falls, Zumbrota-Mazeppa, Kenyon-Wanamingo and Goodhue school districts. The school is broken up into "pods", which provide students with designated areas to call their own. Pods are made up of classrooms, common areas, and patios. The school also includes a playground and full-sized gym.

Programs and services designed to create and deliver value

By Katie Schmitt

How does SSC select programs and services to offer members? Much of our initial work involves conducting and analyzing member needs assessments. Program and service concepts are screened for alignment with mission, vision, partnerships, cost and benefit for members. In some cases, we complete a Request for Proposal (RFP) to meet competitive bidding requirements.

On October 20 and 21, seven SSC staff attended a business strategy framework seminar that enhanced our view of designing programs and services to maximize value. The seminar was presented for several mid-western ESAs by Duncan Simester, Professor at MIT. The key learning components will be integrated into our business development and innovation efforts.



SSC staff members brainstorming at the training.

Key Learning Components:

- Focus strategy on member needs using precision problem-solving tactics.
- Solution development must provide value where it matters most for member and partners.
- Experiment with options and solution variables to determine best approach.
- Spend more time in thinking and problem-solving, rather

than jumping to obvious solutions.

- A common language for the strategy team is essential.
- Area experts need only be part of the strategy team at the early stages.
- Push thinking beyond core business to develop innovative insights.

As we apply this framework to current and future programs and services, members can expect SSC to connect solutions with value. Rigorous thinking and research will help us understand how we can serve members best. With this new business strategy framework, we will work toward our vision of, “Shaping the Future for communities of leaders and learners”. If you have ideas for programs and services that help shape the future in your community, please email Katie Schmitt at kschmitt@ssc.coop.

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structure/classification of programs and services offered, 2) Improve awareness and understanding of all of SSC’s programs and services, 3) Utilize simplified, targeted messaging to speak to the needs of the members, and 4) Meet our members where they are.

Based on this discussion, and follow up dialogue with the staff, our overarching goal for 2015-2016 is to maximize the value of membership by raising awareness and increasing utilization of existing programs and services by current members. To

accomplish this we developed three Bold Steps that will have a systemic impact during implementation, and which influence our detailed action plans, goals, and strategies.

Phase Two of our planning will occur after we complete our very first Baldrige application. We will have a cross-sector site visit this winter, with a written report that includes our strengths and opportunities for improvement to follow. Armed with this information, we will have a second round of strategic planning to respond to what we learn during this quality improvement process.

By using the Baldrige Excellence Framework and its Criteria for Performance Excellence to guide change, improve performance, and get enduring results, we can be sure to continue to grow.

Recommissioning is back

As the economy has improved, more building owners look to invest in energy efficiency

By Pat Weir, IEA, Inc

Building owners and operators are increasingly in need of a method to improve building performance. When staff is bogged down addressing occupant complaints and fixing urgent mechanical failures they cannot devote their time to the proactive tasks that allow a building to run smoothly. Recommissioning is a systematic method of analyzing the building mechanical systems and controls to resolve ongoing problems and to improve energy efficiency.

Energy savings is typically the primary reason most building owners start a recommissioning project. A study by Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory involving 332 recommissioning projects found that the median whole-building energy savings was 16% and the average payback was 1.1 years. Most of the energy savings results from correcting problems with the controls setup/installation, controls programming, or controls hardware.

Some of the most common issues found during recommissioning projects are related to:

- Controls Programming Sequence of Operation, Setpoints, and Deadbands
- HVAC Equipment Scheduling and Lockout Setpoints
- Measurement and Optimization of Outside Air
- Boiler and Chiller Controls and Setpoints
- Pumps or Fans Flow Control
- Airflow Balance, Leaks, or Pressure Issues
- Damper Control and Valve Control
- Coil Leakage or Simultaneous Heating and Cooling
- Lighting and Plug Loads
- Sensor Calibration
- Refrigerant or Condenser Issues
- Building Envelope
- Mechanical Issues Such as Broken Belt, Dirty Coils, Actuators Cycling

Most recommissioning recommendations are low cost or no cost to implement. For example, changing the schedule on a small



Broken exhaust fan with the motor still running.

5500 cfm constant volume air handling unit from 6am-6pm to 8am-3pm would typically save about \$950 per year. Making the same schedule change on a 20,000 cfm unit that runs 5 days a week would save over \$2,000 per year. Implementing demand control ventilation on a 10,000 cfm air handling unit would typically save typically save about \$975 per year. Changing the chiller lockout setpoint on a 245 ton chiller from 55 to 60 would save about \$1,100 per year. Closely analyzing the building automation system often leads to many energy conservation opportunities.

When starting a recommissioning project there are several important factors to consider. As recommissioning has grown in popularity, the number of providers and range of service has also expanded. Since there is very little consistency between providers for the scope of work of a recommissioning project it is important for the building owner to be involved in the process to ensure the value of the project.

The following are some important items to consider when starting a recommissioning project:

- Is the provider certified and experienced with recommissioning?
- Is the provider experienced at analyzing the building automation system and reviewing the controls contractor's work to identify control problems?
- Has the recommissioning contractor provided a detailed proposal that includes all items listed in the RFP? See: <http://www.cacx.org/resources/>

[rcxtools/templates_samples.html](#) for an example of a checklist to use when creating a detailed recommissioning RFP.

- Is the provider taking advantage of local utility incentives (Xcel Energy will cover up to 75% of the cost of the recommissioning study for their customers <https://www.xcelenergy.com/staticfiles/xcel/Marketing/CO-Trade-Recommissioning-Info-Sheet.pdf>)?

Finally it is important to follow through with the recommendations from the recommissioning study and verify the energy savings. A system can be put in place before the project starts to access energy consumption before and after the study. Making the recommissioning contractor accountable for the energy savings will help to ensure a thorough project. Energy Star or the Minnesota B3 Benchmarking systems are convenient for tracking energy efficiency before and after the project. Beginning in early 2016 Minnesota Xcel Energy customers can have their energy bill data automatically entered into the B3 system (<https://mn.b3benchmarking.com>). Energy benchmarking allows year to year comparison of energy usage with graphs that are automatically adjusted to account for differences in weather. Monitoring month to month and year to year energy usage can help identify issues and evaluate the recommissioning project savings. Building recommissioning is an excellent way to eliminate problems that lead to occupant complaints while also improving energy efficiency.

Again, most utility companies offer Study Rebates to help offset recommissioning costs.

Pat Weir from IEA, Inc (507) 345-8818 can assist you with understanding the benefits of recommission and utility rebates. IEA is included on the Excel Energy's Recommissioning Trade Partner Directory of listing providers who have successfully completed and submitted a study.

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

June 2015 Meeting

- Adopted the 2015-2016 budget as proposed.
- Accepted the resignation of Beth Sahli effective July 31, 2015 and authorized the Director to conduct a search for a new Center specialist.
- Accepted a proposal from markit for the final phase of the Wood Lake Meeting Center marketing and development project to be completed during the 2015-2016 fiscal year.
- Appointed Mary Blair-Hoeft for a four-year term on the MSC Board of Directors beginning July 10, 2015 through June 30, 2019.
- Accepted a proposal from CompuClaim for development, implementation, and management of Medicaid third party billing services,

including technical assistance from Greenbush SE Kansas Education Center, contingent on staff's completion of exploration and decision to initiate the service.

- Accepted the settlement report for the 2014 CCOGA Health Insurance Pool, and, pursuant to SSC policy on management of the Health Insurance Pools, credit calculated excess claims fund for eligible groups as outlined in the settlement document.
- Approved a contract with Next Generation Healthcare Economics for ACA management support to SSC groups in the CCOGA and School Health Insurance Pools for the period July 1, 2015 through March 31, 2016.
- Accepted a contract with the following legislative consultants for the 2015-2016 year: Capitol Hill Associates (Sam Walseth), Lindquist & Vennum (Bert McKasy), National Strategies, Inc. (Roger Moe), and David A. Bieging Law Office PLLC.
- Contracted with the Minnesota Department of Education to serve as fiscal host and employer for

state Center of Excellence Program Manager Ann Clark for 2015-2016.

August 12, 2015 Meeting

- Approved the recommendation of the Local Government Health Insurance Pool Formula Committee, including a) maintaining specific stop loss insurance level; b) setting the pool adjustment formula, rate band adjustments, and special group adjustments; c) establishing a wellness program fund; and d) authorizing the Executive Director to make additional adjustments for groups as warranted by unique group circumstances with local renewal decisions.
- Approved the hiring of Jane Drennan as SE/ Metro Center of Excellence Director effective July 20, 2015.
- Approved the hiring of Sonia R. Smith as SE/ Metro Center of Excellence School Advocate/Special Education Specialist effective August 28, 2015.
- Opened the position of WLMC Assistant and authorized the Executive

Recent Board meeting actions and information continued...

Director to complete a search and selection process.

- Opened the position of Development and Innovation Specialist and authorized the Executive Director to complete a search and selection process.
- Authorized the Executive Director to develop a job description for a C-5 level organizational assistant position in preparation to convert the temporary contracted accounting support arrangement to an employment arrangement and to work with the Personnel Committee to finalize the job description.
- Approved Associate Membership for La Crescent Montessori & STEM School, effective September 1, 2015.

August 19, 2015 Meeting

- Approved the joint powers application of Goodhue Public Schools for participation in the School Health Insurance Pool, effective September 1, 2015.

September 2015 Meeting

- Approved the application

of Goodhue County for SSC membership and the joint powers application for participation in the Local Government Health Insurance Pool, effective January 1, 2016.

- Accepted the withdrawal of Glenville-Emmons Public Schools from the SSC School Health Insurance Pool effective September 1, 2015.
- Increased the amount of the School Health Insurance Pool RSR Margin allocation for 2015-2016 local wellness programming.
- Approved the hiring of Donna Dickison as Wood Lake Meeting Center Assistant effective September 8, 2015.
- Approved the position descriptions for two newly created jobs: Organizational Assistant and Development and Innovation Specialist.
- Approved the hiring of Susan Haddad as Organizational Assistant effective September 24, 2015.
- Established the 2015 election schedule (for 1/1/2016 Board service) as

follows:

1. Nominations to be opened Thursday, September 24 and close Friday, November 6.
2. The ballots will be prepared and sent to local Boards on or about Monday, November 9.
3. Election ballots to be received at the Southeast Service Cooperative by Tuesday, December 29.
4. Canvassing Committee to meet at 4:30 PM on the day of the regular December Board meeting (currently scheduled for Wednesday, December 30).
5. Elections will be confirmed by the Southeast Service Cooperative Board at its regular December meeting.

Calendar

November

November 2-4

Junior High Knowledge Bowl Round Robins

9:00-1:30 AM and
12:30-3:00 PM

November 10

Introduction to Google Drive

8:30 AM - 11:30 AM

November 16

Echoes and Reflections: Leaders in Holocaust Education

9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

November 17

SSC Board Meeting

5:00 - 8:00 PM

November 19

SAC Meeting

12:00 - 3:00 PM

November 20

Intermediate Excel 2010 for Windows

8:30 - 11:30 AM or 12:30 - 3:30 PM

November 30

Junior High Knowledge Bowl Round Robins

9:00-1:30 AM and 12:30-3:00 PM

December

December 1-2

Junior High Knowledge Bowl Round Robins

9:00-1:30 AM and 12:30-3:00 PM

December 7-9

Senior High Knowledge Bowl Round Robins

9:00-1:30 AM and 12:30-3:00 PM

December 11

Navigating through Change

9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Out of this World Customer Service

1:00 - 4:00 PM

December 17

SAC Meeting

12:00 - 3:00 PM

December 30

SSC Board Meeting

5:00 - 8:00 PM

January

January 5 and 7

Junior High Knowledge Bowl Sub-Regionals

8:30 AM - 2:30 PM

January 9

Teaching Social Emotional Skills and Addressing Challenging Behavior

8:30 AM - 3:00 PM

January 11-13

Senior High Knowledge Bowl Round Robins

9:00-1:30 AM and 12:30-3:00 PM

January 20 and 21

Junior High Knowledge Bowl Regionals

8:30 AM - 2:30 PM

January 25

9 Essential Skills for the Love and Logic Classroom

8:30 AM - 3:30 PM

January 26

SAC Meeting

12:00 - 3:00 PM

January 27

SSC Board Meeting

5:00 - 8:00 PM

January 28

Introduction to Google Drive

8:30 AM - 11:30 AM

February

February 10

Stress Management in the Workplace

8:30 AM - 11:30 AM

February 17-19

Senior High Knowledge Bowl Round Robins

9:00-1:30 AM and 12:30-3:00 PM

February 18

SAC Meeting

12:00 - 3:00 PM

February 29

Senior High Knowledge Bowl Sub-Regional - Tier A

8:30 AM - 2:30 PM

March

March 3

Senior High Knowledge Bowl Sub-Regional - Tier A

8:30 AM - 2:30 PM

March 7

Senior High Knowledge Bowl Sub-Regional - Tier AA

8:30 AM - 2:30 PM

March 10

Senior High Knowledge Bowl Sub-Regional - Tier AA

8:30 AM - 2:30 PM

March 14

Senior High Knowledge Bowl Regionals

8:30 AM - 2:30 PM

March 16

RTI and MTSS in Action

9:00 AM - 3:30 PM

March 17

SAC Meeting

12:00 - 3:00 PM

March 18

Supervisor Training: Coaching Your Workforce

9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Out of this World Customer Service

1:00 - 4:00 PM

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

Editor: Nicole LaChapelle
nlachapelle@ssc.coop

Southeast Service Cooperative
 210 Wood Lake Drive SE
 Rochester, MN 55904
 Phone (507) 288-1282
 Fax (507) 288-7663

Office Hours:
 Monday - Friday
 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM

For up-to-date news, visit
www.ssc.coop

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

We want to be there when you call, so try dialing us directly at the numbers below. Our voice mail system allows you to leave a detailed message if the person you're calling isn't able to answer right away. If you don't know who you need to talk with, dial (507) 288-1282 or 1-800-657-6996 and one of our staff or our auto-attendant will direct you from there. To send a fax dial (507) 288-7663.

	name	phone	email	service area	
SSC Staff	Suzanne Riley	(507) 281-6673	sriley@ssc.coop	Executive Director	
	Donna Dickison	(507) 281-6684	ddickison@ssc.coop	Meeting Center Assistant	
	Amy Grover	(507) 281-6693	agrover@ssc.coop	Director of Planning	
	Sue Haddad	(507) 281-6672	shaddad@ssc.coop	Organizational Assistant	
	Chris Hancock	(507) 281-6671	chancock@ssc.coop	Bookkeeper	
	Katie Hartman	(507) 281-6667	khartman@ssc.coop	Program Manager	
	Kari Kubicek	(507) 281-6668	kkubicek@ssc.coop	Program Manager	
	Kirsten Kuehl	(507) 281-6670	kkuehl@ssc.coop	Program Manager	
	Nicole LaChapelle	(507) 281-6674	nlachapelle@ssc.coop	Program Manager	
	Peggy Merkel	(507) 281-6666	pmerkel@ssc.coop	Wood Lake Meeting Center Coordinator	
	Katie Schmitt	(507) 281-6676	kschmitt@ssc.coop	Development & Innovation Specialist	
	Bob Tweten	(507) 281-6663	btweten@ssc.coop	Health and Safety Specialist	
	Dale Walston	(507) 281-6675	dwalston@ssc.coop	Director of Operations	
	Center of Excellence Staff	Ann Clark	(507) 696-7735	aclark@mnce.org	Minnesota RCE Program Manager
		Jane Drennan	(507) 696-5772	jdrennan@mnce.org	SE/Metro Director
		Scott Fitzsimonds	(507) 421-6959	sfitzsimonds@mnce.org	Data Specialist
		Kelly Frankenfield	(507) 696-0277	kfrankenfield@mnce.org	Advocate/English Language Development Specialist
Lori Mack		(507) 993-7635	lmack@mnce.org	Advocate/Implementation Science & Reading Specialist	
Barb Marchetti		(507) 696-0274	bmarchetti@mnce.org	RCE Systems Improvement Specialist	
Andrew Schalm		(507) 696-0254	aschalm@mnce.org	Advocate/Mathematics Specialist	
Sonia Smith		(507) 696-2741	ssmith@mnce.org	Advocate/Special Education Specialist	
Carol Swanson		(507) 696-0229	cswanson@mnce.org	Advocate/Implementation Specialist	
Perry Wilkinson		(507) 696-4193	pwilkinson@mnce.org	Advocate/Equity and Implementation Specialist	
Consultants	Bill Colopoulos	(507) 281-6690	bcolopoulos@ssc.coop	Health and Benefits Consultant	
	Roger Jones	(507) 951-6749	rjoneshr@yahoo.com	Human Resource Mgmt Consultant	
	IEA (Institute for Environmental Assessment)				
	Thad Dahling	(507) 281-6680	thad.dahling@ieainstitute.com	Project Manager	
	Craig English	(507) 993-3654	craig.english@ieainstitute.com	Environmental Technician	
	Natalie Eskew	(507) 281-6688	natalie.eskew@ieainstitute.com	Environmental Technician/Support	
	Angie Radel	(507) 281-6682	angie.radel@ieainstitute.com	Senior Project Manager	
	Scott Stockdale	(507) 281-6665	scott.stockdale@ieainstitute.com	Health and Safety Consultant	
	Pat Weir	(507) 281-6677	pat.weir@ieainstitute.com	Regional Manager	



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