

Cooperative Connection

September 2011

Southeast Service Cooperative

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MSTP Mathematics and Science Cohorts offer teachers new learning adventure

by Heidi Knepper

The MSTP Mathematics and Science Cohorts are off and running! Sessions for both cohorts began in August and will continue throughout the 2011-12 school year. The focus for our mathematics teachers is rational numbers for grades 3-8, and for science teachers we are focused on life science for grades 9-12.

Science teachers spent time at Quarry Hill Nature Center and Cascade Meadow this summer. The next meeting will include a field trip to Forage Genetics in West Salem, Wisconsin.

- Demonstrate a multi-faceted and robust understanding



MSTP summer institute at Quarry Hill Nature Center

Math and Science continued on page 9

SSC Health Forum to cover wide variety of topics

by Nicole LaChapelle

SSC presents three health forums a year on a wide range of wellness-related topics. Members are asked what types of information they find useful, and forums are built around their responses.

The next Forum will take place Monday, October 31 from 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM.

Rebecca Lindberg, a well-regarded nutrition and wellness consultant in the Twin Cities area, will present *Navigating Today's Food Environment: Practical Solutions*



for Home and Work. This session will allow attendees to understand how the current food environment influences personal food choices and will serve as the foundation for this fun and interactive presentation. Members will leave the session armed with practical steps for

Health Forum continued on page 6

SSC offering two new student academic events

Science and Nature Conference - November 4

One of SSC's newest student academic offerings, the Science and Nature Conference, is scheduled for November 4 at SSC. This conference is being offered to students in grades 2-4 and is designed to provide students the opportunity to explore and learn about science and nature topics. Four 50 minute sessions are scheduled throughout the day that include some cool chemistry experiments and opportunities for students to meet some creepy, crawly, and even flying creatures.

Early Bird Registration

(September 8 - October 7)

\$40 per student

Standard Registration

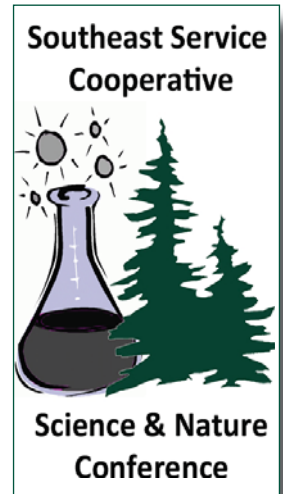
(October 8 - October 31)

\$45 per student

Conference Sessions

- **Meet Four Flying Feathered Friends: An eagle, falcon, hawk and owl** from *The Raptor Center*
- **Colorful Chemistry** with *Charles Handlon*
- **Get to Know Some Not-So-Common Animals** with *Cheryl Moertel* (animals may include a parrot, ferret, turtles, bearded dragon and snakes)
- **Bursting with Bubbles** with *Sharie Furst*

Interested in registering for this conference? Please click [here](#).



Young Authors, Young Artists Middle School Conference - November 10

SSC is hosting a Young Authors Young Artists Conference for 7 and 8 graders on November 10. This conference is being offered to expose students to writing and illustrating as an art form and to provide the students an opportunity to express themselves in a positive and creative way. Four 50 minute long sessions are being offered throughout the day of the conference ranging from creating characters, digital arts, and storytelling.

Early Bird Registration

(September 8 - October 7)

\$40 per student

Standard Registration

(October 8 - October 31)

\$45 per student

SSC will provide staff to supervise each session, along with the presenter.

Conference Sessions

- **Creating Characters, the Real and Imaginary** with *Elizabeth Hurley*
- **Ordinary + Ordinary = Extraordinary** with *Katie McKy*
- **Every Good Story is a Mystery** with *Michael Kalmbach*
- **Digital Arts** with an instructor from *Rochester Community & Technical College*

Interested in registering for this conference? Please click [here](#).



Gifted and Talented network kicks off second year with exciting line-up of presenters

by Nicole LaChapelle

In an effort to meet the needs of our membership, Southeast Service Cooperative is once again offering a Regional Gifted and Talented Network. The 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.

Although the Network has already kicked off for the year with an engaging session featuring author and Harvard-educated presenter Katie McKy, educators are still welcome to join the Network.

Please consider designating a coordinator from your school. The small district fee will allow anyone from your district to attend the sessions, not only the Gifted Coordinator. The fee for this professional development opportunity can come from your district gifted and talented funds.

Each meeting consists of a topic/presenter relevant to academic enrichment activities, students or teachers. Additionally, sessions include time for sharing program ideas; and discussion regarding student enrichment activities/events and books related to high ability students.

During the Network's first session of the year, on September 21,



Katie leading the Gifted and Talented Network Members through an exercise.

Katie McKy presented research from Harvard on the brain and group dynamics and discussed ways to further learning for students. Katie shared the correlation between observation and writing, the power of pedagogical unpredictability, how movement enhances learning, and how we can teach kids the most complex ideas through inversely simple explanations.

The Network's second session, on November 30, promises to be just as engaging. Doug Scholz-Carlson, Associate Producing Director from The Great River Shakespeare Festival will present on using theater as a collaborative art form and how theater can foster creative thinking. Doug, who is also an actor, will guide Network members through some exercises that can be brought back

to the classroom. He specializes in presenting to educators and will share how theater can be used as a good model of life experiences. Future Gifted and Talented Network sessions:

March 28, 2012

Presenter: Heather Casper from the Minnesota Marine Art Museum and Stefan Theimer from Cascade Meadow Environmental Science Center (This session will be held at Cascade Meadow, 2900 19th Street NW, Rochester)

May 9, 2012

Nancy Arey Cohen, expert Gifted and Talented Coordinator. She will present on parent relationships.

For more information about the Gifted and Talented Network, please contact Nicole LaChapelle at nlachapelle@ssc.coop or (507) 281-6674.

Healthcare trend cycles downward

by Bill Colopoulos

The trend factors driving healthcare benefit insurance costs (inflation, utilization, leveraging of deductibles, technology, etc.) are cyclical; typically going through multi-year periods of increases and decreases. Currently, trend is in a period of decline; actuaries and insurance companies generally agree it's down almost 2 points from a year ago. There are several factors that account for this declining trend:

Inflation

The price of medical services, is flat and, in some cases, deflationary (prices are actually decreasing). For example, some hospital service costs have gone down, due to less demand. Medical CPI is down to about 3% overall.

Utilization

Due to persistent and adverse economic conditions, people have become less likely to seek services that are discretionary or which can safely, or in some cases even unsafely, be delayed. The reason for this is that plan deductibles have become high enough to cause some people financial distress; paying their healthcare bills is a personal budgeting issue. Higher average deductibles also mean a lesser percentage of eligible up-front expenses are being paid by insurance programs; another negative impact on trend.

Leveraging

Keeping deductibles and other cost-sharing elements of plan designs the same from year to year means that benefit payment

ratios rise with inflation; increasing benefit plan costs. When the economy is strong, plan sponsors tend to make fewer changes in plan designs, which adds deductible leveraging costs to overall healthcare trend. However, in difficult economic times, this doesn't happen. Employee cost sharing increases are made in order to make insurance more affordable by lowering benefit payment ratios. When this happens, the leveraging component of trend decreases or can even become negative.

Technology and Rx Use

We are either in a lull period where fewer new (and more expensive) technologies are being developed or technological advancements are making healthcare more cost-efficient. It's difficult to tell which, or if both are occurring. But one thing is certain: new medical technologies are not driving overall costs higher in 2011. In fact, the trend towards increasing generic drug utilization suggests that less expensive forms of therapies are replacing more expensive ones. That is certainly true in the pharmacy arena; a significant driver of lower overall healthcare trend. Of course, how long this trend will continue is an open question. New "genomic" therapies that are vastly more expensive than existing medications are scheduled to come on line within the next few years.

What's next?

How much longer will trend continue to fall – and how low will it go? Both questions are difficult to answer. Insurance companies continue to disagree on exact trend figures or the reasons for declining



trend; but all are acknowledging that trend is still falling. They also all agree that trend will inexorably cycle upwards; perhaps with a greater "backlash" due to an unsatisfied demand for services that may be released once the economy improves or healthcare reform delivers on its promise to extend insurance coverage to people who do not have it today.

Provider Cost Shifting

There is also the lagging healthcare economic indicator of "cost shifting" to consider. Cost shifting occurs when healthcare providers charge more to insured patients to make up for the costs they did not recover from uninsured patients or other entities who didn't pay them – including Medicare. As the economy flirts with the possibility of a "double dip" recession and job growth remains stubbornly flat, the unpaid costs of increasing numbers of uninsured and healthcare payment defaults by people who cannot afford their cost sharing amounts; un-reimbursed Medicare charges, etc., are accumulating and will eventually end up on the bills of those with health insurance. Since it usually takes three or four quarters of cost shifting trend

Healthcare trends continues on the next page

Healthcare trends continued from page 4

increases to catch up in the form of higher insurance premiums, cost shifting will eventually spur an upward trend cycle all on its own.

In any case, the history of trend over the past 30 years suggests a down trend cycle of no more than 2-3 years duration (which we are probably halfway through) and a

return to a double digit trend by 2013-14.

For technical assistance with your group healthcare insurance planning, you can reach me at bcolopoulos@ssc.coop.

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

Consider Sand Creek for your employee assistance program

The Sand Creek Group Employee Assistance Program is a safe, comfortable, and confidential resource for employees and their families when they need guidance or advice with the challenges and problems of daily living. The services are designed to help employees assess and resolve issues affecting their personal and/or work life.

The Sand Creek Group offers help with:

- Relationship issues
- Work pressures and conflict
- Depression, anxiety, other mental health concerns
- Parent-child difficulties/ childcare resources
- Alcohol and chemical use problems
- Loss and grief
- Financial crisis or legal concerns
- Many other life concerns

Key facts about our Employee Assistance Program:

24-Hour Telephone Crisis Intervention

Should an emergency occur, help is available every hour of every day, including weekends and holidays.



Confidential

You can use this program with confidence knowing that no one will know you used the program or anything that was said in your counseling session. The highest level of confidentiality is maintained by the EAP.

Free

Employee Assistance provides assessment, counseling, and referral services for you and your dependents at no charge to you.

Professional

All of the counselors are highly trained, experienced, and licensed employee assistance counselors holding at least a master's degree in the field of psychology, social work, or related behavior health sciences.

Family Coverage

Dependents of employees are eligible to use the program. This includes college students living away from home.

All of us face crisis and have stress in our lives. We offer the Employee Assistance Program to help employees and their families find support and necessary resources when difficult situations arise. Please remember this program is free, professional, and confidential.

Cost to Employer Groups

This program is offered for only \$16 per employee per year for SSC health pool members or \$18 per employee per year for SSC non-health pool members. Optional Work/Life presentations and crisis debriefing are available at \$250 per hour.

Contact: Suzanne Riley, (507) 281-6673, sriley@ssc.coop or Nicole LaChapelle, (507) 281-6674, nlachapelle@ssc.coop.

Health Forum continued from page 1

healthy and affordable eating at home and at work.

A presenter from the Rochester Family YMCA will guide session attendees through yoga poses that can be done not only at work, but practically anywhere. Most of the Forum attendees either serve as wellness coordinators or are a member of a wellness committee within their organization. It is our hope that coordinators might bring back these simple poses and share them with their colleagues.

Kevin Luther from Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Minnesota will walk attendees through the new online Health Assessment that has just recently been launched. This version of the assessment

is the most robust to date, and personalizes questions based on the answers of the person taking it. When completed, users will find a wealth of online resources available to them from Blue Cross/Blue Shield.

The Forum's last presentation will be from Melanie Welsh, who serves as LeRoy-Ostrander Public Schools' wellness coordinator. Melanie will share what her district has planned for wellness for the upcoming year, and what activities they have offered in the past.

Time will be built into the Forum to allow Health Pool members to work on their funding applications from SSC. *(SSC distributes mini-grants for*

wellness activities each year to groups who belong to SSC's Health Pools. Groups also receive additional funding that can be used as a stipend for wellness coordinators and committee members. See below for more information.)

The Forum is free for anyone in SSC's Health Insurance Pool. Non-pool members are asked to pay \$25 to attend. Lunch, all materials and door prizes are included.

For more information on the Health Forum, or on SSC's Health Promotion Support Assistance Programming, contact Nicole LaChapelle at nlachapelle@ssc.coop or (507) 281-6674.

Begin or expand your worksite wellness program with funds from SSC!

If your group is a member of SSC's Health Insurance Pool, you are eligible to receive this funding. This program offers prevention-oriented health promotion services that can help you and your employees get fit, stay fit, and manage your health.

What can we use the funds for?

- Hosting a Health Fair
- Costs to start a wellness committee
- Stipends for committee members
- Incentives
- Biometric testing supplies (SSC provides glucose and cholesterol testing supplies provided at cost)
- Presenters
- Policy, systems and environmental changes at your organization

Contact:

Nicole LaChapelle, (507) 281-6674 or nlachapelle@ssc.coop

Schools - It's time to apply for funding!
(City and County Members have until October 31 to apply)



How much funding are we eligible for?

Depending on your group size, you can receive between \$1250 - \$2750 in funds for your wellness program.

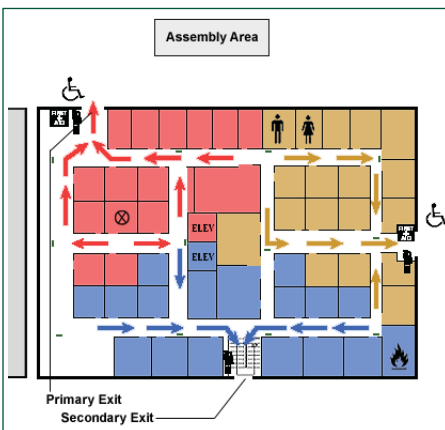
This includes funds for wellness coordination, which are used to either reimburse staff for their time, or for your organization if staff use work time to coordinate activities.

Judge the effectiveness of your emergency plans

by Dan Fitch, IEA

Does your district have an emergency plan? How well does it work? Has it ever been tested? Hopefully you will not have to test your plan in a true emergency; but to be as prepared as possible, conduct drills to judge the effectiveness of your procedures. Schools are required to conduct five lockdown drills, five fire drills, and one severe weather drill. Most districts meet this requirement, but how effective are the drills you are running?

The objective of an emergency drill is to simulate an actual emergency to see if your pre-determined procedures are adequate, identify unforeseen issues, and to train employees in their roles and responsibilities. It should be expected that not all



drills will run smoothly; this is OK as long as the weaknesses are identified and corrected. Here are some suggestions to help make your drills worthwhile.



- Don't inform employees ahead of time. They won't be given a heads up in a real emergency. Reflect that in your drills. Remember, drills should simulate a real emergency.
- Try not to schedule all of your drills at times that are most convenient to employees or students. Emergency situations are just as likely to occur when the weather is bad, all the students are in the cafeteria, or when the principal is on vacation. By planning drills at inopportune times, you can more readily identify issues with evacuation or lockdown
- Add surprise elements to your drills such as blocking an exit to see how people react.
- Practice what you preach. If your evacuation procedures call for staff to grab an emergency go-kit or a class roster, then make sure to do so during drills. This goes for all employees – if the principal is supposed to lockdown in his/her office, the principal should not be out in the hallways checking doors during the drill.
- Critique each drill and debrief employees. Identify strengths and weaknesses of your emergency plan, revise procedures where needed, and communicate with staff.
- Reach out to your community! Involve local police, fire, or county emergency planners to make sure your emergency plan coordinates with their capabilities.

For more information on emergency plans please contact IEA at (763) 315-7900 / (800) 233-9513.

Access top notch professional development opportunities with SSC

by Heidi Knepper

As Southeast Service Cooperative expands our professional development offerings to better meet the needs of our members, we will be highlighting some of those opportunities for you in the *Cooperative Connection*. We have two exciting new opportunities for our members this fall and winter.

An Ounce of Prevention October 27, 2011

Classroom behavior management and teacher stress have been well researched in the fields of psychology and education over the past 25 years. Difficulty establishing and maintaining effective classroom behavior management is one of the main reasons teachers leave the profession and a significant factor in student disengagement (Beaman & Wheldall, 2000).

Traditional approaches to managing problem behaviors have not been responsive to the behavioral and learning characteristics of students and although many reactive techniques are imbedded in schools, these techniques are not always supported in the research and may even have a detrimental effect on the student. During this session, participants will gain additional insights into various theories of behavior and be provided with many research-based strategies to effectively decrease challenging



behaviors and subsequently increase student achievement in the classroom. The presenter will be Karin Marquardt, Autism Consultant, a trainer for both Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports and Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention. Karen is also an adjunct instructor at Southwest Minnesota State University. Her training includes an MS in special education from the University of Mankato.

Co-Teaching Through Purposeful Collaboration February 2-3, 2012

The purpose of this two-day workshop is to provide participants with detailed information about creating and maintaining co-teaching programs in elementary and secondary schools as a strategy for fostering inclusive practices, providing access to the general curriculum, and assisting all students to achieve outcomes based on today's high standards.

In addition to an introduction that defines and overviews co-teaching, the workshop is structured around these essential components:

- Co-teaching system of belief
- Prerequisites of co-teacher
- Classroom practice
- Collaboration including co-teaching approaches and 6 models

Martina Wagner and Linda Harvieux, Regional Education Specialists, will facilitate the sessions. Linda was a classroom teacher for sixteen years, the last three in Las Vegas, Nevada. During that time, she co-taught in a dual language setting. Martina Wagner is an ELL specialist having worked in a K-12 co-teaching capacity. Her experience working as an EL coordinator and co-teacher helped ELs access the content and bridged language base learning strategies with grade level teachers. Collaboratively, they bring insights from both the classroom teacher and specialist perspectives. This dynamic duo will share the ins and outs of co-teaching adding bits of humor to help participants see the benefits of two teachers working alongside one another to reach all students!

If you have any questions about these or other offerings, please contact Heidi Knepper at hknepper@ssc.coop or (507) 281-6669.

MSTP continued from page 1

By the end of the Life Science cohort participants will:

- Recognize how historical and cultural context influences scientific discovery and engineering design
- Use tools, technology, math and communication skills required of scientists and engineers
- Facilitate the scientific inquiry process with their students
- Collaborate in the development of grade appropriate lessons and strategies for content specific integration of engineering into the science curriculum
- Develop grade appropriate assessments to measure process/achievement of the engineering standards
- Apply engineering design processes within life science content instruction
- Apply knowledge of how students learn science and engineering to improve instruction
- Assess student thinking using a variety of formative and summative assessment strategies and modify pedagogical approaches as appropriate

Mathematics teachers met at Southeast Service Cooperative for three days of hands-on rational numbers activities led by Nicole Williams and Susan Beseler. By



Cohort members presenting their work at the MSTP Science Summer Institute

the end of the mathematics cohort participants will:

- Establish the importance of vocabulary in mathematical learning
- Explore rational number representations using models in a variety of settings
- Utilize manipulatives to enhance mathematical understanding of rational number operations
- Offer examples of rational number problems to be offered as enrichment activities
- Connect rational number operations with skill development and assessment
- Evaluate the differences in rational number representations and their applicability in varying contexts
- Incorporate new strategies, content and

manipulatives into existing curriculum

- Review rational number strands in the MN Academic Standards
- Reflect on strategies to increase student engagement, understanding and achievement
- Compare rational number problems and types
- Explore the use of targeted interventions to bring students to standard
- Elevate the use of student work analysis as a means of formative assessment and professional practice
- Gather and analyze data on changes in teaching and student learning

Both cohorts began with days full of hands-on practice led by Winona State University and Hamline University professors. They will continue the adventure through a PLC format designed to deliver new content as well as to review what has been implemented in the classroom, and explore the use of student data for formative assessment.

If you have questions please contact Heidi Knepper at hknepper@ssc.coop or (507) 281-6669.

One year later- bidding adieu to textbooks: Byron Schools using innovate teaching and technology to reach their students

“Um, Mrs. Green? I forgot my book at school, so I couldn’t do my homework last night.” How often does some variant of that conversation happen in our classrooms? Flash forward two weeks—Johnny has repeated this conversation multiple times and now is in serious academic trouble.

Numerous reasons exist as to why Johnny is in this predicament—he truly forgets, he is afraid of trying, he is unmotivated and unengaged, he doesn’t understand the material. All of these are valid and real issues in our classrooms today and countless in-service hours have been spent trying to find an answer or solution. But, let’s face it- there is no magic, educational panacea for all students for all subjects. However, at Byron High School, innovative teaching and use of technology have made great strides in addressing some of these issues.

In the spring of 2010, the Byron math team was due to write curriculum; however, as is the case for many districts, administration was clear that there was no money to buy new books. We were unhappy with our current books, and we felt there had to be a way to make significant changes for little or no money. This is when all the factors of Byron’s innovative culture came together. Key components of this culture include the continuous improvement model, professional learning communities, professional growth academy (technology training), data-driven decision making, teacher laptops, SMART Boards, Moodle training, Google Apps for Education, a progressive

approach to technology, and an open-mindedness to new ideas.

We started with the state standards and developed essential learner outcomes for the department and each course. We turned to the Internet where we discovered many quality open source resources and textbooks. With SMART Boards in all math classrooms, the teachers had already recorded lessons, and now, with YouTube, lesson videos could be uploaded and accessed from anywhere. Moodle provided the “warehouse” piece where all the materials the team was developing could be stored.

It was this ground-up, teacher-driven process that allowed the team to approach administration and suggest that they could go “bookless” and still provide a quality, standards-driven curriculum.

While the overall “look” of our classrooms have not changed much from a traditional classroom, the number one change has been the 24-7 access to course materials which has proved to be the most significant improvement. Students are in control of when and how they learn. Students can “pre-teach” themselves by watching the lesson video before a teacher teaches it and students can “relearn” anything that might not have been clear during class. They can review solution manuals and access additional online resources, like games, Geogebra interactives, and other instructors’ videos.

The initial results our curriculum changes have been overwhelmingly



positive. Data analyses have the students performing well and liking the availability of the course materials. Unexpected things happened also. We realized that the video libraries we were creating could be used for best practice learning experiences within the department. We discovered the reverse classroom concept where video lessons become the “homework” and class time, where teacher and peer help is available, is used for the problems.

Other departments and grade levels have become intrigued and encouraged by our project and have launched their own initiatives. The entire grade 7 team has taken Moodle training and plans to incorporate it into their instruction. The high school social studies department is looking at open resource online textbooks, and the high school language arts department is implementing 9 - 12 grade e-portfolios.

As demand for technology increased last spring, we also piloted using PLDs (personal learning devices) in the classrooms, and since the pilot was successful,

Byron technology continues on the next page

Byron technology continued from page 10

we are now allowing PLDs in classrooms for educational use at the high school. Our next step is to create hybrid courses at the high school that could allow for alternate scheduling or off-campus learning. As teacher-driven initiatives, each project sparks interest and ideas for others which drives the innovation in our district.

While many schools may be waiting for Superman, we feel we have our own set of superheroes in our administrators, teachers, support staff, and volunteers. We will still have our Johnnys who will struggle for all of the reasons kids do, but we believe we are creating a system that lessens the reasons for kids' struggles and truly "maximizes the

learning opportunities for all." We will try to meet our students where they are in order to take them to places even they cannot imagine.

Written by Byron High School Faculty Members: Jen Hegna, Troy Faulkner, Rob Warneke, Darren Nelson, Karla Dee, Jen Green and Jeremy Baumbach

Byron receives national Intel School of Distinction honor

At a September 20 awards gala in Washington, D.C., Byron High School was one of six schools named as Intel Schools of Distinction for their demonstrated excellence in math and science education and their ability to promote students' problem solving, critical thinking and collaboration skills, areas called 21st century skills by educators. This honor, including the prestigious Star

Innovator Award, recognizes schools for exemplary instruction in math and science. Byron teachers say a "perfect mathematical storm" occurred when a need for new textbooks, the lack of funds for such textbooks, and a group of creative educators came together. Recognizing the value of a growing body of online instructional tools, as well as the fact that no single textbook could address all of the

required mathematics standards anyway, teachers decided to build their own textbook-free curriculum. As a result, math scores have risen dramatically, from 29.9 percent of 11th graders meeting proficiency requirements in 2007 to 65.6 percent in 2010.

Click here to view a video outlining Byron's achievements.

SSC's Online Learning program provides options to districts

SSC offers distance learning opportunities for member districts through its partnership with Southwest/West Central Service Cooperative (SWWC). These opportunities include both online and Interactive Videoconferencing (ITV) course options for students as well as course development assistance and facilitation opportunities for teachers.

Members of SSC's online learning program have access to the following:

- Access to the Moodle Course Management System (CMS) for receiving and offering fully online learning courses through the program.

Hybrid courses will be hosted on SSC's Moodle site at no additional cost. Instructors will be required to complete SSC hosted Moodle training to have access to Moodle site for hybrid/blended courses. These trainings will be offered at a discounted rate for SWWC Online Learning Community members.

- Access to online and ITV courseware
- Assistance with online course development and course certification to be offered as an online course through SWWC Online Learning Community

- Regional program administration and coordination with the Minnesota Department of Education
- Maintenance of the CMS, including program, software and server technical support
- Districts retain all state and federal funding for students enrolled in SWWC Online Learning Community courses

To access the SWWC Online Learning Community District Enrollment Form and further information related to the program, visit our website at www.ssc.coop or contact Kari Kubicek at (507)281-6668 or kkubicek@ssc.coop.

Online learning news and updates

47 Interesting Ways to Use Moodle in the Classroom

There's a great Google Documents presentation going around which features 42 (and growing) "interesting ways to use Moodle in the Classroom". It was originally started by Tom Barrett (@Tombarrett) but many other Moodlers and educators have continued building upon the original slides to create a dynamic encyclopedia of tips, tricks, Moodle-uses and module sneak peeks.

You can easily add your own tip or trick by simply opening and editing the document.

- View the presentation at: https://docs.google.com/presentation/view?id=dhn2vcv5_843fgbk2dk;
- Edit the presentation at: <https://docs.google.com/presentation/edit?id=0AclS3lrIFkCIZGhuMnZjdjVfODQzZmdiazJkaw&hl=en>

Check them all out, add your own and don't forget to spread the word!

MoodleNews.com, August 31, 2011

Moodle Training Opportunities

SSC offers training, opportunity and Moodle space for teachers to house blended or hybrid courses on our Moodle site.

SSC has scheduled several *Introduction to Moodle* trainings this fall of. To register for these trainings, click on the appropriate link below.

Tuesday, October 4, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Tuesday, October 25, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Tuesday, November 15, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Each of these trainings take place as a full day face-to-face session and introduce participants to the basic structure of a Moodle course and the tools available for adding content.



Upcoming SMART Board trainings at SSC

SSC will offer a variety of SMART Board trainings for users of all skill levels in the coming months. All sessions are geared to PC users.

Click the links below for more information and registration details.

SMART Board Basics 1

Monday, September 26

Wednesday, October 12

SMART Board Basics 2

(Attendees must complete Basics 1 first)

Tuesday, October 18

SMART Board Advanced Training

(Attendees should have attended SMART Board Basics 1 and 2 and have at least one year working with SMART Boards.)

Thursday, October 27

SMART Board Lesson Activity Toolkit

(Attendees must have completed SMART Board Basics 1 and 2. Learners MUST already be familiar with Notebook Toolbar, drop down menu options and side tabs.)

Monday, November 7, (Webinar)

Tuesday, November 22

What people are saying about SSC's SMART Board Trainings...

Wow! Katie Sue really knows her stuff with this Smartboard technology. I definitely will be back for the second class. She presented everything in a way that I could understand and at a good pace.

The pace was great! We kept moving so as to get a wide variety of experiences.

Very interactive. Our instructor did a great job showing many of the features of SMART software. I learned so much!

780 students attend Young Authors, Young Artists conference

by Kirsten Kuehl

The Young Authors, Young Artists Conference was held on May 18 and 19, 2011. Over 780 students and 132 adults experienced a day of learning.



Students in grades 4-6 from public, private and home schools across southeast Minnesota gathered at the Heinz Center at Rochester Community and Technical College campus for an exciting opportunity to learn and work with professional authors, poets, playwrights, composers, lyricists, illustrators, novelists, journalists, book crafters, and others.



SSC's annual Young Authors, Young Artists Conference promotes student engagement in the areas of written and visual communication, and is often an out-of-classroom experience that students remember for an entire lifetime. The conference has been held for over 20 years.

Session topics range from character development to extreme sport writing to book arts to watercolor artwork to storytelling. Presenters were



a mix of individuals who have presented at the conference in the past and several individuals who were brand new to the conference.

Many students submitted stories, poems and illustrations that can be found on our website (www.ssc.coop).

Mark your calendars for the 2012 conference on May 17 and May 18! More information and brochures will be available in early 2012.

[Click here to view our new Student Enrichment video!](#)

Knowledge Bowl season begins

by Kirsten Kuehl

A meeting for Knowledge Bowl advisors was held on September 19 at the Southeast Service Cooperative.

The 2011-12 season was discussed, including changes in the number of teams advancing to the State Senior High Knowledge Bowl competition in April, dates for the

junior and senior high seasons, Question Reviews and Invitationals.

Teams registered for Round Robin dates. Competitions for junior high begin in October and for senior high in December.

Information and schedules can be found at www.ssc.coop, click on *Student Programs* at the top of the page.

For more information contact: Kirsten Kuehl, kkuehl@ssc.coop or (507) 281-6670.



My Spelling Bee Experience

by Radhika Edpuganti

My spelling bee experience was phenomenal. If I could, I would do it all over again. I was first introduced to the spelling bee when I saw *Akeelah and The Bee* in the theater. When I first heard the title I thought it was just about a girl and a bee, but little did I know that by the time I walked out of the movie theater, that I would get stung by the spelling bee myself.

A couple of months later I decided to watch the Scripps National Spelling Bee on TV, because I had become so interested in the event ever since I had seen *Akeelah and The Bee*. I was awestruck, watching all the kids on screen spell words that I had never even heard of. The one thing I saw on TV that stood out to me the most, was how connected all the kids were. All the kids encouraged and cheered each other on; they congratulated those who went on to the next round, and felt bad when one of them missed a word. You could see a definite companionship between all the kids on screen and I knew instantly I wanted to be part of the spelling bee.

I was in sixth grade when I found out I had a chance at the spelling bee. I walked into my English classroom thinking it was going to be another ordinary class session; however, my teacher told us we were going to take the spelling bee test and a select few were to go on to the District Spelling Bee. After finishing the test, I was so nervous. My teacher said that the results of who were going on to District would be taped to her door later in the day. So for the rest of the



Radhika competing at the National Spelling Bee

day I was so nervous and finally the time came and I walked over to the piece of paper, scanned the list, and there was my name. That year I had gone all the way to the Multi-Regional Spelling Bee, and had gotten 3rd place. I thoroughly enjoyed the experience and I knew I wanted to do it again.

In eighth grade, I had made it to Multi-Regional again, and this time I had studied the roots, and origins of the words which had helped me a lot, especially when I was trying to decipher words I've never heard of. Finally my word came, the word that will let me go to the National Spelling Bee; my word was "digitalis".

The spelling bee in Washington D.C. was amazing. I got to meet new and interesting people and also got a tour of the magnificent Washington D.C. area. When we first got there we got this thick little book, called the *Bee Keeper*, it was like an autograph book. All we had to do was flip to the person's picture in the book, hand the book to them for them to sign. There would also be a little fact about

the person that was signing the booklet, which would have a blank in the sentence that they would fill in. This made us talk to each other, and learn where everyone was from. I even met a speller who knew my cousin.

All the kids at the spelling bee were fun and interesting to hang out with, and meet; even though we were all different in many ways we all had a common interest, the spelling bee, as well as a common nemesis, the dictionary! We had a BBQ event where I met most of spellers and Dr. Bailey. The next day we had a written round with 25 words where Dr. Bailey would give the word, definition, root, origin and how to put the word in a sentence. I thought I did pretty well.

The next day was the oral round where all the spellers are supposed to spell two words correctly. This is the round all the spellers like because we get a list of words from a spelling bee coordinator and they pretty much ask from that word list. I did well on this round and had the honor of sharing this with fellow Minnesotan spellers. Two of them made it to Semifinals! I missed attending the Semifinals by only two points. I was pretty upset the rest of the day, not only because I was no longer eligible for the spelling bee competition, but I was also was wondering what would I do this summer? Spelling bee has become an integral part of my day-to-day routine. I was disappointed that my time in the spelling bee has come to end, yet

Spelling Bee continued from page 14

I didn't let it get to me, I enjoyed every moment of Bee Week.

The spelling bee has taught me many invaluable studying tips, such as juggling school, sports, after school activities, and studying without getting overwhelmed. The spelling bee has also taught me to appreciate the English language and how it was formed. From studying so many words I also learned how to tell the origins of words and how they were formed, which helps me a lot in school.

I'm glad I participated in the spelling bee; it's an experience I will



never forget. I would like to thank my school for supporting me during the spelling bee, and my friends for always being there for me. I would also like to thank Southeast Service Cooperative for sponsoring me in

the spelling bee. Without them I wouldn't have made it so far. Finally, for anyone out there who is ready to go out on the spelling bee road trip, good luck, do your best, and don't forget to have fun!

Radhika Edpuganti was the winner of SSC's 2011 Southeast Minnesota Spelling Bee Final. She and her mother were awarded an all-expenses-paid trip to compete in the 2011 Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, DC which was held on May 29 – June 3, 2011.

Update on the MNTAAB Borrowing Pool


Applications are now available for the winter MNTAAB Pool

The MNTAAB program began in 1993 and is sponsored by the Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA) and the regional Service Cooperatives. The Minnesota Tax and Aid Anticipation Borrowing (MNTAAB) pool is available for all Minnesota school districts expecting a temporary cash flow shortfall.

As the financial advisor to the MNTAAB program, Springsted assists school districts to achieve a cost-effective and easy-to-administer alternative to stand-alone cash-flow borrowing. Over the last 18 years, MNTAAB has been successful in keeping upfront costs reasonable by selling a large pooled issue, resulting in economies of scale and low interest rates. The summer 2011 pool achieved an outstanding true interest rate of 0.365%.

Application materials for the winter 2011 Minnesota Tax and Aid Anticipation Borrowing (MNTAAB) pool were sent to districts on September 14, 2011. Application packets are also available at www.springsted.com/client-center.

Completed applications need to be returned to Springsted by October 3.



MNTAAB Borrowing Pool – Working to Save School Districts Money




Sponsored by: MSBA, Minnesota Service Cooperatives and Springsted

2009-2011 Cash Flow Borrowing Pool Results

| Pool | Participants | Par Amount | True Interest Cost |
|-------------|--------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Summer 2011 | 59 | \$212,920,000 | 0.365% |
| Winter 2011 | 9 | \$18,220,000 | 0.538% |
| Summer 2010 | 73 | \$271,405,000 | 0.448% |
| Spring 2010 | 8 | \$28,970,000 | 0.468% |
| Summer 2009 | 64 | \$118,900,000 | 0.613% |
| Winter 2009 | 8 | \$42,780,000 | 0.439% |

Note: True Interest Cost (TIC) is similar to the interest rate on a mortgage; it is the actual cost of issuing a bond, taking into account the present value (time value) of money.

For More Information, Contact a Springsted Representative:
 Patty Heminover at 651-223-3058
 Don Lillo at 651-223-3067
 Jim Schmitt at 651-223-3000
 John Will at 651-223-3099
 Stacy Childers at 651-223-3083

Recent Board meeting actions and information

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

May Meeting

Approved contracts with The Kinney Firm during the 2011-2012 year for legal services and with Creative Benefit Consultants, LLC for one year from July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012 for health and benefits development services.

Accepted a proposal from Delta Dental and National Insurance Services to offer voluntary group dental coverage to Southeast Service Cooperative member organizations.

Accepted the recommendation of the Personnel Committee for 2011-2012 employee compensation as submitted, including wage and benefit adjustments; the Executive Director's salary, and the 2011-2012 proposed Personnel Benefit Plan.

Accepted the retirement resignation of Kathy Hartman effective June 30, 2011 and thanked her for her contributions to school improvement efforts over the past year. Kathy is becoming an independent consultant and will continue to provide school improvement (AYP) services through a contract with SSC.

Adopted the proposed Service Fee Schedule for 2011-2012.

Honored Gary Kuphal, Plainview-Elgin-Millville Superintendent of Schools, with the 2011 Southeast Service Cooperative Outstanding Service Award.

Rescheduled the August Board meeting from August 24 to Wednesday, August 17.

Appointed Don Andring for a new three-year term on the MSC Board of Directors from July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2014.

June Meeting

Accepted Northfield Public Schools' withdrawal from the School Health Insurance Pool effective 9/1/2011. Northfield is instituting an independent, self-insured program.

Accepted the 2010 CCOGA Health Pool settlement report, and pursuant to SSC policy on management of the Health Insurance Pools, credit calculated excess claims funds to the City of Harmony and the Housing Authority of Austin.

Accepted a grant contract with the Minnesota Department of Education for \$192,000 to provide AYP School Improvement technical assistance as outlined in SSC's plan of work.

Approved AYP School Improvement technical assistance contracts with independent consultants Lesley Hauser, Kathy Hartman, and Mary Haney.

Appointed education member administrators to the SSC Administrative Advisory Committee: New Two-Year Terms July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2013:

- Area 1: Superintendent Ron Wilke, LaCrescent-Hokah Schools
 - Area 2: Superintendent Steve Sallee, Southland Schools
 - Area 3: Superintendent Gary Kuphal, Plainview-Elgin-Millville Schools
 - Area 4: Superintendent Todd Sesker, Faribault Schools
 - At Large: Rachel Udstuen, Spring Grove
 - At Large: Superintendent Jean Broadwater, Houston Schools
- 1-Year Appointment to Fill Vacancies through June 30, 2012:
- Area 4: Executive Director Cheryl Johnson, Goodhue County Education District

Adopted the proposed 2011-2012 budget with the amendment to remove funding for the position of

Distance Learning Facilitator and direct staff to revise the budget for the Distance Learning Program.

Terminated Kim Ross's employment effective June 30, 2011 and thanked Kim for his assistance this year in exploring distance learning options and in applying for online provider status.

July Meeting

Rescheduled September regular Board meeting for Thursday, September 22.

Approved contracts with Capitol Hill Associates, Lindquist and Vennum, and Bill Strusinski for lobbying services for the 2011-2012 year.

Board members and Superintendents Gary Kuphal and Dave Thompson conducted a strategic planning session facilitated by Heidi Knepper, Dale Walston, and Suzanne Riley.

August Meeting

Adopted the 2012 City/County Health Pool renewal formula and the resulting rate adjustments; approved maintaining the stop loss insurance level for the City/County Pool at \$125,000, and authorized staff to establish special conditions and adjustments for groups as warranted by unique group circumstances

Adopted the 2011-2012 Annual Plan as presented.

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

Thursday, September 22
 Wednesday, October 26
 Monday, November 28
 Wednesday, December 21
 Wednesday, January 25, 2012 –
 Regular and Annual Meeting

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

Calendar

October

Save Your License Saturday

October 1
8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Moodle Introductory Workshop

October 4
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

MSTP Math Cohort

October 4
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Jr High Knowledge Bowl Round Robins

October 5, 6 & 7
9:00 AM - 11:30 AM &
12:30 - 3:00 PM

Improvement Plan Development Series

October 11, 12 & 13
9:00 AM - 3:30 PM

SMART Board Basics 1

October 12
3:30 - 6:30 PM

An Introduction to Study Island

October 13
11:30 AM - 1:00 PM

SMART Board Basics 2

October 18
3:30 - 6:30 PM

AAC Meeting

October 20
12:00 - 3:00 PM

Moodle Introductory Workshop

October 25
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Improvement Plan Development Series (3.1 Schools Only)

October 25
9:00 AM - 3:30 PM

911 Improvement Plan Work Day

October 26
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Thinkfinity Training for K-6 Teachers (Webinar)

October 26
3:30 - 5:30 PM

SSC Board Meeting

October 26
5:30 - 8:00 PM

An Ounce of Prevention: Proactive Behavior Management Strategies for the Classroom

October 27
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

SMART Board Advanced Training

October 27
12:00 - 3:00 PM

SSC Health Forum

October 31
9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

November

Jr High Knowledge Bowl Round Robins

November 1, 2 & 3
9:00 AM - 11:30 AM &
12:30 - 3:00 PM

Science & Nature Conference

November 4
8:30 AM - 1:30 PM

SMART Board Lesson Activity Toolkit 2.0

November 7
4:00 - 7:00 PM

Improvement Plan Development Series (3.1 Schools Only)

November 8
9:00 AM - 3:30 PM

MASA Region 1 Administrators Fall 2011 Session

November 9
11:30 AM - 2:30 PM

Young Authors, Young Artists Middle School Conference

November 10
8:30 AM - 1:25 PM

Thinkfinity Training for 7-12 Teachers (Webinar)

November 14
3:30 - 5:30 PM

Moodle Introductory Workshop

November 15
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Improvement Plan Development Series - Session 3

November 15, 16 & 18
9:00 AM - 3:30 PM

AAC Meeting

November 17
12:00 - 3:00 PM

SMART Board Lesson Activity Toolkit

November 22
8:30 AM - 1:30 PM

SSC Board Meeting

November 28
5:30 - 8:00 PM

911 Improvement Plan Work Day

November 30
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Gifted and Talented Network

November 30
12:00 - 3:00 PM



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

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

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

Call toll free, 1-800-657-6996, then an option:

- 1..... Cooperative Purchasing
- 2..... Dental Reimbursement
- 3..... Staff Development
- 4..... EHSM
- 5..... Student Academics & Conferences

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

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SSC to offer Save Your License Saturday - October 1

Will you need to renew your teaching license soon? SSC will offer Save Your License Saturday on October 1. The sessions will be held from 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM at SSC's Wood Lake Meeting Center. Attendees may register for as few or many sessions as they require.

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

- **Accommodations to Meet Graduation Standards** addresses accommodation, modification, and adaptation of curriculum, materials and instruction to appropriately meet the needs of varied students in achieving graduation standards.
- **Reading Literacy** addresses comprehensive, scientifically-based reading instruction to include instruction and practice in phonemic awareness, phonics and other word recognition skills, and guided oral reading for beginning reader, as well as extensive silent reading and vocabulary instruction.
- **Warning Signs of Mental Health Disorders** addresses understanding of key warning signs for early-onset mental illness in children and adolescents.
- **Positive Behavioral Intervention Strategies** addresses positive behavioral intervention strategies.