

Spring, 2006

Developing the 2006 MASE Legislative Platform

by **Don Schuld**
Assistant Superintendent,
Stillwater Area Schools;
MASE Past President; and
Co-Chair MASE Legislative
Committee

and

Darren Kermes
Director of Special Services,
New Prague Area Schools
and Co-Chair MASE
Legislative Committee

When is “less” really “more?”
The MASE Legislative
Committee offers one example
in its recently approved
Legislative Platform.
Specifically, MASE, along with
other organizations such as
MASA and CEC, proposes the
elimination of state laws and
rules that exceed federal
requirements unless there is
agreement among critical
stakeholders that such
standards are necessary to
ensure the provision of quality
special education services.

IDEA requires each state
education agency to identify
state-level laws and rules that
impose requirements not found
in federal law or regulation.
MDE recently posted a
document entitled Minnesota
Statutory Provisions that
Impose a Requirement Not

Required by the Federal Laws
or Regulations. The document,
also referred to as Section 608,
outlines the state standards that
MDE believes exceed the
federal standards. We are
presently in the midst of a 60
day comment period that runs
through the end of March 2006.
The MASE Legislative
Committee encourages all
MASE members to review the
Section 608 document and
submit comments or concerns
to MDE.

The MASE Legislative
Committee proposes the use of
the finalized MDE document as
a framework around which
stakeholders would meet and
examine the need to retain
standards identified to be in
excess of federal requirements.
MASE proposes that those
Minnesota provisions in excess
of federal standards be
repealed unless there is
consensus among the
stakeholders to retain specific
provisions for the benefit of
children and youth with
disabilities.

It should be noted that the
MASE Legislative Committee
does not support the repeal of
state standards related to the
provision of services to children
prior to age three. Rather, the

Committee believes the focus should be
on those standards in excess of Part B
of IDEA.

The 2006 Legislative Session officially
began on March 1st. Now would be an
excellent time to contact your legislators
to share with them the MASE platform
and speak to the impact in your own
district(s). The MASE platform can be
found on the MASE website
(www.mnase.org). Please share your
legislative concerns with your MASE
Area Representative and feel free to
contact the Legislative Committee
Co-chairs Don Schuld,
schuldd@stillwater.k12.mn.us
(651-351-8381) and Darren Kermes,
dkermes@np.k12.mn.us
(952-758-1768). •

**Please see page 3 for a
complete list of the 2006
MASE Legislative Positions.**

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Developing Relationships



Linda Wintz

**by Linda Wintz,
MASE President
and Director of
Special
Education,
River Bend
Education
District**

It was wonderful seeing everyone at the 2006 MASA/MASE

Spring Conference. The agenda had a wide variety of breakout sessions that were of interest to special education administrators. It also was an excellent opportunity to get together and network with colleagues from across the state.

Be sure to check out the MASE website at <http://www.mnase.org> to see the new improvements. Thank you to Colleen Goltz and Shane Dennis for all the extra time and effort to work out the glitches and get the membership directory up and running. It is exciting to see this great communication tool developed and improved.

MASE has been working hard at strengthening our relationship with other key educational organizations. At this time last year, the MASE Board of Directors decided, through our strategic planning process, to focus on building a stronger relationship with a few key organizations. To this end, we continue to develop our relationship with MASA as we work together on common

issues. Both organizations currently share, in each of our legislative platforms, a focus of reviewing Minnesota rules and statutes that exceed the new federal mandates. In February, representatives from both MASA and MASE met with members of the Advocacy Coalition and representatives from MDE to discuss our ideas and concerns around this piece of our respective platforms. This spring, MASE and MASA are also planning to work together to develop sample contracts for special education directors.

MASE has requested membership in the Alliance for Student Achievement Organization and our status should be determined by the time you are reading this newsletter. This group of representative from various Minnesota educational organizations holds as its purpose "to speak with one voice on pre K-12 education policies and issues, with the goal of improving student achievement in Minnesota." It is important that special education be represented in the discussions and is present at the table as this group carries out this noble purpose.

On December 2, 2005, phase one of a report titled "Determining the Cost of Education in Minnesota" was released. The Association of Metropolitan School Districts (AMSD), Minnesota Rural Education Association (MREA) and Schools for Equity in

Education (SEE) are the primary agencies contracting with nationally recognized finance expert John Myers to complete this funding study for Minnesota. MASE has joined in the funding of phase two of this study. This next phase will provide information on what will be needed for Minnesota school districts to meet the state and federal expectations that have been set forth for student performance. Since special education is such an important part of this picture, the MASE board agreed to financially support this project. Watch for future articles on this important study.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the Director's Forum this spring. I applaud MDE and Barb Troolin for reinstating this vital connection to the special education community. MASE is working closely with MDE and helping in any way we can to facilitate this activity. Thank you to Mary Ruprecht and Kim Gibbons for pursuing this.

I encourage you to stay involved with your organization! The MASE Board wants to hear from you and gain from your insights and ideas. If you have questions or input on any of the information included in this article, please remember to contact myself or the MASE office. •

IMPACT
Spring, 2006

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Director of Special Education
Robbinsdale Area Schools

MASE 2006 Legislative Positions

1. MASE support reviewing all Minnesota rules and statutes pertaining to the education of Students with Disabilities that exceed federal mandates.

a. MASE believes the reauthorization of IDEA offers opportunities for more effective and efficient identification of students with learning disabilities.

i. MASE supports changing the SLD criteria to include and define the RTI process.

ii. MASE supports the provision of extensive training to school districts in the RTI process.

b. MASE believes stakeholders must reach consensus to retain Minnesota Statutes and Rules that exceed federal mandates.

i. MASE supports that effective June 30, 2007, all Minnesota state rules and statutes pertaining to special education in excess of IDEA Part B be repealed.

1. The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) should convene a stakeholders group with representation from the following organizations: MSBA, MASA, MASE, Education Minnesota, PACER, MDLC, ARC Minnesota, SEAC, MN CEC, and ICC.

2. If consensus to retain any specific provisions in excess of federal mandates can be reached, MDE must present these standards to the Minnesota Legislature during the 2007 legislative session.

ii. MASE supports voluntary interagency collaboration.

iii. MASE supports standards that require policy interpretations to be formalized through the rule making process before being implemented.

2. MASE supports an adequate and predictable level of funding for Minnesota's public schools

a. MASE believes adequate funding is required to assure that young children and youth make adequate yearly progress and that general education programs are not compromised.

i. MASE supports restoring the growth factor funding for special education categorical and excess cost.

ii. MASE supports streamlining formulas and decreasing complexity.

iii. MASE supports a predictable funding stream.

b. MASE believes adequate funding for special education is critical as this preserves the integrity of general education funding.

3. MASE supports efforts to increase the number and retention of licensed special educators.

a. MASE believes special educators who are appropriately licensed are uniquely qualified to meet the needs of children and youth with disabilities.

i. MASE supports expansion of training programs.

ii. MASE supports the creation of a "high incidence" license covering the disability areas of: SLD, EBD, OHD, DD-MMI, and TBI.

iii. MASE supports the portability of retirement credits from other states.

iv. MASE supports clearly defined and restricted criteria for SL.

4. MASE supports initiatives to increase access to early intervention services for eligible birth to school age children with disabilities.

a. MASE believes that families need to have access to services for their children with disabilities in the district in which their child receives childcare.

i. MASE supports access to services.

ii. MASE supports adequate funding for preschool services.

The 2006 MASE Legislative Brochure can be found on the MASE website at www.mnase.org

CASE Update: Did You Know?



Claudine Knoblauch

by **Claudine Knoblauch**,
MASE's Liaison to CASE and Director of Special Education Services, Designs for Learning

Did you know that the Annual CASE Membership Meeting, Awards, and Board of Director's meeting, will be on Thursday April 6, 2006 at the Grand America Hotel in Salt Lake City, Utah?

Did you know that as the 2005 MASE award winners, Dr. Dan Sullivan, and Ms. Nan Records were nominated for the two 2006 CASE annual awards?

Did you know that the Annual CASE Fun Night will be at the Olympic Park outside of Salt Lake City on Thursday Night, April 6, 2006 and will feature a tour, dinner, music and fun? Cost is \$50 and includes bus ride, tour, dinner, music and more.

Did you know that the CASE Executive Committee and the Board of Directors have been working on a Design for the Future? Did you know that all CASE members will be receiving a survey to provide feedback to the Board and Executive Committee to determine the necessary actions to create the future direction for CASE?

Did you know that CASE will be asking the membership to

consider constitutional changes that will align with the design for the future of CASE?

Did you know that on the CASE website, <http://www.casecec.org>, there are Hot Tips that offer ideas, strategies, reflections and book reviews?

I'd like to suggest to the MASE members this Hot Tip:

If you are an authentic student of Leadership, than you should consider reading *Social Intelligence The New Science of Success* by Karl Albrecht (Jossey-Bass, 2006)

Albrecht defines social intelligence (SI) as the ability to get along well with others while winning their cooperation. SI is a combination of sensitivity to the needs and interests of others, sometimes called your "social radar," an attitude of generosity and consideration, and a set of practical skills for interacting successfully with people in any setting. Social Intelligence provides a highly accessible and comprehensive

model for describing, accessing, and developing social intelligence at a personal level. This book provides numerous examples, and engaging case studies and provides the reader with a self-assessment designed to help navigate human interactions more successfully.

Albrecht defines social intelligence in five dimensions: S.P.A.C.E.: Situational Awareness, Presence, Authenticity, Clarity, and Empathy. Utilizing this tool, and the insights of Albrecht's observations you are guided through the challenging world of person-to-person interactions. You will find yourself nodding with this storyteller's wisdom and wanting to be a member of his human community. •

**Plan to attend the
MASE 2006
Summer Institute
August 2-4
Sugar Lake Lodge, Grand Rapids**

**2006 Fall
Leadership Conference
October 10-13, 2006
Arrowwood Resort,
Alexandria**



CASE

Professional Development Opportunities Abound!

Mark your calendars for upcoming CASE Professional Development Opportunities:

July 9-12, 2006

- 4th Annual Leadership Seminar •
Washington D.C.

November 10-11, 2006

- 17th Annual Fall Conference •
Savannah, Georgia

Visit the CASE website at www.casecec.org or contact Nan Records, CASE Professional Development Chair nan.records@monticello.k12.mn.us for additional information.





Minnesota Administrators for Special Education present

2006 MASE Best Practices Conference

May 10 - 12 • Madden's Lodge, Brainerd

Call for Program Proposals

MASE members are invited to submit a presentation proposal for this year's Best Practices Conference, May 10-12, 2006 at Madden's Lodge in Brainerd. Presentations will be scheduled on Thursday morning and afternoon and on Friday morning.

Please include all information requested below and return your proposal **by Friday, March 31, 2006**. Send proposals to Jeanna Quinn in the MASE offices:

1884 Como Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55108
Fax: (651) 645-7518
Email: members@mnasa.org

Back this year: Stress Busters! On Thursday morning right before lunch, we are hoping to feature four individuals or groups who are willing to present a 10 to 20-minute funny or inspirational segment on how to deal with stress from day-to-day. Do you have a story or technique to share? Creative ideas are most welcome!

The conference committee will meet shortly after the submission deadline and you will be notified whether or not your presentation was selected.

If you have questions, please contact the MASE office at 651-645-6272 (members@mnasa.org) or the Best Practices Conference committee chair Duane Borgeson at 320-252-8427 (dborgeson@bentonstearns.k12.mn.us).

Feel free to submit any topic that you feel would be of interest to special education leaders.

Please type or print legibly—thanks!

All Information is required before we can consider your proposal.

Share this form with a colleague!

Time required for presentation (circle one): 1 hour 2 hour Stress Buster--10 to 20 minute

Are you willing to repeat your session? _____ How often? _____

If your session is repeated, is it necessary to schedule all sessions on the same day? YES NO

Session Title: _____

Session Description (please limit to 50 words): _____

Audio/Visual Needs:

_____ Overhead projector with screen _____ Slide Projector with screen _____ Flipchart with markers
_____ TV/VCR _____ Other: _____

Due to prohibitive cost, we do not rent LCD projectors and we only have a very limited number of projectors available. (Requests are honored in the order they are received.) If you need a projector, it would be very helpful if you could arrange to bring one with you. Please do not assume a projector is available for you until you receive confirmation.

Additional Needs/Requests:

A one-day participation rate will be available *for presenters only* who are not registered for the entire conference but who wish to attend the conference *on the day of their presentation*. Expenses related to travel and lodging are not reimbursed. Presenters not attending the conference are invited to join the participant group for a complimentary meal. Because this conference features colleagues presenting for colleagues, all presenters must register for the conference.

Presenter Information (main contact person—must be a MASE member):

1. Name: _____ Title: _____
Organization: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____

Please provide a short introduction for this person that our session facilitator may use to present the speaker:

Additional Presenter Information (copy this sheet if additional space is needed):

2. Name: _____ Title: _____
Organization: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____

Please provide a short introduction for this person that our session facilitator may use to present the speaker:

3. Name: _____ Title: _____
Organization: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____

Please provide a short introduction for this person that our session facilitator may use to present the speaker:

Thanks ... don't forget to mark your calendar for May 10 -12!

EXECUTIVE *development*

Committee Plans Provide Quality Professional Development

by **Marlene Grindland**,
**MASE Executive Development
Committee Co-Chair and Assistant
Director of Special Education,
Benton-Stearns Education District**

and

Renae Ouillette
**MASE Executive Development
Committee Co-Chair and Director of
Special Education, Lakeville Schools**

It is hard to believe that we are over halfway through the 2005-06 school year! Your MASE Executive Committee wishes all of you smooth sailing as you navigate the waters of second semester and we hope you all have something relaxing planned for your spring break. The committee is very excited about the events we have offered this year and the upcoming activities we are planning. We received excellent feedback on the Fall Leadership Conference. Thank you to everyone who took time to fill out the evaluation. We continue to have great turn out at our monthly new director trainings and if this group is any

indication of the quality of future leaders in our field, we are in good hands. If you know of a new or newer director who is not taking advantage of these great networking sessions, please encourage them to get in touch with the MASE staff. We loved seeing you at the 2006 MASA/MASE Spring Conference at the Sheraton Bloomington Hotel.

Our ever-popular Best Practices Conference is quickly approaching in May and this year we will be hosting the event at Madden's on Gull Lake in Brainerd. Be watching for the registration materials at the end of March. This one fills up fast.

Although we have held our Fall Leadership Conference at Cragun's for the past several years and have appreciated all that the team there has done for us, the committee has made an

executive decision to move the conference to Arrowwood Resort in Alexandria for 2006. Our membership indicated that they would be interested in a change in venue and, after reviewing a number of options, the committee felt that Arrowwood was the best choice for location and amenities. We are very excited about this change and look forward to seeing everyone October 11-13, 2006. A welcome addition to the fall conference will be the increased opportunities to hear from our MDE colleagues, including our new state director!

As always, if you have questions or concerns for the committee, please contact Mia Urick at the MASE office and she will direct them to your co-chairs. We are always recruiting new members, too! •

Meet Our Candidates

MASE Nominating Committee Chair Gary Lewis has announced the 2006 candidates for election.

President-Elect, 2006-2007 :

Daryl Miller

Director of Special Education,
Robbinsdale Area Schools

Secretary, 2006-2008 :

Duane Borgeson

Executive Director,
Benton-Stearns Education District

Greater MN MASA Representative to
the Board of Directors, 2006-2009
(1 position):



Duane Borgeson

Gary Lewis

Director of Special Services,
Northfield Schools

Bob Vaadeland

Assistant Superintendent &
Director of Special Education,
Bemidji Schools



Gary Lewis

**Good Luck to our
candidates! •**

Life As A New Special Education Director in Minnesota

by **Cory McIntyre**
Director of Student Support Services
Rochester Public Schools

Be careful what you wish for. Isn't that what people say? My wife and I have learned this as we have begun our "new life" in Minnesota after spending the last seven years working as special educators in the greater Seattle Area. We truly did enjoy the northwest and all it has to offer. Yet, having Minnesota and Wisconsin roots, we felt the need to be closer to family. With the opportunity for special education administration positions in Minnesota, we decided it was time to come home. Needless to say, our first 15 days of 90 degree weather in Minnesota in July was a far cry from the 60-70 temperatures we left behind. And, having three family reunions the first four weeks we were back, left us laughing to ourselves, "be careful what you wish for." Now that we have been back in the Midwest, we are so glad we made the decision.

Becoming a new Director of Student Support Services in the State of Minnesota has been a rewarding and challenging experience. As the Director in Rochester, I have had the opportunity to continue the excellent work my predecessor, Shelley Burkhardt, had started. To be honest there have been times that I have thought to myself, "I don't know what I don't know!" Then I try to tell myself I cannot be an expert on everything, and lean on the quality people around me.

Rochester is a unique community as we are the sixth largest district in the state, however, we are the largest in Southeastern Minnesota. Needless to say, I believe there to be many

similarities between Minnesota and Washington. For example, the challenges of budgeting and staffing have been similar. In both MN and WA there was always opportunity for improvement regarding measurable goals and objectives in IEPs, as well as improving data collection and progress reporting. Also, in both states there are similarities in striving for efficiency and effective implementation of due process requirements with the priority to be on quality specially designed instruction. I have also found similarities in the need for continued efforts to use quality research based instructional materials, as well as efforts to work more collaboratively with general education and alignment with state standards. The focus on accountability is yet another commonality, as well as issues with workload and caseload, and retention and recruitment of quality staff.

In my new position I have made it a priority to focus on building relationships. I spent the early part of the year visiting all 23 buildings and meeting with special ed staff and listening to what is working and what is not from their perspective. I realized it was not smart to go out and try to change things, but to understand where we are at as a department. I am fortunate to have six Special Education Supervisors who work for me. I can trust them to take care of many issues and we work toward shared decision making whenever possible. I have also been fortunate to work with a supportive group of Special Education Directors from Region 10. They have all been willing to answer all of the many questions I pose.

I have also realized that I can provide quality leadership, I have

to become an effective manager. For example, I have realized that I can not have an impact on the instructional "transactions" until we were effective at daily tasks. Once we have the basic daily functions of the department running efficiently, we can get to the higher order issues of quality instruction.

I have also experienced many differences that I am slowly adapting to. For example, service delivery in MN is different that in WA. Service delivery in WA was much less categorical, and was structured on the level of need a student has. In MN, the disability categories seem to have a larger impact on the structure of the program. In WA, the licensure for a special education teacher was different in that a teacher's endorsement was not specified by disability category. So, the focus was on a continuum of service options, regardless of the eligibility category. Roles of support staff were also different. For example, school psychologists in WA completed the majority of the formal evaluation of students and also case managed initial and re-evaluation processes. Additional differences I have learned is that Minnesota special education law contains additional requirements than Washington special education law, as with the 1997 reauthorization, Washington did away with their state requirements and went with the federal requirements. It has taken me some time to learn the additional requirement that MN has, and it has been unique with the 2004 IDEA reauthorization and some of the conflict between MN special ed law and the federal law. Needless to say, I have had to lean our legal counsel for many issues this year because of being new.

Life...Continued on page 10

MASE Calendar

March 30-31

Aspiring Directors Retreat

Hilton Garden Inn Hotel, Shoreview

April 5-8

National CEC

Salt Lake City, Utah

April 12

Rural Issues Meeting

Benton-Stearns Education District
10 am – 2 pm

April 14

Spring Holiday

MASE Offices Closed

April 19

New Director's Training

MASE Offices, St. Paul

May 10 - 12

MASE Best Practices Conference

Madden's Lodge, Brainerd

May 12

Newsletter Submissions Due

May 29

Memorial Day Holiday

MASE Offices Closed

June 8 - 9

MASE Board of Directors Retreat

Madden's Lodge, Brainerd

August 2 - 4

MASE Summer Institute

Ruttger's Sugar Lake Lodge, Grand Rapids

October 10 - 13

MASE Fall Leadership Conference

Arrowwood Resort, Alexandria

IMPACT is your newsletter and we encourage your input! If you have ideas or an article to share, please contact us at the MASE offices— 651/645-6272 or email us at members@mnasa.org.

Life As A New Director ... Continued from Page 9

I have also come to learn first hand the dispute resolution process having participated in a state facilitated IEP meeting as well as a formal mediation. Not that these are experiences any of us want to have, but I have to say they have provided me with valuable learning experiences. I have experienced that there are include special education finance between the two states, and that I have had a steep learning curve in budgeting.

Lastly, even though as a new Director, I have put in long hours, I do strive to maintain a balance between work and personal life. I have to admit that I am an avid golfer and the winter, albeit mild, has me itching to get the clubs out. I do believe that quality time away from work makes you more effective when you are at work. I have enjoyed my first year to this point and look forward to subsequent years where I hope to be more efficient and effective. •

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