



IMPACT

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winter, 2006

Seeking Increased Influence

by Mary Ruprecht,
MASE President and
Director of Special Education,
Rum River Special Education
Cooperative

At the October meeting, the MASE Board acted upon the recommended priorities and goals set by the MASE Standing Committees, establishing the following goals for the organization:

1. Increase the capacity of MASE to advocate for children with special needs at the local, state and federal level.
2. Enhance MASE collaboration with the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE).
3. Continue to collaborate with stakeholders, such as the Parent Advocacy

Coalition, CEC and MASA.

4. Facilitate a workshop for stakeholders that is designed to provide practical strategies and techniques for use when advocating for special education issues with local and national legislators.

As can be observed from the established goals, MASE seeks increased influence in legislation at all levels of government. To accomplish this, MASE will work to enhance collaborative relationships with special education stakeholder groups, including our partner organizations, MDE and advocacy groups. MASE will also provide members with training that is designed to increase our influence with legislators.

Now that the Federal Regulations are finalized, MASE will identify the differences between State and Federal laws. This analysis will assist in establishing priorities and guide our negotiations in the stakeholder's process. This legislative session is a vital time for the organization to take action, if necessary. With priorities established, advocacy for our positions could lead to meaningful legislative change. Successful advocacy requires your participation, so thank you for attending the training that took place on December 13 at the Radisson in Roseville to where you able to learn more about your role as an advocate. •



Mary Ruprecht



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inside ...

- 2007 Legislative Platform 2
- Reshaping School Funding 3
- CASE Update 4
- Welcome New Members 5
- Social-Emotional Development 6

MASE Legislative Platform for 2007

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

and

Linda Wintz
MASE Past President; Co-Chair MASE Legislative
Committee and
Director of Special Education, River Bend
Education District

At our December 6th MASE Board Meeting the following statements were approved for the 2007 Legislative Platform:

1. MASE supports the creation of a stakeholders group to review all Minnesota rules and statutes pertaining to the education of students with disabilities that exceed federal mandates and retain only those for which there is group consensus
2. MASE supports an adequate and predictable level of funding for Minnesota's public schools which includes current year fully funded cost based system for special education
3. MASE supports efforts to increase the recruitment and retention of licensed special educators
4. MASE supports initiatives to increase access

to early intervention services for eligible birth to school age children with disabilities

5. MASE supports a thorough review of the interagency roles and responsibilities of schools, counties, families, vocational rehabilitation, and other providers

These statements along with a short summary and rationale will make up the published brochure for distribution to our members, legislators, associations and other interested parties. Look for the platform brochure in early January.

The Legislative Committee members have developed bullet points for each of the platform statements. The bullet points will address specific statutes and rules as well as consideration for new legislation. The full platform document with the bulleted items will be placed on the MASE website.

The MASE platform consists of the five major areas of focus for the 2007 Legislative Session. MASE will be actively supporting or challenging bills that impact our work in service of children with disabilities and our profession. We will be working closely with our lobbyist Brad Lundell to promote our initiative and monitor other legislation. Please share your legislative concerns with your MASE Area Representative and feel free to contact the Legislative Committee Co-Chairs Darren Kermes, dkermes@np.k12.mn.us (507-433-0955) and Linda Wintz lwintz@riverbend.k12.mn.us (507-359-8700). •

2006 – 2007 MASE Legislative Committee

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New Prague Area Schools

Ms. Linda Wintz, Co-Chair, Director of Special Education, River Bend
Education District

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Education District

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Ms. Nan Records, Dir of Special Ed, Sherburne-N Wright Cooperative

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Ms. Susan Smith, Coordinator of Special Education, Willmar Schools

Mr. Denny Ulmer, Executive Dir, Bemidji Regional Interdistrict Council

Mr. Bob Vaadeland, Assistant Superintendent, Bemidji Area Schools

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Reshaping the Pattern of School Funding

by **Greg Vandal**
Superintendent, Sauk Rapids-Rice Schools and
Facilitator, P.S. Minnesota

P.S. Minnesota, an unprecedented coalition of education organizations and parent groups, was introduced to MASE readers by the Association of Metropolitan School Districts Executive Director Scott Croonquist in the last edition of the MASA newsletter. Croonquist, along with counterparts Brad Lundell of Schools for Equity in Education, Sam Walseth of the Minnesota Rural Education Association, and this author, were presenters at the MASA fall conference at Madden's where information on the P.S. Minnesota initiative was released. This coalition is solely dedicated to securing a system of school funding in Minnesota which is rationally linked to student achievement.

The group, with research support provided by national school finance expert John Myers, has both been studying the cost of adequacy in Minnesota and developing a formula framework to deliver the resources necessary so that Minnesota's children can achieve. At a major policy forum in early December, P.S. Minnesota representatives reviewed both that framework and Myers' recent study of funding adequacy in Minnesota.

The P.S. Minnesota school finance framework contains five important elements. A learner component funds schools on a per-pupil basis with rational adjustments made in accordance with individual student needs. A second component addresses the

unique characteristics of school districts including such elements as school size, labor cost differentials, and population patterns. District support services such as transportation and building maintenance are a part of component three. The fourth major element of the formula provides limited school board and voter discretion to school districts for use with local targeted initiatives. Finally, the funding framework offers a mechanism for equalized access to building construction dollars.

Not all of the P.S. Minnesota proposal has been cut from new cloth. Indeed, some of the pieces of this patchwork quilt are recognizable in Minnesota's current system of funding. However, the existing quilt has been purposefully reassembled with new pieces added. The result should adequately address the needs of children and school districts across the state. If fully implemented, a pattern of student achievement will emerge which will assure Minnesota's place as a global educational leader. •

DID YOU KNOW...

You can find sample special education director contracts on the MASA website?

Go to: www.mnasa.org/masa_legalsupport.html and download either a continuing or term contract.



Plan to attend the
2007 Best Practices Conference

May 9-11-2007 at
Madden's Lodge, Brainerd

CASE Update – Emphasizing Collaboration



Duane Borgeson

by Duane Borgeson, MASE's Liaison to CASE and Director of Special Education, Benton-Stearns Education District

Mary Ruprecht and I attended the CASE Board meeting in Savannah, GA November 9-10. The CASE Board leadership is emphasizing collaboration with other organizations and agencies, including regular education organizations. Much of the discussion at the meeting centered around CASE's activities and initiatives with other organizations such as NASDE, the IDEA Partnership, the Council of Great City Schools, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, and the National School Boards

Association. As we move to an RTI model, leadership at CASE sees the value in collaborating with multiple agencies and will continue to develop these relationships.

If you are a CASE member, you are eligible for a discount on products that are endorsed by CASE. To receive an endorsement from CASE, the product is extensively reviewed under a strict set of guidelines to be certain that the product is research based and effective. Those products that have received endorsement from CASE are listed on the CASE Website, but there is not a direct link to purchase the products from the CASE Website yet. To purchase a product, go to the CASE Website (<http://www.casecec.org/index.html>), scroll about 2/3rds down the page, and the endorsed products will be listed on the left with links to the product page. In order to get a discount, you will need to call the vendor directly and tell them you are a

CASE Member. CASE is looking at options for streamlining this process.

The CASE Fall Conference was very successful. There were several breakout sessions presented by MASE members, so thank you to those brave souls. The keynote speakers were excellent and there were more good breakout sessions than one could attend. Savannah was a fine location and the next CASE Fall Conference will be in Long Beach, CA. The National CEC conference, in which there is a CASE strand, will be held in Louisville, KY (apparently pronounced loo-a-vul, according to a local expert) April 18-21. Work on your Kentucky accent and join CASE for what promises to be another exceptional conference.

If you have questions, concerns, or suggestions for CASE, please feel free to contact me at (320) 257-7348 or dborgeson@bentonstearns.k12.mn.us.

2007 MASE Calendar

Wednesday - Friday, January 17 - 19
CASE Winter Institute
 Sheraton Sand Key, Clearwater Beach, FL

Thursday, January 25
MASE Rural Issues Meeting
 Benton-Stearns Education District Offices, Sartell

Wednesday - Friday,
 February 21 - 23
MNCEC/CCBD Spring Conference
 Sheraton Bloomington Hotel

Friday, March 9
Newsletter Submissions Due

Wednesday, March 14
MASE Board of Directors Meeting
 Sheraton Bloomington Hotel
 11 am – 3 pm

Thursday - Friday, March 15-16
MASE/MASA Spring Conference
 Sheraton Bloomington Hotel

Thursday, March 22
MASE Rural Issues Meeting
 Benton-Stearns Education District Offices, Sartell

Friday, April 6
Spring Holiday

Wednesday - Saturday, April 18-21
CEC Annual Convention
 Louisville, KY

Wednesday - Friday, May 9 - 11
TENTATIVE
MASE Best Practices Conference
 Madden's Resort, Brainerd
 (Wednesday dinner - Friday lunch)

Tuesday, May 15
Newsletter Submissions Due

Monday, May 28
Memorial Day Holiday
 MASE Offices Closed

Thursday - Friday, June 7 - 8
MASE Board of Directors Retreat
 Madden's, Brainerd
 Thursday: 12 noon (lunch) and 1 – 4 pm mtg.
 Friday: 9 am – 12 noon and 12 noon (lunch)

Welcome New Members

Ms. Martha Amundson

Assistant Director of Special Services
Owatonna Schools

Mr. Gary Blake

Special Education Coordinator
Buffalo Schools

Mr. Brent Brunetta

Student
Deer River Schools

Mrs. Theresa Brunnette

Program Supervisor/Special Education Coordinator
Osseo Area Schools

Mrs. Joni Burris

Director of Special Services
Crookston Schools

Mrs. Jessica Cabeen

Autism Teacher
St. Paul Schools

Dr. David Craig

Supervisor of Special Services
Duluth Schools

Ms. Kathleen Daniels

Coordinator of Special Services
White Bear Lake Schools

Ms. Lesley Ernst

Special Education Supervisor
NE Metro 916 Intermediate District

Dr. Debra Fincham

Assistant Superintendent for Elementary & Secondary Education
Bloomington Schools

Mr. Timothy Finn

ECSE Program Supervisor
St. Francis Schools

Ms. Amy Galatz

Special Education Coordinator
Northern Lakes Cooperative

Ms. Cory Graham

Special Education Supervisor
North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale Schools

Mr. Matt Grose

Superintendent
Deer River Schools

Ms. Jill Haak

Special Education Coordinator
Benton-Stearns Education District

Mr. Dave Haveman

Supervisor of Special Education
South Washington County Schools

Ms. Vici Jernigan

School Psychologist
South Washington County Schools

Ms. Fran Johnson

Special Education Coordinator
Benton-Stearns Education District

Ms. Kathryn Jungerberg

Coordinator
Chaska Area Schools

Dr. Doug Kern

Director of Special Education
Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools

Mrs. Kelly Lessman

Educational Services Administrator
Forest Lake Area Schools

Ms. Diane McCarron

Eden Valley Watkins Schools

Mr. Eric Melbye

Director of Interagency Services
Carver-Scott Educational Cooperative

Ms. Lesley Miller

Director of Special Education
Meeker & Wright Special Education Cooperative

Ms. Sarah Mittelstadt

Student
Little Crow Special Education Cooperative

Mr. James Nelson

Assistant Superintendent
Osseo Area Schools

Mrs. Virginia Nyhus

Director of Special Services
MN River Valley Special Education Cooperative

Ms. Cynthia Pedersen

Special Education Coordinator
Benton-Stearns Education District

Ms. Laura Pingry-Kile

Director of Education Services
Chaska Area Schools

Ms. Cara Quinn

Special Education Coordinator
Community of Peace Academy

Ms. Katie Raisanen

Special Education Administrator
Anoka-Hennepin Schools

Mr. Steve Razidlo

Assistant Superintendent
Brainerd Schools

Ms. Brenda Reed

Superintendent
Browns Valley Schools

Mr. Ron Ruhnke

School Psychologist
South Washington County Schools

Ms. Naomi Scheibe

Special Education Coordinator
Spring Lake Park Schools

Mrs. Laurel Schoborg

Assistive Technology Specialist
St. Cloud Schools

Dr. Jamie Skjeveland

Superintendent
Crosby-Ironton Schools

Ms. Rochelle Van Den Heuvel

Superintendent
Greenway Schools

Dr. Bernadette Wood

Community Education Director
Inver Grove Heights Community Schools

Ms. Kari Yates

Principal/Special Ed Coordinator
Parkers Prairie Schools

Intentional District-Wide Focus on Social-Emotional Development: Reaching High Standards

by Charlene Mykelbust
and
Ellen Teeklucksingh, Intermediate
School District 287

Intermediate District 287 is a consortium of 13 member districts in the western and southern suburban areas of Hennepin County. The mission of the District is to "creatively meet the diverse and changing needs of learners through cooperatively delivered, high quality, cost-effective services." The majority of the 39 Special Education and Area Learning Center programs serve students with significant behavioral concerns. Additionally, the majority of students in both divisions have diagnosed mental health and/or chemical dependency disorders as well as at-risk behaviors that have resulted in teen pregnancy or involvement with the juvenile justice system.

Superintendent Sandra Lewandowski proposed a model of intentional focus on the social emotional development of students that would parallel the rigor of academic standards. The School Board and area Superintendents endorsed the proposal and a district-wide Social Emotional Task Force was formed. There was broad representation across district divisions, including career and technical programs and gifted and talented programs.

The Social Emotional Task Force grounded its work in previous and current District initiatives:

- Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)
- Minnesota Department of Education "Early Warning Signs of Children's Mental Health Disorders" Training
- Eric Jensen: Brain-based

Learning

- Daniel Amen, M.D.: "Making a Good Brain Great"
- Ross Greene, Ph.D.: "The Explosive Child"
- Restorative Practices

The Task Force disseminated an on-line survey to all staff members. It included questions about Positive Behavior Interventions (PBIS), student time-outs, character education, social skills training, mental health related services, suspension, punishment, staff safety, and the link between social emotional behavior and academic achievement. Survey results were tabulated and the Task Force convened to examine current practices and to identify promising practices. These practices were clustered into 25 areas that were then grouped into 5 major themes:

- Training and Development
- Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)
- Curricular Interventions
- Culture, Unity, and Recognition
- Community Partnerships

A sub-group of the Social Emotional Task Force re-searched all 25 topical areas by examining current literature. An executive summary was

developed for each of the topics and provides an overview, research findings, educational implications, recommendations for implementation, and future directions. The "Summary of Best Practices Literature" will be available online.

In order to capture the social emotional practices that have already created a ready climate and strong foundation in the District, a video of student support and interventions was made in preparation for the Fall 2006 "Welcome Back" workshop. This video helped to frame the activities for the current year's work.

The future work of the Social Emotional Task Force will concentrate on:

- Staff training and development related to social-emotional learning
- Development of district-wide standards by an Affective Curriculum Group
- Social Emotional "support and resource system" for staff members
- Crisis support assistance for staff members
- Social Emotional Intervention Manual
- Social Emotional focus for District Professional Learning Communities (PLC's)