



# Annual Report

To Our Partners **2013-2014**

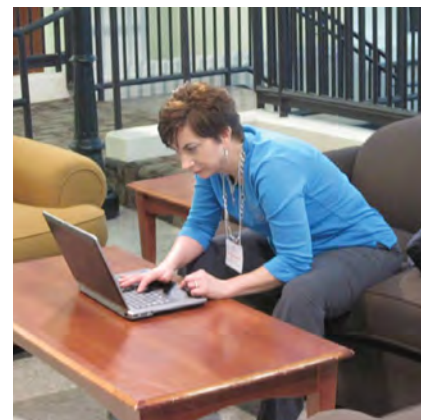
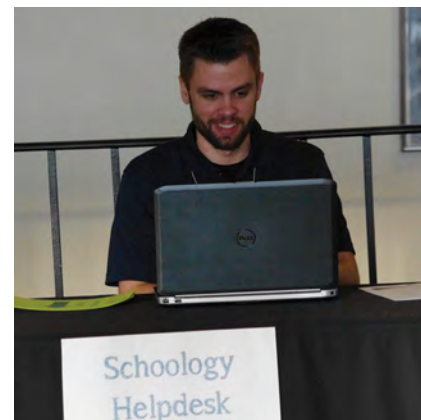


Partnership.

Innovation.

Leadership.

Service.



# From the Executive Director Cliff Carmody



Friends of SW/WC Service Cooperative:

## "Partnership, Innovation, Leadership, and Service"

The SW/WC Service Cooperative Board, administration, and staff focus on providing programs and services that meet the needs of our members!

This *Annual Report to our Partners* illustrates the core mission, values, and commitment our agency has for our region. As you review this report, I hope you will see how our programs and services are critical to, and support the work of, the members we serve.

Our shared services model of delivering services is demonstrated through the new and existing initiatives highlighted in this report. We are a membership driven organization...through the use of a number of advisory committees, our Board and administration work collaboratively with our members to offer programs and services that support, enhance, and meet the needs of our members.

Our core values of service, integrity, and respect form the cornerstone to the work we do. At the center of these values is service. We believe service is a commitment to serve our members, potential members, co-workers, and others. We care about them, listen to them, and work to address their issues. Satisfying those we serve is a priority for everyone in the agency.

As we plan for 2014-15, we continue to recognize the challenges facing our members. We are grounded and committed to our service approach and will continue to find ways to be innovative in our practice of administering high quality programs and services.

Thank you for your support of our collaborative work and I look forward to working with you to address the challenges of the new year!



## Administrative Services

This division, led by Darin Jensen, is comprised of the Regional Management Information Center (RMIC), Health and Safety, Cooperative Purchasing, Information Technology, Distance Education, Technology Integration, and E-Rate Coordination.

An exciting highlight from this past year is the new Cooperative Purchasing online marketplace, the **Express**. The Express was designed to bring the purchasing process together in a single, simple to use, online environment. Members can place orders, compare prices from our partnered vendors, approve and manage orders, and utilize flexible payment options including purchase orders or credit cards/P-Cards. Members can even order items from different vendors and place all of the items into a single shopping cart. Product searches can be done with a variety of options to help improve the shopping experience. In addition, all pricing in the Express is member-discounted pricing – so there is no need to remember contract codes or quote numbers to receive our contracted pricing. The Express site can be easily accessed by visiting our Cooperative Purchasing Connection webpage at [www.swsc.org/cp](http://www.swsc.org/cp).



## Special Education Services

This division, led by Dr. Mary Palmer, is comprised of direct student services, regional low incidence programs, outreach clinics, autism training project, transitions outcome project, and the alternative learning programs and settings.

One highlight from this past year was our first **Low Vision Clinic** which served 10 students with visual impairments. Dr. Siemsen (Mayo Clinic) and Dr. Hinkemeyer (Pine Cone Low Vision Center) set up a small clinic where students were interviewed and given a series of eye examinations. Some students were prescribed visual aids to assist them in school and the community.

Kristin Oien, Specialist for the Blind/Vision Impaired from MDE, met with students and families to look at devices for low vision. Each of the students received free devices specific to their level of vision needs. These devices included magnifiers, monoculars, and special sunglasses. Following the exam, the students had their vision tested with and without the devices. The results were amazing for some students, putting huge smiles on their faces! They were all very excited after receiving their devices, and one student said, "Now I can see when my teacher is smiling!"



## Risk Management Services

This division, led by Doug Deragisch, is comprised of the school insurance pool, the city/county/other governmental (CCOGA) agency pool, and the health cost management program (HCMP). The SW/WC SC operates two health insurance pools on behalf of our members. The School Pool has 55 member schools with a total of nearly 7,000 covered lives. The CCOGA Pool has 109 members covering nearly 7,500 lives. The SW/WC SC's renewal success rate is near 90% annually. Over the years, the Pools have been successful in serving our members with high quality insurance products as well as educational and support services.

A highlight from this past year is pictured at left. These supplies are part of an **Onsite Virtual Health Clinic**. Using Online Care Anywhere® to talk to a doctor using video or secure text chat, members have a live conversation with a real doctor. U.S. board-certified doctors answer questions, diagnose conditions and prescribe medications. The School Insurance Pool provided ancillary supplies (scale, blood pressure cuff, thermometers, wipes, sharps container) to all schools who opened a virtual clinic in their school district. This past year, two school districts took

advantage of this opportunity: Lynd Schools and RTR Schools, who set up a clinic in each school building (Russell, Tyler and Ruthton).



## Teaching & Learning Services

This division, led by Bob Braun, includes school improvement, student enrichment activities, curriculum coordination, the MN West Carl Perkins Consortium, the math and science teacher partnership, RtI, and PBIS. One highlight this year was the **direct support** provided to over twenty member school districts in preparation to meet new educator evaluation requirements. Support was provided through a series of work sessions held in Marshall and Worthington, as well as on-site sessions held at various districts. The goal was for districts to develop an effective evaluation framework that would meet their local needs, as well as, state requirements. Additional support was provided for summative evaluators and peer reviewers through a 3-day workshop series on observation and feedback skills.

Another highlight was two student competitions offered through the MN West Carl Perkins Consortium. These events offered high school students an opportunity to demonstrate their talents, push themselves to try something new, and connect with students from other districts who share a common interest. Additionally, it allowed teachers to network and share ideas for their classrooms. As part of the **Digital Photography** competition, students were given a theme and presented their work to their peers and a panel of judges. The **Culinary Skills Challenge**, sponsored by The Schwan Food Company, brought over 250 students to Southwest Minnesota State University to compete in seven food competitions. A variety of breakout sessions were held for students who weren't competing, which allowed students to try new foods and learn new techniques from professional chefs. Both of these events allowed students to more deeply explore career options by working directly with professionals from the industry.

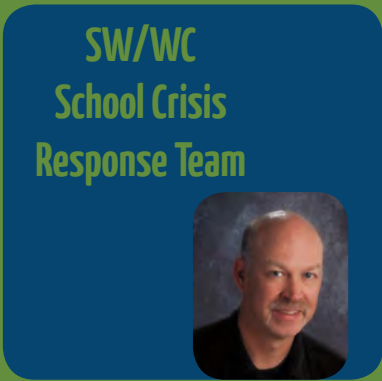


# Partnership

Uniting with members to meet needs

# Innovation

Researching and initiating new programs and services



The School Crisis Response Team is comprised of over 70 trained individuals from schools in our region who are either mental health professionals or licensed support team members. The team provides support to students and staff through the facilitation of debriefings, defusing, and crisis management briefings following the protocol of the CISM (Critical Incident Stress Management) model. The team is coordinated by Brian Skogen from Canby Public Schools (pictured above), with additional leadership support from Jason Kratochvil from the SW/WC SC. Since the team’s creation in 2010, the 2013-14 school year proved to be the most tragic, with countless hours of support provided to districts by the team members. We thank Brian Skogen for the exceptional leadership he provided in the region this past year—working days, nights and weekends to meet school needs.

Located in Willmar, the North Central Learning Center (NCLC) completed its first year of operation in the Spring of 2014. The North Central Learning Center is a program that serves students with special education and therapeutic mental health needs. The program has grown and additional staff have been added. We look forward to continued growth and collaboration with our member districts. The program employs three teachers, three mental health workers and four paraprofessionals. The North Central Learning Center will be adding a part-time administrator for the 2014-2015 school year.

This past year, the SW/WC SC partnered with SafeSchools to offer three exciting programs to our member districts. The three programs include:  
\*Online Staff Training and Tracking Program. This program allows a district to see where they can increase compliance, offer easy to use training, and save time and money.  
\*Online (M)SDS Management Program. This program is an affordable and easy way to access Safety Data Sheets by creating and storing virtual binders.  
\*Bullying Reporting and Tracking Program. This program is a great way to receive and track tips reported via phone, text, email, and web.

The SW/WC SC became a partner in the Minnesota Partnership for Collaborative Curriculum (MPCC) on behalf of its school district members. MPCC is a grassroots initiative among schools to create comprehensive open education resources, with the overall goal to create course work in a digital format in the four core subject areas for grades 3-12. Membership benefits to districts include:  
\*Access to high quality curriculum aligned to standards and available at minimal cost;  
\*Local control to edit, remove, add, or customize the content;  
\*Improved capacity for personalized learning; and  
\*Training opportunities for teachers to develop digital content and become skilled in delivering personalized learning through digital content.

The MDE monitoring process is an on-going endeavor for all 46 school districts who purchase special education coordinator/director services from the the SW/WC SC. This year, for the first time, all 46 school districts were on the same schedule and thus, had to complete a “Self-Review”. Janet Dirksen, Coordinator of Special Education, was assigned to facilitate and oversee the process for all of our districts. This marked the first time one coordinator was assigned to the entire process -- with the hope that the process would be streamlined and more efficient for all districts. Of the 676 files reviewed, a variety of citations were found but overall the districts did very well. We are now in the process of making corrections and getting ready for the next step next year.

The SW/WC SC is home to a new Regional Center of Excellence: the Southwest Prairie Regional Center of Excellence. The goal is “to assist and support school boards, school districts, school sites, and charter schools in implementing research-based interventions and practices to increase student achievement within a region”. The Center will serve all schools by providing training in dropout prevention, transition to postsecondary education and employment, and statewide curriculum standards implementation. This partnership with MDE allows dissemination of information to our schools through a regional training format. MDE Specialists conduct the initial training session and center directors create additional training modules to assist school districts through the implementation process.





# Leadership

## Providing opportunities for all

Whether it be in the area of student conferences, school finance, insurance, or workshops for teachers, the SW/WC Service Cooperative strives to provide opportunities for all to learn, grow and lead.

Students as Leaders--through our student enrichment programs, we offer students a variety of educational and leadership opportunities outside of the classroom. A parent recently sent us this note: "My children are former students of your various conferences. Two of my children have now graduated. Your conferences were amazing and my children learned so much. Sometimes the learning came from making contacts with other adults and kids of like mind. Two of my children (I have four) won first place in their science fair projects in Mankato. They were given ideas and advice on how to run a successful project. These two children are continuing their adulthood education in the medical field and engineering. My other daughter fell in love with German and Linguistic and my last one is still an art fanatic and the tips she received helped her to explore so much more on her own. She loves animation and pottery. Thank you so much for having these opportunities offered to our students in the regions. They learned so much".

Teachers as Leaders--through professional development, partnerships, and other collaborative ventures, we work to provide every kind of teacher the opportunity and ongoing support to be a great leader.

Staff as Leaders--through a variety of leadership opportunities, our staff can serve as mentors to new staff, serve on various committees, provide support, assistance and leadership to our member school districts, work as teachers in our alternative programs, and so much more.

Leaders in the Region--through active listening and experienced facilitation, our agency strives to provide leadership in the region through innovative and collaborative new ventures.

## **2013-14 Executive Director's Cabinet**

Cliff Carmody, Executive Director

Deecy Jesse, Executive Assistant

Annette Miller, Director of Finance

Shelly Maes, Manager of Member Services

Edna Gossen, Operations Manager

Darin Jensen, Senior Director of Administrative Services

Doug Deragisch, Senior Director of Risk Management Services

Dr. Mary Palmer, Senior Director of Special Education Services

Bob Braun, Senior Director of Teaching and Learning Services

Dr. Amy Christensen, Interim Director of the Southwest Prairie Regional Center of Excellence



# Service

Serving the 18 counties of southwest and west central Minnesota

## Office locations

Marshall, Montevideo, Pipestone,  
Willmar, and Windom

## School Locations

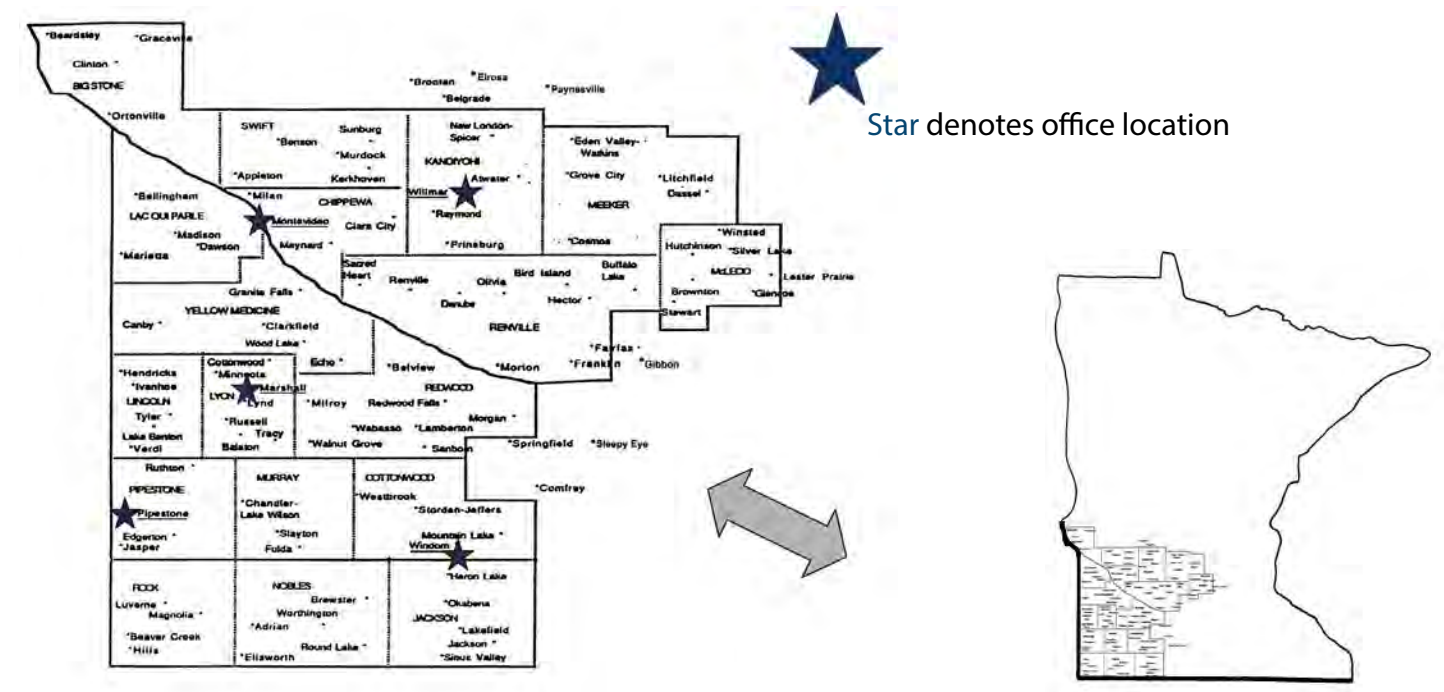
Belview, Benson, Cosmos,  
Pipestone, Willmar, and Windom

## Our Mission

We support and enhance the work of  
our members by providing programs  
and services that meet their needs.

## Our Vision

To be the world’s best resource for  
schools and local units of government  
that endeavor to be innovative,  
collaborative, and responsive.



## Our Board of Directors

- Maydra Maas, Chairperson, WWG Schools
- Kathi Thymian, Vice-Chair, Ortonville Schools
- Donald Brugman, Clerk, Windom Schools
- Kathryn Kelly, Treasurer, Renville County
- Michael Zins, Fulda Schools
- Jan Fransen, Jackson County
- Tom Walsh, KMS Schools
- Maggie Kluver, Montevideo Schools
- David Kilpatrick, New London/Spicer Schools
- Jody Bauer, Tracy Schools
- Steve Schnieder, Worthington Schools

Members of the SW/WC Service Cooperative Board  
of Directors are elected from our membership.

Board of Directors -- listed/pictured as of 6/30/14

## Our Staff

We employ 291 regular employees  
throughout the 18 counties of  
southwest and west central Minnesota.

Our staff are located in one of our office  
or school locations, and many are housed  
right in the school district where they work.

### Employee retention is important to us!

The average length of service for our  
current staff is over 7.15 years.

The number of employees who  
have worked at the SW/WC SC

over 20 years:	25
15-19 years:	19
10-14 years:	32

**Members** are our focus.

We have a unique understanding of the strengths and needs of our members and use these insights to positively impact and improve how our members do their work.

**Benefits of Membership**

- Provides access to the various programs and services offered through our agency
- Allows members to operate more efficiently and cost effectively through creative program development and partnerships
- Creates access to programs and services not readily available to members without cooperation and coordination
- Helps members maximize dollars and realize cost savings by pooling money and resources

**Public, Private and Charter Schools**

Adrian	Milroy
ACGC	Milroy Area Charter
BBE	Minneota
Benson	Montevideo
BOLD	Mountain Lake
Buffalo Lake-Hector-Stewart	Mountain Lake Christian
Butterfield-Odin	Murray County Central
Canby	New Heights, Stillwater
Cedar Mountain	New London-Spicer
Central MN Christian, Prinsburg	Odyssey Charter, Bklyn Center
Clarkfield Area Charter	Ortonville
Cologne Academy	Paynesville
Comfrey	Pipestone Area
Dawson-Boyd	Prinsburg
E.C.H.O Charter	Red Rock Central
Eden Valley-Watkins	Redwood Area
Edgerton	Renville County West
Ellsworth	Round Lake - Brewster
Fulda	RTR
Gibbon-Fairfax-Winthrop	St. Anne’s, Wabasso
Glencoe-Silver Lake	St. Edward, Minneota
Hendricks	St. James
Heron Lake-Okabena	St. Mary’s, Bird Island
Hills-Beaver Creek	St. Mary’s, Tracy
Holy Redeemer, Marshall	St. Mary’s, Worthington
Holy Trinity, Winsted	St. Michael’s, Morgan
Hutchinson	St. Paul Conserv. for Perf. Arts
Immanuel Lutheran, Lakefield	St. Rafael’s, Springfield
Ivanhoe	Samuel Lutheran, Marshall
Jackson County Central	School of St. Peter, Canby
KMS	Sleepy Eye
Lac qui Parle Valley	Southwest Christian, Edgerton
Lake Benton	Springfield
Lakeview	Tracy Area
Lester Prairie	Wabasso
Luverne	Westbrook-Walnut Grove
Lynd	Willmar
MACCRAY	Windom
Marshall Area Christian	Worthington
Marshall	Yellow Medicine East

**Governmental Agency Members**

Cottonwood County Developmental Achievement Center	PACT 4 Families Collaborative
Countryside Public Health	Parkview Home
Des Moines Valley Health & Human Services	Pioneerland Library System
Hospice of Murray County	Pipestone County Soil and Water Conservation District
Housing and Redevelopment Authority of Redwood Falls	Pipestone County Medical Center
Jackson Housing and Redevelopment Authority	Prairie Lakes Youth Programs
Kandiyohi Area Transit	Red Rock Rural Water System
Kandiyohi Soil and Water Conservation District	Redwood County Soil and Water Conservation District
Lake Minnetonka Conservation District	Redwood-Cottonwood Rivers Control Area
Lincoln County Soil and Water Conservation District	Renville County Hospital and Clinics
Lincoln/Pipestone Rural Water	Renville County Soil and Water Conservation District
Marshall Municipal Utilities	Southwest Regional Development Commission
Mid-Minnesota Development Commission	Swift County-Benson Hospital
Murray County Developmental Achievement Center	Westbrook Public Utilities
Nobles County Soil and Water Conservation District	Willmar Municipal Utilities
	Windom Housing and Redevelopment Authority

**NonProfit Members**

Adult Client Training Service	Progress, Inc.
Advance Opportunities	Retired Senior Volunteer Program of SW MN
Area II MN River Basin Projects	Southwest Minnesota Broadband Services
Chippewa River Watershed	SW MN Housing Partnership
Heartland Community Action	SW MN Opportunity Council
Hiawatha Manor	Western Community Action
New Life Treatment Center	
Prairie Five Community Action	

**City Members**

Adrian	Hanley Falls	Newport
Appleton	Hendricks	Oakdale
Atwater	Heron Lake	Pipestone
Benson	Jackson	Renville
Bird Island	Kerkhoven	Rosemount
Buffalo Lake	Lake Benton	Round Lake
Canby	Lake Elmo	Sacred Heart
Carver	Lakefield	Slayton
Clara City/Nursing Home	Madison	Spicer
Cosmos	Marshall	Springfield
Cottonwood	Maynard	St. Paul Park
Ellsworth	Mendota Heights	Stillwater
Fairfax	Milroy	Tyler
Franklin	Minneota	Vadnais Heights
Fulda	Montevideo	West St. Paul
Granite Falls	Mountain Lake	Willmar
Greenfield	New Prague	Windom

**County Members**

Chippewa	Meeker
Cottonwood	Nobles
Jackson	Pipestone
Kandiyohi	Renville
Lac Qui Parle	Rock
Lincoln	Yellow Medicine

**South Dakota Cooperative Purchasing Members**

Over 70 schools and agencies located in South Dakota are members of our Cooperative Purchasing Program, taking advantage of the best pricing available from our vendors.



# Our Core Values

## Service

## Integrity

## Respect



We have a highly skilled and talented group of professionals at the SW/WC Service Cooperative who embrace our core values in all they do.

Here are some examples of the exceptional work being done day in and day out in the region by our staff.

Ongoing education and continuous improvement is important to our staff--8 have PhDs and 93 have an MS or MA degree.

Staying current with technology and social media are also important to us. We maintain an active presence on Facebook and Twitter.

[www.swsc.org/social](http://www.swsc.org/social)

**Doug Deragisch**, Senior Director of Risk Management Services, was elected to a 4-year term representing Agency-Statewide South Zone on the Minnesota Rural Education Association Board of Directors. Doug is also taking part in the Association of Educational Service Agencies' Executive in Residence Program. In May of 2014, Doug spent a week visiting Capital Region BOCES (Board of Cooperative Educational Services) in Albany, New York.

Our staff plan many conferences in the region, including This is IT2, the School Business Conference, the Summer Leadership Conference, the Paraprofessional Conference, the Summer Principal Summit, the Annual Health Conference, and many other workshops and trainings. Conferences, workshops and in-service trainings are held throughout the year in locations across our 18 county region.



Hazel Ashbeck



Kathleen Fischer



Kayla DeJong



Ryan Groeneweg



Paige Fossum



Diane McCarron

**Hazel Ashbeck** received national certification as a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA). This required passing a national board exam after having completed a minimum of 1,500 hours of supervised work in the field and multiple accredited courses in Applied Behavior Analysis.

**Kathleen Fischer** completed training through Salus University (Pennsylvania) that allowed her to receive her vision teaching license. The Salus Program is very rigorous and difficult to complete. Kathleen is now serving students in our member districts who have vision needs.

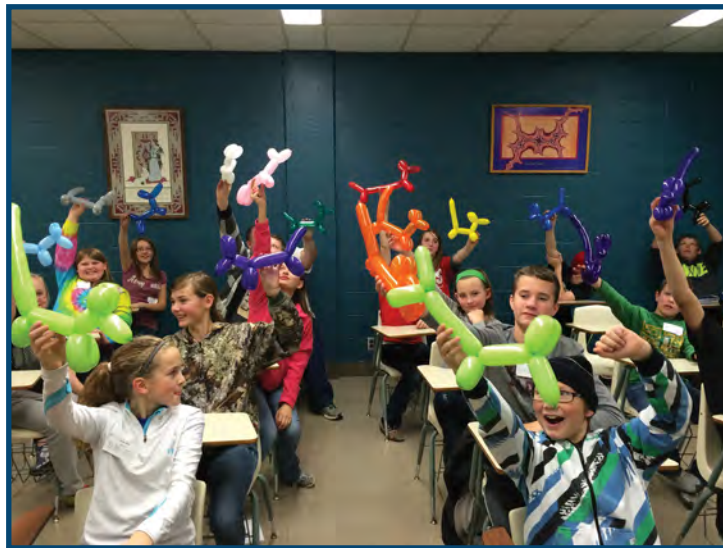
**Kayla DeJong** completed the Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder (FASD) Studies certificate program from the University of Minnesota, which allowed her to become the FASD consultant for the agency. Kayla is available to districts for consultation on how to assess and help children with FASD academically and behaviorally. Kayla also is available to educate staff on FASD and how to assist children with this diagnosis.

**Ryan Groeneweg**, Certified Behavior Analyst, was presented with the Heartland Association for Behavior Analysis (HLABA) Award of Excellence. The Award of Excellence is given to one individual in the area that has made a significant contribution to the advancement of the field of behavior analysis in our area.

**Paige Fossum**, a Licensed Graduate School Social Worker, was selected as the Patrick L. Redinius Spirit Award recipient for 2014, an honor given by the Center for Disabilities in Sioux Falls. This award is presented annually to a former trainee who has exemplified the following: enthusiasm and commitment to disability issues, a high level of energy for work in the field of disabilities, and compassion and respect for all.

**Diane McCarron** was named the 2014 New Special Education Leader by the Minnesota Administrators for Special Education (MASE). She was honored for her commitment to students with disabilities and their families, and her active involvement in professional and community affairs.





**Learning is a  
treasure that will  
follow its owner  
everywhere.**

**~Chinese proverb**





# From the Board Chair Maydra Maas

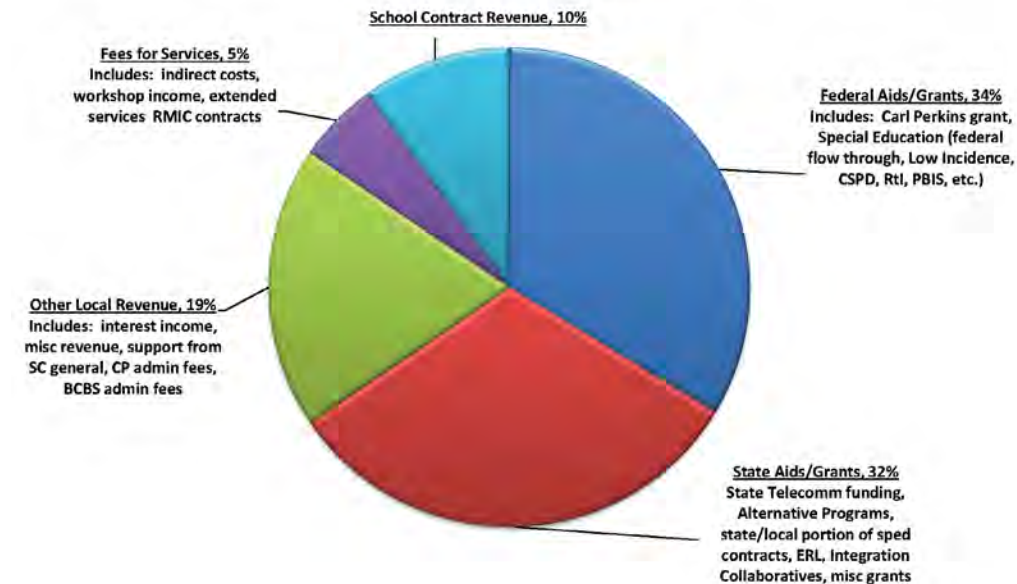
Today, I picture my grandson while sitting at the Westbrook-Walnut Grove School's "Little Charger" table. I want the absolute best for him. I want him to feel loved, stay healthy as he grows, and be ready for a lifetime of learning. I want this for **ALL** children in the SW/WC Service Cooperative area.

The SW/WC Service Cooperative doesn't do anything alone. Setting our children up for success is no different. It takes people in the rural communities across our region -- family, friends, neighbors, volunteers and our entire SW/WC Service Cooperative membership of cities, counties, governmental agencies and schools -- to raise a child.

I hope you will consider what you can do for each and every child. Gather with the excellent SW/WC Service Cooperative administration and staff. Push each other to think outside the box. Think big about what can be tackled together.

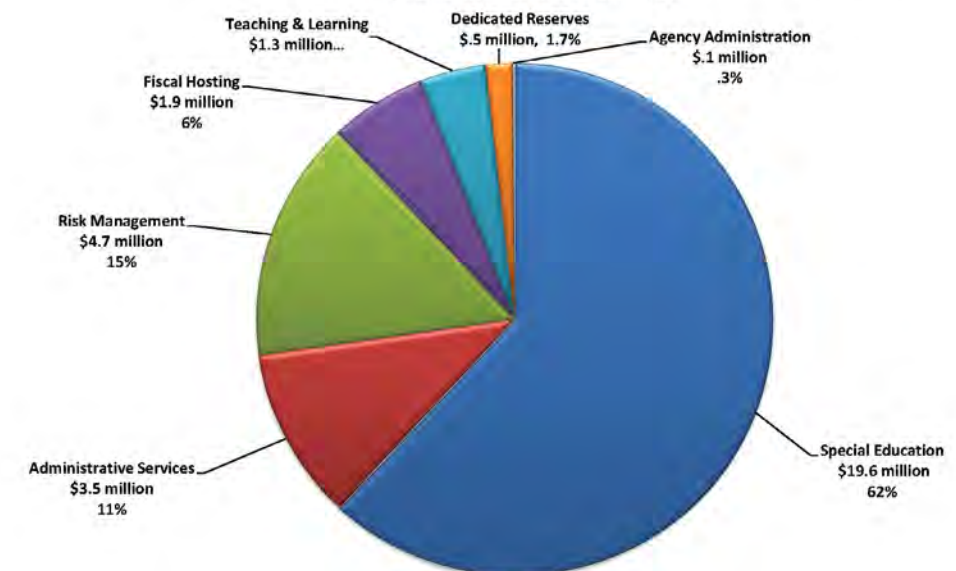
Thank you, one and all, for being part of the SW/WC Service Cooperative. There's always an open seat in true collaboration.

**Budgeted 2013-14 Annual Revenues - \$30.2 million**  
(Excluding Insurance Premiums)



*“Our core values of service, integrity and respect are the foundation for all we do, including our efforts to be great financial stewards of the resources we are given to serve our members”*  
~Cliff Carmody  
Executive Director

**Budgeted 2013-14 Annual Expenditures - \$31.6 million**  
(Excluding Insurance Premiums)





# **Superintendents' Executive Council 2013-14**

Chair: Jerry Kjergaard, Superintendent, Willmar

Vice Chair: Jim Lentz, Superintendent, Pipestone Area

Past Chair: Luther Heller, Superintendent, Montevideo

John Dotson, Superintendent, BOLD

Luther Onken, Superintendent, Fulda and Murray County Central

Chris Sonju, Superintendent, Glencoe-Silver Lake

Ann Wendorff, Superintendent, Heron Lake-Okabena

Todd Meyer, Superintendent, Jackson County Central

Chris Fenske, Superintendent, Lakeview

Klint Willert, Superintendent, Marshall

Dan Deitte, Superintendent, Minneota

Bill Strom, Superintendent, Mountain Lake

Robert Windel, Superintendent, Mountain Lake Christian

John Brennan, Superintendent, Red Rock Central

Ray Hassing, Superintendent, Round Lake-Brewster

Loy Woelber, Superintendent, Westbrook-Walnut Grove

John Landgaard, Superintendent, Worthington

Al Stoeckman, Superintendent, Yellow Medicine East

Sharon Kabes, Education Dept. Chair, Southwest MN State University

Michael Van Keulen, Manager, Minnesota West

The Superintendents' Executive Council provides advice and support to the  
SW/WC Service Cooperative Administration and Board of Directors.



**The SW/WC Service Cooperative is a member of the  
Minnesota Service Cooperatives,  
an association of nine educational  
service agencies in Minnesota.**

