

The Review

Winter 2014
www.swsc.org

And The Winner Is...

Beckie Simenson Named Minnesota Assistant Principal of the Year

By Mark Miley, Middle School Principal, Willmar Public Schools

It is my honor to inform you that Beckie Simenson was selected as the Minnesota Secondary Level Assistant Principal of the Year! She will have the privilege of traveling to Washington D.C. to represent Minnesota on the National Level this spring. We are all so very proud of her at Willmar Middle School and are fortunate to work with Beckie each and every day and see the passion and energy she shares with students and staff!



Canby Aviation Class Wins Competition

by Dan Lutgen, Aviation Class Instructor, Canby Public Schools

Congratulations to the Canby High School aviation class! They participated in an aviation competition with 27 other schools from 22 states across the country. This competition was sponsored by the General Aviation Manufacturers Association (GAMA) and Build-A-Plane. The Fly to Learn Curriculum was used to guide the students through the science of flight and airplane design.

Canby won the national competition with a score of 587 points. This score was based on flying a mission that consisted of speed of flight, time to fly the flight, and the payload it carried. Students involved were Leah Schmitt, Wyatt Johansen, Brandon Stripling, and John Deslauriers.

The two winning schools sent four students, the teacher, and a chaperone to Seattle, WA to actually build a plane at Glasair factory. The plane was a Sportsman 2x2 which is a 4-seat plane with a single engine. GAMA was the sponsor of the competition, which paid for the flight, hotel, food and all associated costs. Students also had the opportunity to tour Boeing Manufacturing.

In July of 2013, the aviation students were invited to attend EAA's largest air show in Oshkosh, WI. They spoke to many companies about their building experiences and participated in various workshops, meetings, and fun activities. It was a great learning experience for the Canby students.



From the Desk of the Executive Director

By Cliff Carmody, Executive Director, cliff.carmody@swsc.org

Regional Center of Excellence

The SW/WC Service Cooperative was recently selected as one of three fiscal agents for the expansion of the Regional Centers of Excellence initiative through the Minnesota Department of Education.

Phase I of this initiative was part of Minnesota's approved waiver from the federal ESEA law and was intended to address the achievement gap between high- and low-performing students. Federal Title I funds were awarded to three service cooperatives to serve as fiscal agents and providers of a statewide system of support. The first three Centers of Excellence are designated to work only with Focus and Priority Schools. The first phase of this work has shown great promise and great success!

The expansion of the Regional Centers of Excellence (RCE) came about through the leadership efforts of the Governor's Office, MDE and the initial RCE staff members. The purpose of the expansion is to "increase the impact on student achievement through regional partnerships that provide equitable access and cohesive, coordinated support." Anne Lundquist of MDE said "The RCE's work will be focused on MDE or legislative initiatives that can best be supported through a regional delivery system."

During the 2013 legislative session, legislation was passed to expand the RCEs. As a result of this legislation and an RFP process, SW/WC SC was selected to assist in the planning and development of a new RCE. Along with our agency, Lakes Country and Northeast Service Cooperatives were selected; doubling the original RCEs from three to six. The three new RCEs will collaborate with MDE staff to provide efficient, effective and equitable service for the functions MDE has an obligation to support in alignment with the Governor and Commissioner's vision.

This is important work, with huge potential for how we can better support the efforts of our school districts. As a regional leader in enhancing and supporting the work of our members, SW/WC SC is excited about this opportunity and is fully engaged with our MDE partners in the design of the new RCEs. We will periodically report on the work of the RCEs and their impact on improving student achievement in our region and state. Thank you for your commitment to the work of educating our children!



**In Partnership for
Our Schools**

Minnesota Department of
Education

G.R.O.W. at SW/WC Service Cooperative

G.R.O.W. -- Giving Recognition for Outstanding Work

The SW/WC SC has a new program to recognize our employees for their outstanding work throughout the year. Our employees can be nominated by co-workers, supervisors, and our members.

The G.R.O.W. submission form can be found on the SW/WC Service Cooperative website at: www.swsc.org/grow.

Visit our website to view the list of recipients so far this school year...and take time to nominate a SW/WC SC staff member for the great work they are doing!



From the Division of Risk Management

Wellness Institute Program

By Kari Bailey, Health Cost Management Coordinator, kari.bailey@swsc.org

During the months of February-April, schools participating in the Wellness Institute will offer onsite biometric screenings to employees participating in the SW/WC SC Wellness Institute program. Onsite screenings will be done to screen employees cholesterol, glucose and blood pressure levels, body mass index and waist circumference. Following the screenings, employees will use their results from

their screening to take an online Health Risk Assessment and then receive an individual health risk summary. During the months of May and June, employer groups will be verifying roster reports for employees that took the online health assessment. Each employee who participates (voluntary) will receive an individualized report and an incentive of \$240 to be applied towards their premium or as a contribution to a VEBA/HSA. The group will receive an aggregate report to use as a guide for future worksite wellness programming.

Health Cost Management Program

By Kari Bailey, Health Cost Management Coordinator, kari.bailey@swsc.org

For groups who are participating in the Health Cost Management (HCM) Program here are a couple of reminders as you continue to develop and implement your worksite wellness program. Program approval forms should be submitted for any wellness programs or screening you'd like to offer

in your district, prior to implementing the program. After the program or screening is complete and you are ready to request reimbursement, the district will need to submit a detailed receipt of the expense and proof of payment by the district for the expense. All reimbursement requests should be submitted to the Service Cooperative by Friday, May 9th. Contact Kari if you have any questions about reimbursement or the HCM Program.

Online Care Anywhere: Story #1

By Kari Bailey, Health Cost Management Coordinator, kari.bailey@swsc.org

The first time I used Online Care Anywhere was back in 2010. At the time, I had a 1 year old and an infant. I picked the kids up from daycare after work, and was told by our daycare provider that pink eye was going around and Kyra (my youngest) had had a pretty mattery eye all day. I got home (of course right at dinner time), and my husband was gone officiating. It was winter, and I didn't really want to bundle both kids up, drive to Urgent Care and sit there and wait with 2 kids that were both ready for dinner. So, I set my laptop on my kitchen counter and connected to Online Care Anywhere while I was making them dinner. I set up an account, described the condition and was placed in a virtual wait room while the Pediatrician I selected reviewed the information. After I was connected, she looked at Kyra's eye and diagnosed her with conjunctivitis. She called in a prescription to my local Hy-Vee pharmacy and I sent my husband a

text to pick up the prescription on his way home from officiating. All from the convenience of my home, during the dinner hour. She had her first drops that night and was able to go back to daycare after being on the drops for 24 hours.

The convenience alone is worth it, and the cost savings is also a plus. Since our initial visit, I've used it several times for sinus infections, strep throat, seasonal allergies, and most recently my 10-month old swallowing an eyeball off of a craft project. Each time, I have had excellent care (often times with a follow-up phone call or email from the provider checking-in the following day), and would highly recommend Online Care Anywhere!



OnlineCareAnywhere®

From the Division of Special Education

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

By Dr. Mary Palmer, Senior Director of Special Education, mary.palmer@swsc.org

Before the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) became law, another statute entitled “Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act” commonly referred to as just Section 504, was already in place. Both laws are designed to provide protections for individuals with disabilities. However, Section 504 is designed to provide a person equal opportunity and IDEA is designed to provide access to education.

Section 504 is a comprehensive law and my intent with this article is to touch on some key components of the law. The reader should know that what follows is only a brief overview of the law and individuals with further questions should obtain additional resources from the websites mentioned at the end of this article to better understand what the law requires.

Some key aspects about Section 504 is that it is NOT a special education law but rather a broad civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in any agency, school or institution receiving federal funds. It covers all persons with a disability from discrimination and does not require qualifying under disability categories as is the case under IDEA. The law allows for more flexible criteria and decision making than that which is allowed for under IDEA. The statute is enforced by the Office of Civil Rights. There is no funding attached to Section 504 as there is under IDEA. Section 504 is often times thought of as the law that “requires reasonable accommodations,” but the law requires much more than that.

A person with a disability as defined in Section 504 means any person who:

- (i) Has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities;
- (ii) Has a record of such an impairment: or
- (iii) Is regarded as having such an impairment. 34 C.F.R. § 104.3(j)

A physical impairment is any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more body systems. Physical impairments can include but are not limited to epilepsy, AIDS and HIV, allergies, arthritis, cancer, diabetes, hemophilia, asthma or temporary conditions due to accidents or illness. A mental impairment is any mental or psychological disorder, such as intellectual disability, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities. Mental impairments can include but are not limited to ADD/ADHD, dyslexia, depression, eating disorder, bipolar disorder, past drug/alcohol addiction, and traumatic brain injury 34C.F.R§ 104.3(j).

A temporary impairment can be a disability if it results in a substantial limitation of one or more of the major life activities. Some people have said that the disability should last at least 6 months before considering possible protection under Section 504. However, the Office of Civil Rights has said there is no requirement that a disability last at least a certain amount of time and each temporary impairment must be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Under Section 504, a major life activity can include but is not limited to caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, standing, or walking. It can also include bending, speaking, breathing, communicating, working, thinking, learning and reading.

A portion of the law that can be difficult to explain is “substantially limits” as it is not defined within the statute. However, after Congress passed the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act in 2008, we know that “substantially limits” generally means that a person is restricted as to the conditions, manner, or duration under which they can perform the major life activity. It does not mean that the impairment prevents or severely or significantly restricts the major life activity. Congress intended the definition of disability in Section 504 to be construed broadly.

(Continued on next page)

Did You Know?

Did you know that the SW/WC SC has **SIX** alternative learning programs in the region?

Belview Learning Center--Belview

- *Setting IV Behavior Program
- *Setting IV Therapeutic Program

Blue Mound Learning Center--Pipestone

- *Setting IV Behavior Program

Cosmos Learning Center--Cosmos

- *Setting IV Behavior Program
- *Setting IV Autism Program

North Central Learning Center--Willmar

- *Setting IV Therapeutic Program

Project SEARCH-Avera Marshall--Marshall

- *Transition Program

Red Rock Ridge School--Windom

- *Setting IV Behavior Program
- *Setting IV Therapeutic Program
- *Alternative Learning Center

For more information on the alternative programs,
contact Tish Kalla, Administrator of Alternative Programs,
at tish.kalla@swsc.org.

Online Care Anywhere: Story #2

By Tom Hoff, Career & Technical Project Coordinator, tom.hoff@swsc.org

Back in December, my son had a bad sore throat and a temp of 102. The sore throat started a few days earlier and had steadily gotten worse. Fortunately we had a discussion about Online Care Anywhere earlier that day at work. I set up an account (which took 5 minutes) and added my son as a dependent (1 minute). I clicked to connect to a doctor and entered the free coupon code (1 minute). The doctor appeared on our laptop screen and interviewed my son, looked down his throat (with the integrated video camera) and asked me some questions. After that process, he told me my son met all the criteria for Strep Throat. The doctor sent the prescription to the pharmacy and I went to pick it up. This whole process happened between 7:45 and 8:00 pm--with his first dose of medicine at 8:30pm. This experience was every bit as good as going to a doctor, but much more efficient. The doctor we selected was very personable and thorough. In a similar situation, I would definitely choose this option over driving into the clinic.



Section 504 continued...

School districts have various responsibilities under Section 504. Some of them include annually identifying and locating every qualified student with a disability and conducting an evaluation that draws upon a variety of sources when making placement decisions. Districts must also provide for a free, appropriate, public education in the least restrictive environment and establish procedures for periodic reevaluation. Although the law does not require a specific format, a Section 504 Plan is required for those individuals who qualify for Section 504 protections and need such protections to receive a free, appropriate, public education. The districts must also designate a Section 504 Coordinator and provide programs and services that are accessible to individuals with disabilities.

A free, appropriate, public, education under Section 504 does not just mean that “accommodations” are provided. Reasonable accommodations are mentioned under Title III of Section 504. However, Title III deals with employment concerns. Title II of Section 504 speaks about a free, appropriate, public education and that portion of the law deals with school districts. As such, a district’s obligation is not just limited to reasonable accommodations. A student with a disability as defined in Section 504 34 C.F.R. § 104.1 is entitled to the regular or special education and related services that are designed to meet the individual needs of the student as adequately as those of nondisabled students are met. The plan is based on individual needs and has no limits as to what can be on it. It can include regular or special education and related aids and services which can include specialized instruction, accommodations, modification to policies, etc.

If you need further information about Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act you can access the Office of Civil Rights website at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/index.html> or MDE’s website at <http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/StuRights/Sect504/index.html>

From the Division of Administrative Services

This is IT2 2014 - Plan to Attend!

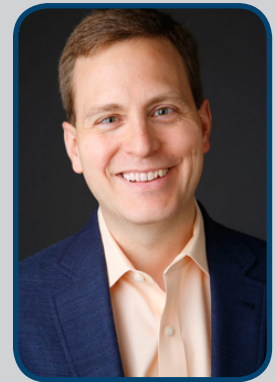
By Josh Sumption, Manager of Information Technology, josh.sumption@swsc.org

Mark your calendars for March 14! Our keynote speaker for ***This is IT2 2014*** will be **Rob Mancabelli**, author of *Personal Learning Networks: Using the Power of Connections to Transform Education*. Rob has spent over a decade developing 21st Century learning environments, is a former school district Technology Director and he writes a column for District Administration magazine. Rob also inspires audiences with insights into 21st Century learning, strategies for engaging stakeholders, and methods for transforming organizations.

Rob's expertise comes from a deep background in education, planning, and leadership. He received his MBA from MIT and earned his international certification as a Project Management Professional (PMP). Rob worked in public and private schools for fifteen years, as a teacher and then technology director, directing dozens of large-scale projects that used technology to improve learning outcomes. He served on the state-level task force for New Jersey High School Redesign, and he was chosen by Ap-

ple as one of the first five K-12 content contributors to iTunes University. Rob serves on educational advisory boards for Dell Computer and Acer Corporation.

Visit www.swsc.org/techconf2014 for more information. Pre-Conference workshops will be held on March 13.



Hour of Code: Marshall Middle School

By Theresa McCoy, Technology Teacher, Marshall Public Schools

Term 4 technology students at Marshall Middle School participated in the Hour of Code along with more than 17 million students worldwide. The students learned the basic concepts of Computer Science with drag and drop programming. They used the game-like, self-directed tutorial starring video lectures by Bill Gates, Mark Zuckerberg, Angry Birds and Plants vs. Zombies. They learned repeat-loops, conditionals, and basic algorithms. The students had fun, collaborated together and were creative. Some were motivated to continue learning computer science at home.

Mary Kay Thomas, principal at Marshall Middle School, adds "Theresa McCoy (author of this article) is our technology teacher at Marshall Middle School – in her second year of teaching. She is innovative, community oriented, and integrates technology throughout the building. She continues to challenge young people in the world of technology by providing a challenging curriculum to all of our 630 Middle School students. In addition, she offers her services on a voluntary basis to provide community seniors with technology learning opportunities and engage her Middle School students in projects such as Hour of Code and Game-It. Opportunities flow into after-school times, and she is thorough and persistent in including students with talents as well as challenges within the area of technology."



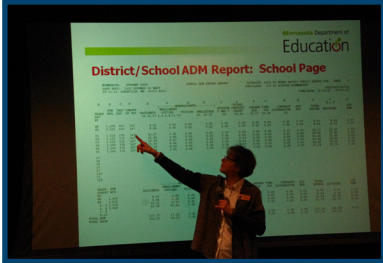
31st Annual School Business Conference

By Denise Hoek, Administrative Assistant,
denise.hoek@swsc.org

April 10th is the date and the location is the Conference Center at Southwest Minnesota State University in Marshall. This conference is held every year and is jam-packed with lots of good information that assists the schools with all the mandated reporting and knowledge needed to be in compliance with the many school programs. We are currently working on finalizing the session line-up. The day

consists of five 50-minute timeslots with eight sessions being offered each time. We have several Minnesota Department of Education staff joining us that day to cover a variety of school topics as well as other presenters. A partial session listing includes: School Funding, PERA, TRA, ACA Compliance, Special Education, UFARS Update, MARSS Reporting, Auditing Potpourri plus many, many more. A notification will be sent to the districts once online registration is ready to go.

For more information, please contact Denise at 507-537-2264.



Cooperative Purchasing Managed Print Contract Savings Increase

By Shareen Neumann, Sales & Marketing, Cooperative Purchasing Specialist, shareen.neumann@swsc.org

SW/WC Service Cooperative members who are enrolled in the managed print program through Bennett Office Technologies recently received great news: Because the aggregate volume of pages for all of our members enrolled in the program has reached 15,000,000, those members will now see a 3% discount reflected on their January 2014 statements.



If you would like more information about how the managed print program through SW/WC SC Cooperative Purchasing and Bennett Office Technologies can save you time and money, contact Shareen at 507-537-2279.

We Are Social!

By Shelly Maes, Manager of Member Services, shelly.maes@swsc.org

Connect with us!



Visit our website at www.swsc.org/social or scan this QR code to connect with SW/WC SC staff members who are social!

Volunteer Grandparents at Helen Baker Elem/GSL

By Teresa Kuester, Kindergarten Teacher,
Glencoe-Silver Lake Public Schools

Each year, new kindergarten students are welcomed to Helen Baker Elementary School in Glencoe. This year, we also welcomed four new grandparents! These wonderful volunteers are as eager as our students to be at school each and every day. The Senior Companion and Foster Grandparent program is sponsored through Lutheran Social Services. The program enables "grandparents" to volunteer in our classrooms. Our grandparents participate in a variety of ways. They assist with individual learning as they help students learn letters, sounds, words, and numbers. They also help with literacy and math centers. They assist with daily routines that involve SmartBoard activities and enjoy working with students on

iPads, too! But, most of all, they share unconditional love as they help each child to feel safe and secure in their learning.

How would you feel if your grandma and/or grandpa could be with you at school? Well that's exactly what we have at Helen Baker! We are always excited to welcome new volunteers at Helen Baker School. For more information about volunteering or the Senior Companion and Foster Grandparent program, please contact us at 320-864-2666.



Pictured at left are volunteer grandparents at Helen Baker Elementary School in Glencoe, pictured left to right, are: Grandma Cherrie, Grandma Linda, Grandma Karen, and Grandpa Dave.

Early Childhood Learning Center opens at GSL

By Dawn Peterson, Superintendent's Secretary, Glencoe-Silver Lake Public Schools

The New Year welcomed the opening of the Early Childhood Learning Center at Glencoe-Silver Lake Public Schools. The 5,000-square-foot addition to Lincoln Junior High School in Glencoe will house the Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE), School Readiness (SR), and Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) programs in one location. Previously, the programs were housed in three buildings and located in two communities. The move was completed over winter vacation and the first classes were held on January 2nd.



Students enjoyed playtime in the large motor room.

Students, their parents, and the early childhood staff are excited about the beautiful new facility. New technology will be available for students to use. Having all the early childhood programs in one location will make it easier for the transitioning of students, and the increased space will provide many opportunities for students to learn and play.

There is still some finishing work to be done and outside work will be completed in the spring. It will take time for the teachers and staff to finish settling into their new location, but it will be a wonderful place for young children when completed. An open house was held on January 31st.



"Miss Britta" Aldrich, School Readiness Teacher, instructed students on how to use homemade playdough.



"Miss Britta" explained what would happen during preschool.

Lester Prairie REACH Program

By Blaine Walstrom, REACH Teacher,
Lester Prairie Public Schools

Though just half way through its first year of existence the Lester Prairie REACH program is making strides in the right direction.

Starting in the 2013-2014 school year Lester Prairie School District implemented a REACH program with the mission of serving all students who need additional support, by helping them attain their place in life, to achieve academic and interpersonal success. The program started with twelve students and has now grown to 19 students with a waiting list for other students. The program was discovered through work with Hutchinson Schools who have been servicing students through REACH since 2008. Prior to the inception of REACH, students were reported passing 25% of their classes, but have now reached a staggering 96% passing grades within their classes.

REACH students are realizing more success in the classroom with fewer absences, missing assign-

ments, and behavior referrals, leading to improved grades. At Lester Prairie, REACH students have 50% fewer missing assignments from middle of the first quarter to the middle of the second quarter. That number continues to decline.

In addition to academic support these students work on team building activities, communication skills, and problem solving skills. Students have daily and weekly "check-ins" to share the highs and lows that are happening in their lives. REACH students and staff talk about appropriate ways to deal with personal conflict, self-image, and peer and social conflicts.

The Lester Prairie REACH program looks to evolve and grow so that it can continue to help students achieve to potential.



The REACH Program at Hutchinson--Watch their new video!

<http://youtu.be/h8ai8hdsehE>

Office Supplies

Food and kitchen supplies

Copiers

Buildings and Grounds supplies

Vehicles

Tablets and other technology

Furniture

Curriculum

Contact Shareen Neumann for more information
shareen.neumann@swsc.org

Canby Blood Drive A HUGE Success

Canby High School had its best Blood drive ever collecting a total of 79 units with only 6 deferrals! The Red Cross personnel here on Wednesday commented that they love coming to Canby HS, in fact the employees ask to work this blood drive, because of the friendly, calm, well-organized volunteers and donors. CHS has some of the few-

That was a tremendous accomplishment. That is also rivaling some of the large metropolitan high school blood drives with much larger enrollment numbers. Thank you so much for your effort--- simply amazing!

**Steven Seering, Manager,
Donor Recruitment,
American Red Cross**

est reactions and deferrals of any high school. Our donors are prepared to be successful because of the planning, information given, the high iron foods served in our cafeteria, positive peer pressure, & supportive teachers and staff. As always "It takes a whole village to raise a child." ~Africa Proverb

I did some investigating - your students collecting 79 units is the most the school has ever collected - way to go!!!!!!

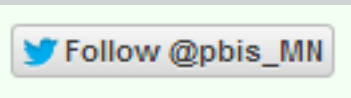
**Cash Huntington | Donor
Recruitment Representative
American Red Cross**

From the Division of Teaching and Learning

North Collaborative Update

By Lisa Gregoire, School Improvement Specialist, lisa.gregoire@swsc.org

The North Collaborative has held best practice content area meetings in Math, Physical Education and Health, and ELA (English Language Arts). Emily Hoeschens, instructor from St. Ben's College, will be spending a day with elementary and a day with secondary ELA staff to provide hands on classroom strategies to meet the rigor of the ELA common core standards in February. The Collaborative has also established RtI Networking meetings for districts to share interventions, look at data, and discuss scheduling and structures of meeting the needs of students. In addition, BOLD hosted a Tech Integration Day for several of the Collaborative districts, featuring Kevin Honeycutt, on December 9. Principals continue to meet monthly to discuss collaboration opportunities, successes and challenges, and how to best support their staff needs through the Collaborative structure. Districts in the North Collaborative include: ACGC, BBE, BLHS, BOLD, Cedar Mountain, KMS, Lester Prairie and MACCRAY.



By Bob Braun, Senior Director of Teaching and Learning Services, bob.braun@swsc.org

Applications for Cohort 10 Schoolwide Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (SW-PBIS) implementation training were due mid-January. The SW-PBIS state leadership team will be selecting and notifying schools by February 14th for inclusion in the two year Cohort 10. Teams selected for cohort 10 will start training in the summer of 2014. The full cycle of training and support will run through the spring of 2016.

When the southern regional implementation project was initiated 5 years ago, there were 2 schools participating. That number has grown to 89 with the addition of Cohort 9. In the southwest and west central region of MN, we have 26 schools that are currently or have participated in the training.

Visit www.pbismn.org to learn more about this program, or follow them on Twitter. If you have other questions, please contact me at 507 – 537 – 2252 or Bob.Braun@swsc.org.

Educator Growth and Evaluation Round 2

By Lisa Gregoire, School Improvement Specialist, lisa.gregoire@swsc.org

The SW/WC SC has started a second round of guided working sessions in Worthington. Five districts



are currently participating. These working sessions allow district teams to develop an evaluation framework to meet their district needs and state requirements. Teams have time to discuss, plan and be

able to network with other districts around Educator Growth & Evaluation. Resources and examples are available throughout the sessions.

The final meeting of Educator Growth and Evaluation Round 1 (pictured in this article) was held at the SW/WC SC in Marshall back in December.



Young Writers Meet Professionals

By Sue Gorecki, Student Activities Coordinator, sue.gorecki@swsc.org

Debra Frasier, author and illustrator, kicked off the 22nd Annual Conference for Young Writers on January 8th with a keynote presentation to over 850 participants. Frasier writes and illustrates picture books. She has won the hearts of readers since the publication of her first book and has also won numerous awards. If you have ever visited the Minnesota State Fair's Alphabet Forest, you have seen her imagination at work on a giant scale.

Students attended three hands-on classes selected from a wide variety of topics related to writing and illustrating. They learned techniques to write humor columns, how to create their own super hero, what it takes to become a TV news reporter/photog-

rapher, hints and tricks to make their writing come alive, how to write a scary story, fantasy or science fiction, how to develop characters, how to draw animal and human characters, how to journal a funny book, the secret formula of storytelling, create their own graphic novel, and how to make their writing more interesting with new skills, and much more! The hints and information that students learned at the conference can be used throughout their life. The chance to meet professionals whose career involves writing can be an eye-opening experience for students.



One Simple Topic, Dozens of Interpretations

By Gail Polejewski, Career Development Coordinator, gail.polejewski@swsc.org

Students participating in the SW/WC Service Cooperative's annual photography competition were tasked to capture photos of nature with impressive results. Thirty-six high school students from Canby, Dawson-Boyd, Marshall, Montevideo, Russell-Tyler-Ruthton, and Worthington shared their work at the competition on December 12.

Canby High School took home three of the top five place finishes with Alexis Bakalakos placing first, Shauna Vernlund placing second and Brady Carstens receiving Honorable Mention.



1st



2nd

Rachael Blake from R-T-R placed third and Tristan Vorhees from Montevideo also received an Honorable Mention.

In addition to the competition, students attended a seminar with Nicole DeBoer where she taught them about different kinds of photography and had them take photos using the newly learned techniques.



3rd

Physics Force to Keynote at 20th Annual Science & Nature Conference

By Sue Gorecki, Student Activities Coordinator, sue.gorecki@swsc.org

The 20th Annual Science & Nature Conference is scheduled for May 14, 2014 at SMSU in Marshall. Mark your calendar and watch for more information! Brochures will be sent out to schools in late February.

We're excited to announce that Physics Force from the University of Minnesota has agreed to give the keynote presentation at the conference. They presented at the conference four years ago and received rave reviews so we're happy to have them back!

Some topics that have been secured include geocaching, archeology, stargazing, kitchen chemistry, science magic, liquids and gases, strange creatures of Minnesota, rockets, cryogenics, crime scene investigation, kitchen detectives, grossology, all about animals, and much more!



Sleepy Eye Pride

Middle School STEM

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) is an exciting new program that was introduced to Sleepy Eye's 7th and 8th grade. The course units are integrated real world skills that are correlated with what they



are learning each day in their regular core classes. The goal of this class is to guide students to discover for themselves how their participation in coursework can lead directly to exciting and

rewarding careers. Through a wide variety of multimedia tools, students will learn that STEM applies to virtually every career field. From mechanics to engineers, forensic scientists to firefighters, STEM encompasses the work force on a daily basis. In order to promote high quality student achievement, this class offers the value of a rigorous and relevant course that highlights science, technology, the engineering process, and mathematics.

STEM course work will be broken into units which require exploration, design, testing, modifying and presenting to a client. Some of the STEM units we will do this year are: Paper Airplanes, Barbie Bungee, IKEA Project, Big Foot, Wild About Rockets, Building Bridges, and 3M MecLab.

'Check-In/Check-Out' Program: CICO

This program is designed to help students meet our school-wide expectations in a positive manner. The purpose is to promote student success and offer

daily feedback on academics, organizational skills, responsible and respectful behavior. Students are assigned a coordinator and are responsible for checking-in each morning and checking-out again at the end of the day. A report gets filled out daily by the student's classroom teacher(s). Coordinators review the report and conference with students at check-in/out time discussing daily behavior, organizing school work, and setting individual goals. Reports get sent home for parent review and signature each night. Students earn incentives and rewards for appropriate positive behavior based on a point system. We found that establishing special adult connections for some of our students has been positive in shaping and improving their academic success.

'Intensive Care Unit': ICU

ICU is a class period in the school day for 7th and 8th graders which supports assignment completion, trains work study habits, and forces practicing of organizational skills. Students in ICU are in a small group and receive direct help from a teacher with assigned work from the day. The goal of ICU is to promote student success by teacher and student working together to produce quality completed assignments.

'Zeros Aren't Permitted': ZAP

The ZAP program goal is to make students responsible for their work by not permitting 'zeros'. Ninth grade students get 'zapped' when they have a zero on any assignment. ZAP homework support happens during lunch on T, W, R, and F. Teacher support is available during ZAP time to help students complete assignments. This is not a punitive program. It is intended to help students finish their work with teacher support promoting assignment completion which helps students be successful.



JHKB Competitions

By Sue Gorecki, Student Activities Coordinator
sue.gorecki@swsc.org

Two sub-regional events were recently held for Junior High Knowledge Bowl.

Region 6: December 9 at ACGC Public School: Thirty-two teams from sixteen school districts participated in the event. Winning teams were Willmar #1 with 121 points, Glencoe-Silver Lake #2 with 111 points, and Glencoe-Silver Lake #1 with 108.5 points. The teams were awarded a trophy for their schools, with first, second, and third place ribbons given to team members. Eighteen teams advanced to the regional event to compete against thirty-three teams from Region 8.

Region 8: December 19 at SMSU: Sixty teams from nineteen school districts participated in the event. After the written and oral rounds, Fulda #1 and Windom #1 were tied for 1st place. Winning the tie-breaker round was Fulda #1. Windom #1 was in 2nd place and Redwood Area #1 was in 3rd place. Thirty-three teams advanced to the regional event

to compete against eighteen teams from Region 6.



Regional Event – January 9 at SMSU: Extreme wind chill temperatures forced the regional event to be postponed from January 7 to January 9. Fifty-one of the best teams from Region 6 and Region 8 met to determine the regional winners! After a written round and four oral rounds, the following teams were declared the winners:

1st: Glencoe-Silver Lake #2 with 124 points
2nd: Glencoe-Silver Lake #1 with 123 points
3rd: Willmar #1 with 107.5 points

Thanks to all the Knowledge Bowl students and coaches for great events.

The winning Junior High Knowledge Bowl teams are pictured on the back page of this issue of the Review.

Student Activity Staff Contact Information

For more information about any of our student activities, including the Creative Writing Contest, Knowledge Bowl, Spelling Bee, Children's Author and Illustrator Program, and our various student conferences, please contact:

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Scan this code to go directly to our student activities webpage:



Senior High Knowledge Bowl

By Sue Gorecki, Student Activities Coordinator, sue.gorecki@swsc.org

The final registration deadline for Senior High Knowledge Bowl is February 3rd. The registration form is available on our website: www.swsc.org/student-activities, then click on Senior High Knowledge Bowl.

Region 6 Events

Sub-Regionals: February 24 at MACCRAY Public School and March 10 at Hutchinson Public School

Regional: March 14 at MN West/Granite Falls

Region 8 Events

Sub-Regionals: March 7 at MN West/Jackson and March 11 at SMSU

Regional: March 13 at SMSU

The State Competition will be April 10-11 at Cragun's in Brainerd (3 teams each from Region 6 & Region 8).



Largest Conference for Young Artists Ever!

By Sue Gorecki, Student Activities Coordinator
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The 20th Annual Conference for Young Artists was held on November 6 at SMSU in Marshall. Southwest Minnesota Arts Council was the title sponsor for the event again this year. Over 1,000 participants from 28 school districts participated in the conference – our largest Young Artists' Conference ever! Twelve schools brought between 30 – 105 students! Many parents also registered their children on their own.

The keynote was presented by Imaginick (Nick Bretz). Bretz is a magician so there were lots of oohs and aahs throughout his performance. He was funny, leaving the audience laughing as well as perplexed. (Now how did he do that?) Nick is one of the most well rounded entertainers on stage today.



Students also attended three hands-on sessions on various topics related primarily to the visual and performing arts: pottery, clay

sculpture, drawing, printmaking, origami, watercolor, nature art, dream catchers, acting classes, digital media, cartoon animation, kitchen art, sand painting, and much more. The confer-

ence gave students a chance to experience some different types of art. Below are some comments from conference evaluations:



**My daughter is a drawer. She draws and draws and draws. The conferences have encouraged her to branch out into other areas of art. Over the years we have been attending, she has taken classes in cartooning, watercolor, wire sculpture, sand art, card making and other crafting. She still mostly draws, but enjoys other artistic pursuits as well now.

**This is my child's 3rd year at the conference and she still finds interesting classes to attend.



**They love art and don't have it at school. They love the chance to try new things and use their imaginations.

The Conference for Young Artists is usually held during the first week of November. Plan to attend next year!

Regional S-p-e-l-l-i-n-g Bee on February 11

By Sue Gorecki, Student Activities Coordinator, sue.gorecki@swsc.org

Students are busy preparing for classroom and school spelling bees during January in preparation for the Regional Spelling Bee on February 11 at the Redwood Area Community Center in Redwood Falls. Local school winners from 26 schools will advance to compete against each other at the Regional Spelling Bee. The competition consists of a written test and three preliminary oral rounds for all contestants. During the lunch break, the written test will be corrected and the scores from that test plus correct spellings in the preliminary rounds will be added together with the top 15 spellers participating in the afternoon spelldown.

The four winning students will advance to the Multi-Region State Spelling Bee in Fergus Falls on February 25 with that winner participating in the National Spelling Bee in Washington, DC. Good luck to all students as they participate in the various Spelling Bees!



SPELLING BEE

Upcoming Workshops

2/6 Technology Leadership Workshop
2/7 DCD Networking Workshop
2/10 Close Reading Workshop
2/10 SMART Board Level I, Windom
2/10 Low Incidence Disorders & Behavior Strategies
2/11 Budgeting Workshop
2/12 Food Service RFP Vendor Presentations
2/12 Regional 3rd Party Billing Informational Meeting
2/17 SMART Users' Networking Group Make & Take Workshop
2/19 School Law Seminar for School Administrators
2/20 Google Drive
2/21 iPad for the K-6 Classroom
2/26 Ralco Technology Campus Tour - Balaton
2/27 PECS: Teaching Critical Communication Skills
3/3 SMART Board Level I Workshop, Willmar
3/14 Annual Technology Pre-Conference Sessions
3/15 Annual Technology Conference
3/10 CPI Refresher - ACGC
3/17 Visual Phonics
3/19 Superintendent Workshop
3/25 Motor Team: DAPE, OT, PT Working Together
3/26 SLP Networking Day 2014
4/7 "Meeting the Challenge" Behavior Conference
4/9 Administrator Forum
4/10 School Business Conference
4/12 Renew Your License Saturday
4/22 Technology Coordinator Workshop
6/4 Administrator Forum
6/17 Technology Coordinator Workshop
6/25-27 Summer Leadership Conference, Alexandria
7/29-30 Principal Summit



Register Now!

Workshops are in Marshall unless otherwise noted.

www.swsc.org/workshops



*Scan here to keep current
on workshops & meetings!*

*Check back often! We are
always adding new things!*



Executive Director's Cabinet

Cliff Carmody, Executive Director
Deecy Jesse, Executive Assistant
Bob Braun, Sr. Director of Teaching & Learning
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Darin Jensen, Sr. Director of Admin. Services
Shelly Maes, Manager of Member Services
Annette Miller, Director of Finance
Dr. Mary Palmer, Sr. Director of SPED



Regional JH Knowledge Bowl 2014
First Place: Glencoe-Silver Lake #2



Partnership Innovation Leadership Service



Regional JH Knowledge Bowl 2014
Second Place: Glencoe-Silver Lake #1



Regional JH Knowledge Bowl 2014
Third Place: Willmar #1



The Review is published three times per year. If you have suggestions, comments, or items for submission, please contact Shelly Maes at shelly.maes@swsc.org.