

There's An App for That

By Heather Wachal and Becky Kolander, SLPs

Two SW/WC Service Cooperative speech language pathologists, Becky Kolander and Heather Wachal, received a \$1,480 grant from CenturyLink/Qwest and Minnesota Business Partnership in June 2011. The grant dollars were used to purchase and integrate iPads in Speech Language Pathology (SLP) lessons. Kolander and Wachal anticipated that iPads would improve students' expressive and receptive language skills – addressing articulation, voice, fluency and language. Now, with almost a year under their belts, it is time to share the success of the past year.



Kolander (pictured at left) believes the iPad is now one of the most useful tools the speech therapists have available for therapy. It is not only handy, but also significantly more affordable than conventional paper materials. There are apps for all areas (Augmentative and Alternative Communication, Articulation/Phonology, Language Skills, Voice, and Fluency/Stuttering) of therapy. Knowing the iPad was going to be a great tool to use in therapy did not prepare Kolander for the enthusiasm and success she has seen—which was much more than predicted.

Wachal (pictured at right) also knew the iPad would be a useful tool with many of the special education students she works with that have speech and language impairments, and that it would be a motivating device for many of her students. The iPad is used in many different ways, depending upon the student's specific educational needs; however, the most important use is helping students to communicate.



The students have demonstrated an increase in motivation and attention while using the iPad over traditional materials, therefore leading to a higher degree of success on their goals. The SLPs have observed the greatest gains in the area of social communication/language skills (conversational skills) and also with students who have limited verbal communication. The iPad is used to teach students expressive, receptive and social language skills. It is also used for teaching articulation skills. It is used with nonverbal and verbal students. The iPad is used as a motivator, reinforcer, and as part of the therapy lesson when targeting a specific speech/language skill. The students can't wait to work on the iPad in speech therapy. They are excited and engaged in the specific speech/language activities. This motivation helps them to improve their speech/language skills.

Using the iPad as a communication device has had a significant impact for nonverbal students. An "average-priced" Augmentative and Alternative Communication Device for a student with limited verbal communication could cost about \$5,000. The cost of an iPad with the appropriate apps is under \$1,000. The iPad allows for instant feedback, which helps students learn instantly. The iPad is not replacing speech/language therapy, but supplementing it. It has been an amazing therapy tool that will be constantly changing by adding apps for the benefits of the students.

As more of our special education staff start using iPads in their work with students, we look forward to more and more success stories.

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In this issue

Risk Management: 3

Special Education: 4-5

Teaching and Learning:
6-10

School News: 7, 11-12

Vendor News: 13

Admin Services: 14-15

Workshops: 16

News from the Executive Director

By Cliff Carmody, Executive Director

My head is spinning as technology continues to find its way into my day-to-day schedule. E-mail, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Digg, Evernote, Pinterest, Flickr, iTunes, Vimeo, Google +, Stumbleupon, apps, apps, and more apps profess to make me more productive! And today, I read a Twitter message that led me to a webpage, that professed 24/7 access provided by my smart phone may not make me more productive but, in fact, may make me less productive!

Don't get me wrong, I cannot envision a future without technology. In fact, there are a number of everyday things that we do that are dependent upon technology. I just think we need to be strategic about how we think about and how we implement technology into our work places and our classrooms! So, the question we may want to ask ourselves about technology is "how will technology fundamentally change the way we do business, educate our kids, or get through our daily lives?"

This isn't so much a question about productivity or technology as it is about innovation! Seth Godin talks about technology as the key "linchpin" to change. Seth goes on to say that many of our institutions were invented to create "compliant, conforming cogs in an industrial system" (harsh, but sounds a lot like most of our school systems). The question then is "what are we going to do about it?" Technology may be the key to innovation or as Godin would say "don't be afraid to try something new, because if failure is not an option, then neither is success! Innovation is all about failing."

Here at the SW/WC Service Cooperative we are in the process of continuing to develop capacity around technology and the integration of technology. We believe our future is dependent on the appropriate use and application of technology at work, in school, and at home. It is our mission to continue to meet the technology needs of our members through leadership, innovation, partnership, and service.



New Vendor-Marsden Services LLC

The Minnesota Service Cooperatives have entered into an agreement with Marsden Services, L.L.C. (Marsden) to offer facility management services, janitorial, general building and grounds maintenance, HVAC and security services to its members. Marsden provides outsourced facility management and facility services throughout the state of Minnesota through its affiliated companies: Marsden Bldg Maintenance, American Security & Investigations, Palen Kimball and Final Touch Services.

An industry-leading company of integrity, service, dedication and innovation since it was founded in 1952, Marsden has succeeded by dedicating itself to providing customers with scalable, customizable and personalized service. Marsden is headquartered in St Paul, and provides services to more than 250 educational facilities and nearly 400 other public facilities nationwide. See our website for the full press release: www.swsc.org.

Division of Risk Management Services

By Doug Deragisch, Senior Director of Risk Management Services

School Pool Insurance Annual Meeting

The School Insurance Pool Annual Membership meeting was held April 3rd at the Redwood Area Community Center. The overall Pool needed increase for 2012 was 4.8%. Part of the 2011 renewal put in place 'Rate Caps' for this year's renewal. The rate caps had a range from a 0% to a 7.5% increase. The School Pool Advisory Committee recommended a formula that had a minimum of 0% with a maximum of 7.5% (the Rate Cap). However, for groups that had a negative needed increase over the past three years, a 'claims experience credit' were applied. The applied credit (off of the group's rate cap) was -1% for the current year, -3.5% for two consecutive years or -8.5% for three consecutive years of negative needed increases. No group's 2012 renewal increase was greater than their rate cap. A rate cap for next year was discussed and will be revisited again by the Advisory Committee next spring for the 2014 renewal.



Wellness Institute Pilot Program

By Kari Bailey, Health Cost Management Coordinator

During the month of March, ten schools participated in the SW/WC Service Cooperative's Wellness Institute pilot program. During the month of April, employer groups will be verifying utilization for employees that took an online health assessment. The Institute will then advance the incentives to the groups for their employees; given as a premium reduction or a contribution to a VEBA/HSA. The advanced funds will be added to the group's utilization and calculated in the 2013-14 premiums. Each employee who voluntarily participated received an individualized report with online coaching while the group received an aggregate report to use as a guide for worksite wellness programming.



Health Cost Management Program

By Kari Bailey, Health Cost Management Coordinator

For groups who are participating in the Health Cost Management Program, here are a couple of reminders as you conclude your worksite wellness program. For us to reimburse you for expenses we will need a detailed receipt of those expenses and proof of payment by the district for the expense. Reimbursement will not be granted if there is insufficient information on the receipt. All reimbursement requests need to be submitted to the SW/WC Service Cooperative by Friday, May 4th.

The annual Fall Health Conference will be held on Thursday, September 20 at the Marshall office. Please encourage wellness coordinators/committee members to attend!

Contact Kari (kari.bailey@swsc.org) if you have any questions about reimbursement or the Health Cost Management Program.



Division of Special Education Services

April is Autism Awareness Month

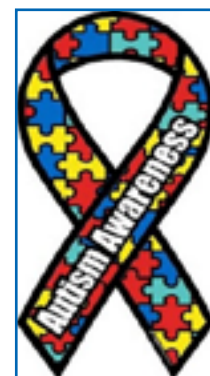
By Tammy Stahl, Director of Special Education Services



April 1st marked the beginning of Autism Awareness Month and according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), more children than ever are being diagnosed. In recognition of this month, check out these autism highlights:

1. Autism is a complex neurobiological disorder that lasts throughout a person's lifetime. It is part of a group of disorders known as Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). People with ASD have problems with social and communication skills and in most cases its causes are unknown.
2. In 2002, 1 in 150 kids were diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder. The CDC is now reporting this number to be 1 in 88. More children are affected by autism than diabetes, AIDS and cancer combined!
3. The CDC continues to report boys are still more likely to be diagnosed with the disorder (1-54) than girls (1-262).
4. The CDC reports a significant increase with the number of Latino children being diagnosed (1-125).
5. The SW/WC Service Cooperative currently employs two Regional Autism Specialists, Karin Marquardt and Penny Cammack.
6. The SW/WC Service Cooperative hosts a variety of workshops and networking sessions specific to autism. The next networking session is May 8 in Marshall and will focus on social thinking.
7. Linda Hodgon, autism author and presenter, will be in Redwood Falls on June 6th for a SW/WC SC sponsored workshop. Linda will provide an introduction and framework to dealing with challenging behaviors through improving communication and using visual supports.
8. About 25 percent of individuals with an Autism Spectrum Disorder are nonverbal but can learn to communicate using other means.
9. Research shows that children as young as 8 to 12 months may exhibit early signs of autism.
10. Autism is treatable; it is not curable. Early intervention is important!

To register for workshops or networking sessions go to our website at <http://www.swsc.org/workshops>



2012 New Special Education Leader of the Year

Tammy Stahl, Director of Special Education for the SW/WC Service Cooperative (pictured above), has been named the 2012 New Special Education Leader by the Minnesota Administrators for Special Education (MASE). Tammy was honored for her commitment to students with disabilities and their families, and her active involvement in professional and community affairs at a statewide recognition ceremony at the MASE/MASA Spring Conference in March.

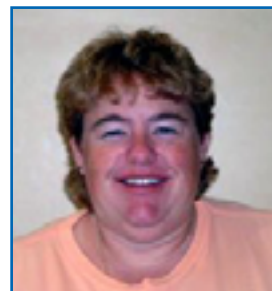
Tammy has been a special education director for two years, serving families and students with disabilities. Demonstrating her leadership abilities, she provides administrative oversight and leadership to more than 15 districts. With special education funding on a decline, her innovative approaches have been well received. "Through her leadership we have instituted many reforms within our district that have improved special education programming and saved the school district money," notes Jim Lentz, Superintendent for Pipestone Area Schools. "Tammy has been instrumental in not only holding us to best practice procedures, but is making us think more creatively about ways to work with special education students."

Tammy has been in the field of special education for over 12 years. During those years, she has served as a teacher for students with moderate/severe cognitive disabilities and emotional/behavioral disorders, as well as a consultant for severely multiply impaired students. She is also an adjunct professor at Southwest Minnesota State University where she provides instruction to students pursuing the autism certificate. **Congratulations Tammy!**



Transition Fair Held in Granite Falls

By Janet Dirksen, Coordinator of Special Education



The Community Transition Interagency Committee (CTIC) from the Montevideo area sponsored a Transition Fair for students in grades 10-12 at the MN West - Granite Falls Campus on Tuesday, March 6, 2012. The committee is comprised of representatives from a variety of agencies, including school district staff from the Belview Learning Center, Montevideo High School, Heartland Girls Ranch School, YME High School, Montevideo ALC, Ortonville High School, MACCRAY High School, KMS High School, Benson High School, BBE High School, Dawson/Boyd High School, and Lac qui Parle Valley High School; agency staff from the Private Industry Council; county social workers from Big Stone County, Yellow Medicine County, Chippewa County, and Swift County; MN West Community and Technical College; SW/WC Service Cooperative; Heartland Industries; Southwest Center for Independent Living; and Vocational Rehab Services.

Sixty-two students participated from the following districts: Dawson/Boyd, KMS, Lakeview, LqPV, MACCRAY, Montevideo, Montevideo ALC, Ortonville, Prinsburg, and YME.



There were numerous sessions for students to learn about life after high school. Topics included Nutrition Education; Housing Rights/Responsibilities/Options; Career Assessment/Awareness and Employment; Identity Theft and Web Safety; Post-Secondary School Options; and Consumer Awareness - Buying A Car. There was even a session for the students with lower cognitive abilities in which

they worked with an area musician to write and perform a song about "Life After High School".

Everyone had a great time and received great information about transitioning to life after graduating from high school.

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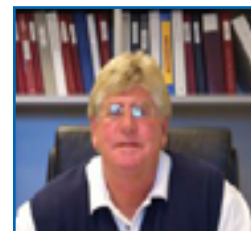
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Division of Teaching & Learning Services

By Bob Braun, Senior Director of Teaching and Learning Services

17 New Schools in PBIS

Seventeen schools have been accepted into cohort 8 for the Southern Regional Implementation Project/PBIS (positive behavior interventions and supports). The schools will start their two year training sequence in August. The two year training is centered around implementation and sustainability of positive behavior support in schools. The Southern Regional Implementation Project was started in August of 2009. At that time there were two schools in the southern region of MN implementing PBIS. With the new Cohort 8 schools, that number has grown to 65. The new schools in the SW and WC regions are: New London/Spicer, Cedar Mountain HS/MS and Elementary, YME HS/MS, and RTR Elementary. We now have 20 schools in various stages of PBIS implementation. Our goal is to have 28 schools involved in the project by 2013. We have already started working with schools for the cohort 9 application process. If interested, please contact Bob Braun.



Two of our area schools recently had newspaper articles written about their PBIS efforts.

Lester Prairie - the Herald Journal: <http://www.herald-journal.com/archives/2012/stories/lp-pam.html>.

Redwood Area - the Redwood Gazette:

<http://www.redwoodfallgazette.com/news/x760621461/Reede-Gray-s-Cardinal-Code-making-a-difference>.

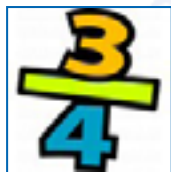
Math & Science Teacher Partnership 2011-12

By Christy Hemp, Math Specialist and School Improvement Specialist



This year, the Math & Science Teacher Partnership (MSTP) worked specifically with:

- Grades 3-8 math teachers on rational numbers, specifically fractions, through the Rational Number Exploration—Fractions! workshops held at SMSU and presented by Dr. Carl Olimb, Assistant Professor of



Mathematics at SMSU and Christy Hemp, Math & School Improvement Specialist at the SW/WC Service Cooperative. Teachers attended four content workshops designed to increase teacher content knowledge around rational numbers. Participating school districts were: Ivanhoe, Lake Benton, Luverne, Murray County Central, Red Rock Central and Round Lake-Brewster. Eighteen teachers from these districts were part of the 7-month project.

- Grades 7-12 Life Science teachers on Life Science & Engineering through the Life Science—Exploring Life Around Us workshops held at SMSU and presented by Dr. Betsy Desy, Professor of Biology at SMSU, Dr. Tom Dilley, Professor of Environmental Sciences at SMSU, Dr. Tony Greenfield, Associate Professor of Biology, and Holly Knudson, Marshall High School Science Teacher. Teachers attended four content workshops designed to increase teacher content knowledge around Life Science & Engineering. Participating school districts were: Ivanhoe, Lac qui Parle Valley, Luverne, MACCRAY, Pipestone, Red Rock Central, Round Lake-Brewster, Springfield and Windom. Eleven teachers from these districts were part of the 7-month project.

Teachers in both programs gained a stronger understanding of the MN Standards. Math teachers worked specifically with the 2007 MN Math Standards and increased their content knowledge of the Number & Operation Strand, specifically benchmarks on rational numbers. Science teachers worked specifically with the 2009 MN Science Standards and increased their content knowledge of the Life Science Strand and how it interacts with The Nature of Science & Engineering Strand.



Teachers also supported their research from these workshops through an online PLC (Professional Learning Community) model that allowed participating teachers from around the region to meet and discuss their content area in a professional capacity. Teachers attended PLC Training on how to incorporate best practices in Professional Learning Communities with technology facilitated by Karen Jacobson, MRVED Director and Brandon Raymo, MRVED Assistant Director.

Recruitment of schools and teachers for the 2012-2013 Math & Science Teacher Partnership Grant will start in April 2012.

Mathematics, Statistics, and the Data Deluge

By Christy Hemp, Math Specialist and School Improvement Specialist

The SW/WC Service Cooperative would like to announce the annual April observance of Math Awareness Month (MAM). MAM is sponsored by the Joint Policy Board for Mathematics (JPBM), which has selected “Mathematics, Statistics, and the Data Deluge” as the theme for MAM 2012.

Every day, massive amounts of data are collected, often from information we have provided to the services we use regularly. Scientific data are generated daily from sensor networks, astronomical numbers of instruments, biometric devices and other sources, in amounts we almost cannot fathom – and all that data need to be sorted out.

In addition, personal data from numerous sources, including Google searches, Facebook and Twitter activities, credit card purchases, and airline and hotel reservations, are being mined for information and insight. All of these data sets provide great opportunities for marketers and others, but they create potential dangers as well.

Resources for this year’s Mathematics Awareness Month are designed to show how mathematics and statistics provide the tools to understanding these data and to helping mitigate against their misuse. At www.mathaware.org, you can download articles and essays, as well as an 8.5 x 11” copy of the 2012 poster, “What Would You Do with All This Data?” (pictured above). You also may order full-size copies of the poster by mail or online. Cost is \$1 for each poster. Mail orders may be sent to: ASA Marketplace, American Statistical Association, 732 North Washington Street, Alexandria, VA 22314. Order online at: <https://www.amstat.org/eseries/scriptcontent/BEWeb/orders/ProductDetail.cfm?pc=MAMPOSTER>

Mathematics Awareness Month, held each year in April, was created to increase public understanding of and appreciation for mathematics. It began in 1986, when President Reagan issued a proclamation establishing National Mathematics Awareness Week. Activities for Mathematics Awareness Month generally are organized on local, state and regional levels by college and university departments, institutional public information offices, student groups, and related associations and interest groups.

The JPBM is a collaborative effort of the American Mathematical Society (AMS), the American Statistical Association (ASA), the Mathematical Association of America (MAA), and the Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics (SIAM).



WWG After-School Science Academy

By Paul Olson, Elementary Principal, Westbrook-Walnut Grove Schools

Mrs. Angie Larson, Westbrook Walnut Grove science teacher, has added another role to her resume. She is now teaching a class for fourth, fifth, and sixth graders in our After-School Science Program. Each Tuesday from 3:30-5:30pm Mrs. Larson covers a host of science units and lessons, but her favorite has to be the C.S.I. unit. Mrs. Larson has a passion for science and how it works at a crime scene investigation. Each year she sets up a crime scene for her high school students to figure out. She plans on doing a similar unit that is age appropriate for our 4th-6th graders. Her twenty elementary students are very excited to be a part of this program. Mrs. Larson will run this after-school program through the end of the school year.

We at WWG have been very fortunate that both our high school science teachers have been so eager to teach our elementary students about science. An article was featured last year about Mr. Pat Merrick and his work with our 1st-3rd graders.

Please call us at 507-859-2141 or 507-274-6111 if you would like to learn more about our After-School Science Programs.





left to right
4th – Dalton LaVoy
3rd – Robin Bock
2nd – Bailey Munsterman
1st - Millie Piper



Scan this QR Code to
read more about ALL of
our Student Activities

Students Spell Their Way to State

By Sue Gorecki, Student Activities Coordinator

SW/WC Service Cooperative's Regional Spelling Bee was held on February 14 at the Redwood Area Community Center in Redwood Falls. Twenty-four students, who were local winners, competed against each other through a written test and three preliminary oral rounds. The scores for those two events were added together and the 16 students with the top scores advanced to the afternoon's spell-down. After twenty-four intense rounds, Millie Piper of Fulda was declared the champion. Other winners included Bailey Munsterman (Lincoln HI-Ivanhoe – second place), Robin Bock (Marshall – third place), Dalton LaVoy (ECHO Charter – fourth place), and Stephanie Prokop (Canby – alternate). All students received certificates. The top four students received trophies and advanced to the Multi-Region State Spelling Bee on March 1 at Fergus Falls. Emma Greenlee, a 7th grader from Mesabi East in Aurora, was named champion and will compete in the National Spelling Bee in Washington D.C. from May 27 – June 1.

Schools from the eighteen county area were invited to participate in this academic enrichment activity sponsored by the SW/WC Service Cooperative. The Multi-Region State Spelling Bee is sponsored by the following Minnesota Service Cooperatives: Lakes Country Service Cooperative, Northeast Service Cooperative, Northwest Service Cooperative, Resource Training & Solutions, and the SW/WC Service Cooperative.

If your school would like to participate in Spelling Bee next year, please contact Sue at sue.gorecki@swsc.org or 507-537-2258.



Showing Support for Knowledge Bowl

By Jenny Kirk, Marshall Independent (Reprinted With Permission-Edited for Length)

Nearly 40 Marshall Public School students were involved in Knowledge Bowl this year, including the five who advocated for the activity by giving a short demonstration to board members at the Marshall School Board meeting in March.

"Thank you for giving us the opportunity to talk about an activity that I feel is an awesome activity for kids," Marshall coach Bessie Skalicky said. "Knowledge Bowl is an activity that is provided to us through SW/WC Service Cooperative and it is a statewide activity for high schoolers and also junior high students. It's basically an interdisciplinary academic challenge." Skalicky said that 25 high school students and 14 junior high students participated this past season, which ended in early March.

"I have the opportunity to bring high school seniors to Rotary Club every Tuesday, and many times the students speak about their experiences and their activities," Marshall Superintendent Klint Willert said. "Knowledge Bowl is one of the activities they highlight. It's amazing to hear the knowledge that the students come to the table with. It's really a great activity for our students that oftentimes doesn't get the attention that some of our sports and other activities do."

Two senior high teams finished in the top 10 of the regional competition but did not qualify for the state competition this year. Despite not advancing, Skalicky believes all of the teams were successful this season. "Overall, as far as participation in Marshall, we've done very well as a team," Skalicky said.

(Continued on page 12)

Knowledge Bowl Teams Compete at State Academic Event

By Sue Gorecki, Student Activities Coordinator

One hundred teams from 38 districts registered to participate in the Senior High Knowledge Bowl Program. Teams practiced and attended invitationals at area schools in preparation for the events hosted by the SW/WC Service Cooperative. All teams participated in one of two sub-regional events held in each region with approximately half of the teams advancing to the regional event.

The Region 6 regional event was held on March 19 at ACGC Public School. After an intense competition the following three teams were declared winners: 1st - Willmar (105 points), 2nd - Hutchinson #2 (91.5 points), and 3rd - Glencoe-Silver Lake #1 (85.5 points) (pictures at right).

The Region 8 regional event was held on March 8 at SMSU. After an intense competition the following three teams were declared winners: 1st - Worthington #1 (98 points), 2nd - Windom #1 (94.5 points), and 3rd - Murray County Central #1 (91.5 points) (pictures below).



Worthington #1



Windom #1



MCC #1

The six winning teams listed above competed in the Senior High Knowledge Bowl State Event on April 12-13 at Cragun's in Brainerd. Over 4,000 students throughout the state participate in Knowledge Bowl with 240 competing at the state event. It is a big accomplishment to make it to state! Congratulations to Windom for being the 3rd runner-up in the A Division. Also congratulations to Worthington for winning the Heritage Spirit Award for qualities and conduct becoming to a champion competitor in the AA Division.



Windom



Worthington

If you are interested in starting a Knowledge Bowl program at your school, please contact Sue at sue.gorecki@swsc.org or 507-537-2258.



Willmar



Hutch #2



GSL #1



Winners Chosen in Creative Writing Contest

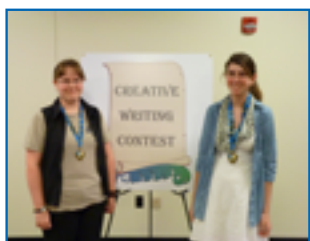
By Sue Gorecki, Student Activities Coordinator

The Creative Writing Contest is open to students in grades 3-12 for fiction and poetry and grades 5-12 for creative non-fiction. This year's contest drew 251 students with 376 entries. Students from 17 school districts participated with many others entering the contest individually.

Winning entries have been chosen in the 8th Annual Creative Writing Contest. Entries were originally screened by SMSU creative writing students and then submitted to the final judges, faculty in SMSU's Creative Writing Program. The top three place winners in each grade level within each category were invited to an Awards Ceremony on April 15 at Southwest Minnesota State University. Even though we had to deal with bad weather (including going to the lower level during a tornado warning!) the event was very successful. Authors Nicole Helget and Nate LeBoutillier from Mankato gave a presentation to the students, their families, and teachers. Prizes include a \$2,000 scholarship to attend SMSU for the top junior/senior place finisher in each writing category (limit of one scholarship per student,



1st Place Winners



Scholarship Winners

Annie Magnuson, Marshall, Fiction

Laura Frazeur, Canby, Poetry & Non-Fiction

per year); gift certificates for first place winners; gold, silver, and bronze medals; and a copy of the anthology (limit one per student) to the top three place finishers in each grade level from each writing category. Certificates of participation were given to all students that submitted entries. Recognition awards were presented to Comfrey and New London-Spicer schools for the most top three place winners. A reception followed the awards ceremony.

If anyone is interested in purchasing an anthology (\$5/copy), please send check (payable to SW/WC Service Cooperative) to Andrea Anderson, SW/WC Service Cooperative, 1420 E. College Drive, Marshall, MN 56258.

For more information about this contest, check out our website:

www.swsc.org/studentactivities or contact Andrea at andrea.anderson@swsc.org or 507-537-2257 or Sue at sue.gorecki@swsc.org or 507-537-2258.

Over 1,400 Expected for the Science and Nature Conference

By Sue Gorecki, Student Activities Coordinator

The final registration deadline for the Science & Nature Conference was April 3. We have over 1,400 registrants for the 18th annual conference. We think this is one of the largest and most popular science conferences for students in the country!

A few of the topics being offered this year include kitchen chemistry, insects, glaciers, animal wrappers, kitchen detectives, zoo fear factor, grossology, rockets, crime scene investigation, storm tracking, blood splatters, cryogenics, planetarium shows, etc.

A few comments from last year's conference -

"Great science trip for all ages."

"This is our first time. We love it and want to come back. We will definitely recommend it to others."

"I always look forward to attending this conference with my children."

If you would like to be added to our mailing list to receive brochures on the three student conferences (Young Artists, Young Writers, and Science & Nature), contact Andrea at andrea.anderson@swsc.org or 507-537-2257.



Minneota Initiates Anti-Bullying Crew

By Mary Boulton, ABC Advisor, Minneota Public Schools

Last fall, two junior high students approached administration about the need to develop an anti-bullying group at Minneota Schools. Both students had been victims of bullying and were willing to share their stories with the local school board.

The board unanimously agreed that this was an important issue, and encouraged the students to set up a group that would bring an awareness of bullying and the effects it has on all involved. Today, there is a group of 35 students in grades 7-12, including representatives from St. Edward, who make up the Minneota Anti-Bullying Crew, commonly referred to as the ABC's.

Since its inception, the group has sponsored an elementary coloring contest and a high school door decorating contest. In addition, they have displayed anti-bullying posters throughout the school, and sold blue and gold wristbands with embossed writing that says, "Stop and Think... Words Can Hurt."

Most recently the group was awarded two grants to help in their anti-bullying efforts. A United Way Venture Grant will be used to implement a program called "Second Step." This is a curriculum designed to increase the students' school success and decrease behaviors by promoting social emotional competence and self-regulation. Students in grades K-6 will be involved with this program next year.

The Anti-Bullying Crew was also awarded a YAR (Youth as Resources) grant which will be used to host an all school anti-bullying rally at the Minneota football field on May 7. The group, Sheltered Reality, a drum line ensemble, will present an anti-bullying message through their music. In the evening, the group will perform for parents and interested community members. T-shirts portraying an anti-bullying message are also being sold at this time.

This has been a busy year for the ABC's of Minneota District 414 as they strive to lessen bullying and its effects in Minneota Schools.



MCC Home To Math Masters

By Mark Schliessman, 5th/6th Grade Teacher, MCC Public School

Murray County Central is home to the **FIRST** place team from the sixth grade annual Math Masters competition on Saturday, March 10th, in Worthington. Eleven teams competed, with MCC coming in first.

Team members include:

Kneeling: Maggie H., Rachel V. Standing: Tyler G., Brendan T., Zach A.



Sumption Earns CETL Certification

Josh Sumption has earned the Certified Education Technology Leader (CETL) designation by passing a rigorous certification exam. The CETL certification, awarded by the Consortium for School Networking (CoSN), signifies that he has mastered the knowledge and skills needed to bring 21st century technology to our K-12 school systems. Josh is one of 32 professionals nationwide to receive the CETL certification to date. To become certified, the candidate must have demonstrated experience in the education technology field and pass a comprehensive two-part examination based on the 10 skill areas in CoSN's Framework of Essential Skills of the K-12 CTO. Congratulations Josh!

Marshall Public Schools Wins Awards

By La Oeltjenbruns, Marshall Public Schools

The Association of School Business Officials International (ASBO) has awarded to Marshall Public Schools its Meritorious Budget Award (MBA) for excellence in budget presentation. The award is conferred only to school entities that have met or exceeded the Meritorious Budget Award criteria. This is the first time the District has received this recognition.



To earn this award, the 2011/2012 budget was submitted for a rigorous review based on stringent criteria. These criteria guide school business officials toward a quality school budget presentation by enhancing the school business officials' skills in developing, analyzing, and presenting a school system budget.

The district also received ASBO's Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting award for having met or exceeded the program's high standards for financial reporting and accountability. The district was recognized for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the fiscal year ending 2011. This award confirms the school business office's commitment to financial accountability and transparency. Recognition through the COE program can help strengthen a district's presentation for bond issuance statements and promotes a high level of financial reporting. Hats off for a job well done to the entire team!

Showing Support for Knowledge Bowl (Continued from page 8)

"The last five years that I've been coaching we've had four different teams make it to state competition. We've had some do very well once they got there. Some have a little bit of a culture shock once they got there. I have high expectations for my team members in upcoming seasons."

Of the five MHS students who helped give the Knowledge Bowl presentation Monday, only senior Eli Louwagie will not be returning next season. Others returning next year include junior Meghan Lozinski, sophomores Nick Lozinski and Rachel Landmark and freshman Talitha Black. "It's fun," Louwagie said.



Skalicky explained that a pressurized strip, green in color and connected to a pocket box, lays in the middle of the team's table. Anyone can buzz in, but only the spokesperson can give an answer to the judge. "Basically, it's not only a race to show what you know, it's also a racing competition to buzz in first, to get the opportunity to answer first," she said. "Students work in cooperative groups. They get 15 seconds of discussion time on the question they are asked if they buzz in first, or second or third."

The best part about competing in Knowledge Bowl, according to Nick Lozinski, is that it's about improving your own knowledge. "I like that it's more of a self-competition," he said. "It's more of you trying to improve each round other than trying to beat other people."

Skalicky believes that participation teaches students skills that are going to be useful to them in the real world. "It's really focused on teamwork, communication and listening," she said. "Listening is a huge aspect." Knowledge Bowl is a special activity, Skalicky said, because it encourages different types of students to collaboratively work together. Besides the academic challenge, Knowledge Bowl also provides the opportunity to gain self-confidence.

Green Cleaning for Improved Student Health

By Mike Hofer, Marsden Services, RBSM, LEED-AP O+M, IICRC, CIMS-GB Expert

We all understand the importance of providing a clean environment for our children's health and safety, but how do we know it is the best environment possible? Does it just need to look clean? That might not be enough.

According to a 1989 State of Massachusetts Study, 50% of all illness is due to poor Indoor Air Quality (IAQ)(1). And, according to the US Environmental Protection Agency, airborne contaminants can be up to 100 times higher indoors than outdoors(2). And, 30% of all buildings worldwide have indoor air quality problems(3).

The Berry Study conducted at the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center on the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill Campus, in collaboration with the EPA's Environmental Criteria and Assessment Office, found that improved cleaning practices reduced airborne dust levels by 52%, VOC's by 49%, bacteria by 40% and fungi colony-forming units by 61%. And by all accounts this building had been considered to have been well-maintained prior to the cleaning program changes.

Dr. Berry also found that "there is a direct connection between healthy school environments; behaviors and attitudes of students, parent, and educators; and academic achievement." His research at the Charles Young Elementary School in Washington, D.C. found that by including proper cleaning as part of a healthy school program students increased their basic math performance by 25 percentage points and their reading levels by 16 percentage points.

The Krilov Study conducted at the Association for Children with Downs Syndrome School in Bellmore, New York found that improved cleaning reduced total illness by 24%, doctor visits by 34% and days absent from school by 46%.

"It takes more than just a casual commitment to clean for health and safety", says Guy Mingo, President & CEO of Marsden Services, L.L.C., "It involves using the right equipment, the right green-certified chemicals, education of the workers and the occupants of a building as well as implementing the right processes and procedures." The Marsden companies, headquartered in St. Paul, Minnesota, are leading providers of green janitorial solutions for educational facilities and commercial properties nationwide and Guy Mingo has spent his entire 35-year career in the janitorial industry.

The GREENGUARD Children & Schools Certification Program™ provides the strictest certification criteria to protect children because they are more sensitive to environmental exposures than adults. Their bodies are still developing - including their brains. They breathe faster than adults and in return receive a higher dose of indoor pollution per body weight. To accommodate children who spend extended periods of time inside school buildings, the GREENGUARD Children & Schools Certification Program™ brings the most stringent requirements for lower allowable emissions, low exposure to VOC's and limits on Phthalates.

By using very specific products and procedures that have been thoroughly tested in the GREENGUARD Environmental Institute's Dynamic Environmental Chambers, you can achieve GREENGUARD certification for your onsite cleaning program. There are ten key areas of concentration in a successful healthy high performance cleaning program.

- 1) Go Beyond Appearances - clean to protect health.
- 2) Take a Holistic Approach - understand that poor cleaning in one area can affect other areas too.
- 3) Educate & Communicate - get people involved and celebrate successes and benefits.
- 4) Perform Routine Maintenance - don't wait for a severe decline before restoring.
- 5) Plan For Accidents - have specific procedure for quick response to weather, spills, blood, etc.
- 6) Minimize Exposure - reduce human exposure to contaminants and VOC's with green chemicals.
- 7) Minimize Residue - use microfiber tools to capture more particulates using less solution.
- 8) Ensure Safety - document and follow safe practices for all tasks performed.
- 9) Reduce Pollutants Entering - have systems and procedures to trap dirt before it comes in.
- 10) Safe Disposal - dispose of all waste properly so as to not harm people or the environment.

To simplify this process, you may find it easiest to select a janitorial service provider who has proven experience in green cleaning and a proven program that will achieve GREENGUARD certification for the cleaning in your building!



Division of Administrative Services

MN Common Course Catalog Submissions

By Barb Raske, Student/MARSS Specialist



During the quarterly Data Sig WebEx on April 4th, Minnesota Common Course Catalog (MCCC) staff gave the participants updates with the file submissions and the interface.

The indexing file and calendar setup deadline was March 16. For districts that need to complete this project, the website will be opening up the end of April. MDE has it closed right now for updates and the preparation for the staff and student file submission. A reminder the data gathered for these submissions are for 2010-11 year.

The MCCC website has online trainings to watch for the indexing file and how to setup the calendar in the web interface. The website to find these trainings is: <http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/SchSup/DataSubLogin/MCCC/>.

When the website is open, districts that have the first and second steps completed will be able to submit their staff and student files using an XML format only. A district will need to have both files created when ready to submit these files in step 3 and 4. The interface will allow the district to submit the staff file first and the student file right after. More information will be explained in the trainings available around mid-May. MCCC staff will offer 3 sessions of training.

The window for submitting the staff and student files will be open from April/May until around September/October.

If you have questions or need assistance, please contact the MCCC staff at Mde.mccc@state.mn.us.

FCC Order Directly Impacts SW/WC SC

By Josh Sumption, Manager of Information Technology



On February 15, 2012 the Federal Communications Commission released Delegated Authority Number 12-189, otherwise known to those who aren't up to speed on the FCC Docket lingo, as the ruling on SW/WC Service Cooperative's FCC Appeal. After 2 ½ years of working through appeals with the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) and then having to appeal to the FCC over USAC's denials the FCC found in favor of SW/WC SC's appeal.

The order from the FCC has now been issued to fund the SW/WC SC's Wide Area Network Consortium E-Rate applications. The next steps in the process may take a few months to get funding flowing, but the appeal at this point is over. This is great news for our organization and all of our membership as it reinstates nearly \$3.9 million in E-Rate funding that USAC had denied due to alleged rule violations.

The FCC ruling finds that SW/WC SC did not violate the rules that USAC alleged and granted our appeal for all funding years in question. Our FCC counsel in Washington D.C., Charles Keller, stated that this order is "a clear finding that the competitive bidding rules were not violated" in regards to the outcome of the FCC order.

This is the outcome we have been hoping for all along and will allow for our districts to continue to receive high-quality and valuable Internet and Wide Area Network Services that would not be possible without this funding. The E-Rate Program is perhaps one of the best funding mechanisms available for Education Technology Infrastructure in the nation, and it continues to bring in tens of millions in funding annually across the state of Minnesota. We are pleased with this ruling as it reinstates our focus on making the best possible technical services available to our members and making use of the E-Rate funding mechanism for financial support on eligible services.

Tremco delivers unique facility asset management solutions designed to reduce your roofing and building envelope life-cycle costs while extending overall performance.

Craig Hulbert, 612-554-8662
e-mail chulbert@tremcoinc.com



Let the Innovation Begin! 2012 Tech Conference Motivates Hundreds

By Josh Sumption, Manager of Information Technology

The 2012 SW/WC Service Cooperative Technology Conference received rave reviews from the 250 participants who attended the conference (including vendors and presenters—there were over 400 total people in attendance). The excitement and motivation of the audience was as big as it has ever been as we were inspired by Wesley Fryer's keynote address, "We Must Share". Attendees then took part in a variety of the more than 50 unique breakout sessions held throughout the remainder of the day.

Wesley's keynote address is now available on our website at www.swsc.org/tech-conf2012. The conference website also features breakout session information and handouts that were provided to us by presenters. You can also find our conference photo album, recordings from the Why I Love Office Max competition that took place in the exhibit hall and evaluation forms for the Conference. This year featured more buzz than ever in the Exhibit hall as our 33 exhibitors shared the latest in Information and Instructional Technologies. This year there was even more opportunity to share in the exhibit hall, in addition to our Demo Lab that features the latest in technology such as Windows 8 tablets and laptops and X-Box 360 Kinect and a number of other tablet devices, we also showcased several exhibitor innovation in short, 20 minute sessions at our Innovation Station.

The underlying theme of the conference was "Collaborate. Innovate. Empower 21st Century Learners". Our intention was for the conference to be just a beginning, a starting point or mid-point of sorts for a number of our participants. The collaboration and innovation, even though it was bountiful at the conference, was really what we hoped would be taken back to school districts and shared with students and peers. The theme of the Technology Conference was meant to be ongoing and bridged from year to year—it is our sincere hope that the collaboration and innovation ignited in participants of this year's conference is still burning strong when we all re-unite in 2013!

Featured speakers included Ananth Pai, an Instructor and Innovator from White Bear Lake, Minnesota who spoke about his data-backed success with Classroom Gamification; Aimee Bissionette, Attorney and Author emphasizing in Cyber Law and Policy Development for School Districts; Karina Berzins of the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension who spoke on Internet Safety risks in Schools during the Pre-Conference; Mary Mehsikomer, Technology Integration Development and Outreach Facilitator at TIES; Corey Anderson, Systems Engineer from Apple; Jon Larson, Technology and Learning Coach, East Central Minnesota Education Cable Cooperative (ECMECC); as well as many more talented and knowledgeable individuals from throughout Minnesota and the country.

A big thank you to presenters from our member districts: Paul Bang and Ann Wendorff from Heron Lake - Okabena Schools; Kathleen Stalnaker from MACCRAY Schools; Marty Brandl from Marshall Schools; and JoAnne Alverson, Dave Dulas, Jamie Fenicle, and Cory Strasser from Pipestone Area Schools.

Again this year we had a number of districts utilize the conference as a professional development opportunity for a number of their staff members. Both Pipestone Area Schools and ECHO Charter school sent their entire staff to this year's conference and several other districts are talking about doing the same next year. If you are interested in doing that in 2013, please contact me at josh.sumption@swsc.org. Schools sending their entire staff to the event will be entitled to further discounts on their registration.



Planning is underway for the 2013 Technology Conference!

If you would like to present next year or know of someone that you would like to see present, let us know!

Upcoming Professional Development

To register for any of these workshops, visit our website at www.swsc.org and click on Workshops. Please check back often as workshops are frequently added. If you have any questions, please contact Dawn Christensen at dawn.christensen@swsc.org or 507-537-2278.

May - August 2012

- 5/3 Managed Print Services Lunch and Learn - Marshall
- 5/8 Regional Autism Network Meeting - Marshall
- 5/9 SLD Region 6 & 8 - Redwood Falls
- 5/9 E-Textbooks Information Session - Marshall and ITV sites
- 5/16 SLD Region 6 & 8 - Marshall
- 5/17 Part C Regulations - Willmar
- 5/21 SMART Board Level 1 - Marshall
- 5/23 SMART Notebook 11 Update/Make & Take - Marshall
- 5/23 Files, Files, Files - Just Due It! - Pipestone
- 6/4 Files, Files, Files - Just Due It! - Olivia
- 6/5 iPad for Teachers - Marshall
- 6/6 Administrator Forum - Marshall
- 6/6 Linda Hodgdon: Discovering the Possibilities - Redwood Falls
- 6/7 SLD Region 6 & 8 - Willmar
- 6/7 Flipped Classroom Fundamentals - Marshall
- 6/11 CK12-Using Flexbooks to Customize Your Curriculum - Marshall
- 6/11 UFARS Year End - Marshall
- 6/11 Health and Safety Update - Marshall
- 6/12 iPad School for CTE Teachers - Marshall
- 6/12 UFARS Year End - Willmar
- 6/13 Power of ICU - Willmar
- 6/13 Modern Automotive Maintenance Training - Jackson
- 6/14 Technology Director/Coordinator Workshop - Marshall
- 6/16 SMART Board Level 2 - Marshall
- 6/18 UFARS Year End - Hutchinson
- 6/18 Microsoft Active Directory 2008 - Marshall
- 6/18 iPad for Teachers - Marshall
- 6/19 UFARS Year End WebEx
- 6/20 SMART Board Level 1 - Marshall
- 6/21 SMART Notebook 11 Update/Make & Take - Marshall
- 6/26 SMART Board Level 2 - Marshall
- 6/27-29 Summer Superintendents' Conference - Arrowwood Resort
- 7/25-26 Data Mine - Marshall
- 7/31 New Supt/Principal Workshop - Marshall
- 8/6 Instructional Coaching - Redwood Falls
- 8/7 Early Literacy Project #1 - Redwood Falls
- 8/7 2012 Paraprofessional Conference - Pipestone
- 8/8 2012 Paraprofessional Conference - Willmar

**Keep current on
workshops and meetings!
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- 8/9 2012 Annual Teacher Extravaganza - Westbrook
- 8/9 CPI Full Training - Windom
- 8/9 CPI Refresher - Pipestone
- 8/10 CPI Refresher - Pipestone
- 8/10 CPI Refresher - Windom
- 8/10 CPI Refresher - Marshall
- 8/13 CPI Full Training - Pipestone
- 8/13 CPI Full Training - Redwood Falls
- 8/14 CPI Refresher - Pipestone
- 8/14 CPI Full Training - Marshall
- 8/14-15 Data Mine - Willmar
- 8/17 Newer Teacher Workshop - Redwood Falls
- 8/17 Power of ICU - Pipestone
- 8/23 2012 Annual Teacher Extravaganza - Maynard
- 8/28 CPI Refresher - Willmar
- **June (dates TBD): Advanced Placement workshops and Clean Up Your PLCs workshop