

NSASSP SELECTS PRINCIPALS OF THE YEAR



Lamberty

Ron Lamberty, Principal at Seward High School was selected to represent Nebraska as the High School Principal of the Year for the Nebraska Association of Secondary School

Principals.

Ron received his education from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (Bachelor's and Masters of Educational Administration).

Ron has served at Seward Public Schools since 1985. He is active in many professional organizations such as The Nebraska Council of School Administrators, The Nebraska Association of Secondary School Principals, the Nebraska School Activities Association, The Nebraska Athletic Directors Association and the Nebraska Coaches Association. As well as professional organizations, Ron is active in the Council of Drug and Alcohol-Committee of Seward and the Youth Coach of Seward Recreation Department.

Marshall Adams, Superintendent of

the Seward School District, states: "Ron's positive leadership has brought his building through the troubled times. His positive and empathetic approach to the Principalship has gained him a tremendous amount of respect in the community and among his peers."

Mike Hecker, VP Cashier of Jones National Bank & Trust Co., says: "Ron has worked hard during his years of service at Seward High School to develop and maintain a positive and exciting atmosphere for the students and teachers in his building."

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Osgood

John Osgood, Principal, C.L. Jones Middle School in Minden was selected to represent Nebraska as the Middle School Principal of the Year for the Nebraska Association of

Secondary School Principals.

John received his education from Hastings College (Bachelor's) and Kearney State College (Master's of Educational Administration).

John Osgood has been at C.L. Middle

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NCSA BOARD ELECTS NEW CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR



Beran

The NCSA Executive Board at its April 2 meeting elected **Glen Beran**, Superintendent of Chase County Schools and President of NASA as the new Chair of the NCSA Executive Board.



Haack

Terry Haack, Principal of Elkhorn High School and President of NSASSP has been elected as Vice Chair. Terms of office begin on September 1, 2003.

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The mission of the Nebraska Council of School Administrators (NCSA) is to be an effective leader for quality education and to enhance the professionalism of its members.

NCSA ANNOUNCES NEW PRESIDENT-ELECT-ELECTS

Affiliate members elected their president-elects for the new school year 2003-2004. These administrators will officially begin their duties on the NCSA Executive Board after September 1,

2003. Congratulations and welcome:

NASA - Tim Hoffman

NAESP - Katie Mathews

NASES - Donna Moss

NSASSP - Troy Loeffelholz



Hoffman



Mathews



Moss



Loeffelholz



SIGNS OF THE TIMES

By Doug Christensen, Commissioner of Education

Someone said, "These are the times that try...[our] souls." Someone else said, "These are the best of times. These are the worst of times." No doubt, these are tough times for everyone. These are tough times to be educators.

After almost 40 years as an educator, I can, without reservation, say these are the most difficult times I have seen. The issues are huge, complex and energy sapping. The challenges are tough, daunting and threatening and at the same time, the opportunities are immense, heady and inviting.

One of the things I have learned as an educator these past 38-plus years is that challenge and opportunity go hand in hand. And, I've learned they proportion each other. In other words, the bigger the challenge, the bigger the opportunity. These times we live in are "trying times,"

i.e. huge challenges, equally huge opportunities; great opportunities to succeed and great risks of failure to succeed.

What is it that makes these times so unique, so full of opportunities and so equally full of challenges? There are two sets of reasons. One set is about the context of the times that makes our work more difficult and challenging. The second set is that our work is not just different, it is harder.

The context in which we do our work is different in at least three ways. The first is a trend toward devolution of power. There is an increasing trend for power to move upward in government—from cities and counties to states and from states to the federal government. Examples include the financing of education, which used to be primarily a local function, now has moved to a state-local

partnership. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), passed by the federal government, is another example. Devolving power and authority upward has solved problems like tax levy inequities and lack of equal educational opportunities for individuals with disabilities that could not or in some cases would not be solved at lower levels.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) is another example of the devolution of power. It is also an example of how citizens frustrated by either state or local inaction, or incapacity, have turned to the federal government to resolve their issues. The choice and voucher components of NCLB are prime examples. Devolution of power upward could make lower units of government irrelevant. And, devolution tends to bring with it new laws, new rules, i.e. more regulations.

The second sign of the times is contest of competing values. Today and for most of the past 20-25 years, we have seen many values held dear by our parents challenged and replaced. The search engines of the Internet alone have made human interactions more accessible, more vulnerable and more virtual. Our parents held values of community and neighborhood where interactions were face-to-face, real and dynamic.

Our values have always existed along a continuum of extremes. Today, the extremes seem further apart and they are populated by very vocal constituents. When not so extreme, not so highly populated, and not so vocal, these voices could easily be ignored. Not today.

A third sign of the times is our politics. There have always been politics, as in two sides of any issue or question. That's just the way democracy works. So it is with partisan politics as well. Republican vs. Democrat is as American as our democratic government. However, our politics have become ideological and often single issue where no compromise or consensus is possible. Ideologies and single issues have become the expression of political parties and that expression is often cynical, mean spirited and bitter. The "ends justify the meanness"

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NCSA EXECUTIVE BOARD - 2003

Chair Roger Breed
 Vice Chair Roger Nyffeler

NASA Representatives:

President Glen Beran	President-elect Dan Ernst	Past President Roger Breed
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NASBO Representatives:

President Barry Ballou	President-elect Mark Shepard	Past President Chris Nelson
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NAESP Representatives:

President Mark Murphy	President-elect Scott Dodson	Past President Roger Nyffeler
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NSASSP Representatives:

President Terry Haack	President-elect Lynn Moeller	Past President Barry Stark
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NASES Representatives:

President Robert Uhing	President-elect Charlene Snyder	Past President Kim Cooper
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NARSA Representatives:

President Stan Hale	President-elect Dolores Rader	Past President Ralph Thorpe
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NCSA STAFF - 2003

Executive Director Jerry L. Sellentin
 Associate Director/Lobbyist Michael S. Dulaney
 Financial/Membership Director Julie Anshasi
 Training Development Director Kelly Coash Johnson
 Executive Assistant Angie Carman

The opinions expressed in this newsletter or by its authors do not necessarily reflect the positions of the Nebraska Council of School Administrators.

P E R S P E C T I V E S

by Jerry Sellentin, Ph.D., Executive Director



Sellentin

STATE TOURNAMENTS

This past March, during the state basketball tournaments, players, teams, coaches, parents, and communities all become part of a symbol of "synergy." There's a feeling of optimism, as you work together to continue a string of wins or accomplish an upset and the State Championship.

As in coaching for the state basketball tournaments, it's our job as school administrators to coach excellence. It's our responsibility as leaders to help all students and adults who work with them to aspire to greatness. It's also a time to celebrate the achievement of being at state or participating in a musical, a play or other extra-curricular activity. Yet we need to remember the comments of President Theodore Roosevelt, "It is not the critic that counts nor the man who points out how the strong man stumbled or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena; whose face is marred by sweat and blood; who strives valiantly...who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions and spends himself in a worthy cause; who, at his worst fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory or defeat." As administrators, it's our responsibility also to help all students know that the game of life is theirs in which to participate fully and that may mean doing their best and not being the team or player who is recognized as the winner. Yet, the true winner is the one with perseverance who faces the game of life knowing when you are down or beaten you have done your best and you continue to believe in yourself as a winner.

For Christmas I received a book by Jim Collins a former Stanford University professor, entitled, "Good to Great." His

book tells school leaders "Good" isn't good enough. As in getting to the state tournaments it takes more than just being good. What matters, he says, "is that everyone in the school system, including children, becomes conditioned to making each step the very best they can take."

"The challenge for educational leaders," he said, "is to instill in children the ability to recognize greatness within themselves." Isn't this what the coach does to get the team ready for state tournament or any extra-curricular activity?

Another small suggestion I found

helpful was to develop a "stop-doing list" instead of adding to the "to-do list." How many activities should we stop doing to be great instead of good?

Gates Training:

2003-04 is the last year of the Gates Grant. If you are a superintendent or principal and have not participated in this training I would urge you to sign up today by calling Darryl Kile at the Nebraska Department of Education. (402 471 1881). Training for other administrators is being planned for November 4, 5, 6 and another session December 2, 3, 4. More details will be forthcoming.

NSDLAF+ NOTES #9

Theory versus Practice in Budget Building. "First you start with the educational goals of your school district, and then you provide the budgetary structure to accomplish those goals." I think I read that kind of statement sometime early in my quest to become a school administrator. I still believe being responsive to goals is the basis from which budgeting should start. Ideally, you should total the separate needs of all the students, establish an organizational pattern to support instruction and build an appropriate budget. You might, on the other hand, start with an individual classroom and then build a budget containing the ingredients required to support the individual teacher. In the same way, I think some successful businesses start with a service and customer orientation and from that emphasis build the structure of the enterprise.

So much for budget theory! Almost without exception, the budget process used by many public supported endeavors must be constructed in reverse. The organization is given an amount or a list of restrictions which total the available resources and then directed to provide a set of defined services. I would equate it to being given a roof and then being instructed to build a house under the

roof. Additional families keep moving in and the roof leaks.

As I am able to spend more time visiting school administrators about fiscal management I am amazed about the level of creativity involved. Right now in Nebraska educational institutions are trying to survive. Some are exhausting reserves, some have deferred maintenance needs, and others had hoped the previous staff and program reductions would surely be enough.

In spite of all these negative events, the business of operating school districts remains at a professional and ethical level. All activities remain controlled by statutes and regulations of various regulating agencies. The temptation to cut corners, relax internal controls and place an institution or personnel at risk can become severe during any difficult time. Educational institutions in Nebraska will survive this trying period because of the Midwestern ethics passed on and incorporated into all of our activities.

For information contact: Cliff Dale, Vice President, Ambac Securities, Inc. 402-483-1678 or cdale@neb.rr.com. Ambac Securities, Inc., the provider of investment alternatives, is endorsed by both the NCSA and NASB.



CELEBRATE STUDENT LEARNING

by Don Fritz, Ph.D., Director of ESU #6

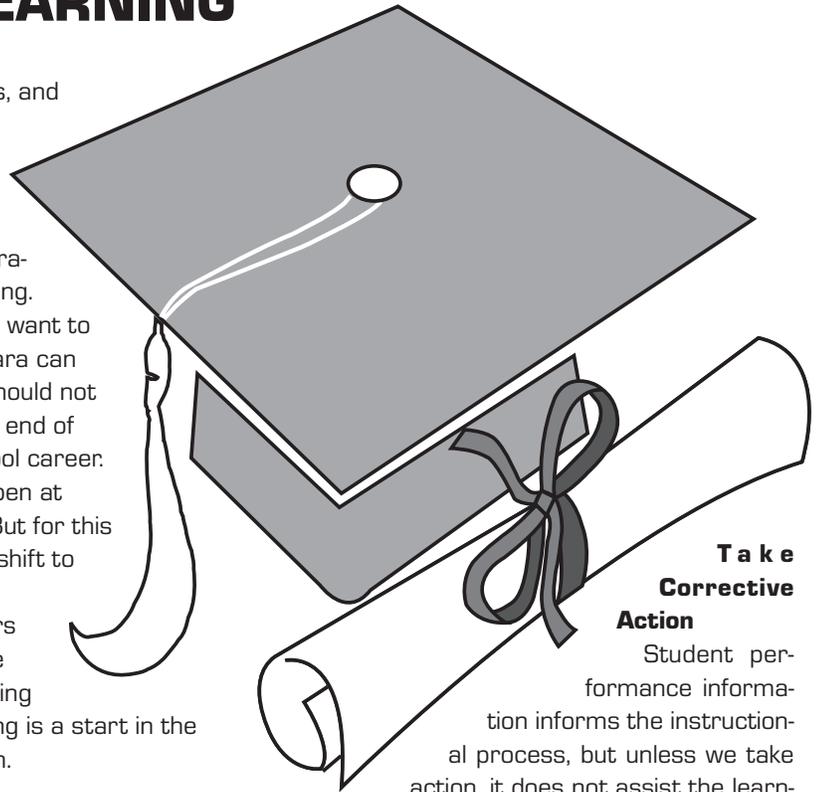
My daughter, Kara, is a senior in high school and I recently attended my last parent-teacher conference. This was the standard parent-teacher conference. All of the teachers were seated at individual tables in the gym and parents rotated from table to table. All of us have been attending these for decades. While my wife was getting all misty-eyed with a couple of favorite teachers, I was struck by a profound sense of missed opportunity.

If the purpose of schooling is to increase student performance (and I believe that is the most important purpose), no one talked with us about all of the wonderful skills that Kara has developed in the past thirteen years, nor the last nine-weeks for that fact. No one talked to us about Kara's progress on the state standards. No one showed us products of her success. There was no celebration for Kara or for the school that really has done a great job. Nothing! All I heard was that "she is a great kid and getting an A." Now, I love to hear kind words about my daughter, but the system has missed the point of schooling.

Schools have a legal responsibility to collect student performance information and a moral obligation to share student performance information with students and parents. I know that the school has collected a great deal of information about Kara's performances over the years. They have norm-referenced data, criterion-referenced data, graduation demonstration scores, content proficiency scores, classroom assessment results, class projects...the list could go on. There is no shortage of information. There is, however, a shortage of skills on what to do with it and a plan to communicate the information.

The good news is that Nebraska schools, because of S.T.A.R.S. and all of the school improvement work, are really ready to move to the ultimate level of accountability, individual students and their parents. Schools have traditionally measured individual success by seat

time, GPA's, and Carnegie Units and not by specific examples and demonstrations of learning. As a parent, I want to "see" what Kara can do and this should not just be at the end of her high school career. It should happen at least yearly. But for this fundamental shift to occur, school administrators must lead the way. Committing to the following is a start in the right direction.



Take Corrective Action

Student performance information informs the instructional process, but unless we take action, it does not assist the learning process.

Understand Student Performance Information

School leaders need to increase their assessment literacy and have at least a fundamental understanding of the types of assessments and the appropriate use of the assessments.

Expect Student Performance Information

Establish an expectation at all levels of the district – classroom, building, district – that student performance information is collected and used.

Model Data-Driven Decision-Making

Avoid the "Don't confuse me with the facts, my mind is made up!" behavior.

Collect and Analyze Student Performance Information

Develop skills and processes to collect and analyze student performance information that is clear and focused.

Communicate Student Performance Information to Stakeholders

Beginning with students, schools need to provide clear and focused learning information. The current system of grades is woefully inadequate.

Celebrate

Establish a culture of celebration of learning for students, classrooms, buildings, and districts.

I don't know whether parent-teacher conferences are the vehicle to celebrate student learning, but I know as a parent, I want to celebrate my daughter's learning successes and I want the school to get the credit it deserves as well. We missed the opportunity with Kara but I am very optimistic that Nebraska schools are moving in the right direction.



LOOK FOR YOUR 2003-2004 MEMBERSHIP FORMS THE END OF THIS MONTH!



QUALITY SCHOOLS: THE NEBRASKA WAY

by Jim Walter, Associate Dean, Teachers' College,
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

I am sure other Nebraskans have had similar experiences at national education conferences. I arrive at the conference site full of worry and concern over the plight of education in Nebraska but, after several interactions with professionals from other states – feel fortunate to be from Nebraska. A few years ago several of us from the School at the Center Project were invited to an Annenberg Foundation-sponsored conference at Brown University on the topic of civic involvement in public schools. Our Nebraska team consisted of myself, a superintendent, a teacher, and a school board member. When we arrived at the conference members of our team were placed in separate discussion groups and the fun began. One national organization represented at the conference was Parents for Public Schools. I had no idea of their mission, but was attracted to the name. It turned out that this group promoted change in urban public schools, but were very unfriendly to teachers and teacher unions. At the initial session a few from that group encountered our teacher representative, Mary Chochon, from Palmer. After suffering in silence through several attacks on teachers by members of Parents for Public Schools, Mary unloaded on them. She challenged their assumptions about teachers and public schools as she revealed the qualities she valued and talked the curriculum in rural Palmer, Nebraska. She had an opportunity to do some quality teaching in her group and at the coffee breaks between meetings I heard expressions like, “who is that teacher from Nebraska?”

What we Nebraskans learned quite dramatically is that we have some special qualities in our educational system that make it superior. What are the qualities that make our educational system qualitatively different? In this brief article I will suggest four qualities for us to consider.

First, we educators enjoy strong support for quality public schools. Now,

you may be thinking that this support is not as strong as it used to be and that tax receipts are destroying our educational infrastructure, but compared with other states and Nebraskans willingness to pay taxes, we enjoy support much greater than others. Over the years I have gotten to work with dozens of community schools on North Central Evaluations, research projects, and in instructional programs. The interactions I have had convince me that the patrons of these schools really care about the quality of the schools. With Royce Ronning and Erv Goldenstein, both now deceased from Teachers College, I explored the “secret” ingredients for what made a school a “quality” school. We wondered what indicators set excellent rural schools apart from merely adequate schools. We carefully selected 20 high schools in 15 communities and collected input data like tax support, teacher qualifications, as well as output data such as student achievement scores and stories about accomplishments of outstanding graduates. In the end we concluded that the “secret” ingredient was the commitment of citizens to support and steward quality schools.

Second, local control of curriculum and school finance allows grassroots involvement of citizens on issues of great importance. Years ago one of my professors, Galen Saylor, espoused the power of local control of schools. He talked eloquently about the role of citizen involvement and how having schools with varied curricula allowed multiple “laboratories” for testing educational theories. Such variety also allowed groups of educators much latitude in designing programs for the local populations that they knew best. Today as I compare the Nebraska approach to standards and assessment with approaches from other states, I perceive the trust citizens and policy makers have invested in local educators. This trust does imply that we are still held to high levels of account-

ability, but we are trusted to find the best paths to increased student learning. Surely there are unacceptable inequities in school funding in Nebraska. Our current financial crisis makes that fact all too clear; however, the amount of discretion given to local boards to set curriculum standards, assess student learning, and spend funds on local priorities is a quality to be protected.

Third, the Midwest work ethic is evident in our educators and students. I first thought of this advantage when participating in a North Central Evaluation in Ord. Working on the “governance and community relations” subcommittee took me out to talk with business people in the community. While working at the school site I could see how diligently the teachers and students were using their time and how little time the teachers had to talk with us. They were occupied with the lessons of the day. While visiting patrons at their places of work the pace was much slower. These people could take 30 minutes from their day and talk about issues related to the accreditation visit. The contrast was obvious. I witness this too in the work I have done in Teachers College over the years. The students we encounter from the near and far corners of Nebraska are motivated. They really know how to work. In fact, many are paying all of their college expenses while moving forward on degree programs more challenging than many of us experienced. They do not consider this hard work unusual as they have seen parents make similar sacrifices. Students like this are a privilege with whom to work. They often seem to be asking, “what more can I do?”

Fourth, the collaboration among educators at different levels in the educational industry is remarkable. “What? You actually work collaboratively

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CONGRATULATIONS TO...

☞ **Diller-Odell Public Schools** on passage of their over-ride election

☞ **Elmwood-Murdock Public Schools** on the success of their over-ride election

☞ **Battle Creek Public Schools** on the passage of a \$7.85 million school bond for a Junior and Senior High School

☞ **Republican Valley and Twin Valley** on the passage of a \$6.9 million bond for a 6-12 school

☞ **Terry Fusco**, Principal, Shelby Elementary School, on being named NRCSA Outstanding Principal of the Year

☞ **Russell Hicks**, Superintendent of Johnson Brock Public Schools, on being named NRCSA Outstanding Superintendent of the Year

☞ **Steve Rector**, Superintendent of South Sioux City Public Schools, who has been elected President of the Northeast Nebraska School Superintendents Association

☞ **Richard Becker**, Superintendent, Wilber Clatonia Public Schools, who has been honored as Southeast Community College Distinguished Alumnus Award

☞ **Jerry Beach**, Principal, Aurora High School, who has been named Superintendent, Fort Calhoun Public Schools

☞ **Larry Stick**, Principal, Columbus High School, who has been named Superintendent, Shelby Public Schools

☞ **Kirk Russell**, Principal, Grant Public Schools, who has been named Superintendent, Grant Public Schools

☞ **Merrell Nelson**, Superintendent at Pavillion, Wyoming, who has been named Superintendent at Crawford Public Schools

☞ **Jim Troshynski**, who has been named Superintendent of the Kenesaw Public Schools

☞ **Shawn Scott**, Kenesaw Industrial Teacher, who has been named Superintendent and Principal of Palmer Public Schools

☞ **Jeff Rippe**, Bellevue Public Schools, who has been named Assistant Superintendent of Bellevue Public Schools

☞ **Jerry Riibe**, Director, Secondary Curriculum, who has been named Assistant Superintendent Curriculum Ralston Public Schools

☞ **Ed Stansberry**, Assistant Director, Winnebago Public Schools, who has been named Principal, Emerson Hubbard Elementary School

☞ **Jim Bovee** of Alliance Public Schools who has been named Principal, Clay Center High School

☞ **Dana Wiseman** of Centura Public Schools, who has been named High School Principal at Sutton

☞ **Randall Reinke**, Interim Principal at Conestoga High School, who has been named Principal of Conestoga High School

☞ **Doug Kittle**, Assistant Principal, Aurora Public Schools who has been named Principal, Aurora High School

☞ **Bary Habrock**, Assistant Principal, Elkhorn High School, who has been named Norris High School

Principal

☞ **Troy Lurz**, Teacher at Hay Springs, who has been named Principal of Hay Springs

☞ **Russell Baker**, Principal at Palmer who has been named Principal of Holdrege Middle School

☞ **Demaris Grant** who has been named Director of the Nebraska Transition-to-Teaching Program at University of Nebraska Kearney

RETIREMENTS

☞ **Roland Schilz** Superintendent, Atkinson Elementary/Jr High School

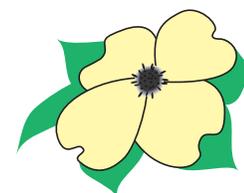
☞ **Rose Trinkle**, Assistant Superintendent, Bellevue Public Schools,

☞ **Charles Stoner**, Principal, Nebraska City Middle School

SYMPATHY

☞ **Bill Thurmond**, Principal, Lincoln McPhee Elementary School, on the death of his Mother

☞ **Ted Classen**, Loup City Secondary Principal, on the death of his Father



FYI

You can now
download
the NCSA Today!

Please visit www.ncsa.org



NSASSP SELECTS PRINCIPALS OF THE YEAR - RON LAMBERTY

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Jeanette Niemann, Head Teacher of Seward Alternative Education Center, says: "I have worked with Mr. Lamberty for fifteen years and have great respect for his enduring leadership, creative problem solving, commitment to education and related programs, and his ability to energize community partnerships with school programs." 



STAY INVOLVED – JOIN NARSA

by Stan Hale, NARSA President

The Nebraska Association of Retired Administrators (NARSA) membership is over 330 and is continuing to grow as current administrators retire.

The NARSA Executive Board is composed of three members from each affiliate. One NARSA member sits on their respective affiliate board as a voting member. A NARSA member is also a voting member on the Executive Board of NCSA. This representation gives NARSA members the opportunity for input and keeps them informed about the educational issues in the state. NARSA working closely with NCSA has been a sounding board for retired administrators.

NARSA members have given many years of their time and commitment to their communities and school districts and many have chosen to stay involved on a limited basis and still enjoy their retirement. We would encourage all retired administrators to be involved. Nebraska will always need your support.

NARSA has a very talented pool of expertise in so many areas. Many of our retirees continue to work and/or volunteer in many areas. A recent study conducted at the University of Michigan shows that being helpful to others can increase your life expectancy. The results of this study suggest that it isn't what we get in life, but what we give that keeps us going. The trend toward longer life leads many retired administrators to rethink and revitalize their lives. A recent article in AARP indicated many retirees are trying new careers, launching new businesses, volunteering eagerly, returning to school and pursuing other paths that build on the interests, skills and wisdom they've acquired through the years. Thirty years ago retirees may have been looking for more of a rest. Today's group is saying, "Give me a little rest, but I'm ready for the next challenge." Some 18 million men and women 55 and older are

still in the work force and the data suggests these numbers will grow.

Upon your retirement, please take some time and think about joining NARSA. The organization is working for you to improve retirement issues.

"Friends are like pillars on your porch. Sometimes they hold you up and sometimes they lean on you. Sometimes it's just enough to know they're standing by."

NARSA periodically has social events that allow you the opportunity to meet new friends and renew old acquaintances. Many continue to attend their region functions, elementary and sec-

ondary conferences and Administrators Days. As one gets older, some say their friends and colleagues become more important in their lives. Take some time to call or write a colleague or friend you haven't seen for sometime. It may be a

relative, a teacher or coach that made an impact on your life. Many of us want to do this, but put it off and sometimes the opportunity to contact them is gone. Just a call or note to thank them for their friendship will make their day. A quote from Elizabeth Foley sums it up this way. "Friends are like pillars on your porch. Sometimes they hold you up and sometimes they lean on you. Sometimes its just enough to know they're standing by."

To all administrators, a special thanks for all you do for young people in our state. To the retiring administrators, we welcome your membership in NARSA. 

NSASSP SELECTS PRINCIPALS OF THE YEAR – JOHN OSGOOD

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School since 1978. He is active in several professional organizations including; The Nebraska Council of School Administrators, The Nebraska Association of Secondary School Principals, and the Nebraska Association for Middle Level Education. In addition, John has served as a Minden City Councilman, on the Kearney County Community Foundation, the Minden Chamber of Commerce and the Bicentennial Community Committee.

Scott Maline, Superintendent of Minden Public Schools, says: "The most important quality of John Osgood is that he truly cares about students and teachers and models that caring on a daily basis. His whole life is about helping students and teachers to learn and be successful. He is not afraid to take a stand

for something in which he strongly believes, if it is in the best interest of students and our school."

Whitney Schwenka, Former Student, states: "My thoughts on Mr. Osgood's career as a principal at Minden Middle school are simple. I believe he knows each and every one of his students on a personal level. He cares about the quality of his school. Finally, no matter where you are...you can always expect a smile and a "Hello" from Mr. Osgood."

According to Julia Thomsen, 8th Grade Language Arts Teacher, "Mr. Osgood's foremost concern is for the well-being of the individual and his/her education. Mr. Osgood is committed to making C.L. Jones a true middle school."





WELLNESS PROGRAMS CAN IMPROVE MORALE AND EMPLOYEE WELLNESS!

by Kim Saum-Mills, Assistant Principal, Millard South High School

School professionals often find themselves with working conditions that make it difficult to follow a healthy lifestyle. Staff members often sit for long hours at a desk or in meetings, they skip lunch due to deadlines, and are frequently offered doughnuts for breakfast. We have all had those 14-hour "crisis" days when all you really want is a handful of peanut M & Ms from the nearest candy jar. Just having that irresistible junk food around can be defeating in itself! Teachers' morale and well being suffer from having 30 or fewer minutes for lunch breaks. Many administrators often don't even take a break, unless you consider lunch supervision a break. HA! What can be done to improve our crazy work lives?

Schools need to implement wellness programs. At Millard South High School, where I serve as an assistant principal, we are in our third year of implementing a voluntary wellness program. Approximately sixty of our two hundred staff members are regular participants. "Health promotion is the science and art of helping people change their lifestyle to move toward a state of optimal health. Optimal health is defined as a balance of physical, emotional, social, spiritual and intellectual health. Lifestyle change can be facilitated through a combination of efforts to enhance awareness, change behavior and create environments that support good health practices. Of the three, supportive environments will probably have the greatest impact in producing lasting change" (American Journal of Health Promotion, 1989, 3, 3, 5).

What are the benefits of employees leading healthy lifestyles? Administration will see fewer employees taking sick leave, decreasing insurance rates, increasing levels of morale and productivity, and improvements in student achievement. How are healthy staff lifestyles and student improvement correlated? It's simple. If your staff is well, they are working at their optimal level and students are reaping the benefits. Remember the last time you went to

work and didn't feel well? Perhaps you were suffering from home life stresses. You weren't very productive were you? Many people go to work each day not feeling well. Some are sleep deprived, many are overweight and are suffering physically, and some are smokers or excessive drinkers. I must admit that I



haven't always led a healthy lifestyle, and my work suffered because of it. As I began to lead a healthier lifestyle, I realized how much more energy I had at work. I am now a strong advocate of living a healthy lifestyle.

So how do you implement a wellness program? I can tell you how MSHS did it; however, I am not totally satisfied with what we are offering our staff. The tip of the iceberg is beginning to show at MSHS, but there is a huge area of wellness that is untapped and still sitting below the water's surface.

Our wellness program began soon after Phyllis Schroeder, our P.E. department chair, and I attended a WELCOM workshop in the spring of 2000. As a result, we were excited about the possibility of creating a program at MSHS. Howie Halprin from WELCOM offered great assistance to us as we began planning for our first year. Our mission was

and still is to "promote and enhance the health and well being of MSHS staff and students". Our activities each year are targeted to the responses we received from an initial staff questionnaire and the end of the year evaluations.

Students have been invited to our health fairs and a family walk/run, yet most of our activities have been targeted to staff. We have incorporated our wellness philosophy into our strategic plan, in hopes of finding future funding. However, we continue to charge staff members to join the wellness program (\$15/year) in addition to fundraising and soliciting donations.

Examples of our wellness activities include guest speakers, a family fun walk/run, The Corporate Cup Run, wellness luncheons, incentive programs called "100 Miles in 100 Days," "Return to Slender," "Battle of the Bulge," and "Race to the End," educational literature, health fairs, and many incentive prizes.

Our wellness team consists of five teachers, one counselor, one secretary and one administrator. This team volunteers to meet before/after school and during the summer to plan activities for the building. Our PAYBAC Partners, Nebraska Health Systems and Better Bodies Health Club, have donated time and money to help with many of our wellness incentive programs.

An example of one of our recent incentive programs was the "Battle of the Bulge." The objective of "Battle of the Bulge" was to encourage staff members to form teams to encourage one another to lose the most body fat. This semester we have one fourth of our staff members participating in "Battle of the Bulge." On January 20, 2003 each person had his/her body fat measured at the beginning of the ten-week competition. This body fat was taken in confidence by Better Bodies' trainers. Trivia contests are held based on the information contained in each of the educational articles shared. Winners of

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DISCOVER CARD TRIBUTE AWARD SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Since its inception in 1991, the Discover Card Tribute Award program has awarded more than \$8.6 million in scholarships to over 4,000 students nationwide. Given in cooperation with the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) and the Nebraska Association of School Administrators (NASA), scholarships are awarded to high school juniors who have demonstrated excellence in many areas of their lives — not just academics.

This year, national winners will be selected from a pool of nearly 10,000 applicants. While students must maintain a minimum of 2.75 cumulative grade point average to qualify, they must also demonstrate accomplishments in three of four areas: special talents, leadership, obstacles overcome, and com-

munity service.

The 2003 State Scholarship Recipients in Nebraska are:

LeDeana Nickel, Burke High School;
Superintendent Dr. John Mackiel/
Principal Dr. Connie Eichorn

Jamie Zeorian, Elmwood-Murdock High School; Superintendent Mr. Daniel Novak/
Principal Mr. Tim Allemang

Catlin Babbitt, Kearney High School;
Superintendent Dr. Ken Anderson/
Principal Dr. William Kenagy

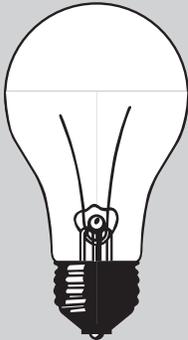
Erica Overmyer, Millard North High School; Superintendent Dr. Keith Lutz
/ Principal - Dr. Rick Werkheiser)

Darren Brandl, Madison High School;
Superintendent Dr. Robert Ziegler/
Principal Mr. Steve Borer

Claire Keene, Bellevue East High School;
Superintendent Dr. John Deegan/
Principal Mr. Dan Larson

Megan Smith, North Platte High School;
Superintendent Dr. Jim Merritt/
Principal Mr. Dan Twarling

Karissa Braaten, Lincoln Lutheran;
Administrator Dr. Gary Hammeck/
Principal Mr. Scott Ernstmeyer

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

(continued from page 2)

well describes the expression of many ideological issues.

These three “signs of the times” present unique challenges. Coupled with the financial stresses experienced across the country makes these “signs of the times” more pervasive and more personal. With economic sectors taking huge hits, state revenues declining, potential widespread draughts and now with the war in Iraq, every American is likely to experience the upward push in government, the uncertainty and extremes of our value system, and the politics that seem devoid of caring for each other and devoid of any notion of a great good to be achieved.

As educators, doing our day-to-day work in these contexts makes our work the toughest it has ever been. On top of our already demanding work that must be done in the most challenging of social contexts, we now have a new job to do! We are being asked to take the next step of the “all children” agenda and it is the biggest step we have ever been asked to take.

We spent the last 150 years going well into the 1960’s and 1970’s to get universal opportunity or access for all American children. Brown vs. Board of Education and IDEA are landmarks of the final stages of insuring equity or universal access to a free and appropriate public education. Somewhere in the late 1980’s, we began this new journey. It is the ultimate of the “all children” agenda, universal outcomes.

Only in America would we try this. Only in America would we not rest until equity of achievement is coupled to equity of opportunity. We may feel overwhelmed by the enormity of the task ahead. We may even feel it an impossible agenda. But as Americans, I hope we feel we must do this. I hope we feel the call to get at this work and to get it done. This is high ground where all of us can meet and join hands. This is the greater good we all should seek.

It is the most difficult work we have ever attempted. It will take everything we have—time, money, expertise and our wills—to get it done. 



QUALITY SCHOOLS: THE NEBRASKA WAY

(continued from page 5)

with your department of education?" Not an unusual reaction when talking with colleagues at national meetings. Perhaps because we are a small state we feel like we better cooperate for our collective survival, but the ethic of collaboration has been deeply engrained in the educational culture in Nebraska. While compiling data for our latest accreditation report, we counted collaboration between Teachers College and 79 other educational agencies. ESU's work to bridge interests between the Nebraska Department of Education and public schools. Institutions of higher education also share the collaborative spirit with one another. Sure, we often have to com-

pete, but the commitment to collaborate seems well established. With innovative projects like Century 21 Learning Communities, we are learning how to collaborate more fully with other social agencies that work with families and children. Surely we can accomplish much more in this arena, but we have some models to guide us.

So, the Nebraska Way has rooted advantages for the quality of schooling in the state. I argue these qualities are worth protecting and nurturing. 

WELLNESS PROGRAMS

(continued from page 8)

the trivia contests receive free energy bars to encourage their healthy snacking. On April 1, 2003 at the end of the ten weeks the top three teams to lose the most body fat will win prizes. This competition becomes so fierce that it is not uncommon to find a candy bar secretly placed in someone's mailbox by a member of an opposing team.

At this point we are proud of the wellness program we have offered MSHS staff. Our long-term goal is to reach the next level and incorporate a comprehensive wellness program similar to those offered by corporations to improve the health of our staff and demonstrate LOWERED insurance costs.

Unfortunately, although research shows that wellness programs can lower insurance premiums, it seems very difficult for public schools administrators to invest in wellness programs because of tight budgets. We have presented a proposal to our superintendent to support a payroll deduction program called "Simply Well" through our PAYBAC Partner Nebraska Health Systems. It would not cost the district any funds, but the district would need to allow for a payroll deduction option for each participating employee so they could contribute \$14 per month. At this point we have not been given the green light, but everyone who knows our wellness team knows that PERSISTENCE is our middle name!

Has the MSHS Wellness Program made a difference at the work place? I hope so! I do know our end of the year evaluations have been outstanding, and there is a desire from MSHS staff for us to continue. At this point I do not have hard quantitative data indicating our wellness participants are decreasing our insurance premiums or improving student achievement. I do know; however, that our wellness participants are healthier and happier. Here's to a healthy 2003 to all of you!!! 

UPCOMING EVENTS...

You can register online for any of the following conferences at www.ncsa.org

**APRIL 22
NARSA SPRING FLING**

Dinner & Jazz
Crane River/UNL Jazz Ensemble
Lincoln
For more information contact Kelly:
kelly@ncsa.org

**APRIL 24-25
NASES SPRING
CONFERENCE**

Ramada Inn - Kearney
For more information contact Angie:
angie@ncsa.org

**APRIL 28-30
NASBO STATE CONVENTION**

Holiday Inn - Hastings
For more information contact Angie:
angie@ncsa.org

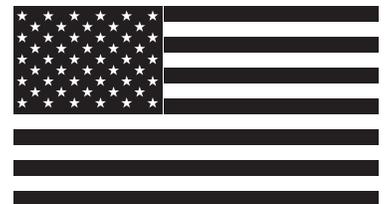
**MAY 5, 7, & 8
STUDENT HANDBOOKS
WORKSHOP**

May 5 - Scotts Bluff - ESU #13 (8:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.)
May 5 - North Platte - Holiday Inn Express (5:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.)
May 7 - Columbus - Holiday Inn Express (9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.)
May 7 - Grand Island - GI Public Schools Central Office (5:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.)
May 8 - Omaha - ESU #3 (9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.)
For more information contact Kelly:
kelly@ncsa.org

JULY 22-23

NATM Summer Conference
"My Business/Your Business"
Speakers: Doug Christensen and Lorelee Byrd
Psot Conference hosted by UNO Center for Economic Education
For more information, go to
www.nde.state.ne.us//NMS/natm/index.html

**ADMINISTRATORS' DAYS
JULY 30-AUGUST 1
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Calendar of Events

APRIL

- 2 NCSA Executive Board, 9:00 a.m., NCSA Lincoln
- 3 NSASSP Executive Board, 9:00 a.m., NCSA Lincoln
- 9 GRIT Conference, 8:30 a.m., Cornhusker Hotel Lincoln
- 9 NSASSP Region IV, 1:30 p.m., ESU #10 Kearney
- 9 NASA Region I, 4:00 p.m., York Country Club York
- 16 NASA Region V, 12:00 noon, Gaslight Gering
- 22 NARSA Spring Fling, 5:00 p.m., Crane River Lincoln
- 22 NARSA Executive Board, 1:00 p.m., NCSA Lincoln
- 23 NSASSP Region III, 5:00 p.m., Eldorado Hills Country Club Norfolk
- 23 NAESP Region III, 5:00 p.m., Eldorado Hills Country Club Norfolk
- 23 NSASSP Region I, 5:30 p.m., Evening with Friends Milligan
- 24-25 NASES Spring Conference, 8:30 a.m., Ramada Inn Kearney
- 25 NAESP Region I
- 28 NASBO Golf Tournament, 12:00 noon, Lochland CC Hastings
- 29-30 NASBO State Convention, 8:30 a.m., Holiday Inn Hastings
- 30 NAESP Region IV, 12:00 noon, Drew Heady's House Hastings
- 30 NSASSP Region II, 5:30 p.m., UNO Alumni House Omaha

MAY

- 5 Student Handbooks Workshop, 8:00 a.m., ESU #13 Scottsbluff
- 5 Student Handbooks Workshop, 5:00 p.m., Holiday Inn Express North Platte
- 7 Student Handbooks Workshop, 9:00 a.m., Holiday Inn Express Columbus
- 7 Student Handbooks Workshop, 5:00 p.m., GI Schools Central Office Grand Island
- 8 Student Handbooks Workshop, 9:00 a.m. ESU #3 Omaha
- 14 NASA Region V, 12:00 p.m., Eagles Club Bridgeport

JUNE

- 3 NAESP Executive Board & Orientation, 9:00 a.m., NCSA Lincoln
- 4 NCSA Executive Board, 9:00 a.m., NCSA Lincoln
- 12 NSASSP Executive Board & Orientation, 9:00 a.m., NCSA Lincoln

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