

A PUBLICATION OF THE NEBRASKA COUNCIL OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

APRIL, 2004

LEADERSHIP TALKS TECHNOLOGY ACADEMY LTTA 1 - LTTA 2 - LTTA 3

by Woody Ziegler, Nebraska Department of Education

900 school administrators, 900 computers, 900 Palm Pilots and Clies, 9 training sites, 67 training days, 4,425 software install disks, 300 nights in a hotel, 1.3 million dollars, 12,041 teachers and 30, 285 students surveyed by TAGLIT, 50 dedicated ESU & school district technology trainers, 100s of success stories, and what seems like 10,000 miles and 100,000 e-mails are all part of a memorable and exciting three years in the life of the Leadership Talks Technology Academy.

Officially, the first three years of the Leadership Talks Technology Academy as funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation grant ended in May. Year three's evaluation survey is being readied for data collection. The final report will be compiled and sent to Seattle, Washington. Who could believe that a vision developed by staff from NDE and NCSA could affect as many people in as

many ways as actually occurred?

Thank goodness, we had administrators willing to test the opportunity in the first year of the grant. These leaders jumped in and received our best. That experience was fine-tuned and evolved considerably by year three. Connecting to wireless hubs actually worked (almost all the time) by year three. Each year we observed how the computers and PDAs got bigger, brighter, faster and cheaper.

Some things remained constant. The "Hey Song" and "Whoa Clap" started each training session and the "Woody Soap Box" continued. Most important, Nebraska administrators gave their best in an effort to grow and learn for the benefit of students and teachers.

Highlights of LTTA from the NDE team include:

- Contributing to the administrators in an effort to make a difference in opportunities for teaching and learning

- Willingness of the ESU and school district personnel to assist and support the training

- Fun that made the time and years fly by

- Dedicated and focused school administrators

- Active involvement of the entire team: administrators, trainers and facilitators

- Food that was great and occasionally not-so-great

- Road trip memories that will last a lifetime

- The Windows platform developed a digital movie program that works

- The energy, organization and expertise Lisa Lewis brought to the room

- Willingness of the host sites to make the training go smoothly

- Superintendents and principals doing the fireworks and sprinkler celebration.

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NCSA ANNOUNCES NEW PRESIDENT-ELECT-ELECTS

Affiliate members elected their president-elects for the new school year 2004-2005. These administrators will officially begin their duties on the NCSA Executive Board after September 1, 2004. Congratulations and welcome:

NASA - Larry Ramaekers
NAESP - Susan Anglemyer
NSASSP - Lynn Johnson
NASES - Lee Frye



Ramaekers



Anglemyer



Johnson



Frye

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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.



LESSONS FROM THE BLOCK

by Bill Kenagy, Principal, Kearney High School

Kearney High School adopted block scheduling in 1997. Over the course of the last seven years, the faculty and staff at KHS have learned many lessons from our experience. For educators interested in secondary organizational patterns, I thought it would be instructive to relate some of our findings and the findings of others.

Since 1997, there has been a considerable amount of research on block scheduling and other organization patterns for secondary schools. A recent article in Education Week (May 7, 2003) has provided what I believe is a balanced look at block versus traditional scheduling patterns. Some of the most pertinent findings are:

- "Several studies...have reported a series of academic dead heats when comparing block and traditional sched-

ules. These studies suggest that it is not so much the allocation of daily class time that influences a student's performance. Instead, it is what teachers and students choose to do with that time once it is given to them."

- "For all the angst embodied in the scheduling debate, current research now shows that a school's schedule plays a remarkably insignificant role in determining performance outcomes."

- "Both non-disabled and special education students performed equally well with their peer counterparts on the opposing schedules."

- "Quality and not quantity of classroom time is what appears to determine real and meaningful learning."

With these findings in mind, what have been some of our perceptions of the Kearney High School block experi-

ence? We have developed a list of "block revelations.* The following are some of these revelations.

Generic Revelations:

- There are many variations of block organization – pick the one or adapt the one that fits you best. A blend of 80 percent block and 20 percent traditional classes at KHS seems to fit our specific needs.

- The first year, or at least first quarter, of implementation of the block can be difficult and stressful because comfort zones are changed. Our teachers would say it was worth the effort after the first year.

- Block organization can be a convenient target for anything perceived as wrong in your school. .

- Block is difficult to first understand because it is not in most of our experience bases.

- The staff development process of getting ready for block scheduling was a positive experience in that everybody had a common focus for our building.

- We have seen slight increases in GPA and ACT scores and attendance over the course of seven years.

Teacher Revelations:

- Teacher time management becomes more important in block classes.

- Block scheduling is not the demise of the lecture – some parents referred to long "boring" college classes when they think of block classes. Teachers can lecture in the block format, just not for 88 minutes. This format encourages teachers to focus on numerous instructional activities during block classes.

- Some classes need selective abandonment of some curriculum – but we do not consider this as watering down of curriculum. Some classes have expanded their curriculum.

- Strong block teachers get more higher order thinking from students in their classes.

- Block has increased enrollment in elective classes.

Student Revelations:

- Students' first reaction to the block schedule is that classes are too long. We seldom hear that much anymore.

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NCSA EXECUTIVE BOARD 2004

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 Vice ChairTerry Haack

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



PERSPECTIVES

by Jerry Sellentin, Ph.D., Executive Director



Sellentin

IS THE GLASS HALF FULL OR HALF EMPTY?

The Educators Health Alliance (EHA)

is a partnership of the Nebraska Council of School Administrators, The Nebraska School Boards Association and the Nebraska State Education Association with the purpose to negotiate and obtain high-quality health insurance coverage at reasonable prices for employees of Nebraska's public school districts and other educational entities. The partnership is effective and the glass can be seen as half full.

The Educators Health Alliance (EHA) overall composite rate increase with Dental Plan Option I is 9.7 percent effective September 1, 2004. This compares to the 9.4 percent rate which was effective September 1, 2003. Looking at this rate increase compared to other insurance plans and comparing it to last year, the perception can be the "glass is half full."

In reality, one can see the glass being half full in other ways. The EHA plan provided insurance coverage for 1,393,854 claims in 2003. Approximately 99.5 percent of all claims are processed within 30 days with a majority processed within seven days. The EHA plan has a statewide network accessibility. 95.4 percent of EHA members have two Primary Care Physicians within 15 miles of their home. 96.1 percent of EHA employees have one Hospital within 25 miles of their home. Blue Cross/Blue Shield provides member service with an average of 6,500 calls and e-mails a month. Having needed coverage is important especially when the claim is for over \$100,000. In 2003 there were 131 cases over \$100,000 compared to 76 in 2002 and 79 in 2001. Prescription drug claims have dropped off dramatically since introduction of the three-tier plan design. A national consulting firm recently released reports indicating BCBS members received on aver-

age, 38.4 percent in provider discount savings. This is 7.7 percent better than other insurance carriers.

Changes in the plan for 2004-05 can also be seen as the glass being half full: 1) Adding a \$1,000 deductible; 2) Changing the requirement of having ten members in a specific group for coverage; 3) Change the age of retirement for the plan from 55 years of age to 50.

Looking at EHA from the viewpoint of the glass being half empty means a 9.7 percent increase has a major impact on resources being available for salary increases. If we look at the next five years with expected health insurance increases will school districts be able to afford health care coverage? This past year the inpatient trend jumped 30 percent the highest spike in the last ten years. The outpatient trend has drifted higher than 15 percent over the last year.

Hopefully as a EHA member you will see the EHA glass being more than half full rather than half empty.

YOUR VALUE

My good friend, Miles Turner, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Association of School District Administrators, shared the following with me which I think is very timely.

A well-known speaker started off his

seminar by holding up a \$20 bill. He asked, "Who would like this \$20 bill?" Hands started going up. He said, "I am going to give this \$20 to one of you but first let me do this." He proceeded to crumple the dollar bill up. He then asked, "Who still wants it?" Still the hands were up in the air. "Well," he replied, "what if I do this?" He dropped it on the ground and started to grind it into the floor with his shoe. He picked it up, now all crumpled and dirty. "Now who still wants it?" Still the hands went into the air. "My friends, you have all learned a very valuable lesson. No matter what I did to the money, you still wanted it because it did not decrease in value. It was still worth \$20. Many times in our lives, we are dropped, crumbled and ground into the dirt by the decisions we make and the circumstances that come our way. We feel as through we are worthless. But no matter what has happened or what will happen, you will never lose your value. You are special - don't ever forget it. Never let yesterday's disappointments overshadow tomorrow's dreams."

No matter how many times you are "crumpled and stepped on" in your district, your intrinsic value as a leader is essential to the success of your school district. Never, never, never let them get you down. 🙏

Congratulations to the following AASA/Discover Card Scholarship Winners:

- Anish Mitra**
Lincoln East High School - Lincoln
- Michaela Berke**
Lexington High School
- Jarryd Widhalm**
Aurora High School
- Leandra Cartagena**
Central High School - Omaha
- Matthew Schultz**
Northwest High School - Grand Island

- Melissa Godfrey**
North Platte High School
- Terence Herrick**
Gretna High School
- Jessica Anderson**
Fillmore Central High School - Geneva
- Janet Nelson**
Wilber-Clatonia High School



“CROSSROADS” PROVIDES AT-RISK STUDENTS NEEDED HELP TO SUCCEED

by Delores Rader, President, Nebraska Association of Retired Administrators

Three years ago, a young friend was able to enroll in a dual-credit automotive course, sponsored by his high school and a neighboring community college. Only seniors in the top ten percent of the high school automotive class were eligible for the dual-credit class. Our friend related that of the dozen or so teens who took advantage of this offer, only one of them was living with his natural biological parents. Either through choice (the child had solved conflict with parents by leaving home) or eviction (kicked out by his family), all of the others had left their family homes. Independently, each one had to find relatives or friends with whom to live. Each struggled to achieve high school graduation while working 35 to 40 hours each week in order to make car payments and to provide car fuel, insurance, clothing, and food.

This true story highlights a little discussed trend that seems to be blossoming. More and more parents grow weary of dealing with their teenager and his/her attitude. Ironically, both the child and the attitude are the results of choices the parents themselves have made. Many adults do not realize the stress and hurt, rebellious feelings they create in children with continual picking and arguing. Skills in negotiations and productive discussions seem to be non-existent. The caring atmosphere that should be inherent in family structures is overridden by criticism and domination. Teenagers simply seek escape; those who stand up for themselves are kicked out of the family when they reach eighteen. It is then legal for their parents to put them out on the street.

About fifty years ago, five percent of children were born to unwed mothers. Ten years later, the percentage had doubled. By 1980, the number of newborn, out-of-wedlock children rested at eighteen percent. Prior to the end of the 1990s, the figure had nearly doubled

again. Today, nearly half of birthing mothers between the ages of twenty and twenty-four are unmarried. The shift from an intact family home to one that may not contain two parents, or at least not two biological parents, has also altered the parents' approaches to child-rearing. Since American children spend

Crossroads is a non-denominational charitable organization in Hastings that provides food, clothing, shelter, and counseling assistance to homeless men, women, and families.

Paul Spence, the Crossroads director, has related that young 18-, 19-, and 20-year-old men begin to arrive each year in late August, either walking in, or being left by families who dump them out of the car and drive away.

about nine percent of their time in school, the balance of their out-of-school time should be controlled by deliberate family decision. For many children, no out-of-school support and/or control is provided. Children left to their own devices do not eat properly, do not complete homework and do not get enough sleep. They frequently choose inappropriate friends and activities. As these children reach the volatile teen years, the groundwork for open family communication that earlier should have been laid, is missing.

Crossroads is a non-denominational charitable organization in Hastings that provides food, clothing, shelter, and counseling assistance to homeless men, women, and families. Paul Spence, the Crossroads director, has related that young eighteen, nineteen, and twenty-year old men begin to arrive each year in late August, either walking in, or being left by families who dump them out of the car and drive away. Paul says this August traffic is his busiest time. These young gentlemen usually have not graduated from high school. Crossroads, while pro-

viding food and shelter, helps them enroll in school and find a part-time job. Some of these young people make it and are able to leave Crossroads with an education and a job. Some are not as fortunate. Because they often have a friend or boyfriend with whom to live, Crossroads receives very few young women who are have left home.

Legally, the parents must provide for their child only until his/her eighteenth birthday. Some students have graduated by this time. Many have not. Lack of a high school diploma does not deter the parent(s) from evicting the child from the family home. Some eighteen-year-olds, still in their junior year of high school, find themselves homeless

and without resources. Schools are required to educate each child until graduation or until the child has reached his/her twenty-first birthday. Parents, however, are permitted to relinquish responsibility for their children who celebrate eighteenth birthdays. It appears that there is no individual or organization who advocates for these young people. Social agencies and some community organizations offer supportive family and after-school programs for young children, elementary children, and middle-school students. There are few resources available to young people caught in the eighteen-to-twenty age bracket.

These children are not perfect; most of them are normal young people, similar to those that we, ourselves, have raised. Regardless of their backgrounds, they certainly should not be considered expendable. They need responsible and accountable parents to provide life's necessities and support until each child graduates from high school or reaches his/her twenty-first birthday. 

STANDARDS CHANGE EVERYTHING: ROLES, RELATIONSHIPS, RESPONSIBILITIES

by Doug Christensen, Commissioner of Education



Christensen

Standards change everything! At least, they should. And, if they don't, then standards are not really being implemented.

In a standards-based system or school, change happens. For example, no longer is it sufficient for teachers to just cover content; teaching isn't over until students have learned. No longer is it sufficient for students to just take courses; achievement or credit is based on demonstration of learning. No longer is it sufficient for schools to just offer a curriculum; the curriculum must be aligned to standards, focused on specific learning outcomes and flexible to ensure learning for each and every student.

In standards-based systems and schools, the focus is on the learner. And, the clear outcome to be achieved is student learning.

So what else changes?

One of the key changes that occur is in the roles of educators—teachers, principals, and superintendents. In some ways, the changes are subtle, but in other ways, they are dramatic.

If learning is the valued outcome in a standards-based education, and it is, then the classroom is the center of the action. It is center stage. It is where the core functions of teaching and learning occur. Therefore, any change in the roles of educators begins in the classroom and proceeds throughout the rest of the organization. In other words, the role of teachers is determined first and the roles of others are built around and in support of the classroom.

In standards-based schools, teachers are instructional leaders. This role is usually reserved for principals but it needs to move to teachers. Teachers

are the ones who know the content of the subjects they teach. Teachers are the ones who should know the appropriate methods and strategies for teaching the content to ensure learning. Teachers are the ones who used to be able to measure learning and determine whether or not students need more time, different instructional strategies, re-teaching, etc. All of these responsibilities are leadership responsibilities and ones that belong to teachers.

Superintendents are often referred to as “CEO’s” or Chief Executive Officers. In the business model, CEO work is largely management of the corporation’s assets with a clear eye on the bottom line (finances).

In standards-based systems, the superintendent is still the CEO but “CEO” means Chief Education Officer.

Principals then are leaders of learning. If the principal is no longer the instructional leader, what are the new responsibilities that connect to and support the new role of teachers as instructional leaders?

As a leader of learning, the principal works in a collaborative role with teachers to help in any way possible to support quality teaching and learning. As collaborator and colleague with teachers, principals engage teachers in continuous conversations about how much and how well students are learning. Together with the teachers, the principals work with data generated by assessments from the classroom and the school to track student progress to diagnose learning gaps, to verify learning progress and to validate achievement.

The principal ensures that school-wide conversations are held about who is learning and what they are learning; who is not learning and what they have not learned. And, what do we need to do ensure they learn. Leaders of learning also collaborate with teachers about

professional learning needs of teachings including subject matter knowledge, pedagogy, coaching, etc.

Superintendents are often referred to as “CEO’s” or Chief Executive Officers. In the business model, CEO work is largely management of the corporation’s assets with a clear eye on the bottom line (finances). In standards-based systems, the superintendent is still the CEO but “CEO” means Chief Education Officer. While management and finances are

always important, the superintendent is the leader of the school corporation and its improvement. As the Chief Education Officer, the superintendent collaborates with principals and teachers to make sure the system works by supporting the work of principals

in schools, and by supporting the work of the teachers in the classroom.

The Chief Education Officer works “on the system,” to focus it, align it, and improve it. Continuous system-wide improvement must be a major leadership function of the superintendent that includes setting goals for improvement, designing implementation plans, allocating resources, mentoring, evaluating and reporting results.

Standards change lots of things and among them are changes in the roles, relationships and responsibilities of teachers, principals and superintendents. Standards demand that teachers, principals and superintendents be leaders in their respective responsibilities. Standards demand that teachers, principals and superintendents work as a team.

It takes leadership and teamwork if we are committed to achieving the standards, and especially if we are committed to achieving the standards by each and every student.



HIGH SCHOOL REFORM—WHAT DID DICKENS KNOW?

by Kent B. Mann, ED.D., Principal, Grand Island Senior High; Cindy Wells, Assistant Principal; Jeff Hower, Dean of Students

Charles Dickens presented a broad framework of the high school reform movement in his writings. Though not widely acknowledged as an educational commentator during his lifetime, he does provide classic insight in these words from the opening of his epic story, *A Tale of Two Cities*:

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness...it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us...”

Does this great author know something about educational reform that we have missed? This burning question may be played out over the next few generations by administrators and teachers as we attempt to reshape educational institutions in the 21st century.

Never in the history of mankind have we had the opportunities that we now have in education. We know more about learning and learners than ever before and we have the greatest capacities for teaching of all time. If this is the age of “educational” wisdom because of these techniques and strategies, we are also sinking deeper and deeper into the abyss of foolishness with impracticalities like NCLB and AYP. Both concepts are important and both must be addressed. However, neither can ever be established as an absolute without exception. The application of an industrial age concept (i.e. zero defect product) to a setting in which the only variables that can be controlled are those of contact time and interaction may truly be the pinnacle of foolishness. We do not live in an absolute society: doctors do not cure all ailments, lawyers do not win all cases, generals do not vanquish all enemies, theologians do not save all souls. Perhaps a revision of the NCLB and AYP could include an addendum—“...to the best of the school’s and the student’s ability.” School reform is important, realistic reform is critical, and the challenge of reform may well be our greatest chal-

lenge. But how do you change an American institution like the high school?

The first commissioned work by NASSP, *BREAKING RANKS, Changing an American Institution*, was published in 1996. The creation of the document was an undertaking that lasted over two years, drawing on the insight, expertise, and forward thinking of principals and other educational experts from across the nation. The document articulated possible foundations of high schools for

Never in the history of mankind have we had the opportunities that we now have in education.

the 21st century. The nine purposes presented detailed a vision for the high schools of America. These nine purposes were studied and revised in the companion document, *BREAKING RANKS II: Strategies for Leading High School Reform*. In this document, published in 2004, seven cornerstone strategies that lead to improved student performance are presented. The seven cornerstone strategies are as follows:

I. Establish the essential learnings a student is required to master in order to graduate, and adjust the curriculum and teaching strategies to realize that goal.

II. Increase the quantity and improve the quality of interactions between students, teachers, and other school personnel by reducing the number of students for which any adult or groups of adults is responsible.

III. Implement a comprehensive advisory program that ensures that each student has frequent and meaningful opportunities to plan and access his or her academic and social progress with a faculty member.

IV. Ensure that teachers use a variety of instructional strategies and assessments to accommodate individual learning styles.

V. Implement schedules flexible enough to accommodate teaching strategies consistent with the ways stu-

dents learn most effectively and that allow for effective teacher teaming and lesson planning.

VI. Institute structural leadership changes that allow for meaningful involvement in decision making by students, teachers, family members, and the community and that support effective communication with these groups.

VII. Align the schoolwide comprehensive, ongoing professional development program and the individual Personal Learning Plans of staff members with the content knowledge and instructional strategies required to prepare students for graduation.

These cornerstones are not absolutes, but rather navigational points for each high school to consider. As we begin the work of school reform and start to assess our capacities and our assets, the seven cornerstones presented will help us maximize learning opportunities for every student. How each high school reacts to these issues must be a strategic response based on the unique and individual characteristics of the school. These characteristics must be understood in reference to the qualities of the district, the community, and the state. The founding fathers of this great nation never intended for every child to have the same education. They did intend for every child to have access to the same opportunity for learning: a free public education. These seven cornerstone principles are good starting points for use in assessing present levels of success and also for formulating future goals and outcomes for the high schools of the 21st century. Our opinions and our politics, our financial capacities and limitations, our abilities to change, and a unique list of other assets and liabilities will all be significant factors that play into this unfolding masterpiece of school reform.

Grand Island Senior High’s most recent step in the journey toward under-

(continued on next page)



HIGH SCHOOL REFORM

(continued from page 6)

standing and implementing comprehensive, meaningful school reform came this winter at NSCI's 7th National Conference on What Works in Secondary Schools. February's conference in Atlanta saw educators from around the nation gathered to share discuss everything from block scheduling to year-round school. Keynoters such as Bill Daggett, Heidi Hayes-Jacobs, Bobb Darnell, and Carol Lieber provided insight and ideas on such timely topics as preparing students for a changing world, developing an essentials curriculum, and gathering and using data in meaningful ways. A host of presenters added their voices to the mix, and attendees were exposed to a large number of theories and practices that have worked and are working in schools across America.

Our team of Grand Island educators brought back four main themes that seemed to resonate through all of the sessions of the 2004 NSCI conference. Time and time again, the strategies or research that showed up in presentation were an extension of one of the following four key themes of successful school reform:

- Kids Come First—The top priority is the student's success.
- Restructure Schools by Restructuring the Ways We Teach
- Staff Development Should be Unique and Specific to Building Needs
- High Performance Results for All Learners and High, Achievable Goals

These themes provide a strong basis for conversations about restructuring Grand Island's secondary school programs, and, much like Breaking Ranks' seven cornerstones, are not absolutes. Rather, they are guideposts, or standards, by which we can measure future restructuring efforts. The overarching principle here seems to be that a restructured school works only to the extent that the restructuring is based on local and building-level needs and resources. Just as there can be no one size fits all education for students, there can not and should not be a generic restructuring plan for schools.

So, what might restructuring efforts designed around these various navigational beacons look like? Grand Island Senior High has taken the various themes to heart, and we have begun to implement the initial phases of a restructuring plan that seeks to address the issues highlighted above. In the 2004-2005 school year, Grand Island Senior High will engage in the following in order to restructure its

TIME:

- Increase contact time with kids. Next year's schedule will put 8 contact days back into the calendar, increasing opportunities for instruction and learning.
- Train and empower departments to conduct scheduled reteaching and enrichment opportunities on a department need-specific basis.
- Implement a Saturday school, which will allow time for completing missed/incomplete work, for serving disciplinary consequences, and, most importantly, for buying back lost credit due to poor attendance.

- Dismiss early four days per semester, allowing for building-specific, needs-driven teacher training (in addition to current district staff development efforts).

PROGRAMS:

- Reteaching and remediation strategies to complement enrichment activities in content-specific, need-specific situations.
- Implement an Advisory Program with the following components: a 4-year plan for each student, built and revisited by the student and a mentor teacher; every teacher becomes an advocate for at least one at-risk student in the building.

STAFFING:

- Instructional Strategies Coaches (5 teachers to serve as peer coaches, with trainer of trainer and feedback opportunities as well as support and enrichment responsibilities).
- Revision of Department Chair duties to reflect changing demands of essentials curriculum and staffing needs.

These are the just most recent steps we are taking on the journey, and may

not seem to fit your circumstance and needs...and that's just the point. Restructuring is a highly individual process, and the numerous strategies and components of reform serve best when assessed and adopted according to how they further the vision and meet the needs of a local school as it seeks to educate its students to the highest standards of performance.

We must embrace the work of reform and begin the process of restructuring the American high school. This quote from BREAKING RANKS II seems to sum up the task of reform now before us very well:

"Good ideas serve only as fodder for intellectual debate if they are not put to use. And so it is with school reform...lifting words off paper and putting them into operations in the nation's high schools remains the most difficult and important part...Leadership requires that some people have the will and ability to act." 

WANTED

Southeast Polk CSD
High School Principal
Contact: Dr. Stephen Miller
Southeast Polk CSD
8379 NE University Ave.
Runnells, IA 50237
515/967-4294
fax: 515/967-4257

SYMPATHY

☞ **Earl Nannen**, Principal of Malcolm Junior/Senior High School on the death of his brother

☞ **Fred Meyer**, President of the Nebraska State Board of Education on the death of his father

☞ **Mick Loughran**, Administrator, ESU #9, on the death of his father

☞ **Lee Hall**, Superintendent, Shelton Public Schools, on the death of his mother

MAY 3-9 TEACHER & STAFF APPRECIATION WEEK



CONGRATULATIONS TO...

☞ **Wood River Rural High School** on the success of their \$4.4 million bond issue

☞ **Friend Public Schools** on the success of their 30 cents levy over-ride election

☞ **Fairbury Public Schools** on the success of their 25 cents levy over-ride election

☞ **Wisner-Pilger Public Schools** on the success of their \$2.99 million bond issue

☞ **Eric Weber**, Principal, Conestoga Middle School, who has been appointed Principal, Westside Middle School

☞ **Mitch Bartholomew**, York, Librarian, who has been appointed Assistant Principal, York High School

☞ **Dan Martin**, Elgin High School Principal, who has been appointed Principal, Howells High School

☞ **Darrell Barnes**, Social Sciences teacher, Stanton Public Schools, who has been appointed Principal, Stanton Elementary School

☞ **Kim Saum Mills**, Assistant Principal, Millard South High School, who has been appointed Director of Staff Development of Millard Public Schools

☞ **Allen Gross**, Minitare Superintendent, who has been appointed Superintendent, Bayard Public Schools

☞ **Randy Butcher**, Administrator, ESU 17, who has been appointed Superintendent, Bridgeport Public Schools

☞ **Roger Boyer** currently an administrator in Arizona and prior Principal at Lexington Middle School, who has been appointed Superintendent, Wilcox Hildrith Public Schools

☞ **Jeff Edwards**, Superintendent, Sandhills Public Schools, who has been appointed Superintendent, Logan View Public Schools

☞ **Ted Claussen**, Principal, Loup City High School, who has been appointed Superintendent, Amherst Public Schools

☞ **Jim Calder**, past Superintendent at Bridgeport, who has been appointed Superintendent, Leyton Public Schools

☞ **Matt Fisher**, Principal, Chase County High School, who has been appointed Superintendent, Chase County High School

☞ **Mike Cunning**, appointed Superintendent of Hershey Public Schools and will continue as Superintendent of Sutherland Public Schools

☞ **Mike Moody**, Superintendent, Wakefield Public Schools, who has been elected as a member of the Tri-Partite Council for National Network for Education Renewal

☞ **Patricia Timm**, Beatrice School Board Member, who has been appointed by the Governor to the State Board of Education

☞ **Dave Wade**, Past Superintendent at Elmwood Public Schools, who has been appointed Superintendent at Rock County

☞ **Kim Neal**, Heartland AEA in Sioux City, who has been appointed Assistant Administrator at ESU #1

☞ **Susan Marlatt**, teacher at Millard South High School, who has been appointed Assistant Principal at Millard North High School

☞ **Kraig Lofquist**, SpEd Director at Wayne Public Schools, who has been appointed Director of Pupil Services at Millard Public Schools

☞ **Susie Melliger**, Principal at Omaha Public Schools, who has been appointed Principal at Aldrich Elementary School in Millard.

☞ **Roy Ingram**, Superintendent at Banner County on being appointed Superintendent at Morrill Public Schools

☞ **Patricia Cruzeiro**, Professor at Chadron State College, who has been appointed Associate Professor of Educational Administration at the University of Nebraska - Kearney

☞ **Bruce Vires**, Assistant Principal at Chase County, who has been appoint-

ed Principal at Chase County High School

☞ **Glen Morgan**, Superintendent at Neligh-Oakdale Public Schools, who has been named Nebraska Rural Community Schools Association, Outstanding Superintendent for 2004

☞ **Don Sackett**, Principal at Cambridge Elementary, who has been named Nebraska Rural Community Schools Association, Outstanding Principal for 2004

☞ **Jody Isernhagen**, Associate Professor, Educational Administration at UNL, on receiving the University of Nebraska Distinguished Teacher Award

☞ **Max Kroger**, Superintendent at Ord Public Schools, who has been elected, President-elect of the Nebraska Rural Community Schools Association

☞ **Thomas Christie**, Multicultural Community Administrator, Lincoln Public Schools, received the Lincoln Interfaith Council Torch of Understanding Award

☞ **Bert Jackson**, appointed Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, Westside Community Schools

☞ **Bob Bruckner**, appointed Director of Elementary Education, Westside Community Schools

☞ **Sue Evanick**, appointed Director of Administrative Services, Westside Community Schools

☞ **Jeff Wagner**, appointed Assistant Principal, Westside High School

☞ **Kent Kingston**, appointed Director of Technology, Westside High Community Schools

☞ **Andrew Rickli** from NDE, appointed Director of Assessment & Research, Westside Community Schools



“WHAT PARENTS’ WANT” AWARD

The SchoolMatch 13th annual “What Parents’ Want” Award honors only 2,519 of the nation’s 15,573 public school districts for meeting family needs.

SchoolMatch, an independent,

nationwide service, helps corporate employee families find schools that match the needs of their children. The following Nebraska schools have been chosen for the 2004 “What Parents Want Award.”

Adams Central Jr-Sr HighSchool
 Alliance Public Schools
 Alma Public Schools
 Auburn Public Schools
 Aurora Public Schools
 Bellevue Public Schools
 Blair Community Schools
 Broken Bow Public Schools
 Cambridge Public Schools
 Chadron Public Schools
 Columbus Public Shools
 Crete Public Schools
 Diller-Odell Public Shools
 Fremont Public Schools
 Friend Public Schools
 Gothenburg Public Schools
 Grand Island Public Schools
 Hastings Public Schools
 High Plains Community Schools
 Hitchcock Co. Unified School System
 Holdrege Public Schools
 Kearney Public Schools

Lakeview Community Schools
 Lincoln Public Schools
 Logan View Public Schools
 Louisville Public Schools
 McCook Public Schools
 Mead Public Schools
 Milford Public Schools
 Morrill Public Shools
 Norfolk Public Schools
 North Bend Central Public Schools
 North Platte Public Schools
 Ogallala Public Schools
 Papillion-La Vista Public Schools
 Plattsmouth Community Schools
 Ralston Public Schools
 Scottsbluff Public Schools
 Seward Public Schools
 Sidney Public Schools
 South Sarpy Dist 46
 Tri County Public Schools
 Westside Community Schools
 York Public Schools

UPCOMING EVENTS...

APRIL 26

NASBO Golf Tournament
Yankee Hill Country Club
1:00 p.m.
Lincoln, NE

APRIL 27-28

NASBO State Convention
Cornhusker Hotel - Lincoln, NE

APRIL 29-30

NASES Spring Convention
Holiday Inn - Kearney, NE

MAY 3

Teacher Handbook Workshop
ESU #13 - Scottsbluff - 8:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Sandhills Convention Center - North Platte - 6:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

MAY 5

Teacher Handbook Workshop
Lifelong Learning Center - Norfolk - 9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
I-80 Holiday Inn - Grand Island - 6:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

MAY 6

Teacher Handbook Workshop
ESU #3 - Omaha - 9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

JUNE 7

Patterns in Exceptional Coaching
Sandhills Convention Center - North Platte - 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

JUNE 8

Patterns in Exceptional Coaching
I-80 Holiday Inn - Grand Island - 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

JUNE 10

Patterns in Exceptional Coaching
ESU #3 - Omaha - 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

For information and to register for any of the above events, please visit www.ncsa.org

NATIONAL PRINCIPALS GROUPS STUDYING IDEA OF MERGER

The National Association of Elementary School Principals and the National Association of Secondary School Principals have formed a study team to explore what it would take to combine the groups into a single national organization with a membership of 60,000 members.

The purpose of the study by an independent organization to be named is to understand the challenges and benefits of a merger. It is anticipated the study will take about a year to complete. For the merger to take place NAESP and NASSP membership would have to vote on any merger decision.

Vincent Ferrandino, the executive director of NAESP stressed: “This issue continues to come up; let’s get the facts first, before we take any action.” Some observers see much to be gained by forming a unified association with strength in numbers in addressing leg-

islative issues. The study is also being encouraged as affiliates in 30 states are already merged.

The two organizations are currently coordinating several activities. In the past two summers they’ve jointly hosted a “leadership academy” in the Washington area. A leadership development program for state executive directors is coordinated by both organizations.

The study will also address differences of the two organizations to include: Election of President, size of board, organization of regions, financial issues and activities of each organization. An example of the differences is a third of the National Association of Secondary School Principals are devoted to organizing student activities such as National Honor Society and the National Association of Student Councils. 



LESSONS FROM THE BLOCK

(continued from page 2)

- A majority of teachers and students get to know each other exceedingly well. For those where the chemistry isn't good, the student is not assigned to any teacher for a full year. Students and teachers are excited about a fresh start at mid-year (or nine weeks.)

- Most students developed a better appreciation of the value of good attendance under block.

- The habitual truant is still habitually truant – this student is out faster but back in faster.

- Regardless of the type of schedule, students like classes largely based on the teacher.

The bottom line from our experience would seem to echo a finding from the "Scheduling Choice" article in Education Week. "Quality and not quantity of classroom time is what appears to determine real and meaningful learning." I am confident that block scheduling has enhanced our ability to deliver quality classroom time.

*For a list of all Kearney High School revelations, contact Bill Kenagy at bkenagy@esu10.org



LEADERSHIP TALKS TECHNOLOGY ACADEMY...

(continued from page 2)

The good news is the Leadership Talks Technology Academy experience is just beginning. The Bill and Melinda Foundation conducted the final National Convening for the grant directors. The theme, Leaving a Legacy is alive and well in Nebraska. Almost daily we receive a call or e-mail concerning a process, hint, tip or trick that is needed or shared by a participant in one of the training experiences. A principal called this week to share how he and his fellow district principal resented the need to attend the training. They wanted the tools and that was all. In spite of this attitude, the training was one of the best, time passed quickly and the skills learned are frequently being used.

Today, an e-mail from a year one participant arrived. This superintendent shared, "Just a short note from one of your LTTA alumni from several years back—was just keying in some names into my new Palm ZIRE 71 (color & built in camera!) and wanted to let you know that until this week I was still using the Palm M105 we all received in that years-ago cohort, it has been with me every day since then, and has been one of the most useful of tools. The LTTA program was very enjoyable, and the things we all learned were very beneficial. The Palm unit and the laptop computer have been in daily use."

These success stories keep us going. While we expended energy, ate more than we should, laughed and lost sleep; we had the goal of making a difference for leadership, teaching and learning. These messages give us a glimpse at the connection and impact we may have made.

Fortunately, the end is still ahead of us by at least one year. Carry-over monies will facilitate the delivery of training opportunities across the state. All levels of school administrators are invited to participate in "choose your topic" training sessions that will be conducted across the state. Look for a survey to state your needs for these sessions.

We hope you continue to use the skills that you developed or polished to make your jobs easier. We also hope you continue to understand the need for tech-

nology in the teaching and learning process. You lead the way by making the connection to the future and applying technology in your work. Prioritize and re-allocate the resources. The Millennial Student is not connecting to many of the traditional classroom experiences. What can you do to make the learning situation one that prepares today's learner for their life after school as a member of the Nation of Learners? (www.acenet.edu/bookstore/pdf/2003_build_nation.pdf)

The end of an experience cannot take place without special thanks to the contributors. Here goes. Thank you to the NDE team of Liz Hoffman, Dean Bergman and Ann Masters and to NCSA's Jerry Sellentin for writing and submitting the grant application. This experience took place through their efforts. Thank you to the trainers for their immediate support and assistance provided to the participants. Thank you to the steering committee and the curriculum team for setting the course. Special thanks go to Lisa Lewis, Mike Kozak, Liz Hoffman, Deb McDaniel and Betty Schneider. The experience would still be in the box without their assistance, energy and personality. Appreciation is also extended to Commissioner Doug Christensen and Deputy Commissioner Polly Feis for their encouragement, support and vision of the potential for this opportunity. Thank you for the privilege of working with Darryl Kile, the Co-Director of the LTTA. For a guy who said, "Woody had the talent and he had the time." Darryl more than brought talent to the show. He provided the stories, organization, dedication and a solution minded focus to keep the program and team going.

Have a great spring. Watch for and complete the survey. Join us to continue your journey into the future. In the meantime, "Keep making a difference." - Here's a Sprinkler Celebration to acknowledge your effort and dedication. Nebraska School Administrators are terrific. 

RETIREMENTS

☞ **Dale Eberhart**, Superintendent, Chadron Public Schools,

☞ **Glen Beran**, Superintendent, Imperial-Chase County High School,

☞ **Dave Van Horne**, Principal, Lincoln Irving Middle School

☞ **Dorothy Farr**, Assistant Principal at Millard North High School

☞ **Roger Farr**, Director of Pupil Services at Millard North High School

☞ **Rich Pahls**, Principal at Aldrich Elementary in Millard

☞ **Jim Ossian**, Associate Professor, University of Nebraska – Kearney

☞ **Bill Schnoor**, Superintendent, Bloomfield Public Schools

☞ **Jim Findley**, Assistant Superintendent, Westside Community Schools

☞ **Sue Manuel**, Director of Technology, Westside Community Schools

☞ **Fran Carr**, Director of Elementary Education, Westside Community Schools

☞ **Irwin Ross**, Special Education Director, ESU #9



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Calendar of Events

APRIL

6	NASA Region V, 12:00 noon, Bistro On Butte	Alliance
7	NCSA Executive Board, 8:30 a.m., NCSA	Lincoln
7	NSASSP Region IV, 1:00 p.m., ESU #10	Kearney
7	NASA Region I, 4:00 p.m., York Country Club	York
14	NASA Region IV, 10:00 a.m., ESU 10	Kearney
21	NSASSP Region I, 5:30 p.m., Evening with Friends	Milligan
21	NAESP Region II, 5:30 p.m., Olive Garden	Omaha
26	NASBO Golf Tournament, 1:00 p.m.	Lincoln
27-28	NASBO State Convention, 8:00 a.m., Cornhusker Hotel	Lincoln
28	NAESP Region IV, 12 noon, Drew Heady's House	Hastings
28	NAESP Region III, 5:00 p.m., Eldorado Hills	Norfolk
28	NSASSP Region III, 5:00 p.m., Eldorado Hills	Norfolk
29-30	NASES Spring Convention, 9:00 a.m., Holiday Inn	Kearney
29	NAESP Region I	

MAY

3	Teacher Handbook Workshop, 8:00 a.m., ESU #13	Scottsbluff
3	Teacher Handbook Workshop, 6:00 p.m.	
	Sandhills Convention Center	North Platte
5	Teacher Handbook Workshop, 9:00 a.m.	
	Lifelong Learning Center	Norfolk
5	Teacher Handbook Workshop, 6:00 p.m.	
	I-80 Holiday Inn	Grand Island
5	NSASSP Region II, 5:30 p.m., UNO Alumni House	Omaha
5	NAESP Region II, 5:30 p.m., West Upstream	Omaha
6	Teacher Handbook Workshop, 9:00 a.m., ESU #3	Omaha
14	NASA Region V, 1:00 p.m., Country Club	Bayard
25	P-16 Conference	Lincoln

JUNE

1	NAESP Executive Board, 9:00 a.m., NCSA	Lincoln
2	NCSA Executive Board, 9:00 a.m., NCSA	Lincoln
7	Coaching Workshop, 9:00 a.m., Sandhills Convention Center	
		North Platte
8	Coaching Workshop, 9:00 a.m., Holiday Inn - I-80	Grand Island
10	Coaching Workshop, 9:00 a.m., ESU #3	Omaha
10	NSASSP Executive Board, 10:00 a.m., NCSA	Lincoln

NATIONAL CONVENTIONS

April 16-20 - NAESP National Convention - San Francisco, CA