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## IS SPECIAL EDUCATION S.P.E.C.I.A.L.?

by Charlene Snyder, Special Education Director, Millard Public Schools



Snyder

*Special (spesh\_1) adj. 1. of a kind different than others; distinctive, peculiar, or unique 2. exceptional; extraordinary 3. highly regarded or valued 4. of or for a particular person, occasion, purpose, etc. 5. not general or regular; specific or limited Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language, Second College Edition, 1986, Simon and Schuster*

Almost 30 years ago Public Law 94-142 (now named the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, or IDEA) was written and passed to assure that the special educational needs of students with disabilities would be met in the public schools. Since that time public schools have provided specialized programs for special needs students so that each student is able to participate in educational, vocational and community activities as identified in the student's Individual Education Program (IEP). Special education and the services provided to students with disabilities have changed dramatically since IDEA was initially passed and the professionals who have been working in this field for most of those 30 years can attest to the many changes. During this time countless other educational programs have gone through changes and have subsequently been renamed. And yet the term special education endures. Could it be that special is not just a word, but that it is actually an acronym for the program and that it exemplifies what special education is? To illustrate my hypothesis, consider the following.

### Special Education Is:

Student-centered. The foundation of special education is focusing the efforts and expertise of parents and professionals on the unique educational needs of an individual student. This concentration of efforts and resources on a specific student for the purpose of providing the student a free, appropriate public education prepares the student to lead a productive and independent life as a contributing member of our democratic society. The challenge to schools and staff is that of balancing the needs of all students and the needs of the individual student while providing each student with a free, appropriate public education.

Public. Public funding for special education programs is the shared responsibility of local school districts and state

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## SUPERINTENDENT OF THE YEAR



Ernst

Dan Ernst, Superintendent at Waverly School District 145 has been named Nebraska's 2004 Superintendent of the Year. Ernst and 49 other superintendents will be recognized at the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) national convention in February.

Dan has been the Superintendent at Waverly since 1994. Prior to that, he served as Superintendent at Gibbon Public Schools. He received his B.A. in Education at Wayne State College, his Masters at the University of Nebraska - Kearney, and his Doctor of Education from the University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

A few of Dan's community and profes-

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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.



# DOG GONE - ALMOST

by Kevin Wilkinson, Director of Special Education and Technology, Alliance Public Schools

When the alternator went out on our '86 Topaz, I decided not to fix it right away. A summer remodeling project and our daughter's wedding had created a cash flow problem that wouldn't clear up for a couple more pay checks. Rather, I hooked up a trickle charger every other night and remembered not to use the radio, wipers, heater, or blinkers (hand signals still work very well). It was a bit of an embarrassment when the car stalled at the stop sign nearest the high school during the lunch rush. I felt like all the students standing around the high school and passing me in their cars were pointing and laughing. It was a surprise when one group of students came running over to push the Topaz into the nearest parking stall. I recognized several of them as outcasts from our defunct alternative

school. Two of them suffer from diagnosed mental diseases and, before alternative school days, had been complete misfits. That very morning, one of them had participated in his own IEP meeting morning in which I asked him why he wouldn't do his school work and comply with school rules. When the meeting ended, he stormed out of the room, demonstrating behaviors we had worked so hard to extinguish. This student and the other boys were courteous and genuinely interested in my well being.

"Not going to get any lunch Mr. Wilkinson?"

"I can walk home from here."

"That'll be good for you. It's a beautiful day for walking."

Last school year I worked with these boys on a project that school psychologist Barbara Ehrhart and I developed for

the alternative school. Barb found some grant money from the National Association of School Psychologists, and we used it to purchase and maintain two high quality Labrador retriever puppies. We explained to the alternative school students that they would train these dogs to be service dogs to work in our classrooms for students with severe to profound disabilities.

I went to the alternative school three times a week to work with the teachers and students on basic dog training issues, and as they became more proficient, scaled back to once every week or two. The teachers and students embraced the idea and endured the difficult puppy-raising phase by house training them and finding ways to cope with the incessant barking. Student and puppy boredom eventually compelled us to build an obstacle course to integrate into the alternative school PE program. The program worked very well until last spring when budget problems caused by our declining enrollment forced the closure of the alternative school.

Barb and I thought long and hard on how we would preserve the service dog program and continue to involve the students who had been training the dogs at the alternative school. We suffered another blow when the district laid off a teacher who was providing foster care for one of the puppies. I was compelled to let her keep the dog on a conditional basis because of her family's emotional attachment. The condition is that she has to come back to work in Alliance as soon as the district has an opening.

Left with only one unprepared dog, Macy, and no environment in which to continue her training I thought it was over. We eventually found our deliverance, in an IEP meeting gone bad. It was for a student with a behavioral disability who refused to return to AHS for his senior year. This student had excelled at the alternative school and had done well with the dogs. It seemed such a waste to throw it all away. Consequently, we cut a deal in which I would set up a Nova Net node in our high school severe/profound classroom, and he would complete his senior year in the shelter of that environment. Meanwhile, he would serve as the severe/profound classroom cadet

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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

## LEADERSHIP ON THE CUTTING EDGE

The mission of the Nebraska Council of School Administrators is to be an effective leader for quality education and to enhance the professionalism of its members. For the past two years a task force of NCSA members have been discussing the need to develop a sustainable leadership institute which would be on the "cutting edge" in helping members enhance their professionalism in being Leaders of Learning.

To accomplish the mission of enhancing professionalism of its members, NCSA has formed a partnership with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the Gallup Organization in forming the Nebraska Educational Leadership Institute. This partnership is being directed by Dr. Bruce Avolio who is the Don and Shirley Clifton Chair in Leadership, at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Dr. Avolio has recommended that the mission of the Nebraska Educational Leadership Institute be, "To develop and support basic and applied research that creates the foundation for implementing best practices in leadership assessment, development and performance." To accomplish this mission three operational model strategies will be emphasized: 1) NCSA Emerging Administrators Training will continue to provide information to aspiring administrators. 2) In partnership with the Gallup Leadership Institute, "Thought Conferences" that will be held to focus dialogue and study around critical issues of leadership and education. Sometimes this model is referred to as a "Think Tank." 3) A pilot Leadership Institute was launched in 2003-04 and will expand to regional sites in 2004-05.

On November 13 and 14 twenty-four administrators (who were nominated to go through the Leadership Institute) and six coaches participated in the first phase of the Nebraska Educational Leadership Institute. The first day

involved participants in four main activities overall comprising a developmental assessment center that included; responding to twenty-four e-mail incidents, role playing of two leadership scenarios, videotaping participants' personalized vision, and completing an ethical dilemmas survey. The day also included each administrator sharing their number-one strength, which was based on feedback from the Gallup Strengths Finder survey participants completed prior to the session on November 13.

On November 14 participants met at the Gallup University campus in Omaha which opened in October 2003. Commissioner Doug Christensen started the day with a videotaped presentation. Dr. Avolio provided an overview of "Authentic Leadership Development" and how it applies to a core learning objective of the Institute and to each administrator's personal development as a leader. Gary Gordon of Gallup provided a presentation and discussion of "What Constitutes Exemplary Leadership in Schools." The administrators were introduced to an outline of a leadership development plan which they will use as a framework for developing their own individual leadership development plan/goals. Administrators were encouraged to keep a weekly diary of leadership

reflections to share with their coaches and peers over the course of the year as they meet once a month as a team with their coaches to discuss leadership challenges and opportunities. The next conference will be held in Kearney, January 29 and 30, and then again in April, at a date to be determined.

**HOLIDAY SEASON:** As we celebrate the Holiday Season I would like to share the following thoughts which were developed by an unknown author:

- that being kind is more important than being right;
- that no matter how serious your life requires you to be, everyone needs a friend to be goofy with;
- that we should be glad God doesn't give us everything we ask for;
- that it's those small daily happenings that make life so spectacular;
- that the Lord didn't do it all in one day...what makes me think I can?
- that to ignore the facts does not change the facts;
- that love, not time, heals all wounds;
- that everyone wants to live on top of the mountain, but all the happiness and growth occurs while your climbing it.

Happy Holidays and best wishes for the new year from your NCSA staff.





# CROSSING BORDERS WITH PRIDE AND DETERMINATION

by Ray Otero, Assistant Principal, Lexington High School

*“To be successful is to be helpful, caring, and constructive – to make everyone you touch a little bit better. The best thing you have to give is Yourself.” (Norman Vincent Peale)*

My personal life's experiences have guided me throughout my life. I was told that a person's entire life can be changed by a single deed, word or action. What someone says or does can have an everlasting effect on another person. I shared with the faculty and staff stories of significant people who came into my life and how those acquaintances changed and molded my life.

An encounter can either be positive or negative. Consequently, the point encounter makes us think; it makes us reevaluate our life's goals. We react and make choices based on those experiences. Because of racial undertones, my young Hispanic life was filled with more negative situations than positive ones. However, it was from those incidences that I was able to realize my goals, and gain the insight that I have on life. I learned that it is possible to take something that is wrong, or just bad, and turn it into something very positive. It is all a matter of how you look at the situation.

Prior to starting school, there were two people who made a huge difference in my life. It was because of Mrs. Reed and my “Teo” Manual, that I learned to think things out, to have compassion, and to use common sense. Mrs. Reed comforted me and showed me that people, other than my family, could love and care for me. My Uncle Manual taught me how to share what I had and that material things were not that important. Most importantly, my uncle showed me I needed to be there for others because, in the long run, everything that I gave out would come back to me.

I grew up in a very prejudiced community that had a clear division between white and brown. Discrimination was everywhere; it was especially prevalent in the schools. My first experience in school was one I'll never forget. Classes

were created based on ethnicity, not on home language or student needs. Consequently, I was placed in a class with all Hispanic students and a Hispanic teacher. Since I spoke some English, I wanted to be in the class with a white boy with whom I used to play. I left my assigned class and went to the other one on my own. The Principal took me back to my assigned segregated room. After lunch, not understanding why I couldn't be in the class with my friend, I changed classes again. The Principal physically picked me up and removed me

My Mom explained that I did not wish to be in a segregated class based simply on ethnicity. Later, we all went to school. My Mom and Dad's cousin met with the principal in the Principal's Office, while I waited outside. After some time, they emerged and I was taken by the hand by the Principal to my new room. Not only did I get to change classes, other kids began to change rooms as well. Although at the time I didn't really understand what was happening, what I still remember to this day is...that if something isn't right, you have to stand up and fight for what you think is right. Sadly, not much else changed at school throughout my elementary years. Hispanic students were still treated differently. We were spanked if we spoke Spanish, and if we were playing on playground equipment

After some time, they emerged and I was taken by the hand by the Principal to my new room. Not only did I get to change classes, other kids began to change rooms as well. Although at the time I didn't really understand what was happening, what I still remember to this day is...that if something isn't right, you have to stand up and fight for what you think is right.

again; however, this time he tore my shirt. Then, he took me to town and bought me another shirt and an ice cream cone at the corner drug store. When we got back to school, he told me to go back and finish off the remainder of the week in my assigned room, with a promise that on Monday morning, if I still wanted to change to the other classroom, I could.

Of course, first thing on Monday morning I went directly to the other room with all the white kids and sat down. In a matter of minutes, the Principal came in and drug me out of the room. Because he had not kept his promise, once I got free, I broke away and ran home.

When I got home, my Dad's cousin, the County District Attorney, was there.

that white kids wanted to play on, we had to get off or else get a spanking.

My 6th grade year is the one that really stands out the most because there were three major events that happened that shaped the rest of my life. First, a white girl lost some money, and the teacher said that if it was not returned she was going to call the police. At recess, I asked the girl to tell me where she last saw the money, where she went, if she stopped somewhere, and anything else she could think of. Then I retraced her path, and I found her money. When we got back to class I proudly raised my hand and announced to the teacher and the class that I had found the money. Much to my dismay, instead of thanking me, the teacher told

*[continued on page 13]*



## “SO, YOU THINK YOU WANT MY JOB, HUH?”

by David Hamm, Superintendent, Unified Niobrara-Lynch Public Schools

Today in education we see a greater and greater emphasis on the need and utilization of coaches and mentors. The business world has made use of these individuals within their organizations for years. Efforts are continually being made to recognize and develop leadership potential and abilities of those associates in lower- and mid-level management positions. Within the military, both officers and NCO's alike are required to prepare subordinates for assuming leadership positions. The military's educational leadership system is designed to always be teaching/training someone to take over your job. As superintendents and administrators in charge of districts/buildings, how are we accomplishing this? Are we investing the time necessary to prepare others to take over our jobs?

The use of mentors is not new to education. (I use the term mentor hesitantly. For some it conjures up visions of a wiser, more experienced, and more powerful individual teaching “the ropes” to someone of lesser position. This is not the type of mentoring/coaching I write about.) For years we have used mentors to assist the growth, development, and transition of teachers new to the profession or our local districts. Larger districts have had leader development programs available for identifying individuals for administrative positions and responsibilities within their system. However, in the state of Nebraska, few districts have the luxury of providing such developmental programs. Who then has the responsibility of identifying, encouraging, and developing leadership within the vast majority of school districts in Nebraska? We do!!

*“I like my job and want to keep it. Why would I want to train someone to take over my job?”*

As a superintendent working with principals and teachers I have found several positive outcomes associated with teaching others what I spend my day doing:

**Empathy/Understanding**—by showing others how we spend our day and

teaching them what we do, there is a greater respect and understanding for the great number of responsibilities we share.

**Increased Morale**—by including others in our professional lives and sharing with them the rationale for the decisions we make, a noticeable change in school climate and staff morale will take place.

**Esprit de Corps**—as morale builds, so will trust. Trust is essential to building an organization where there is a sense of belonging and ownership. Individuals need to feel they are valued and their input is important. Through an investment of time and teaching, staff cohesiveness and a pattern of teamwork and sharing will become the norm.

**Productivity**—as staff members become comfortable with sharing thoughts, ideas, and plans for action, overall productivity will be increased. Valued employees are productive employees.

*“O.K. so there are a few positives, what are the drawbacks?”*

Some obstacles that may get in the way of working with others may include:

**Time**—effective mentoring/coaching does require a commitment of time. You must be willing to meet with protégé(s) on a regularly scheduled basis. However, you will find that this is time well spent. I have found that I have learned as much or more from my relationships with these individuals as I have from various conferences/workshops that I have attended.

**Control**—giving up direct control of responsibilities that we have “always been in charge of” can also be difficult. *“If I want something done right, I have to do it myself,”* is not the proper mentality conducive for fostering the growth of a productive mentor/coach relationship. We must be willing to delegate to others and allow them an opportunity to grow and shine.

**Fear**—sometimes we are afraid that others may outperform us. They may find a better way of accomplishing a task that we have been doing a certain way for years. Working closely with others

allows them an opportunity to see our weaknesses. If we are strong leaders, we take advantage of this opportunity and allow others to help us grow. We all have weaknesses. Why not build on our strengths and utilize the assistance of others to overcome our weaknesses?

*“Well then, maybe mentoring/coaching is a good idea and I should be doing it. But what do I have to do?”*

There are several roles and responsibilities that a good mentor/coach needs to practice:

**Listening**—first and foremost, a good mentor/coach must be a good listener. To borrow from the *Fish Philosophy*, you must “be present.” You must be able to listen with your eyes, your ears, and most importantly—your heart.

**Mission/vision creation**—it is imperative to help others find and develop their “purpose” both in their professional and personal lives. This is accomplished through observation, listening, and asking lots and lots of questions.

**Identifying strengths/weaknesses**—by acknowledging their strengths and weaknesses, you can work with protégé(s) to develop coping strategies necessary to being successful.

**Goal Setting**—based on an individual's strengths and weaknesses, you can assist them in identifying personal and professional goals. There should be no more than 3-5 goals that may be a combination of short, intermediate, and/or long-term.

**Develop action plans**—this may be one of the most critical responsibilities of the mentor/coach. Goals are meaningless unless there is a plan of action to accomplish them. Your job is to **help** your protégé(s) develop a concrete and systematic approach to goal attainment. It is not your responsibility to develop this plan! Through careful questioning and probing, you should be able to “lead” others in the development of “their” plan of action.

*“I think I can do that! So once I've gone through this process, I just sit back and watch this individual grow and mature into this great leader that will ease the burden of my day?”*

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## “S.P.E.C.I.A.L.?”

*(continued from page 1)*

and federal governments. When IDEA was passed in 1975 the federal government pledged to fully fund special education within five years by increasing the appropriation for special education each year (full funding is considered to be 40 percent of the excess cost of educating students with disabilities). This pledge was not kept and at this time federal funding for special education is at less than 20 percent, far less than the promised 40 percent full funding. The federal government cannot continue to neglect its responsibility to students with disabilities by forcing local school districts to continue to bear the financial burden of educating students with disabilities. We must continue to insist on and legislate for a guaranteed annual funding schedule that will achieve mandatory full funding for IDEA in each federal budget.

**Education.** Prior to the passage of the IDEA the education of students with disabilities was left to the discretion of states and local school districts. Passage of the federal statute created an individual entitlement to a free, appropriate public education for students with disabilities that continues today. In addition to the individual accountability for student progress toward achieving the goals and objectives identified in a student's IEP, the 1997 amendments to the IDEA mandate the participation of students with disabilities in all district-wide assessments and require that school districts report to the public the aggregated and disaggregated performance results of students with disabilities on regular assessments and on alternate assessments. This requirement has contributed to higher expectations for and achievement of students with disabilities in the general curriculum. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 goes beyond the provisions of IDEA, requiring that the aggregated and disaggregated results of district-wide assessments for students with disabilities be included in the school's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) determination. The goal of holding schools accountable for the performance of all students, including those with disabilities, is laudable; the reality

however, is that some students with disabilities may not achieve the predetermined proficiency goal and their performance may result in a school being labeled In Need of Improvement. If this occurs, programs for students with disabilities should not be condemned as needing improvement, rather the resources and expertise of all educators should be utilized to develop and implement programs that enable students with disabilities to meet the same standard to which students who are not disabled are held.

**Complex.** Special education processes are complex and often burdensome. Special education paperwork is oppressive. The threat of litigation looms over every decision, resulting in even more paperwork and additional documentation of school district efforts to provide appropriate educational services. Time better spent collaborating for the purpose of increased student learning and planning enhanced educational programs is spent in meeting after meeting, writing reports, filling out forms, and documenting efforts to provide a free, appropriate public education to students with disabilities. Until the emphasis on procedural compliance is reduced, the paperwork burden will continue and school districts will be forced to continue to use paperwork as a means of documenting compliance with special education regulations.

**Individualized.** Students with disabilities have authentic and distinct differences and educational needs that have not been able to be accommodated in general education classrooms using general education curriculum taught exclusively by general education staff. The specialized learning needs of students with disabilities are intense and real, and require the individualization of academic content and pacing, instructional strategies, and increased consistency and intensity of instruction. Because students with disabilities are a heterogeneous group, they are representative of the cultural and socioeconomic composition of our society and their disabilities vary greatly by type and severity and their educational needs are equally varied and complex; thus no one intervention will be uniformly successful

for every student. The development and implementation of specialized educational programs for students with disabilities is time intensive and requires substantial technical knowledge and reasoned professional judgment in order to make good decisions regarding a student's individual learning needs.

**Appropriate.** A free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment is guaranteed each student with a disability. Students with disabilities are diverse and have varied and complex educational needs; some students have highly specific educational needs requiring a specialized program of instruction while other mildly disabled students are able to make progress with less intensive interventions. The standard for determining the appropriateness of a student's educational program includes consideration of whether the student's educational program is specially designed to address the student's unique needs and not merely what is offered to others and whether the program is reasonably calculated to provide educational benefit to the student. School districts are not required to develop and implement an IEP that will confer maximum possible benefit on a student, however the judgment of whether an IEP provides appropriate special education services or maximizes a student's educational benefit is often contentious and the resulting decision to provide appropriate services contributes to strained relationships between parents and school personnel.

**Lingo.** Definition: special vocabulary that one is not familiar with. How many of these do you know? IEP MDT IDEA FERPA LRE SAT FAPE RT IAES ADHD RTI DB SESIS MI BD IFSP FBA ECSE SLD PT TBI OHI AU DD OI MH SLI VI ELL SLP OT BIP 504 AU SPED EI ESY FTE HI

Special education is indeed S.P.E.C.I.A.L. and will continue to be so for those students who receive the services to which they are entitled. S.P.E.C.I.A.L. education is here to stay and I believe that we can rest assured that a new name for the program is not in the making. Let us be sure that S.P.E.C.I.A.L. indeed means special. 



## NSASSP Longevity Awards

### 15-years

Dan Brosz  
Bryan Lubbers  
Steve Wickham  
Scott Buchanan  
Edward Detweiler  
Dennis Dolliver  
Terry Haack  
Debra Hiesterman  
Chuck Johnston  
Ron Lamberty  
Lynn Moeller  
Les Owen

### 20-years

Robert Arp  
Donald Eberle  
Richard Lemmerman  
Michael Marymee  
Hugh McDermott

### 25-years

Richard Kolowski  
Kelly Wood  
Ron Iles  
Stan Knapp  
Richard Meyer  
Richard Moses  
John Nattermann  
Judy Porter  
Randy Spahn  
Jerry Wilks

### 30-years

Barry Stark

### **NSASSP Eligibility:**

To be eligible, a member had to complete years 15, 20, 25 or 30 years during the current term and had to be a continuous member of NSASSP. If you feel that we have missed someone in our process, please feel free to contact Kelly at NCSA: [kelly@ncsa.org](mailto:kelly@ncsa.org) or 800/793-6272

## NAESP Longevity Awards

### 15-years

Robert Acamo  
Carol Beaty  
Jerry Bergstrom  
Steve Billeter  
Paul Bohn  
Frank Hoefling  
Bonnie Kolowski  
Pat Meyer  
Nila Nielsen  
Darrell Peterson  
Nancy Prosser-Weedin  
JoAnne Roberts  
Mary Jo Rupert  
Brad Wentzlaff  
Kim Whitehouse  
Audre Zaroban

### 20-years

Jim Bathen  
Mary Drew  
Gene Haddix  
Jim Melonis  
Tom Camp

### 25-years

Michael Hemen  
Terry List  
Bob Rowe  
Dan Navratil  
Ross Ridenour

### 30-years

Dave Townsend

### **NASA Eligibility:**

To be eligible, a member had to complete years 15, 20, 25 or 30 years during the current term and had to be a continuous member of an NCSA affiliate.

## NASA Longevity

### 15-year award

Robert Ziegler, Madison Public Schools  
Larry Weaver, Maywood Public Schools  
Ron Wymore, Pleasanton  
Jon Broadbent, Red Cloud Community Schools  
Jo Reinert, Wayne Public Schools  
Chris Effken, Friend Public Schools  
Don Sackett, Cambridge Public Schools  
Dan Hoelsing, Wheeler Public Schools

### 20-years

Don Bettermann, Plainview Public Schools  
Alan Harms, Wisner-Pilger Schools  
James Havelka, North Bend Central Public Schools  
Dwayne Uttecht, Ravenna Litchfield Public Schools

### 25-year award

Michael Cuning, Sutherland Public Schools  
Doug Ackles, St. Paul Public Schools  
Larry Eberhart, Chadron City Schools  
Patrick Osmond, Callaway Public Schools  
Rick Black, Papillion-LaVista Public Schools  
Keith Rohwer, Nebraska City Public Schools  
Mark Ferg, Oakland Craig Public Schools

### 30-year award

Wayne Ferguson, Morrill Public Schools  
Daniel Jantzen, Thayer Central Community  
Dale DeRiese, Holdrege Schools



## NSASSP NEW PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR



Habrock

**Bary Habrock**, Principal at Norris High School, has been selected for the Nebraska State Association of Secondary School Principals Outstanding New Principal Award.

The NSASSP Outstanding New Principal Award recognizes individuals who have demonstrated outstanding leadership in their school, their region, and at the state level. The individual will have demonstrated their enthusiasm for the principalship by support from students, parents, teachers and peers.

Bary received his Bachelor of Science

in Education and his Master of Science in Educational Administration from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Bary began his career as a teacher at Centennial Public Schools and then an Assistant Principal at Elkhorn High School.

Terry Haack, Principal at Elkhorn High School, states: "Bary brings an enthusiasm to the job that can be matched by few."

Charles Rohlfing, Counselor at Elkhorn Public Schools, says: "Bary is highly regarded by the student body for his fairness, and his willingness to listen.

Conscious of the needs of the individual, he demonstrates skill helping frustrated parents and he helps students accept logical consequences for their actions. His deep concern for them is apparent in his calmness and his careful attentiveness." 

## SARA LANDGREN NAMED NSASSP ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR



Landgren

**Sara Landgren**, Assistant Principal at Lincoln Southwest High School, was named as the Assistant Principal of the Year at the annual Assistant Principals Conference November

10th at the Cornhusker Hotel in Lincoln. McDonald's Corporation, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, and the Nebraska State Association of Secondary School Principals sponsor this award each year.

Sara Landgren received her B.S., Masters and Ed.D. from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She has been the Assistant Principal at Lincoln Southwest High School since it opened in 2001. Prior to that, Sara was the Assistant Principal at Northeast High School in Lincoln and the Vice Principal at Millard South High School.

Sara is extremely active in the national and state secondary school principal's organizations including being a task force member of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, and the State Assistant Principal Representative on the NSASSP Executive Board. Sara was key in the

opening of Southwest High School, the first new high school in Lincoln in 30 years. Working with the principal, she was involved with every facet of developing and implementing the programs and structures that would become a comprehensive 9-12 high school.

Jerry Wilks, Principal at Lincoln Southwest High School, states: "Dr. Landgren has exceeded all my expectations as an assistant principal. Her outstanding work ethic, knowledge of the curriculum and student registration process, communication skills, ability to adjust to a new learning community, along with the implementation of the first 4X4 block schedule high school in the city, only validate for me her outstanding leadership qualities." 

## SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS VACANCY

Lincoln Public Schools  
Lincoln, Nebraska

This outstanding leadership opportunity exists due to the retirement of Dr. Phil Schoo after 19 years of distinguished service as Superintendent of Schools.

Lincoln Public Schools is a growing school district of 32,000 students from many backgrounds who are served by a dedicated and talented staff. The District is led by a caring student-centered Board of Education and enjoys the unparalleled support and active involvement of the Lincoln community.

Lincoln (population 235,000) offers an exceptional quality of life with abundant educational, cultural, and recreational activities.

For information regarding Lincoln Public Schools visit:  
[www.lps.org](http://www.lps.org)

- Education:** Doctorate preferred.
- Experience:** Demonstrated successful leadership experience as an assistant superintendent or superintendent.
- Qualifications:** Eligible for Nebraska Superintendent certification.
- Salary:** Competitive with the region.

**Application Deadline: December 22, 2003 or until filled.**

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# TERRY HAACK AND BLAINE FRIESEN NAMED DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD WINNERS



Haack



Friesen

**Terry Haack**, Principal at Elkhorn High School, and **Blaine Friesen**, Principal at Heartland Community Schools, have been selected for the Nebraska State Association of Secondary School Principals Distinguished Service Awards. The NSASSP Distinguished Service Award is to honor administrators who have rendered outstanding and unselfish service to the Nebraska State Association of Secondary School Principals and who have contributed significantly to quality education at the state and local level. Persons will have demonstrated their enthusiasm for the principalship by support from students, teachers and peers.

Terry Haack received his B.A. of Science in Secondary Education from the University of Nebraska-Omaha, his Masters of Educational Administration for the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and his Ph.D. from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Terry began his career as a High School Science Teacher in College Spring, Iowa, and became the Assistant Principal at Beatrice High School in 1989. In 1991 Terry moved to Elkhorn to become the Assistant Principal and now High School Principal at Elkhorn High School.

Terry has several accomplishments and has been extremely involved at the state and national level of the NSASSP including NSASSP State President and Region V NASSP National Technology Committee.

Lynn Johnson, Arlington High School Principal, states: "Terry has evidenced himself to be a person of high integrity with the ability to lead and make decisions that are in the best interest of students and professional educators."

Sondra Bluma, Business and Technology Department at Elkhorn High

School, says: "Terry has provided excellent leadership for our school. One of his strengths is helping teachers to grow in their profession and to improve instruction."

Blaine Friesen received his B.A. of Art in Education and his Educational Specialist Endorsement from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Blaine began his career as a Social Studies Teacher, Head Football Coach, and then Elementary and Junior High School Principal at Sutton Public Schools. In 1985, Blaine became the Secondary School Principal at Heartland Community Schools in Henderson and Bradshaw.

Blaine is a member of several Professional Organizations including the North Central Association Advisory Committee, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Nebraska Coaches Association, and the

National Education Association.

Norman Yoder, Superintendent of Heartland Community Schools states: "I have worked with Mr. Friesen the past 17 years. I have found Mr. Friesen to be an excellent administrator who has the concern of the students and his staff at the top of his priorities. He is sensitive, concerned and caring about their needs and takes a real interest in their individual needs. He is committed to their education and misses few activities that they are involved in."

David Ehly, teacher at Heartland Community Schools, says: "His professionalism and dedication to his students, teachers and community speaks for itself. He has been involved in every aspect of the educational life of the school and has always been a motivator and supporter of all, especially the students."

## JERRY SELLENTIN NAMED AS JACK HALLSTROM "FRIEND OF EDUCATION"

The Nebraska Council of School Administrators Executive Director Jerry Sellentin was awarded the Jack Hallstrom "Friend of Education" Award at the annual NSASSP conference in Lincoln.

Jerry Sellentin has been the Executive Director of the Nebraska Council of School Administrators since 1992. He received his B.S. in Business, M.A. in Adult & Continuing Education, and Ph.D. in Community & Human Resources from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Over the years, Dr. Sellentin has received many honors and has served at the state and national levels for many organizations and committees.

Jack Hallstrom, retired member of NSASSP, stated in his nomination of Dr. Sellentin: "Jerry Sellentin has made a tremendous impact on our profession. His vision, his leadership, his goals and his unbelievable strong work ethic have been outstanding. Jerry is a tutor for new administrators, a lobbyist for education issues, and a leader among leaders. In all that he does be it as a mentor, tutor, professor, director, lobbyist or presenter he is truly a supporter of the public schools in Nebraska—a true "Friend of Education." "Dr. Sellentin has provided tremendous leadership and vision for our six affiliates. He has been able to coordinate the affiliates and at the same time allowing them their individual input making sure the needs of the total NCSA organization are met."

Our congratulations go out to Jerry Sellentin!



Jack Hallstrom & Jerry Sellentin



# PUBLIC OFFICIALS OF THE YEAR: BOLD, PERSISTENT, VISIONARY AND INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

(GOVERNING NOVEMBER 2003 ISSUE)



Christensen

Over the past decade, *Governing Magazine* has honored dozens of public officials who took a risk, fought for a cause they believed in and triumphed against the odds, proving con-

ventional wisdom wrong. Several of this year's ten other honorees showed a similar willingness to struggle against the odds. Nebraska education commissioner Doug Christensen believed the testing requirements of the federal "No Child Left Behind" education act were rigid and insensitive, unfair to states like his

that had already instituted their own systematic locally based testing. To the surprise of virtually the entire education establishment, Christensen persuaded the Education Department to approve a waiver allowing much of the Nebraska system to remain intact, despite its differences with the federal law. 

## BUCKING THE TEST SYSTEM NEBRASKA KEEPS STUDENT ASSESSMENTS UNDER LOCAL CONTROL

by *Governing Magazine* – Alan Greenblatt

A favorite complaint among state officials is that the federal government isn't adequately funding its No Child Left Behind law, which imposes an annual battery of standardized tests on every school district receiving federal funds. But Doug Christensen, Nebraska's education commissioner, is one of the few who have challenged the actual policy of the testing regimen, which argues is far too narrow.

Christensen hasn't just complained to the feds – he's gotten them to back down. He brought U.S. Department of Education Secretary Rod Paige to Nebraska, showed him what the schools there are doing and, in May, received a waiver that will allow his state to continue with its mixture of locally crafted student assessment systems. "He has such powerful political structures arrayed against him – the federal government wielding all that money, and a Department of Education that everyone else is bowing to," says Rick Stiggins, president of the Assessment Training Institute in Protland, Oregon. "But see, that's his strength. He doesn't care. He's saying this isn't the right thing to do."

To Christensen's way of thinking, standardized tests are not good measures of how much and how well children are learning. What may be worse, the results don't come in until

after old Christensen faced down heavy political pressures to adopt standardized tests. Five years ago, the state legislature mandated uniform testing across Nebraska. But Governor Mike Johanns vetoed funding for the plan and was a key Christensen ally in the effort to get legislators to change their thinking. "Doug kept pushing that that wasn't the way to do it, and he convinced us," says Ron Raikes, chairman of the state legislature's Education Committee.

Nebraska's small districts and homogenous population have undoubtedly made Christensen's job easier. "I don't happen to sit in a state that has a large urban school district that's a mess," he admits. But, if Nebraska lacks the kind of problem schools that prompted passage of the federal law in the first place, the state refuses to obsess over narrow tests that draw time and resources from schools' central mission of teaching kids how to read, write and do math.

"If schools systems are doing a great job, why should we be heavy-handed at the state level-let along the federal level?" says Governor Johanns. "One of Doug's strengths is that he recognized in really every system in Nebraska there are outstanding teachers and administrators, and he builds upon those strengths."

## NSDLAF NOTES #14

The contemplation of spending reserve funds or "balances" during difficult financial times can easily become a temptation extremely difficult to avoid. Part of that temptation can be the result of a common misunderstanding about the expenditure and revenue patterns of Nebraska School Districts, Educational Service Units and community colleges. Spending patterns are fairly consistent throughout the year because of the concentration of personnel related costs. The majority of employees are paid on a twelve month basis creating a rather steady monthly expenditure pattern. Revenue, amounts are more cyclical with the distribution of property taxes causing defined peaks and lows in the "checking account." What appears to be a large bank account balance in May or September may be greatly diminished during the intervening months.

The best informational and accounting tool to explain and plan for this revenue/expenditure mismatch is called "cash flow." Regular use on a current and projected basis will not only help the public understand the issue, but will also enable business-like investments when cash is available. Maximizing the interest to be earned from all funds is an inherent responsibility of effective fiscal management.

For information on the benefits to your school district, educational service unit or community college from participation in NSDLAF+, contact Cliff Dale, Vice President, Ambac Securities, Inc., 402-483-1678, or [cdale@neb.rr.com](mailto:cdale@neb.rr.com).



# COORDINATING COMMISSION STUDYING WHY STUDENTS DON'T GO TO COLLEGE

by Patsy Martin, Communications Officer, Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education

Nebraska historically has ranked near the top in the nation when comparing our high school graduation rates and college participation rates with those of other states. In recent years, however, Nebraska's ranking in college participation has dropped from the third highest in the country in 1992 to 21st in 2000. In this same time period, Nebraska's high school graduation rate has remained among the highest in the country.

The Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education is interested in finding out why a lower percentage of Nebraska high school graduates is entering college now than in the past. In today's economy, the importance and value of postsecondary education to the students and to the state's future economy are greater than ever. In 2001, the U.S. Census Bureau reported median income for individuals with a two-year associate degree was nearly \$7,000 higher than those with only a high school degree. For people with a bachelor degree, the median income was more than \$17,000 a year higher than those with only a high school degree. The Bureau of Labor Statistics shows that in 2002, those with only a high school degree had a 5.3 percent unemployment rate while those with a bachelor's degree had a rate of only 3.1 percent. The Bureau also predicts that by 2008, more than 50 percent of the job growth will be in jobs requiring an associate degree or higher.

To address this concern, the Coordinating Commission is undertaking a study to survey graduating high school seniors from school districts throughout the state to determine why more than 40 percent of high school graduates, based on 2001 data, decided not to attend or participate in some form of higher education. The purpose of the study is to help the state and schools develop strategies and policies that encourage more students to attend college or pursue postsecondary education.

In spring of 2003, the Coordinating Commission conducted a preliminary pilot study in cooperation with three Nebraska school districts. The preliminary study was supported financially by EducationQuest and the Nebraska Career Information System. In the sur-



vey, students were asked whether or not they planned to attend college after graduation. Depending on their answer, they then responded to follow-up questions regarding the reasons behind their decision. The Commission is conducting follow-up surveys of the same cohort of high school graduates this Fall to find out if those students who said they planned to attend college actually enrolled and if those who said they were not going to college ended up enrolling in college or were considering attending college in the future. The follow-up surveys are asking those not attending college to indicate factors that would influence them to attend college in the future.

The preliminary results of the pilot study, which surveyed approximately 600 students, showed that 80 percent of the graduating seniors reported they intended to enroll in college. However, we know that currently in Nebraska only 59.3% of graduates go on to college, so it's possible many of these will not actu-

ally enroll.

Of the survey respondents who indicated they would not be going to college, 42 percent were in the school's Free and Reduced Lunch program and 70 percent reported that they did not take college prep classes. The top five reasons listed for choosing NOT to attend college were:

1. I wanted to take a break.
2. I can't afford to go to college.
3. I have not decided what to do.
4. I am working now to save money for college.
5. I couldn't obtain enough funding/ financial aid.

From these preliminary results, it would appear that the cost of higher education is a factor in students decision-making process. Ultimately, if the results of the comprehensive study are consistent with these early findings, the study could help change state policy regarding financial aid for students.

The Commission is now in the process of inviting other schools to participate in this study in Spring of 2004. The goal is to have at least 20 more schools participate, preferably from districts throughout the state. The surveys would be conducted either on-line or in a paper-format during the spring of 2004 with follow-up in the fall of 2004.

The Commission believes there are many benefits to the schools who participate in this study. Participating schools would receive feedback regarding what happened to their graduates following graduation. Schools would learn how many of their graduates actually enrolled in college and the reasons why the others did not enroll. This feedback could help schools evaluate their programs and could lead to the implementation of new policies or practices that encourage and assist more students to attend college.

*[continued on page 14]*



## “...WANT MY JOB, HUH? “

(continued from page 5)

As with most living things, continual care and nurturing will result in the greatest growth and improvement. The following suggestions are provided to help increase the effectiveness of any mentor/coach relationship:

1. Regular meetings—you should schedule weekly meetings at a designated time. Cancellation of these meetings should be avoided at all costs. Topics should be relevant and timely and chosen in advance so any needed preparation can be completed. Input from protégé(s) is needed for the selection of discussion items.

2. Communication—as with everything we do, this is essential. Communication should be continually taking place between leaders of a school. Encourage protégé(s) to develop their own networks. They are not to rely solely on you for advice and opinions. Again, for some administrators this may be difficult to swallow. *“Why should they call some other administrator for advice, an explanation, or an opinion when they can just ask me? Other administrators may begin to think I don’t know anything or am unwilling to help those I work with.”* We all know that two heads are better than one. Why not take advantage of the wisdom of as many practicing experts as possible? By encouraging those I work with to seek counsel from others in the field, our school district gets the benefit of knowledge from many sources. This is a good thing! I have learned a great deal

from my fellow administrators both directly and indirectly.

3. Confidentiality/Trust—extreme caution should be practiced to keep conversations and issues confidential. As trust is earned, relationships develop, morale is increased, climate is improved, and productivity goes up.

4. Support—we will not always agree with the decisions or processes that others choose to follow. We must, however, support their right to “find their own way”. This is difficult at times. Experience may tell us that doing something a certain way will ultimately result in failure. We are faced with deciding to let them try and possibly fail or not letting them try at all. As we know, failure is a great teacher. It helps to build character and resolve. We must at times “let go” and allow our protégé(s) the opportunity to test their wings. Sometimes we will be surprised by the results, other times we must be there to help them pick up the pieces. Either way, we must be there, giving them an opportunity to learn and grow.

5. Recognition—rejoice in the successes of those around you. When an individual accomplishes a goal or succeeds at something new, recognize their efforts. Depending on the situation, it may be appropriate to make it a public recognition. Positive news coming from the school should always be a priority of our local news media.

6. Load Relief—if we are going to ask others to share some of our burden as part of the learning process, then we

should be prepared to share in their burden. For example, if I ask our principal, Margaret Sandoz, to complete a report, attend a meeting, or provide documentation for something that would normally be part of my responsibilities, then I should be prepared to lighten her load by assuming a responsibility that she has. The message that we all have an equal responsibility for completing the district’s mission is vital to the morale and welfare of our district. Additionally, I gain the experience of participating in an activity or exercise that I normally may not be exposed to. As administrators we should continually look for opportunities to “walk a mile” in as many different shoes in our district as possible. This is important to understanding the significant roles that all employees have in educating the children of our district.

*“Let me see if I have this straight. You’re telling me that if I spend my valuable time working with and teaching others about my job, learning more about their jobs, sharing issues and experiences with them, encouraging them to network, and doing these other things you discussed, then morale and productivity will improve at my school?”*

GUARANTEED!! 

***“Concentrated knowledge can be dangerous to an organization. Shared knowledge increases productivity, creativity, and organizational cohesiveness.”***

## CONGRATULATIONS TO...

☞ **Martha Bruckner**, Associate Superintendent, Milliard Public Schools, on receiving the Walter K. Beggs Award for Distinguished Service to Education

☞ **Dan Hoelsing**, Superintendent, Laurel-Concord-Coleridge Public Schools on receiving the David W. Hutcheson Award for Distinguished Service to Education in the State of Nebraska

☞ **Senator Chuck Hagel**, U.S. Senate, received the ESU’s award for Distinguished Service

☞ **Phil Schoo**, Superintendent, Lincoln Public Schools, recognized for his Outstanding Service to TeamMates

☞ **Keith Rohwer**, Superintendent, Nebraska City Public Schools, on receiving the Volunteer of the Year award from Teammates of Nebraska

☞ **Sterling Public Schools** on the success of their Override election

☞ **Larry Jess**, Superintendent, Wilcox-Hildreth Public Schools, on his retirement effective July 1, 2004

☞ **Dale Heth**, Superintendent, Twin River Public Schools, on his retirement effective July 1, 2004

☞ **Diane Woodford**, South Sioux City Public Schools, who has been named the 2004 Nebraska Teacher of the Year

☞ **Roger Groth**, Westside High School, recognized as a 2004 Award of Excellence Winner, by the Nebraska Department of Education

☞ **Suzanne Kirby**, Clinton Elementary School, Lincoln Public Schools, recognized as a 2004 Award of Excellence Winner, by the Nebraska Department of Education

☞ **Joan Anna Christen**, Beatrice High School, recognized as a 2004 Award of Excellence Winner, by the Nebraska Department of Education



## CROSSING BORDERS...

(continued from page 4)

the class that from the beginning, she had thought that I had stolen the money, and I only brought it back because of her threat of calling the police. After school, going home I felt real good about myself, actually proud because of how I was able to ask the girl the right questions and retrace where she had been and found the money. The fact that the teacher had accused me of stealing did not bother me, because I knew inside that I had done no wrong and that I had actually helped.

The second event that I remember was the time there was a visiting nurse, who came to check every student in school. The next, day my teacher announced to the class that I was trying to pull something over on her. She informed the class that I had tested out as being deaf in one ear, so she and the class were going to conduct another test. She had me go to one end of the room, sit down, and cover my good ear. I did as instructed. She asked me, "Can you hear me?" I replied, "No." She prompted again, "Are you sure you can't hear me?" I emphatically said, "Yes, I am sure I can't hear you!" Next, she told me I could take my finger out of my good ear. She then announced to the entire class, "See, I told you he was trying to pull one over on us. He heard everything I told him." Everybody laughed and I felt really bad. What she and the rest of us didn't realize was that throughout the years, I had learned to accommodate my disability by reading lips. I could understand a lot by just watching lips when people spoke.

The third incident dealt with an assignment. We were to write a short story about an eventful experience. The summer before, I had gone to a 4-H camp in the mountains. I wrote about what I did, what I learned, and the people I met. One day the teacher announced she was going to read the three best short stories. She read the first two stories and implied they were well written. Prior to reading the third story, she indicated that it was so good it could be in one of our library books. As the teacher began to read the story, I knew instant-

ly that it was mine. I felt so proud as she read it. When she finished the story, she announced to the class that I had tried to pull one over on her again. She accused me of copying the story from a library book. Again, due to a teacher, I was ridiculed. After school I walked home with a big grin on my face, because inside I knew that I had written a story that was so good that it could actually be turned into a book and put in the library. What she said and what the kids did wouldn't bother me. I knew I hadn't cheated; I knew that was my story, and I felt good about my creation.

My freshman year I went to Santa Fe to attend The Immaculate Heart Seminary. It was there that I knew that my life was going to be dedicated to helping people. However, towards the end of the year I realized that I didn't have to become a priest to help people, so I went back home to finish high school.

Numerous, negative situations which centered on ethnicity occurred throughout the rest of my schooling. Because of skin color, people had to take a back seat to others. That's just the way it was, and there was not much that we could do to change perceptions. The night of my graduation I was leaving the auditorium when I ran into the school counselor, who had never spoken to me while I was in high school. She reluctantly put her hand out and said, "Congratulations, I hear that construction work is very good in Albuquerque," then went on her way.

I'm sure that many other graduates have been led to hold low expectations for themselves; assuredly the saddest part is that is probably exactly what they did. I know that's what I did. I went to Albuquerque and got a job in construction. All the time I worked construction I knew that was not what I was going to do the rest of my life. Then when I was 21 I joined the army mostly because I knew I needed to be with and around people.

Another major event in my life occurred my senior year which made me more deeply commit to a life of helping others. I learned that people do things for selfish reasons. I got in some trouble and my Uncle Toby, who was also my Godfather, came over to see what he could do to help or so I thought. It was what I overheard him tell my mother that

made it very clear as to what kind of a person I was going to grow up to be. It definitely wasn't like my uncle. He told my mom that if it got out that I had gotten in trouble, his "good name" could be ruined. I immediately realized that his concern wasn't for me, but for himself.

My uncle's concern for nobody else but himself and my counselor's farewell are what drove me to becoming what I am today. I have dedicated my life to making sure that nobody experiences what had been done to me and many others. Because of those experiences and situations, I have made it my mission in life to ensure that everybody I come in contact with is given an equal opportunity to succeed. I also believe every human being has at least one good quality in them, and too many times it takes someone from the outside to help them find it. This is when we can make a difference in people's lives.

One last story, is very near and dear to my heart. I did have many people in my life who were there, not for selfish reasons but they were sincere in trying to help others. When I worked construction there was a man, to this day I call Uncle George, who would take the extra time to teach me how to do things right. He taught me so many things that have helped me throughout my life. There were others who I worked with who wouldn't even give you the time of day. I guess they were afraid that I would eventually learn more than them and take their job away. One day I asked Uncle George, "Aren't you afraid I'm going to learn your job and maybe do it better and eventually take it away?" His answer to that was, "If you take my job because you can do it better, then I will be happy, because I'll know that I've taught you well."

I can still remember the negative teachers and kids, and how they treated me. However, the good news is that I had positive people come into my life as well. Positive people taught me not to be angry with others who allowed ethnicity to be a barrier, but rather to be forgiving to people who formed perceptions built on race. I learned to be resourceful and found ways to turn negative situations into positive ones. 



**DOG GONE - ALMOST**

*(continued from page 2)*

teacher and continue Macy's training as her handler.

So far it has worked well. Macy practices daily pulling a student's wheelchair and has developed a terrific rapport with that student (and the other students as well). My cadet teacher/dog handler is going to finish high school. And the former alternative school students get Macy from the classroom during their lunch periods and throw a Frisbee for her on the front lawn. They like the fact that Macy recognizes them and expresses her affection in front of the other high school students.

I don't know what the future holds for our service dog program. In a perfect world I'd be able to figure a way for Macy's handler to train her to deal with our NCLB, SIP, ILSD, IDEA reauthorization, "highly qualified teacher," and finance issues. Unfortunately, I'm afraid those chores will remain for our administrative staff.

See Macy's new harness at our SOCS site: <http://www.allianceps.org/vnews/display.v/ART/2003/10/01/3f7b3ca642d19>

For more information about the service dog program as it appeared during 2002-03: <http://admin.aps.k12.ne.us/aps/SvcDogs/SvcDogFrames.html>

**SUPERINTENDENT OF YEAR**

*(continued from page 1)*

sional activities include: United Way/CHAD of Lincoln and Lancaster County Communications Committee, City of Waverly Comprehensive Plan Review Committee, NASA President, Nebraska School Activities Association Board of Control, Eastern Midland Conference President and past president of the Nebraska School Masters Club.

Marcia Herring, President, Waverly Board of Education states; "Dr. Ernst presents a future-focused vision, which will ultimately shape the direction of the district. This vision includes his commitment to excellence and high achievement through continual improvement along with his accountability." ... "His character, integrity, sincerity, knowledge and passion for education have earned him the respect of his professional peers, administration, staff, board and patrons."

James Tenopir, Executive Director of the Nebraska School Activities Association states; "As an outsider looking in, I often marveled at Dr. Ernst's ability to rally his staff behind the cause of educating students and for providing a safe and quality school setting for students and staff."

**COORDINATING COMMISSION**

*(continued from page 11)*

The study would give feedback regarding the following:

1. The percent of seniors who felt they were academically prepared for college
2. The percent of seniors who say high counselors assisted them in making educational and career plans
3. The percent of seniors who said they planned to go to college but did not and why?
4. The percent of seniors who said they were not going to go to college but did and what changed their mind?

School administrators who have questions about the study or want to meet with Commission staff to consider participation should contact Ms. Carna Pfeil, Associate Director for Finance and Administration, at (402) 471-0029 or [cpfeil@ccpe.state.ne.us](mailto:cpfeil@ccpe.state.ne.us).

**UPCOMING EVENTS...**

**JANUARY 10**

Emerging Administrators Workshop  
NCSA Offices - Lincoln, NE

**JANUARY 12**

Special Education Student Discipline  
ESU #16 - Ogallala, NE

**JANUARY 13**

Emerging Superintendent Workshop  
NCSA Offices - Lincoln, NE

**JANUARY 14**

Special Education Student Discipline  
Holiday Inn - Columbus, NE

**JANUARY 15**

Special Education Student Discipline  
ESU #3 - Omaha, NE

**JANUARY 17**

Emerging Administrators Workshop  
NCSA Offices - Lincoln, NE

**JANUARY 24**

Emerging Administrators Workshop  
NCSA Offices - Lincoln, NE

**JANUARY 31**

Emerging Administrators Workshop  
Sandhills Convention Center - NorthPlatte, NE

**FEBRUARY 3-4**

Labor Relations Conference  
Ramada Inn - Kearney, NE

**FEBRUARY 7**

Emerging Administrators Workshop  
Holiday Inn - Sidney, NE

**FEBRUARY 12-13**

NASES/NDE Joint Meeting  
Cornhusker Hotel - Lincoln, NE

For information and to register for any of the above events, please visit [www.ncsa.org](http://www.ncsa.org)

**\*NCSA Inclement Weather Policy:**

Should the school district where an NCSA Conference/Workshop is being held is closed, the event shall be canceled or postponed.

**SYMPATHY**

- Doc Moeller**, OPS Retired Administrator, on the death of his Grandson
- Bill Krueger**, Westside District 66 Administrator, on the death of his Father
- Judy Porter**, Millard Public Schools, on the death of her husband, Chuck
- Gerry Tirozzi**, Executive Director, National Association of Secondary School Principals, on the death of his wife, Marie



# 2003-2004 NCSA SPONSORS

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www.planforcollegenow.com

### Kirkpatrick Pettis

Daniel J. Smith  
10250 Regency Circle  
Suite 500  
Omaha, NE 68114  
800/206-7523  
fax: 402/392-7908  
dan-kp.smith@kirkpatrickpettis.com

### Nebraska Public Agency Investment Trust (NPAIT)

Candi Sanders  
PO Box 82529  
Lincoln, NE 68501  
402/323-1278  
fax: 402/323-1286  
candi.sanders@npait.com  
www.npait.com

### Nebraska School District Liquid Asset Fund Plus

Cliff Dale  
7300 Old Post Road, #13  
Lincoln, NE 68506  
402/483-1678  
fax: 402/483-1678  
cdale@ambacsecurities.com

### VALIC/American General Financial Group

Patrick Shay Campbell  
13180 Metcalf, Suite 200  
Overland Park, KS 66213  
800/892-5558  
www.aigvalic.com

## SCHOOL & COMPUTER FURNITURE & SUPPLIES

### Gateway Computers

Tim Christensen  
16112 Arbor Street  
Omaha, NE 68130  
402/330-4858  
fax: 402/330-4132  
www.gateway.com

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

### Applied Information Management Institute

Tim Topf  
118 South 19th Street  
Suite 1A  
Omaha, NE 68102  
402/345-5025  
fax: 402/345-5028  
tmt@nebraska.org  
www.schoolink.org

### DLR Group

Pat Phelan  
400 Essex Ct.  
Omaha, NE 68114  
402/393-4100  
fax: 402/393-8747  
pphelan@dlrgroup.com  
www.dlrgroup.com

### University of Nebraska-Lincoln Independent Study High School

Jolene Curry & Carol Ash  
900 North 21st Street  
Lincoln, NE 68588  
402/472-2175  
fax: 402/472-4450  
unlishs2@unl.edu  
www.nebraskans.unl.edu/ncsa

**NCSA**  
**455 So. 11th Street, Suite A**  
**Lincoln, NE 68508-2105**

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## **Calendar of Events**

### **JANUARY**

7	NSASSP Region I, 5:30 p.m., York Country Club	York
7	NASA Region I, 5:00 p.m., Ameritas Investment Corp.	Lincoln
8	NASA Region IV, 10:00 a.m., ESU #10	Kearney
10	Emerging Administrators, 9:00 a.m., NCSA Offices	Lincoln
12	SpEd Discipline Workshop, 8:30 a.m., ESU #16	Ogallala
13	Emerging Superintendents, 9:00 a.m., NCSA Offices	Lincoln
14	SpEd Discipline Workshop, 8:30 a.m., Holiday Inn	Columbus
14	NASA Region V, 12:00 p.m., Country Club	Alliance
15	SpEd Discipline Workshop, 8:30 a.m., ESU #3	Omaha
17	Emerging Administrators, 9:00 a.m., NCSA Offices	Lincoln
21	NSASSP Region II, 5:30 p.m., Elks Lodge	Omaha
21	NAESP Region II, 5:30 p.m., Champions Club	Omaha
24	Emerging Administrators, 9:00 a.m., NCSA Offices	Lincoln
28	NSASSP Region IV, 5:00 p.m., TBD	TBD
28	NAESP Region IV, 12:00 p.m., ESU #10	Kearney
31	Emerging Administrators, 9:00 a.m., Sandhills Conv. Center	North Platte

### **FEBRUARY**

2	NSASSP Executive Board, 3:00 p.m., Ramada Inn	Kearney
3	NCSA Executive Board, 8:30 a.m., Ramada Inn	Kearney
3	NASA Executive Board, 5:00 p.m., Ramada Inn	Kearney
3-4	Labor Relations Conference, 1:00 p.m., Ramada Inn	Kearney
4	NSASSP Region V, 10:00 a.m., Valentino's	Ogallala
4	NAESP Region II, 3:00 p.m., Lifelong Learning Center	Norfolk
4	NAESP Region V, 9:30 a.m., Valentino's	Ogallala
6	NAESP Region I, 8:30 a.m., ESU #6	Milford
7	Emerging Administrators, 9:00 a.m., Holiday Inn	Sidney
11	NASA Region V, 12:00 p.m., CSC Union	Chadron
12-13	NAESP/NDE Joint Meeting, 1:00 p.m., Cornhusker Hotel	Lincoln
18	NSASSP Region III, 2:00 p.m., ESU #1	Wakefield

### **NATIONAL CONVENTIONS**

February 19-22 – NASA National Convention – San Francisco, CA  
 February 27-March 1 – NASSP National Convention – Orlando, FL  
 April 16-20 – NAESP National Convention – San Francisco, CA  
 March 20-22 – ASCD National Convention – New Orleans, LA