

EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS: WE HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY NOW

by Barry Ballou, President, NASBO; Assistant Superintendent, Hastings Public Schools



Ballou

Should the educational system of Nebraska, from pre-school to graduate school, be dependent upon, and linked to, the economic cycle? Should students' learning opportunities be reduced when there is an economic down turn? Will students' learning opportunities be expanded when the economy is expanding? Or, at the very least, should the State and school districts be forced to hold the necessary cash reserves to withstand the effects of an economic down turn? Do all schools have a fair opportunity to build such reserves? Should all Nebraska citizens be asked to contribute to the funding of education on an equitable basis or should some, because of where they live within the State, be allowed to contribute less than do others? Such questions dominate the discussions surrounding education in Nebraska today. Or, at least, they should be dominating such discus-

sions. We must think about our future while working through our present circumstances. We must look systematically at what we are doing if we are going to withstand the present economic situation of the State and provide answers for future generations who will eventually face similar circumstances when it is their turn to struggle with such ques-

tions.

While I am no expert in the legislation the State has adopted in relationship to our road infrastructure, I have been told the development of that infrastructure is fairly resistant to the economic cycle of the State. Is traveling from Point A to Point B more important to us than our children or grandchildren and their educational attainment? Will having good roads to travel upon stimulate our economy more than a highly educated population?

These are all relevant questions that
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NAESP ANNOUNCES DISTINGUISHED PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR



Heady

Andrew (Drew) L. Heady, Principal at Abraham Lincoln Elementary School in Hastings, was selected to represent Nebraska as the Distinguished Principal of the Year for the Nebraska Association of Elementary School Principals.

Drew received his Bachelor's and Masters of Science from the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Drew has been a member of NAESP since 1990 as well as several other educational organizations and Task Forces.

Some major accomplishments of Drew include: improving the reputation and perception of Lincoln Elementary by increasing student learning and positive parent involvement and decreasing discipline referrals and violent acts; developed a school-wide Title 1 Plan; developed Staff Development to fit the needs of staff; and encouraging Staff to assume leadership roles.

Craig Kautz, Assistant Superintendent at Hastings Public Schools says: "Mr. Heady genuinely believes that all stu-

dents can, and must, learn at a level consistent with, or beyond, their potential... Mr. Heady has worked extremely hard with his staff and parents to develop a curriculum and an instructional program geared to meeting the needs of each student attending his school." Denise Koch and Dave Berens, Team Teachers at Lincoln Elementary state that: "As principal of Abraham Lincoln Elementary, Mr. Andrew Heady displays a unique educational leadership style. By sharing leadership with his experienced staff, his purpose becomes clear WE ARE HERE FOR THE KIDS, thus encouraging new ideas/program development to occur continuously."

Kearney Public Schools will receive \$500 in recognition of Tom's accomplishments from NCSA and BlueCross/Blue Shield.

Regional winners announced are:

Region II – Nila Nielsen, Willa Cather Elementary, Millard Public Schools

Region III – David Ludwig, Wisner-Pilger Elementary School

Region V – James Jeffres, Progress & West 5th Elementary, Ogallala Public Schools

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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.



EDUCATION IS FOR THE CHILDREN

By Dennis Pool, Assistant Superintendent, Omaha Public Schools

As we move toward the 2003-2004 school year, we are in for the professional fight of our careers. I believe, as professional public school administrators, it is time to renew our advocacy for the education rights of all our State's children in a bona fide and vocal manner.

Our State Constitution establishes the right of our youth to a "free" education. If you look closely at the record of debate and discussion regarding the selection of those words, nearly a hundred and thirty years ago, "free" meant more than "free." Our founding fathers were concerned that as the state grew, there would be an education system in place which would provide everyone with an adequate education in order to support themselves in their world. Now, as we look at "our world" today, it certainly looks significantly different. No longer is

an 8th grade education adequate, no longer are the standards of our parents adequate. Yet, the diversity of our state continues to reflect the diversity and the high expectations of our grandparents. To come to Nebraska, and settle in among others who spoke the same language and held high the traditions of their forefathers was not uncommon in our State. Yet today, many seem to be unwilling to bear the challenge of a "free" public education, the expectation of our Constitution.

Even with all of the wonders of technology and the opportunities to travel and "see" what is going on in other communities, we seem to turn inward and look at only our own issues. In reality, as public educators, we are in for the fight of our careers, to sustain a "free" education for the children of our state, no

matter where they live.

Look at the "accountability" issues, which have grown over the last two decades. In 1983, *A Nation at Risk* established we were failing as public educators. We should do more; we had grown sloppy and were not accomplishing what was then contrasted as a high-quality education in Japan and Europe. Had we known what we know now, it was a declaration of war on behalf of those who would unjustifiably criticize and bring down public education. Shame on us for not seeing the disguise of corporate powers infusing their will over the will of the people. Yet as educators we began pointing fingers at each other: "It must be a problem with our elementary schools; no, it is our middle education programs; no, the problem rests with the high school curriculum; okay, it must be our teacher education programs." We all know this time provided a great opportunity for us to reflect, to conduct research, to offer and make many great changes in our system, but to what end? Have we satisfied the critics of our instructional programs? Have we been able to be fiscally conservative to be able to meet the needs of the "tax activists?" No, we needed to run our schools more like a "business." Be more like our corporate critics. Model schools after the business and corporate structure, then we will have success. Look to Philadelphia Public Schools and other cities, which have moved to embrace charter schools to get a glimpse of the success provided by "corporate schools." With the corporate accounting scandals of the past two years, when was the last time someone told you to run your school more like a "business?"

Now, for the most recent push by the corporate structure to dismantle public education, House Resolution 1, also known as "No Child Left Behind." Now not only do we face an accountability structure which is not based upon our Nebraska model, we are being placed in a "No win" environment which will simply pit one elementary school against another, one district against another, with an untenable solution for "failure of

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NCSA EXECUTIVE BOARD - 2003

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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.

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

by Jerry Sellentin, Ph.D., Executive Director



Sellentin

At the American Association of School Administrator's Annual (AASA) Conference, February 21-23, Paul Houston, AASA's Executive Director provided the following list to the topic: 'Ten Things They Never Taught Me About Being A School Administrator'

10. All changes in the district must first be approved by the superintendent's secretary.
9. Hell hath no fury like the mother of a cheerleader scorned.
8. How much snow is too much?
7. The best decisions are the ones I almost made.
6. How to introduce technology into a classroom with only one electrical outlet.
5. The difference between bug bites, sound bites, and gigabytes.
4. There is no such thing as "off the record."
3. How 100 percent of the students will meet 100 percent of the standards with only 90 percent of last year's funding.
2. Which is better, Roloids or Tums?
1. It's what you learn after you "know it all" that really counts.

Denny Vincent, the President of the National Association of Secondary Principals (NASSP) provided his top ten list to Principals attending the 2003 NASSP Conference in San Diego:

10. Let's reinvent the principalship so principals can effectively do their jobs and still have a life.
9. Let's provide one adult advocate for every child in every school.
8. Let's require every congressman and every senator at the state and national level and every governor to spend a minimum of one week in a classroom as a teacher or in the school office as a principal.

THE TOP TEN OR TWENTY

7. Let's pay every teacher and every principal a respectable wage, commensurate with their professional training and professional responsibilities.

6. Let's reduce the size of every high school to under 1,000; every middle school to under 750; and every elementary school to under 500.

5. Let's reduce class size to a maximum of 25 in high schools, 20 in middle schools; and 15 in elementary schools.

4. Let's get rid of 90 percent of all the paperwork that teachers and principals have to do. Most of it is a waste of time anyway.

3. Let's fully fund IDEA.

2. Let's not spend public money on any school unless that school follows the same rules we in the public sector must follow.

1. Let's stop the insane movement toward comparative high stakes testing under the guise of educational accountability. Let's use tests for what they were meant for—to diagnose educational problems and prescribe educational solutions.

Health Insurance

The overall average rate increase for the EHA 2003-04 year is 9.4 percent.

Information I have received for some rates in Iowa were over 30 percent. An article from Blue Cross/Blue Shield HealthIssues.com (February 26, 2002 "Why are Healthcare Costs Going Up?" Hospital Spending and prescription drugs are the fastest growing costs. Physician services, technology, and the consumer demand for more services. In a year with revenue cuts, the 2003-04 EHA rate increase is better than a double-digit increase, but the challenge is to be a "wise" user of Health Insurance as the best medicine for lower premium costs.

BOB Award

In my February article I talked about the BOB Award at Lincoln Robin Mickle Middle School. I failed to mention the award is run by the teachers. Another award program of interest is the WOW Award. This award recognizes outstanding performance. A WOW certificate is given each time someone observes outstanding service and at the end of the year a grand prize is given to the teacher or staff member who has received the most WOW certificates during the year. Recognition is important and recognizing it is even more important.

EXECUTIVE BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

The NCSA Executive Board met on February 4, 2003, at the Kearney Ramada Inn.

- The new Blue Cross/Blue Shield overall rate will be 9.4 percent effective September 1, 2003.
- NCSA active membership dues for 2003-2004 will increase by \$10. New dues will be as follows; active membership \$300, associate membership \$90, student membership \$25, and retired membership \$170. Nebraska's fees in comparison to surrounding states remain low. By increasing steadily, members will not have to experience a spiked or high rate increase.
- An Inclement Weather Policy for

Workshops and Conferences was approved. This policy will be printed at the bottom of each registration form.

- Jerry Sellentin was given direction to create guidelines and policy for a Legal Defense Counseling Group. Retired Administrators would be trained and available to assist administrators. This group would be available at the \$500 step of legal defense.
- Reports were given by each affiliate President. The NCSA staff brought the Board up to date on activities, legislation, finance, membership, training and development matters. Reports were also given by the chair and vice chair.



SCHOOL FIRE CODES PROVIDE SAFE ENVIRONMENT

by Al Inzerello, Assistant Superintendent, Westside Community Schools

There are always many surprises awaiting school administrators as they go about the job of managing our schools and school districts. Students, staff, Board members, the local community, and other government entities as well all seem to generate a variety of issues that must be addressed appropriately by those in charge of our schools. At times, these issues are not anticipated and in some cases require the allocation and expenditure of considerable financial resources. In very tight budget times, this becomes an even greater issue for school administrators. An example of this type of issue is the life safety codes dealing with schools and the mandates for building modifications generated from violations and interpretations of non-compliance with these codes.

In an effort to deal with this issue, Ken Winters, the State Fire Marshal and Doug Christensen, Commissioner of Education, formed the Nebraska School Safety Code Committee in August of 2002. This statewide committee was made up of representatives from the Nebraska Department of Education; State Fire Marshal's office, various local Fire Departments, school districts across the state, Architects and Engineers, and independent consultants. The objectives from Commissioner Christensen and Fire Marshal Winters to the committee were to share individual experiences, review all pertinent governance issues, identify all concerns from all parties regarding the life safety codes and the interpretations of the codes as they apply to schools; and to provide recommendations for change that would benefit all stake holders.

During the first meeting, all parties agreed that our overall charge would be to ensure a safe environment for all children and adults in our schools. To accomplish this, we all agreed to develop cooperative working relationships among all parties and to identify the major areas of concern and possible solutions.

During subsequent meetings, we all realized that life safety code expectations would need to be clearly explained

and understood by all parties. Discussion supported the fact that enforcement of the life safety codes needed to be more consistent and inspections more predictable and that corrections and compliance requirements needed to be as sensitive as possible to the financial burdens of school districts without compromising the safety of children and school employees. In order to assist with this effort a "Fire Inspection Checklist for Educational Occupancies" has been developed and will be distributed to Nebraska administrators this spring. This checklist is designed as a convenience to assist local school officials in maintaining fire safe facilities. This checklist is not all-inclusive and does not replace the Life Safety Code or other regulations adopted by the State Fire Marshal or other local jurisdictions but should provide a clear working document for both school administrators and fire safety officials.

The committee also realized the problems created by the ever-changing inspection personnel together with changing personnel in our schools. We all agreed that we all need to do a better job at creating a historical record of inspections, discussions and compliance issues in each school system. This record will assist with many compliance issues as personnel changes take place

by providing some level of historical documentation on school facilities.

The committee also agreed that the financial implications of Life Safety Code violations may pose a very serious issue for school districts in Nebraska as well. This session legislation has been introduced, thanks to Senator Jensen through LB 246, that would allow a tax levy exclusion in order to fund building modifications necessary for compliance. All entities involved in the committee have agreed to support this legislation in hopes of this exclusion becoming effective as soon as possible.

Better communication between fire safety officials and school administrators appeared to be a reoccurring issue at each committee meeting. To address this issue, state fire officials have agreed to participate in our annual meetings such as NASBO, Administrators' Days, etc. in an effort to continue the dialog between the State Fire Marshal personnel and school officials.

I believe we need to thank the Commissioner and the State Fire Marshal for spearheading this effort. The results of the work of this committee should provide better information and fewer surprises for each of us charged with keeping our schools as safe as possible for all occupants. 

WANTED...

The Nebraska Educational Service Unit Cooperative Purchasing Board of Control is seeking applicants for an Assistant Executive Director. Estimated start date is June 2003 with the office located in Ainsworth, Nebraska. Position is intended to be transitional to the position of Executive Director in 2004. Requirements include a Bachelor's degree with a minimum of five years experience in business and/or education as well as proficient computer skills.

For application materials contact:
Rodney Garwood, Search Committee Chair
rgarwood@esu1.org
(402) 287-2061
c/o ESU #1,
211 Tenth St.
Wakefield, NE 68784



NEBRASKA PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES COMMISSION

by Kurt Harrison, Superintendent of Schools, Lakeview Community Schools

To develop, to promote and to enforce standards of professionalism for Nebraska educators is the goal of the Nebraska Professional Practices Commission (NPPC). At the request of the State Board of Education, the commission will hold hearings and will make recommendations to the State Board of Education concerning alleged violations of standards of professional ethics and practices by public school certificate holders.

I was fortunate to be appointed to the NPPC in 1996. At first I was very skeptical about the appointment, sitting in a judgmental position and not wanting to take time away from family to work some Saturdays. But at the end of my second term I found myself wanting to continue with what I found to be a very rewarding position. I found that the NPPC can have a definite impact on children's education and the contact with dedicated professionals working to improve Nebraska education was an invaluable opportunity and experience.

Twelve commissioners are nominated by the teaching profession and existing professional organizations. My nomination came from the Nebraska Council of School Administrators. Commissioners are representative of elementary classroom teachers, secondary classroom teachers, school administrators and post-secondary educators. Commissioners are appointed for staggered terms of three years and may only be reappointed one time. The opportunity to meet and to work with dedicated educators from all over the state was a definite benefit. Although coming from different perspectives—teacher, administrator, post-secondary educators—a majority of the time we reached similar

recommendations. After many very aggressive and healthy discussions we usually came to a consensus that protected our children and the profession.

There has been a drastic change in

In a recent nine-month period from January 2002 to September 2002 there were ninety-eight complaints. Approximately fifty percent of those cases were for inappropriate sexual conduct or pornography, with a majority stemming from using school district computers to visit pornographic sites. Four percent of the complaints involved contract abrogation. Thirty-three of these cases were still under investigation at the time of this writing. Of the cases settled, fifteen certificates had been either voluntarily surrendered or revoked. The revocation period can vary...but it does reiterate the definite need for NPPC to help protect our children.

the nature of the complaints since the inception of more advanced technology and the use of the Internet in our school systems. From 1970 to 1989 there were approximately ninety-one complaints filed. Eight percent of those cases involved inappropriate sexual conduct and approximately sixty-four percent were complaints of contract abrogation. During that period nine certificates were revoked.

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from a specified number of years to permanent. I'm not certain what those statistics convey, but it does reiterate the definite need for NPPC to help protect our children.

In addition to the volunteer commissioners, the NPPC hires a clerk, a hearing officer and court reporter. Kathi Vontz is the clerk and does an excellent job preparing and mailing information to the commissioners, maintaining and

updating the office and the website, and answering any questions the commissioners may have. Mrs. Vontz is responsible for publishing pamphlets on Code of Ethics for the Teaching Profession, Standards of Competency, and Teacher Aides, which provide clarification of the duties, which can be performed by non-certificated personnel. The NPPC could not function without Kathi.

The current hearing officer is Judge Samuel

Van Pelt. Judge Van Pelt orchestrates the hearings with the precision of a professional mechanic leaving nothing to chance or speculation.

Another important piece of the puzzle is Brian Halstead, Certification Counsel for the Department of Education. Mr. Halstead receives and investigates the complaints. He also represents the Commissioner of Education acting as prosecutor before the commission. His presentations are always very thorough and professional.

My tenure with the NPPC has been one of the most rewarding educational experiences to date. If you get the opportunity to serve on the NPPC, please take advantage of the opportunity.

For additional information on the NPPC, the Commission Clerk, Kathi Vontz, is available to discuss the business of the commission with any group that might request it, and to visit classrooms at the college level to offer information about the commission and its business to prospective teachers. 



CONGRATULATIONS TO...

☞ **Kim Saum Mills**, Assistant Principal, Millard South High School, who was a NASSP National Assistant Principal of the Year finalist

☞ **Bill Bucher**, Principal, Lincoln Lux Middle School on receiving the Award of Excellence in Middle Level Education by the Nebraska Association for Middle Level Education

☞ **Ken Bird**, Superintendent, Westside Community Schools on receiving the, Friend of the Horace Mann League award

☞ **Larry Dlugosh**, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, on being elected, President, of the Horace Mann League

☞ **Richard Becker**, Superintendent, Wilber-Clatonia, on being named the executive director and development officer for the Southeast Community College Educational Foundation

☞ **Bob Norvell**, retired Superintendent, on his and Nancy's 50th wedding anniversary

☞ **Paul Toms**, retired York Superintendent, who has been appointed to the York City Council

☞ **Nebraska ASCD 2002-03 elections**—President-elect: **Cindy Gray**, Elkhorn Public Schools; Secretary: **Terry Kenealy**, York Public Schools; Board Members: **Penny Jans**, Milford Public Schools, and **Bob Bruckner**, Westside Community Schools

☞ **Pat Roschewski**, NDE, on her article, *Nebraska Stars Line Up*, in the March issue of "Phi Delta Kappan"

☞ **Marlene Uhing**, Superintendent, Randolph Public Schools, who has been named Superintendent of Seward Public Schools

☞ **Wayne Koehler**, retired Superintendent, Davenport Public Schools, who has been named Superintendent of Pawnee City Public Schools

☞ **Charles Lambert**, Principal, West Holt Rural High School, who has been named Superintendent of West Holt Rural High School

☞ **Tom Becker**, Principal, Emerson-Hubbard, who has been named Superintendent of Emerson-Hubbard

☞ **Luis Cass**, Principal, Sutton, who has been named Superintendent of

Wallace Public Schools

☞ **John Frates**, retired Superintendent, who has been named Superintendent at Arthur County

☞ **Lee Sayer**, Principal, Wolbach Public Schools, who has been named Superintendent of Clay Center Public Schools

☞ **Shawn Scott**, teacher, Kenesaw Public Schools, who has been named Superintendent of Palmer Public Schools

☞ **Galen Boldt**, Principal, Norris Public Schools, who has been named Assistant Superintendent Norris Public Schools

☞ **Lee Frye**, Special Ed Director, West Point Public Schools, who has been named Special Ed Director of Elkhorn Public Schools

☞ **Kevin Young**, Principal, Stuart Public Schools, who has been named Principal at West Holt High School

☞ **Tom McQuire**, Assistant Principal, Columbus Middle School, who has been named Principal at Central City Middle School

☞ **John McGill**, Assistant Principal, Papillion Junior High School, who has been named Principal at Papillion Junior High

☞ **Melanie Mueller**, math teacher, Papillion Junior High School, who has been named Assistant Principal Papillion Junior High

☞ **R. Brent Holder**, English teacher, Papillion Junior High School, who has been named Assistant Principal Papillion Junior High

☞ **Papillion LaVista South High School** new administrators: **Enid Schonewise**, Principal; **Jeff Johnson**, Assistant Principal; **Patrice Zalesky**, Assistant Principal; **Jim Larson**, Assistant Principal

☞ **Dave Weber**, retired Principal at Callaway, who is returning as Principal of Callaway

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

☞ **Tobin Buchanan**, Assistant Principal, Plattsmouth Elementary School, who has been named elementary Principal at Arlington Public Schools

☞ **Nancy Nelson**, administrative intern, Millard Neihardt, who has been named Principal Millard Cottonwood Elementary School

☞ **Mandy Johnson**, administrative intern, Millard Montclair, who has been named Principal Millard Hitchcock Elementary School

☞ **Tim DeWaard**, Superintendent at Valentine Rural High School, who has been appointed Superintendent of Tri County

☞ **Brent Gaswick**, Assistant Principal at Rapid City, SD, who has been appointed Principal at Gordon Elementary School

☞ **Robert Drews**, Assisant Principal at Valley Public Schools, who has been appointed Principal at Gordon High School

RETIREMENTS

☞ **Dick Becker**, Superintendent, Wilber Clatonia

☞ **Dave Dudley**, Superintendent, Wallace

☞ **Larry Hermsmeyer**, Superintendent, West Holt Rural High School

☞ **Bill Rogers**, Superintendent, Brady

☞ **Lewis Evert**, Principal, Fullerton High School

☞ **Bob Bussman**, Principal, Lincoln Arnold Elementary School

☞ **Larry Grosshans**, Assistant Superintendent, Norris School District

SYMPATHY

☞ **Keith Rohwer**, Superintendent, Nebraska City on the death of his sister-in-law

FYI




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NSDLAF+ NOTES #8

Bond issues in 2003! With the current state of the economy, coupled with the impending gloom surrounding the



legislative session, it may seem illogical that districts would consider bond issues in 2003. In reality, whether intended or not, the legislative actions of recent years have forced districts for several reasons to consider bond issues for capital needs. First, since the \$.14 building fund levy has been incorporated into the levy lid, many districts have lost the flexibility of accumulating funds for anticipated facility improvements and large maintenance type projects. Second, the needs involved in building modernization have been magnified in two major ways. Technology enhancements, for sure, have multiplied necessary structural upgrades to accommodate larger electrical and communication capacities. The fervor associated with asbestos contamination has now given away to attention to air quality. Third, programs change and the traditional k-12 educational format now includes pre-school and precludes segregating students with specialized needs away from the home attendance center.

Districts contemplating bond issues should make sure to use the services of the Nebraska School District Liquid Asset Fund (NSDLAF) as a partner in the planning process. The investment of bond proceeds or accumulated building funds is an important component in the effective fiscal planning for any major capital task. Consider NSDLAF as a planning partner with the architect, underwriter and local staff.

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

EFFICIENT & EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS...

(continued from page 1)

need to be addressed at a policy-making level. There is another important question, however, that must be addressed. That question is this: What are the barriers that prevent us from providing the most efficient and effective educational system the State should provide?

This question certainly was placed in front of me at a conference I recently attended. This conference was sponsored by the Association of School Business Officials. I was fortunate enough to attend such a gathering in my present role as President of the Nebraska Association of School Business Officials (NASBO). Much of what I learned at the conference can be applied to Nebraska. One of the things that I learned is that states who appear to have the greatest potential for withstanding an economic down turn are states where unified coalitions exist among state school board associations, state school administrator associations, and teacher associations. Will the similar associations in Nebraska be unified in our present situation?

And, if unified in our efforts, will we be able to think "outside the box?" Will we be able to remove any barriers that prevent us from establishing an efficient and effective educational system? In attending this conference, it became quite clear to me that we have many entities delivering educational services for the size of our student and adult population. There are numerous reasons for this from a cultural, political, and financial point of view. To be truly efficient, however, we must reduce the number of schools and eliminate any barriers that prevent this from happening now. Reducing the number of districts can happen. North Carolina, for example, has approximately 1 million students served by only 117 school districts. Hawaii, a

state with approximately the same number of students as Nebraska (but with drastically different geographical factors), has only one school district. Does Nebraska really need over 500 school districts to effectively and efficiently serve the student population of this State? I think not.

I am fortunate to be serving NASBO

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as President for the second time in my career. While many things have changed since I first served during the 1989-90 school year, I am not sure Nebraska students are better off than they were a little over ten years ago. While we have tried to improve effectiveness through standards, assessment, and accountability, we really haven't accomplished enough to make our educational delivery system efficient. It appears we may have also entered a period when political courage is rare or lasts only eight years given term limitations. Under such circumstances, it is clear that professional educators are going to need to provide leadership at a very high level. As a member of NCSA, I challenge us to unite with the other professional education associations to strengthen our voice. Let's lead the way in making the Nebraska school system the most well-funded, efficient, and effective school system in the nation. We actually have the means. The question is, do we have the collective will to take the actions that must be taken?





THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN SCIENCES...ENHANCING PEOPLE'S LIVES AT HOME, AT SCHOOL AND IN THE COMMUNITY

by Marjorie Kostelnik, Designated Dean for the College of Education and Human Sciences, University of Nebraska Lincoln

For the past 100 years, Teachers College and the College of Human Resources and Family Sciences at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln have strived to enhance the quality of people's lives through professional preparation programs, research and community partnerships. Between them, the two units address most facets of P-16 education as well as family and community education and development. Now the two colleges plan to join forces to create the College of Education and Human Sciences. The aim of this move is to strengthen families, schools and communities, paying special attention to the interconnections among them. If approved by the NU Board of Regents, the new college will begin fall semester 2003.

The Need for a College of Education and Human Sciences

Families, schools and communities face increasingly complex challenges in today's world. As we address those challenges, it is difficult to imagine ways to enhance family and community life without taking into account schools. Likewise, educators face a formidable task trying to enhance teaching and learning, without strong families and communities to support that effort. In response to these circumstances, the College of Education and Human Sciences will bring together complimentary disciplines and a critical mass of resources to carry out research, creative work, teaching and outreach targeted at building stronger links among families, schools, and communities in our state and beyond. Graduates of the college will work with people in and across a variety of settings including: homes, schools, health and clinical settings, community agencies and institutions, aesthetic environments, business, industry and government. The value of the new college will come from

providing a structure for connecting different perspectives in new ways to achieve novel approaches and effective solutions. Its promise will be realized through the creation of new and better ways to strengthen families, schools and communities.

Coming together to form one college will enable us to:

- Bring together a critical mass of human and fiscal resources focused on strengthening families, schools and communities.
- Address real challenges faced by families, schools and communities
- Influence the primary system on which people depend – home, school, workplace and community
- Develop innovative ways of looking at issues, asking questions, and approaching problems
- Offer solutions to complex problems involving multiple social systems
- Become a significant area of strength in the NU system
- Facilitate faculty and students working together across disciplines
- Strengthen and develop new relationships with community partners
- Develop initiatives that distinguish us within the state and among our peer institutions nationally

Over time, the result of coming together will yield teaching, research and outreach programs that will look different than they would if the two founding colleges remained independent. This partnership will influence the programs we offer students, the scholarship we pursue and the outreach we conduct. It will influence how we present ourselves to potential employers and to the public. Faculty, students, alumni and you will help to shape how it all evolves.

Looking Toward the Future

People ask – what will the new college look like? How will it look different than the two founding colleges look now? The

honest answer is that none of us knows for sure what structures and processes will be in place a year or two from today. However we do know that we plan to 'grow' the new college so it is responsive, flexible, innovative, student-centered, family friendly, and focused on leadership, scholarship and service in education.

Some emphases will remain the same as they are now. For example, the College of Education and Human Sciences will continue to emphasize:

- High quality teacher preparation programs
- The importance of teaching and instruction, development and learning
- Preparing professionals for leadership roles in education
- Research on teaching and learning
- Making connections between theory and practice
- Community-partnerships
- High standards
- Accountability
- Meeting the education needs of Nebraska citizens

As the new college forms, we will increase our emphasis on:

- Engaging families and communities in the education process
- Education across the life span
- Professional interactions across systems

• Finding new ways for families, schools and communities to work together and support one another

Creating the College of Education and Human Sciences is more than simply rearranging units or making changes where people are housed on campus. It is a commitment by the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, to the development of human capital and to the people-focused scholarship. We believe that the combination of education and human sciences will result in highly skilled teachers and educational

(continued on page 9)



COLLEGE OF EDUCATION & HUMAN SCIENCES

(continued from page 8)

leaders who will make a positive difference in children's lives and enhance the schools in which they are employed. As has been true for the past century, our aim is to conduct exemplary professional preparation programs, to carry out useful research and to contribute to the continuing improvement of institutions that meet the educational needs of society.

Where to Get More Information and to Offer Feedback

There is a website devoted to the new college available at <http://www.unl.edu/newcollege>. It includes a concept paper describing the College of Education and Human Sciences in greater detail, up-to-date minutes of meetings held, a bulletin board for reader comments, and several papers written by faculty regarding ways in which the two founding colleges might build a future together. There is also a place for you to make suggestions. Later this spring, a series of listening sessions will be conducted in Nebraska communities to give people a chance to talk about issues related to families, schools and communities. I hope you will come to a session near you to offer your ideas.

On a Personal Note

Long before I arrived in Nebraska two years ago, I was well aware of the state's reputation for high quality K-12 education and of its strong focus on family and community. Those traditions make Nebraska an ideal place to create the college described here. Having been involved in many facets of education over my career, I am excited to be part of the team developing the College of Education and Human Sciences. I hope you will help us in this enterprise and believe that your contributions will be critical in shaping the college right from the start. I am looking forward to meeting many of you in the coming months, to learning from you and to working with you on behalf of children, educators, families and communities. 

UPCOMING EVENTS...

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

APRIL 9 GRIT CONFERENCE

Cornhusker Hotel – Lincoln

For more information contact Angie:
angie@ncsa.org

APRIL 22 NARSA SPRING FLING

Dinner & Jazz

Crane River/UNL Jazz Ensemble
Lincoln

For more information contact Kelly:
kelly@ncsa.org

APRIL 24-25 NASES SPRING CONFERENCE

Ramada Inn – Kearney

For more information contact Angie:
angie@ncsa.org

APRIL 28-30 NASBO STATE CONVENTION

Holiday Inn – Hastings

For more information contact Angie:
angie@ncsa.org

MAY 5, 7, & 8 STUDENT HANDBOOKS WORKSHOP

May 5 - Scotts Bluff - ESU #13 (8:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.)

May 5 - North Platte - Holiday Inn Express (5:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.)

May 7 - Columbus - Holiday Inn Express (9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.)

May 7 - Grand Island - GI Public Schools Central Office (5:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.)

May 8 - Omaha - ESU #3 (9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.)

For more information contact Kelly:
kelly@ncsa.org

ADMINISTRATORS' DAYS JULY 30-AUGUST 1 KEARNEY, NE

EDUCATION IS FOR THE CHILDREN

(continued from page 2)

Nebraska schools." Solutions for prescribed failure are direct and nearly immediate. Student choices, which will amount to "new programs." In essence the long-desired prescription will come true, public funds going to private for-profit providers. In rural Nebraska, choices will be limited to a new and evolving group of private providers.

Federal funding will never be sufficient to meet the needs schools will experience because of these mandates. In fact, recent news out of Washington already portrays declining appropriations for this initiative. "Just make it work." States, already financially challenged, will be asked just that, "make it work." The reality is, public educators must take up the banner and press home the fight for our public schools

and our children's education with more zeal than ever before.

Now as the State's Legislators are fully engaged in the issues of dwindling state tax revenues, public school finances are expected to be a part of the reduction mix. The Legislature has created a funding quagmire, which will be nearly impossible to cut the funds needed to salvage the issue. They will not be able to increase taxes sufficient to make a short-term difference. Public education is at a crossroads and we are likely to see a dismantling of what most communities have established as a quality Nebraska public education. As Nebraska Public School Administrators, will we be able to make a positive difference? Yes, but only through a focused and hard fought fight for the education rights of all our State's children, no matter where they live. Let's all stand up to be counted on the side of children. 



A CHILD'S "BILL OF RIGHTS"

by Richard D. Eisenhauer, Superintendent, Lexington Public Schools

I had an idea once! Like many ideas, it didn't go far or cause a great stir, or really change anything. Still, it was a good idea. It came to mind again when Jerry Sellentin asked me to write something for NCSA. I got to wondering if perhaps it is still a good idea, and perhaps even an

Then it hit me, "Why not," I thought, "Why not drop all of this and spend our time and focus on development of a Bill of Rights for Children?" What would be included in a Bill of Rights for children?

idea whose time has come?

The idea occurred to me several years ago while serving on AASA Resolutions Committee. There we were, meeting in Washington, working on revisions of the platform and considering all the usual "resolution stuff." Then it hit me, "Why not," I thought, "Why not drop all of this and spend our time and focus on development of a Bill of Rights for Children?" What would be included in a Bill of Rights for children? Well, how about:

- The right to quality education for every child, including equal resources, safe and modern buildings for every child, highly trained and dedicated teachers in every classroom, and his standards and expectations fairly developed and assessed?
- The right to pre-natal care for every child to let them be born healthy.
- The right to good nutrition and healthy care for every child.
- The right to quality pre-school opportunities for every child.
- The right to access books for every child.
- The right to a safe neighborhood, free of drugs and crime.
- The right for parent access to parent resource centers to make sure that they know about and can easily access the services that families need.
- The right to be respected as our future, not as property.

It occurs to me that most of these "rights" have been identified in research and in good common sense as factors of growth into positive, healthy, productive students and citizens. This being the case, should it not be a "right" I thought, that each child in America be assured of no less?

Could not the United States of America, the richest and most powerful nation in the history of the world not assure this Child's Bill of Rights if it was our will to do so?

And who better that AASA and NCSA I sug-

gested and am suggesting again to be champions of this cause. Who cares more, has the talents to develop ideas better, has the savvy to make the ideas know, than the kind of leaders we see amongst our colleagues? Are children's rights at the heart of our work and deliberations, or do they sometimes get lost in our work on other things?

Is it an idea whose time has come? I don't know. I have to be aware and consider as we all do:

- A Child's Bill of Rights vs. The War on Terrorism, or other wars.
- A Child's Bill of Rights vs. Federal deficits and State revenue shortfalls.
- A Child's Bill of Rights vs. tax cut

mentality and taxpayer revolts.

- A Child's Bill of Rights vs. changing demographics including the "graying of American" and ethnic shifts.

- A Child's Bill of Rights vs. efforts by some to undermine or dismantle public education, the very foundation of the key to equal rights and opportunities for every child.

- A Child's Bill of Rights vs. current trends to not support charities and with health care costs that are prohibitive to many families.

I know there are so very many reasons to say that this is a nice idea, but it is not the time. But then when it is ever going to be I wonder?

What makes me so proud to be a public school administrator is the kind of people who are in our profession. I see smart and caring people who want to make a difference. Let's then, each of us, as we consider how we work and what we do, consider our decisions and priorities against what we consider to be the rights for children, and if our budgets, priorities, and programs are such as to at least take steps towards this "idea."

And, as a professional association, as we lobby, and consider positions, let's keep the primary mission of service to kids as our primary arguing point. Pie in the sky? Perhaps, but that does not make it wrong. Maybe even, there will be a time when the rights of children is an idea whose time has come. I hope so.



TRAITS OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS

Instructional leaders must be knowledgeable and continuous learners, understand human nature and interpersonal relationships, provide support and encouragement to all stakeholders in the school, and foster a sense of possibility and high expectations for all.

In addition they must:

- Use data effectively. Review, analyze, and communicate what the data reveal and make decisions based on data.
- Build professional learning communities so teachers can learn about effective instructional and assessment practices.

ive instructional and assessment practices.

- Serve as coaches. This means being willing to step in and offer expertise in the classroom.

- Motivate staff members. Instructional leaders have to help their staff members see themselves in this mission.

(Source: "Closing the Achievement Gap: It's Everybody's Job," ASCD, January 2003, Volume 45, Number 1) 



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Calendar of Events

MARCH

12	NSASSP Region I, 5:30 p.m., Misty's	Lincoln
12	NASA Region IV, 10:00 a.m., ESU#10	Kearney
19	NASA Region V, 12:00 noon, Eagles Club	Bridgeport
20	NAESP Executive Board, 9:30 a.m. Holiday Inn Midtown	Grand Island
21	NAESP Region I, 2:00 p.m., Evelyn Hamlow Elementary	Waverly
26	NASA Region III, 9:00 a.m., Lifelong Learning Center	Norfolk
26	NAESP Region II, 9:30 a.m.	
26	NAESP Region V, 9:30 a.m., Western NE Comm. College	Sidney

APRIL

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

NSBA - April 5-8 - San Francisco, CA
 NAESP - April 12-15 - Anaheim, CA

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