

NASBO ANNOUNCES NEW PRESIDENT- ELECT-ELECT



Lewis

NASBO has selected for the new school year 2005-2006, Doug Lewis, Assistant Superintendent, Ralston Public Schools to serve as president-elect. Mr. Lewis will officially begin his duties

on the NCSA Executive Board September 1, 2005. 

INSIDE...

The Best Ideas Start on the Back of a Napkin	2
What Matters for Success	3
Executive Board Highlights	3
Back to Work after Nine Years of Retirement...How Things Have Changed!	4
Six-Trait Writing	5
Responsibilities as an Administrator How Have They Changed?	6
Frustrations of Field Study Research	7
The Leadership Debate in School Administration	8
Book Review	10
Nebraska: A Leader in Special Education	11

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.

MENTOR

by Mark Shepard, Business Manager, Fremont Public Schools;
Vice Chair, NCSA Executive Board

Mentor, The American Heritage Dictionary defines a mentor as "a wise and trusted counselor or teacher." We have along the way in our careers known and or looked up to someone we'd refer to as our mentor. If you're like me you can think of multiple mentors that have helped you along on the journey.

There are some obvious people that come to mind. A college professor, teacher, coach or supervisor. There are also some not so obvious (at the time) people that guided our careers or gave some advice that has paid its dividends over and over again.

When I think about some of the people that I consider mentors several current and retired NCSA members come to mind.

Dr. Keith Rohwer (Coach K), Dr. Dan Ernst and Dr. Jerry Sellentin are three individuals that have provided the type of guidance and leadership to myself and many others through NCSA and the Nebraska Educational Leadership Institute. Their commitment to the profession and developing individuals is outstanding. Dr. Cliff Dale is another individual that I look up to a great deal-Cliff has always been willing to help me with any question in regard to School Finance or other issues related to running the business end of a school district.

An individual that may not even realize the impact that his advice had on my life and career is Dr. Jim Ossian, professor at University of Nebraska at Kearney. Dr. Ossian at the time was the Superintendent of Schools at Waverly, he advised me that if school business management was something I was truly interested in, I should consider seeking a degree in the field, from Northern Illinois University. Northern has one of the few

programs in the country designed specifically for the Business side of School Administration. Along the same vein, Dr. Charles Sloan, a retired Professor at Northern, I view as a good friend and mentor.

In my own district Gary Bolton and Dr. David Pinkall are two individuals that I have looked up to and sought advice from on a regular basis. They have always been willing to share their point of view and helpful advice either directly or indirectly through their advice and actions. Dr. Steve Sexton, my Superintendent and friend for the past eight years is another individual that has taught me a great deal about working with employees, boards of education and the public. Many of Steve's examples of leadership are taught by doing and affording others the opportunity to grow in their positions professionally and personally.

There is one individual that has made an impact on my life, the lives of my brothers (both High School Principals), my sister (elementary assistant principal) and countless others, through his commitment to helping others through the vehicle of teaching, coaching and administration. That individual is my father, Dr. Wesley Shepard. Dad not only had, but continues to have a profound impact on everyone he comes in contact with. His commitment to the profession-but most of all young people is like none other.

At a time when the public's opinion of school administrator's is often shadowed by the action of a few individuals, these are shining examples of people that exceed the definition of "wise and trusted counselor or teacher," through their examples, words of advice and guidance. To them, I respectfully say THANK YOU!





THE BEST IDEAS START ON THE BACK OF A NAPKIN...

by Patricia Timm, State Board of Education Member

On April 20, 2005 during the 25th Excellence in Education Conference, I had the opportunity to spend the day with our children's everyday heroes, the men and women who have chosen to be professional educators.

During the day I reflected on the changes that have been made in education since I was a classroom teacher:

- The focus on student learning and believing that all children can learn.
- The identification of the individual learning style of each child.
- The changing expectations of teachers and of students.
- The standards and assessments that reflect what the citizens of the state of Nebraska believe children should meet.
- The changing faces of the children

that are walking into our classrooms.

Wonderful advancements have been made from the days of "the little red school house." However, don't throw away the napkin yet. We are not finished!

Dr. Lawrence Zelotte suggested in his keynote address that perhaps changing the name of a school building would cause people to think differently about what goes on inside. Let's expand on that thought. In the state of Nebraska, one in three students is from a low-income family; 15 percent move from school to school during the year; 5 percent are learning English as their second language in school; and 15 percent receive special education services from their school. Dr. Zelotte illustrated his thoughts on meeting a child's readiness to enter a particular classroom by say-

ing "each child needs a flight plan based on real time and real circumstances and that flight plan will need to be adjusted continually or the trip may not be completed successfully."

We need to give ourselves the permission to customize the delivery of education and place kids at their readiness level instead of concentrating on the processes of education. Imagine if you will, a circular building where centers of learning (not boxes with enclosed classrooms) overlap, encouraging the integration of curriculum with a schedule that provides blocks of learning time. As an adult in the workforce, we do not move from office to office when the bell rings. Nor do we work on a project for 20 to 30 minutes and then move on to another without finishing the first.

Children with a vocabulary level of 500 words may walk into a center where they receive more guided practice with instant feedback. High ability learners may walk into a center where they can explore the music, art and literature of a specific period in history and the effect it had on our society. All children would experience and understand the relationship between subject areas and the transition from learning level to learning level would be fluid.

I am not advocating a six year old learning to read in the same learning center as a 15 year old. Children must also develop in an appropriate social and emotional environment. However, if we believe that every child should have the opportunities that constitute an essential education then we must provide them with a learning atmosphere that accepts them at their readiness level. As leaders in education we must develop the strategies that support the development of a generation of students who meet or exceed the essential skills that allows for economic self-sufficiency, thus supporting the economy of our state.

Given the opportunity, children will succeed. Oops, we need another napkin!



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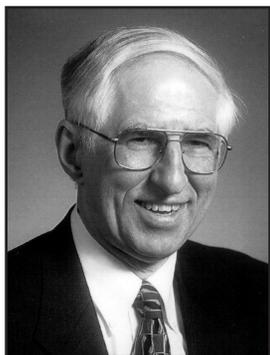
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PERSPECTIVES

by Jerry Sellentin, Ph.D., Executive Director



Sellentin

WHAT MATTERS FOR SUCCESS?

As the 2004-05 school year comes to a close I have been thinking of what message I want to give. As I travel the state and visit with school administrators, I know closing the achievement gap and raising grades is a top priority. Meeting the proficiency requirements of No Child Left Behind legislation as well as state standards, have been challenging. Without a doubt school administrators, as leaders of learning, have provided the leadership to raise the bar for the success of all students. I believe the following anonymous message brings out a very important factor that, as leaders of learning, you care about the success of others.

A few years ago, at the Seattle Special Olympics, nine contestants, all physically or mentally challenged assembled at the starting line for the 100-yard dash. At the gun, they all started out, not exactly in a dash, but with a goal to run the race

to the finish and win. All, that is, except one little boy who stumbled on the asphalt, tumbled over a couple of times and began to cry. The other eight heard the boy cry. They slowed down and looked back. Then they all turned around and went back. Every one of them. One girl with Down's syndrome bent down and kissed him and said, "This will make it better." Then all nine linked arms and walked together to the finish line. Everyone in the stadium stood, and the cheering went on for several minutes. People who were there are still telling the story. They say they'll never forget it. Why? Because, deep down we know this one thing. What matters in this life is more than winning for ourselves. What matters in this life is helping others win, even if it means slowing down and changing our course.

As a leader of learning, what was accomplished in your school this past year that you believe made a difference? What changes did you make this past year that moved your school from good to great? Were there challenges that changed the direction of the school

improvement plan to help achieve success for all students? Did your school work as a "team" with the student or students who needed extra help to continue in the race for school achievement? I hope the 2004-2005 school year has been a "great" one and as you plan for 2005-2006 it will be even better.

MEMBERSHIP

You can renew your 2005-06 membership online. The membership year is September 1 to August 31.

ADMINISTRATORS' DAYS

August 3-5 in Kearney. You can register online.

An achievement gap existed long before NCLB – Do we solve the gap by testing???? 

EXECUTIVE BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

The NCSA Executive Board met on April 6, 2005, at the NCSA offices in Lincoln.

- Motion was made to increase mileage expense from 30 cents to the federal rate currently and to increase the per diem from \$35 to \$45 effective immediately. Motion Carried.
- Al Inzerello was elected chair and Troy Loeffelholz was elected vice chair of the NCSA Executive Board
- Annual performance appraisal of Jerry Sellentin was completed.

- Motion to extend Jerry Sellentin, Executive Director's contract for an additional two years. Motion Carried.
- 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.

NCSA Summer Hours

June 1-August 1

Monday-Thursday
8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Friday
8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.



BACK TO WORK AFTER NINE YEARS OF RETIREMENT...HOW THINGS HAVE CHANGED!

by Fred Bellum, Superintendent, Columbus Public Schools

I have been asked to share my thoughts as I entered the Superintendency after nine years in retirement. It was nice to be asked to return to the position that I held for twenty-two years. I have enjoyed the renewal of friendships and working relationships with the Columbus Public School Staff that I enjoyed for so many years. It was heart-warming to be greeted and welcomed by the staff. It was interesting to again attend Administrators' Days and the Board/Supt. Conference in Omaha. I have enjoyed being part of the Greater Nebraska Superintendents group. As you can tell, I felt good about returning to the superintendency.

This is not to say that I didn't have some serious doubts about my ability to take on the many tasks that are required in the job. My wife, Renee, and I had a few long talks about what would have to change in our lifestyle, and if I had the energy to last a year in the position. She did not encourage me to take the job, but once I made up my mind to do so, she has been most helpful and supportive.

I have been very active during my retirement doing volunteer work. I serve as a National Operational Volunteer with the Girl Scouts USA. In this role I evaluate Girl Scout Councils and do Board training. I am a member of the AARP State Executive Board. I serve on the Board of Trustees of the University of Sioux Falls and have many commitments in Columbus. Life in retirement can be very busy and rewarding. When you work for nothing, you become very popular. Because of these activities I was somewhat prepared for the workload.

Now what did I find to be the same or different as I started back into the job? Well my desk, chair and the telephone were the same. A number of office procedures were still the same, but other than that most things have changed.

I have been involved in public education in some manner for sixty years as a student, teacher, or administrator. This longevity has given me observation that few current working people have. I don't know how much value this has, but it does

give me insights that may be of interest to others. I am not dismayed or encouraged by all that has happened over the years, but only pass on my opinion of what has happened.

Since the mid '60s there have been so many programs mandated by the Federal and State Governments that it is hard to keep track of them or even to remember them. Some have helped students, and some have had no effect on learning. All have taken time, money, and effort. In many cases resources have been taken away from the very students who most need help. Overall, it is my perception that having the Federal and State Governments try to solve local education concerns has had limited success.

All schools are now implementing the Federal Program entitled No Child Left Behind. Also, the schools in Nebraska are implementing the State Standards Assessment. Both programs demand much testing and record keeping. I have been encouraged by the quality of work that is being done in the School District in the use of data and the sophistication that the staff has shown in using the data to improve instruction and student learning. The ability level of the staff and the use of computers have made this possible. While both programs have good points and the intent is good I am afraid that the programs will collapse because of the excessive time, money and data that has to be dealt with to comply with the dictates of the programs. Also, NCLB is under funded and this has caused a number of States to try to opt out of the program.

Much is being written about needed changes in the No Child Left Behind. Some changes could improve the law. As I view the program, it seems to be a simple political solution to a very complex problem. The intent is noble, but the method is flawed. The program will identify the student who is left behind, but does little to assist schools in addressing the needs of the student. That will take resources, which in this day of limited resources, will cause School Boards and

school staffs to make some very difficult decisions. Who will lose and who will gain? This will be interesting to watch when I am again retired.

The thing that most amazed me as I started work was the tension in the District. Everyone seemed to be uptight about test scores and fear of being identified as a school that was failing. This was true of central office staff, principals and teachers. The next thing I noticed was the workload that was placed on everyone. Testing, school improvement plans, individual growth plans, ESL programs, and all the normal things that go on in a school district. I decided early on that I could not get on top of all of the programs that were in place. I concentrated on the day-to-day operations of the district, the High School building program, the District's Strategic Plan, and working with the Administrative Team. Therefore, any thoughts I have on the Superintendency are somewhat limited.

The first thing I noticed was the quality of administrators in the District. They are outstanding and totally committed to quality education. The Columbus Public Schools Board of Education is committed to quality schools and academic achievement and do not hesitate to supply the resources necessary to reach their goal. As always, the teaching and support staff in CPS is very good. All of these factors have made my job very rewarding. I look forward to coming to work every day.

Yes, I still find the Superintendency very rewarding and exciting. I don't understand why more young people are not moving into school administration. Where else in society can one do so much good, never be bored, and have good financial rewards? I would encourage any young person to give consideration to a career in school administration.

This has been a great year in my life and I now know how much I have missed being a Superintendent. However, like all things it must end, and I will be content to again be retired. I will miss you all.





SIX-TRAIT WRITING

by Justin Wagner, Assistant Principal, South Sioux City High School

How? How does excellence happen? What are its ingredients, and when do you know when you've achieved it? Once there, how do you duplicate the formula from year to year? Who knows if or when excellence will happen again?

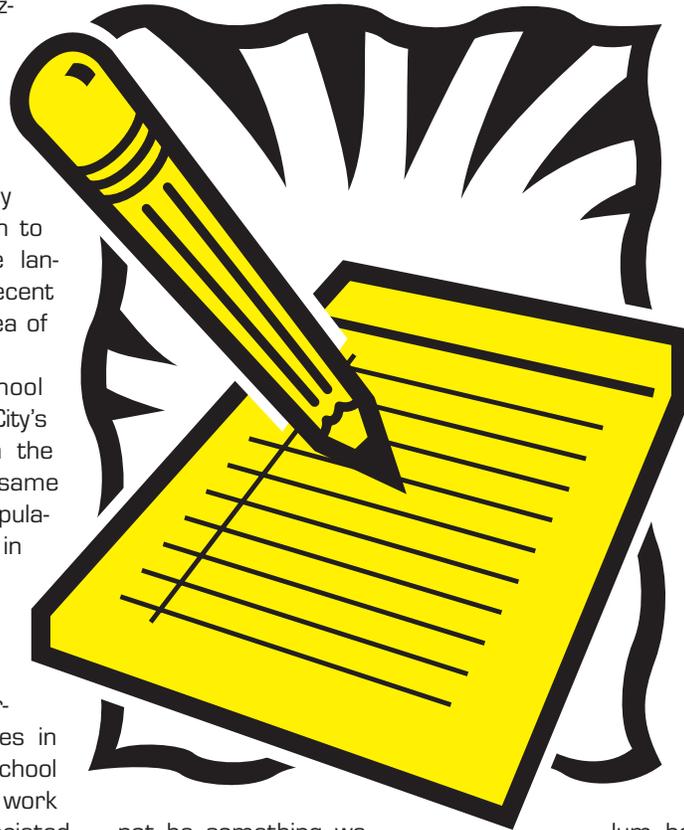
Rarely does excellence seem to associate itself with a 5'8" teacher, gazing over lowly positioned reading spectacles, approaching retirement. However, that is exactly the face excellence takes in education at South Sioux City High School. I have been honored to play a small part in this school's path to excellence specifically within the language arts department and its recent assessment successes in the area of six-trait writing.

During the 2003-2004 school year, 97 percent of South Sioux City's junior class scored proficient in the area of six-trait writing. This is the same high school that has a student population higher than the state average in special education students, ESL students, migrant students and students that qualify for free and reduced lunch rates. This is a high school that has experienced enormous cultural and ethnic changes in the past decade. This is a high school that is rooted in a blue-collar work ethic, which is often times associated with low academic ability. So, how could these students, this school, achieve at such a high level?

There are three reasons I believe we have been so effective in assessments in general, but specifically in the six-trait writing arena. First and most important is our teachers! No amount of time, effort, money or unlimited resources can make up for a quality teacher. To many of you reading this, that is not a new concept or even a novel idea. While working with teachers and creating a collaborative environment can at times prove to be both tricky and timely, the ultimate outcomes of connectedness and producing a team-oriented feel is worth the effort. As we administrators know, the collaborative leadership style does not always work. Asking for input

and feedback means, at times, not making everyone happy. However, the end result is that you get the expert opinion from the people in the trenches, and that is worth everyone's efforts.

Assessment cannot be an event; it must be a process. Six-trait writing can-



not be something we do once a year and then put back up on a shelf in a classroom. There has to be a constant and consistent focus and effort to highlight and re-mediate the writing process regardless of the class. All teachers at the high school at one time or other speak about or refer to six-trait writing and assign a writing assignment based upon their particular curriculum. All teachers are not expected to be writing experts, but the explanations and definitions concerning the six-trait writing skills are handed out to students and teachers alike. Often times our teachers take on the role of the lead learner, thus giving the students the opportunity to feel even more comfortable making mistakes and taking risks. This risk-taking [coupled with a cross-curricular attempt at focusing on the six-traits] has paid off

for us.

For example, students in our Physical Education classes may write about a sports hero. One assignment may focus on voice, just voice, and the next writing assignment they may focus on organization, both components of six-trait writing.

We encourage our non-language arts instructors not to feel inadequate if they are not writing experts. Let students try and the mere practice alone of going through the motions is paying off. Likewise, expecting our band or choir instructors to grade and give back papers on an area that is not their area of expertise would be setting them up for failure and inviting the teachers to revolt. But allowing teachers the autonomy of giving the assessment when they want and working through the assessment after the students complete it, at their own pace and on their own time, has provided ownership and empowerment to expert teachers that regardless of their content areas, have simply connected with kids.

Giving students an opportunity to write across the curriculum helps to reinforce six-trait writing and its importance. These expert teachers are in Spanish, language arts, math, band and truly transcend the curriculum. These teachers focus on creating relationships, thus knowing and being an expert in the six-trait area is not a fundamental piece to this assessment puzzle.

Slowly, what we have found is that the third reason we are having success in the six-trait area is due to simply emphasizing its importance. We focus on the six-trait writing assessments and skills through a district-wide effort in which all teachers teach six-trait lessons. We stress its importance through highlighting the fact that when the six-trait scores come back from the state, it is not just the language arts department who should feel good. Everyone who teaches

(continued on page 7)



RESPONSIBILITIES AS AN ADMINISTRATOR HOW HAVE THEY CHANGED?

by Brad Cabrera, Superintendent, Sutton Public Schools

Nineteen years ago I accepted my first position as an administrator, a position as a secondary principal and athletic director, and eight years later I became a Superintendent, a position that I have held for the past eleven years. During these nineteen years things have changed and the challenges have grown, but I have never regretted the decision to pursue a career as an administrator.

After fifteen years as a secondary teacher and coach I decided that I wanted to become a high school principal and in 1986 I accepted a position as secondary principal and athletic director. As I began that first year as a principal, I can remember telling the staff that within ten years they would no longer be qualified for their teaching position if they did not learn to utilize the computer, because computer technology was not at the same level as it is today. Nineteen years later, as I reflect back on that statement, computers have become an integral tool for both teachers and administrators. Most, if not all schools, have computer networks and daily communications between teachers and administrators are conducted through the computer system. In addition to communications, administrators utilize the computer and computer networks to maintain student records, schedule classes, complete supply requisitions and process purchase orders, and now almost all state reports are via the internet. Skills utilizing technology have become necessary for administrators and the technological skills necessary to perform educational duties will continue to increase. For the young administrator, one who has grown up with technology,

this is the simple part of the job but for others it is a challenge to keep up with the advancements in technology. Even though nineteen years have passed since I first informed teachers that they must learn to use computers, we are still striving to provide technology in-service to teachers; this is often a challenge because we have such a varying degree

Becoming a school administrator has been a rewarding experience. What could be better than helping guide young people through one of the most important times of their lives, their education? We must all remember that every career begins right here, in our schools; as administrators, we have an important job and we must always remember that we are in this for the kids. Every decision we make must be based upon, "What is best for the kids?"

of skills on our teaching staff. The utilization of the computer, internet, and computer software has been one of the fastest moving changes that I have experienced and the cost of keeping up with hardware and software is often referred to as the "technology black hole."

Although the computer has helped to reduce the time that is necessary to complete administrative duties, additional responsibilities have been added. No Child Left Behind (NCLB) has filtered down from the federal government to the state and NCLB has created a high stakes atmosphere for student assess-

ment. Along with the actual assessment of student learning, administrators, primarily principals, have been required to add to their leadership role the responsibility of developing and reporting student assessment data. My prediction is that the responsibility of reporting student assessment data will become greater and the stakes will be even higher because those that do not understand student assessments will utilize the data to compare schools, something that is a misuse of data. More accountability will be required of administrators as they evaluate the data and develop school improvement plans, and the success of administrators will depend to some degree on their ability to utilize assessment data.

A third major change in the responsibility of administrators is in the area of school finance. Eleven years ago, when I planned my first school budget, it was a matter of determining the cost of offering the educational programs expected by the community and weighing the program cost against the cost to the taxpayer. Today, with state property tax levy caps and expenditures

Superintendents and Boards are often required to obtain voter approved property tax levy overrides so the needs of students can be met. Administrators of school districts that do not receive adequate state funds and cannot pass property tax levy overrides must provide their Boards of Education with recommendations as to what professional staff can be eliminated, an action that diminishes the educational opportunities for kids. Yes, school finance has become a challenge, and the development of a plan to balance the budget is challenging for the person

(continued on page 11)



FRUSTRATIONS OF FIELD STUDY RESEARCH

by Jim Koontz, Superintendent of Schools, Newman Grove

After two years of work and research, I recently finished my field study which is the final step in the process of completing the Educational Specialist Degree at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. When one begins doing a project of such magnitude, they soon find out that Dr. Jim Ossian's comments in the field study manual at UNK are correct. Internal questions abound: "Am I capable? How much time will it take? Is it worth the effort?"

After convincing oneself that one is indeed capable and it is worth the effort, the research begins and one starts to develop a research instrument or survey. The survey should be the easiest part of the entire study. One develops questions they are seeking answers to, questions that may certainly improve the educational field or the researchers particular school. However, the survey is where the real frustration exists.

Some one hundred surveys were sent to randomly selected administrators in hopes of soliciting honest responses. However, as my surveys were returned, I found that some had actually changed

questions or added choices for answers that I hadn't used. One administrator even returned the survey to me (in the self-addressed, stamped envelope, I might add) without answering a single question. His explanation for not participating in my research was basically because the survey did not meet his criteria!

Probably the most disappointing aspect of the study were the people that chose not to help in my research. At least I understood why the one survey was returned unanswered. However, the other 22 would certainly have helped in my study. What would I have done had each of the 100 selected people decided, for whatever reason, to not participate? Who better understands what a fellow administrator goes through in an advanced program, than those who themselves have done the same thing? It certainly shouldn't be too much to ask fellow administrators to have the consideration to take the time to assist "one of their own" in achieving one's goals of study and research.

If you have set surveys aside in the

past, or worse yet, tossed them in the trash, please reconsider the next time you receive one. Take the time to fill the instrument out, return it, and provide your professional assistance and expertise to the student. We are educators and are trying to better ourselves and the system we work in. Surely that is worth a few minutes of your time. For those of you that took the time and helped me, please accept my sincerest thanks! 🙏

Six-Trait Writing

(continued from page 5)

at the high school had a role in the success. We practice six-trait lessons and writing papers. We highlight how each teacher is a teacher, not just an art teacher or a band teacher, but a teacher. We discuss in meetings with our juniors how we are competing against the state and ultimately other states across the country. We understand that we have specific hurdles within our student population that others might look at as detrimental to a process that ultimately says every student is equal. We overstate that we embrace those hurdles that to us these are not hurdles, and that they are catapults to success. We know that walking down this sometimes thorny road of assessment can be daunting, but together it is elevating, especially if we are all walking down the road as one.

The 2003-2004 six-trait writing scores at South Sioux City High School prove that success is a journey not a destination. That journey begins in mid-August and ends in mid-May. We also know that if for some unforeseen reason our scores are not as high in the following years, our processes are correct. And, with experts in the classroom leading the way and a motivated student body, anything is possible. Things have not always been perfectly welcomed with open arms here, probably not unlike any other school instituting or implementing change. But at the end of the day, after this complaint or that complaint (which most of the time are warranted) the climate is of a family, a family that sticks together through good times and the bad. 🙏

Bennington Public Schools to Accept Bids on Modular Classroom Buildings

Notice is hereby given that the Bennington Public Schools is extending an invitation for sealed bids for the sale of five (5) modular classroom buildings.

Said bids will be received, in sealed envelopes (along with a check or money order for the amount of bid for cash purchase) displaying the words "Modular Classroom Bid(s)" plainly marked on the outside of the envelope, at the office of the Superintendent, Bennington Public Schools, Bennington, Nebraska, until 11:00 a.m., May 11, 2005. Bids will be publicly opened and read in the presence of the Superintendent and a School Board member on same date.

The Board reserves the right to accept or reject each proposal, and each proposal that does not comply with the bidding requirements will be rejected.

Specifications and bidding information shall be obtained at the office of the Superintendent, Bennington Public Schools, 11620 North 156 Street, Bennington, NE 68007. Phone: 402-238-3044 Fax: 402-238-2185



THE LEADERSHIP DEBATE IN SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

by Frank Adams, Wayne State College; and Dan DePasquale, Norfolk Public Schools

The Debate

The week of March 15, 2005 proved to be an exciting time for school administrators all across the United States. Arthur Levine, president of Teachers College at Columbia University, issued a scathing report criticizing educational leadership programs across the country. His report, "Educating School Leaders" focused on the preparation of school administrators.

Generally, the report says that programs preparing elementary and secondary leadership range from "inadequate to appalling." School leadership programs, he indicates, are dumbed down, contain inappropriate coursework, contain disjointed curricula and are taught by unskilled college faculty members. Finally, he concludes, the Ed.D. degree should be eliminated. Levine, in the report, proposes several recommendations (*Executive Summary*, p. 5). He states, first, eliminate the incentives that favor low-quality programs; second, set and enforce minimum standards of quality; and third, redesign educational leadership programs.

Over 40 percent of the current building principals and superintendents will be leaving their job in the next decade. Reflecting upon this grim statistic, the report indicated that schools of education should reform their educational leadership programs immediately. Additionally, the report stated that too many students in the educational leadership programs "... are more interested in salary bumps than they are in getting a good education."

Needless to say, this report is causing a debate that many scholars and practitioners have joined: Wise (NCATE), Young (UCEA), Crow (U. of Utah), Orr (Teachers College, Columbia University), Ogawa (AERA), Creighton (NCPEA), and Ranbom, et al (Education School Project). Art Wise stated, "Neither the education profession nor the states are yet as serious about quality assurance for education leader or teacher prepara-

tion programs as they should be. ... When we begin to do that, then we can fulfill the promise that these preparation programs have the potential to deliver" (2005).

The Response

The debate initiated from the March 2005 report has been joined by many scholars, practitioners, politicians, teachers, and students. We have organized the responses to the report utilizing the following format:

1. All or nothing – Many groups hold that the report goes too far in lumping together all leadership programs; many colleges and universities have sought and have gained accreditation under tough, voluntary standards. Imig (AACTE) said that schools have taken steps to raise their standards in recent years. Any additional changes, Imig said, would require more public and private spending on training; emerging principals should have a chance to do a full-time internship and learn from mentors.

2. No degree – Current school districts should give salary increases based on the new skills employees can demonstrate. Not presenting new credentials earned appears to be a radical recommendation. Levine's report did not thoroughly investigate the issue at hand; a number of high quality programs already exist. These programs recruit committed and skilled educators, usually in cooperation with school districts and school administrators into leadership programs.

3. Questionable research – The research itself and the basis upon which the conclusions were drawn, show significant weaknesses. These weaknesses raise important concerns about the soundness of the research data, its analysis and interpretation and the conclusions drawn (Young, et al, 2005).

4. The programs – A failure to grasp the basics of quality preparation has negatively affected the report's ability to adequately explain "how to develop a

roadmap to successful program reform." Without these basics, it is difficult to present a logical argument for reform.

The Effect on Nebraska

Following some discussion with our peers, we propose some initial questions in order to frame the debate that will involve all of the administrators across Nebraska. We do not assume that these are the only questions to be asked; however, we would like to initiate the discussion with the following questions and some suggestions.

1. Evaluation – What are the schools of education in Nebraska doing to evaluate their programs? How are they using this information to improve, change, or modify these programs?

2. Building communication – Have the schools of education, the colleges, and the universities built strong connections to the school districts to ensure they are providing the skills and training needed to perform their jobs in a competent manner? What specifically have both the schools of education and the school districts done to build that communication, or establish that communication link?

3. Nebraska standards – What has the State of Nebraska done to increase the standards for administrative degree programs? Along with the standards being created, how have these standards been implemented? What has been the effect of using standards in the preparation of administrators?

4. Alignment – Do standards advocated by NCATE, NCTE, ELLC, and INTASC positively affect the quality of the student graduating from the degree program?

Summary and Recommendation

The Levine study raises serious questions and should be cause for reflection on how graduate schools organize their school leadership programs. The Nebraska Council on Teacher Education

(continued on page 10)



CONGRATULATIONS TO...

☞ **Elkhorn Valley Schools** on the success of their override election

☞ **Exeter-Milligan Public Schools** on the success of their override election

☞ **Chris Stogdill**, Elementary Principal, Stanton Public Schools, who has received the H.O. Sargent award as an individual who promotes diversity in agricultural education and FFA

☞ **Tom Sharpe**, Superintendent, Exeter-Milligan Public Schools on receiving his doctorate

☞ **Cheryl Blue**, who will continue as an administrator with the Plattsmouth Public Schools and will become the Executive Director of Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, ASCD

☞ **Jess Wolf**, Hartington High School Principal, who was elected President of the Nebraska State Education Association, which is a full-time paid position with NSEA

☞ **Myron Sikora**, Fremont Foreign Language, appointed Assistant Principal, Fremont High School

☞ **William Fitzgerald**, Louisville Athletic Director, appointed Assistant Principal and Activities Director, Fremont High School

☞ **Jackie Herink**, York Special Education Director, appointed Elementary Principal at Columbus

☞ **Robby Thompson**, Bassett Guidance Counselor, appointed Kenesaw Public Schools Principal

☞ **Mark Grove**, Southern Valley Elementary Teacher, appointed Silver Lake Public School Elementary Principal

☞ **Rita Moravek**, Assistant Principal at Alliance Middle School, appointed Principal

☞ **Michael Wentz**, Aurora Elementary Principal, appointed Elementary Principal at Imperial

☞ **Joyce Baumert**, Assistant Principal, Schuyler Central High School, appointed Principal

☞ **Darrell Barnes**, Principal, Stanton Elementary School, appointed Principal Boone Central High School

☞ **Kristen Uhrmacher**, Coordinator for School Improvement at Syracuse, appointed Elementary Principal, St. Paul Public Schools

☞ **Steve Wichman**, Assistant Principal, Kearney Public Schools, appointed High School Principal

☞ **Randall Klooz**, Principal, Franklin High School, appointed Principal Plainview High School

☞ **Elizabeth Ericson**, Centennial Public Schools teacher, appointed Sutton Elementary Principal

☞ **Caryn Zietlow**, Hemingford Elementary Principal, appointed North Bend Elementary Principal

☞ **Jadi Miller**, Hastings Public Schools Curriculum Coordinator, appointed Grants Coordinator with Lincoln Public Schools

☞ **Randy Page**, Elementary Principal, Malcolm Public Schools, appointed Superintendent, Cross County Public Schools

☞ **Daniel Keyser**, Cambridge High School teacher, appointed Principal of Cambridge High School

☞ **Andy Luebbe**, Columbus Public Schools, appointed Principal of Madison Elementary School

☞ **Bruce Johnson** from Sioux City Iowa, appointed Superintendent of Homer Public Schools

☞ **Barry Limoges**, Superintendent, Medicine Valley Public Schools will also be Superintendent of Maywood Public Schools

☞ **Joan Reznicek**, Superintendent, Red Cloud Public School, who has been appointed by the Governor to the Nebraska Professional Practices Commission

☞ **Jay Bellar**, Superintendent, Battle Creek Public Schools, who has been reappointed by the Governor for another term on the Professional Practices Commission

☞ **Bill McAllister**, Concordia College, Seward, appointed West Holt Superintendent

☞ **Cynthia Osterlon**, Elementary Principal at Papillion-LaVista, appointed Louisville High School Principal

☞ **Brian Tonniges**, Geneva teacher, appointed Fillmore Middle School Principal

☞ **Trent Steele**, Assistant Principal at Beatrice, appointed Kearney High School Assistant Principal

☞ **Ryan Ricenbaw**, Waverly teacher, appointed Waverly High School Assistant Principal

☞ **Mark Norvell**, Southwest Superintendent, appointed Fillmore Central Superintendent

☞ **David Hendricks**, retired School Administrator, appointed Southwest Superintendent

☞ **Jenise Straight**, ESU #9, appointed Director of Special Education

☞ **Lisa Muff**, ESU #9, appointed Professional Development Director

☞ **Larry Fox**, ESU #9, appointed Director of Financial Services

☞ **Nebraska's 23,618 K-12 teachers, NCSA recognizes you on May 3, National Teacher Day and every day of the year for your outstanding work and dedication for the success of students in Nebraska's K-12 schools**



Book Review by Ron Joekel

EIGHT HABITS OF THE HEART

Written by Clifton Taulbert

Penguin Books, ISBN 0-1402.6676 3 (1997)

I recently participated in a conference where one of the speakers was Clifton Taulbert, whose topic, according to the program, was *Eight Habits of the Heart*. I thought here we go again with another one of those “quick fix” speeches with eight cookbook steps to success! Boy was I wrong! Clifton Taulbert shared with us memories and experiences as a youth growing up in the segregated South. His moving message and memorable lessons were learned as an African American growing up in the delta of Mississippi. His message (and really what the book is about) can be summarized with the theme of embracing the values that build strong families and communities.

Although the book is a “quick read” of 127 pages, it is filled with poignant stories of how family and community shaped his life during a period of poverty and segregation. Taulbert shares personal experiences with his parents, relatives and neighbors and the greater community that he calls the eight habits of the heart. The eight basic principles he learned from his elders are: A Nurturing Attitude, Dependability, Responsibility, Friendship, Brotherhood, High Expectations, Courage, and Hope. Now I know that you are probably thinking that none of the eight are new or revolutionary, and you are correct, but the manner in which he weaves in personal stories of his youth about each of the eight habits is truly heart warming. Here is an individual who is not seeking “pity” or carrying a “chip on his shoulder,” but someone who speaks from the heart

and presents a message reinforcing the role of values, family, relatives, neighbors and the community.

Taulbert emphasizes that “community” is more than a geographical designation be it is much bigger with consequences far beyond the place where we first experienced the touch of others in our lives. He believes it is really the “touch” that defines community in every age. He begins with a description of how his parents, relatives, friends and neighbors gave him the best of what they had and the emphasis was on nurturing their children (and each other) to build a community for their dreams. He explained how the “front porch people” of the Mississippi Delta built community. He adroitly shares personal stories of the people who helped shape his life and explains how they lived out in their daily lives the habits that created a good community. The eight habits, as he relates as he lived them out, are timeless and universal, ideals that are not held captive by race, gender, or geography.

The author reinforces that the eight habits are not just “words” but they are the essence of building a community. According to Taulbert, leadership is more than just “being out front” with a plan and authority, it is the ability to draw others into the vision and how to maintain and develop it by bringing others along. He believes the power of community begins with the IU factor (Intentional Unselfishness) and if everyone brings IU you get the power of community. A community has the power to motivate its members to exceptional performance and provides the climate in which great things happen.

After returning from the conference I sought bookstores to purchase the paperback book and did some research on Clifton Taulbert. I found that he was the author of a book titled, “Once Upon a Time When We Were Colored,” which

became the basis for a critically acclaimed feature film. He also was a Pulitzer nominee for, “The Last Train North,” and “Watching Our Crops Come In.”

If you are looking for something to read while traveling and want something to read that is light, humorous, and really does have a point, I recommend the book to you. It helped my understanding of what it was like to “grow up” in the Mississippi Delta and more importantly, a message that is important for us as educators to build strong communities.



The Leadership Debate...

(continued from page 8)

has worked hard to ensure Nebraska educators are provided quality administrative programs and the recommendations of the Levine study will provide additional input into what makes a good school leadership program.

We propose that administrators and schools of education should:

1. initiate debate in many different forums across the State of Nebraska about the current state of educational leadership programs;
2. develop procedures and methods for providing feedback to both educators and colleges; we need to exchange information, ideas, and suggestions for all to access; and finally,
3. be active. Do we need to change what we do to prepare educational leaders? Do we need more assessments on what we do? How can schools and schools of education become more interactive? Should we begin a dialog on K-16 education?





NEBRASKA: A LEADER IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

by Linda Douglas, Director of Special Education, Lincoln Public Schools

In my opinion, Nebraska has always been a leader in providing special education services for students with disabilities. This overall leadership has been almost totally provided by the Nebraska Department of Education, Special Populations Office. There are schools in Lincoln Public Schools that have provided services to students who have orthopedic impairments, vision impairments, or hearing impairments for the past 50+ years. There certainly were no laws to require districts to provide these services when these programs were implemented. These services were provided because there were students who needed the services and it was the right thing to do. There were many similar programs across the state in the 1960s, at least ten years before the initial special education law was passed. Nebraska both encouraged and supported the implementation of these programs by providing both guidance and funding.

In 1975, when Congress passed the federal law for special education, public schools were required to provide a Free Appropriate Public Education for students with disabilities. Lincoln Public Schools, as well as other districts across our state, quickly began to implement the law. I was principal at Hawthorne Elementary School in Lincoln Public Schools at that time. Services for students with mental handicaps were already provided in public schools. The students who were verified as having multiple disabilities were served in community programs. During the fall of 1976, we planned and implemented the program for elementary students with multiple disabilities at Hawthorne. The Nebraska Department of Education Special Populations Office was most helpful in providing consultation, guidance, funding, etc. as students with more significant disabilities were served in public schools.

In 1979, Nebraska again was a leader

by passing a law that mandated that school districts across the state provide services for children below age 5 years who were verified with moderate disabilities. This law was required of public schools and was voluntary for participation by families. Nebraska was one of the few states to pass the law, especially for children below age three years. In Lincoln Public Schools, we planned the Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) program during the 1979-80 school year and implemented it in the fall of 1980. These programs have now been in existence across the state for more than 25 years. Today, Nebraska has implemented the Primary Service Provider Model for delivering services to young children and their families in their natural environments. This is an innovative model that emphasizes coaching practices between the family and the service provider.

The Special Populations Department at NDE has always encouraged districts to be innovative in their approach to serving students with disabilities. Again, several years ago, Lincoln Public Schools planned and implemented inclusive practices for students and encouraged all students to attend their neighborhood schools. Professional development has been provided for staff members to assist them to plan and implement inclusive practices within their classrooms. Today, the vast majority of students with disabilities attend their neighborhood schools and are included in general education classes where they can be successful.

Another innovation in which the Special Populations office has provided guidance is in the "Response to Intervention" process in the verification of students with specific learning disabilities. Three (3) districts across the state were given permission to begin studying this process even prior to the re-authorization of IDEA in 2004. This innovation

will assist the entire state in implementing this practice in a more organized manner when IDEA 2004 is implemented.

In 1999, when districts across the state were exploring the use of web-based IEPs to assure that teachers access the web in recording student IEPs, the NDE Special Populations Office exhibited leadership in planning and developing the Student Record System, making certain that all included forms comply with both federal and state laws. This Student Record System is innovative in many ways. Each student's IEP and other relevant materials are included as a part of the SRS system. If a student transfers from one district to another, the student file can be transferred immediately. Parents also have access to their child's finalized IEP and multi-disciplinary evaluation materials as a part of the SRS system. The web-based Student Record System is now implemented in 86 percent of the districts across Nebraska.

Another way in which Nebraska has been a leader in special education is through the different ways of funding. The allocation of IDEA Enrollment and Poverty funds has helped districts provide services for students with disabilities that could not otherwise be provided. The flexibility for the use of these funds has been deeply appreciated by districts across the state. Lincoln Public Schools utilized these funds to work with a construction class at one of our high schools to build a duplex for students in our special education program who are 18-21 years of age. Today, we have a beautiful duplex "built by students, for students" in which our students learn and practice those independent living skills in a natural environment.

These are just a few examples of the fantastic leadership that Nebraska has provided throughout the years for students with disabilities!



RETIREMENTS...

- ☞ **Tom Fortune**, Lincoln Public Schools,
- ☞ **Ruth Gnuse**, Elkhorn Public Schools
- ☞ **Steve Srb**, Papillion-LaVista
- ☞ **Connie Baxter**, Papillion-LaVista
- ☞ **Terri Walters**, South Sarpy School #46,
- ☞ **Linda Douglas**, Lincoln Public Schools
- ☞ **Lon Bernth**, Ralston Public Schools
- ☞ **Derald Morgan**, Alliance Public Schools

UPCOMING EVENTS...

June 3

Balance Leadership: What 30 Years of Research Tells us about the Effect of Leadership on Student Achievement

8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

The Lodge at Wilderness Ridge - Lincoln, NE

For more information about the summer conference contact www.nascd.esu6.org

June 6-9

Nebraska Career and Technical Education Conference

Holiday Inn - Kearney

For more information please visit www.nceconference.com

August 3-5

Administrators' Days

Holiday Inn - Kearney

For more information on any of these conferences or to register online please visit www.ncsa.org

Mark Your Calendars!
Administrators' Days 2005
August 3-5
Holiday Inn - Kearney

SYMPATHY...

- ☞ **Jack Price**, North Platte Public Schools, Curriculum & Instruction Director, on the death of his wife
- ☞ **Scott Maline**, Superintendent, Minden Public Schools, on the death of his mother-in-law

Responsibilities...

(continued from page 6)

responsible for the budget, normally the Superintendent.

Other duties that have always been the responsibilities of administrators continue to be present: evaluating staff, communicating with parents, developing policies, dealing with discipline, articulating curriculum and hiring staff. Yes there are many responsibilities, more than I ever imagined, but there will always be a place for individuals with high morals, a strong work ethic, and a desire to help kids reach their potential.

Even with the added responsibilities that face principals and superintendents I have no regrets for my career path; I would do it all over again. Becoming a school administrator has been a rewarding experience. What could be better than helping guide young people through one of the most important times of their lives, their education? We must all remember that every career begins right here, in our schools; as administrators, we have an important job and we must always remember that we are in this for the kids. Every decision we make must be based upon, "What is best for the kids?" Are the hours long and the challenges great? Yes, but without the direction of a dedicated administrator many of our kids would never reach their potential. When we look at the many success stories of the students with whom we work, we quickly realize that it is worth all the time and stress that we give.

I encourage any dedicated educator to pursue a career as a school administrator, but only if they are ready to make a sacrifice of time and energy, they are not easily discouraged, and they truly care about kids. Those of us who have pursued this career realize that we are not in this alone; a strong network of professionals is there to help. This network includes NCSA, which provides a variety of professional growth activities for current and aspiring administrators. By utilizing the available network of professionals an individual can become a successful administrator. 



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Calendar of Events

MAY

13	NASES Region III	12:00 p.m.	Sports Denn	Norfolk
18	NAESP Region II	5:30 p.m.	Kobe Steakhouse	Omaha

JUNE

6-9	NCE Conference	8:00 a.m.	Holiday Inn	Kearney
8	NCSA Executive Board	8:00 a.m.	NCSA	Lincoln
9	NSASSP Executive Board	10:00 a.m.	Governor's Mansion	Lincoln
9	NAESP Executive Board	10:00 a.m.	NCSA	Lincoln

NSDLAF+ NOTES #24



The Nebraska School District Liquid Asset Fund + currently provides a Money Market Fund and the ability to invest in a variety of fixed income investments.

The Board of Trustees of the Nebraska School District Liquid Asset Fund + will soon be sending an email to all school superintendents, ESU administrators and business managers requesting participation in a survey to determine interest in possible changes or additions to the financial services provided.

Links to the survey will be provided on the NCSA home page.

For assistance in cash-flow and financial management for your school district, educational service unit or community college, contact Cliff Dale, Senior Marketing Representative, PFM Asset Management LLC, 402-483-1678, or dalec@pfm.com

RENEW YOUR NCSA MEMBERSHIP ON-LINE NOW!

Continuing with the 2005/2006 membership year, you may renew your NCSA membership online. We hope this will be as beneficial and convenient for you as it is for NCSA. We have made the process as simple and user-friendly as possible. At the NCSA website, just click on the Membership Card image shown on the web page. Then click on Membership Form. You may then choose either DOWNLOAD membership form or COMPLETE ONLINE membership form (this is the preferred method). Be sure to print a copy of the form to submit to your accounting department. Then send your payment to NCSA and your membership will be renewed! Please remember that we cannot activate your membership until we receive your payment. If you have any questions about this process, please e-mail julie@ncsa.org, or call her at (800) 793-6272. Go to www.ncsa.org to renew online now!

2005 Administrators' Days

August 3rd - August 5th

Holiday Inn

Kearney, Nebraska

Wednesday, August 3rd

- ▶ Nebraska Department of Education Day

Thursday, August 4th (Registration at Holiday Inn)

- ▶ Keynote Speakers
Douglas Reevesl, Center for Performance Assessment
Todd Whitaker, Indiana State University
- ▶ Distinguished Speakers
Guadalupe Quintanilla, Cross Cultural Communications
Tom Roth,

Friday, August 5th

- ▶ Keynote Presentations
- ▶ Richard Pimentel, Milt Wright & Associates
- ▶ Wavelength - A Funny Thing Happened Leaving No Child Behind

Why Should I Attend?

- Keynote Speakers
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REGISTRATION FORM: 2005 Administrators' Days

August 3 - 5 - 2005 - Holiday Inn - Kearney, Nebraska

Name _____ Title: _____
Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Spouse Name(if attending): _____
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Address _____
City/State/Zip _____

PAYMENT INFORMATION:

- Check enclosed payable to NCSA
- Bill School District
- Bill me

REGISTRATION

REGISTRATION FEES (Before July 25, 2005) "Early Bird Fees"

NCSA Member	\$120	\$ _____
NDE Member	\$90	\$ _____
Non-Member Fee	\$250	\$ _____

REGISTRATION FEES (After July 25, 2005)

NCSA Member	\$150	\$ _____
NDE Member	\$110	\$ _____
Non-Member Fee	\$275	\$ _____

MEAL REGISTRATION

Thursday Luncheon	\$ 15.00	\$ _____
Friday Breakfast	\$ 14.00	\$ _____

There will be a \$50 cancelation fee after July 15th

TOTAL REGISTRATION & MEALS FEE \$ _____

(Retired Members & Students Pay Meal Fee Only)

Please mail or fax to: NCSA, 455 S. 11th Street Suite A, Lincoln, NE 68508 - Fax: 402-476-7740

NOMINATIONS BEING SOUGHT FOR NEBRASKA COUNCIL OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS' DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

The purpose of the NCSA Distinguished Service Award is to honor individuals who have rendered outstanding and unselfish service to the Nebraska Council of School Administrators and who have contributed significantly to quality education at the state and local level.

CRITERIA

- ^ YEARS OF NCSA SERVICE: Minimum of Five Consecutive Years
- ^ Active Member of NCSA at Time of Nomination
- ^ Significant Achievement in Promoting NCSA Goals and Activities
- ^ Acknowledged as a Leader at Local and State Levels

A committee composed of the past presidents of affiliate organizations will review all nominations and determine the award winner. Since the element of surprise is deemed an important aspect of the award, self-promotion or campaigning is discouraged.

Resume Summary of Nominee

Name: _____

Present Position: _____

Educational Background:

Professional Position(s) Held:

NCSA Activities/Committees/Offices:

Professional Organizations:

Significant Awards & Achievements at Local & State (National, if applicable) Level:

Attach a brief statement on why you think the nominee deserves the award.

Nomination submitted by: _____

Return by June 3, 2005 to: NCSA * 455 South 11 Street, Suite A * Lincoln, NE 68508-2105.

30 YEARS OF DISTINGUISHED SERVICE

Many people have contributed their time and efforts to the betterment of education. The following have stood out from the crowd, thereby qualifying themselves for the prestigious **NCSA Distinguished Service Award**.

PAST RECIPIENTS

1970	Howard Schroeder	1988	Russ Hicks
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1971	O. W. Kopp	1988	Norbert Schuerman
1973	Fred Wilhelms	1989	William Gogan
1973	Melvin Olson	1989	Edward Johnson
1973	Walter Beggs	1989	Larry Vontz, NDE
1974	Jerry Warner, Senator	1990	Ron Withem, Senator
1975	Barney Gyger	1990	Jim Brisson
1976	Ben Burke	1990	Ken Bird
1976	Bill Bogar	1991	Ward Sybouts
1977	Owen Knutzen	1991	Elmer Murman
1977	Lloyd Sexton	1991	Pat Beckenhauer
1977	Gerald Koch, Senator	1992	Mark Alderman
1978	Frank Lewis, Senator	1992	Jim Ossian
1978	Rosalie Farley	1993	Ron Oswald
1979	Paul Kennedy	1994	Jack Hallstrom
1979	Cliff Dale	1995	Ron Joekel
1979	Anne Campbell	1996	Ron Witt
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1984	Les George	2004	Doug Christensen
1985	Fred Bellum	2004	Polly Feis
1985	John Lammel		
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1986	Paul Baker		
1986	Bob Peterson		
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