

A LOOK BACK

by Martha Bruckner, Associate Superintendent, Millard Public Schools



Bruckner

One of the defining moments of my educational career occurred early in my career as an administrator in Ralston High School, when I met and interacted with Kelly, a feisty, red-haired sophomore who seemed to have little interest in school, and less interest in behaving in school. The fifth time I saw her in my office, for, yet another important offense, I shook my head, with the wisdom of a brand-new school administrator who was a former English teacher. I asked why she couldn't follow the simple rules of the school, and, with exasperation, I ordered her to write an essay to answer that question. Much to my astonishment, Kelly did write that essay, and it honestly changed my life.

I had been raised in a supportive, fairly close, middle class family where each of us was expected to do well in school and to set educational goals for the future. In front of me was a 15-year-old girl who had written, "sometimes the things that happen in my life drown out the teacher's words, and school just doesn't matter." I quickly learned that Kelly had lived through more in her short life than I have been through to date. I realized that I needed to care about this person more than I needed to preach to or punish her. I never forgot the lessons she taught me in the next few years as she dealt with the birth of her first son, the decision 18 months later to give him up for adoption, the suicide of her father, drug experiences for herself and others in her family, and other challenges that I still haven't experienced.

When given the opportunity to serve as president of ASCD for a year, it was the experience that I had shared with Kelly some 20 years earlier that helped create a theme for the year: Power, passion, and promise. A conference planning team of like-minded educators designed a theme to remind educators that we have the power to challenge, we need the passion to lead, and we must promise to succeed.

I. Power to Challenge. As educators, we not only have the power to challenge, but we have the obligation to challenge anything that hurts children or gets in the way of their learning or future success. ASCD encourages educators to shift their thinking to focus on the "whole child," challenging the presumption that educators can change the world without looking beyond the confines of our small world. It is time for educators to admit to the world that we can't change society alone, and that communities that look to

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TEARS? SNEERS? FEARS? OR CHEERS?

by Larry Ramaekers, President NASA, Superintendent, Aurora Public Schools



Ramaekers

Tears? Sneers? Fears? Or Cheers? Depending on the results of the vote of legislators, the outcome of a bond issue, the election of individuals to the local board of education or the amount of state aid provided, each of the foregoing reactions have been displayed by school administrators statewide. Could the results have been better? Do we now have to adapt to the change that invariably occurs? If only they could see the right path to pursue (which by the way, is my way of thinking)!

Those "seasoned" in the education profession have witnessed numerous election proposals, acts of the Unicam-

eral or board member changes that have had premonitions come true or a predicted upheaval occur. In retrospect, have those changes been to the demise of the school or has each change brought about a challenge to improve? Education has been altered by both internal and external forces since time immemorial and will continue to be for those who have been charged with the implementation of change.

Countless times each of us wished for a reference library that could be consulted each time a decision had to be made. How simple it would be to turn to the index and find the solution to the irate parent, disgruntled patron or the "right answers" to the insatiable

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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.



MEETING ESSENTIAL EDUCATION NEEDS THROUGH DISTANCE EDUCATION

By Tim Ernst, Director, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Independent Study High School

After spending 19 years as an educator in Nebraska, I was honored to be named director of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Independent Study High School (ISHS) this past March, a program I had used many times during my tenure at four Nebraska high schools. The ISHS is a program that has a long history of helping Nebraska schools, and continues to be on the cutting edge of providing high-quality distance education courses to our students.

I have spent the past several months thinking about our program and the state of education in Nebraska. After spending time talking with several administrators from across the state, the Nebraska Department of Education, and others who have their pulse on edu-

cation in the state, I truly believe the following: That, as educators, we must ensure that all Nebraska students receive an equitable opportunity at an essential education.

Doug Christensen, Commissioner of Education, spoke of this need in his 2005 Administrators' Days address. "We have kids, who, simply because they represent something other than the norms, don't get the same chances and don't get the same future. We have to change that." All schools face this challenge, whether they are rural schools combating declining enrollment numbers and consolidations, or urban schools dealing with urban sprawl and a wide range of student abilities.

Distance education can help ensure equal access to an essential education.

The Independent Study High School offers more than 100 courses in 16 subjects schools can easily add to their master schedule, as outlined in Rule 10. With everything from core, elective and Advanced Placement® courses, schools can select which courses they need to fill gaps, expand offerings and ensure students access to a high-quality education. In short, the ISHS can ensure students have the same exposure to an essential education regardless of whether they attend a rural or urban school, what part of the state they live in and what size of school they attend.

Another important trend I see continuing to grow is the increased rate in which our students are attending college after graduation. Statistics from the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Post Secondary Education indicate that 62.5 percent of Nebraska's 2004-05 graduating class attended college within 12 months of graduation. In an era where college admissions will become ever more competitive, having access to an essential education is even more critical. What better way to help students prepare for college than by offering a diverse, college-preparatory curriculum track, a track that can be enhanced with supplemental courses through distance education?

Providing equitable access to an essential education has become even more of a challenge. With state standards, Essential Education, No Child Left Behind (NCLB), teacher shortages, consolidation, budget cuts and any of the other dozens of challenges Nebraska schools face, the ISHS is your resource to ensure these roadblocks can be eliminated. All ISHS courses are written to Nebraska standards, all of our teachers are certified by the state of Nebraska and teaching in their area of endorsement and the program is accredited by the Nebraska Department of Education and the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement. The ISHS is listed under Rule 10 as an asynchronous

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

by Jerry Sellentin, Ph.D., Executive Director



Sellentin

RECOGNITION AND MAKING A DIFFERENCE

We know how important public and private recognition is especially when it comes from our peers. NCSA provides recognition in many ways to include the Distinguished Service Award, Friend of Education Award, Outstanding Elementary, Middle School, High School Principals of the Year, Outstanding Assistant Principal and New Principal of the Year, Superintendent of the Year, NASES Distinguished Administrator, Regional Administrator Recognition and of course longevity awards. Thank you notes or a pat on the back, and a message of appreciation always go a long way in recognizing others.

One of the annual responsibilities I always enjoy and look forward to is participating in the selection of the Nebraska Teacher of the Year. This year in the selection of the Nebraska Teacher of the Year for 2006 the assignment was very difficult due to the exceptional quality of the teachers who were nominated for the honor of representing not only the teaching profession but the state of Nebraska. Recipients of the 2006 awards include: Patricia Koch Johns, Lincoln High School, Lincoln Public Schools, Pamela Buchholz, Swanson Elementary, Westside Community Schools, James Campbell, Lincoln Northeast, Lincoln Public Schools, Chuck Foxhoven, Norfolk Middle School, Norfolk Public Schools, Karen Gottsch, Cambridge High School, Cambridge Public Schools, and Amy Hottovy, Centennial High School, Centennial Public Schools, Utica.

Patricia Koch Johns, a theater and oral communications teacher at Lincoln High School is the 2006 Nebraska Teacher of the Year and will be recognized at a luncheon on November 3rd at the Governor's Residence.



Dick Thomas, an exceptional leader as Executive Director of the School Administrators Association of New York State, shared the following story of "Making a Difference" with me which I believe applies to providing recognition to teachers and the education profession.

Dinner guests were sitting around the table discussing life. One man, a CEO, decided to explain the problem with education. He argued this way: "What's a kid going to learn from someone who decided his or her best option in life was to become a teacher? You know, it's true what they say about teachers: Those who can, do, and those who can't, teach. To corroborate his statement he said to another guest, Susan, you are a teacher. Be honest, what do you make?" Susan, who had a reputation for honesty and frankness, replied, "You want to know what I make? I make kids work harder than they ever thought they could. I can make a "C" student feel like the Congressional Medal of Honor and an A student feel like a slap in the face if the student didn't do his or her very best. I can make parents tremble when I call home or feel almost like they won the lottery when I tell them how well their child is progressing. You want to know what I make? I make kids wonder, I make them question, I make them criticize, I make them apologize and mean it, I make them write and I made them read, read, read. I make them show all their work in math and hide it all on their final drafts in English. I make them understand that if you have the brains then follow your heart. And if someone ever tries to judge you by what you make in money, you pay them no attention." Susan then paused. "You want to know what I make?" She said, "I make a difference. What about that?"



THANKSGIVING

In November it is tradition to celebrate Thanksgiving and to give thanks for our blessings. I would offer the following "thanks." Thank you for the work you do to provide quality educational experiences in your schools in spite of huge challenges. Thank you for staying the course to make changes that are difficult, yet necessary, if we are to reach every child. Thank you for how you're giving back to your professional organization while having an incredibly busy life. Thank you for being there for kids and adults who serve them. Happy November and Thanksgiving.



MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

The membership year is from September 1 to August 31. Have you renewed your NCSA membership?



**NCSA's
Inclement
Weather Policy**

If school is called off in the city where an NCSA event is being held due to inclement weather, the event will be considered canceled. To check the status of an event, please call NCSA at 800/793-6272



EDUCATION BETTER LEFT TO EDUCATORS THAN POLITICIANS

by Mike Moody, Superintendent, Wakefield Community Schools

In "Beyond McSchool: A Challenge to Educational Leadership," John Goodlad (1997, p. 1) identified two school reform movements in the United States. The first of these he refers to as school reform, and the second as school renewal. Dr. Goodlad further identifies the negative connotation that tends to be linked to reform movements—"something is terribly wrong and needs to be corrected." "Prescriptions are given; corrective actions are to be taken; faceless people in faceless agencies are holding clearly identifiable people accountable."

At the 2005 National Education Summit on High Schools, the National Governors Association (NGA) proffered an Action Agenda for Improving America's High Schools. Not surprisingly, this agenda is well grounded in the ethos of reform described above. With a "Git'er Done" mentality, the NGA opens with the following pithy statement: "America's high schools are failing to prepare too many of our students for work and higher education," and the following ten-step action agenda:

1. Create a permanent Education Roundtable or Commission to foster coordination between early childhood, K-12 and higher education.
2. Define a rigorous college and work preparatory curriculum for high school graduation.
3. Challenge business, education, parent, community and faith-based organizations to support initiatives that improve college awareness.
4. Give college and work-readiness assessments in high school.
5. Create statewide common course agreements so that college-level work in high school counts towards a postsecondary credential.
6. Provide financial incentives for disadvantaged students to take rigorous AP exams and college preparatory and college-level courses
7. Expand college-level learning opportunities in high school to minorities, English language learners, low-income students and youth with disabilities.

8. Help get low-performing students back on track by designing literacy and math recovery programs.

9. Develop and fund supports to help students **pass the high school exit exam**.

10. Develop statewide pathways to industry certification.

Within the above context, it is important to note that our high schools have changed little in the past 100 years. The release of the "A Nation At Risk" report in 1983 prompted many superficial changes (increased number of class periods, more strenuous graduation requirements, for example), however, change of a substantive nature was scant at best.

Ironically, the 2005 Summit was the fifth major educational summit since 1989—all of which "were instrumental in creating political momentum and public support for raising academic standards and performance in the nation's schools." (NGA Press Release, February, 2005 p.2). In reality, I am personally and professionally hard pressed to conjure up many (if any) initiatives from any of the summit activities that have had a positive impact on the teaching/learning process. In fact, I believe that they have merely served to fan the flames of the "failed schools movement", and prompted ill-conceived infringements such as the No Child Left Behind law.

I find it disturbing that the passage of twenty years and five National Summits have basically served to produce an increasingly narrow focus upon the education process as an economic unit. The NGA's redesign of the American High School vividly expresses the need to better prepare our graduates for continued education and successful participation in the world of work. Little, if any, credence is given to learning for learning's sake, and any reference to participation in the democratic process seems to have been added as an after thought. It is a sad state of affairs when due diligence is aimed at the reduction of self-fulfillment and self-actualization to over-time pay

and the opportunity to be better prepared to take more classes.

The subtitle to Dr. Goodlad's "Beyond McSchool" is "A Challenge to Educational Leadership." The challenge looms as great as or greater than it did when he penned the article in 1997. The "call" to redesign the American High School (whether real or perceived) has served to create a "vacuum" of need. As educational leaders, if we are content to sit on the sidelines while politicians and venture capitalists scramble to fill this perceived void with politically polished quick fixes, we will continue to see an even greater disconnect between what is, and what is needed—between progressive renewal initiatives and punitive reform schemata.

Nebraska Network (NeNER) partner schools, Wayne State College and Wakefield Community School, have involved a collaborative effort with Educational Service Units 1, 2, 7, 8, & 17 and the Nebraska Department of Education in an effort to address the High School Experience. This collaborative effort involves approximately one-third of Nebraska's school districts, representing over 4,000 teachers and almost 50,000 students. The over-arching goal is to approach needed change from a renewal perspective directly tied to educational delivery based upon student-centered best practice. As educational leaders, we find ourselves being displaced from our legitimate roles, and replaced by self-serving politicians and bureaucrats. It is time that we reclaim our turf. 

Goodlad, John I. Beyond McSchool: A Challenge to Educational Leadership. Prepared for the Symposium "Reflecting on Sputnik: Linking the Past, Present, and Future of Educational Reform." Washington, DC, 4 October 1997.

National Governors Association. An Action Agenda for Improving America's High Schools. 2005 National Education Summit on High Schools. Available online at www.nga.org

A RETIRING REFLECTION

by Gary Hartzell, Retired Professor, Department of Educational Administration, University of Nebraska - Omaha

I retired this past summer, after forty years in education split between high school and university service. Looking back, I think the most rewarding elements in both cases were the trusting relationships I enjoyed with other educators. These relationships did not develop with every educator I encountered, of course, but those with whom it did develop count as the most important people in my career, whether I was a teacher, administrator, or professor.

Trusting relationships are at the core of best practices because they reach up and down as well as across the hierarchy. There is no real collaboration unless peers trust one another, and there is no leadership without mutual leader-follower trust. We all know that others' actions can affect us, and we must be confident that the other person, especially a leader, will not take advantage of us, exploit our efforts, or abuse our rights or interests. All the bright spots of my experience are associated with people in whom I had such confidence, whether they were mentors, colleagues, bosses, or subordinates.

Developing that confidence wasn't easy. Trust is difficult because it involves risk and vulnerability. Perhaps that is why such relationships changed my professional life and I value them so much. Real trust occurs when one or both participants stand to lose more if the trust is broken than they'll gain if it is confirmed. Unless that's the case, it doesn't really matter if the other person comes through. Absent any risk, the notion of trust as a virtue is trivialized. In a way, you can argue that trusting others is non-rational. Dale Zand provides a clarifying example in an every-

day scenario. We live out the vulnerability of trust, he argues, every time we hire a babysitter so we can go out to a movie. We're vulnerable because we can't control the sitter's behavior once we depart. If the sitter takes advantage of our trust and fails to keep our children safe, a tragedy might ensue that could devastate our lives. If, on the other hand, the

gain. It's little wonder that many administrators appear untrusting of their staffs. My fortune was in working with people who were willing to take the risk with me – and with whom, and with others, I was willing to take the same risk.

As I think about the people I trusted over the years – colleagues, supervisors, the people I supervised, and graduate students – I see that they shared three basic characteristics: integrity, competence, and commitment. Organizational research confirms my experience and observation, and that's why I think I was so fortunate in my career. First in California and then later in Nebraska, I often was able to work in and with schools populated by wonderfully honest, talented, and committed people.

Honesty was fundamental. Trusting relationships are rooted in the integrity of the participants. To put myself or a vital part of my organizational operation in the hands of someone I perceived to be other than honest and morally consistent would have been patently foolish. I got burned sometimes, as we all do, but I suspect that I was as fortunate as anyone could be in discovering how much integrity most educators have.

Equally fundamental was the talent level of the people I came to trust. All were highly competent. The best were brilliant – and possessed an interpersonal or technical expertise, either learned or intuitive, that I could only envy. This was important because there is no workplace trust without competence. Workplace relationships differ from social relationships. Social relationships are built around interpersonal attraction, but workplace relationships exist only because our respective jobs exist. Because our jobs intersect, our basic connection is the

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babysitter lives up to our trust, the only gain we can realize is the pleasure of seeing a movie. Given how precious children are to parents, the rational thing would be to take care of them ourselves.

Administrators face similar situations in the workplace. Letting others represent the school to the community, letting them take the lead in curriculum revision, or letting them structure and administer budgets, hire and fire, alter procedures and timelines, or actually decide policy carries a potential for damage or loss that is greater than any likely



RETHINKING THE HIGH SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

By: Bob Uhing, Administrator, ESU #1



Uhing

Forty years ago, the American high school was in great shape. Many students did not attend college. However, even if they didn't graduate from high school, students could still find good, well-paying jobs. This past summer the National Governor's Association held the 2005 National Education Summit on High Schools. The result of this conference was an "Action Agenda for Improving America's High Schools." This increasing attention to high school reform arises in large part from concern over what students are and are not learning. Higher education and business leaders are concerned about the skill levels of high school graduates and their ability to succeed in college or work settings.

Five of the ESU's in Northeast Nebraska (ESU#1, #2, #7, #8, & #17) and the Nebraska Department of Education coordinated a collaborative effort involving approximately one-third of Nebraska's school districts, representing over 4,000 teachers and 50,000 students. This initiative was designed to engage educators in a process to rethink the high school experience. Approximately 100 educators representing 19 school districts convened the first conference of a continuing process. Affectionately coined "The Nebraska 100," this group of educational partners brainstormed what the high school experience might look like if ALL students were successful. The attendees at the workshop represented teachers, administrators, counselors, several colleges, ESU's and state department of education.

The critical objective is to move toward needed transformation from a renewal point of view directly tied to educational delivery based upon student-centered best practice. As a number of conference attendees pointed out "high schools in Nebraska are doing a good job." The desire to improve education leads to strong support for a wide range

of reform proposals, including setting high standards for student achievement. The ultimate goal is to have all students prepared for college and the workplace when they graduate.

During the first day of the conference, participants explored many aspects of the high school experience – both current experience and some possible options for what the high school experience might look like in the future. In that exploration, participants examined elements of a vision and manifesto for change, different models for what the experience could be, and a process for engaging other people in the dialog and how to manage change over time.

During the second day, participants identified nine components of a vision for the high school experience of the future. Each school district then identified what they were already doing in these nine key areas – and developed plans for specific areas on which they wanted to focus.

The nine components of the vision are:

- A sense of purpose
- Personalized learning
- A vision for what "it" looks like when it's done
- Innovative assessment
- Relationships with students
- Broader responsibility
- Connected learning (integrated, interdisciplinary, relevant learning)

- Teacher as facilitator
- Learning Communities

Educators in attendance began the process of identifying what they wanted their high school to look like in the future. The key to creating a plan of action is to maintain momentum and support through continued professional development activities. Participating districts have agreed to continue this process back at the district for at least two to three years. They will meet periodically for continued networking and professional development. Based on the needs each district shared at the conclusion of the conference, additional support will be provided related to personal learning plans, the teacher as facilitator, and for a set of 'experiments' that districts might implement.

Innovation Labs, who facilitated the conference process, created a website throughout the entire event. Conversations were captured, pictures were uploaded and pictorial summaries were created to highlight additional large group discussions. The web site of the content the participants created is available for viewing at <http://www.innovationlabs.com/newhighschool/blog.html>

Please share your thoughts and ideas with us!! 

CONGRATULATIONS TO...

☞ The Center for Biopreparedness Education and Department of Education recognized **Dennis Berry**, Principal, McCook Junior High School and Central Elementary School; **Joe Reinert**, Superintendent, Wayne Community Schools; **Scott Swisher**, Superintendent Hartington Public Schools; **Joan Resznicek**, Superintendent, Red Cloud Public Schools; **Lisa Sterba**, Principal, Lewis and Clark Middle School, Omaha Public Schools for their exemplary

efforts in working with the preparedness of their communities,

☞ **Stan Hale**, Retired Assistant Principal Millard South Public Schools on being named to Millard High School Hall of Fame

☞ **Mark Ferg**, Oakland, Craig Elementary Principal who announced his retirement effective July 1, 2006

☞ **Dick Eisenhauer**, Superintendent, Lexington Public School who announced his retirement effective July 1, 2006



Book Review by Ron Joekel

The World Is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century

Written by Thomas Friedman

New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux

ISBN 0-374-29288-4

This is the current “buzz book” that everyone is talking about across the country and internationally. Friedman has stirred the pot on “globalization” presenting his case that the world is flat in a 469-page book (this is brief?) that has received accolades from some and brickbats from others. Interestingly, Thomas Friedman was a 17-year-old golf caddy for Chi Chi Rodriguez when Rodriguez won the US Open. Rodriguez is now retired, but his caddy is now a foreign affairs columnist for *The New York Times* and has spent his career apparently using many of the same skills he used on a golf course: describing the terrain, shouting warnings and encouragement, and whispering in the ear of the big players. As a result, Friedman has become an influential American newspaper columnist.

In the mid 1990s, Friedman looking at the intersection of technology, financial markets, and world trade realized this thing called “globalization” can explain more things in more ways than anything else.” In 1999 Friedman wrote a book titled, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree: Understanding Globalization*, thrusting him to center stage in the journalistic world. After the 9/11 disaster, Friedman paid less attention to globalization spending time traveling to the Arab and Muslim world digging for the roots for the attack on the US. He claims that while he was writing about terrorism, he missed the fact that globalization had gone into overdrive. Friedman argues that the economic world is rapidly changing from a hierarchical to a vertical form of organization under the impact of fiber optic cables laid all over the world during the 90’s. It happened he claims while he was sleeping (chapter one), but he woke up by his visits to India and China learning about how American companies were “outsourcing” work and the world had changed. Much of the information

presented in the book was gleaned via Internet searches and interviews conducted with many people from around the world in his role as an op-ed commentator for *The New York Times*.

When asked what he means that the world is flat, Friedman said that while he was in India interviewing leaders at Infosys, he was told that the playing field is being leveled and that India and China were going to compete for work like never before, and Americans weren’t ready. He realized that the phrase “the playing field is being leveled” meant that with technological and political forces converging, it has produced a global, web-enabled playing field that allows for multiple forms of collaboration without regard to geography or distance. In other words the world was becoming flat!

In Chapter Two, Friedman presents Ten Forces that Flattened the World and leveled the playing field. The ten great levelers:

1. Fall of the Berlin Wall (11/9/89). When the walls came down – the windows went up tilting the worldwide balance of power toward democracies and free markets.

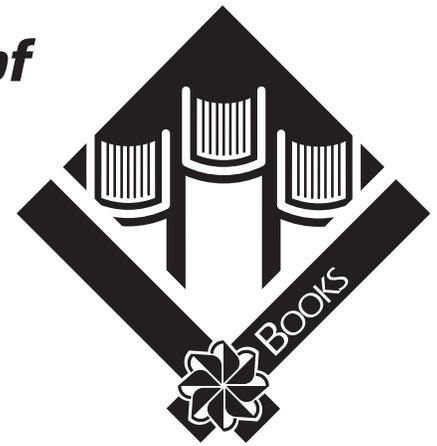
2. When Netscape Went Public (8/9/95). The August 9 IPO offering sparked massive investments in fiber-optic cables, popularizing the Internet.

3. Work Flow Software or Let’s Do Lunch: Have your Application Talk to my Application. The rise of various applications enabled faster, closer coordination among far-flung employees.

4. Open-Sourcing. Self-organizing communities launched a collaborative revolution.

5. Outsourcing. Migrating business functions to India saved money and a third world economy. Have you purchased a man’s shirt lately? Look at the label and see where it is manufactured!

6. Offshoring. Contract manufactur-



ing elevated China to economic prominence. On December 11, 2001, China formally joined the World Trade Organization. With China as a player on the world scene, offshoring began to occur. Offshoring is when a company takes one of its factories and moves it from the US to China, etc.

7. Supply- Chaining. Robust networks of suppliers, retailers, and customers increased business efficiency. He uses Wal-Mart as an example.

8. Insourcing. Logistics giants took control of customer supply chains, helping mom-and pop shops go global. He cites FedEx and UPS as prime examples.

9. In-Forming. Power searching allowed everyone to use the Internet as a personal supply chain of knowledge. He presents information on Google as an example.

10. Wireless. Like “steroids,” wireless technologies pumped up collaboration, making it mobile and personal.

Of course, he goes into great detail on each of the ten flatteners, giving many examples and sharing comments by people he interviewed. Although the chapter is lengthy, it provides the gist of how he arrived at the conclusion the world is flat.

I think each of us can identify with many of the ten flatteners presented by Friedman.

We are all aware of the emergence of India and China as world players and we have all been consumers of the many technological advances that helped flatten the world according to Friedman. People are talking about the book and

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Sixth Annual Governor's Summit on Workforce Development

It's not too late to register for Nebraska's 6th Annual Governor's Summit on Workforce Development, being held November 9-10, 2005, at The Doubletree Hotel in Omaha. Once again, the Nebraska Chamber has formed a solid partnership with the Department of Labor and the SilverStone Group to develop the Summit Agenda.

The one-and-a-half day conference will bring Nebraska's current workforce development challenges to the forefront, promoting prosperity and growth in our state and local workforces. Among the speakers will be Senator Chuck Hagel, Lieutenant Governor Rick Sheehy, former Shuttle astronaut Mae C. Jemison,

motivational speaker Dr. Joseph Mancusi, and Bruce Tulgan, a leading expert on young people in the workplace. This year's Summit will host nearly 500 professionals from across the state who represent the business, economic development, education, government and health care communities. Keynote speakers from across the nation and results-driven breakout sessions will both challenge and engage attendees.

Seats are filling quickly so register today! For more information and to register online, visit www.NebraskaWorkforce.com and click on the 2005 Governor's Summit icon. 

Renew your NCSA membership on-line now!

Please take a moment to renew your 2005/2006 membership, if you have not already done so. 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! 



Happy
Thanksgiving
from your
NCSA
Staff

SYMPATHY

☞ **Gene Neddenriep**, Superintendent of Malcolm Public School, on the death of his father,

☞ Family of **Duane Backstrom**, retired Auburn High School principal, who passed away

☞ Family of **Z. Clarence Barbee**, Retired OPS Principal, who passed away

☞ **Burma Kroger**, Nebraska Association of School Boards, Director of Board Development, on the death of her husband

UPCOMING EVENTS...

November 9-10
NSASSP State Convention
Holiday Inn - Kearney

November 14
Assistant Principals Conference
8:30 a.m.
Cornhusker Hotel - Lincoln

November 16-18
NASA/NASB State Convention
Holiday Inn - Omaha

December 1-2
NASES/NDE Joint Meeting
Sandhills Convention Center - North Platte

December 7 - Legislative Preview
8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Cornhusker Hotel - Lincoln

December 7
New Superintendent Workshop
1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
NCSA Offices - Lincoln

December 15
Emerging Superintendents Workshop
9:00 a.m.
NCSA - Lincoln

January 11
Employment Pitfalls Workshop
Holiday Inn - Kearney

January 11 - New Principals Workshop
ESU #10 - Kearney

January 12
Employment Pitfalls Workshop
ESU #7 - Columbus

January 21
Emerging Administrators Workshop
NCSA - Lincoln

January 24-25 - NELI
Holiday Inn - Kearney

January 28
Emerging Administrators
NCSA - Lincoln

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



NCSA Executive Board Summary

The NCSA Executive Board met on October 5, 2005 at the NCSA offices.

☞ A summary of the principal liaison activities was given.

☞ Motion was made to table a move towards forming a 501 C 3 organization for the purpose of receiving grants and being tax exempt.

☞ A presentation was given by Karen Brokaw, Sr. VP of Media and Promotions, Ayres/Kahler regarding a public relations campaign. Motion to not move forward with this campaign and to continue looking at advocacy, and look into a campaign/kit for school districts.

☞ Motion was made to accept the 2004-2005 audit.

☞ Discussion was had on the Educators Health Alliance and the issue of "Health Savings Accounts".

☞ Jerry reported on the Past Chairs Retreat held at NCSA. 18 out of 22 past chairs attended the retreat and discussed a variety of topics.

☞ Discussion was had on forming an additional affiliate to include HR, staff development, curriculum development, and technology professionals. Any change in the composition of the board would require a vote of the entire NCSA membership. Discussion will continue at the next meeting.

☞ Motion to move forward on the formation of a Political Action Committee was approved.

☞ 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. 🍌

Employment Opportunities New NCSA Service

Mike Dulaney has developed a tailor-made job employment opportunities site on the NCSA Web Page. As a member of NCSA you can use this employment site at no cost. It is easy and an efficient way to post positions and find candidates.

In addition to no cost, and being easy to use an additional advantage of the online employment opportunities site comes with full participation of all school districts in Nebraska. Thus, it may be easier for districts to find quality applicants creating a win-win situation.

The hiring season will soon be heating up. Let the NCSA employment opportunities site help you fill those positions. 🍌

Book Review:

The World Is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century

(continued from page 7)

using some of its terminology and concepts. Gov. Dave Heineman (although not giving credit to Friedman) was reported by the *Lincoln Journal Star* (October 19, 2005) to have said at the news conference announcing the formation of The Nebraska Education Leadership Council, "Nebraska students are no longer competing with those in Iowa or Kansas, or even Texas, California or New York. They are competing with students in India and China and other countries around the globe."

Summary: Friedman's argument can be summarized by recognizing that globalization is not just a phenomenon and not just a passing fancy. It is the international system that replaced the cold war system. Globalization is the integration of capital, technology, and information across national borders, in a way that is creating a single global market and, to some degree, a global village. He contends there is an irreversible trend towards globalization requiring a new way of thinking, which is very different

from the ways many of us have been taught to think. To survive in this new "flat world", Friedman suggests the need for a new way of thinking that involves more math and science education and education which lasts a lifetime (but as educators we know that learning is a life-long process). The US needs to accept the fact that although other countries may take certain jobs from the United States, there are many jobs that will be emerging as long as one is willing to learn.

It is worth the money (and time) to purchase the book to be better informed to engage in dialogue with others who have read the book. But beware, fasten your seatbelt and pack a snack because this 469 page travel is an observational, geo-political technology that goes everywhere: social activism in Cambodia, AIDS in Africa, schools in India, drive-through in Missouri. One learns how to assemble a Dell laptop from parts around the globe. It is thought-provoking, highly current, and

offers interesting perspectives on issues challenging the world today. You can get it at Barnes & Noble, Borders, and online via Amazon. When I was growing up, my parents told me to finish your dinner and remember that people in China and India are starving. After reading *The World is Flat*, I am telling my grandchildren to work hard in school-finish your homework, as people in India and China are starving for your job!!

It is worth the bucks to purchase, but be prepared to wade through a lot of rhetoric. I was disappointed he didn't delve into distributed education via electronic technology online as another leveler. With today's distance online education, classrooms are accessible and open 24/7 without any of the constraints of time and distance.

As a final thought, as you read the book, think strategically about what are the implications of a "flat world" for education. 🍌



A LOOK BACK

(continued from page 1)

schools alone for answers or blame schools primarily for failures are not challenging enough of the society in which we live. We must challenge the status quo of education and our communities to find ways to meet the very differing needs of our many students.

II. Passion to Lead. If we have a passion for something, we don't act lightly. Most of us didn't accept our current position because we "drew the short straw." We determined to lead because we wanted to make a difference for our students, our schools, and our communities. We wanted to "leave no child behind" even before that mantra became famous or infamous. But, having a passion for something doesn't automatically result in being successful. We need to know how to lead. Donald Clifton, who was past chair of the Gallup International Research and Education Center said, "a leader is a person who can rally support to move forward." What we envision as our goal is even more important. De Witt Jones, an

award-winning photographer for National Geographic learned an important lesson about photography. While he started his career with the belief that "seeing is believing," he came to realize that one doesn't see things until he believes he will. We won't accomplish the vision of leaving no child behind until we believe it is possible.

III. Promise to Succeed. If we do believe it is possible, the next step is promising to succeed. It's an important promise. But, making the promise isn't as difficult as keeping the promise. In the ASCD book, *A Passion for Learning*, teacher Kristie C. Wolferman argued that each student is worthy of an individual promise to succeed. In her selection "Students with Special Needs," she described an incident in which her principal asked each teacher to hand in a list of five students with special needs. As Kristie worked on the task she identified students who had difficulty learning, as well as students who learned easily but didn't fit in well with their classmates. In the end, she identified the special needs of each of her 36 students. Convinced that she had done the task well, she

handed it into the principal who fumed that her six-page list of students wasn't at all what he wanted. Irritated in return, Kristie responded, "You just read through this list and tell me whom you'd like to have me take off," and she stormed away. The end of her story deserves to be shared: "The next day there was a memo in my box, in fact, in all the teachers' boxes, from the principal: 'Forget about that 'Special Needs' list I asked you to make. I have just been reminded that all of our students have special needs.'"

When I was first named as a principal, too many years ago, a close friend wrote, "As principal, you'll be busy with all sorts of seemingly-important responsibilities, but don't ever forget the children. The children are the reason we do what we do." Those words helped guide me through every stage of my career to date. The focus on children, and on our power, passion, and promise to make a difference for children, continues to be the best compass to guide what we do, whether in the classroom, in a leadership role, or in responsibility to organizations we serve. 

TEARS? SNEERS? ...

(continued from page 1)

requests from boards of education. Such a library would cause untold educators to seek employment elsewhere due to the lack of need for the positions vacated by its use. Fortunately, pedagogy, the art or profession of teaching, involves that human element that evaluates, weighs alternatives and decides with the best interest of the student, school and community in mind. Duplicating solutions that may have worked once obviously can breed complacency, stagnation and discontent in those individuals educators serve. Hypocrisy at its zenith, by those involved in education, is to obstruct change and choose to continue a path of least resistance. Students are instilled with the need to adapt and change to what may be facing them in the future. Is it possible to encourage change and yet pursue a course that thwarts any action away from the norm? Possible, yes; constructive, no!

Educators maintain the tenacity and

perseverance to overcome adversity and work toward "making best" with the resources available. Rare is the administrator, teacher or student that is content with the resources available and can say, "I need nothing further to make my program better." Such a utopia may exist; however, not in any school district I am aware of in Nebraska.

Michael Fullan in his book, *Leading in a Culture of Change*, states: "If you ask people to brainstorm words to describe change, they come up with a mixture of negative and positive terms. On the one side, fear, anxiety, loss, danger, panic; on the other, exhilaration, risk-taking, excitement, improvements, energizing. For better or worse, change arouses emotions, and when emotions intensify, leadership is the key." The word leadership surfaces when the word change enters into the conversation. Without a doubt, leadership and school administration are synonymous and congruent...one cannot occur without the other. It is readily apparent to school administrators who have been a part of change in a

school district, that their enthusiasm, commitment and excitement or lack thereof, can be the determinant as the success or failure of the change being implemented.

Are tears, sneers or fears caused by what can occur? Or, are they from the anticipated change that must be faced knowing that what we are accustomed to may be lost? Are we secure enough in what we do and how we do it to cheer on change and submit to its inevitability? If we are to compete and excel, school administrators must again be more "proactive" than "reactive." When administrators take the stand that we will work with the change and have a say in the direction of that change, a more positive and non-threatening educational environment can be achieved. The challenge then becomes a process of predicting, anticipating and training ourselves and teachers to make change and pursue a course that enables growth of self, the teacher and education. 



MEETING ESSENTIAL EDUCATION NEEDS THROUGH DISTANCE EDUCATION

(continued from page 2)

course option, meaning schools can add our courses to their master schedule and meet the state's requirements.

In addition to ensuring access to a high-quality education, ISHS courses possess unique traits that make them ideally suited for schools and students. The flexibility of ISHS's asynchronous courses means that students and schools have 24/7 access to course content from virtually any location. Whether schools choose online or print-based courses, the content is always available, making integration into the school day easy. Asynchronous courses also allow students greater time to reflect by allowing time to mull over ideas, check supplemental materials and refer to notes. This added time for reflection and encouragement of independent thinking also aptly prepares students for the college classroom.

Lance Bristol, Principal at Ansley High School, has incorporated ISHS courses into his school's curriculum. The Spanish courses his students are taking are not only filling the gap after losing his Spanish teacher, but also ensuring access to Spanish curriculum he would not otherwise be able to offer. "The ISHS has been delivering high quality indepen-

dent study courses for several years and had the course we needed for our students," he stated. "The students have come to realize that they are now taking a larger responsibility for their own education...this responsibility eventually hits us all at the college level."

At Ansley High School and in nearly 250 other Nebraska communities, the ISHS is helping schools meet needs and supplying high-quality curriculum to nearly 1,200 students. The ISHS is committed to helping Nebraska communities prepare students for life beyond high school. We have recently begun a curriculum review process, bringing together representatives from Nebraska Department of Education, Nebraska high schools and UNL, to look at what changes need to be made in order to meet the changing needs of Nebraska students.

The past two years has seen the introduction of the program's first Advanced Placement® courses, beginning with AP U.S. History 1 and 2. This year, we introduced AP English Literature and Composition 1 and 2 as well as AP Computer Science AP 1 and 2, which was a dual effort of the ISHS and UNL's J.D. Edwards Honors Program. I believe that offering these AP courses is an important part of preparing students for college-level curriculum and making them more attractive to colleges and universities during the admis-

sions process.

Additionally, the ISHS has teamed up with the Nebraska Safety Council to work to gain approval from the Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles to offer an online driver's education course with a hands-on driving component. I am anticipating approval from the DMV in early 2006 and will be offering this program to Nebraska schools struggling to supply a driver's education program at their school.

CareerStart is another exciting program launched this year. This program combines the ISHS's Career Planning course with one-on-one career counseling from a licensed career counselor. Look for more information about this program soon.

All of these exciting changes at the ISHS are just some of the ways we are reaching out to Nebraska schools in an effort to provide equal access to an essential education. As we continue to build partnerships with Nebraska schools, I hope that you will think of the ISHS first to meet the needs of your school and students. Please do not hesitate to call upon us to discuss how our distance education courses may be of assistance to you. 

A Retiring Reflection...

(continued from page 5)

shared need to accomplish some set of tasks in which we both have a part. Focused as we are on task accomplishment, we tend to interpret individual attributes differently than we might in a purely social relationship. We perceive more value in work-related qualities and less in qualities that might be very important in a friendship or love affair. In fact, we're often willing to overlook individual traits that would flatly be undesirable – perhaps even unacceptable – in a purely personal relationship, so long as the other person delivers a strong set of task-related attributes. I enjoyed most of the people with whom I worked over the

years, but I truly valued those who were outstanding in what they did. Our perceptions of others' competency and integrity drive our assessments of their value in the workplace, and their perceptions drive their assessment of ours. Ultimately, these perceptions affect how much each of us is willing to invest in the relationship, how much trust develops between us and, over time, even how much we may come to like each other.

Last, I had the great fortune to work with many people who were committed to the same values as I was. They wanted the best for and from others. We might have had wicked fights about the best way, or even the proper way, to get those things, but our ultimate goals were the same. I came to trust them because I

had a sense that they – just as I did – had a priority intention to make the organization and its clients successful.

At this point, I suppose I should close with some kind of sage forty-year advice, and I guess that this is it: above all else, build a reputation for integrity, competence, and commitment, and trust those in whom you confirm the same characteristics. When all is said and done, the core of quality professional experience resides in the quality of the people with whom you share it. People you can trust are the ones who give you opportunities to learn and do the things that are really important in your professional life – and they're the ones you remember. 



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Calendar of Events

November

4	NAESP Region III	2:00 p.m.	Lifelong Learning Center	Norfolk
4	NAESP Region II	8:30 a.m.	ESU #3	Omaha
9-10	NSASSP State Convention	6:00 p.m.	Holiday Inn	Kearney
9	NSASSP Executive Board	1:00 p.m.	Holiday Inn	Kearney
9	NAESP Region I	6:00 p.m.	Valentino's	Beatrice
9	NASA Region V	12:00 noon	Alliance Country Club	Alliance
14	Assistant Principals Conference	8:30 a.m.	Cornhusker Hotel	Lincoln
16-18	NASA/NASB State Convention		Holiday Inn Central	Omaha
16	NASA Executive Board	12:00 noon	Holiday Inn Central	Omaha
18	NAESP Region IV	8:30 a.m.	UNK	Kearney
18	NASA General Membership	9:00 a.m.	Holiday Inn Central	Omaha
30	NAESP Region II	5:30 p.m.	Champions Club	Omaha

December

1-2	NAESP/NDE Joint Meeting	9:30 a.m.	Sandhills Convention Center	North Platte
1	NAESP Executive Board	9:30 a.m.	NCSA	Lincoln
7	Legislative Preview	8:00 a.m.	Cornhusker Hotel	Lincoln
7	New Superintendent Workshop	1:00 p.m.	NCSA	Lincoln
15	Emerging Superintendents	9:00 a.m.	NCSA	Lincoln
16	NAESP Region II	8:30 a.m.	Papillion LaVista Public Schools	Papillion

January

4	NSASSP Region I	5:30 p.m.	York Country Club	York
11	NASA Region V			Alliance
11	Employment Pitfalls Workshop	9:00 a.m.	Holiday Inn	Kearney
11	New Principals Workshop	9:00 a.m.	ESU #10	Kearney
11	NAESP Region I	TBD	TBD	TBD
11	NASA Region I	5:00 p.m.	Ameritas Investment Corp.	Lincoln
11	NASA Region IV	10:00 a.m.	ESU #10	Kearney
12	Employment Pitfalls Workshop	9:00 a.m.	ESU #7	Columbus
12	NAESP Region V	9:00 a.m.	Perkins	Sidney
13	NAESP Region III	12:00 noon	Sports Denn	Norfolk
20	NAESP Region II	8:30 a.m.	Bennington Public School	Bennington
21	Emerging Administrators	9:00 a.m.	NCSA	Lincoln
24-25	NELI	5:00 p.m.	Holiday Inn	Kearney
25	NSASSP Region IV	5:30 p.m.	TBD	TBD
25	NSASSP Region V	10:00 a.m.	Valentino's	Ogallala
25	NSASSP Region II	2:00 p.m.	Elks Lodge #39	Omaha
25	NAESP Region IV	8:30 a.m.	ESU #10	Kearney
25	NAESP Region V	9:30 a.m.	Valentino's	Ogallala
26	NAESP Region IV	12:00 noon	ESU #10	Kearney
28	Emerging Administrators	9:00 a.m.	NCSA	Lincoln
31	NSASSP Executive Board	10:00 a.m.	NCSA	Lincoln

NATIONAL CONVENTIONS

- November 11-12, 2005 - CASE National Convention - Scottsdale, AZ
- February 9-11, 2006 - ASBO Leadership Convention - Pittsburgh, PA
- February 23-26, 2006 - AASA National Convention - San Diego, CA
- March 17-19, 2006 - NASSP National Convention - Reno, NV
- March 31 - April 4, 2006 - NAESP National Convention - San Antonio, TX
- April 6-9, 2006 - CASE/CEC National Convention - Salt Lake City, UT

The NAESP Link

*The State Association Newsletter for Elementary School Principals
November, 2005*



Region II Student Leadership Conference Larry Wade, President, Region II

I was proud to be part of Region II in offering 175 students, from 12 school districts, 12 different sessions on leadership. The October 17th leadership event took place on the UNO campus. The evaluation feedback was overwhelmingly positive - about the only complaint was that students wanted to attend more than three sessions. Constructive criticism at its best! Students wanted to have more opportunities and you know, that is what leadership is all about!

An additional session for the adult sponsors was offered as a time for sharing. As I helped facilitate this session, it became clear educators are providing numerous leadership opportunities for students. There were great ideas shared during this session. All of the schools had some form of community service, penny drives and food drives being the most common. There were other schools whose students performed weekly radio (intercom) student news stories or who developed monthly newspapers. Students were involved with helping those in their schools who were in need. Some student councils were helping animal shelters. The list of student led projects was just amazing!

~~At the end of the day, my colleagues and I drew the same conclusion; the day was successful for both students and sponsors.~~

District Strategic Planning As A Bridge To Leadership Transition Susan Anglemyer, President, NAESP Principal, Sandoz Elementary School

Those serving in administrative capacities within school systems in the United States are faced with greater personal and professional challenges than at any other time in the history of institutionalized education. State and federal funding challenges, increasing costs for technology, site upkeep, and the ever-inc achievement standards all contribute to the challenges of administration. Additionally, the widening scope of social problems facing students and their families impact the educational environment. Administrators find themselves spending large blo working with social service agencies, counselors, physicians, and parents to rectify these problems. Thus, the need for developing a functional district site plan to address these issues is essential.

The way persons interact in educational settings, whether in large or small groups, is often determined by the clarity of purpose and the sense of direction in which the educational body is moving. Jim Collins, in his book, Good To Great, points out that having “good people” on the bus is an asset, but the key is having the “right people” on the bus to reach true greatness. Hiring quality people who see the big picture with a shared sense of direction is an investment worth making. They are the power and influence behind identifying the changes that must occur based on the evidence/data available to improve learning for all students. The pulse of the district is determined by these talented individuals who contribute by working hard to develop and implement positive change resulting in the academic growth of all students.

This year at Administrators’ Days in Kearney, I heard several presenters tell of the large percentage of administrative leaders eligible for retirement in the next several years. I pondered what bridges would be in place for young administrators to cross as other administrators enter retirement. In other words, what bridges are in place to ensure continued quality leadership and smooth transitions? Other questions leapt to mind:

- How many district site plans are on paper, but not really activated in a useful fluid manner with constant reviews of baseline data and post data resulting in constructive planning for improvement?
- What would it be like to not have “program based” budgeting where specific needs of the district plan are not prioritized yearly and budget planning is superficial with allocations never changing because that is the way it has always been done?
- What would it be like to be in a district that didn’t believe in the site plan process where everyone is truly invested and understands the purpose and impact on learning?
- Who views the strategic plan as simply “more stuff on paper”, instead of how it can provide clarity and direction for the whole community?

All districts have academic goals mandated by the state of Nebraska. The Nebraska State Department of Education does a fine job of holding districts accountable. However, I question whether or not all districts have active, participatory district strategic planning processes in place, including, plans that examine the big picture for providing a positive educational culture. Taking the time to develop an active site plan with positive stakeholders ensures continued quality education and improves the chances of getting the ‘right person’ on the bus when hiring new staff.

The NAESP Nominations Committee is now accepting nominations for the positions of President-elect and Vice-president. Please email Kristy Carlson (kcarlson@lps.org) with your nominations.

Region Notes

Region I

Plans are underway and being finalized for the November 9th Superintendent Appreciation Dinner and Meeting to be held at Valentino’s in Beatrice. Region I Superintendents will be honored as will the Region I nominees for the NDP and Outstanding New Principal Awards. Region I members are encouraged to attend this function either with or without their district Superintendent. The Region meeting will

begin at 5:30 with dinner starting at 6:30. Bill Kenagy, retired principal from Kearney Public Schools, who is serving as a liaison with new principals in Nebraska will be one of the guest speakers at the event.

Mark Murphy of Centennial Elementary in Utica was selected as Region I Nebraska Distinguished Principal nominee and Ruth Ann Wylie of Riley Elementary in Lincoln was selected as the nominee for the Outstanding New Principal of the Year Award. Congratulations and good luck to both Mark and Ruth Ann as both are very deserving of this honor.

The Region I Board met at Thayer Central Elementary on October 12th to discuss upcoming events and to review notes from the October 10th NAESP Board Meeting. The Region I Bylaws and Constitution were revised with final discussion and approval happening at the November 9th event.

All Region I Principals should be receiving the regional minutes and communications via e-mail. Please contact Region I President Kurk Wiedel at kurk.wiedel@thayercentral.org if the information is not getting to you.

Region III

Region III Principals will be meeting at the Lifelong Learning Center on the Campus of Northeast Community College on Wednesday, November 2, 2005 at 2 pm. Special Guests: Linda Meyers, NDE; Steve Wilson, Centura Elementary; and Susan Strahm, ESU 1, will present Early Childhood information to our group. Be Rudloff



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