



Council for
Exceptional
Children

MINNESOTA

The voice and vision of special education

Minnesota Council for Exceptional Children

Newsletter

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTIONS

CANDIDATE INFO
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MAIL-IN BALLOT
INSIDE

POSTMARK DEADLINE:
FEBRUARY 8, 2006

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BRIGHT IDEAS

IMPLEMENTING THE NEW IDEA

2006 Special Education Conference

February 15-17, 2006
Mayo Civic Center
Rochester, MN



By **Jeanne Danneker**
MNCEC President-Elect and 2006 Conference Chair

Our 2006 conference is packed with **bright** ideas! First, a wonderful pre-conference workshop presented by Martha Simpson will provide a step-by-step process to guide teams through functional behavior assessment and planning using positive behavioral supports. Kathie Snow, our opening keynote speaker, will **light** up your morning with new ways of thinking about your students. Kathie will share strategies to help us build on the interests, talents, hopes and dreams of our students and “create a society in which all people are valued and included.” Dan Reschly will present a special two-hour session on Response to Intervention (RTI) practices and strategies. We are also **delighted** to have the CEC Associate Executive Director of Policy and Communication Services, Deborah Ziegler, speak. She will bring us breaking news from the Capitol regarding the new regulations for IDEA 2004.

We had an excellent response to our call for presentations and have selected over thirty great sessions sure to **enlighten** your professional practice. Session topics include **bright** ideas related to self-determination; inclusion; instruction and evaluation for reading, writing, and math; Autism; EBD; LD; Fetal Alcohol Spectrum; vision impairment; H.O.U.S.S.E.; RTI; research; and paraeducators just to **highlight** a few. We will host networking sessions for educators interested in early childhood, elementary, middle school, and secondary levels to share more **bright** ideas.

This year’s conference committee is made up of elementary and secondary teachers of students with disabilities, university professors of special education, and special education administrators. We believe that the keynote

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Letter from the President

by Larry Iwen



Exercise Your Membership Rights!

Being a member of the Council for Exceptional Children has a lot of advantages. Several benefits including professional publications, career development opportunities, advocacy & support, and access to professional divisions allow you to tailor your participation in CEC to your particular area(s) of expertise. As part of this professional group, you also have the ability to exercise specific rights that are not available to everyone in the field of special education.

Exciting changes are in the works for Minnesota Council for Exceptional Children members this fall and winter. Included in this newsletter is a ballot for the annual election that will establish the composition of our board of directors. Each of the candidates offers unique skills and talents that will help support the mission of the Minnesota Council for Exceptional Children. I encourage you to read the candidate biographical information and exercise your right as a member to vote for the candidates that you feel are the most qualified to fill the open positions on the Board of Directors.

Upon review of the constitution that is currently in place for our organization, it became apparent to the Board of Directors that some of the wording and directives in our constitution were antiquated and no longer in line with the mission and goals of the organization. Changes and revisions to the unit's constitution do not happen on a regular basis and the revision of a document that runs an organization such as ours is no simple task. In fact, revisions and changes began with committee work in January of 2005! Now, almost a year

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Minnesota Council for Exceptional Children Mission

To improve practices and resources for persons working on behalf of individuals with exceptionality in the state of Minnesota.

Minnesota Council for Exceptional Children Goals

- To promote and utilize systems for timely communication with our membership.
- To promote quality professional development opportunities including a quality conference.
- To support the professional development of pre-service teachers.
- To increase our involvement in political issues impacting our membership and the individuals they serve.

2005 – 06 MN CEC Board of Directors

President:	Larry Iwen
President-Elect:	Jeanne Danneker
Past President:	Melissa Schaller
Secretary:	Roberta Kaufman
Treasurer:	Mark Krug
CAN Coordinators:	Roberta Kaufman Bryce Fornes-Bates
Elections	Mary Ellen Wade
Membership	Mary McGrath
Representative Assembly:	Steven Kaatz Carol Long
Student Advisor:	Marilyn Hukriede
Student Governor	Amy Beckstrand
Student Officer to National Board:	Justin Lien
Publications:	Carol Long
Newsletter Layout:	Lynne Olson

Directors:

Dawn Allen
Brad Benson
Nancy Dumke
Krista Fisher
Gary Lewis
David Nelson
Nancy Recibe
Jim Smith

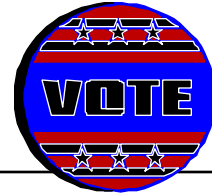
Division Representatives:

Paula Krippner, DCDT
Daryl Miller, CASE/MASE
Lonna Moline, CCBD
Jane Roundtree, DEC

Website: www.mncec.org



MNCEC Board of Directors Elections



Editor's Note: It's that time of year again! Time for MNCEC Board of Directors Elections. Below you will find biographical information for each of the nominees for this year's elections for President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Directors-at-Large. Review your choices, mark your ballot on the enclosed self-addressed stamped postcard and mail by February 8, 2006. Thank you!

President:

Vote for one

Roberta Kaufman

Roberta is currently a teacher on special assignment with the St. Paul Public Schools, where she is developing a first year special education teacher coaching project. Her career includes teaching K-12 special education in South Dakota, serving as executive director for the Center for Excellence Across Disciplines at Huron University, Huron, South Dakota and Dean of the College of Education at Concordia University, St. Paul, Minnesota. Roberta has served as MNCEC director-at-large, co-coordinator for CAN and secretary.

Secretary:

Vote for one

David Nelson

My background in education and training spans about 15 years. My undergraduate degree is in Elementary Education from Northwestern in St. Paul. I worked with grades K-6 as a classroom teacher, physical education teacher and computer education teacher from 1990-1998. I also coached basketball, volleyball, track and field and tennis at the Junior High level from 1994 until 1998. Most of these experiences were in Houston, Texas.

In 1998 I completed my Master's in Educational Administration from the University of Houston, TX. My wife and I moved back to St. Paul, MN in 1998 at which time I accepted a position with RPS/FedEx as a Technical Consultant/Trainer. I worked for RPS/FedEx from 1998 until 2000 at which time I went to work for a computer software company called CES. I worked with CES from 2000 until 2002. Both of these opportunities gave me a variety of experiences that I feel play a major role in how I work with children, parents and colleagues. It was during this time that I realized how much I missed working with young people.

In the Spring of 2002 I was accepted into a Master's Program for Special Education at Bethel University in Roseville, MN. I also accepted a teaching position in Special Education at Crosswinds Middle School in Woodbury, MN working with grades 6 through 8. I have taught since 2002 under a variance but have recently completed my Special Education licensure in EBD and SLD. I am licensed in this area by the state of Minnesota along with my Elementary license. This is my fourth year at Crosswinds and I thoroughly enjoy the work I do with children in this area.

I appreciate this opportunity to continue to learn and grow in this field. Thank you for your consideration.

Treasurer:

Vote for one

Mark Krug

Mark Krug is currently a Special Education Manager for Related Services at Northeast Metro Intermediate School District 916. He is starting his 18th year with Northeast Metro and has been a special educator for the past 24 years. He has worked with students with challenging behaviors, both as a teacher and as a behavior specialist. His current role is as the administrator responsible for related services such as Occupational Therapy, Speech & Language, and Physical Therapy along with supervising Deaf and Hard of Hearing and Physical and Other Health Disabilities teachers. He has been a member of CEC throughout his professional career and has served as President of MN CCBD as well as Board Member, Secretary, and Treasurer for MNCEC.

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2006 Special Education Conference

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speakers and session presenters selected for this conference will bring you the information you need to increase your knowledge, effectiveness, and enthusiasm for the very important work you do everyday. We've got a **BRIGHT IDEA**...Join us in Rochester in February 2006 for an enlightening conference.

MNCEC Board of Directors Candidates

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Director Vote for 4

Sally Baas

Sally is a professor of special education, and directs the Southeast Asian Teacher Program and Hmong Culture and Language Program at Concordia University, St. Paul. As a school psychologist she works with Lutheran Special Education Ministries and is completing her doctoral degree in leadership.

Sally has just complete three terms as the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) Minnesota delegate and has served on and chaired many NASP and MN School Psychology Association committees.

Currently, she is on the MN Dept. of Education Mental Health Services in Special Education Leadership Committee and is a trainer with that group. She also serves on the MN Student Services Coalition for Effective Education. and represents higher education on the MN Paraprofessional Consortium.

Sally is on the YMCA Board of Directors and other initiatives focused on the needs of youth. She is a member of Phi Delta Kappa, Council for Exceptional Children, Council for Learning Disabilities, and National and MN Associations for School Psychology. She speaks on topics focused on mental health needs of students and cultural competency in assessment.

Bradley Benson

Bradley has been a teacher at Stillwater Area High School for the last eight years. As a licensed special educator, he has taught students across categories from MSMI to LD, and EDB. He has served on the MCEC Board of Directors since 1997. While on the Board, he has served as Co-Chair of both the Membership Committee and the Co-Chair of the Children and Youth Action Network.

Krista Fisher

Hello, My name is Krista Fisher, I am a Special Education, Learning Disabilities specialist at Mound Westonka High School. I am seeking re-election to the MNCEC board as a director for a second term. I was a paraprofessional for many years working with children with mild to severe disabilities before enrolling in St. Cloud State and earning a degree in Special Education, graduating in the winter of 1999.

I became interested in MNCEC as a student and attended meetings as an observer. I am currently serving on the CAN committee of MNCEC. My goal is to become further educated and involved in the legislative role of MNCEC as an advocate for students with learning disabilities and their families.

Marilyn Hukriede

Marilyn is a Secondary Special Education Teacher for Upsala Schools. She earned her Bachelor's Degree in Special Education from St. Cloud State University. Her areas of licensure are Learning Disabilities and Emotional/Behavioral Disorders. She has recently finished the coursework to add the Work-Based Learning endorsement to her license.

While attending SCSU as an undergrad, Marilyn became involved with Student CEC, attending the state meetings as a student representative. She attended the Kansas City national conference with her student chapter. Now, as an elected board member, Marilyn has taken on the role of Student Chapter Advisor.

Jennifer McIntyre

I am currently a special education coordinator for Austin Public Schools. My undergraduate training was from UW-Madison in psychology, where I worked in research labs focusing on the early development of cognition, emotions and personality in children from birth to 3 years. I also worked with a research team focusing on families from birth to five years and the impact of family members in the workforce on child development.

My school psychology degree is from UW- LaCrosse and for six years I worked as a school psychologist in the state of Washington. My experiences ranged from birth to 21 years. During the 2004-2005 school year, I was a program specialist in a large, diverse, urban district, primarily with middle school to 21-year-old students. I also served on the Washington State School Psychologist Association Board for three years and edited the association's newsletter for two years. During the past four years, I have worked as a freelance writer with the Technical College System in Wisconsin developing and writing curriculum for various programs, including para-professional education, early childhood programs, and general studies programs.

Melissa Schaller

I have been in the field of special education for eleven years. During this time I have worked with a wide variety of disability categories at a variety of levels. I hold licensure in elementary education, specific learning disabilities, emotional/behavioral disorders, mild/moderate mental impairment, work experience handicapped and as a director of special education. Currently I serve as the Director of Special Services in the Austin Public School District.

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Nominee Bios

Melissa Schaller Bio

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I have served in a range of capacities with the Minnesota Council of Exceptional Children for about ten years. My roles have ranged from director to secretary and most recently, president. I feel that MNCEC has an increasingly important role in the education of students with disabilities. It is important that MNCEC support and assist for practitioners and students particularly as changes in the law are implemented. I would like to continue to work with MNCEC as an advocate for our membership.

Sara M. Stack

In 1987 I graduated from St. Cloud State University with a degree in elementary education and a middle school endorsement. I moved to CA for two years and taught a K-1 combination class and 3rd grade. Upon moving back to the Midwest, I entered a graduate program at SCSU in special education, not really sure what I wanted to "be when I grew up." I obtained licensure within a year, completed the Master's program in 1997 and worked as an EBD/LD teacher in varying settings and age levels and loved the challenges that the special education students and their families brought.

Loving to learn, I received my administrative degree from Minnesota State University-Mankato and have been an administrator for the past 5 years, 3 years at a residential correctional facility and currently a special education coordinator for a six district cooperative. I am involved with children of all disability areas and have a special interest in EBD, ASD, and children with mental illness. I am involved with MNCCBD and have enjoyed the networking and education CEC/CCBD has provided, and I'm very interested in working with the organizations at a higher level. Special education is a passion of mine and CEC has provided me with direction and I'd like to do the same for others.

Membership Report

By Mary Z. McGrath, Membership Chair

Winners!!

CEC members Mark Krug, Julie Corcoran and Mary McGrath took the opportunity on October 20 to work at the exhibit booth at the Education Minnesota conference. These volunteers welcomed many future and current teachers who stopped by to gather handouts and information on the benefits of joining CEC.

Those visiting the booth also had the option of signing up for door prizes! Winners of the CEC logo products - tee shirts and canvas bags- include Elizabeth Landwehr, Jen Galvin, Pat Johnson and Vee-Musa Fo Fana. Congratulations to these people and to all CEC members for being part of a winning organization!

The Rhyme and Reason for Joining CEC

By Mary Z. McGrath

There once was a teacher named Tom
Whose professional life started to bomb
He joined CEC
and like 1-2-3
He performed his job with aplomb

There once was an educator called Tess
Her program was a complete mess
She joined CEC
and quick as can be
Her colleagues she soon could impress

There are still some folks that you know
Who have not given CEC a go
Get on the ball
Give them a call
Their careers will develop, pronto

Tell this to teachers like Tom and like Tess
Our web site is one of the best
Go to the spot
Our info is hot
Have them join now to ease all their stress

While checking the site on the net
Tell them as members they're set
There's much to gain
Hop on our train

Check out how to join at
www.cec.sped.org.

MNCEC Offers Information Sessions on Minnesota's Highly Qualified Teacher Requirements and the HOUSSE Process

A series of four meetings will be held around the State to address the questions, comments, and concerns that educators have about the Minnesota plan for Highly Qualified Teachers and the HOUSSE process. Organized by a committee within the MNCEC Board of Directors, the first meeting was held in Minneapolis on November 15th with guest speaker Kathy Manley from the Minnesota Department of Education.

Future meetings are planned for Rochester (at the conference), Duluth, and Moorhead during the months of February, March, and April. Specific dates and times for these sessions will be sent to MNCEC members in each area and will also be posted on our web site at www.mncec.org under the "MNCAN/ Government and Policy" link.

For more information, contact board members Bryce Fornes-Bates, Roberta Kaufman, or Larry Iwen. Their contact information can be found under the "Officers and Board of Directors" link on MNCEC website, www.mncec.org.

Winter Wellness through Stress Management

by Nancy Dumke

Winona State University and MNCEC Board Member

Do the short days of sunlight affect you? Do you dread the long, cold winter?

Perhaps, you can try a new approach to these seasonal issues. We all experience some degree of stress as we adjust to changes, whether we are students, teachers, or administrators. And we all need some level of stress just to get out of bed in the morning. But how do we “keep the balance” in a way that is healthy for us and for our students?

Life is full of stressful situations, including job changes, money problems, personal loss, family changes, and illness or injury. Most of us have a variety of coping mechanisms that work well most of the time. Some of them have been learned from our loved ones. These might be stress relievers like humor, laughter, exercise, reading or reflection. When we are most stressed, it is easy to forget our natural coping skills, or ignore their benefits.

Try incorporating ONE (yes, just one!) new coping skill into your daily routine during this new season. Perhaps it is something that you have always wanted to do, but didn't feel like you had the time. Try reading a page of jokes each day. Or park your car at the far end of the lot when you go shopping. Take a half hour a day to unwind with a good book.. **Just one simple tool can impact your daily outlook.** Make that into your reward for the day. **Think of that tool as a necessity and that you are worthy of the time it takes.**

The impact of stress on our bodies is noteworthy. Without coping tools, our bodies are subject to more colds, headaches, backaches, high blood pressure, heart attacks, and strokes. We can impact how we handle the stress that we have.

Listed below are tips from the National Mental Health Association for reducing or controlling stress. Remember,

success takes practice and it will not come overnight. Your determination, persistence and time will pay off:

- 1) Be realistic – learn to say “no” to unnecessary commitments
- 2) Shed the “Superwoman or Superman” urge – don't hesitate to ask for help
- 3) Meditate – 10 to 20 minutes brings relief from stress
- 4) Visualize how you can manage a stressful situation more successfully
- 5) Take one thing at a time
- 6) Exercise – 20 – 30 minutes benefits the body and the mind
- 7) Hobbies – do something you enjoy
- 8) Healthy life style – good nutrition, limited caffeine and alcohol, rest, work and play
- 9) Share your feelings – stay in touch with friends and family, don't cope alone
- 10) Give in occasionally. Be flexible!
- 11) Go easy with criticism – don't expect too much of yourself or others
- 12) Where to get help – friend, spouse, doctor, spiritual advisor, or employee assistance professional

According to the Wall Street Journal, March 8, 2005 edition, massage is a way to treat stress. Benefits of massage include lowering blood pressure in people with hypertension and improving asthma, diabetes, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder in children. “Many physicians agree that massage can help people cope with illness by reducing anxiety and depression.” (D5)

If you happen to live near a school that teaches massage therapy, you may be able to find less expensive massage options. Some student massages start as reasonably as 30 minutes for \$10. Massage therapists with more experience may have specialty areas such as back or foot massages. Such an option may be a useful idea as we progress through the long winter months.

Free is Good

By Steven Kaatz

MNCEC Board Member and Professor, Bethal University

Apartment Finder, Autodeals, Auto Mart, Employment News and like publications are all available free at your local supermarket, drug store, etc. While not great literature and not part of a publisher's educational offering, these items can be of great help in the special education classroom especially at the middle school and high school.

Browsing through them (or their online equivalent) could be on the reward menu for a task well done. Reluctant readers may find their format attractive and their content relevant (Adventurous educators might even allow their use for some students during sustained silent reading).

Indeed having these freebies scattered about may entice some recalcitrant readers, especially boys, to start reading. Given the predilection for abbreviations in these publications, (ac, pdl, pw, ABS, exp, DOQ, ONO) the student will probably need some teacher help decoding the advertisements. (In some cases the teachers may need to be taught the lingo by the student – not a bad idea either). Using these free items might just convince some student that reading isn't just for school; real people in the "real world" need to use it, too.

Math teachers can use "real cars" and current interest rates to demonstrate how much that dream car will *really* cost. Similarly the cost and location of "real" apartments help to teach budgeting.

Map reading is a skill students need to have but often lack. These publications lend themselves to using maps. Where is the apartment building? How close is that to public transportation? Can I walk to school from there? Where is the job offered? How can I get there?

Any teacher working on transition skills can see their immediate use for students planning housing, employment, transportation and the like. Legal issues like signing a lease or securing a title come alive when used with examples that are easily available to everyone and not just "teacher stuff" (one more worksheet or computer program).

Doubtless, there are many other authentic activities that can be related to these easily available, free, authentic artifacts.

Letter from the President

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later, we have a document that is clear, concise, and again relevant to the goals of the Minnesota Council for Exceptional Children.

The draft has received approval and a recommendation from the Board of Directors to go forward with the proposed changes. All MNCEC members have an opportunity to review a revision and draft of the MNCEC constitution and bylaws online. I encourage you to do so; the draft is posted on our website at www.mncec.org.

During the MNCEC annual membership meeting at the February conference, a voice vote for approval of the constitution will take place. It is an exciting time for our organization and I look forward to seeing the membership in action as they cast their votes regarding changes to the document that not only guides our organization but also gives us purpose and direction.

Voting in the election and voting to approve the constitution are two important rights available to all members of MNCEC. However, these two activities fall under the most basic right of all, which is the right to full participation in the organization. As President, I welcome you to contact the heads of committees, the directors at large, and the officers and let us know about other ways you would like to exercise your right to participate such as working on committees and activities within the organization.

Contact information for the entire Board is available on our website by clicking on the Board of Directors link. Carrying out the mission and goals of the Minnesota Council for Exceptional Children is not just for the board of directors and during this time of change, there is no better time to exercise your membership rights than now!

The IEP Meeting

By Mark Krug, MNCEC Board Member

Northeast Metro Intermediate School District 916

So, its mid-year and you've had a couple of IEP meetings, or, perhaps, you're in one of those districts that 'save' the IEP meetings for the end of the year so that plans are in place at the start of the new school year. Maybe those meetings didn't go well, or, if you haven't had any meetings, maybe you're anxious about how to have a positive and productive IEP meeting.

One of the keys is to focus on the commonality amongst all team members: the student. If the team can focus on the strengths and needs of the student, then the IEP meeting will be a success. Of course, how to keep the team focused on the student and avoid the myriad personalities and separate personal agendas is the daunting task facing you, the case manager.

To assist with focusing the team on the strengths and needs of the student, several steps can be taken:

1. Develop an agenda and, if possible, send it out with the notice of the team meeting. On the agenda, list the date, location and time of the meeting. I recommend that you list both the start time and tentative ending time. I have found that most teams lose productivity after 75 to 90 minutes. While in an ideal

world we would have unlimited time, it is realistic to place parameters around the time to meet, and, if the team is unable to complete the agenda within that time frame, to adjourn and schedule additional time. The agenda could be drafted to include introductions, present levels of performance (broken down into 'academics, transition, behavior, etc.).

2. There is debate whether or not a draft document can be brought to a meeting. I advocate one be brought and be clearly labeled "DRAFT." I recommend this for several reasons. First, many of us are visual learners. We can sit in a meeting and discuss the student, but a written summary of the present levels of performance, adaptations, and possible goals can be quite helpful. Second, by drafting the document, it allows you, the case manager, to pull your thoughts together regarding the student. Finally, the draft document, along with the agenda, can provide structure to the meeting and be a guide to leading the discussion.
3. Be realistic when discussing the student. Avoid jargon and euphemisms; speak in plain and simple terms. Not simplistic, but terms that are understood by all team members. Note the positive strengths of the student, but don't gush over traits, skills, or behaviors of the student. At the

same time, be factual about the student's areas of need, especially when dealing with behavioral issues. Much interpretation can be done with how a student acts, keep your comments on observed actions or statements the student has made. If you feel it is important and pertinent to bring your feelings or other's into the meeting, do so with much evidence and by clearly labeling your observations as 'feelings' and not as 'facts'.

4. Take the time to briefly summarize the major points of the meeting.
5. If you've brought a draft document to the meeting, you might be tempted to have the parent sign off on the IEP at the conclusion of the meeting. **DON'T.** Even if the parent seems to be in agreement with all that was discussed, they need to be provided time to digest the information and reflect on what was shared. Inform the parents that you will incorporate what was discussed during the meeting into the final document and that you will be mailing it/sending it out five to seven days after the meeting.

There are other steps that can be taken during the course of the meeting in order to maximize the team's time and energy, but these simple steps are essential to a great beginning.

**Minnesota School Health Education Conference**

Feb. 6, 2006, Bloomington, MN
www.bemidjistate.edu/conferences/mnhealthconf
 John Rohwer at j-rohwer@bethel.edu

CCBD International Forum on Alternative Schooling

February 10-11, 2006, Norfolk, VA
 Lyndal M. Bullock at bullock@coe.unt.edu

2006 MNCEC/CCBD Special Education Conference

February 15-17, 2006, Rochester, MN
www.mncec.org

MN Division of Early Childhood Spring Conference

March 9-10, 2006, Bloomington, MN
 Jane Roundtree: jane.roundtree@anoka.k12.mn.us

The Care and Treatment Education Conference

March 12-14, 2006, Red Wing, MN
 Minnesota Dept. of Education: (651) 582-8200
<http://education.state.mn.us>

CEC Annual Convention & Expo

April 5-9, 2006, Salt Lake City, UT
 CEC: 888/232-7733, conteduc@cec.sped

Charting the Cs - Assistive Technology and Universal Design

April 24 & 25, 2006, Alexandria, MN
 Joan.breslin-larson@state.mn.us

25th National Paraeducator Conference and Annual Minnesota Paraprofessional Conference

May 11-13, 2006, Bloomington, MN
www.nrcpara.org/conference

Continued Need for Special Education Teachers For Low Incidence Populations

By **Mark Krug, MNCEC Board Member
 Special Education Manager for Related
 Services at Northeast Metro Intermediate
 School District 916**

Low Incidence populations, such as blind/vision impairment and deaf/hard of hearing continue to be in great need of teachers. These populations have remained fairly steady for the past five years, though anecdotal reports indicate an increase in deaf/hard of hearing students, especially among recently arrived refugees. While the populations have remained fairly steady, the number of teachers for these populations has not and many school districts have great difficulty filling openings with fully licensed personnel. The route to licensure is not different than for any other educational disability, but finding higher education institutions offering the training is the challenge. Due to the low prevalence, not all of the state's schools offer programs, but several are working together to solve the need.

Additional need exists in the areas of physical impairments and speech-language. Students with physical impairments are typically served by teachers with the licensure of Physical and Other Health Disabilities

(P/HD). Teachers with this license are quite versatile and provide a range of services, both direct and indirect, in serving students. Because their training is wide ranging, P/HD teachers also work with IEP teams for students with Learning Disabilities, Other Health Disabilities, and Autism Spectrum Disorders, in many instances providing consultation on environmental modifications, adaptations, and assistive technology.

Filling openings for Educational Speech-Language Pathologists has become harder in the past five years. In a recent State Improvement Grant survey of Directors of Special Education, only 68 percent of Speech-Language positions were filled on the first day of school with 14 percent of positions remaining unfilled for the year. Barriers to finding qualified applicants included a shortage of qualified personnel as well as noncompetitive salaries, as compared to what can be obtained in the private sector.

Efforts are under way to increase the licensure pool of teachers serving students with low incidence disabilities. If interested, email Clay Keller (ckeller@ecs.k12.mn.us) or Eric Kloos (Eric.Kloos@state.mn.us) for further info.

Book Review

Why Gender Matters: What Parents and Teachers Need to Know About the Emerging Science of Sex Differences

Author: L. Sax **Published by:** New York: Doubleday (2005)

Book Review by: Steven Kaatz, MNCEC Board Member
Professor at Bethel University



The title of this very readable book by Leonard Sax, MD, PhD, describes its content and why the book is important for parents and professionals concerned about special education. Although not written for a special education audience, its combination of science, anecdotal reports, and direct suggestions make it a valuable resource for those wishing to improve the lives of their students – and families.

The following few examples illustrate the very practical nature of this work.

Girls are born with more sensitive hearing than their male counterparts. Since boys usually sit in the back of classroom, a boy referred for an ADD assessment may literally not be hearing what a soft-spoken teacher is saying. A logical first intervention would be to move the referred boy to the front of the room. The “ADD” may disappear.

Emotions are processed differently in boys and girls. An ancient structure of the brain, the amygdala, is in control of some emotions. Girls develop a connection from the amygdala to the cerebral cortex enabling them to talk about feelings. Boys don’t develop this connection.

Therefore, trying to get an adolescent male to “express” his emotions, may be futile; anatomically he may be incapable of doing so.

According to Dr. Sax, “If you’re working with a girl, smile and look her in the eye . . . That gives her nonverbal reassurance that you like her and you’re her friend” (pg.86). On the other hand, when working with a boy, sit down next to him, shoulder to shoulder, with the materials spread out in front of both of you. Don’t smile. It gives some boys the “creeps.”

Another rule of thumb from the author; moderate stress, such as that caused by contests, games, confrontation, and timed tests, improve boys’ performance on tests. The same techniques have the opposite effects on girls.

Sax holds it might be helpful for boys and girls to be taught differently. Many boys enjoy math for its own sake. Girls usually don’t. “Twelve –year-old girls are likely to be more interested in the real world applications of number theory . . .” (pg. 105).

Besides discussing school performance Leonard Sax devotes chapters to such hot button issues as sex, drugs, discipline, and “beyond pink and blue”. He spends a number of

pages on the fascinating topic of the *anomalous male* and the *anomalous female*; children who don’t fit society’s expectations about their gender.

As the new school year begins, *Why Gender Matters* provides a stimulating, fact-based, overtly practical read that is sure to stimulate discussion, controversy and, perhaps, improve instruction as well.

MNDEC Update

Last October’s annual Early Childhood Special Education Fall Leadership Conference was a great success. The title, “New IDEAS Into Action,” coincided with IDEA’s reauthorization. Those who attended came away with many new IDEAS!

The MN Division of Early Childhood (MNDEC) will host its 4th Annual Spring Conference at the Marriott at the Mall, in Minneapolis on March 9-10, 2006. It’s a great event for people out in the field and focuses on issues relevant to ECSE. In addition, MNDEC will be hosting the National DEC conference in December 2008.

MNDEC strives to provide practitioners and leaders with current information impacting the needs of young children with special needs across the state. One of MNDEC’s goals is to share this information throughout the state. Please let us know what topics are of interest to you. Email: jane.roundtree@anoka.k12.mn.us.

CAN Report

by **Roberta Kaufman**
Co-Chair

Through Children's Action Network (CAN), Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) members have access to THE MOST current federal policy information and tireless advocates! Through their efforts, the voices of special educators resonate with legislators on Capitol Hill.

CAN Leadership Training in June provided Bryce and me with a new found respect for the CEC staff who engage in navigating the political network which officially gave birth to IEP's thirty years ago. We came back from Washington, D.C. convinced that each CEC member in Minnesota can become better informed of special education issues and more savvy in communicating with state and local as well as national politicians.

Deb Ziegler, one of CEC's veteran spokespersons for legislative issues on behalf of the members, will be a keynote at the MNCEC conference in February. Her insight on rules and regulations relative to IDEA and connections to the NCLB will be timely.

What follows are some reminders prepared by CEC to encourage discussions with Senators and Representatives. Remember, you are already an accomplished advocate, so use your skills.

Rules for Effective Advocacy

1. Ask for what you want.
2. Be specific in your request.
3. Be ready to work hard.
4. Find a legislative champion.

5. Organize, coordinate, orchestrate.
6. Touch all bases.
7. Stay flexible, be opportunistic.
8. Keep it simple
9. Assume the perspective of others.
10. Build and preserve your credibility.
11. Anticipate and deal with your opposition.
12. Be prepared to compromise.
13. Never burn your bridges.
14. Target your efforts.
15. Honor the staff.
16. Track your progress.
17. Be persistent.
18. Follow up.

Having the confidence of an advocate, arm yourself with the following thoughts: Politicians....

1. hold public office to help others.
2. like to be asked for help.
3. are good learners.
4. do not know everything!
5. have many demands on their time.
6. do not have sufficient resources to meet demands made on them.
7. are always running for office.
8. respond to crises.
9. behave differently when they know they're being watched.
10. like to be thanked.
11. love good press!

As I review the list nearly six months later, the suggestions are still relevant at all levels of political action, from working with students and their parents, to colleagues, administrators, and elected officials in the district, state and nationally. Individually and collectively when we have opportunity to make comments on proposed rules, regulations and legislation by, for and about special education, we have professional responsibility to have our voice be heard.

Donate to the First Annual

MNCCBD Basket Bid!

MNCCBD members are invited – and encouraged – to donate items to be included in baskets that will be available for bid at the 2006 Special Education Conference.

If interested in donating or helping, email:
Julie Corcoran at:
jcorcora@hbc.com

Letter from the Editor continued from back page

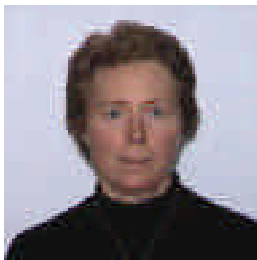
mediation. We lead by following our hearts and minds and what we know is right for our students. All this leadership comes as part of the job.

My students and I talk about doing what you can and not necessary what you want. That by caring and being consistent, keeping your agreements, and doing what you can in your role as a teacher and leader you can bring about change and make a difference.

Kris credits me with a lot more influence than I deserve. She was ready. All she needed was a little push in the right direction to extent her sphere of influence, to make a greater contribution. She mentioned becoming department chair next year. Well maybe, maybe not. That's out of her control but what she can and, I believe, will do is keep on growing and keep on leading. I am privileged to have witnessed her development and cannot wait until her next report.

Letter from the Editor

by Carol Long



I can honestly say this has been one of the best years that I've had. The needs assessment was successful. In April, special education and general education teachers met to discuss the important issues identified by the assessment, as well as brainstorm ways to address the communication needs in our building. Your guidance and inspiration was invaluable to me this year. I felt very empowered throughout this year. I was able to speak my mind and voice my opinion, instead of sitting back and listening! I believe that I stood out as a leader this year, and many feel that I should be the department chair replacement when ours retires after next year. I am also thinking about presenting at the Wisconsin special education conference next year, but I am not sure what I want to present on. Again, thanks for everything, especially the confidence that I feel! It sure is an incredible feeling!" Kris

The paragraph above is an update from the message I wrote last spring. You may remember, I wrote about a former graduate student who was seeking advice for helping her fellow special education teachers better serve

their students. Kris was the former student poised to create a success story. And she certainly did succeed! She led her department through a needs assessment that led to increased communication between regular and special education, more collaboration, stronger connections, and in the end improved instruction for all students in the building. She became a leader in her building and changed how she was perceived by faculty, administration, and, most importantly, herself.

"...by caring and being consistent, keeping your agreements, and doing what you can in your role as a teacher and leader you can bring about change and make a difference."

What I find incredible is the personal (or is it professional?) growth she experienced by taking that next step. It wasn't easy and it was a bit scary. But she was committed to improving instruction for her students and trying her leadership skills. Now she thinks of herself in a different way, as a leader, empowered to take on large-scale issues.

I believe we are a profession of leaders. We lead IEP meetings, we lead students, we lead parents, we lead committees, we lead organizations, we lead fellow faculty. We lead whether we want to do it or feel prepared to do it. We lead by example. We lead by action. We lead by



MNCEC Board of Directors Elections Mail-in Ballot



Ballots must be postmarked no later than February 8, 2006b

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Vote for one (1)

- Roberta Kaufman
- _____

Treasurer
Vote for one (1)

- Mark Krug
- _____

Secretary
Vote for one (1)

- David Nelson
- _____

*You may vote for
write-in candidates
for President,
Treasurer &
Secretary.*

Director
Vote for four (4)

- Sally Baas
- Bradley Benson
- Krista Fisher
- Marilyn Hukriede
- Jennifer McIntyre
- Melissa Schaller
- Sara Stack

Minnesota Council for Exceptional Children
c/o Carol Long
Special Education Department
Winona State University
Winona, MN 55987



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