

Winter 2017



WCASS Newsletter

WISCONSIN COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATORS OF SPECIAL SERVICES, LTD.

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President's Message

By John Peterson

Like some of you, I received my first Special Needs Scholarship Program (SNSP) notification from Wisconsin's Department of Public Instruction. My sincere hope for this student – and for all students participating in this program – is that they are successful and make great gains academically, socially, emotionally, and communicatively. As you know, WCASS continues to have great reservations regarding the level of services that students participating in the SNSP will receive. Despite differences of perspective regarding the necessity of this program, the purpose of this article is to summarize the eligibility requirements of SNSP, highlight the issues surrounding SNSP, and to provide recommendations for each LEA to consider when working with families who have a son or daughter participating in SNSP.

Eligibility Requirements for SNSP:

DPI's special education leadership team has been very helpful in distributing information regarding the SNSP and providing clarification on several issues surrounding a Local Educational Agency's requirements for students participating in this program. From this information, we know that in order to participate in the Special Needs Scholarship Program, a student must meet the following eligibility requirements during the year that they apply for SNSP:

- Be a Wisconsin resident
- Have a current Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Individual Services Plan (ISP)
- Had all of their open enrollment applications denied and any appeals upheld
- Attended a public school district for the entirety of the previous school year

There is an alternative option for students to participate in the SNSP. It includes meeting all of the aforementioned requirements with the exception of one: the student did NOT have to attend a public school. Rather, the student simply has to be enrolled in a parochial school and meet the other three requirements to apply to the SNSP School of their choice (which very well could be the same parochial school that they are currently attending; this was the case for the SNSP application that I recently received).

Issues Surrounding SNSP:

I have heard proponents of the Special Needs Scholarship Program argue that the main and solitary purpose of this program is to provide students with disabilities choices when they have not had these choices in the past due to open enrollment denials. These proponents argue that having choices for students and their families creates

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competition; competition, in turn, raises the level of services for students with disabilities. In truth, we cannot say we are providing students with disabilities and their families a choice when the student is already attending the parochial school in which he or she is applying for through SNSP. Adding the alternative eligibility option to SNSP listed above opens the door for parents / guardians to have their child continue attending the same parochial school that they have always attended under the guise of choice. Providing students with disabilities a choice may be an issue for some of the students applying for the SNSP. However, it is not an issue for all of the students in the program.

Furthermore, choice is neither the only issue nor the biggest that surrounds this program. There is a significant Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) issue that clouds SNSP. Namely, once a student is accepted into SNSP and enrolls into the parochial school, the parochial school has minimal state requirements to implement the services, accommodations, and modifications outlined in the student's IEP or ISP. If you read the parents / guardians information brochure (found at DPI's website at: <http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sms/SNSP/SNSP%20Brochure%202016-17.pdf>). From this website, we learn that the SNSP Schools have three requirements when it comes to the IEP / ISP:

1. To implement the IEP or ISP modified by agreement between the parents / guardians and the school
2. To provide quarterly updates to the parents / guardians about the implementation of the IEP / ISP and progress of the student
3. Make the SNSP student available for a reevaluation of special education needs to the resident district within 60 days of the resident district's request

Without question, this is WCASS' biggest reservation regarding SNSP: students are NOT guaranteed FAPE and their families have no recourse to challenge the SNSP School if they feel their son or daughter is not being provided the services in their IEP / ISP. To make matters even more challenging for students with disabilities and their families, there is no requirement for the SNSP School to conduct annual IEP meetings, let alone make changes to the IEP or ISP (due to progress, or lack thereof) once they are accepted into the SNSP School.

Not only is there a significant FAPE issue surrounding SNSP,

but there is also a staffing issue as well. In short, the SNSP School has no requirement to hire staff with the necessary licensure to serve students with disabilities. In Wisconsin, public schools are required to employ staff with the appropriate licensure to work with our students with disabilities to ensure that each professional has the necessary training and skills to work with the students' areas of deficit and to build upon their areas of strength. A SNSP School does NOT have to hire a Speech and Language Pathologist to work with a student with apraxia or some other communicative disorder. A SNSP School does NOT have to hire a teacher of the Visually Impaired or an Orientation and Mobility Teacher for a student who is blind or has a visual impairment. A SNSP School does NOT have to hire a Hearing Impaired Teacher or provide a Hearing Impaired Interpreter for a student who is deaf or has a hearing impairment. One would hope that the SNSP School would provide these services from teachers with the appropriate licensure, but there is no requirement for them to do so. To make matters even more challenging for our students with disabilities, even if the SNSP School wants to hire licensed teachers in the student's disability area, there is a shortage of all of these aforementioned positions.

Recommendations to Consider:

With all of the issues and differences of opinion that surround the SNSP, it is easy to lose sight of what is important: the care and well-being of our students with disabilities. Always keep the focus on the needs of the student with a disability and how to best serve him or her. I respectfully submit the following recommendations for you to consider when working with students with disabilities and their families who are participating in the SNSP:

1. Establish a point of contact with the SNSP School – if the SNSP School is willing to do so – and discuss how to best communicate with one another around the needs of the student with a disability
- Ask to be invited to the annual IEP review (although not required, hopefully these meetings are taking place)
 - Point SNSP School staff to available resources that could assist the student with a disability in his / her day-to-day needs while at school
 - Extend opportunities to SNSP School staff to come to professional development opportunities hosted

by your school district that could enhance or support the needs of the student with disability

- If you do not have a point of contact, you can go to the SNSP Schools home page on DPI's website to assist you: <http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sms/SNSP%202016-17%20School%20List.pdf>
2. Seek permission from the parents / guardians to stay in contact and offer opportunities to be used as a sounding board
- Send parents / guardians a copy of the Procedural Safeguards Notice as you would any other parent; an informed parent can better advocate for the needs of their son or daughter
 - Make them aware of resources and points of contact in case they have questions regarding how services are being delivered in the SNSP School
3. Maintain copies of all paperwork from the SNSP school and ask for copies of the current IEP or ISP once the student has been in the SNSP school
- Having copies of the progress reports, annual IEPs / ISPs (hopefully they are held), and any other documentation will help you support the student with a disability and prepare your team in its required reevaluation (held once every three years)
 - Copies of paperwork will help you stay informed of the student's progress and needs, especially if a concern in programming arises

Summary:

At the time of writing this article, there are 28 parochial schools throughout the state and an estimated 416 students that will be participating in the SNSP for the 2016-2017 school year. Again, it is my sincere hope that these students experience success and make great gains. We should do as much as we can to help all students with disabilities – including those participating in the SNSP – be successful. When it comes to advocating for our students with disabilities in the SNSP Schools, the best thing we can do is to reach out to our legislators to call for change.

I encourage our legislators to review these students' progress

closely, to analyze how many of these students are being served by teachers with the appropriate licensure, and to look for trends within parents' concerns regarding implementation and adherence to the SNSP students' IEP or ISP. If the SNSP program is here to stay, our legislature owes it to our students with disabilities and their families to ensure that the SNSP Schools are hiring licensed teachers in the students' area of disability and reviewing, revising, and implementing the students' IEP or ISP – just like we are required to do so in public schools.

If the legislature's ultimate goal for the SNSP is to provide a choice for our students with disabilities and raise their level of services through this choice, then establishing a lower standard of care and service in SNSP Schools is perplexing and counterintuitive. Not requiring SNSP schools to adhere and to review/revise the students' IEP or ISP and not mandating them to employ licensed teachers in the area of the students' disability is hurtful to our students with disabilities and insulting to their families.



Do you know a **new** Director of Special Education or Director of Pupil Services that has "knocked your socks off?" The WCASS board is developing a new award to recognize those that are new to our field and should be recognized. If you know of someone that just started in their position, or only been in it a year or two, keep an eye on them so that you are able to write up their nomination with ease. Details will be in the next WCASS newsletter. Stay tuned!



Kurt Eley, Past President

Active Engagement Is More Important Now

By Kurt Eley, WCASS Past-President

For the last four plus years I have been encouraging everyone to get involved. Involved not only by contacting your legislative representatives, but within WCASS. Your response has been great. In fact it has been so significant in regard to WCASS that we don't have enough opportunities for everyone who has volunteered. Thank you all for doing this. Please be patient as we find opportunities for you to become involved.

With the new state legislature, Congress and President of the United States beginning their terms, it is now more important than ever that we all develop relationships with them. If you are now being represented at the state or local level by a new person, this is the perfect time to make a contact with them to begin to develop a working relationship. They need to know how you are able to assist them as they begin to discuss new proposals that are being offered. Please keep in mind, this relationship takes time to develop. It may begin by you writing a letter, email or attending one of their listening sessions, but this first introduction is only the beginning. The contacts should be consistent and not only at times when you are expressing an opinion about a piece of legislation. Let them know you are here for them when any education or child related legislation is being debated or if they are thinking about proposing a bill. Let them know you would be happy to discuss with them the pros and cons of the legislation. When you are speaking with them, make the personal connection to your district or a specific student respecting confidentiality.

They like to have that personal connection. If you have the same representatives as before, be sure you reach out to them so they know that you are still here to help. Again they like the personal contact and connection. Make your conversation real and about how they impact our students. We are the voice for children who are not able to vote.

At the national level we have a new President and Secretary of Education. While we may not be able to have significant influence with these two individuals due to them being so removed from us, we certainly may be able to make some positive outcomes with our federal level representatives. Representative Paul Ryan is within our reach and a key person that we should all contact. While he only represents the southeast part of the state, he is from Wisconsin. Fostering a relationship which makes it clear that you are a resource to him will be very valuable. You may be surprised when you receive an email asking a question.

It is also important to remember what a positive outcome is in regard to legislation. Of course the most positive outcome is getting a bill passed that we support, but this is not the only definition of a positive outcome. As we have learned through our work, a positive outcome is also influencing the final outcome of the bill which could be delaying a bill altogether or changing the language so it is not as bad as it was originally written. We are living in a new world of politics. Now is the time to stay engaged.



Executive Director's Report

By: Gary Myrah

NOW IS THE TIME FOR STRONG RESOLVE

"Success is not measured by what you accomplish, but by the opposition you have encountered, and the courage with which you have maintained the struggle against overwhelming odds."

This quote comes from Dr. Orison Swett Marden, an American inspirational author who wrote about achieving success in life and founded SUCCESS magazine in 1897. This quote is as relevant today as it was at the turn of the 20th century. I write this article one week after the presidential election.

At this point in time there is great concern for the fate of the U.S. Department of Education, continued federal funding of public education, the outcome of a U.S. Supreme Court vacancy, and the sanctity of federal laws related to public education.

This concern has been raised due to public statements made by President-elect Trump related to federal involvement in public education, his support of the expansion of a voucher program for private/parochial schools, the need to reduce regulations, as well as decentralizing federal regulations.

Representative Virginia Foxx (R-North Carolina), the incoming chairwoman of the House Education & Workforce Committee, has acknowledged that they will probably not be able to eliminate the US Department of Education, yet they can may look to deregulation and defunding. Legislation is harder to undue. Ms. Foxx also said the two areas she still thinks the federal government should play a role are higher education and special education.

Ms. Foxx says that one of her priorities is the reauthorization of IDEA. Fortunately, this will be

a bipartisan issue. Yet there is the reality there may be a greater emphasis to "decentralize" and send the authority of educational issues back to the states. We are unsure what that would look like for special education.

The need for membership in CASE is critical as we begin to chart our way through the months and years ahead. We need to coalesce our collective support to maintain the protections for children with disabilities. The CASE Policy and Legislative committee is working to finalize the elements we believe need to be considered for the reauthorization of IDEA. Each of us need to establish a connection with our Congressmen and Senators. This may be in the form of emails, telephone calls, written letters that describe the positive features of having the structure of IDEA to protect the rights of children with disabilities.

I encourage you to connect with the [CASE website](#) and scroll down the page and look for 'Search for Your Elected Officials' in the left column. Type in your zip code and you will receive information specific to your US Senators and US Representative. Included in this information will be contact information as well as background information for everyone. Also, you will find important information related to the 'staffers' that assist with specific issues being considered for a vote. Look for the staffer that focuses on education or legislative issues. This is the person you need to begin writing to as you wish to address educational issues.

The CASE and CEC leadership will be working on developing issue papers that you may use as a starting point for correspondence. It is best to send a personal letter that reflects how particular

Executive Director Report continued...

issues impact the citizens of the voting district for the person to whom you are writing. It is important to recruit parents to also contact the legislative representative.

If your Senator or Representative schedule 'town hall meetings' consider recruiting colleagues to join you to be present and verbalize your concerns on a specific issue. Even if you do not support the views of your representative, it is important to still show your concern for an issue. The more an issue continues to surface from different venues as well as different constituents, the greater chance to influence the thinking of your representative.

We need each director to become politically active, even if you believe your efforts are futile. The more active and visible we are, the greater chance we may be heard. We may not have financial influence, yet we have knowledge and experience. It is time to collectively use this knowledge and experience to change the anticipated tide of attacks on public education. And don't forget a great opportunity for being visible and vocal is the CEC/CASE Legislative Summit to be held at the Weston Alexandria, VA on July 9-12, 2017!

I close with another quote from Dr. Orison Swett Marden:

"No man is beaten until his hope is annihilated, his confidence gone. As long as a man faces life hopefully, confidently, triumphantly, he is not a failure; he is not beaten until he turns his back on life."

This article was originally written for the CASE newsletter and is being resubmitted to the WCASS newsletter.

Membership

Tammy Lampereur

Don't miss out on the opportunity to connect with professionals around the state and country! Invite colleagues to join too. There are a variety of other district staff who enjoy the member benefits.

Register for WCASS:

<http://www.wcass.org/?page=22JoinWCASS>

Register for CEC/CASE:

<http://www.cec.sped.org/Membership>

- make sure to select the WI CASE division*
- check out the CASE link to see all it has to offer <http://www.casecec.org/>



Are you retiring this year? Congratulations!

WCASS would like to recognize all your hard work and dedication. Please contact any board member. If you know someone that is retiring and they won't shine their own light, then you can let us know. Contact Julie R. Prouty jprouty@cesa3.org, 608-822-2164 if you have any names to submit or questions.



THE SUPREME COURT EDUCATION CASES THE MOST SIGNIFICANT IN YEARS FOR EDUCATION

By Jerry Nicholson

The Supreme Court docket will have more cases related to education that it has had in years. Two of the cases will impact students with disabilities, and another case will look at transgender rights. I will give a brief summary of each potential case below. Needless to say this will be an interesting year from both the judicial and executive branches of government and a potential changing approach to public education.

Endrew F. v Douglas County School District (No. 15-827)

For the first time in over 30 years the Supreme Court will address what level of “educational benefit” is required for districts to meet the “free, appropriate public education” that is guaranteed in IDEA. Various circuit courts has used terms such as “some educational benefit, meaningful benefit, substantial benefit, or just above trivial”. This decision could provide some clarity for school districts, but could also potentially change the required standard in the process. It will be an interesting case that could have a significant impact on how we serve students at the local level.

Fry v. Napoleon Public Schools (No.15-497)

In this case the court will take up the issue of how IDEA and ADA law interacts. Does a student and family have to exhaust administrative procedures in IDEA before bringing forth an ADA access suit? In this particular case a child obtained a service animal to help with balance. The district already had a one on one aid in the student’s IEP to provide this support. The family sued under ADA arguing that denial of access for the service animal denied the child an accommodation.

Gloucester County School Board v G.G.

In this case the Supreme Court Justices will consider transgender rights. In particular, can a 17 year old transgender boy use the school restroom that conforms to his gender identity in a Virginia High School? The court is acting on this just one year after it established a constitutional right to same-sex marriage. The case will also look at how the Obama administration is entitled to interpret the federal regulations that ban discrimination on the basis of sex in schools that receive federal money.

As student services directors we will need to be carefully monitoring these cases and their potential policy and procedural impact on our local practices. Each of these cases fall directly into our area of expertise and responsibility. I know I am waiting to update our local transgender policy pending the outcome at the Supreme Court level. In addition, I am anxious to see the outcome in the service animal case due to the potential impact as I receive more service animal requests. The case that likely will have the greatest impact is what is required to provide “FAPE”. We will work to keep you well informed of these decisions and their potential impact moving forward.



I OPENED THE DOOR

By Barb Buffington

My name is Barb Buffington. I serve as the Director of Pupil Services for the DeForest Area School District and now serve as the new Legislative Chair for WCASS. Thank you to Kurt Eley (WCASS Past-President/Waunakee) and Jerry Nicholson (WCASS President-Elect/Middleton-Cross-Plains) for recommending my appointment and opening the door to this fantastic opportunity.

I am not new to policy advocacy, I currently serve as a member of the Governor's Council for Mental Health and the Council's subcommittee for Children and Youth. I also am an active member of the Dane County Children's Mental Health Collaborative. It was during my previous experience in Beloit, as their Executive Director for Pupil Services, that I found my passion for school-based mental health services. Together with a couple of passionate therapists, we formed a strong collaboration to provide mental health stabilization services to students in schools. When I came to DeForest and saw that students there also had those same needs, I had to do something.

I connected with the Directors in Dane County and found about the Dane County Children's Mental Health Collaborative. It was in October 2014, that I opened the door to my first meeting with the Collaborative and advocated for more school-based mental health services. It was there that I learned about a school-based mental health stabilization program that was coordinated between the County and public schools in Dane County. I wanted this program in DeForest. It would greatly benefit the students in DeForest. Dane County Department of Human Services was holding public hearings regarding their upcoming budget. A few of my colleagues and I spoke at the budget hearings. I

remember getting my designated three minutes to speak. I had written my speech that previous week and rehearsed repeatedly the night before. I wanted to be heard and be the strong voice for students. I wanted the county supervisors to hear about the growing mental health needs of students and expand funding in this school-based mental health program. After the hearings, I was confident that I did my part for students. I gave them my voice. Shortly after the hearings were complete, I found out funding was expanded funding in this program. My voice was heard and now DeForest has two full-time staff that focus on school-based mental health services.

I realize that I was one voice of many that advocated during those public hearings. This is my message to my fellow Directors. Your voice matters and can also be heard. Let us not just be the receivers of information or the compliance officers in our districts. We can be the voice in change and advocate for legislation and policy that positively impacts students. I look forward to serving you as the WCASS Legislative Chair.

Here's your legislative update:

Open Enrollment- DPI just issued a draft bulletin on setting spaces in special education for purposes of open enrollment. In case you have not seen it, you can find it [here](#) .

OCR Guidance - The U.S. Department of Education released three new sets of guidance to assist in understanding how OCR interprets and enforces federal civil rights laws protecting the rights of students with disabilities. These guidance documents clarify the rights of students with disabilities and the responsibilities of educational institutions in ensuring that all students have the opportunity to learn. You

Legislative Update continued from page 8

can find more information [here](#) .

DPI biennial budget proposal -Specific to special education, DPI is asking for funding in the following areas:

- early childhood
- increased reimbursement for School Social Workers
- increases in special education categorical aid
- School-based mental health programming
- Implementation of evidence-based programming for mental health
- Trauma Sensitive Schools
- Mental Health First Aid
- SBIRT screenings

Here's an [article](#) that highlights our State Superintendent, Tony Evers, advocating for increased funding on mental health services.

DPI's new [Mental Health in Schools](#) web page- It highlights the mental health provisions in the State Superintendent's state budget request, and also

includes a new video that tells a powerful story from the Hortonville Area School District. Please share this information.

2017-19 SAA Legislative Agenda- The SAA believes that comprehensive education reforms in Wisconsin should emulate the evidence-based best practices of the states and nations that have significantly raised academic performance and closed achievement gaps. In pursuit of this objective, the SAA offers legislative priorities specific to special education and special services:

- Increased special education categorical aid
- Mental Health Services
- High Cost Special Education

The summary of all the highlighted priorities can be found [here](#) .

WCASS Legislative-TAKE ACTION -Click [here](#) for information on how to take action and be the voice for students.



For the latest legislative and political news, see the SAA Blog at <http://wsaa.org/saainfo/>.



Congratulations!

Kurt Eley was recognized as the WCASS Outstanding Director of the Year at the WASB/WASDA/WASBO Joint Convention.



You Deserve It!

In the state of Wisconsin, there are over 400 school districts. Yet, we have only two or three people recommended for the WCASS Outstanding Special Services Administrator Award. Awards can be given out at the regional level too. What we do is difficult, and we need to “toot our own horn” once in a while. I challenge you to recognize an outstanding special services administrator in every region. Let’s fill all the awards this year. Here is a partial list:

Mainstream Teacher Award or Integration Team Award
Administrator Award
Special Education Teacher Award
Pupil Services Award (nurse, social worker, psychologist, counselor, at-risk teacher)
Special Education Paraprofessional Award
Related/Support Services Award (OT, PT, SLP, Interpreter, Adaptive PE)
Personal Achievement Award (student with disability award)

Ask yourself, who has started something new? Who has made your life easier by doing their job? Who has been having a tough year because of all they have faced and accomplished? Please contact your region representative with someone that has done great things in your area. Let’s recognize all our hard work and dedication on behalf of the children in this state.

For more information, contact your regional representative, or Julie R. Prouty

prouty@cesa3.org or 608-822-2164

WCASS Upcoming Training Dates & Events

February 1-3 WCASS Winter Conference: 3 days, Paper Valley Hotel, Appleton

February 15-16 Wisconsin Federal Funding Conference: 2 days, Kalahari Resort & Conference Center, Wisconsin Dells

May 3-5 WCASS 2016 Spring Conference: 3 days, Crowne Plaza, Madison

Please visit our website at http://www.wcass.org/events/event_list.asp

WCASS Region News

Region 1 Chair: Tanya Fredrich, Ph.D.

fredrict@elmbrookschools.org

RSN/WCASS Network Meeting of the 2016-17 school year was held on Thursday, January 19, 2017 at CESA #1. The main topic of the day was **A Review of the National Association of School Psychologists Practice Model and Application to CESA #1 Districts**, presented virtually by Stacy Skalski, Ph.D. Dr. Skalski is the NASP Director of Professional Policy & Practice. She led a discussion followed by regional district teams sharing their journey in implementation of NASP Practice Model.

Region 2 Chair: Jamie Syvred

jamie.syvred@lakemills.k12.wi.us

In CESA 2 we have had the opportunity to learn from Gail Anderson, our CESA 2 Special Education Director, about CCR IEP's. We have had many opportunities to attend trainings and discuss with other directors how to implement the new IEPs. CESA 2 new directors have also had some wonderful meetings and time to network and learn from each other.

Region 3 Chair: Trudy DeSimons

DeSimonsTr@rrsd.k12.wi.us

For information from this region, please contact Trudy DeSimons

Region 4 Chair: Eric Jensen

jensen.eric@wsalem.k12.wi.us

For information from this region, please contact Eric Jensen

Region 5 Chair: Rebecca Johnson

johnsonr@cesa5.org

Greetings from Region 5! We are definitely loving the unpredictable winter weather that has been appearing in the last few weeks. It keeps us all on our toes and allows us to become self-proclaimed meteorologists!

At RSN meetings, we have been busy discussing the

happenings inside our schools and in our ever changing world. Our districts are busy working on increasing professional development in the areas of mental health/trauma informed care and closing achievement gaps, while trying to maintain good staff morale. The team in Region 5 is always sharing resources, ideas, and supporting one another with the ever developing roles we have in our buildings. We will be starting the process for WCASS awards in Region 5 in February with our banquet scheduled for May.

Some exciting things that are happening in our Region 5 schools.....We have several Project SEARCH sites that have started in the last 2 years and have had success with our students. In many of our sites, our interns are getting hired after graduation to continue working within their sites or other employment. In our Wisconsin Dells site (Kalahari) all eight of last year's interns were hired by the company. In the Wisconsin Rapids site, 12 of the 13 interns were hired! Region 5 has Project SEARCH sites in Stevens Point, Marshfield, Sauk Prairie, Wisconsin Rapids and Wisconsin Dells. It is exciting to watch these programs develop, and we look forward to continued success with our Project SEARCH sites.

Adams-Friendship continues to be part of the AWARE grant that was created from President Obama's "Now is the Time" plan. This grant is focused on making schools safer, promoting healthy development of children/youth and increasing access to mental health services for students. It has increased the partnership with the community to assist students/families in accessing resources. Adams-Friendship has made tremendous growth with this grant and is looking forward to more success with their students. They are one of a few schools in Wisconsin to have received this grant.

Region 5 has a great group of Directors and Schools that are focused on student learning and working hard to make sure Every Child Succeeds!

Keep up the great work! Rebecca Johnson

WCASS Region News

Region 6 Chair: Marci Thiry

thiry@mjssd.k12.wi.us

For information from this region, please contact Marci Thiry

Region 7 Chair: Lisa Misco

lamisco@pulaskischools.org

Greetings WCASS members,

I hope 2017 has been positive for you all so far! This year I have been working on building relationships with new directors in our region, sharing information about WCASS and also answering questions that new directors may have. I have been so happy to get to know many of them and, as we find so often, I'm learning from their situations as much as I hope they are learning from me.

I also want to give everyone a heads up that we will be scheduling our annual awards banquet in Green Bay during late April/early May. I'll send out the link to the nomination form and hope that every district in CESA 7 is able to nominate someone and attend the banquet.

Stay warm and we'll see you at the winter WCASS conference in Appleton.

Region 8 Chair: David Kwiatkowski

davek@cesa8.org

Life is great in Region 8! Thanks to our outstanding CESA 8 RSN Director, Deb Wall, and our fantastic WCASS Executive Director, Gary Myrah, we have been able to keep the special education leaders and principals well informed of pressing issues in special education in our state. WCASS Updates are shared at our scheduled RSN Meetings (previous meetings were on November 4 and December 16, 2016). Deb always allows generous time to have frank discussions of how these issues impact our local schools, parents and especially our students in CESA 8. Deb Wall

and our top-notch Special Education Assistant, Jessica Kaczmarek do an excellent job sharing WCASS information in print form through Live Binders with all who are unable to attend.

Looking ahead, I encourage our members to mark your calendars for our next joint CESA 8 RSN / WCASS Region 8 meeting on Friday, March 10, 2017 at CESA 8. That will also be the deadline for submission of nominations for WCASS Region 8 Awards for 2016-17. Nomination forms and criteria will be emailed to all WCASS members in Region 8 in early February. Our 2017 WCASS Region 8 Awards Day is scheduled for Friday, April 7, once again at the superb Waubesa Lake Lodge in Lakewood, WI. This will be an event our member will not want to miss as it is always uplifting and gratifying to recognize and celebrate the excellence of the paraprofessionals, teachers, pupil services professionals and administrators in our CESA 8 schools. I am confident that Russ and the great staff of Waubesa Lake Lodge will again do a great job in making this day memorable for our Award Recipients, their sponsors and all who attend. We are hoping that our WCASS President, John Peterson, and Executive Director, Gary Myrah, attend that day as well!

We are also looking forward to the election of a new Region 8 Chairperson to be accomplished by that date. We are still seeking nominations for that position for a three year term to begin on July 1, 2017. Anyone interested in being a candidate or nominating a colleague should contact me by March 10, 2017. Electronic ballots will be made available to WCASS Region 8 members between March 17- 24, 2017 and the new Region 8 Chair will be announced at our Awards Ceremony on April 7.

As always, if anyone has questions, concerns or needs assistance joining or becoming more active in WCASS, they should feel free to email me at davek@cesa8.org or chat by cell at 715-927-1349.

As always... Thanks for listening! Dave

WCASS Region News

Region 9 Chair: Karen Baker

kbaker@antigo.k12.wi.us

CESA 9 was fortunate to celebrate the retirement of Dr. Eric Hartwig, Ph.D. at a recent fall meeting. Dr. Hartwig, former Director of Special Education at Marathon County Special Education, has served in this capacity for many years and has been a mentor, friend, and colleague to many of the CESA 9 Directors. He continues to serve others as he is the author of the training for the Just-in-Time: Behavior Initiative Project, and the recently released online universal behavior screener, b.e.s.t.: Behavioral, Emotional, and Social Traits. From CESA 9 – Best Wishes, Eric, this is not goodbye, but simply, “Until our paths cross again.”

Region 10 Chair: Lorna Margenau

lmargenau@cesa10.k12.wi.us

For information from this region, please contact Lorna Margenau.

Region 11 Chair: Dawn Western

dawnw@cesa11.k12.wi.us

Region 11 continues its work navigating the new forms. There has been increased focus on mental health issues and the functional behavior assessment process. Edcamps are starting to pop up in the region which has allowed for increased collaboration between districts.

Region 12 Chair: Vicki Lemke

vlemke@phillips.k12.wi.us

For information from this region, please contact Vicki Lemke.





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Membership Opportunities

Thank you to all who have renewed your WCASS and CASE memberships!

Want to join or renew WCASS membership? <http://www.wcass.org/> (click join-renew tab)

Want to join or renew CASE membership? Join CEC and then select the Council of Administrators of Special Education special interest division. <http://www.cec.sped.org/Membership>

Members! There are many new directors around the state this year. Please take time to reach out to them and encourage them to join our organization. Teaming together helps us all become more effective leaders.

Feel free to contact me with any type of membership questions throughout the year.

Tammy Lampereur tlampereur@ashwaubenon.k12.wi.us