



News

Minnesota Association of Alternative Programs Newsletter
Steve Allen, Editor

Here is all the latest news from the world of alternative education in the state of Minnesota. You can also check out our [website](#) for more information.

President's Message

By *Krissy Wright*



Hello members and friends of MAAP,

I am honored to serve as your president for the next 2 years. In my time with MAAP I have had the privilege of working with some great folks who have taught me the importance of getting involved. From participating in STARS events to attending legislative committee meetings to helping plan the annual conference, I stay involved because of the fantastic network of people.

The next couple years will be a time of transition for MAAP. We will be moving forward without the voice and leadership of some who have shaped the organization. Although daunting, I look at this as a time of opportunity. We have a strong board or regional directors and executive members who have served for more than one term or have returned because they see the value of being involved.

MAAP is a network of support, a forum for ideas, and a vehicle for innovative practices. I look forward to the work that we will do together and the growth in support and resources for alternative students and educators.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions, comments, concerns or ideas.

Cheers,
Krissy Wright
krissy.wright33@gmail.com
507.351.0422

Past President's Reflections

By *Peter Lundin*



Decades ago, when we were living in Portland OR, my family became involved with campaigning against a ballot measure (No on 9) that, if passed, would hurt friends of ours. Full disclosure, I needed pushing and prodding

to step out of my comfort zone and do something for the greater good. Once

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I was there, once I was committed, my frame of reference was changed forever. The chance to see passionate people make change happen in front of your eyes was truly inspiring. I see MAAP in a similar light. Exceptional people doing exceptional things... taking the time to write that letter, make that call, creatively innovate teaching. My point is this: You won't regret becoming involved in an organization like the Minnesota Association of Alternative Programs. You don't even need pushing or prodding! Consider becoming involved. If you're engaged at the building, local, regional, or state level, I guarantee you will meet extraordinary people and be involved with issues that positively impact kids in our schools today. Thanks for the opportunity MAAP!

2020 State Conference Review

By *Kristyn Martin*



As the MAAP Conference comes to a close, I hope that all attendees feel rejuvenated and filled with knowledge to bring back to their programs. After all, isn't that the point of our annual get together?

With over 100 breakout sessions, 2 keynotes and 400+ conference attendees, this is one of the best professional development opportunities for those in alternative education. Learning from practitioners, community experts and individuals with a shared vision is an

incredible opportunity that provides us all with a chance to grow both professionally and personally.

The conference planning committee tried a few new things this year. The pre-conference hosted by Institute for Personalized Learning was an opportunity to collaborate with your co-workers and create an environment in your programs that can set our students up for academic and personal success. Also added to the conference this year was a focus on entertainment and fun. Former Past President Cliff Skagen on the piano and the first ever March of the Retirees, as well as a brass band at the networking extravaganza was all added to enhance the experience for members, and thank all of those who have contributed so much to MAAP and alternative education in general.

There has been a lot of feedback given by those who have completed the 2020 Conference Evaluations. Many were pleased with the high quality breakout sessions. Thank you to all of our presenters! Believe it or not, the 2021 Conference Chair, Brian Cashman is already starting to plan our next conference taking place in Mankato next February. Please take the time to complete the 2020 Conference Evaluation (look in your email) and complete it so we are able to take your suggestions and include them in the decision making process for our next conference. Also, If you are looking for your Conference CEU's, once the 2020 Conference evaluation is complete, your CEU's will automatically be sent to you via email to the email address provided at registration.

Congratulations to our most recent additions to the MAAP Hall of Fame, our 2020 MAAP Exemplary Winners, Steve Hammero and Tony Scallon. Congratulations to Program of the Year, Milaca ALC and our Staff member of the year Jerry Nesland (Freshwater ALC). Your dedication and contributions to alter-

native education has created a positive impact on the lives of many. Thank you for all you do.

When looking back on the experience of the 2020 MAAP conference, it is the camaraderie amongst the members that is most impressive, and hard to beat. To be in a space with like-minded, kind and compassionate individuals from across the state is a powerful force that can create positive change for students and educators across the nation. Thank you to all our members that attended, presented, engaged and connected. I look forward to seeing you all again soon.

Conference Award Recipients

By *Steve Allen*

This is always an important part of our annual conference. See the photos below and read more about these individuals and schools on our website.

Staff Member of the Year –
Jerry Nesland



School of the Year – Milaca Area Learning Center



Presidential Award – Kristyn Martin



Exemplary Award – Steve Hammero



Exemplary Award – Tony Scallon



Save the Date!

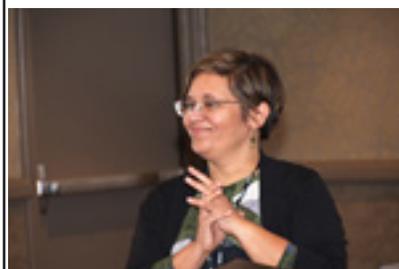
By Steve Allen

As you may or may not be aware, a few

years ago, the MAAP Board decided to rotate their annual State Conference every two years between an northern venue and a southern venue. I'm pleased to inform you that we will be back down south in 2021 and 2022. The conference will be held at the Mayo Clinic Health System Event Center (formerly the Mankato Verizon Center). The dates of the 2021 conference are February 3rd, 4th and 5th.

MDE Update

By Sally Reynolds



Area Learning Centers and Cooperation

The discussion had at the MAAP Conference at Wednesday's session on how "cooperating" is defined was so informative and helpful. Thank you to all that attended. We are taking that feedback, sharing it and seeking more input from our colleagues at MDE and the Legislature to come to a quick conclusion and communication to alternative programs across the state. More to come.

Alternative Programs Discussions at MDE

We will be offering additional opportunities for learning and sharing around what makes alternative programs alternative. Four (4) half day sessions have been scheduled, and will be at MDE. We hope this offers the flexibility to engage as many educational professionals as possible. A virtual option is

not being planned for these sessions. Registration will soon be open on the [MDE Calendar](#), and by clicking under the session links below.

Friday, February 28, 2020 – Conference Center B, Room 17

- 9 a.m. to Noon [Part A](#)
- 1 – 4:00 p.m. [Part B](#)

Friday, April 10, 2020 – Conference Center A, Room 14

- 9 a.m. to Noon [Part A](#)
- 1 – 4:00 p.m. [Part B](#)

Celebrate Career and Technical Education Month

Governor Tim Walz has proclaimed February as Career and Technical Education Month. Join us in celebrating! [Read the proclamation](#). CTE is the backbone of a strong, well-educated workforce. Students gain practical experience and learn new skills that provide them with more career choices. [Learn more about CTE](#).

Spring is a great time to start planning for your Minnesota Goes to College events!

At this workshop, participants can meet with other site coordinators to generate and share ideas for fun student activities, engaging your school community, and celebrating application and FAFSA completion. Breakout sessions on specific college exploration and financial aid topics will also be available. Minnesota College Goal co-chairs will share important initiative updates for 2020-2021 school year and provide resources for schools.

- Monday, April 27 | 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Minnesota Department of Education,
Roseville, MN | [REGISTER HERE](#)

Save the Dates: Restorative Practices in Schools and Communities June Trainings 2020

The Minnesota Department of Education School Safety Technical Assistance Center will offer trainings on restorative practices and the circle process June 15-19, 2020, in Bemidji and Cloquet, and June 22-26, 2020, in Crystal. The center is collaborating with the Minneapolis Legal Rights Center, Mickelson Consulting and Peacemaker Resources to offer the trainings. The Bemidji, Robbinsdale and Cloquet school districts will host the trainings in their buildings. The cost of a day of training will be \$70-\$85; trainings will be 1-4 days in length. More information will be available in late January. For further information, contact [Nancy Riestenberg](#) (651-582-8433).

School staff and community members looking for training in southwestern Minnesota can contact members of the Restorative Practices Network of Greater Minnesota. Go to the Restorative Practices in Schools Program Directory, found on the [Implementing Restorative Practices webpage](#), and contact Restorative Justice Coordinators in [Chippewa](#), [Kandiyohi](#), [Redwood](#), [Renville](#), [Swift](#) or [Yellow Medicine Counties](#), or [Southwest Health and Human Services](#).

Retirement Thoughts and Reflections

By *Jerry Nesland*



I have been concurrently enrolled or employed with a school since 1952. A lifetime in education!

About two years ago I started thinking about retirement. I have always told my staff... retirement is really a time to “reinvent yourself”. The word “retirement” as always sounded to final to me.

I tendered my retirement letter to the Freshwater board last July. I came to Freshwater in 2010 and always told the staff and board that I would let them know one year in advance to my leaving. I am really happy I did stay for 10 years. Now it is time to move on and invest myself in other interests and activities.

When I accepted my position with Freshwater, much of my daily assignment was that of oversight with our several ALCs and extended-time program sites. It didn't take me long to realize that alternative education is a life saver for lots of students. My new challenge was to be an advocate for those students and provide the resources, guidance, and encouragement to our ALC staff. Our ALC staff is so far ahead of me in solving daily problems and helping students succeed. I simply redefined my role as that of a person that works for my staff. Not a person that has staff working for me. The success of Freshwater has to go to staff for their 24-hour dedication to the students.

I leave this assignment knowing that some of my efforts have helped my staff hit “home runs” as truly outstanding educators that have provided huge opportunities for their students!

Speaking of home runs, I will always be thankful to Steve Allen for his MAAP leadership and friendship as well as the efforts and dedication our Freshwater ALC Specialist Jana Timm.

Regards and Goodbye!

Retirement Thoughts and Reflections

By *Kristyn Martin*



MAAP is the greatest. I love MAAP. My term is up, but it's not like I'm really going anywhere. It's been about 5 minutes and I'm already trying to figure out how I can hang around MAAP board meetings and conference planning meetings because I have a severe case of FOMO. Steve Allen and Bill Zimniewicz, that stands for Fear of Missing Out.

In all seriousness, the opportunity to be a part of the MAAP board is one of the most fulfilling opportunities I have been able to be a part of. It is rare that one is able to work with such intelligent, committed and truly compassionate individuals as those on the MAAP board. I appreciate their friendships, and how they've pushed me to grow professionally and personally. I believe in innovation, and I think it's the key to cause serious change in education. I encourage the MAAP board to continue to pursue initiatives that promote innovation. After all, our mission is To Lead, Promote & Support Innovative Learning Experiences.

To Steve Allen and Deanna Chiodo, thank you for your combined 50+ years of dedication to MAAP. I can only be grateful for being able to have worked

with both of you. Thank you for leading the way so others can continue to support alternative education in the state of Minnesota.

Retirement Thoughts and Reflections

By Emily Dirksen



Four years ago, when I was elected as the Southwest Regional Director, I had no idea what was in store for me. I initially wanted to become involved with the MAAP Board to find out more about MAAP. At the time I had been the advisor for our MAAP STARS program for about ten years, and I wanted to learn more about the organization that created this wonderful opportunity for our kids.

Being on the board I felt a bit out of my element at first, because there was a lot of conversation around the MAAP budget. Since I am a teacher and not an administrator, I generally never deal with the budget. In the end, this was probably the most difficult part of my time on the board, because tough decisions were made, ones that greatly affected the STARS program, a program that is the reason I got involved with MAAP in the first place. However, my takeaway here is that I am grateful for those who make these tough decisions on a regular basis and know that the focus is always on what's best for our kids.

One of the greatest joys, and something that I will cherish in the years to come, is the relationships I formed with other

educators from around the state. There is a huge difference between those that teach in a traditional setting and those who are in alternative education. These teachers and administrators are so passionate about their work and their students that it drives me to be a better educator as well! The sacrifices they make and the creativity they use to ensure that their students are successful is simply inspiring!

Finally, I encourage everyone to get involved with MAAP. I don't think I realized how much effort goes into this organization to really support the teachers and administrators in alternative settings. There are so many ways to get involved, and it's a great way to learn more about alternative education.

Retirement Thoughts and Reflections

By Lea Dahl



When I think back on my 34 years in education, it seems to have gone by in the blink of an eye. I don't think I would change my career path & choices much (maybe finish my math licensure?). And despite the changes and challenges, I would and do recommend this amazing career to anyone willing to listen.

I grew up in North Minneapolis and most of my high school class didn't go to college. After a few years working at Dayton's, I realized that to advance

in my career I needed some sort of post secondary education credential. I enrolled at the U of MN when I was 21 and was woefully unprepared. As soon as I started college, I learned there was so much I didn't know. Learning was so exciting. Each new course presented a new possible career. Psychology, Creative Writing, Accounting, Law, Art (NOT Botany). I wanted to major in all of it, but after 5 years in college, I needed to settle on something and finally did: Education. My husband was happy that I finally made a decision.

My first year in teaching was rough. I wasn't well prepared for a suburban classroom and my administration wasn't helpful. But then someone called me from this crazy Intermediate district that had a job opening, and I found my calling, teaching less advantaged students in a less traditional setting. Initially, I taught postsecondary classes at Hennepin Technical College and soon, I moved to teaching high school aged ALC students. My heart was opened up and teaching became a passion, not a job. After a decade and a half in the classroom, I spent the last decade and a half as an ALC Principal.

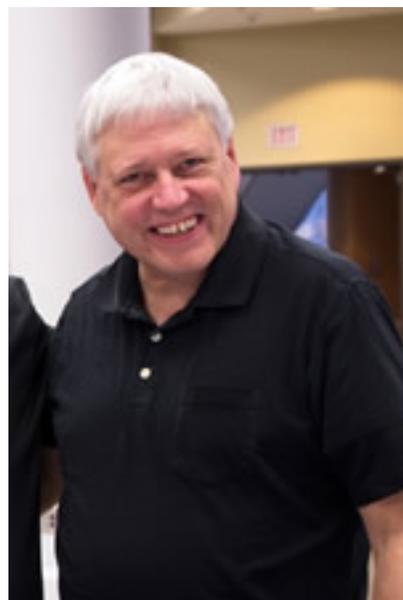
I have always loved and believed in alternative students and their stories and their talents and their challenges. I feel proud and giddy every time I attend a graduation ceremony; seriously, as proud as I am of my own children's accomplishments. The students who find their way to us in our ALC, may not have had easy life paths, but we make sure they have real and tangible opportunities to succeed.

So now this is my commencement. The remaining work path is short. I'm walking out at the end of June. I'm sure I'll be looking over my shoulder and smiling. And I am sure I will keep connected in some ways to MAAP and Minnesota Education, like any good

alumnae should. Call me if I can help you, or if you need someone to listen. I promise to get back to you, just as soon as I return from my next path, Wales & Norway.

Retirement Thoughts and Reflections

By *Bill Zimmewicz*



When asked to write this piece as a reflection on my 36-year career in alternative education I had a difficult time to begin writing. I may not be good at leaving my career. I'm not sure.

I had originally planned on retiring on New Year's Eve, December 31, 2020, but Dave Hagman convinced me that I should think about retiring at the end of the school year. I concurred. I'm ready to step down, but I won't not work in some capacity for alternative and progressive education. I think I can still be of value for our cause.

I look back when I started teaching, at a Native American alternative school in St. Paul. I knew next to nothing. Eventually I matured, perhaps too slowly. Jerry Buckanaga, who was from the

White Earth Reservation in Minnesota, became my first great mentor. I learned a lot from him.

Later I started two alternative schools: one ALC in South St. Paul and, the other, a charter school in West St. Paul. Both schools are still in operation and doing well.

I've seen our organization—the Minnesota Association of Alternative Programs (MAAP)—evolve a lot. I remember when our conferences had fewer than 120 people attending and then growing to well over 800 at Arrowood in Alexandria, Cragun's near Brainerd, Rochester and Duluth. MAAP then contracted some. This was due in part of state funding shortages. MAAP continued to have amazing conferences; and in this past conference, amazingly organized and run by Kristyn Martin, was one of the best. Our conference is often described as the best one to attend for practitioners.

I do miss many MAAP members from my earlier days. Dan, Luger, Gene, Wal-ly, Julia, Loren and many others were influential for me in understanding that MAAP is leading and supporting innovative learning.

It became easier for me to take up a leadership role since Wayne Jennings was my mentor for more than half of my career. And from Wayne, I learned an abundance amount. He affirmed my beliefs and shared with me and others, volumes of research data and personal stories of battles he had fought to make education relevant for our students. Wayne dared to challenge harmful traditions and practices in education and encouraged us to come on aboard for the fight.

I will miss working with the staff at Jennings Community School. They are the best! I hope to attend the MAAP State Conference as long as I can. I have too

many friends there not to show up.

Retirement Thoughts and Reflections

By *Steve Allen*



Where do I start? I have been involved in MAAP for close to 40 years. If I start mentioning names of people who have been important to me and to our organization, I'm surely going to forget many people. So, I will apologize right from the beginning! However, it doesn't matter, MAAP members tend to check their ego's at the door and they know who they are and how important that they have been.

I do have to mention Arlo Renschler and Lydell Taylor. Both of these great leaders have passed away, but we owe a lot to these individuals. Arlo and Lydell always challenged your operating assumptions. They were so far ahead of most educators at that time and if they were still alive, they would still be challenging us to provide better opportunities for kids. I had numerous discussions with Arlo and Lyell that often lead to challenging discussions and yes, sometimes some laughter, as well.

Over the years, we have had candid and sometimes difficult discussions with State Department representatives and legislators. Two State Department representatives who have had a significant impact on alternative education are Gene Johnson and Bob Wedl. Gene was the voice of reason during the early



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years of Area Learning Center implementation. Gene was the “guide on the side”, often advising members on starting and/or expanding their schools and programs. Bob was a force unlike any that we have ever had at the Department. Bob really helped bring credibility to the work that we do. Bob helped our schools and programs in many ways, but the most significant impact that he had was with the implementation of independent study and personalizing learning. I would be remiss if I didn't mention Sharon Peck. Sharon was instrumental in assisting alternative programs with their student accounting systems. She attended numerous MAAP conferences and answered hundreds, if not thousands of questions. When the legislature passed the “90%” legislation, Sharon (and other MDE staff) assisted our schools and programs in better understanding their revenue sources. This helped assure that alternative schools were receiving all of the revenue that was allocated to them.

In the past, we have often had support from legislators on both sides of the isle. Senator Jim Pehler was one of the most influential legislators. Jim helped pass Area Learning Center Legislation and along with former Governor, Rudy Perpich, numerous choice initiatives. (One of my fondest photos is a photo that I have with former Governor Perpich.) I will never forget the comment that Senator Pehler made at the capitol. (Para-phrased when discussing revenue needed for alternative schools and programs.) “You can either pay it now or pay for it later!” In more recent years, former Representative David Bly (also a past MAAP President) has been extremely helpful and influential with legislative issues and concerns.

I've taken the liberty to cut and paste the list of past MAAP Exemplary Award recipients. Every one of these individuals have left their foot print on

alternative education in Minnesota.

1998

- Wayne Jennings
- Bob Jibben
- Gene Johnson

1999

- Steve Allen
- Roger Klimpel

2000

- Arlo Renschler
- Governor Rudy Perpich (posthumously)
- Lydell Taylor

2001

- Dan Daly
- Patti Haasch
- Peggy Hunter

2002

- Wally Campbell
- State Senator Jim Pehler

2003

- David Bly
- Senator Paul Wellstone (posthumously)

2004

- Don Glines

2008

- Mike Luger
- John Sedey

2009

- Joan Sorenson
- Bob Wiltsey

2010

- Mary K. Boyd

2011

- Bob Wedl

2012

- Julie Johnson-Willborg
- Lorin Ellertson

2013

- Julia Jilek
- Bill Zimniewicz

2014

- June Long
- Dee Thomas

2015

- Kip Sackett
- Scott Neiman

2016

- Sue Boehland
- Katy Mohabir

2017

- Dave Hagman
- Ted Kolderie

2018

- Lea Dahl

2019

- Tom Wendt
- Mark Wolhart

2020

- Steve Hammero
- Tony Scallon

I've loved every minute of my tenure with this great organization. We've provided a lot of opportunities for students and staff and we've even enjoyed some laughs along the way. Our mission statement, To lead, promote and support innovative learning experiences, still holds true today. One of my favorite laughs was when we were having a Board meeting at Camp Ripley near Little Falls and one of our members called in from Paynesville and asked where the meeting was at! We also experience another good laugh a few years ago when the conference was held in Rochester. Ask Wayne Jennings or Joan Sorenson about the time they offered to provide a ride to the airport for our keynote speaker and ended up

spending the whole day with her at Mall of America!

I've had the opportunity to meet many outstanding individuals along the way. Our current membership is extremely strong and there appears to be a strong group of young progressive thinkers who are ready to lead. I'm extremely excited about the future of alternative education movement in Minnesota.

Keep the torch burning!

MAAP STARS Legislative Day at the Capitol

By Patti Haasch



Hi Everyone,

What a GREAT day at the Capitol!!! I appreciate getting the pictures people are sending to me. White Bear Lake ALC even got their picture taken with Gov. Walz!! I'm getting pictures put up on the MAAP Facebook page and also sending them to Steve Anderson for the MAAP Newsletter. Remember, those pictures are valuable to your legislators as well especially if they are running for re-election. You can send them a picture along with a "Thank You" for meeting with you. Hope they got invitations to visit your school too.

Because of the schedules individual schools set up with Legislators, tours, etc. people came and left as they needed from Room 500. In case you weren't there the whole time, here's a list all those who

did come and addressed the large group meeting which was lead by three MAAP STARS Officers: Vanessa Boyum (Owatonna ALC), Ansaia Phillips (Jennings), and Destiny Rollie (Paladin).

- Krissy Wright - MAAP President
- Tony Scallon - MAAP Legislative Committee Member
- Brad Lundell - lobbyist & long time supporter of MAAP
- Representative Cheryl Youakim - House Education Policy Committee Chair
- Representative Jamie Becker-Finn (Representatives Youakim and Becker-Finn have both signed the House bill in support of funding MAAP STARS)
- Special notation: Peter Wiczorek from Northwest Passage High School came even without students. Peter visited Rep. Zach Stevenson from Coon Rapids and Rep. Stevenson signed on in support of the MAAP STARS funding bill as Peter talked with him!!

Those who could come to the 12:30 - 1:30 PM meeting with the PELSB ladies ~ both named Michelle. We had an informal discussion on Teacher Preparation: What Makes A Good Teacher & Learning Environment. Many students and staff gave excellent feedback. If you missed out on that, you can have students write out answers to those questions that you received before (let me know if you want the questions again) and you can send them to me and I'll make sure they get submitted.

Now, for your homework assignment can you please go to the MAAP website, under the MAAP STARS tab and go to the MAAP STARS Legislative Day section on the drop down list? There's a Legislative Day Follow Up Link that we ask for you to fill out so we have a record of what schools came and what Legislators people met with. This is valuable information for the MAAP Board & the MAAP Legislative

Committee.

REALLY - THANK YOU, STAFF for bringing your students to the Capitol! I know it takes a lot of effort on your part to get there with your students. And please let the students know that I'm grateful to them as well.

Let me know if you need anything and we'll see you at the MAAP STARS Spring Events Conference, May 7 & 8 at the Double Tree Hotel in Bloomington.

Legislative Update

By Wayne Jennings

The MAAP platform has two items:

1. Extended day and year. We want the present extended time based on an inflation-proof base formula. That base has not changed for us for ten years. We also want a restored multiplier factor of 1.5. Presently it is 1.2. The Legislature reduced it during a time of budget crisis. We introduced: Bills SF 2183 and HF 2210 to provide the remedies. Unfortunately, there were no hearings.

2. Provide an appropriation of \$45,000 for MAAP STARS. See bills SF 2425 and HF 2139

We made contacts with the Governor, Lt. Gov., Commissioner, MDE personnel, and some legislators by members and particularly, Patti Haasch. We urged our members to contact their legislators. We always receive a favorable reception about our needs but did not get hearings in the respective education committees, due to the power of the chair.

We haven't given up and, there's always next year.

Plus, we have our Legislator Day, February 19, 9 AM in room 500 of the State Office Building. The meeting presents a great opportunity for students to meet their respective legislators- always a positive

experience. There will also be another special meeting in that same room, the same date from 12:30 - 1:30 with the Professional Educator Licensing & Standards Board (PELSB) members. They are interested in hearing from our students about what makes a good teacher. It's another great opportunity for our students to be heard.

Our Legislative Committee (lively and active group of about 12 members, open to anyone [including people in the far reaches of the state via an Internet connection, (Thanks, Steve Anderson)]) and the Executive Committee urges continued contact with your local legislator via 1) an invited visit to your site, 2) students telling their story a legislator, 3) your conversation with the Senate or House member. A number of you did so this year and received a favorable response. Thanks!

We believe that our interests need to be represented in the MDE request to the legislature next time. Contact involves a very early timeline prior to the convening of the Legislature. We also need to contact the chairs of Education committees to at least receive hearings before their committees. We continue to learn about the legislative process and thus better our chances for success.

Thanks especially to Steve Allen for his most capable, knowledgeable leadership of the committee.

Alternative Assessment

By Brandon Wait

In our last newsletter and at this year's conference, some of you have been introduced to a possible new alternative student assessment, the MAAP Student Survey. One of MAAP's priorities has been try to find alternative forms of assessments that are more relevant to the needs of our students. We desire to find new ways to support accountability

while showcasing all the great work we know our schools are doing. This has led to the development of a proto-type alternative student survey, which is shown on the last page of this newsletter.

At some point in the up-coming school year, MAAP may be piloting this instrument. This will be a voluntary process. We anticipate that all of the data will be maintained and utilized at the local level. During the piloting process, we will be encouraging participants to be involved in future discussions on how effectively demographic and anecdotal information is collected and utilized. We also would like to help validate the effects that our schools and programs have on the students that we serve. Watch for more information!

AERO National Alternative Conference Coming to Minneapolis

By Wayne Jennings

The Alternative Education Resource Organization (AERO) will be holding its national conference June 25-28, 2020, in Minneapolis. The conference will be held at the Crowne Plaza, Bloomington, near the Mall of America. AERO has been a national organization for 50 years supporting educational alternatives. The conferences always feature exciting speakers and practical sessions. Wayne Jennings and Joe Nathan, among many others, will do a session at the conference. For more information and registration materials, go to <https://www.aeroconference.org>.

Recovery Schools

By Traci Bowermaster

Recovery schools in Minnesota continue to thrive in their efforts to

help young people support each other in embracing sobriety in enriching educational settings. The six recovery schools in our state are APEX Recovery School in Rochester, Central Freedom in Mankato, Detroit Lakes Recovery School, Insight Recovery School in White Bear Lake, McKinley Recovery School in St. Cloud, and PEASE Academy in Minneapolis. These schools find ways to bring students together to widen the circle of and celebrate young people in recovery at such events as the Fall Fun Day at APEX in September, the Snow Tubing Party at Green Acres in February, and Sober Prom on the Jonathan Padelford and Recovery in the Park at Augsburg University, both in May. Nationwide, 42 recovery schools are currently operating in 20 states with more schools in development.

Research about the effectiveness of recovery schools is promising. Studies show that students in recovery high schools have higher graduation rates; report significantly lower absenteeism are more likely to abstain from using substances; and have significantly fewer days using marijuana and other drugs (Finch, Tanner-Smith, Hennessy, & Moberg, 2017). However, with approximately 83,000 young people receiving treatment for substance use last year (although its predicted that close to 1 million met the criteria for needing treatment), there are only about 1000 seats in recovery schools nation-wide, or seats for only 1.2% of eligible recovering youth. Why the huge disparity? Recovery schools are costly to operate, have unpredictable enrollment numbers, and require staff with very specific hard-to-find skill sets. The Association of Recovery Schools continues to connect those who are interested in starting recovery schools with organizations like SAMHSA with funds and resources to provide technical support to develop new programs. Contact www.recovery-schools.org for more information.

What is a Contract Alternative Program?

By Amy Anlauf, Senior Director of Education for Project for Pride in Living's Alternative schools: MERC and Loring Nicollet

Contract Alternative Programs (CAP's) are State-Approved Alternative Programs (SAAPs) that are run by non-profit organizations that contract with a local district to provide academic programming for students who have not been successful in the traditional public school system. CAPs have been operating in MN since the early 1970s. Currently, in MN, there are eight different CAP programs connected to 7 different nonprofits, offering multiple different types of credit-earning programs for students in both Minneapolis and St Paul. CAP schools provide educational service to young people who have identified barriers according to MN state Statute: M.S. § section 124D.68. This statute states that students experiencing these types of barriers are considered to be at risk of dropping out or falling behind their peers, therefore eligible to enroll in this type of alternative learning environment.

- performing substantially below grade level
- behind in credits for graduation
- are pregnant or a parent
- have experienced physical or sexual abuse
- chemically dependent
- mental health problems
- currently or recently homeless
- have withdrawn from school or are chronically truant
- speak English as a second language or have limited English
- school district referral

A significant characteristic of a CAP school is their diversity in both Ped-

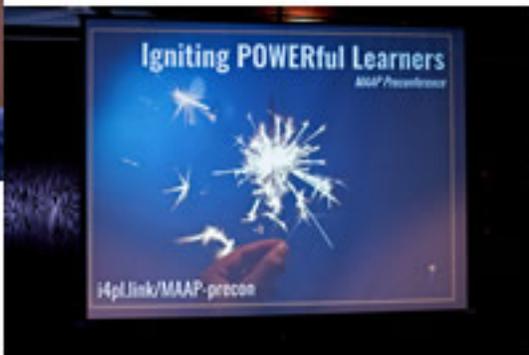
gogy and service delivery. There is no standard model of delivery for CAP schools. Still, they all carry a common goal of High school graduation, along with personal growth and engagement at the individual level for each student. For some programs, this translates into goals aligned to a student's career paths and/or others, it is an environment that fosters a reengagement of self and community. CAP's are all in one way or another, united in their commitment to providing educational alternatives and opportunities for students who are having a difficult time fitting in or succeeding in traditional public schools. Students attending CAP's must meet the same graduation requirements as their peers at their partnering district. Therefore a strong partnership with their contracted district is critical. There are multiple factors that link strong CAP performance to longevity within their districts. Dual purposes programs that focus on both academics with a social-emotional lens, small class sizes, employment-focused content, with a strong staff who focus on authentic relationship building with their students.

For over five decades, these trailblazing programs have continued to focus on personalized instruction with flexible learning environments for all their students. CAPs value their district partnership and, to date, continue to focus on a student population that has fallen behind in credits and are looking for an environment that offers the opportunity to find reengagement in self, school, and community.



MAAP
Minnesota Association of
Alternative Programs
News

MAAP 2020 CONFERENCE - THE YEAR IN PHOTOS





MAAP STARS - LEGISLATIVE DAY 2020 IN PICTURES



MAAP "DRAFT" Student Survey 2020-2021

- A. Student Demographic Info (same)
- B. Student Perception questions (allows for narrative paragraph)
- Describe how you learn new information and skills best?
 - Why did you enroll at name of the alternative program?
 - What barriers have you experienced in going to school?
 - Do you feel that you are being successful in school now? Please share with us why.
 - What could be done to improve your education experience at name of the alternative program?
- C. What type of instruction helped you achieve academic success at name of the alternative program?
- Insert Likert Chart from original survey*
- D. For the following statements, please select a score from 1 – 5
(1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = No opinion, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree)

I feel safe at this school.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel supported by at least one staff person at this school.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel respected by most of the staff at this school.	1	2	3	4	5
I am provided with helpful community resources by this school (social services, counseling, housing, food, etc...).	1	2	3	4	5
This school has helped me to become a better learner.	1	2	3	4	5
I have become a more independent learner at this school.	1	2	3	4	5
I have become a better manager of my stress at this school.	1	2	3	4	5
I have become more sensitive to the needs of others while at this school.	1	2	3	4	5
I am well prepared for a career and/or college after attending this school.	1	2	3	4	5
I would recommend other students to attend this school.	1	2	3	4	5