

Here is all the latest news from the world of alternative education in the state of Minnesota. You can also check out our website at <http://www.maapmn.org/> for more information.

MAAP STARS Spring Conference Update

By Patti Haasch and Dan Daly



MAAP STARS Officers: Peyton Dean, Daisah Var, Carl Fisher, and Desiree Henry welcomed students and staff from 29 Minnesota programs/schools on Wednesday, April 26 at the Doubletree Hotel in Bloomington. Over 200 students could choose from 16 different competitive, non-competitive, and individual or team events under the watchful eyes of 58 Advisors. Each student was recognized for their participation and awarded a ribbon for the events. The 90% level get a gold ribbon, 80% level is silver, and 70% level are blue for

the competitive events. The Artistic Performance and Project Demonstration participants earn green ribbons.

Some students moved into the semi-final and final rounds of the qualifying events over the two days where they could win a medal and/or plaque to take back to their school. Those scoring through 8th place were recognized for the individual competitive events and through 3rd place in team competitive events. The top three teams will also receive medals for each participant.

Besides ribbons, plaques and medals, students go home with feedback on their events written by the many volunteer judges that critiqued the students efforts. We encouraged everyone to give feedback to the 46 students that submit their artwork. All students in attendance were given certificates to put their ribbons on. These were carefully printed by AndreaLynn Johnson and Brenda Johnson-Bell of Varitronics, LLC (www.variquest.com) while the conference was going on when they weren't helping by being volunteer judges. Announcers at the Preliminary and Grand Awards Ceremonies were: Kristyn Martin, Krissy Wright and Troy Johnson.

Chloe Ludwig, from Northwest Passage High School, scored the highest in Public Speaking. Chloe read her speech at the end to all in attendance

at the Grand Awards Ceremony. Chloe's very powerful speech received a standing ovation and cheers from the audience.

Top school winners of the Team Events are shown on the next page:

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	First	Second	Third
Team Advertising:	Hermantown ALP	Northwest Passage	Brooklyn Center
Mgmt. Decision Making:	Brainerd AEC A	High view Alt. B	Ivan Sand A
Parent Decision Making:	High view ALP	Brooklyn Center	Brainerd AEC C
Team Video:	Northwest Passage B	St. Croix Valley A	Northwest Passage A
Community Service Project:	Worthington ALC	Fergus Falls C	Fergus Falls A
Annual Program of Activities:	Northwest Passage	Pillager Area Charter	Worthington ALC
Entrepreneurship:	Jennings Community	Voyageurs Exp.	St. Croix Valley ALC
Life Smarts	Brainerd AEC	South St. Paul	Worthington ALC

Additional activities that took place during the Spring Events Conference included swimming, a photo booth with Christine & Pat Salokar, a cookie social, Bingo with Mary Ecklund-Tollas and other games in the Garden Court. We held a “Future Career Fair and Workforce” on Thursday that included Minnesota State Colleges and Universities plus several Community Presenters organized by Dawn Kalina. The MAAP STARS Officers’ community service project this year was again making “Thank You” cards for Veterans. Those get delivered to the Veteran’s Home out by Fort Snelling.

So many people deserve a “thank you” for organizing, preparing and carrying out the conference for this major MAAP STARS event of the year, starting with Kip and Liz Sackett, our conference co-chairs, Heather Fjelstad who lines up the over 100 volunteer judges, Mary Ecklund-Tollas, MAAP STARS Treasurer, Mike Myers-Schleif who does the registrations and event scheduling along with headquarters management throughout the conference, Don Hettinga who handles all those ribbons, the plaques come from Theresa Boisjolie & Brandi Greer of Northwest Passage and the White Bear Lake ALC staff and students handle the MAAP STARS clothing sales. And where would we be without the alternative education staff members who

get their students to the conference and cheer them on as they participate in the various events? We are grateful to the MAAP Board for their continued support as the parent organization of MAAP STARS, along with Steve Anderson, the MAAP Website Master who keeps getting information and pictures out there about this wonderful event. This is a shining example of people making the most of volunteer efforts for those students in alternative programming. It demonstrates: Success, Teamwork, Achievement, Recognition, and Self-esteem building (STARS) all in one year end conference!

Next year’s conference dates are: April 10 – 11, 2018 at the Doubletree Hotel in Bloomington. MARK your calendars so even more students and staff can plan to attend. Help MAAP STARS continue its vision of: **“Achieving Extraordinary Life-Changing Results for Learners.”**

LifeSmarts by Dan Daly

LifeSmarts competition at the STARS Conference was another great success! Twenty-four teams from throughout the state participated, with the Brainerd Area Education Center taking top honors. It was an exciting final match as only one correct answer separated the top 3 teams. South St. Paul was runner-up with Worthington finishing third.

LifeSmarts is a nation-wide program featuring quiz bowl type questions on consumer issues such as personal finance, consumer choices, technology, health & safety and environment. Online competition starts in the Fall, with a State Tournament in February and a National Championship in April (San Diego, CA in 2018!). We were again honored to have National LifeSmarts Coordinator Lisa Hertzberg

serve as a judge, who noted that STARS teams would match up well in State and National competitions. We hope to see more STARS teams next year, see www.lifesmarts.org to find out how to get started.

Congratulations to all the winners!





MAAP STARS Awards

By Patti Haasch

Two awards were given out at the MAAP STARS Spring Events Conference on the evening of Wednesday, April 26 during the Preliminary Awards Ceremony. On hand to give out the awards was Kevin McHenry, MDE Assistant Commissioner, Eliza Kelly, MAAP STARS State-wide Advisor, and Patti Haasch, MAAP STARS Chair.

The **Student Of The Year** award was given to Michelle Ramirez who attends Worthington ALC. Anne Raetz, Michelle's MAAP STARS Advisor, nominated Michelle for the leadership role that she played in their school, particularly for their "Culture For A Day" Service Project. Michelle has received numerous recognitions while attending Worthington ALC. She is graduating this school year and has been accepted at Winona State University for next

year. Other nominations for this award were: Rhianna Gantzer (Academic Arts), Breanna Kissel (Ivan Sand Community School), Chloe Ladwig (Northwest Passage High School), Daisah Var (Jennings Community School), Karla Vazquez Resendiz (Austin ALC) and Carl Fisher (Paladin Career & Tech High School).



Advisor Of The Year is Eliza (Liza) Kelly who teaches at the Austin ALC. Liza was nominated by two of her students. Some quotes from their nomination: "Mrs. Kelly truly cares about the students that she works with." "She's a very good teacher and she makes me feel truly safe in the ALC and in MAAP STARS." "She always makes time for me even if it's not about school." In addition to working at Austin ALC, Liza is a State-wide MAAP STARS Officer Advisor and has served on the MAAP Board as a Southeast Regional Director. Ms. Kelly also has been the Chair for the Art Display at the Spring Events Conference for the last two years. Other nominees for this award were: Heather Fjelstad (Academic Arts High School) and Deb Risberg (Voyageurs Expeditionary High School).



Congratulations to those two award recipients who have demonstrated exemplary qualifications and dedication to their schools and MAAP STARS. You can find the nominating criteria for each of these awards on the MAAP website and we encourage everyone – students and staff to nominate a deserving person(s) from their programs. A special "shout out" to Variquest (www.variquest.com) for making the plaque awards.

MAAP STARS Student Artwork

Below, and on the next page, are some of the great student Artwork that was displayed at this year's Spring Conference. Our students are extremely talented!





Alchemist 2016 & 2017 Available

Our long-time Alchemist Editor, Shelly Peterson from Molly Spring ALC, resigned after completing the 2016 Alchemist edition. Shelly and the students and staff at Molly Spring ALC

have been responsible for the producing the Alchemist for many years. We are sincerely appreciative for all of their efforts! Our new editor is Deb Nelson and she completed the 2017 edition in time for the MAAP STARS Spring Events Conference. CD's for both years were given to the programs who attended the conference. THANKS to all the students who contributed their work for publication! Be sure to use that on your resume.

Deb Nelson wants everyone to know that you can submit student artwork and writings for the 2018 edition online to alchemisteditor@gmail.com at any time; even starting now. Deb will leave that link open and check it periodically. The Alchemist guidelines and all the Alchemist issues can be downloaded off the MAAP website.

Here is the link to the Alchemist webpage:

<http://www.maapmn.org/Alchemist.html>

MDE Summer Workshops By Mary Barrie

Minnesota Department of
Education

I wanted to say what a wonderful event that I was privileged to be able to be a judge at the MAAP STARS competition that was held April 26 and 27. Kudos to the organizers of this wonderful event. If any of you have been considering having your students participate in this I highly encourage it. If any of you have thought about volunteering but have not done so, I highly encourage that as well. Just a great experience.

I also want to share that MDE is partnering with MAAP to offer several



summer seminars this August. On Monday, August 14, we will have the first annual Online and Digital Learning Workshop. Jeff Plaman (jeff.plaman@state.mn.us) is coordinating this. The Online and Digital Learning Summer Seminar is an opportunity for teachers and administrators in K-12 online, hybrid, or blended learning environments to network, share, and learn. Participants will engage with a variety of session formats facilitated by teachers, program administrators, students, and MDE staff focused on improving student learning. I believe there are multiple connections to be made between our Independent Study programs and Online Learning programs and that this workshop will be relevant for our staff as well. The next day, August 15 will be the SAAP Summer Seminar. I have many MDE and district staff lined up to discuss Targeted Services, summer programs, meals, finance, reading strategies, science strategies, etc. I think it will be a great day. On August 16, those of you that have approval to run an Early Middle College program will be invited to a workshop regarding that. Beth Barsness (beth.barsness@state.mn.us) is coordinating that and contacting invited programs.

Registration is \$38 per day and includes your breakfast and lunch. This year we are also able to accept PayPal thanks to MAAP. Here is the link to the registration page:

<http://www.maapmn.org/events/>

We are limited in terms of space so please get your registrations in as soon as possible.

Legislative report

By Wayne Jennings and Steve Allen

As the legislative session finishes up, it

appears that this Legislature did very little for us. The deadlock between conservatives and liberals was reduced to tax cuts vs taxes used for societal benefits like education and infrastructure.

We learned a valuable lesson this year. In the future, we have to convince the ruling party of our needs! The subordinate party has little power. (Some of our bills that were submitted by the subordinate party didn't even get a hearing in a committee.) We'll have to work harder to sharpen and simplify the planks of our platform so that anyone sees and understands our views. We even had one of our bills introduced by another organization and that organization then refused to work with us! It was a very interesting session, to say the least! In the future, we have learned that we need to be more focused and more willing to work across both isles and with other organizations.

Again, we stress the importance of contacts with legislators during the off-time. This can be done by inviting them to see our programs and meeting with them over coffee. Note: always have 2-3 of our people at meetings and even better, an articulate student.

Start a meeting with common ground, for example: Do we agree that it's important that all kids get educated for their future and society's needs? That our kids can disrupt the education of other kids in regular classes? And therefore it's best to provide education for at-risk kids in another setting that helps them learn and overcome their problems?

Please meet with them. It's always interesting and pays dividends.

E-lympics

By Tom Wendt

The E-lympics is coming!

Thursday, May 18th

9:15-11:15 AM and 12:00-2:00 PM

On Thursday, May 18th, the E-lympics will be held for alternative programs from throughout the state of Minnesota. We will do two sessions of two hours each with an 45 minute break in the middle. Sessions will run from 9:15 to 11:15 and 12:00 to 2:00. The last questions are released at 10:45 and 1:30 but 30 minutes are allowed for their submission.

The competition will be held using the Schoology website. Teams will be given the site address and a password with which to log in. The format is as follows: 3 questions are immediately posted at the start time with one additional question posted every five minutes. Teams have up to 30 minutes from the time each question is posted to submit an answer for that question. At the 90 minute mark, the sessions 3 final questions are posted and the teams have up to 30 more minutes to complete their submissions. Both sessions will follow the same format.

One hundred (100) points are awarded per question. Those points are evenly divided among the teams submitting a correct response within the 30 minutes (no bonus for quickness of answer, only correctness matters).

A team is composed of whatever a school decides. Your entire program could be one team, you may select a few students to represent your school, or some schools enter many teams to make a great intra-school competition in the midst of the larger event.

Students may use any resource other than the program's staff. The role of the

staff is to help organize and problem solve before the event begins and to be cheerleaders as the E-lympics occurs. Of course, staff may help with any tech issues that may arise.

The cost is \$10 for a school's first team and \$5.00 for each additional team.

Here is my contact information if you need to contact me with any questions or issues, before or during the event:

Tom Wendt
St. Croix Valley ALC
wendtt@stillwaterschools.org
651-323-0657

The E-lympics Registration Form is on the last page of this newsletter.

Northwest Metro Regional Report

By Sue Yankowiak

The Northwest Metro Region has been very active this school year. We are very proud to announce that we have two MAAP STARS State Officers Jeffery Carter (Anoka-Hennepin Regional High School) and Desiree Henry (Osseo Area Learning Center). They were elected at the Fall MAAP STARS Leadership Conference held at Camp Ripley. We are very thankful for Kip Sackett and Patti Haasch for all of their hard work in making STARS so active throughout the State and to the MAAP Board for supporting STARS. Sixty NW Metro Regional MAAP STARS students from six member alternative high schools participated in the 12th Annual Northwest Metro Regional STARS Conference on March 22nd. The conference took place at Hennepin Technical College, Brooklyn Park Campus. Monticello ALC, Turning Point became an active member this year. Sixteen community member volunteers took time out of their busy schedules to judge the student regional events.

Lunch was provided to the students for the first time from a \$250.00 donation by the Elk River Lions Club. Thank you cards were mailed to the Club expressing our gratitude. Anoka-Hennepin Regional High School, Osseo ALC and Ivan Sand also attended and participated in MAAP STARS annual Legislative Day. The Spring MAAP STARS Conference is approaching and is always the highlight for our region. The NW Metro region will be planning a health fair conference for our students coming fall of 2017.



Southwest Regional Report

By Emily Dirksen

The Southwest Regional Conference will be held on Friday, October 6th, 2017 at the Worthington Area Learning Center, 117 11th Ave, Suite 2 (Door #7), Worthington, MN 56187. A keynote speaker, breakout sessions and networking with other alternative educators in Southwestern Minnesota are being planned. Look for more information in the fall.

The State Conference Review

By Chris Bodick

The MAAP Board will be reviewing all of the evaluation data from the 2017 State MAAP Conference at the June Board retreat. The survey and evaluation information you provide for each session and the conference in general is the best input we can get for planning future conferences. Your comments matter and we take them into consideration as we plan for another State Conference.

The tentative dates for the 2018 State Conference (again in Mankato at the Verizon Wireless Center) have been set for February 7th, 8th and 9th, 2018. Please plan to attend!- As the MAAP Board gets together in June we will begin discussing keynote speakers and making preliminary plans. If you would like to get involved with the conference, either as a presenter or a volunteer, please contact Chris Bodick (cbodick@riverbend.k12.mn.us) or Steve Allen (sallen958@gmail.com).

Creating a Thriving Community

By Shelley Skarie

Using map coordinates for eight different places on the globe and the following driving questions:

- *What buildings/facilities will your community need to flourish?*
- *How will the community interact with the rest of the world based on its location?*
- *What elements will you have in your community that will encourage others to visit and increase your economy?*
- *What architectural styles will be best based on the location of your community?*

The Detroit Lakes Area Learning Center students embarked on yet another Problem Based Learning interdisciplinary unit. Staff created units and rubrics for students to research a portion of the world and understand different cultures and environments. Students presented their research by presenting a 3D model of a residence, a map of their community, a newscast with current events and a weather report and a digital brochure to persuade tourism in their community in a question and answer format. The unit required teamwork, creativity, empathy, speaking and researching skills and exploration beyond their comfort areas. These five afternoons of engagement allowed students to work on over 25 Essential Learning Outcomes and even tap a little into STEAM.

The Nearly Annual MAAP Baseball Game

By Bill Zimniewicz

26 MAAP members and some members of their families will attend the Thursday afternoon, June 22, 2017 game against the Chicago White Sox. I believe this is the fourth time we have held such an event. In 2015, MAAP members attended the St. Paul Saints game. Most will meet at Jennings Community School at around 11:00am and take the light rail to Target Field.

There may be a couple of tickets left. Please contact me by email: bill@jenningsclc.org. Tickets are \$36.00 (group rate). Let's hope the weather is pleasant.

MAAP Board Retreat

By Steve Allen

The MAAP Board will be meeting for their annual Board Retreat June 11 through 14 at the YMCA Camp at Sturgeon Lake. At the retreat, the Board will be planning all of the activities and events for the up-coming year. Camp Miller at Sturgeon Lake has a lot of educational opportunities that you may want to consider taking advantage of with your students.



E-lympics Registration Form

Thursday May 18th, 2017

Name of Program _____
 Program address _____
 Number of teams entered _____
 Total cost _____ (\$10 for first team plus \$5 for each additional team)

Copy & paste registration section below as often as needed

Contact person _____
 Contact person's email _____
 Contact person's phone number _____
 (needed for emergency contact during competition if technical issues occur)

Team name (should include school name) _____

Contact person _____
 Contact person's email _____
 Contact person's phone number _____
 (needed for emergency contact during competition if technical issues occur)

Team name (should include school name) _____

Make check payable to St. Croix Valley ALC.

Send check and registration form to: Tom Wendt, St. Croix Valley ALC, 5640 Memorial Ave. N., Stillwater, MN 55082