



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 *Peter Lundin*

Another year! Fast, furious and always fulfilling!

The MAAP Board retreat this year will be held in Detroit Lakes, May 25th and 26th! Regional Directors and MAAP officers will come together to discuss, plan and problem solve issues at hand. For example, legislative efforts this year were significant, yet unfulfilled. At the Board retreat, conversation will focus on what MAAP needs to do to convince legislators of the positive impact we have on our student populations and the need for policy change. There's something special about these quarterly meetings, because smart, passionate people make things happen! Consider joining us in the future...!

Legislative Update

By *Wayne Jennings*

Although our members contacted legislators and had a favorable reception, the education committees did not advance our planks. We think there were too many other demands and that committees didn't have sufficient dollars to satisfy the needs.

In assessing our legislative lack of success, we should probably convince the chairs of legislative committees in order

to convince them of the importance of our needs. If we could convince the committee chairs, they might use their powers to maintain our interests through the steps of getting our planks to the House and Senate floors and then to the conference committee.

It would take work and possibly a little luck, but it would be excellent if we could reach and convince the leaders of the House and Senate who could then lean on their respective education committees to advance our planks.

Thanks to our members who contacted legislators. That was very important in getting sympathetic legislators. Our legislative committee will wrestle with the process of successful actions. We must redouble our work and not give up!

MAAP STARS Update

By *Patti Haasch*



STARS 2019 Spring Events Conference
MAAP STARS Officers:

- Fardowsa Abdi (Paladin Career & Tech High School),
- Robert Johnson (Voyageur Expeditionary High School),
- Breanna Kissel (Ivan Sand Community School), and
- Katelyn Dorry (Northern Lights Community School)

welcomed students and staff from 29 Minnesota programs/schools on Thursday, May 9 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 54 Advisors, Event Chairs and other volunteers.

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Our 26th annual conference is our BIGGEST & BEST state-wide event for students and advisors! The different events give students the chance to show their artistic, career, and life skills they have developed. Details about each event can be found in the 2019-2020 MAAP STARS Spring Events Manual. That Manual, plus information about previous years, are available on the MAAP website under the STUDENT tab, MAAP STARS Spring Conference. Each student was recognized for their participation and awarded a ribbon for the events. The 90% level get a gold ribbons, 80% level is silver, and 70% level are blue for the competitive events. The Artistic Performance and Project Demonstration participants earn green ribbons.

On May 10, some students moved into the semi-final and final rounds of the qualifying events to try to 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 also received 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 students that submit their artwork. All students in attendance were given certificates to put their ribbons on. Announcers at the Preliminary and Grand Awards Ceremonies were: Kristyn Martin, Chris Bodick and Krissy Wright.

Katelyn Dorry, a student at Northern Lights Community School, scored the highest in Public Speaking. Katelyn read her speech at the end to all in attendance at the Grand Awards Ceremony.

Top school winners of the Team Events were {event chair names in bold} ~

	First	Second	Third
Team Advertising Susan Yankowiak	Northwest Passage A	Northwest Passage B	Northwest Passage C
Mgn't Decision Making Dave Schmitz	Northwest Passage C	Osseo ALC B	Brooklyn Center B
Parent Decision Making Laura Watters	Brainerd AEC B	Fairview Alt.	Pillerger Area A
Team Video Emily Dirksen	Highview A	Brainerd A	Northwest Passage A
Community Service Project Greg Zimmerman	Jennings B	Riverside A	Northwest Passage A
Annual Program of Activities Kip Sackett & Pat Salokar	Albert Lea	Northwest Passage	
LifeSmarts Dan Daly	Northern Lights	Academic Arts H.S.	St.

Congratulations to all those winners!

Here are some samples of the awesome art work at this year's conference:



Additional activities that took place during the Spring Events Conference included swimming, a cookie social, making MyIntent bracelets, Bingo with Mary Ecklund-Tollas & Jackie Janousek and other games. We held a "Future Career and College Fair" on Friday that included Minnesota Colleges and Universities, the National Guard, and Job Corps. 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 in honor Veteran's Appreciation month. Soy

Scents “Candles for a Cause” were on hand selling their soy candles, soap and wax melts. All the profits they make are donated to the Northfield Food Shelf. It’s amazing just how much they have donated through their years.

We had a special guest visit on Friday from the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE). Heather Mueller, Senior Director of Teacher and Learning, came to see our conference and learn more about MAAP STARS from the students and Advisors. Ms. Mueller was teaching at Mankato and recently was hired for this new MDE position. We appreciated the great questions she had for us.



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; Pat Salokar, our new judge coordinator, who lined up our volunteer judges; Mary Ecklund-Tollas, our MAAP STARS Treasurer; Mike Myers-Schleif who does the registrations and event scheduling along with headquarters management throughout the conference; Ray Ostfield, who handles all those ribbons; the plaques were crafted by Tom Wendt, Stillwater ALC; Deb Nelson & Pat Bergin worked on all those student certificates; White Bear Lake ALC staff and students handle the MAAP STARS clothing sales. And where would we be without all those wonderful alternative education staff

members and MAAP STARS Advisors who get their students to the conference and cheer them on as they participate in the various events or even Chair an event? 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! MAAP STARS makes a difference for so many and we hope that even more schools will participate next year. It will be one of the best decisions you make for next school year’s planning. Help MAAP STARS continue its vision of: “Achieving Extraordinary Life-Changing Results for Learners.”



Please include the following dates in your next school year’s plans. We would like to see more schools and programs become active in MAAP STARS. It’s a REAL winner for those who are involved. It’s wonderful to see our students gain critical life skills that enhance their future and receive the well-deserved recognition:

MAAP STARS State-wide Events Tentative Calendar Dates For SY ’19 – 20

- October 9 & 10, 2019
 - » Fall Leadership Con-

ference at Lake Beauty Camp

- February 20, 2020
 - » Legislative Day at the State Capitol
- May 7 & 8, 2020
 - » Spring Events Conference @ the DoubleTree Hotel

Sample Press Release



We want folks to brag about their students’ accomplishments at the MAAP STARS 2019 Spring Events Conference. Liza Kelly from Austin ALC created a press release that we encourage folks to use to get the word out. This is an excellent example of good public relations (P.R.) for your students and school.

Hi All!

Attached is a “Read-Only” link to the press release I wrote for last week’s conference. Feel free to “Save As” or “Copy/Paste” the content into a new document for personal use. I also updated Heather Mueller’s information and fixed the dates for next year’s conference.

Thanks!

Liza

[Sample Press Release](#)



MAAP STARS Springtime Awards

The Annual Awards were given out at the 2019 MAAP STARS Spring Events Conference on the evening of Thursday, May 9 in Bloomington.

MAAP Student Of The Year award was given this year to Lucy Theisen, a student at Northwest Passage High School. Quotes from her nomination are: "Lucy is a great ambassador for MAAP STARS and will not hesitate to say that MAAP STARS is what helped her grow and gain confidence that she now has applied to other aspects of her life. Lucy is a strong advocate for alternative education and won't hesitate to tell others it has made all the difference... Lucy is an innovative learner and now seeks a variety of opportunities to help her grow and learn. Along with being involved in MAAP STARS, she is part of Youth In Government, Model UN, the bonsai club, and has participated in expeditions that have taken her to places like Grand Isle, Louisiana, and Guatemala." Another surprise for Lucy was that her parents came to see her receive the award. Congratulations Lucy!



MAAP STARS Advisors Of The Year
This year we were very pleased to honor two very devoted MAAP STARS Advisors who have gone above and beyond (often in the background) to serve MAAP STARS and their students. They have been involved with MAAP STARS for many, many years. They are sisters, Mary Ecklund-Tollas and Jackie Janousek, who both teach at the Brainerd Learning Center, just as their mother, Jeanne Ecklund, had before and with them for a number of years. Their mom even was even involved with MAAP STARS when it first started in 1993 and it was called MAAP-YO (Youth Organization). Mary has been our MAAP STARS Treasurer for many years. Their dedication to alternative education and MAAP STARS is truly remarkable.



A Certificate of Appreciation was also given to the MAAP Northwest Metro Region who had the most schools/ programs that attended MAAP STARS state-wide events for the 2018-2019 School Year. Thank You Northwest Metro for your continued support of MAAP STARS! They are a model for the other regions to emulate.



Alchemist 2019 Available!

Deb Nelson is our Alchemist Editor and she completed the 2019 edition in time for the MAAP STARS Spring Events Conference. CD's copies were given out to each school/program attending the conference. You can download a copy from the MAAP website. THANKS to all the students who contributed their work for publication! Students, be sure to use that on your resume.

Deb Nelson wants everyone to know that you can submit student artwork and writings for the 2020 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 former editions can be downloaded off the MAAP website.

MDE Update By Sally Reynolds

- June 28th, 2019 - State Approved Alternative Program Summer Convening
» MDE Conference Center

- » B; 8 a.m. to noon
- » This SAAP gathering is an opportunity for teachers and administrators in alternative learning environments to network, share, and learn. Participants will engage with a variety of session formats facilitated by teachers, program administrators, and MDE staff focused on improving student learning. CEUs will be available. Coffee, tea and water will be provided. FREE
- July 30th, 2019 - Online and Digital Learning Summer Seminar
 - » MDE Conference Center B; 8:00 a.m. to noon
 - » 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. CEUs will be available. Coffee, tea and water will be provided. FREE
- August 16th, 2019 - SAAP 101 Seminar
 - » MDE Conference Center B RM 17 & 18; 8:00 a.m. to noon
 - » This Seminar is an opportunity for teachers and administrators new to alternative learning

environments to network, share, and learn. Participants will engage with other teachers, program administrators, and MDE staff to learn about SAAP requirements and best practices, focused on benefitting improved student learning. CEUs will be available. Coffee, tea and water will be provided. FREE

- October 18th, 2019 - State Approved Alternative Program Fall Convening
 - » MDE Conference Center B; 8:00 a.m. to noon
 - » This SAAP gathering is an opportunity for teachers and administrators in alternative learning environments to network, share, and learn. Participants will engage with a variety of session formats facilitated by teachers, program administrators, and MDE staff focused on improving student learning. CEUs will be available. Coffee, tea and water will be provided. FREE
- November 1st, 2019 - MDE & MAAP Administrative Workshop
 - » MDE Conference Center B; 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
 - » More information forthcoming.

MAAP 101 – Save the Date! *By Greg Zimmerman*

Save the date for the upcoming MAAP 101 Conference:

- Friday, October 4, 2019
- Jane Goodall Environmental Sciences Academy
- Registration and Presenter Details to Follow

State Conference Planning *By Kristyn Martin*

Mark Your Calendars, MAAP 2020!

The 2020 MAAP Conference will take place in Duluth on February 5th, 6th and 7th. The conference planning committee and board will convene this June to start planning the annual event. Themes, keynote speakers, conference evaluation data, breakout sessions and more will be discussed during the two day board retreat in Detroit Lakes. The hope is to announce MAAP's keynote speakers and conference theme by Fall of 2020.

We need your input. If you completed the conference evaluation, your feedback will be reviewed and become part of the decision making process. Our organization continues to seek member input from what breakout sessions you are looking to attend to keynote



speaker recommendations and more. If you have any suggestions please email

kristyn@jenningsclc.org.

Please consider presenting at the MAAP 2020 Conference! We are looking for more practical approach presentations, something that our teachers can take back and use the next day in their classrooms. Do you have an engaging lesson, activity, or project? Please share it with the rest of the alternative education world at the 2020 MAAP Conference!

As always, thanks for all you do as educators. Congratulations on another school year. Enjoy the summer and look for updates on the 2020 MAAP Conference through our Facebook page:

[Minnesota Association of Alternative Programs](#)

Wayne Jennings Receives Prestigious Award

By Steve Allen

Earlier, we announce that Wayne Jennings received the John Dewey Society's Outstanding Achievement Award! This award was given to Wayne in light of his recent book, *School Transformation* and his "... decades of work in progressive educational causes." I thought that you may like a little more information on this award.

John Dewey is the patron saint of American progressive education. He was the reason Teachers College at Columbia University was the Mecca for educators in the 30s and 40s. Dewey died in 1952 (age 92) after a lifetime of teaching and writing. Wayne is proud to be mentioned in the same sentence as John Dewey. The John Dewey Society (mostly college professors) continues as a testament to Dewey's thinking.

Wayne was recently interviewed by the Civic Caucus. I've attached a link to this interview and more information

about the Civic Caucus for your information.

- [Wayne Jennings Interview by the Civic Caucus](#)
- [More Information about the Civic Caucus](#)
- [Sign Up for Civic Caucus Mailing List](#)

Regional Collaboration With RCE

By Steve Allen

President Peter Lundin and I met Jen Andrews van Horne and Amanda Tegels, Regional Center of Excellence Advocates that Regional Directors, Brandon Wait, Jolene Parks and Sue Yankowiak have been working with. The goal of the meeting was to see if there was some common interest between the work that they are doing and the work that MAAP is doing. Peter and I felt that there definitely was ways that we could collaborate. We proposed that we work with the three schools that Brandon, Jolene and Sue represent and their Regions (not all nine regions at this time). We also asked President-Elect Krissy Wright to work with this group. This "pilot initiative" will allow us to begin immediately and allow for other Regional Directors to monitor the benefits.

Peter and I recently met with former Commissioner, Bob Wedl and have begun talking about some possible accountability measurements that MAAP may be able to assist with (more discussion coming at the Summer Board Retreat). If and when we move forward with this part, we have also agreed to collaborate with some of the RCE staff for their feedback and support.

Brandon, Jolene, Sue and Krissy have fully embraced this initiative. We will be taking "baby steps" because we need to at first initiate communication and

understanding. We are hopeful that this could potentially assist our members with collegial support and with the collection of relevant and meaningful data.