

**Network of Michigan Educators
Connections for Action
Annual Conference
Minutes
December 8-9, 2005**

December 8, 2005

I. Opening Plenary Session

- A. Jean Shane, MDE: Thanks and recognitions
- B. Dave Borth, NME President: Welcome and Goal-Setting.
We are unique in the country, bringing together various award groups to work on education leadership issues.
- C. Sharen Howard: Introduction of the Speaker
- D. **INSPIRE: Lance Secretan**—keynote speaker. Lance’s message:

*Theme—Love each other and tell the truth, working together as human beings. We are asking different questions today: fear is the currency of our time. Fear is the opposite of leadership. Fear is the way we regulate the world: religions, marketing, politics, health. **Education is also built on fear.** Fear has accelerated since 9/11... We are frightened of institutions. If we don’t trust institutions—the outside—then we must look for trust and confidence in the internal forces of society.*

Every great leader in history is a person who inspires. Inspiration is the oxygen of the soul; it is the opposite of fear. What do your students want from you? An inspiring teacher—just as you want inspiring students.

Definition of leadership: a serving relationship that inspires growth and makes the world a better place. Leading and teaching are the same thing. Leadership is something someone lives, not something one tells others to do. Confusing motivation and inspiration—we motivate by fear (human resource policies are built on fear)—induce, incite, compel. Inspiration means “spirit”—to infuse with an encouraging or exalting influence, to animate, a genius, idea or passion; a divine influence—to give life, breath.

*Common factors of great leaders: DESTINY (why I am here on earth); CAUSE (how I will be while I am here and what I will stand for) and CALLING (how they would use their talents and gifts). In short: **Why—Be—Do.***

DESTINY: Manifesto—all problem statement in reverse.

Terrathreat: What are the things that must change in this world?

Terrafixes: What are the things that will fix the problems?

CAUSE: Creating a magnet for passion. Even the Declaration of Independence was changed (in the same way we compromise, writing a mission statement). We have to please everyone on the committee, but this does not represent a cause...Tear up your mission statements and replace them with a CAUSE!!

Religion and politics are noisy but they have lost power; business is where the power is now: the resources and the intellectual capital. We need to change the world through re-awakening spirit and values in the workplace. Most men are not told by their fathers that they are loved: boys strive for accomplishment to achieve approval. Creating a cause will attract passion and will draw the best people to the organization. Finding an inspiring workplace—a cause is attractive.

CALLING: the work we love. Nothing will stand in your way if you have a passion for your calling.

*Aligning **DESTINY, CAUSE and CALLING.***

The first mission of all great leaders is: how do I serve? Am I serving those that I am leading? This is the difficult part. What we know about psychology we learned from animals. Behavior psychology teaches us to manipulate behaviors through reinforcements and punishments. To serve—you must become the equivalent of a horse whisperer: a people whisperer.

Guiding the contribution of brilliance: every communication is an opportunity to inspire. Teachers sometimes forget to find out what inspires students. Recognize and harness gifts, then attach learning to those gifts. What do YOU do to change energy in a boring, static meeting?

Who inspires the leader? Who creates the environment that encourages followers to inspire their leader? The inspiration comes from followers. Teach people how to inspire their leaders—it is in the best interests of followers to strengthen leadership.

The keys to the C A S T L E:

C= courage

A= authenticity

S= serving others

T= truth telling (we don't tell the truth in appraisals, marketing, budgeting, etc.)

L= love

E= effectiveness

Why am I here? What will I stand for? What will I do?

What if these weren't hypothetical questions?

Questions from the audience, re: mission statements, contract negotiations, dealing with negativity, abdicating leadership, reinventing ourselves—which can be painful, working

inventively under tough financial times, tailoring the message for children and youth, telling students we love them through words and touch.

II. Breakout Sessions

- A. ONE: The Art and Practice of Conscious Leadership—Lance Secretan
- B. Conversation with the Michigan State Board of Education—Liz Bauer, Kathy Straus, Carolyn Curtin (see detailed notes at end of minutes*)
- C. How Flat is the World and What Does This Mean for Education---Dan Pappas
- D. Courage to Teach/Courage to Lead---Marianne Novak Houston
- E. The Soil Where Teaching Grows/Growing Great Teachers---Carol Steele

III. Recognition Banquet

December 9, 2005

IV. Opening Plenary Keynote Session

A. Focus on High Priority Initiatives—Yvonne Caamal Canul, MDE OSI

High Priority School Definition: A school that has been identified for improvement because of not making AYP for 2 or more consecutive years. Sanctions are effective at the beginning of year 3.

What do you do when two kids in a subgroup didn't pass the test? What do you do when a school doesn't pass by an inch? A mile?

Phase Sanctions

Phase 1: Two consecutive years-Choice/Transportation

Phase 2: Three consecutive years-Phase 1 and **Tutoring**

Phase 3: Four consecutive years-Phases 1 and 2 and **Corrective Action** (significantly changing the instruction in our schools)

Phase 4: Five consecutive years-Phases 1, 2, 3 and **Planning for Restructuring** (options-significantly alters governance of the school)

Phase 5: Six consecutive years-Phases 1, 2, 3, 4, and **Implementing Restructuring**

Phase 6: Seven consecutive years-Phases 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and **Comprehensive Audit, Targeted Funds** Up to state to develop guidelines

High Priority in Michigan:

1. Status Data 2004-2005

71 schools in phase 1(Improvement), 68 in phase 2 (Continuing Improvement), 73 in Corrective Action, 84 in Restructuring Planning, 64 in Restructuring Implementation

Whole school reform is not content based, not acceptable in restructuring phase

117 schools made if OFF the list of identified schools (62 were in phases 3, 4, and 5)

235 schools are holding-met AYP in 2005-2006 and stayed on 2004-2005 identified list.

Most schools that are high priority schools are in southern Michigan, now has spread north.

355 high schools in Michigan did not make AYP in 2005-2006. 654 high schools did make it.

2. Plan for Support

School Portfolios

School contextual information-Who is in the school? How are they doing? What are their resources? Math series? Reading series?

Information for assistance providers-SEA staff, District staff, ISDs

Regional Assistance Model

7 regions-SEA, ISD, District, Coaches

School Improvement grants to ISD

Principal Academies

High Priority Schools-Summer Residential-Balanced Leadership, School Improvement Framework

Administrators

Microsoft Partnership-endorsement initiative

Wallace Foundation-data focus

Gates Foundation-technology & data focus

Critical List-Comprehensive Audit

Alternative Governance-in production, How decisions are made in a school, who makes those decisions (Instructional Program, PD, School Events and Activities, Resource Management, School Operations)

Coaches/Turn-Around Specialists

93 trained

Appointed by SEA for some schools

SI funds can support-part of restructuring options

MI-MAP

3 yrs. of action research

What systems are missing in high priority schools?

Build strategies around those systems

Make it “ruthlessly practical”

Guiding Assumptions

Change requires co-creation in collaboration with participants

Data-rich...

School Improvement Framework-The Vision

A theoretical construct-foundation for our thinking about action with continuous school improvement

A coherent comprehensive...

Serve as a foundation for decisions about: Technical Support and Program Dev.

Grant Criteria

PD

Accreditation-Performance Indicators

Provide common language-educational community has a shared lexicon

Structure (like a pyramid): has five strands

B. What Can You Do?

Understand High Priority, AYP, NCLB

Stay apprised of statewide activities

Extend your conversations to colleagues in high priority schools

Provide expertise, develop products

Contribute to MDE's initiatives (GMOSI-contribute to promising practices)

What are the products we need out in the field?

For further information:

www.michigan.gov/osi-wide variety of resources

canuly@michigan.gov-Dr. Yvonne Caamal Canul, director OSI

C. Reflections Lauren Childs

Write down one new fact you learned

Write down one new connection you made as a result of Yvonne's presentation

Write down one question how we might help contribute to the work of High Priority Schools

V. Membership Meeting of NME

- A. Discussion on addition of the office of treasurer: MIEM has become our fiscal agent due to changes in the MDE office of Management and Budget. We now have a means of handling any grants or other monies.

Moved David Kapolka, seconded by Robin Ziebert to add the office of treasurer. Passed unanimously.

- B. Introduction to the new NME website: www.nme-educators.org
Features of the new website were introduced: minutes of meetings, bylaws, events and conferences, the Action-Study Teams page, the Ask the Network page.
- Request for a press release button to facilitate media pieces.
 - Discussion on unblocking access to the network.
 - Suggested: providing profiles of Network members to link NME members to those seeking a member with a particular expertise, location, etc.
- C. Frank Miracola led a review of the features of the Ask the Network page, using the HS Curriculum project as a model.
- D. Jordy Whitmer did a presentation on a new NME website feature: the NME blog. Introduction to what a blog is, various forms that blogs take. Jordy displayed the NME blogpage and introduced its features, including links to other blogs, commenting on blog pieces, checking for particular NME authors, Newsreader services, etc. Demonstrated how to post a comment or add a new topic. There is a registration; Jordy will monitor registration. Urged: read, start a conversation, link to your blog, volunteer to manage the blog. JordyW@mac.com

VI. Breakout Sessions

- A. Action Study Teams—Lauren Childs and Nancy Flanagan
- B. Policy Action at the State Level—Bob Morris and Dave Borth
- C. MI-MAP—OSI—Charlotte O’Brien and Yvonne Mayfield
- D. School Improvement Framework—OSI—Betty Underwood
- E. Connecting NME Members with Existing Mentoring Programs (ASSIST)—Cheryl Poole, Marcia Leone

VII. Plenary Session

A. High School Reform--Mike Flanagan, Superintendent of Public Instruction

Michigan Department of Education’s budget was cut by 60%. State workers have taken pay cuts. Mike had a meeting last week with the Governor. Mike believes if we don’t radically restructure the way we teach our kids, we won’t be able to afford to continue the way we are. We can’t get all of our students to this higher rigor without doing more for

them in early childhood. If we looked at the image of Michigan from space, it is beautiful. The image of the world is beautiful. If we look closer, we'll see the problems we are facing-unemployed, homeless... This lifestyle is over. We have to rethink financially. We have a global economy now.

“If we don’t very quickly adjust the system, the lights will be turned out in Michigan education.”

We can’t be just a “Civics only” state. Companies look at Michigan and don’t see any requirements. How do we get away from a “Civics only” state? Only 30% of the districts in the state require Algebra I. 80% of special needs students are in the normal range of cognitive ability. We may need to accommodate kids differently.

Some of the state standards in:

English/Language Arts

Math

Science

Arts

PE

16 credits for state standards

The creativity we have locally can meet the needs of the standards. Make our curriculum look like a college prep curriculum. This will force the system to rethink career tech. Math and science are really important in these career tech. programs. Only 20% of our residents have a college degree, this includes community college.

www.michigan.gov/highschool link to standards

If we can get these requirements in place, we will have several students who never thought they were college material thinking they can do it.

Mike needs our support on these standards. He told us we can’t accept the system the way it is now. We need to go about teaching in a different way. Go at it from all angles. Find a new approach that works for students that struggle.

The jobs have crumbled beneath our feet because our students are not prepared. The funding is going in the wrong direction because the money is not there. Toyota may come in and bring a plant. A lot of that decision relies on whether our citizens are well prepared by their education, if they see a potential workforce here.

Mike hopes to have the Standards passed by March 1.

**We have a modification plan in place. If by the student’s junior year, they are struggling, there can be a modification made so that they can still graduate.

This is not to be translated as “university for all”. It is not that way.
Accommodation piece—we can do that, CTE, other ways of thinking about kids learning
These standards will help schools meet AYP.

Rigor without relevance is useless.
Rigor and Standards does not mean boring lectures.

We need to look at Education programs at colleges and universities. The Department
renews these programs every five or six years.

Should we be outraged if we don’t change the high school dropout rate?

Lion King—bring Simba out, honor each and every cub, we need to change our system to
each and every kid can learn (not just all). We can lead the country in high school
reform. We can re-imagine our state as the highest level of education in the state. We
will love to live here and enjoy our retirement.

Communicate to Mike with an e-mail to Jean about new standards and reactions to what
Mike said in his presentation. This needs to be submitted to Jean by Friday, 12/16/05.

VIII. Breakout Sessions

- A. Visiting Legislative Offices
- B. Job-alike conversations
- C. Award-alike conversations

***Conversations with the State Board (Notes from two breakout sessions)**

Liz Bauer: introduced herself, discussed the duties and obligations of the Board.

Question on professional development to support the new GLCE—fighting for funding or
establishing a source for resources to provide professional development.

Question on upgrading the GLCEs—how pragmatic are they? Q on the emphasis on
MEAP instruction? We are idealistic in creating policy, but there are realistic situations
that we are not looking at.

Long discussion on the mandatory curriculum.

Key points from NME membership:

- relationships matter
- there is this obsession with preparing kids for college; the new more rigorous
curriculum will burn kids out
- Achieve, Inc. is calling the shots (Business Roundtable)
- Rigor, relationships, relevancy are the new 3Rs—a rhetorical approach.

- The new curriculum is being pushed through very quickly. The legislature is now coming up with their own bills.
- This is also a test case for the powers granted constitutionally to the State Board.
- Unanticipated consequences: what will families and students do in interpreting these mandates? When kids fail Algebra II, what will happen? Will schools and teachers be blamed?

Discussion on training for preschool, compulsory kindergarten, and moving the date of admission back to September 1. Discussion on NCLB. We need to make decisions based on what is good for kids.

Carolyn Curtin and Kathleen Straus came in at 2:00 pm—with a fresh report on the mandatory curriculum. The Board members report that legislators were generally favorable to the curriculum as presented by Superintendent Flanagan.

Discussion followed on:

- Local control.
- Competencies, as opposed to a list of courses taken.
- Vocational, CTE coursework. Suggested: partnerships with industry. For example, by 2010, half the existing jobs in medical technology will turn over.
- The Cherry Commission has been working for two years on making HSs more productive—and their report calls for more students to attend college. The new curriculum will apply to HS students who graduate in 2010.
- Necessity of higher math for all...vigorous discussion... again—who is calling the shots? When the focus is on relationships—then standards learning will fall in place.
- Application of knowledge to accommodate individual learning differences. State Board members are aware of these factors—and corresponding work with pre-service teachers.