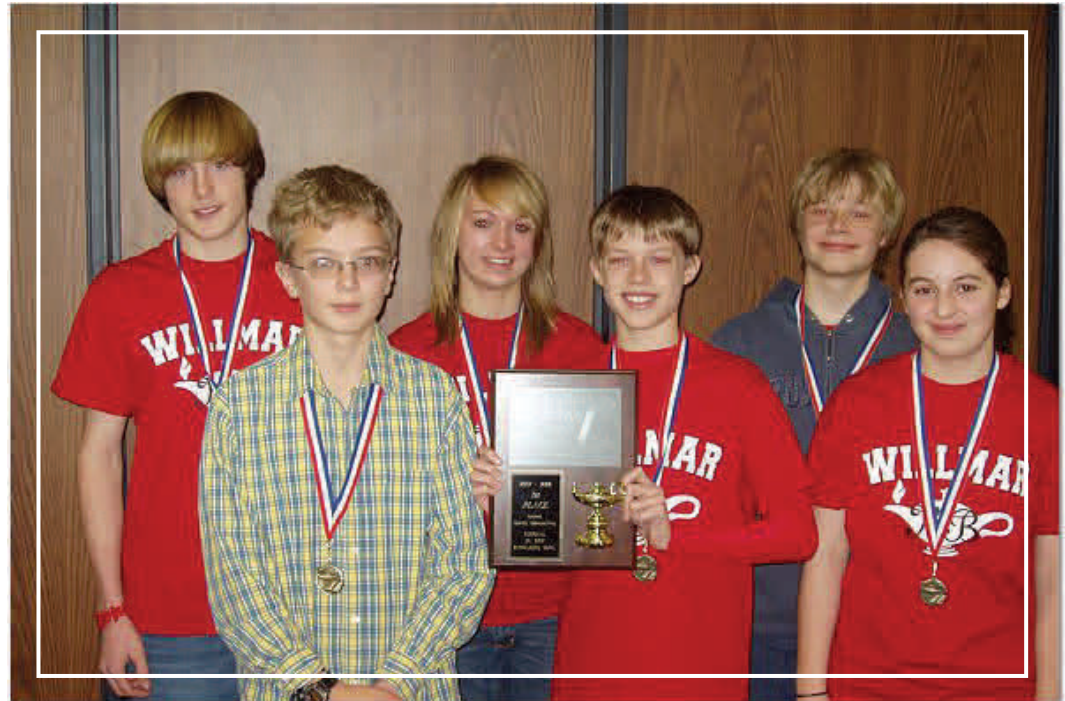


# Annual Plan and Report



2007- 2008



Junior High Knowledge Bowl--1st Place Winners-Willmar

**Philosophy:** The Board of Directors and staff of the SW/WC Service Cooperative believe that all children, families, and community members should be safe, healthy, and have opportunities for learning, growth, and fulfillment.

## Dear Friends of SW/WC Service Cooperative:

The staff, administration, and Board of the SW/WC Service Cooperative are committed to providing high quality programs and services to our members!

Using a shared services model, the SW/WC Service Cooperative provides a number of benefits to our members. From saving money, to gaining economies of scale, our shared services model creates efficiencies while providing access to programs and services not readily available to our members without our efforts.

Authorized by statute in 1976 as an Educational Cooperative Service Unit (ECSU), the history of the SW/WC Service Cooperative dates back to 1965 when the Southwest and West Central Minnesota Educational Research and Development Council (ERDC) was created. A pilot Educational Service Area (ESA) was established in 1973 and the Legislature authorized our enabling legislation in 1976. Our enabling legislation allows our agency to provide the programs and services to our members that we provide today! A “quasi-governmental agency” we receive no direct state aid, but through contracts and fees for service generate the revenue to support our various programs and services.

We are committed to working collaboratively with our members to bring opportunities, efficiencies, and innovative programs and services to our region. In this report, you will learn more about our programs and services. We are proud to be a partner with our school districts, cities, counties, and other governmental agencies as we embark on providing quality programs and services.

On behalf of our Board of Directors, we want to thank you for taking the time to review our annual report. As we continue to strive for transparency and accountability, we believe it is important to report back to our members the status of our programs and services.

Just as we believe it is important to report to you, we also believe it is important to listen to you! Please feel free to contact us with your thoughts, comments, and concerns!

Sincerely,

Cliff Carmody  
Executive Director  
SW/WC Service Cooperative



**51,109**

Number of students within the  
SW/WC Service Cooperative  
Region

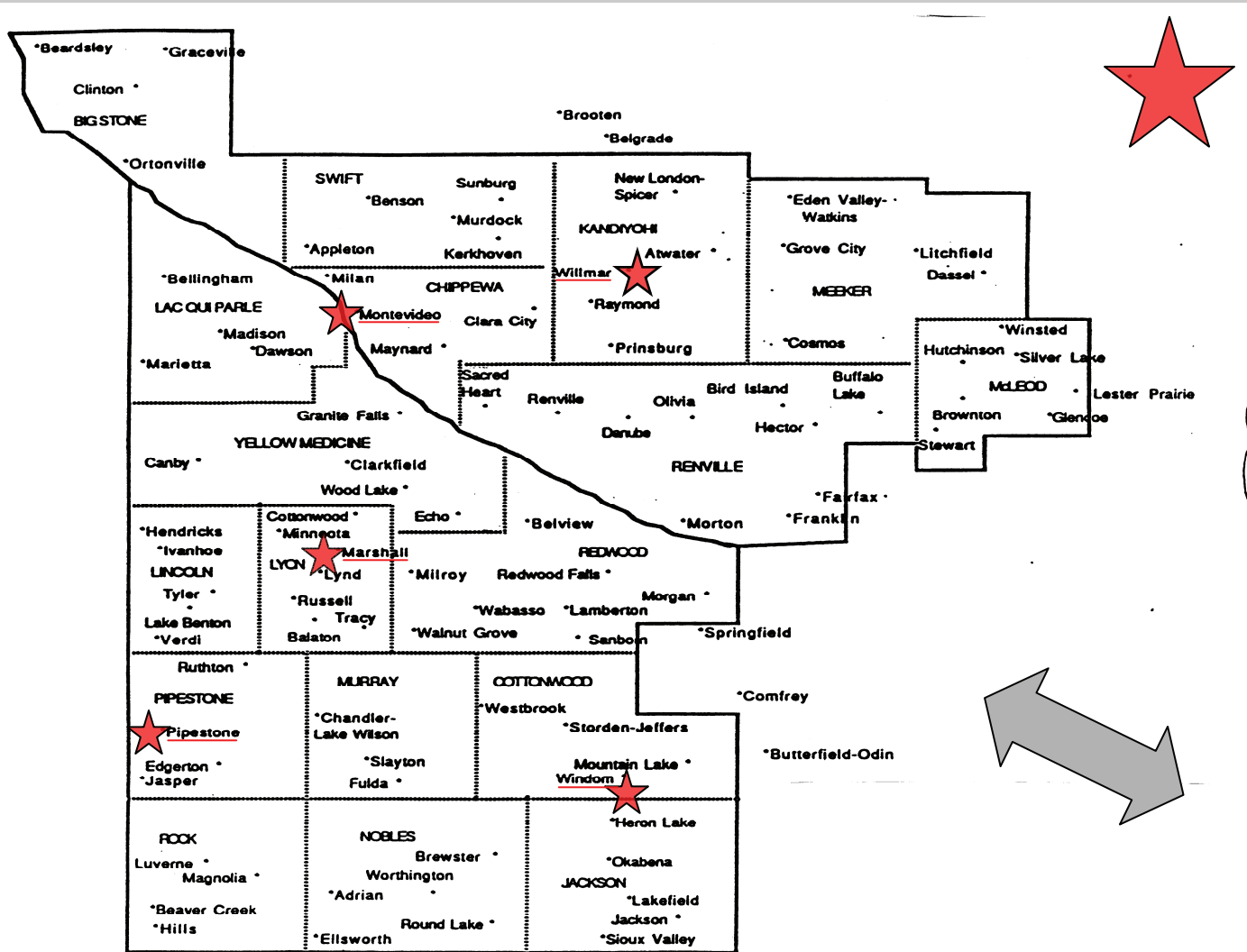
**18**

Number of counties served by the  
SW/WC Service Cooperative

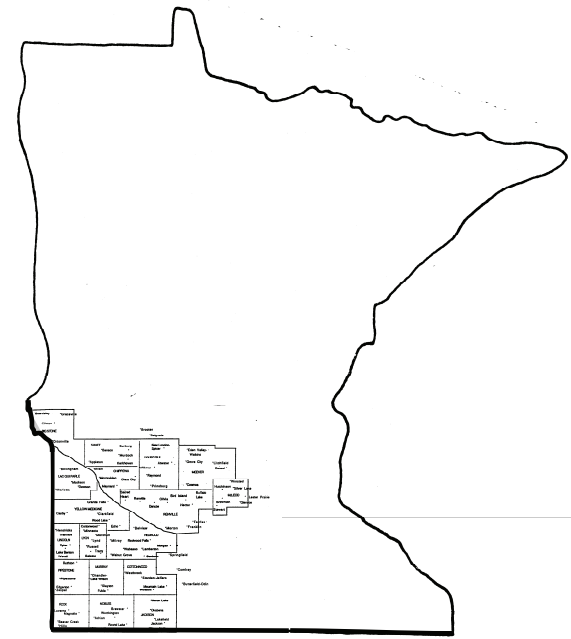
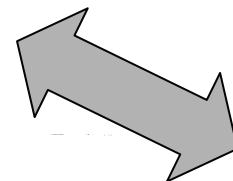
**12,500**

Square miles in the SW/WC  
Service Cooperative Region

# Map of the SW/WC Service Cooperative Region



Represents the Service Center locations



# A Glimpse of the Past

An adequate history of the SW/WC Service Cooperative is difficult to piece together. Its roots are deep into such places as the Granite Falls Fire Hall, Montevideo's Hotel Hunt, the Cyrus Public School and the Universities at Morris and Marshall.

Cooperative activities in the 1960s included a series of meetings beginning in Morris in 1965, that led in 1966, to the creation of the Southwest and West Central Minnesota Educational Research and Development Council (ERDC). The ERDC was independently organized by area school superintendents who were willing, without federal support, to develop a dues structure to fund the council.

The ERDC was succeeded in 1973 by a pilot organization authorized by the State Legislature, the Southwest and West Central Educational Service Area (ESA). The Educational Media Center, begun by the Montevideo School District with a 1965 Title II grant, was donated to the ESA and was one of the first services offered by the ESA.

The ESA was so successful that in 1976 the Legislature expanded the concept to all regions of the state, and renamed the agencies ECSUs (Educational Cooperative Service Units). Governor's Planning Regions 6 & 8 combined to form one administrative entity and the SW/WC ESA became the SW/WC ECSU on July 1, 1976. The rest of the governor's planning regions formed their own ECSUs, as well, making a total of nine ECSUs in Minnesota.

The purpose of the ECSUs was to perform educational planning on a regional basis and to assist in meeting children's specific educational needs that may be better provided for by an ECSU than by the individual districts.

The 1992 State Legislature changed the enabling legislation for ECSUs to include providing services to cities, counties, and other governmental units. This legislative change reflects the state's attitude toward government operating in an efficient manner.

On July 1, 1995, through legislative action, the Minnesota ECSUs became Service Cooperatives. The Service Cooperative's Board of Directors officially named Regions 6 and 8 the Southwest/West Central Service Cooperative on August 23, 1995.

"The SW/WC Service Cooperative is a great resource for support for all districts in the region. They can provide essential support that is about helping all schools in the region improve the quality of service that our local constituents have come to expect. Thanks!"

~ *Klint Willert*

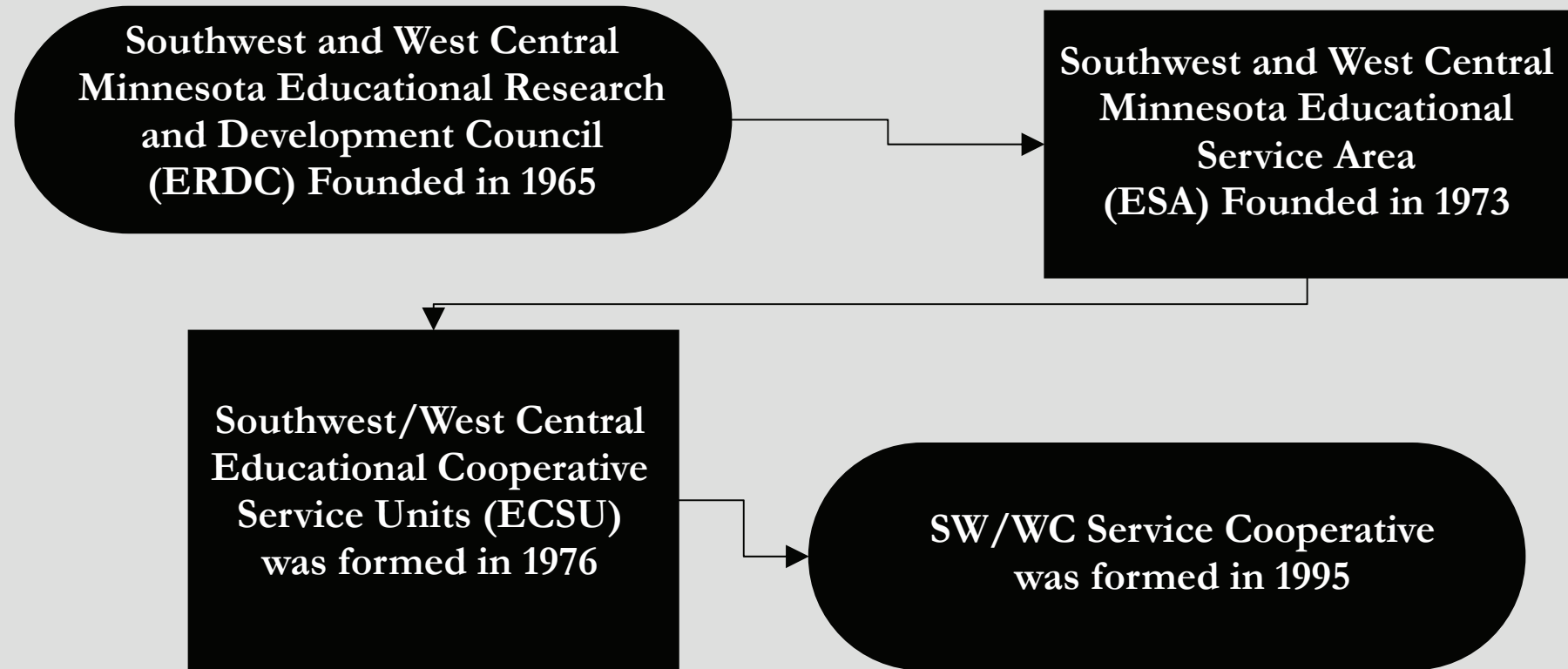
Superintendent

Marshall Public Schools





# SW/WC Service Cooperative's Name Timeline



“My sincere thanks to the SW/WC SC for your wonderful programs for the students of SW Minnesota! I am a teacher and a parent of students that have enjoyed your programs. My own children have enjoyed Knowledge Bowl, Creative Writing Contests, Science and Nature Conferences, Spelling Bees, Science Fairs and more.

It is such a rewarding experience to see students take their classroom knowledge to a higher level with these wonderful opportunities!

Thank you again!”

~Sue Bau  
MCC/Fulda  
Secondary Science Teacher

# SW/WC Service Cooperative's

## Divisions Of Excellence

*A Division of Excellence  
combines comprehensive services  
with highly experienced and educated staff  
to deliver quality programs and services to our members.*

### **Mission**

Through partnership, innovation, and exceptional leadership, our programs and services will be challenged with meeting the diverse needs of our members.

### **Vision**

We will be known as the agency of choice that provides high quality, flexible, responsive, and innovative services to our school, city, county and other governmental agency members.

### **The priorities of the Southwest/ West Central Service Cooperative:**

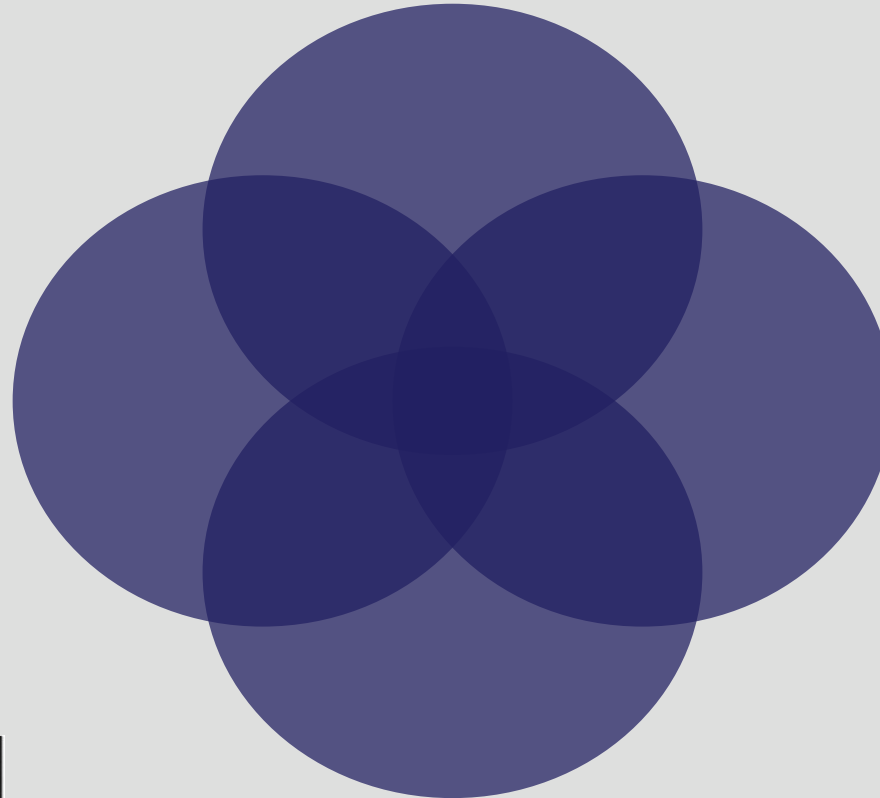
- ✦ Develop a process for evaluating and developing services that incorporates a continuous assessment of our members' needs.
- ✦ Identify new partnership opportunities and evaluate current partner relationships; in an effort to develop new services, as well as, to enhance and make more efficient our current services.
- ✦ Continue to support the development and delivery of programs and services that meet the needs of all students.
- ✦ Develop additional programs and services for our city, county, and other governmental agency (CCOGA) members.
- ✦ Develop and implement a health insurance model of delivering services that focuses on education, prevention, and innovation.
- ✦ Utilize new and existing technologies to support and enhance all aspects of the work we do.

Division of  
Special Education  
Services



Division of  
Teaching & Learning  
Services

Division of  
Risk Management  
Services



Division of  
Administrative  
Services



# Division of Special Education Services



Teresa Ostlie  
Director of Special Education  
Montevideo Service Center



Dave Lammers  
Director of Special Education  
Pipestone Service Center



Dr. Mary Palmer  
Director of Special Education  
Willmar Service Center



Erv Marquardt  
Director of Special Education  
Windom Service Center

Number of students served through  
Special Education Service Centers:  
~**Over 4,400**

Number of students who received  
hearing screenings through audiology  
services:  
~**1,149**

Number of students who graduated  
from Red Rock Ridge School, Windom,  
in May 2008:  
~**31**

Number of students served through the  
regional assistive technology project:

~July 07-April 08 = **31**

~July 06-June 07 = **54**

Number of students reached through  
autism consultants:

~July 07-April 08 = **152**

~July 06-June 07 = **286**



## Special Education Service Centers

The Special Education Service Centers had another very busy year providing direct services to students and member school districts. Each center provided numerous training and workshop activities on a variety of topics, as well as brought a number of staff development activities to the region. These regional activities included training for paraprofessionals, DAPE teachers, and speech/language pathologists. The service centers will continue to find ways to collaborate on regional activities, as well as customizing training activities for the schools in their center.

All of the service centers utilize a web-based IEP software system. The Special Education Forms software is a valuable tool for special education teachers in the region. The service centers also oversee the third party pay system and to date have helped the districts access millions of dollars in revenue from this system. The service centers continue to assist the member districts in completing their applications for state and federal funding. In addition, the information for the state EDRS system was reported by the service centers to ensure local funding for special education programs. This past year, the service centers created a web based TSES Manual (Total Special Education System).

Assistance in promoting continuous improvement activities was provided by the service centers for their member districts. The service centers recognize that special education program effectiveness is an important concept that they can assist the member districts in achieving and maintaining.

The regional resource library, which is housed in Montevideo, is available to staff in participating school districts. By working with regular and special education teachers, the resource library will assist district staff in locating and using valuable instructional support materials for their classroom. School staff have access to equipment and materials, teaching machines, instructional kits, videos, multi-media kits, games and books, and computer programs; all of which are designed to facilitate learning programs for children with special needs.



Another part of the special education service centers are the following programs: Red Rock Ridge School in Windom, Belview Learning Center in Belview, Heartland Girls Ranch School in Benson, and the Glencoe Alternative Programs in Glencoe. These programs provide educational settings for a wide range of students with varying abilities.

## Interpreter Training & Mentoring Project

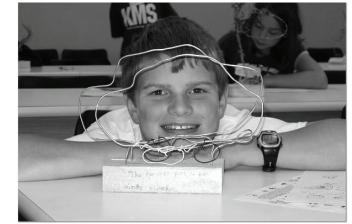
This project is designed to assist interpreters to obtain training and certification, and to offer certification test opportunities. The project consists of a mentoring component and the development of educational plans. It is a partnership with MN West in the development of a Deaf Studies Program.

## Developmental Cognitive Disability (DCD) Training and Network Project

This project establishes networking activities for individuals serving DCD students. It provides instruction in behavioral strategies specific to DCD, training opportunities in the area, a state DCD network, and training for paraprofessionals relating to the DCD student.

## Autism Training Project

This project provides customized training for teams at the local district level, with a goal of establishing teams in each district with expertise in Autism Spectrum Disorder. This is a collaborative effort between all the local districts, SW/WC Service Cooperative, and MDE.



## Regional Assistive Technology Project

The Assistive Technology Lending Library and Demonstration Lab offers equipment and materials to enhance special education learner outcomes and quality of life. The Library lends equipment to school districts considering technology support for a student identified under one of the low incidence categories: Autism, Deaf & Hard of Hearing, Physically Impaired, Other Health Impaired, Visually Impaired, Traumatic Brain Injury and Developmental Cognitive Delay. Needs are determined through the IEP team process, and items are available for short-term loan to assist the team in determining the effectiveness of specific forms of technology. The Lab provides on-site assistance in enhancing a special needs learner's outcomes with assistive technology through consultation, training and demonstration. The Lab is located at the Marshall office. The Southwest MN Capacity Building Project is a collaborative initiative that is directed at assuring service is available in the region for individuals who require assistive technology. Major collaborators are Southwest Community Action Network, SW/WC Service Cooperative, Gillette Children's Hospital and STAR Program. The Demo Lab and the Lending Library work with Project Discovery Services to help assure appropriate accommodations in vocational assessments of students with disabilities. The Used Equipment Referral Project assists school districts and families who have assistive technology equipment they are no longer using and desire to sell.

## Outreach Clinics

Gillette Outreach Clinics are made available to anyone (people of all ages with disabilities, families, therapists, teachers, counselors, social workers, etc). Clinics can provide general information, demonstrations, hands on work and/or training for many types of assistive technology, as well as, discussing specific needs and product recommendations. Outreach Clinics are sponsored by: SW/WC Service Cooperative, Region 5 CAN (Community Action Network), The United Way of Southwest MN, STAR (A System of Technology to Achieve Results) and Gillette Children's Special Healthcare.

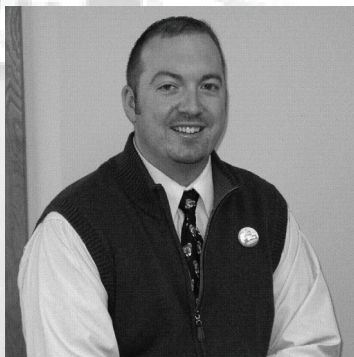
## Transition Outcomes Project

This is a 6-phase project aimed at improving transition services for junior high and senior high students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs). The project provides training to special education teachers, families, and agency staff to develop practical transition plans using a student-centered process. The 6 phases of the project are: identification and commitment from local school districts; IEP file reviews, report findings, setting target goals/timelines; developing strategies for improvement; implementation of strategies and technical assistance; follow-up review of IEPs; and report of final results.

# Division of Teaching and Learning Services

The mission of the School Improvement and Curriculum/Assessment/Instruction Departments is to be a valuable partner with our member districts in their efforts to provide quality education by:

- Recognizing and responding to local needs of member schools and districts
- Building effective relationships with administration and teaching staff
- Building capacity and creating sustainability for a continuous school improvement process
- Working collaboratively with other SW/WC SC programs and staff



Michael Koranda  
Coordinator of School Improvement Services



Bob Braun  
Director of Teaching and Learning



Meg Litts  
Coordinator of Curriculum, Assessment, & Instruction

Number of students attending:

Science and Nature Conference: 971

Conference for Young Artists: 700

Culinary Skills Challenge: 245

Conference for Young Writers: 643

Children's Author & Illustrator Program: 5,264

Number of:

• Teachers at Teaching & Learning Conference: 1,455

• Districts Receiving School Improvement/AYP Services:  
13 schools in 10 school districts

• Schools in Southwest Minnesota Carl Perkins/Tech Prep Consortium: 30



Sue Gorecki  
Student Activities  
Coordinator

### Student Activities

SW/WC Service Cooperative plans and coordinates quality programs, conferences and competitions for students in the eighteen counties of southwest and west central Minnesota. The activities are for all students including regular ed, students with special needs, gifted and talented, home schooled, etc. The popularity of these activities is evident by the continued growth in participation with over 24,000 participants last year.

#### Conferences

- \*Conference for Young Artists (grades K-8)
- \*Conference for Young Writers (grades 3-8)
- \*Science & Nature Conference (grades K-8)

#### Competitions

- \*Creative Writing Contest (grades 3-12)
- \*Culinary Skills Challenge (grades 9-12)
- \*Junior High Knowledge Bowl (grades 7-9)
- \*Senior High Knowledge Bowl (grades 7-12)
- \*Regional Chess Tournament (grades K-12)
- \*Spelling Bee (grades 5-8)
- \*Technical Skills Challenge (grades 9-12)



#### Other Programs

- \*Career Exploration Days (grade 10)
- \*Children's Author & Illustrator Program (elementary schools)

### Educational Pathways Project

The Educational Pathways Project is a collaborative program partnering SW/WC Service Cooperative, School-to-Work, MN West, MN Paraprofessional Consortium, and MDE. The project is designed to develop career opportunities in education and provide training for paraprofessionals. The project is a 2+2+2 model for credit transfer linked to the MN Paraprofessional Competencies.

### School Improvement and Curriculum, Assessment and Instruction

The School Improvement & Curriculum/Assessment/Instruction Departments have experienced tremendous growth over the past year! Along with growth have come some foundational initiatives that effective organizations must engage in to give focus and purpose to their work.

We reorganized to better meet the growing needs of our members with both a Coordinator of Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction and a Coordinator of School Improvement Services. Our range of services has grown to include: Various Strategies for Accessing and Analyzing Data, Unpacking and Aligning Academic Standards for all Students, Best Practice Strategies for Reading and Math Instruction, Best Practice Strategies for Reading and Math Assessment, Developing and Implementing Professional Learning Communities, Curriculum Mapping, Response to Intervention, and Leadership Networking and Support. We also have been contracting with districts to provide curriculum coordination, staff development, district assessment coordination, and administrative services. We continue to develop more opportunities to provide NWEA Training and additional coaching opportunities to meet regional needs.

We are in our second year of the AYP Coordinator Grant from the Minnesota Department of Education to employ school improvement specialists to work with the schools not meeting Adequate or Annual Yearly Progress (AYP). It is our overall goal to deliver assistance directly to schools and districts to facilitate local efforts to increase capacity and improve student achievement. Specifically, the School Improvement Specialists have the following responsibilities: 1) assist district and school teams in the development, implementation, and on-going review and refinement of school improvement plans, 2) identify and analyze data and facilitate team dialogue, 3) assist in the identification of professional development needs and 4) support schools as they implement high quality professional development.

### Carl Perkins/Career and Technical Education

The Southwest Minnesota Tech Prep Consortium is comprised of 30 high schools and MN West Community and Technical College, our post-secondary partner. The consortium works very closely with other agencies that serve the area, regional businesses, and other consortiums throughout the state.

High schools that participate in the Southwest Minnesota Carl Perkins/Tech Prep Consortium receive an annual entitlement to be used for improvement of state approved career and technical education (CTE) programs. Participating high schools complete a brief application that specifies the approved programs that will be making the purchase and the bill is paid by the SW/WC Service Cooperative, the consortium's fiscal host. Each year over \$100,000 worth of improvements are made to CTE programs. Examples of improvements include: new text books that link to industry standards, consulting services, mileage and sub fee reimbursement for staff development, commercial grade equipment, industry based software, instructional videos, etc.

The consortium also provides career/education planning materials and opportunities. Many schools in the region use their Carl Perkins funds to purchase career assessment instruments and on-line career information systems. The consortium also works with many agency and post-secondary partners to provide career and education planning experiences through an interactive "Career Expo" and through our "Project Discovery" career assessment and exploration program.

Having students demonstrate what they have learned and develop leadership skills is a central goal for schools in the consortium. Our consortium provides strong support to student organizations (FCCLA, BPA and FFA) and is proud to have some of the strongest in the state. We also host two very popular regional competitions: "Culinary Skills Challenge" and the "Technical Skills Challenge". These events are led by our industry partners and provide students the opportunity to learn about industry standards and participate in competitions that help them reach for those standards.



Tom Hoff  
Career & Technical  
Project Coordinator



# Division of Administrative Services

*The Division of Administrative Services  
is committed to delivering high quality,  
reliable services to our members and partners,  
which exceed expectations for responsiveness and expertise.*

Number of people attending:

Technology Conference: **130**

Business Conference: **175**

School Business Management  
Conference: **200**

Number of SMARTboards,  
Airliners & Sympodiums sold through  
our Cooperative Purchasing Program:

January-June 07 = **173**

July 07-April 08 = **162**



Dr. Luther Heller  
Director of Administrative Services





Darin Jensen  
Manager of RMIC

## RMIC

Regional Management Information Center (RMIC) provides finance, human resource, payroll, and student administrative support services to districts and educational cooperatives.

**SMART Finance and UFARS/Accounting Services** are provided to contracted districts and educational cooperatives.

Besides assisting the districts with maintaining their school district records, our staff provide advice and assistance with accounting and bookkeeping procedures and overall assistance

with SMART Systems software, Finance and eR Modules, along with serving as regional liaison between districts and the Minnesota Department of Education. Accounting assistance services may be purchased as an alternative to hiring an accountant or contracting with an auditing firm. **SMART HR** services are provided to the districts that use SMART Systems HR/payroll and eR Modules, which produce payroll, retirement, direct deposit, leave, quarterly and year-end tax reports. The program is also capable of storing and reporting a wide range of human resource information, as well as tracking employee flexible benefit and leave information. An online employee self service website is available for employees to view pay and leave detail, tax, flex info, emergency contact and licensure information.

**STAR** (Staff Automated Reporting) consists of reporting licensed and non-licensed school staff data to the Minnesota Department of Education. The data reported on STAR will be used to determine licensure violations, to complete supply and demand studies, and to fulfill state and federal reporting requirements.

**MARSS** (Minnesota Automated Reporting Student System) consists of automated reporting of student data to the Minnesota Department of Education. Data elements are maintained and reported by school districts for each student attending a public school in Minnesota. The primary focus of MARSS information is the accurate accounting of students resulting in payment of state and federal dollars.

RMIC does not support Student Services software, but does provide informal support in the Attendance, STAR, and Carl Perkins programs because of the correlation with MARSS for reporting to the Minnesota Department of Education.

## Health and Safety

The Health and Safety Management Assistance Program provides consultation and coordination of services related to the management of environmental health and safety concerns for school districts. These services may include: assist schools in identifying and prioritizing health and safety plans and programs, assist districts in planning to manage, monitor and improve Attachment 99 emphasized areas, conduct on-site management assistance work for a minimum of two site visits per district per fiscal year, work with the Minnesota Department of Education and other service cooperatives in the development of future Health & Safety workshops, meetings, trainings, etc., direct communication with the Minnesota Department of Education, interpretations of mandatory requirements from the Minnesota Department of Education, assistance completing mandatory reports such as Attachment 99, IAQ information and development, machine guarding, etc., more personalized service such as summarizing communications (mass emails, etc.) to let schools know exactly what they need to attend or complete, assistance to determine what is allowable under Health & Safety funding, assistance coding Health & Safety, ability to recommend approval of Health & Safety projects up to \$10,000 with MDE criteria, interpretations of regulatory agencies, mock OSHA building walk-through, assistance with Machine Guarding, and Playground Safety Inspection. We did not have an Environmental/Occupational Health and Safety Management Program Contract for 2007-08.

## Cooperative Purchasing

The Cooperative Purchasing Program is dedicated to combining the collective purchasing power of our members in order to receive the best value in goods and services.

By working cooperatively, on a regional and statewide level, each of our members benefit by purchasing goods and services at a lower cost than if individually purchasing. When choosing vendors, the CP program focuses on quality, service, support, as well as competitive pricing. The goal of our program is to have our members receive the best long-term value possible.

We hold prime vendor contracts, have an annual bid process, and do individual product quoting. Performing the bid process for all members collaboratively eliminates members' time and staff to perform that bidding function and generates aggressive prices in relation to volume purchasing. The Cooperative Purchasing Program concentrates on serving its members, and it saves members time and money!!

## Technology

This was the first full year of operation for two of our newest services. Technology Integration Services continue to take shape with the mission to differentiate and reinforce instruction in the classroom by helping teachers expand and enhance upon the successful use of technologies. We have over 15 professional development course offerings available. Another movement has been around the hybrid classroom, which involves the incorporation of our Moodle Classroom Management System, and other cutting edge technologies that are traditionally used in distance education, into a traditional classroom.

Another new service is our Student Information System Support for the TSIS Student Information System. Our staff is responsible for fully supporting 6 school districts on the student system. We are also providing full support and training services for the Cognos Data Warehouse. Users of the Cognos Data Warehouse system are entitled to professional development in data-driven decision making and the use of the data warehouse tools for the benchmarking and analysis of student growth.

Our extensive Wide Area Network (WAN) is a cooperative venture between SW/WC Service Cooperative and 32 school districts in the southwest portion of our region. Our staff, in partnership with Trillion Partners, provide continual monitoring and upkeep of the WAN System, ensuring that our state of the art technologies that comprise the network perform at the highest of standards in both stability and speed.

This year brought a restructuring of our technology audit process, which is included in our Basic Technology Services Contract. We have also created a Comprehensive Technology Audit. Both of these audits now include Technology Integration components, providing evaluation and justification for your investment in classroom technologies.

SW/WC Service Cooperative offers technology coordination services to school districts and other agencies to supplement current technology staff or by fully-staffing their technology departments.

Our Distance Education offerings continue to evolve and expand. We will be offering over 20 courses for the 2008-2009 school year, all developed and taught by teachers from our member school districts. We continue to provide our American Sign Language ITV course.

Finally, our E-Rate Coordination Service continues to grow. We now coordinate over \$1 million worth of E-Rate funding per year through the applications that we file within this program.



Deb Foley  
CP/Sales & Marketing  
Coordinator



Josh Sumption  
Manager of Information  
Technology

# Division of Risk Management Services

## The Goal of the SW/WC Service Cooperative's Health Insurance Pool Program is to:

1. Reduce the individual risk for our member groups.
2. Stabilize rates for our members on a year-to-year basis.
3. Negotiate with the claims administrator, on behalf of our members, a competitive price, product design options, and services.
4. Provide educational trainings and workshops for our members and their employees.

### Our Risk Management Team:

Cliff Carmody, Executive Director  
Doug Deragisch, Director of Risk Management  
Annette Miller, Director of Finance  
Shelly Maes, Manager of Member Services  
Dan Weir, Employee Benefit Services, Inc.  
Bobbie Carmody, Administrative Assistant

~Our School Pool has 62 groups totaling 4,800 members.

~Our CCOGA Pool (cities, counties and other governmental agencies) has 124 groups totaling 6,000 members.

“It is a huge challenge for a small local group like ours to secure insurance that is comprehensive in coverage and stable in price. Members of our group are convinced that we have benefited long term as a member of the SW/WC Service Cooperative Schools Insurance Pool.”

~*Brad Madsen*

Superintendent

Dawson-Boyd Schools

School Pool Advisory Committee Chair



Doug Deragisch  
Director of Risk Management

## History of the Pools

In 1985, the SW/WC Service Cooperative entered into its first operating agreement to provide a school district insurance pool for its members. Since that time, the risk management services have focused on a “minimum premium plan” that provides a self-insured health insurance product for schools, cities, counties, and other governmental agencies.

In 2003, the research and development of VEBA products was completed, with availability of the VEBA plan for schools in July, 2003, and cities, counties, and other governmental units in January, 2004. The development of new programs and services continued with the advent of the Care Support Program focusing on the management of chronic conditions, and an emphasis on health and wellness initiatives through the Worksite Wellness Program.

Today, risk management services provide a cost-efficient health insurance option for our members. With flexibility and choice of plan design, a complete network with deep discounts, low administrative and stop-loss fees, and new consumer-directed health products, we believe our school pool and city/county/other governmental agency pool have worked in helping our members find the best option for their health insurance dollar.

## **For every dollar in health insurance premium our member pays:**

Healthcare Expenses, Inpatient, Outpatient, Professional, Drugs 89.4¢	Pooling High Cases \$75,000 - \$300,000 3.9¢	Stop Loss >\$300,000 1.6¢	Admin Fee (Avg. Exp) 5.1¢
To pay anticipated Claims = 93.3¢		Pooling Benefits/Advantage = 6.7¢	



## Benefits of Pooling

**Strength and Security in Numbers.** Statewide, there are over 500 groups who partner with their regional service cooperative for health care coverage.

**Leveraged Purchasing Power.** Partnering with the SW/WC Service Cooperative protects your employees and your bottom line. Public employer groups of all sizes achieve purchasing power usually reserved for very large employers. This collective group participation maximizes your limited health benefit dollars.

**Great Stability Through Shared Risk.** Pooling results in more stable and predictable health care rates. With insurance pooling, your risk is spread among similar public employer groups participating in the plan. This reduces the need for sizable rate increases following a year of high claims, and promotes a willingness to pay a little more in years of low claims. Smaller yearly rate fluctuations contribute to greater stability, enhanced risk management, and long-term financial security for your organization.

**The Health Plans People Want.** The SW/WC Service Cooperative, along with the other Minnesota Service Cooperatives, have teamed with Blue Cross Blue Shield to offer the state's most comprehensive health care coverage. The array of benefit plans features innovative and flexible plan designs, competitive pricing, member health management and improvement programs, and dedicated customer service and support.

**Preserving Your Group's Autonomy.** When you join forces with other public employer groups in your area, you maintain your group's independence and local autonomy.

**Keeping Your Health Care Local.** BCBS has the state's largest provider network, in addition to dedicated customer service, operations, sales and account management teams.

**Good Health is Good Business.** There are many health plan support programs and services through BCBS.

**Lower Costs.** There are lower administrative fees, a 20-25% lower stop loss rate than the commercial market, lower target loss ratio for stop loss claims, and consumer directed plans such as VEBA and HSAs.



# Fiscal Integrity

*SW/WC Service Cooperative is a public agency.*

*No state or local tax dollars are used  
to fund our programs and services.*

*Operating revenue is derived  
from membership fees and grants.*

*We invite corporate and foundation sponsorship  
of student and adult  
enrichment programs and services.*

“The Southwest/West Central Service Cooperative has been instrumental in helping us share useful career planning information with the students and school staff in the region. Without the SW/WC Service Cooperative’s help and connections, we would not have been as successful. They have been a great asset to our project!”

*~ Cameron Macht*

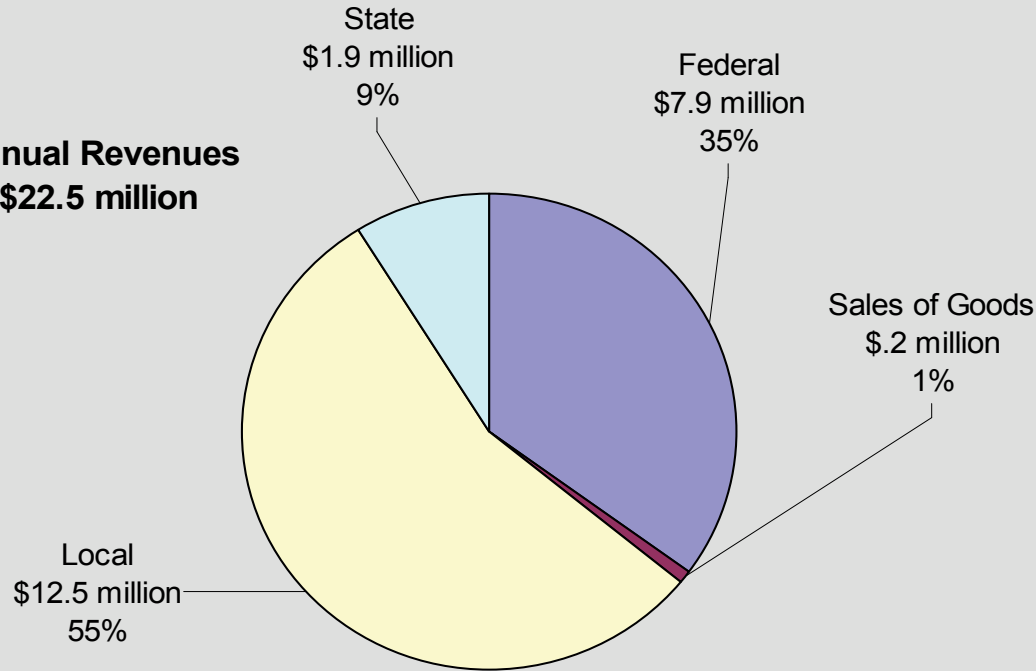
Regional Labor Market Analyst  
Minnesota Dept. of Employment &  
Economic Development



Annette Miller  
Director of Finance



**Annual Revenues**  
**\$22.5 million**



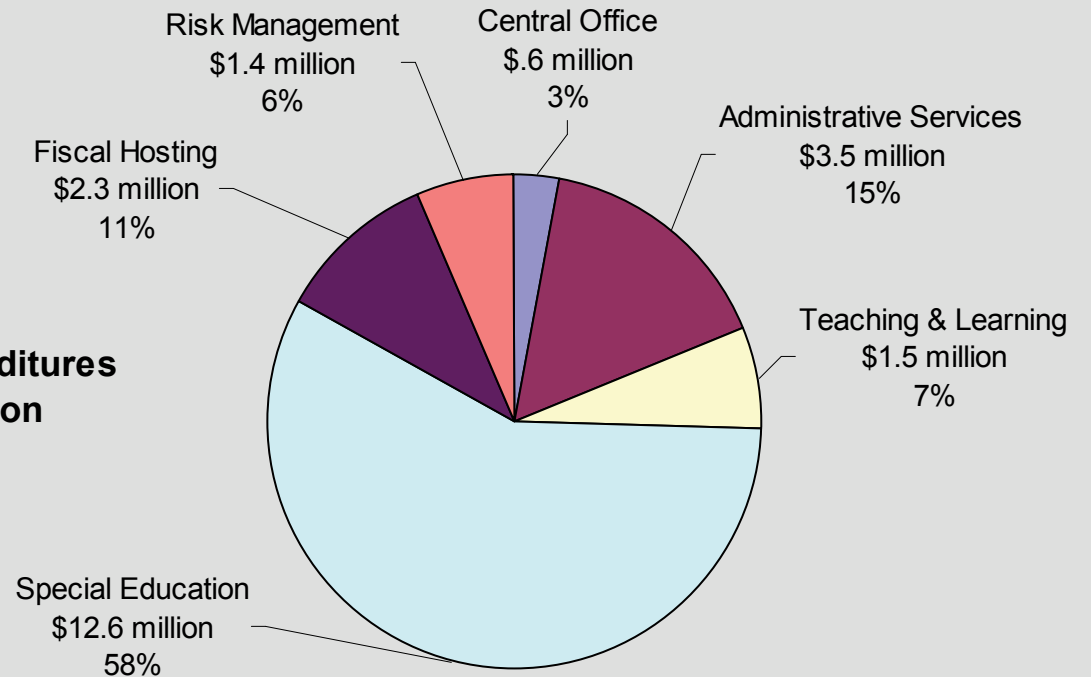
“In my role as superintendent of schools at MACCRAY, there never seems to be enough time to get everything done. In dealing with the SW/WC Service Cooperative, I can honestly say my time has been well spent - whether I was attending meetings in Marshall, Willmar or Alexandria. I appreciate the friendliness and professionalism of the staff at the SW/WC Service Cooperative. They are great to work with! They continue to have my support.”

~Greg Schmidt  
Superintendent  
MACCRAY

“The SW/WC Service Cooperative has earned our respect time and again for their leadership, creativity, and willingness to collaborate with regional entities. Working with them to produce quality programming continues to be a positive experience for our agency.”

~Southwest Minnesota Private  
Industry Council, Inc. Staff

**Annual Expenditures**  
**\$21.9 million**

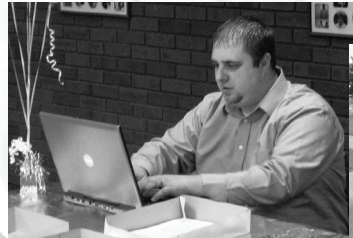


# Valuing Employees

"I believe the service cooperative is a tremendous organization with great leadership and a high level of integrity. The SW/WC Service Cooperative is an organization that is continuously striving to serve its members efficiently and effectively.

The Red Rock Ridge Alternative Learning Center in Windom is in constant review of the delivery model both academically and with its mental health program. Our main goal is to always serve our students to the best of our abilities. We teach the students in all three programs in a way we would want our own children taught if they were in this program."

*~Ann Wendorff*  
Principal  
Red Rock Ridge School, Windom



Edna Gossen  
Operations Manager



The SW/WC Service Cooperative employs a wide range of employees.  
 Below is a sampling of some of the varied professionals we have on staff.  
 Out of 231 employees...



**We  
 value  
 and  
 practice  
 initiative,  
 ingenuity,  
 and  
 creativity.**



<u>Title</u>	<u>Number of Employees</u>
ALC Teacher.....	3
Assistive Technology/Transition Coordinator.....	1
Audiologist.....	2
Autism Consultant.....	2
Bilingual Paraprofessional.....	4
Career and Tech Project Coordinator.....	1
Consultant for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.....	1
Consultant for the Visually Impaired & P/HD.....	1
Cultural Liaison.....	6
Curriculum, Assessment, Instruction Coord.....	1
ECSE Coordinators/Teachers.....	7
Heartland Girls Ranch Teacher.....	2
ITV American Sign Language Teacher.....	1
LAN/PC Specialist/Technicians.....	3
LI Consultant for Severe/Multiply Impaired.....	1
MARSS/Student Services Coordinator.....	1
NWEA Regional Trainer.....	1
Occupational Therapist/COTAs.....	20
P/HD and TBI Consultant.....	1
Physical Therapist/Physical Therapist Assistant.....	3
PLATO Lab Assistant.....	1
School Improvement Specialist.....	2
School Psychologist.....	17
School Social Worker.....	7
Special Education Teacher/Paraprofessional.....	28
Speech/Language Pathologist.....	9
Teacher of Deaf and Hard of Hearing.....	6
Technology Integration Specialist.....	1
UFARS Specialist.....	1



As a Physical and Health Disability Consultant, I am fortunate to see many good teachers striving to deliver the very best to the students they serve. I especially value the times when education teams come together in an atmosphere of creativity and information sharing that not only engages with the student, but creates a supportive system that challenges the student to leave high school with confidence and a sense of direction.

*~Darwin Dyce, Physical and Health Disability Consultant  
 17 years of service*

Pictures on this page are from the 2007 Spring In-Service

The SW/WC Service Cooperative serves as fiscal host and provides HR and Administrative Services to the following two programs:  
 CRIC-Cottonwood River Integration Collaborative, St. James  
 WCIC-West Central Integration Collaborative, Willmar

# Member Services

59

Number of Regular Public School Members

21

Number of Charter and Non-Public School Members

68

Number of City Members

16

Number of County Members

46

Number of Other Governmental Agency (OGA) Members

“The SW/WC Service Cooperative’s ability to link together communities and resources has been a valuable asset for our partnership with them. We appreciate their excellent customer service and the many ways that they help us to reach our educational and programming goals for our region. We especially appreciate the opportunity to be part of meetings and conferences sponsored by SW/WC Service Cooperative that provide platforms for the exchange of ideas and best practices in science and career education.”

~ Kathleen Huntley and Wendy Foley  
Executive Director and Health Careers Specialist  
Southern Minnesota Area Health Education Center  
Rice Memorial Hospital

“Whether our needs are staffing for low incidence services for students, helping us attract ‘hard to find employees’, or advising us in a potentially litigious environment, the Redwood Area School District has benefited immensely as a member of the SW/WC Service Cooperative.”

~Rick Ellingworth  
Superintendent  
Redwood Area Schools



Shelly Maes  
Manager of Member Services



## 2007-08 Southwest/West Central Service Cooperative Members

Adrian Schools	City of Ivanhoe	Clara City Nursing Home	Lynd Schools	Redwood-Cottonwood Rivers
Adult Client Training Service	City of Jackson	Clarkfield Area Charter School	Lyon County	Control Area
Area II MN River Basin	City of Jasper	Comfrey Schools	Lyon County DAC	Renville County
Projects, Inc.	City of Jordan	Cottonwood County	MACCRAY Schools	Renville County West Schools
Atwater/Cosmos/Grove City	City of Kerkhoven	Cottonwood County DAC	Marshall Schools	Rock County
Schools	City of Lake Elmo	Countryside Public Health	McLeod West Schools	Rock County DAC
Augsburg Fortress Publishing	City of Lakefield	Dawson/Boyd Schools	Meeker County	Round Lake Schools
Avera Marshall Regional	City of Lamberton	E.C.H.O Charter School	Mid-MN Development	Russell-Tyler-Ruthton Schools
Medical Center	City of Lismore	Eci' Nompa Woonspe School	Commission	Rural Enterprises for Acceptable
Balaton Schools	City of Madison	Eden Valley/Watkins Schools	Milroy Schools	Living/SWCIL
Belgrade/Brooten/Elrosa	City of Marshall/MMU	Edgerton Schools	Milroy Area Charter School	St. Anne's School-Wabasso
Schools	City of Maynard	Ellsworth Schools	Minneota Schools	St. Edward's School-Minneota
Bellingham Schools	City of Mendota Heights	Fulda Schools	Montevideo Schools	St. Mary's School-Bird Island
Benson Schools	City of Milroy	Gibbon-Fairfax-Winthrop	Mountain Lake Schools	St. Mary's School & Church-Tracy
BOLD Schools	City of Minneota	Schools	Murray County	St. Paul Conservatory for the
Brewster Schools	City of Montevideo	Glencoe/Silver Lake Schools	Murray County Central Schools	Performing Arts
Buffalo Lake/Hector Schools	City of Mounds View	Heartland Community Action	Murray County DAC	St. Peter's School & Church-Canby
Butterfield Schools	City of Mountain Lake	Hendricks Schools	New Heights School-Stillwater	Samuel Lutheran School-Marshall
Canby Schools	City of New Prague	Heron Lake/Okabena Schools	New Life Treatment Center	Sleepy Eye Schools
Cedar Mountain Schools	City of Newport	Hiawatha Manor-Pipestone	New London/Spicer Schools	South Metro Firefighters
Cedar Riverside Comm. School-	City of Oak Grove	Hills/Beaver Creek Schools	Nobles County	Southwest Regional Development
Minneapolis	City of Oakdale	Holy Redeemer-Marshall	Nobles County SWCD	Commission
Chippewa County	City of Pipestone	Holy Trinity School-Winsted	Odyssey Charter School-Brooklyn	Southwest Christian School-Edgerton
City of Adrian	City of Plymouth	Hospice of Murray County, Inc.	Center	Southwestern Youth Services/Praxis
City of Appleton	City of Prior Lake	HRA of Jackson	Ortonville Schools	Springfield Schools
City of Atwater	City of Renville	HRA of Redwood Falls	Ortonville Area Health Services	SW MN Housing Partnership
City of Benson	City of Rosemount	Hutchinson Schools	PACT 4 Families Collaborative	SW MN Opportunity Council (SMOC)
City of Bird Island	City of Round Lake	Ivanhoe Schools	Parkview Home-Belview	Swift County
City of Buffalo Lake	City of Russell	Jackson County	Parkview Manor-Ellsworth	Swift County-Benson Hospital
City of Canby	City of Sacred Heart	Jackson County Central Schools	Paynesville Schools	Tracy Area Schools
City of Carver	City of Scandia	Kerkhoven-Murdock-Sunburg	Pioneerland Library System	Upper MN Regional Development
City of Chanhassen	City of Slayton	Schools	Pipestone Area Schools	Commission
City of Cosmos	City of Spicer	Kandiyohi Area Transit	Pipestone County	Wabasso Schools
City of Cottonwood	City of Springfield	Kandiyohi County	Pipestone County Medical Center	Westbrook Public Utilities
City of Ellsworth	City of St. Paul Park	Kandiyohi County SWCD	Pipestone County SWCD	Westbrook/Walnut Grove Schools
City of Fairfax	City of Stewart	Lac qui Parle County	Prairie Five Community Action	Western Community Action
City of Franklin	City of Stillwater	Lac qui Parle Valley Schools	Prairie Lakes Youth Programs	Willmar Schools
City of Fulda	City of Tracy	Lake Benton Schools	Prinsburg Schools	Willmar Municipal Utilities Comm.
City of Ghent	City of Tyler	Lakeview Schools	Progress, Inc.	Windom Schools
City of Granite Falls	City of Vadnais Heights	Leota Christian School	Red Rock Central Schools	Windom Area Hospital
City of Greenfield	City of Vesta	Lester Prairie Schools	Red Rock Rural Water Systems	Worthington Schools
City of Hanley Falls	City of Waconia	Lincoln County	Redwood Area Schools	Worthington Regional Hospital
City of Hendricks	City of West St. Paul	Lincoln County SWCD	Redwood County	Worthington Area Language Academy
City of Heron Lake	City of Willmar	Lincoln/Pipestone Rural Water	Redwood County SWCD	Yellow Medicine County
City of Hugo	City of Windom	Luverne Schools		Yellow Medicine East Schools

# Governance

*An elected board of directors  
representing our membership governs us.  
Advisory committees provide  
planning and evaluation input.  
We operate as a regional system  
delivering programs and services  
responsive to our members and others.*

## 2007-2008 Superintendent Advisory Council

David Marlette, Chair, Tracy Public Schools  
Gery Arndt, Jackson County Central Public Schools  
David Baukol, Montevideo Public Schools  
John Brennan, Red Rock Central Public Schools  
Rick Clark, Buffalo Lake/Hector Public Schools  
Rick Ellingworth, Redwood Area Public Schools  
Gary Fisher, Luverne Public Schools  
Luther Heller, SW/WC Service Cooperative  
Bruce Houck, RTR Public Schools  
Don Johnson, Southwestern Youth Services  
John Kraker, Minneota Public Schools

John Joosten, Minnesota West-Granite Falls  
Kathy Leedom, Willmar Public Schools  
Larry Peterson, Eden Valley/Watkins Public Schools  
Greg Schmidt, MACCRAY Public Schools  
Dwayne Strand, Yellow Medicine East Public Schools  
Bill Strom, Mountain Lake Public Schools  
Robert Tews, Cedar Mountain Public Schools  
Loren Wiger, Southwest Minnesota State University  
Klint Willert, Marshall Public Schools  
Loy Woelber, Westbrook/Walnut Grove Public Schools



“Being a member driven organization is the basis for the SW/WC Service Cooperative’s philosophy and mission. The staff, led by Executive Director, Cliff Carmody, actively seek opportunities to serve our member schools and governmental units. The Board of Directors, elected from the 18 county area, are appreciative of the advisory councils and committees that guide programs and services.”

*~ Sally Vogt*

Canby Public Schools  
SW/WC Service Cooperative Board Chair





Sally Vogt, Board Chair  
Canby Public Schools



Michael Zins, Vice-Chair  
Fulda Public Schools



Richard Vroman, Clerk  
Milroy Public Schools



Maydra Maas, Treasurer  
Westbrook/Walnut Grove  
Public Schools



*New Members as of  
January 2008*

Bonnie Barnhardt  
Avera Marshall Reg. Med. Center  
CCOGA At-Large Representative

# Board of Directors



Daniel Benson  
Kerkhoven-Murdock-Sunburg  
Public Schools  
Term ended December 2007



Don Brugman  
Windom Public Schools



Stephanie Cordes  
RTR Public Schools



Paul Henriksen  
RTR Public Schools



Jan Fransen  
Jackson County  
CCOGA At-Large Representative



Loren Mathews  
Glencoe/Silver Lake  
Public Schools



Michael O'Brien  
New London/Spicer  
Public Schools



Kathi Thymian  
Ortonville Public Schools



Daniel Zimansky  
Tracy Public Schools



Lynn Suter  
Kerkhoven-Murdock-Sunburg  
Public Schools

Southwest/West Central Service Cooperative

1420 East College Drive

Marshall, MN 56258

507.537.2240

Fax 507.537.7663

Montevideo Service Center

306 North First Street

Montevideo, MN 56265

320.269.9243

Fax 320.269.7132

Willmar Service Center

611 Southwest 5th Street

Willmar, MN 56201

320.231.5184

Fax 320.231.5302



Pipestone Service Center

PO Box 69, 713 6th Street Southeast

Pipestone, MN 56164

507.825.5858

Fax 507.825.4035

Windom Service Center

North Highway 71, PO Box 265

Windom, MN 56101-0265

507.831.2936

Fax 507.831.2938

Visit us online at:

[www.swsc.org](http://www.swsc.org)

Our website offers a general guide to programs and services, information about training opportunities, special events, employment openings, education news, and much more!

This report is published for members, educators, legislators, and business/government partners who enable us to provide relevant, cost-efficient, and high quality services throughout the 18-county Southwest and West Central Minnesota region. You'll see throughout the pages of this document why we are proud of who we are and what we do to make a difference every day in schools and communities.