

Mark Your Calendar!

JUNE 10

AMSD Executive Committee Meeting
7 AM, TIES Building
Regular Board meetings will resume in August.

JUNE 16

AMSD Workshop
8-11:30 AM, TIES Building Auditorium
"Building Advocacy from the Ground Up... Preparing for the 2005 Legislative Session"
See *From the Chair* in this month's *Connections* for more information about this important workshop.

AMSD's Mission

To advocate for state education policy that enables metropolitan school districts to improve student learning.



Left to right the following students were part of Chaska's winning Science Bowl Team: Zack Kertzman, Merideith Johnson, Bryan Eerle, Ellen Thomas and Nixon Li.

Chaska High Science Bowl Team: "King of the Hill" in National Competition

Picture this: You are handed sticks of balsa, a small hydrogen fuel cell, a small water tank and some glue. In seven hours, your assignment is to create a car that can make it up a 40 foot grade within five minutes.

That's exactly the situation Chaska High Science Bowl teammates Nixon Li, Ellen Thomas, Bryan Eberle, Meredith Johnson, and Zack Kertzman faced at the National Science Bowl Competition this month in Washington D.C. They not only built the car, they made the 'grade' and earned the title "King of the Hill" in the competition sponsored by General Motors and the U.S. Department of Energy.

As State Science Bowl Champions, the Chaska High School (CHS) team joined 63 other National Science Bowl teams to compete in both Science Saturday and the standard competition the following Sunday. The CHS students also became one of the 16 teams to advance to the double elimination category, an honor that earned a check for \$1000 for the CHS science department. The team is coached by science teachers Jim Lund and Pam Schmillen.

"It was quite an experience!" noted Lund. "When we entered, we received a fuel cell to practice with before we went to the competition. The team tried to build light where possible and position the weight so that it would have the maximum torque...at the expense of speed."

From the Chair

June 16 Workshop Important Step in Preparing for 2005 Session

It has never been more important for parents and community members to get involved in supporting public education. We hope you are planning to join us for AMSD's half-day workshop on June 16 from 8-11:30 a.m. in the TIES Building Auditorium. The theme of the workshop is *Building Advocacy from the Ground Up...Preparing for the 2005 Legislative Session*.

This workshop will provide new ideas and insights on how to build advocacy for public education in your district from the ground up. You will leave with practical, how-to information that works. There will be presentations by experienced superintendents, school board members, parents and business leaders. You will also hear from legislators themselves on the most effective ways to communicate and build relationships.

To maximize your district's efforts, we are asking all districts to send teams of five people, ideally consisting of a superintendent, school board member, public relations coordinator,

Inadequate State Funding for Public Education Taking its Toll

The recent legislative session did nothing to provide much needed relief to Minnesota school districts. This lack of action on top of the \$185 million in reductions enacted by the 2003 Legislature has caused districts to make deeper and deeper cuts to balance their budgets.

In addition to the serious impact the lack of appropriate funding is having on our students, families and our future, Minnesota is losing ground when compared to other states. Simply put, Minnesota is not making public education the priority that it once did and it shows. The 2003 Development Report Card for the States, which is prepared annually by the Corporation for Enterprise Development, offers State policymakers this dire warning, “Large drops in the rankings of average teacher salary and K-12 expenditures could spell the end of high student achievement if the state’s commitment to its educational system wanes further.” And this report was released before the \$185 million cut in 2003 was enacted.

From 2002 to 2003, Minnesota’s ranking plummeted from 8th to 24th in K-12 expenditures per pupil and fell from 17th to 29th

among the 50 states in average teacher salaries.

“It is clear that the Legislature and Governor need to recommit to adequately funding public education,” stressed Keith Broady, chair of the Association of Metropolitan School Districts. “Other states are catching up and passing us by... and our ability as a state to offer a quality workforce that will attract and retain businesses and allow us to compete in the global marketplace will suffer.”

The chart on the right shows how Minnesota compared to other states.

For more information about the 2003 Development Report Card for the States, visit the Corporation for Enterprise Development’s Web site at <http://drc.cfed.org>

Education Expenditures by State & Average Teacher Salaries

	K-12 Education Expenditure Rank		Average Teacher Salary Rank	
	2002 DRC	2003 DRC	2002 DRC	2003 DRC
Alabama	34	38	22	25
Alaska	21	28	31	40
Arizona	47	48	35	41
Arkansas	43	41	32	34
California	48	47	16	11
Colorado	46	44	40	36
Connecticut	3	4	4	6
Delaware	5	1	6	3
Florida	39	40	25	31
Georgia	29	16	12	8
Hawaii	49	50	50	50
Idaho	45	42	28	24
Illinois	23	25	7	4
Indiana	10	12	10	7
Iowa	22	18	27	22
Kansas	20	26	33	32
Kentucky	19	32	26	23
Louisiana	38	37	42	35
Maine	16	23	38	47
Maryland	17	17	11	5
Massachusetts	14	13	21	27
Michigan	13	10	2	2
Minnesota	8	24	17	29
Mississippi	44	46	44	43
Missouri	37	30	36	39
Montana	35	29	47	45
Nebraska	18	14	37	38
Nevada	42	43	9	13
New Hampshire	30	22	41	42
New Jersey	1	20	5	30
New Mexico	31	34	45	46
New York	4	7	8	21
North Carolina	36	35	13	12
North Dakota	12	39	48	49
Ohio	27	11	14	9
Oklahoma	33	36	39	44
Oregon	24	15	15	10
Pennsylvania	6	5	1	1
Rhode Island	2	9	3	14
South Carolina	25	19	24	15
South Dakota	32	31	49	48
Tennessee	40	45	23	19
Texas	28	27	19	16
Utah	50	49	43	28
Vermont	9	3	34	37
Virginia	26	21	20	17
Washington	41	33	30	20
West Virginia	11	2	29	25
Wisconsin	7	6	18	18
Wyoming	15	8	46	33

From the Chair (cont)

parent and business leader.

Please contact the AMSD Offices at 651-999-7325 if you did not receive a registration form. I'm looking forward to seeing teams from all of our districts on June 16!

Keith Broady, board member for the St. Louis Park Public Schools, is chair of the Association of Metropolitan School Districts.

Chaska High Science Bowl Team... (continued from page 1)



Chaska High Science Bowl Team's car conquered a 40 degree slope at the National Science Bowl Competition last month in Washington D.C.

Another factor in the car's success was its ability to go straight. "Getting the car to roll straight was crucial; many other cars ran into the walls of the ramp and stopped," Lund said.

Eight teams, drawn by lottery from the teams entered, began by testing their cars on a five degree slope. By the time the slope had increased to a 30 degree angle, only two teams remained. Chaska

High was the only team to conquer a 40 degree slope.

Coach Lund said that the car was just inches from the top of a 48 degree slope when time ran out. "The slope was a real challenge," Lund said. "By my calculation, the absolute maximum slope for a perfect 4-wheel drive vehicle on dry pavement would be 45 degrees... but I'd hate to be the one to test it!"

The team brought honor and another check for \$1500 home to the Chaska High science department.

This month's district spotlight was submitted by Nancy Kracke, community/staff relations coordinator for the Chaska Public Schools.

Employment Opportunity

AMSD Seeks Director of Research

The Association of Metropolitan School Districts is seeking an energetic, self-motivated individual responsible for the management and coordination of a comprehensive research program to serve the Association's 26 member school districts.

Demonstrated research skills, strong computer skills, extensive experience in spreadsheet and statistical software and strong written and oral communication skills are required. Knowledge of state K-12 education issues and the legislative process is preferred.

Willing to consider less than full-time status or independent contractor relationship.

AMSD offers a competitive salary and excellent benefits package. Resumes will be accepted through June 25. Please send cover letter and resume to: Association of Metropolitan School

Districts, 1667 Snelling Avenue North, Suite B-301, St. Paul, MN 55108 or Fax 651-999-7328.

Members of AMSD include: Bloomington, Brooklyn Center, Burnsville, Chaska, Eden Prairie, Edina, Fridley, Hopkins, Intermediate District 287, Inver Grove Heights, Mahtomedi, Minneapolis, Minnetonka, Mounds View, North St. Paul/Maplewood/Oakdale, Orono, Richfield, Robbinsdale, Roseville, Shakopee, South St. Paul, Spring Lake Park, St. Anthony/New Brighton, St. Louis Park, St. Paul and Wayzata.