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#### President's Column (continued from page 2)

or district that could benefit from having support in the area of communication management, encourage them to join WSPRA this year.

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In addition to attracting new members, we will implement a number of projects designed to add value to WSPRA membership and increase WSPRA's service to other organizations:

- ◆ A Trainer/Coordinator will be added to WSPRA to facilitate the planning of at least two workshops throughout the year.
- ◆ The Image Builders and Breakers presentation designed for district support personnel will be updated and ready to be offered at least twice in 2001-02. Be watching for details about the schedule.
- ◆ WSPRA is working on a curriculum. This is a comprehensive project that when finished will provide a user-friendly framework of concepts and skills involved in school public relations.
- ◆ To increase WSPRA's support to other educational organizations, we will expand the number of presentations made by WSPRA members at educational conferences. By building alliances within the state, WSPRA hopes to strengthen the role that we all play in education today.

## Mark Your Calendar!

### 2001 WSPRA Annual Fall Conference

'Meeting the Challenge of Change' • November 7-9, 2001

Heidel House Resort & Conference Center on beautiful Green Lake

Watch your mail in September for details!



WISCONSIN SCHOOL PUBLIC RELATIONS ASSOCIATION

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www.wspira.org

## Compromise Emerges from Conference

■ Joseph H. Quick, WSPRA Liaison,  
Madison Metropolitan School District

### SAGE Fully Funded, Modest Revenue Limit Relief, Special Education Disappointing

After nearly a month of negotiations between Senate and Assembly leaders, a compromise document has emerged, that predictably, helps in some areas and disappoints in others. Once passed by both houses, the document will be forwarded to Gov. Scott McCallum. The conference committee report may not be amended. Wisconsin's governor is widely acknowledged to have the most wide-sweeping veto powers of any of the nation's chief executives.

Of the key issues identified by state education groups, only full-funding for SAGE (Student Achievement Guarantee in Education), the K-3 class size reduction program, can be considered a total victory. Modest relief from state-imposed revenue limits — a .78 percent allowable increase using a complex formula — acknowledges the need for revenue limit flexibility. Most disappointing is the Legislature's failure to provide resources for mandated special education programs.

The budget adds \$15 million for special education during the 2002-03 fiscal year, meaning the reimbursement rate — currently slightly below 36 percent — will most assuredly drop in the next two years. A description of some of the major education issues follows:

**SAGE** — Program is fully funded for expansion into 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grades.

**Special Education** — No new resources added to the \$315 million special education appropriation, ensuring that the state reimbursement to local school districts for SPED services and programs will fall to less than one-third by the 2002-03 school year. Authorizes the Legislative Council (the research/legal counsel entity for the Legislature) to study: criteria for SPED placement, SPED services for violent pupils, the availability of alternatives to SPED placement, impact of state tests on SPED referrals, prospects for recovering a larger

percentage of federal medical assistance resources for SPED services and SPED teacher training. The report is due to the Legislature by June 30, 2003. Dropped the \$26 million targeted aid for low-incidence/high cost SPED students, included by Senate Democrats.

**Revenue Limit Flexibility** — Allows increase of .78 percent using a variety of factors from local property value per member to the statewide average equalized property value per member. Increases must be authorized by a two-thirds vote of the school board. The Legislature appropriates \$45 million in general purpose revenue to fund the change.

**2/3 Funding Commitment** — No change to current law. Specifies that costs associated with operating the School for the Deaf and Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired will be included in the definition of state school aids for the purpose of calculating 2/3 funding.

**Milwaukee Parental Choice Program** — Continues the program, but funds the \$50 million voucher plan as a separate item, rather than through the school aid formula. This change means local school districts will no longer pay for a portion of the program, a critical issue for Senate Democrats. No state standardized assessment is included.

**High School Graduation Test** — Delays implementation of the HSGT until the 2004-05 school year. Also delays until 2004-05 the requirement for local school districts to develop a written policy specifying criteria for granting a high school diploma. Reinstates the \$4.5 million and six positions to continue the test development.

**Four-Year Old Kindergarten** — Decreases the state reimbursement for pupils enrolled in 4-year-old kindergarten from .5 full-time equivalent to .3.

**Legislative Council Study of School Financing** — Authorizes the Legislative Council to conduct a study of school financing and report to the Legislature by June 30, 2003.

**School Start Date** — Requires districts to commence the

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## From the President . . .



Mabel  
Schumacher,  
Ph.D.

### Blue Ribbon Chapter Award

Recently, several WSPRA members joined over 650 other professionals at an exhilarating National School Public Relations seminar held in Minneapolis. It was a wonderful mix of informational and inspirational speakers and sessions. Just a bit of good news . . . WSPRA earned Blue Ribbon Chapter status again this year, thanks to all of you who submitted information about your professional activities during the past year. Thank you! You'll enjoy reading more about the conference in this issue of the WSPRAgram.

### WSPRA Planning Session Includes 'A Look Back'

The national conference was a meaningful follow-up to the planning session that the WSPRA Board of Directors held on June 22 in Menomonee Falls. As the board reviewed our organization's activities since its 1998 strategic planning session, a number of accomplishments were identified. Among them are the development of a web site ([www.wspra.org](http://www.wspra.org)), preparation for the upcoming addition of a trainer/coordinator, and increased membership services in the form of workshops and assistance to districts regarding educational issues.

### Board Goals

WSPRA's mission is to *demonstrate visionary leadership and offer service to the educational community by expanding the capacity of its members to provide effective communication management.* In keeping with our mission, WSPRA's 2001-02 goals deal specifically with the services that we provide to our members. We want to be able to offer service to an increased number of individuals and districts. To do this, we hope to add a membership chairperson to our board. If you are interested in becoming involved in WSPRA in this capacity, please contact me. Also, if you know of a professional

### (Compromise Emerges, continued from page 1)

school year after September 1 beginning with the 2002-03 school year. Allows the Department of Public Instruction to waive the requirement "if it determines there are extraordinary reasons for granting it," according to the Legislative Fiscal Bureau conference committee summary. It is presumed that districts that have already signed bargaining agreements through the 2002-03 school year will be exempt until the 2003-04 school year.

**School Performance Report** — Requires that the school performance report compares a district's performance to others in its athletic conference.

A hodgepodge of issues allows: school boards to require school uniforms, requires school districts that teach human growth and development to also offer instruction in marriage and parental responsibility, and, requires the state superintendent to encourage local school districts to invite armed forces veterans to discuss their experiences as veterans.

Governor McCallum indicated in late July that he would take 4-5 weeks to review the budget for his vetoes. Democrats sought to ensure "veto-proofing" from the governor for several key items. It is believed that revenue estimates in mid-August will indicate that more cuts will have to be made to ensure a balanced budget, complicating McCallum's veto review process. You can contact the

## Preparing an Effective Presentation

■ Mark McLaughlin, President, McLaughlin & Associates

We've all seen presenters we envy because they look so relaxed and can present their point of view in a way that we almost automatically agree with them. It's not by chance that we tend to agree with them. They have planned it that way and planning is the key.

Bob Boylan, in his book, "What's Your Point?" emphasizes the position that "the presentation is not information sharing . . . You are asking somebody to do something, to make a decision or change a behavior."

"Presentation" in this context does not refer only to presentations at conferences or seminars. As business people, any time we are making a recommendation, suggesting a new approach or convincing someone of the need for change, we are making a presentation. This even applies to a one-on-one situation.

This article will highlight the key points Boylan makes in his book regarding one of the key elements of an effective presentation; content. In what has become known as "The Boylan Method," there are three factors in an effective presentation; focused content, correct content and commitment to content.

1. **Focused Content.** When the content is focused, the speaker will be clearer, more concise and less nervous. To focus the content, write down detailed answers to these three questions:

- Who am I addressing?
- What do I want to say?
- What are the "benefits" to the listener of what I have to say?

Next, you will want to develop a single **point of view**. Using the list you developed in 1-B above, reduce it until you have one sentence that states your point of view. This sentence should be the one most important point you want your audience to remember.

2. **Correct Content.** The correct content includes benefits, facts and

personal experience.

- List the benefits.** Think of your audience asking, "What's in it for me?"
- List the facts.** List only facts that support your point of view.
- List personal experience.** There are three types of experiences you can use:

- Experiences of your district that relate to the point of view,
- Experiences of others that you can tell,
- Personal experiences that support your point of view.

Since using experiences can help the audience understand your message, it is important that the experiences clearly relate to your point of view.

3. **Commitment to Content.** If you expect people to believe you and to act on your recommendation, they have to believe you are committed to your point of view. This is the final and equally important part of your presentation preparation process. As Boylan states, "How you look and how you sound tells your audience you believe you have something they should hear."

To show your commitment, there are many presentation skills to master including the use of your hands, positioning yourself in the room, body language, proper attire and voice projection. These are skills that need to be developed through practice. All these factors relate to your commitment. Boylan concludes, "If you don't look or sound like you bought your own idea, why should anyone else?"

When you begin your presentation, be sure to tell your audience "what you are going to tell them" and then "tell them what you told them" by repeating the key points from the body of your presentation.

Finally, present your recommendation. If you have developed and presented the elements of your presentation effectively to this point, the audience will ask themselves, "Now what?" Your recommendation should specifically answer that question; tell them specifically what you want to happen. Again, be sure your recommendation is directly related to and flows from your point of view.

In conclusion, borrowing once again from Boylan's book, when preparing a presentation of any kind, remember that "people don't care how much you know until they know how

## Back to School Already???

■ Mark McLaughlin, President, McLaughlin & Associates

While it may seem like summer just started, it's time to start planning back to school activities. WSPRA's Back to School Kit was designed to help make that job a little easier. Listed below are five of the ideas from the list of "30 Ways to Foster Support for Education."

- ◆ Present an honorary award to a local government official

or community leader to recognize his or her contributions to education in your community. This can be a high-profile event to help focus the community on the importance of community involvement. Involving community leaders to select the recipient can involve even more people in the process. This process can be used to build new school-community relationship and reinforce existing ones.

- ◆ Stress the importance of parents reading to their preschool children at least 20 to 30 minutes a day. The theme that parents need to prepare their students for the first day of school can go way beyond buying new clothes and school supplies. Emphasize the importance of parents interaction with their children long before they are ready for their first day of formal education.
- ◆ Encourage parent-teacher meetings other than scheduled parent conference dates. Be careful not to make general statements such as telling parents to call teachers. Inform parents how to schedule these meetings in a way that is convenient for them and the teaching staff — list which phone number to use, the best time to reach the teaching staff, e-mail addresses if available and any other information that makes communication between parents and teachers effective and efficient.
- ◆ Involve parents in defining discipline policies to develop better understanding of the parents' expectations of behavior and the schools' rationale for the policies. Whether you are starting with new policies or if current policies need to be reviewed, learning more about the parents' expectations can help school officials handle discipline matters in ways that parents will more actively support.
- ◆ Schedule presentations at local organizations such as Rotary, Kiwanis, Junior Service League and League of Women Voters about how community members can get involved in education. Even if you don't have a list of presenters yet, use the summer time to lock in a presentation date with local organizations. You can provide the name of the presenter later. Summer is also a good time to develop a list of talking points, handouts and other resources for the staff members who will be making the presentations during the school year.

The complete list of "30 Ways to Foster Support for Education" along with templates for resolutions, certificates, news releases and public service announcements are included in the Back to School kit. For additional information about the kit or to order kits for your district, contact Mark McLaughlin at [macassoc@manty.com](mailto:macassoc@manty.com). ❖

**WSPRA welcomes articles from its members for the WSPRAgram. If you would like to write an article, please send contributions to WSPRA, 122 W. Washington Ave., Suite 400, Madison, WI 53703.**