

well connected

AREA SCHOOLS | LOCAL GOVERNMENTS | NONPROFITS

GOING TO THE DOGS

Funding helps launch
K-9 program in Crosby

CRASH COURSE

Royalton FD receives
hands-on driving experience

CREATING A RIPL EFFECT

Taking a preventative
approach to school violence

Career to
classroom

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Welcome to the fall/winter edition of Well Connected. Like past issues of the magazine, we offer a little bit of something for everyone within these pages, including fantastic photography and heartwarming stories.

By now, students and school staff have likely settled into a regular routine. While many were enjoying their time on the lake or on vacation last summer, one Sebeka High School teacher took advantage of the time to participate in an externship with a Menahga telecommunications crew.

See how this experience is changing his approach in the classroom.

Speaking of the classroom... did you know the U.S. teacher shortage is projected to grow to more than 100,000 educators by 2021? It's a frightening statistic that must be addressed now. On pages 12-15, read more about measures being taken here at home to turn those numbers around.

Great things are also happening for our cities, counties, and nonprofits. The Pine River Police Department explains how Innovation Funding is enhancing collaboration across all five counties through shared equipment. Check out the article and learn how your organization can also participate.

Toward the back of the magazine, we share three great stories about how Small Project Partnership funding is transforming lives, enhancing public safety, and providing greater opportunities in several communities and schools throughout our region.

And that's just the tip of the iceberg.

Now, refresh your cup of coffee and enjoy the following stories featuring the men and women who make this a great place to live, work, and play.

Paul Drange
Sourcewell Director of Regional Programs

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Field work: Teacher externships drive opportunity

For one week in July, Sebeka teacher Jacob Oyster (center) joined the crew of Menahga-based Cooperative Network Services as part of an externship program offered through Sourcewell.



“..by sharing these opportunities right here in our backyard, students can stay in the area and work in a field that will be around long into the future.”

- Jacob Oyster, Sebeka ag science teacher and Sourcewell Teacher Externship participant



Larry Lanoue (right) and Clayton Burns (left) of CNS in Menahga give additional perspective to extern Jacob Oyster (center). >

Not many appreciate the summer months quite like a teacher.

But for Jacob Oyster, this summer break provided the perfect opportunity to broaden the horizons and possibilities for his agriculture science students at Sebeka High School.

In 2018, Sourcewell introduced an externship program for regional educators. The program pays educators to spend one week with a local business. The intent is to not only help build school-to-business relationships, but to connect educators and classrooms with real-world skills.

Sebeka Public Schools Principal Amie Westberg said her district participates in several Sourcewell offerings, including Tech Mobile, networking groups, the Minnesota

Summit for Learning and Leading, and much more. When she learned of the opportunity for paid externships, she didn't hesitate to share it with her teachers.

"When students ask us, 'Where are we going to use this?' sometimes it's hard to give examples," Westberg explained.

For one week in July, Oyster traded his teacher hat for a traffic vest and joined the crew of Cooperative Network Services based in Menahga. CNS provides a variety of services, including Geographic Information System (GIS), telecommunications, and outsourced services.

"Telecommunications is the wave of the future," Oyster added. "There are so many careers related to GIS and using GPS. And by sharing these [employment] opportunities right here in our backyard, students can stay in the area and work in a field

that will be around long into the future."

The externship also gave Oyster an opportunity to get hands-on experience with equipment he already has in the classroom and discover new techniques he can build into his curriculum. It also established connections with a local business, providing him and his students with a valued resource in the field.

Westberg said by creating a career-to-classroom gateway, these externships also benefit the community by retaining and recruiting a future workforce.

"When they [staff] can bring the techniques and experiences back to the classroom, it can make what they are teaching more credible," Westberg said. "When students can understand the 'why' they tend to want to learn more."



A crash course in emergency vehicle safety

Firetruck crashes are the second-leading cause of on-the-job deaths of firefighters, according to data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the United States Fire Administration.

Royalton Fire Department training officer Travis Blais refuses to allow himself or anyone on his department to become one of those statistics.

Blais was driving his personal vehicle on Highway 10 when a vehicle came out of nowhere and pulled out in front of him.

“Without even thinking about it, I used the lane change/collision avoidance maneuver and avoided t-boning a distracted driver,” Blais said. “I did all of this as if it was a natural reaction; there was no time to think about or plan out what I was gonna have to do. Once it was over and I realized what had happened, I thought to myself ‘Holy hell. That worked!’”

Local public safety personnel participate in real-world driving techniques, including skid control, at the Minnesota Highway Safety and Research Center in St. Cloud.





Just weeks before, Blais and fellow firefighters from the Royalton Fire Department participated in a driving skills course at the Minnesota Highway Safety and Research Center in St. Cloud. The hands-on instruction held on a closed course included skid control, controlled braking, and evasive maneuvering among other lifesaving tactics.

States. Data supports most of those crashes could have been prevented.

Nadeau, an experienced emergency responder for over 24 years, said the fire and EMS driver training is the highway safety center's fastest-growing program. Courses are also offered for law enforcement, teens, and as part of the 55+ driver discount program.

“Without even thinking about it, I used the lane change/collision avoidance maneuver and avoided t-boning a distracted driver.”

-Travis Blais, Royalton Fire Department training officer

Since 2015, Sourcewell and MHSRC have partnered to provide behind-the-wheel training for emergency responders in Sourcewell's five-county service area. Following successful completion of the course, Sourcewell pays for 100 percent of the training.

“Regardless of skill level, our training is designed to improve competency of all drivers,” said MHSRC Director Larry Nadeau. “We don't put drivers in competition with each other; we work to help all drivers improve. Our training also places emphasis on wise decision making behind the wheel.”

In addition to those tactics, the comprehensive course has a classroom component that supports advanced driver skills training. The training is designed to reduce preventable crashes involving emergency responders.

Vehicle crashes remain a leading cause of fatalities and life-threatening injuries for emergency responders throughout the United

“I think when an individual has made the decision to become a firefighter or first responder, they have a natural instinct to want to help anyone that needs it. And this instinct leads to a rush of adrenaline,” Blais said. “Without this training, that adrenaline could lead to poor choices while responding to a scene.”

While there isn't a state mandate requiring this training for fire and EMS responders, most fire departments and agencies set their own requirements for hours behind the wheel of their respective emergency vehicles.

“I believe this training should be mandatory to all firefighters and responders and should be part of the state's requirements to be in EMS,” Blais said. “We are grateful to Sourcewell for supplying the funds needed to have these experiences. And we are also grateful to the highway safety center. Having this level of training and equipment in our backyard is priceless.”

With input from area school districts, Sourcewell held its first Central Minnesota Education Job Fair in April 2019.



Addressing the teacher shortage in central Minnesota

The challenges

Minnesota Rural Education Association (MREA) identifies key drivers of the teacher shortage:

1

Slow growth and increasing diversity in Minnesota's workforce.

2

Fewer young people choosing education as a career.

3

Increased challenges of entering the teaching profession and sustaining a satisfactory and impactful career.

4

Low income potential and growing wage gap compared to other skilled workers.

Verndale native Elyssa Kern was offered, and accepted, a teaching position with the Menahga School District after attending the Central Minnesota Education Job Fair.



The opportunities

Through a teacher recruitment specialist, Sourcewell has:

- a** Formed a consortium of school districts that purchased an online system to make it easier for applicants to apply for jobs.
- b** Formed partnerships with several Minnesota universities.
- c** Helped prospective teachers understand the unique resources and support available.
- d** Developed programs to encourage prospective teachers to come to the region.
- e** Held its first education job fair in April 2019 with plans for another in 2020.

“I had many people tell me going into teaching was a bad idea and that I should find something new...”

-Elyssa Kern, first-year teacher at Menahga Elementary

When Mary Klamm began her career as a school administrator at Menahga School District in 2008, teacher recruitment wasn't an issue.

With the boom of retirements still a few years away, applicants were ripe for the picking. In 2011, that all changed. Districts began losing teachers, and finding high-quality replacements became difficult.

Years later, the situation hasn't improved.

The Minnesota Rural Education Association identifies fewer young people choosing a career in education as a key driver of Minnesota's continued teacher shortage. The crisis isn't unique to Minnesota – the U.S. teacher shortage is projected to grow to more than 100,000 educators by 2021. But rural districts are struggling the most to attract applicants.

Now Sourcewell's teacher recruitment specialist, Klamm partners with schools in Cass, Crow Wing, Morrison, Todd, and Wadena counties to address the shortage. Klamm also works with universities throughout Minnesota to aid in recruitment, as well as developing programs to encourage prospective teachers to come to the area.

With input from area districts, Klamm put on the first Central Minnesota Education Job Fair as an initiative aimed at connecting candidates to careers.

Inspired to inspire

Verndale High School graduate Elyssa Kern said she was inspired to become a teacher while volunteering as an education aide. However, her decision to pursue a degree and career in education didn't come without hesitancy.

"Actually, I had many people tell me going into teaching was a bad idea and that I should find something new," she said. "I took their advice and started looking into other options, but I couldn't shake the idea of becoming a teacher one day. It really had become my dream."

Kern was one of 47 potential teaching candidates who attended the job fair in April 2019. Eighteen of 23 regional school districts participated in this first-of-its-kind event in greater Minnesota.

Making connections

Following three breakout sessions, including techniques for a successful job interview, Kern visited with a handful of district representatives at the job fair before approaching Menahga School District's table.

Kerry White, a lead mentor and instructional coach, represented Menahga at the fair.

"I felt like this was an opportunity to speak with potential candidates and to show our commitment to helping new teachers entering the teaching profession," White said.

"Elyssa came up to our booth, and her engagement with us was impressive. Her questions were spot-on."

Days later, Kern interviewed and was offered her first teaching job as a first-grade teacher at Menahga Elementary.

Success for schools

At least four new teachers were hired by regional districts as a result of the Central Minnesota Education Job Fair. In addition to hiring Kern, Menahga was also able to connect with two student teachers for fall 2019.

The Menahga School District also participates in Sourcewell's New Teacher Academy, setting up first-year teachers for success, as well as the Minnesota Summit for Learning and Leading, and numerous ENVoY (nonverbal classroom techniques) offerings.

"Sourcewell's leadership heard the cry for help from our administrators," Klamm said. "They understood it was important to our schools' success to develop both short- and long-term solutions to address the teacher shortage. Sourcewell doesn't want to just fill a gap; they want to raise the bar."



Meaningful
connections

RIPL

through Bertha-Hewitt School District





There's a RIPL effect surging across the region and state.

RIPL – or Relational, Impactful, Preventative Leadership – equips teachers and staff with tools to connect with students in meaningful ways and create strong relationships.

The program also educates school staff on detecting early warning signs that may predict violent student behavior and suicidal tendencies.

Scott Doss, a lifetime educator with over 22 years of administrative experience, and Ben Rudrud, a former police officer of 13 years,

created the program. Both oversee day-to-day operations and serve as RIPL consultants.

Since fall 2018, nearly 30 school districts have engaged in RIPL training. The Bertha-Hewitt School District was one of the first to participate.



“So many times in a school tragedy, you always hear about – man, if there were just that one person that would’ve made a connection. If there were just one person that would’ve reached out, you know, maybe we’d have had a different result,” said Darren Glynn, Principal at Bertha-Hewitt Schools.

RIPL focuses on identifying opportunities to intercede and prevent violence before it’s too late. All staff participate in the training -- cooks, custodians, bus drivers; all are taught how to have a powerful impact on students beyond the school walls.

Bertha-Hewitt Superintendent Eric Koep said he first heard about the program from Rudrud and immediately knew it was something Bertha-Hewitt staff would embrace. However, Koep couldn’t have foreseen the direct impact the training would have in his life.

Shawn* started his high school journey on a rocky road. Behavioral issues sent him to detention on a regular basis. Outside of school; Shawn’s life was equally tumultuous. Because of a stressful family situation during his junior year, Shawn resorted

to living with a friend and taking life day by day.

“That’s when Mr. Koep talked to me,” Shawn said. “He told me everything would be fine. I knew he was a person I could trust whenever I had a problem.”

“My first recollection of Shawn is when he passed me going about 95 mph on the highway a couple years back,” Koep said. “I got to school, called him in, and gave him a good lecture. But he didn’t seem to care when I told him I was going to call home. That stuck with me because you could tell, he felt nobody cared for him.”

Shawn stayed front of mind for Koep, who tried to touch base at least twice a month to ensure Shawn was staying out of trouble and on track to graduate. Then, Shawn voluntarily began visiting Koep’s office more frequently to vent or ask for advice.

“During late winter, he didn’t come to school for a couple of days, so I called his cell phone and he shared some concerns he had,” Koep said. “But after five minutes of chatting, he decided to come in to school. He came to my office and shared more concerns and we both

shed a tear or two before putting a plan in place to finish the year.”

Shawn graduated from high school and is enrolled in college. He also checks in with his friend and mentor, Mr. Koep, for motivation on the tough days.

In addition to staff training, RIPL includes an observational study of a school district’s culture and climate, which provides leaders with feedback to help make their schools safer. RIPL student assemblies focus on making good decisions and building positive, meaningful relationships with one another. During assemblies, students learn about the impact of hurtful words, actions, and bullying. Ongoing professional development for each district is offered to support the initial RIPL training and provide staff with the specific tools to help address mental health issues.

Renee Current is a paraprofessional at Bertha-Hewitt and participated in the initial RIPL training for school staff.

“This is the first training I’ve had that makes me feel like I can be part of the solution,” Current said.

The training has helped staff form

24

Minnesota school districts have participated in RIPL training:

- Bemidji
- Bertha-Hewitt
- Browerville
- Climax-Fisher
- Crosslake Charter School
- East Grand Forks
- Fertile-Beltrami
- Henning
- Lake of the Woods
- Long Prairie-Grey Eagle
- Mahnomen
- Marshall County Central
- Menahga
- Park Rapids
- Pillager
- Pine River-Backus
- Sebekka
- Stephen-Argyle
- Swanville
- Underwood
- Upsala
- Verndale
- Wadena-Deer Creek
- Win-E-Mac

daily interactions with students.

“It has reminded me how much one person can affect another,” she explained. “Sometimes a smile and someone to listen is very important. I want each student to know and understand they are special.”

“The staff at Bertha-Hewitt have always been second to none when it comes to building relationships with students,” Koep said. “But the RIPL message has helped us build upon the success we were already having. I recommend that every school in our region and state bring the RIPL team to their district, not just for the initial evaluation and presentation, but for ongoing professional development. Being proactive and building relationships with students needs to happen in order for success in the classroom and on the field to reach its fullest potential.”

RIPL is Sourcewell’s preferred school violence prevention training. To learn more about the RIPL program, visit ripltraining.org.



“This is the first training I’ve had that makes me feel like I can be part of the solution.”

– Renee Current, paraprofessional at Bertha-Hewitt School District



Q&A with Karrie Ehlenfeldt:

Committing to the practice of teaching

There are only five Level 3-certified High Reliability Teachers in the United States. Impressively, three teach in the Walker-Hackensack-Akeley School District. Karrie Ehlenfeldt, WHA district assessment coordinator, is in that group and recently sat down for a Q&A session to share more about the program and the impact it is having on student achievement.

Q What does it mean to become certified as a High Reliability Teacher?

To me, becoming a High Reliability Teacher (HRT) means I am committing to enhance and develop my personal and professional practice. I am proving that I use best instructional practices, have evidence of student learning, and have valid and rigorous feedback for students.

Q What was the process to become an HRT?

Within HRT there are three levels, or four courses. Each level has criteria you need to put into place and prove with evidence that you are doing each task. Some sample tasks include videos of your teaching, setting individual goals, student work, proficiency scales, student assessments, and lots of reflection on your teaching and student outcomes.

Q How does that impact how and what you teach?

The biggest impact in my teaching is being intentional about my planning and delivering of content to students. I am focused on student outcomes more than what I, as the teacher, am doing. For example, I can deliver the best lesson and ensure I have many examples, but if my students do not understand what we are doing, why we are doing it, and how to do it, my lesson failed. Using students as a gauge for me as the teacher has been a shift and instrumental to increasing student learning.

Q When did you first hear about this program and why did you decide to pursue it?

I first heard about this program through a pilot opportunity through Sourcewell. We did not have very detailed information at the very beginning, but the chance to work with Dr. Robert Marzano and be part of a pilot program was very intriguing to me. I am always looking to be part of and try new things, so it was a perfect fit.

Q In simple terms, what does that mean for students? What is the impact on their learning?

Through proficiency scales (steps for learning progression), students are the leaders of their learning. Students can articulate what they can do, and where they need to go in order to master the standard. Since I am more prepared and have a clear path, the proficiency scale, the student learning is more directed and clearer. All students know the expectations and how to get there.

"I am focused on student outcomes more than what I, as the teacher, am doing."

- Karrie Ehlenfeldt, Walker-Hackensack-Akeley district assessment coordinator and Level 3-certified High Reliability Teacher



What is the High Reliability Teacher program?

The Marzano Resources High Reliability Teacher™ (HRT) program recognizes the advancement of a teacher’s instructive skills and knowledge in three levels:

- Effective use of teaching strategies
- Student learning
- Valid and rigorous feedback



What educators are saying...

“The use of proficiency scales and subsequent goal tracking has helped my middle school students take more control of their learning and fostered further independent learning.”

– Miranda Graceffa,
Crosslake Community School

“I think the biggest impact with my students is that they have taken more ownership of their own learning. Using the proficiency scales in the classroom gives the students a map of where they need to go and they are able to identify where they are on the journey. It’s not me telling them what they need; they are telling me what they need to get them to the next level. They are so excited when they see their own progress!”

– Shannon Rivard,
Walker-Hackensack-Akeley Schools

Q Are you a different teacher because of this training and certification?

Absolutely. I learned about myself, my students, and my professional practice. I have learned how to create a road map of my content more effectively, ensure student learning, and allow students to shine through empowering them as individual learners. I know that last school year was my best year with students, and this year will be even better – all because I have more tools and knowledge to grow my practice each year.



Karrie Ehlenfeldt, Walker-Hackensack-Akeley assessment coordinator, implements in the classroom what she’s learned through the HRT program.

Care to share?

Shared equipment increases efficiency

Use this equipment for free or reduced cost



Laser Shot Simulator



Speed Signs



Dewatering Equipment



Drone



Sewer Camera



Mobile Command Trailer



Experiential Traffic Safety Resources

With gun drawn, Walker Police Chief Wayne Tennis quickly aims and prepares to pull the trigger.

Fortunately, this is only a simulation taking place at the Pine River Police Department. And the gun shoots a laser instead of bullets.

In 2016, a collaborative of law enforcement agencies from Sourcewell's five-county service area received \$100,000 in Innovation Funding to purchase a Laser Shot Simulator for firearms training. The simulator is

one example of equipment purchased through this funding opportunity and used to enhance collaboration across cities and counties.

For the last six years, cities, counties, nonprofits, and schools in the region have used more than \$11 million in Sourcewell Innovation Funding to positively impact their communities. Much of that has been used by various agencies to purchase equipment that otherwise couldn't happen due to tight budgets.

Projects given priority are those that demonstrate a promise of collaboration with other public entities. Scott Saehr, community solutions specialist at Sourcewell, said the idea of utilizing Innovation Funding for shared equipment came from the members already informally sharing with each other.

"The concept comes from what our members are already doing," said Saehr. "It also removes duplicative costs and efforts. For example, City A has a



Walker Police Chief Wayne Tennis (left) and Pine River Police Chief Paul Sand train with the Laser Shot Simulator, equipment purchased with Innovation Funding dollars.

street sweeper and lets City B use it. In exchange, City B has something it's willing to share."

Innovation Funding steps in to help by providing the funding to purchase large items that can be shared throughout Sourcewell's five-county service area – Cass, Crow Wing, Morrison, Todd, and Wadena counties.

Saehr said the response has been positive, including success stories from a host of communities that have taken advantage of shared equipment. In

addition to the Laser Shot Simulator, others include search-and-rescue operations with a drone system (Crow Wing County, 2017), and making neighborhoods safer with portable, electronic speed-control signs (Pierz, 2014-15).

Pine River Police Chief Paul Sand uses the Laser Shot Simulator with his department for training and invites other departments to also attend.

"We do an annual training at our police department with Lake Shore,

Walker, Pequot Lakes, and Pillager," Sand said. "I can tell you this: We are very happy with it and it has been helpful to this department as well as the others. I even had our city council go through it to show them what challenges we face; and they were very surprised, but enjoyed it."

Learn more about the equipment available to you at sourcewell-mn.gov/community

Room to be real





In one year alone, 33 percent of students at the Freshwater Education District's Area Learning Center identified themselves as wrestling with mental health issues. That year, Freshwater staff made the decision to prioritize supporting students with mental health needs.

"It was a decision not only to increase attendance and improve academic success, but to improve the quality of students' lives," explained ALC Specialist Jana Timm. "We are aware that mental health concerns do not end with a high school diploma. It was important to all of us – staff and students – that the stigma associated with mental health did not prevent our students from seeking support as young adults."

Freshwater began by collaborating with a local mental health provider. The provider meets daily with groups of students, facilitating discussion about current and relevant health topics. Students are provided the opportunity for group and individual therapy, along with behavioral skills.

Initially, intervention took place in a classroom also used for an academic class the next hour. Timm and staff felt that the physical meeting environment influenced emotions and wanted a room that would positively affect the therapeutic experience for all students.

"Our school happened to be moving locations at that time," Timm said. "Though we still had the constraints of an educational setting, we were seeking ways to make one of the new rooms in the building a space to provide a perception of psychological safety so that students would have a willingness to disclose and build rapport with a support person."

Timm turned to Sourcewell's Small Project Partnership funding to help provide the means to create a safe and sacred space for students. The Freshwater Area Learning Center requested and was awarded \$1,500 to match funds provided by the district.

Students selected the type of seating. At one site, they chose antigravity chairs and ottomans. At another site, they selected bean bag chairs and stools. Timm said the chairs are typically set up in a semi-circle to promote discussion. Carpet provides a warmer feeling, and walls are painted beige and a soft blue tone to enhance a soothing environment.

Timm said the room is used daily for group sessions. When having a difficult time at school, students also use it as a place to escape, or to sit or meet with staff, peers, and social workers.

"This area would have been difficult to provide without the financial support from Sourcewell," Timm said. "With academics as a focus, it's difficult to make the decision to create this kind of space over curriculum – although we all understand the benefit of it. When students start their school day with time in a calming environment, it tends to set the tone for the rest of the day. No matter the circumstance, our students always know they have a safe place to go at school."

ART

Small Project

Helping teens find their creativity

The Crossing Arts Alliance (CAA) in downtown Brainerd is one of the first nonprofit organizations to receive Small Project Partnership funding from Sourcewell.

Thanks, in part, to the \$2,500 award, the Crossing recently began offering after-school art programs for teens. A wide range of hands-on studio- and gallery-based experiences are led by area artists. Regular introductions to new techniques in mediums such as painting and drawing, coupled with collaborative installations and experimental works, are designed to challenge and inspire young artists.

“It’s our hope that teens will find a safe, welcoming environment with us where they can explore and share their creativity,” said CAA Director Lisa Jordan. “We hope that this regular exposure to different art forms will build the foundation of a lifelong appreciation of art and help kids find their voice, creatively.”

Jordan said she also hopes these teens will feel invested in their community through participation in the classes and feel as though Brainerd has a creative culture that will support their interests.

Small Project Partnership funding has allowed CAA to purchase the necessary supplies and tools, and to bring in area artists to launch the program.

Twice-monthly classes began in September with hopes the program will continue to grow to a weekly offering.





Partnership Funding

Crosby Police Department adds to its unit

An idea – years in the making – finally grew legs this year. Four of them, in fact.

Thanks to the financial support of the community and funding through Sourcewell’s Small Project Partnership, the Crosby Police Department added K-9 officer Ragnar to its force this summer.

Ragnar, a 1 ½-year-old Belgian Malinois, is a drug detection and tracking dog. He specializes in search and rescue, narcotics detection, evidence location, tracking, building searches, and community outreach.

Ragnar graduated from training in June 2019 and, only one week into the job, was called into action to assist another agency with a drug search.

The upfront expense to purchase a dog, as well as provide the required training, was roughly \$10,000. Crosby Police Chief Kim Coughlin said the public response to helping fund this unit was overwhelming. From individuals to small businesses and large companies to corporations, money was raised in short order to make this dream a reality for the Crosby community and beyond.

Dollars to sustain the unit – including food, vet bills, equipment, and additional training – will come from additional donations, grants, and funds awarded through the court system stemming from cash and other items seized during drug arrests.

In addition to demands in the field, Ragnar has also partnered with the Crosby-Ironton School District in conducting locker sweeps, building searches, and finding missing students if the need arises.

But don’t let Ragnar’s impressive resume intimidate you. While all business on the clock, he’s also a giant puppy off duty – taking full advantage of belly rubs and endless games of fetch. When not on the job, Ragnar gets to be a regular dog, living with officer and handler Mike Davis, his wife, and two children.

Created in 2016, the Small Project Partnership Funding program supports projects initiated by public agencies within Sourcewell’s five-county service area. Sourcewell funds up to \$2,500 per entity per fiscal year and requires the initiating agency to provide a 50/50 financial match.

To learn more about Small Project Partnerships, visit sourcewell-mn.gov and search, “funding.”





Professional development

For all community leaders

Statewide Census 2020 Livestream - Information, Training, and Resources for Complete Count Committees
Jan. 29, 2020

LEAD Academy Series: Managing Up and Out
Feb. 20, March 12, 19, 2020

Community Resilience Roundtables: 2020 Trends in Minnesota
March 5, 2020

Civil Discussions During the Election Year
April 22, 2020

LEAD Academy Series: Time to Lead
April 30, May 13, 21, 2020

Leadercast
May 7, 2020

Collective Bargaining for Local Elected Officials
May 27, 2020

LEAD Academy Series: Supervisor Survival
June 4, 11, 18, 2020

Marathon Madness
June 23, 2020

For public safety

Strength and Resiliency: A Tactical Approach to Wellness
Dec. 10, 2019

Reducing Resistance and Protecting Yourself from Controlled Drama
Feb. 11, 2020

Mental Health Awareness
April 8, 2020

For educators

Systems Work with an Equity Lens - Paul Gorski
Nov. 20, 2019

Leadership Academy
Nov. 26, 2019, Jan. 28, April 2, June 9, 2020

Winter webinar series
Jan.-March, 2020

Equity Advocates Leadership Cohort
Jan. 15, March 18, June 10, 2020

Advanced SEED Seminar
Jan. 30, 2020

ENVoY – Paraprofessionals
Jan. 20, 2020

ENVoY I
Feb. 27, 2020

Central Minnesota Education Job Fair
April 1, 2020

Educators of Excellence
April 29, 2020

Leadercast Live
May 7, 2020

Leadership Retreat
June 22-24, 2020

For students

Regional Elementary Science and Engineering Fair
Feb. 25, 2020

Spelling Bee
March 25, 2020

Students of Character Celebration
April 15, 2020

Math Masters
April 27, 2020

Regional Art Show
May 14, 2020

For nonprofits

Planned and Legacy Giving
Brainerd Lakes Area Lunch and Learn
March 2, 2020

Succession Planning for Nonprofits
April 14, 2020

Donor Relations – Prospects and Retention
Brainerd Lakes Area Lunch and Learn
June 2, 2020

For technology professionals

Cybersecurity for Educators
Ongoing | Online Training

Impact Education Conference
by Sourcewell Technology
Minneapolis Hyatt Regency
Dec. 14-17, 2019

Learn more and register at sourcewell-mn.gov

Connect with us

Upcoming events

We'd love to see how we can serve you.
Stop by our booth at these upcoming events.

Minnesota Rural Education Association (MREA) Annual Conference

Nov. 17-19, 2019 | Brainerd, Minn.

Minnesota Association of Townships (MAT) Annual Conference

Nov. 22-23, 2019 | Mankato, Minn.

Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) Annual Conference

Dec. 9-10, 2019 | St. Cloud, Minn.

Minnesota Sheriffs Association (MSA) Winter Conference

Dec. 10-11, 2019 | Alexandria, Minn.

Minnesota School Board Association (MSBA) Leadership Conference

Jan. 16-17, 2019 | Minneapolis, Minn.

Monthly e-newsletter

Get information about upcoming events
plus regional news.

The Source for Educators

contact education@sourcewell-mn.gov

The Source for Communities

contact community@sourcewell-mn.gov

Find us on Facebook

Follow the Sourcewell Facebook Page
to see the latest news and events:
facebook.com/sourcewellgov.

Sourcewell 
Formerly NJPA



Sourcewell: we are driven to serve

Who is Sourcewell?

Formerly National Joint Powers Alliance (NJPA), Sourcewell is a self-supporting government organization, partnering with education, government, and nonprofits to boost student and community success. As one of Minnesota's nine service cooperatives, we offer training and shared services to our central Minnesota members. Throughout North America, we offer a cooperative purchasing program with over 325 awarded vendors on contract. We are driven by service and the ability to strategically reinvest in member communities.

Our core services

- Cooperative Purchasing
- Community Solutions
- Education and Career and College Readiness
- Regional Low Incidence Project and Collaborative Service Workers
- Insurance and Employee Benefits
- Technology