



March 2024 Newsletter

Dear Friends of Private and Independent Education,

Last month, we received the sad news that Jon Theobald had passed away. Jon had been deeply involved with MINNDEPENDENT/MISF for years - he was among the most committed, caring and generous people to our organization. Jon served on our board of directors, established the President's Cabinet and, along with many others, helped lead then MISF through some very challenging times.

The first time I met Jon was during the search process prior to coming to MISF in 2014. Over the next decade he became a dear friend and trusted advisor. His personal generosity and willingness to connect others to our organization were something I had rarely seen in my career. He was also a giant for many other wonderful organizations and his loss is felt by many.



Jon's favorite event was the [Private and Independent Education Awards](#). He would attend each year and would personally congratulate those being recognized. One of our board members summarized it best, "I don't know too many people with his kindness and generosity of heart.

Finally, Jon's annual gift arrived in January. He included a handwritten note in the finest penmanship wishing our staff a Happy New Year – that's just who he was.

I'll miss Jon.

ASK THE PRESIDENT

Have a question about issues like school transportation, Title funds, current legislation, etc.? Want Tim's take on the Twins' upcoming season? Ask the President! Click the button below.

[Ask Tim](#)

MNNDEPENDENT has negotiated a discounted rate for member schools interested in participating in the [#SocialSchool4EDU](#) Membership Program

[READ MORE](#)

MINNDEPENDENT Jobs Board

Member schools can post job listings for free.

[READ MORE](#)

Share your school's news!

Whether it's a noteworthy student achievement, a

Sue Furry

remarkable teacher initiative, or a collective success that deserves recognition, we want to share it! Drop us line below.

EMAIL US

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Sue Furry
Assistant Manager of Engagement
Sue.furry@thrivent.com
651-666-8695



Bruce Plautz
Senior Engagement Leader
Bruce.plautz@thrivent.com
1-920-851-7298

The 2024 Private & Independent Education Awards

Sunday, April 28, 2024
Mendakota Country Club



Announcing the 2024 Private & Independent Awards Winners

Each year, MINNDEPENDENT has the honor of shining a bright light on individuals and programs connected with Minnesota's private and independent school community. The individuals and program being recognized are inspiring examples and champions of school communities across Minnesota.

Join us in celebrating these amazing individuals and schools on [Sunday, April 28 from 4:00-7:00pm](#) at the Mendakota Country Club. We hope to see you there

[REGISTER HERE](#)



BEHIND THE SCENES
Chad Skally
Holy Spirit Catholic School



COMMUNITY CHAMPION
John & Teri Peshorn
Heritage Christian Academy



PROGRAM
Future Leaders
Hill-Murray School



HONOR TEACHER
Caroline Little
Visitation School



HONOR TEACHER
Kelly Donnelly
Hill-Murray School



LEADERSHIP
Dr. Christine Glomski
Saint John's Preparatory School



LEADERSHIP
Michael Brennan
Holy Family Catholic High School

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[Read more here](#)

STEM Scoop

SAVE THE DATE!

2024 STEM EDUCATION CONFERENCE
Wednesday, August 7 (8:30am - 3:30pm)

HOST MEMBER SCHOOL



**HERITAGE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY
15655 BASS LAKE ROAD, MAPLE GROVE, MN 55311**

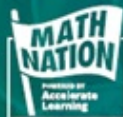
MINNDEPENDENT would like to invite individual teachers and groups of teachers, leaders and students from **member schools** to submit proposals for breakout sessions for the **2024 STEM Education Conference**. This conference provides an opportunity for educators to share effective resources, expertise, lessons, and strategies to advance teaching and learning. We know from conference evaluations that attendees value presentations that include innovative and practical ideas and resources they can implement in their classrooms. **We also love featuring programs and projects that have received MINNDEPENDENT STEM Grant funding.**

We welcome breakout session proposals that focus on one or more of the STEM disciplines or link them with other subject areas such as language arts, creative arts, social studies, and more. In addition, we are interested in sessions that connect STEM with topics such as innovation, social entrepreneurship, social-emotional learning, social justice, and preparing students for college and careers. We are also eager for session proposals that incorporate Minnesota's new science standards in direct and meaningful ways. **Breakout sessions are one hour in length with participation limited to 25 attendees.**

All interested presenters must complete the **SESSION PROPOSAL FORM** before **March 31, 2024**.

Questions: Lisa Vosbeek, lvosbeek@minndependent.org

Get to Know **STEMscopes™**



Scan or click
to register.

Meet the speakers!

Pamela Richards is a National Math Academic Specialist serving the North Region. With a master's in education from Hamline University, Pamela is an expert in K-12 Math and Science content and a Master Teacher with 30+ years of educational content development, academic team leadership, and teaching history.

Shawn Wigg is an innovative and forward-thinking executive leader, curriculum developer, and instructional leader with a comprehensive 15-year background in education. Experienced in driving positive change, developing curriculum, and implementing efficient systems to enhance educational experiences and outcomes for students.

Igniting the Standards of Mathematical Practice in Every Lesson
April 16, Tuesday | 9:00 AM-9:30 AM, 12:00 PM-12:30 PM

Problem Solving in a Thinking Mathematics Curriculum
May 14, Tuesday | 9:00 AM-9:30 AM, 12:00 PM-12:30 PM

Scaffolding Students UP Instead of Watering Math DOWN:
Improving Accessibility
June 11, Tuesday | 9:00 AM-9:30 AM, 12:00 PM-12:30 PM

[Register for FREE Webinars](#)



MINNDEPENDENT has partnered with the nonprofit **Girls Who Code** to bring free computer science resources to member school community – no coding experience required and no cost! [WATCH this short 15-minute video to learn more about Girls That Code free clubs.](#)

When you start a free Girls Who Code Club, you'll unlock resources, activities, and community for 3rd-12th graders to unleash their creativity, gain valuable coding skills, and imagine themselves as future tech leaders and innovators. Your Club members will learn how to build websites, applications, and games tackling important topics from climate change to cybersecurity and artificial intelligence.

As the Club Facilitator, you'll get access to everything you need below to successfully run your Club, no computer science experience required! Check out a few highlights here:

- Plug-and-play program content for all skill levels and genders, including a library of self-guided video tutorials.
- A Clubs Fund for eligible Clubs to purchase supplies and snacks through an Amazon Wish List.
- Dedicated live help, webinar training, and facilitation guides to support your Club's success.
- Exclusive events like CSEdWeek workshops featuring Girl Who Code's industry-leading partners.
- A flexible curriculum for you to adapt to your unique needs.
- And extra perks like t-shirts and swag for eligible Clubs!

Sign up to access Girls Who Code's Club resources at girlswhocode.com/clubsapply and list "MINNDEPENDENT" as your Community Partner to get started!

GIRLS WHO CODE 2024 Summer Programs (Share with high school students)

Summer is (almost) here, and that means now is the perfect time to stay tuned to [Girls Who Code's 2024 Summer Programs](#). Whether a coding novice or an advanced programmer, Girls Who Code's free Summer Programs offer opportunities for high school girls of all experience levels, with the application set to open on January 18th.

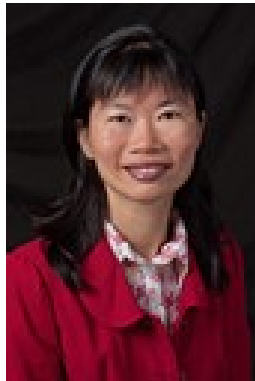
Application deadline is March 22, 2024.

Charting the Course: Generative AI Strategies for K-12 Educational Leaders

Professional Development Webinar

Thursday, March 21 | 11:00 am - 12:30 pm *Please note: this webinar is being offered as a live-only event. It will not be recorded for future access.*

Generative artificial intelligence (AI), such as chatGPT, can produce texts, videos, photos, presentations, research, and many other projects. This session focuses on educational applications and examples of generative AI as well as ethical considerations in the K-12 classroom. Participants will learn about the promises and pitfalls of integrating generative AI in education. Specific discussions include guidelines for educators, assignment implications, AI-generated content detection, and future impacts. Through collective brainstorming, participants will generate resources, tools, instructional strategies, and practical examples of utilizing generative AI for educational purposes.



Chientze Candace Chou, Ph. D Professor and Doctoral Program Director, Department of Educational Leadership University of St. Thomas

Dr. Chou is a professor of learning technologies and a Fulbright Scholar. She specializes in the pedagogical applications of emerging educational tools and technology integration to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion. She created the Learning Technology Leadership and Innovation certificate, which equips visionary leaders with the knowledge and skills to lead equitable learning initiatives and foster creativity in learning environments. Her past leadership role also includes serving as the chair for the Special Interest Group (SIG) in Technology as Agent of Change in Teaching and Learning (TACTL) with the American Educational Research Association (AERA). She has over forty publications in peer-reviewed journals, conferences, and book chapters. Dr. Chou provides consultation and workshops on technology integration for K-12 schools, higher education institutes, and learning professionals in organizations. She has designed and implemented online and blended learning for over two decades.

Dr. Lanise Block Founder & CEO Sankore Consulting

Dr. Lanise Block is a professional educator who has long been devoted to the ideals of social justice, service, inclusion, and digital innovation and armed with a B.A. in history, an M.A. in teaching (Drake University), graduate certificates in learning technologies, e-learning, and teaching online, and an Ed.D. in critical pedagogy (University of St. Thomas), as well as nine distinct certifications and micro-credentials.

Dr. Block served in the Minneapolis Public Schools System for 21 years as a social studies teacher, technology integration specialist,



and high school program coordinator. She also held the post of strategic project administrator for the office of the Superintendent of the Minneapolis Public Schools for two years; additionally, she was appointed Social Studies Content Lead K-12 for the district.

Dr. Block is an adjunct graduate professor of education at the University of St. Thomas, Hamline University, Augsburg University, and Metropolitan State University. With several technology integration publications and national professional conferences under her belt, Dr. Block founded Sankore Consulting in 2017 with the aim of serving her community as a leader in design thinking, strategic planning, equity, and inclusion who lifts as she climbs.

Dr. Block has publications of her technology integration research and has presented at conferences nationally. Her research interests include the digital divide, advocacy, and inclusion.

In addition, Dr. Block was awarded the Education 2.0 Outstanding Leadership Award in recognition of her contributions to the field of education and learning in 2022. She was also featured in the 2022 Top 100 Innovators and Entrepreneurs Magazine.

- **MINNDEPENDENT Members attend FREE of charge**
- **Nonmembers: \$100 (check with your LEA about using Title Funds for fees)**

REGISTER HERE



Increase Student Motivation, Mental Wellbeing & Success

Resilience cannot simply be taught — it must be learned through application. Which is exactly what [EmpowerU, Catapult Learning's newest mental health service](#), provides. Through evidence-based programs for students, educators, and families, EmpowerU has been proven to improve motivation, resilience, and well-being. The best part? If you have EANS funding remaining, you can apply your EANS funds towards EmpowerU programs this year!

[Learn More.](#)

Member School News





Mayer Lutheran High School

March 11 at 3:00 PM · 🌐

Service is one of the four pillars of National Honor Society (NHS), along with scholarship, leadership and character. This past Saturday, members of the Mayer Lutheran chapter of NHS demonstrated service to others by packing meals at Feed My Starving Children in Chanhassen.



👍 53

Share your school's news and accomplishments

Let's celebrate and amplify the spirit of excellence that defines private and independent schools in Minnesota. Whether it's a noteworthy student achievement, a remarkable teacher initiative, or a collective success that deserves recognition, we want to share it! Please send your submissions to office@mindependent.org

Important Dates to Remember

Thursday, March 21:

Professional Development Webinar: Charting the Course: Generative AI Strategies for K-12 Educational Leaders

Sunday, April 28:

2024 Minnesota Private & Independent Education Awards

Wednesday, August 7:STEM Education Conference

Monday, September 30 - Wednesday, October 2

School Leadership Conference

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