

NEWSLETTER

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“Better Schools for Maine Students”

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President’s Message



Dear Colleagues,

Here we are after February vacation, and I don’t know about you, but for me, February was not much of a month for instruction...our district had five snow days of the ten days prior to vacation. It was so good to have the Monday holiday at the start of vacation to know that the alarm wouldn’t be going off and that my early morning

superintendent text group would not be “meeting” at 4:30 a.m. This is not what any of us want to experience on nearly a daily basis (see related article, page 5)!

As for MSSA, it continues to be a busy month of meetings and planning. The Executive Committee met February 10, as did the Funding Committee and the Professional Development Committee. The Legislative Committee met during vacation on February 22. The Legislative Committee has been reviewing each of the bills that have been introduced so far, and the Funding Committee continues to review the proposed Governor’s budget while developing facts and position statements to present to the membership, legislators, and the public. The Executive Committee has approved a process to get pertinent information regarding position statements to you in between Executive Committee meetings. This is an active time for communication and the more we are informed the better we can keep our Boards and Legislators current with data and facts that provide the picture of our schools within our communities. Information will be sent out rapidly and in a way that can be used to develop testimony at legislative hearings or to use as information within local or state publications.

On February 8 I had the opportunity to attend the 2016-2017 Policy Leaders Academy, organized by the Maine Development Foundation. The day was made possible by multiple sponsors including the Maine Legislative Council, Maine Chamber of Commerce, University of Maine, Maine Community Foundation, Educate Maine, Maine Health Access Foundation, and the Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center. It was organized to provide Legislators the opportunity to interact with business leaders, education leaders, community leaders and discuss the intersection of business, education, health and entrepreneurship. Two full-group sessions included “Workforce Challenges and Opportunities - Strengthening

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The Legislative Committee Description and Mission



The MSSA Legislative Committee is made up of representatives from each of the nine Superintendent Regions. The purpose of the Committee is to serve as a “front line” to represent the best interests of Superintendents and LEA’s across the State regarding proposed legislation. At times, it is difficult to find a position on bills that is supported by every unit. Funding bills present the highest level(s) of friction because for every

“winner”, there is a “loser” of GPA. Consequently, except when supporting a higher level of total GPA funding, when a proposed bill impacts the distribution of GPA funding the association has consistently not taken positions for MSSA, but encouraged local superintendents to advocate as is most beneficial to their own districts.

This year may provide an exception to that as the Governor’s budget proposal contains several elements that are generally alarming and may prove detrimental to all schools.

During the legislative session, the Committee meets frequently to thoroughly discuss and come to a consensus on a “MSSA position” for bills that impacts education in Maine. Oftentimes each bill we review represents direct and consequential impacts on PreK-12 education, others are less impactful, but may have indirect positive or negative consequences.

We depend on the MSMA staff to review and make recommendations on all bills presented to the committee. There are times when bills are acted on so quickly by the legislature that Dale/Elaine/Vicki or other MSSA representatives need to take a position rapidly.

The goal of our committee is to establish a clear “line of thinking” so *most* positions are either pre-determined or can be made with a high degree of certainty that it is representative of the best interest of MSSA.

I assure you that each member of the Legislative Committee acknowledges the great responsibility we share in the legislative process and works diligently to influence the passage laws that are representative of MSSA’s intentions to positively influence education in Maine.

Following are a listing of the different “positions” the Legislative Committee may take:

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MSSA Mission Statement

The Maine School Superintendents Association (MSSA) is an organization that is committed to leadership:

- Leadership to provide equity, create opportunities for and promote the success of every student;
- Leadership to develop ethical, visionary and competent leaders by
 - Offering professional learning opportunities for leaders
 - Promoting community and legislative support for education
 - Providing member services

Core Values and Beliefs

We believe members shall:

- Maintain high expectations for all students, staff and ourselves
- Advocate for resources essential to student learning
- Act with integrity and model professional behavior
- Champion the advancement of public education

For a Leader...

Vision without execution is hallucination.

~Thomas Edison (1847-1931, American inventor)

Everyone has a 'risk muscle.' You keep it in shape by trying new things. If you don't, it atrophies. Make a point of using it at least once a day.

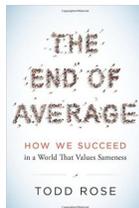
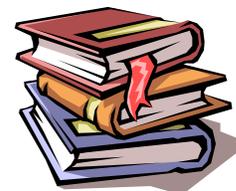
~Roger von Oech, American speaker and author

On the Bookshelf

The End of Average

How we succeed in a world that values sameness

By Todd Rose



From the review:

Are you above average? Is your child an A student? Is your employee an introvert or an extrovert? Every day we are measured against the yardstick of averages, judged according to how closely we come to it or how far we deviate from it.

The assumption that metrics comparing us to an average—like GPAs, personality test results, and performance review ratings—reveal something meaningful about our potential is so ingrained in our consciousness that we don't even question it. That assumption, says Harvard's Todd Rose, is spectacularly—and scientifically—wrong.

In *The End of Average*, Rose, a rising star in the new field of the science of the individual shows that *no one is average*. Not you. Not your kids. Not your employees. This isn't hollow sloganeering—it's a mathematical fact with enormous practical consequences. But while we know people learn and develop in distinctive ways, these unique patterns of behaviors are lost in our schools and businesses which have been designed around the mythical "average person." This average-size-fits-all model ignores our differences and fails at recognizing talent. It's time to change it.

Read this powerful manifesto in the ranks of *Drive, Quiet, and Mindset*—and you won't see averages or talent in the same way again.

President's Message

(continued from page 1)

Maine Human Capital Pipeline," and "Business Challenges And Opportunities - Leveraging Maine's Assets Through Innovation and Entrepreneurship." Four break-out sessions were held with four presenters sharing the time in each of the four sessions. MSSA President-Elect Betsy Webb was a presenter in the Education and Training session where she was able to share more about our commitment to students being College, Career and Life ready. I attended the session on The Role of Technology and Innovation. Two other sessions including Health and Productivity and Business Climate and Entrepreneurship. As you can see from the session titles, there is a sincere interest in working together to keep Maine students here, in filling the employment gap with better trained workers, and finding ways to increase opportunities for new business start ups.

Comments were made relating to the labor force of Maine. 40% of males without a high school diploma are not in the labor force. This seems to be one of the greatest opportunities for increasing employment and developing trained, skilled workers to add to the productivity of the state, let alone to the well-being of themselves and their families. To me, this seems to be a message directly to our schools, as we think about the males who do not complete school with a diploma...what a lost opportunity for everyone.

This was an intriguing day. Legislative sessions were not scheduled for the day so that Legislators could be in attendance. It was very well attended, a very bipartisan day, and it was clear that Legislators wanted to learn all they could and to make connections with the presenters and topics shared during the day.

This week, March 2-4, several superintendents will attend the AASA National Conference on Education to be held in New Orleans, Louisiana, at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center. Mary Nash, Superintendent of SAD 35 in Eliot, will be recognized and honored as Maine's Superintendent of the Year. Dominic Depatsy will be recognized as completing the National Superintendent Certification program, joining just a few other Maine Superintendents who have completed this program. The conference is a great learning experience and a terrific way to interact with national leaders and many other district superintendents. It always helps me realize that Maine has districts that are more like others across the country than they are different.

I hope to see you at the Friday morning, March 10 Budget Drive-In Workshop at the Augusta Civic Center. This is another time to connect and learn together and to better prepare us for budget preparations and communications with Legislators, Board members and residents. Thank you Funding and Professional Development Committees for collaborating to put this together for members. Happy March - spring is on the way!

Connecting Kids to Coverage—CK2C

Earlier in the fall I brought to your attention the effort to connect all children to medical coverage. Eric Buch of the Maine Children's Alliance came to eight of the nine superintendent regions helping to inform all of us of this effort. The work has continued and a referral sheet has been established to connect families with navigators in our communities to assist in the effort to get their children insurance coverage.

I encourage you to click on the link below and make your school personnel aware of this important opportunity for our families. Should you have questions about this effort please get in contact with me or Eric Buch of the Maine Children's Alliance. Thank you.

-Steve Bailey

[Connecting Kids to Coverage](#)

The Legislative Committee

(continued from page 1)

Support- Vote by the committee to support a proposal.

Oppose - Vote by the committee to oppose a proposal.

Monitor - Keep an eye on and discuss if it begins to impact education.

Monitor to Support - Keep an eye on but support if Dale/Elaine/Vicki sense that it needs backing to positively impact education.

Monitor to Oppose - Keep an eye on but oppose if Dale/Elaine/Vicki sense that it will have a negative impact on education.

Neither for nor Against - Not something that directly affects or impacts education. These are things that might put MSSA in a compromising position either way. "Take a walk". Let other interests fight the battle.

Defer - "Hold off" until more information is available.

Refer- Send to another MSSA committee such as Funding.

We appreciate your input and assistance contacting members of your Legislative Delegation to provide them with vital information that only school leaders may have. I also urge each of you to consider helping MSSA staff by volunteering to "come on down" to offer testimony on behalf of our Association, many hands make light work, (or at least, the work easier)!!

To better inform you of both impending bills and the MSSA Position on Bills, the minutes and "positions on bills" are posted on the MSMA website under the MSSA tab. I encourage you to contact any of the Committee members or the MSMA staff if you have questions, concerns or suggestions regarding proposed legislation. Also, you may want to follow the status of bills, the Legislative calendar and/or Education Committee hearings live on the Legislature website at <http://legislature.maine.gov/>.

-Roger Shaw

The following is a News Release from the Maine Department of Education dated January 31, 2017.

Organizations needed to feed hungry children this summer

AUGUSTA — With the assistance of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Maine public schools have long offered a nutritious breakfast and lunch meal program to thousands of income eligible children in Maine during the school year. To extend this program, Maine Department of Education Child Nutrition (Maine DOE) is seeking organizations who would like to participate in the federally funded Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), which provides children healthy meals when school is not in session.

"It is well documented that students learn best when they are not hungry. In fact, a nutritious, well-balanced diet is an important attribute of a great education," says Maine DOE Acting Commissioner Robert Hasson. "Our nutrition programs in Maine serve our students well. With federal assistance, Maine needs partners for the Summer Food Service Program."

In 2016, 119 sponsors participated in the program, serving an average of 12,182 lunches per day to children at over 400 sites. Although almost 700 more meals were served per day in 2016 than 2015, there is still a long way to go towards feeding all eligible children during the summer. Community partners are working to maximize the number of sponsors utilizing the availability of funds under the SFSP.

The Summer Food Service Program may be offered statewide in areas or at sites where more than 50 percent of the children are eligible for free or reduced meal benefits under the National School Lunch Program or census track data supports the need. Organizations that provide services in rural communities or near migrant farm workers and American Indian populations are urged to participate. Eligible sponsoring organizations include schools, nonprofit residential summer camps, government agencies, and tax-exempt organizations including faith-based organizations.

Maine DOE encourages any eligible organization to consider providing this much-needed service to Maine children. The agency will begin accepting applications to participate in February. Approved sponsors will be reimbursed for eligible meals served to children during the long summer break. Interested organizations should begin planning now for a successful summer. Potential sponsors are required to attend training sessions. For a complete schedule of trainings, please visit <http://www.maine.gov/doe/nutrition/programs/sfsp/index.html>. Maine DOE is available to attend meetings or consult by phone and email to answer questions regarding summer meals.

For more information about the Maine DOE's Summer Food Service Program, contact adriane.ackroyd@maine.gov, call 624-6726 or visit <http://www.maine.gov/doe/nutrition/programs/sfsp/index.html>.

March 10th School Funding Workshop...don't miss it!



Your MSSA Funding and Professional Development Committees have collaborated to deliver a half-day "Drive In Workshop" dealing with school Funding issues.

Please join us March 10th at the Augusta Civic Center upstairs in the Pine Tree Room.

The opening session will be presented by Jim Rier, former Commissioner of Education and long time participant in formulating and interpreting the Maine school funding formula. Rier will present "EPS 101" and as you know he can make a very complicated topic understandable.

During the next session of the morning four (and at this writing possibly five) different topics will be presented in a smaller group setting to allow for more individual questions and answers. Those include:

- System Administration: What's In It?
- Construction Grants
- Communicating the School Budget
- The School funding Formula - from a Superintendent's Perspective

At the end of the morning we will allow time for people to meet by regions and debrief the learning and discuss further steps.

The Committees believe the topics will be of interest to superintendents, assistant superintendents, school board members, business managers, special services directors, and interns. While registration is closed, call [Debra Swift](mailto:Debra.Swift@msmaweb.com) (800) 660-8484 if you would like to complete a late registration.

DID YOU KNOW?

The MSSA Legislative Committee posts its positions on legislative bills following every meeting during which bills are reviewed.

(See Roger Shaw's full article regarding the committee's work on page 1)

The information may be found by clicking [here](#) or visit our website (www.msmaweb.com)

-click on the MSSA tab- Committees-Committee Minutes-Legislative Committee-
MSSA Position on Bills

Awards to be presented at 2017 Commissioner's Conference

MSSA OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP AWARDS

The awards policy identifies four criteria which will be considered by the Executive Committee in selecting the recipients of the awards. These include: (1) leadership, (2) professional service to the Association, (3) exemplary educational programs with which they have been associated in a leadership capacity, and (4) service to the profession of education.

Nominees must be a member of MSSA for a minimum of three years. The MSSA Executive Committee will accept and review all nominations and allow the ranking process to dictate the total number awarded. (Please note that nominees must obtain a certain level in the rankings and all nominees may not necessarily receive the award).

Nominations for Outstanding Leadership may be made by regional presidents/associations, and are limited to one per region. Click [here](#) for a Nomination Form. Return the completed form to Acting Executive Director Elaine Tomaszewski at etomaszewski@msmaweb.com **as soon as possible but no later than April 3, 2017**. Nominees will then receive paperwork to complete and return by the filing deadline.

MSSA DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

The Distinguished Service Award is not necessarily an annual award. Its recipient must be a person who has:

- Made real, recognizable, and outstanding contributions in the field of education on the local, state, and/or national levels.
- Been responsible for having promoted better education in the positions held.
- Assisted other educators in the development of worthy educational objectives.

Nominations for the award are subject to the approval of the members of the Executive Committee of the Maine School Superintendents Association. Send any recommendations to Acting Executive Director Elaine Tomaszewski at MSSA, 49 Community Drive, Augusta, ME 04330 or by email at etomaszewski@msmaweb.com. **Deadline: April 14, 2017**. Click [here](#) for a Nomination Form.

RETIREMENT RECOGNITION

Please inform Acting Executive Director Elaine Tomaszewski etomaszewski@msmaweb.com of any superintendents from within your region who plans to retire at the end of this year.

YEARS OF SERVICE RECOGNITION

The Years of Service Survey will be sent out shortly to superintendents/assistant superintendents. Please complete the form for recognition for 15, 20, 25, 30, and 35 years of service.

A Superintendent's View

This article by Jim Chasse, Greenville Superintendent, originally appeared in the Bangor Daily News on January 28, 2017.

My rural school's future depends on the wilderness surrounding it

As you're driving north on Route 15 toward Greenville, you eventually arrive at the top of Indian Hill, where Moosehead Lake comes into view. It is breathtaking. As your gaze moves away from the water, the majesty of the mountain peaks appear as a crown to the lake. The sight can calm the hardest of souls, and it's a paradise that residents respectfully call home.

As a recent Maine Focus article, "[Wilderness and a way forward](#)," points out, population losses have fueled efforts by the Moosehead Lake Economic Development Corporation to build on the region's history and fulfill its economic promise. Greenville Consolidated School, the public K-12 school at the foot of Moosehead Lake, has an important part to play in that work.

Just as Henry David Thoreau, the writer, philosopher, adventurer and scientist, was inspired by the majesty of what is Moosehead Lake — his 1846 book "The Maine Woods" mentions Moosehead 71 times — so, too, will the school's future success hinge upon its integration with the natural environment.

The outdoor classroom for Greenville students includes nearly 1 million acres of public access land, a lake that is nearly the size of Rhode Island and a ski mountain that boasts some of the best views in New England.

Also, there are six accessible mountain peaks, an Appalachian Mountain Club office, more than 100 miles of the Appalachian Trail, proximity to the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument, and offices for Maine Inland Fisheries and Wildlife biologists and wardens.

The school is in the strategic planning process to integrate these resources into its curriculum and learning experiences, reaching K-12, college-level and adult learners. The school envisions an environmental college and is seeking a partnership to place a satellite campus on the shores of Moosehead.

Such an outpost would provide experiential learning that incorporates the largest outdoor laboratory in Maine: the North Maine Woods. Local students would have access to an early college experience that embeds the area's landscape — rich in history and natural resources — into its learning.

Essentially, the aim is to attract targeted students from all over the world who seek a first-class education that integrates the liberal arts with environmental science.

The school intends to add to the current summer experiences that exist in Greenville. One such effort is occurring through the performing arts. The school is currently working with the Center Theatre in Dover-Foxcroft and The Theater at Monmouth to become a host site for summer theater productions.

The school wishes to open its doors and welcome locals and those who visit the lake. The school's auditorium, built in 1935, is a site to behold and is dear to the community.

The school board's aim is to continue a strong academic tradition, while creating opportunities for students that better integrate natural resources and tourism through the study of outdoor recreation, horticulture, watershed research, wildlife biology, entomology, forest conservation, tourism and hospitality, energy and more.

In 1846, Moosehead's port of entry, Greenville, was about 10 years old with four school houses valued at \$2,000. In the 1930s, during the booming years of the former Mt. Kineo House, the Louis Oakes family founded the Greenville School as well as Foxcroft Academy. Both buildings remain today and share the bond of a common founder. Academically, Greenville continues to place students at the top of academic lists.

Recently, the Maine Department of Education [released state assessment results](#). The top scores in Piscataquis County, for all subjects, came out of Greenville. In science, Greenville ranked near the top of the state's list. This is a tribute to its students, teachers and families.

While the school's scores are impressive, for many communities, a decline in enrollment and funding beg for an entrepreneurial solution. Greenville's school today houses about 200 students fewer than it did in 1991.

Coupled with the enrollment challenge is the current state funding formula, which leaves many of Maine's rural schools scratching their heads. The Moosehead Lake area is, as they say, "property rich but cash poor." The lake property has a high valuation but the median income is well below the state average. Most of the lake is in unorganized territory and not subject to the property tax that funds the local school.

(continued on page 6)

What?!? Another snowy forecast?

During the first two full weeks of February, I have had three sections of my days: 1) My early morning “mission control group” of mid-coast superintendents (beginning at 4:30 a.m. with a text from Howie Tuttle or Heather Wilmot), 2) the main day (either in school, a delayed opening, or snow day cancellation), and then 3) my evening school board meeting schedule (sometimes affected by a cancellation or not). As the two weeks went on, and we had 5 snow day cancellations and 2 more delayed openings, there hardly seemed a day when the early part of the day (and the hour and a half needed to complete all the communications with bus companies, road commissioners, and superintendents) would allow for a normal start.

Thanks to Bangor Superintendent Betsy Webb and WCSH6 & WLWZ2, the public got a look into what we go through to make the tricky and often difficult decisions to have school, have a delayed opening or to cancel school for the day. I’m not sure I look as put-together each morning as Betsy did for the interview with the news station!

Other superintendents have their own way of dealing with making the decision of what to do on these days. Jim Boothby tells me that he gets out and rides the roads before making the call. On YouTube, I found a similar experience by a superintendent in Stokes County Virginia that reminded me of the story Jim told. That superintendent crafted a creative way to make his “no school” announcement found here in this link: [No School in Stokes County](#) (wait for it to load – there is a video!)

So, Friday, February 17 came, and the weather was clear. I was going to miss my early morning text with the mid-coast supts. So I wrote an early-morning “hello”, noting the clear skies and hoping they’d have a good Friday and vacation break from our early morning communications. I didn’t hear back from Eileen King right away - but did get this back from her later in the morning - sent to our mid-coast “mission control group”, written in true Dr. Seuss style from Eileen:

Ode to my Regional Supts.

I did not miss you this a.m.

I did not miss you sir, or m’am.

I did not wake up in the dark,

I did not hear my doggies bark.

I slept in my bed all night long,

And I did not have my cell phone on.

I did not rise to speak to you,

I did not hear Storm Center’s tunes.

I am not tired like in the past,

I hope these storms will not last

I did not miss you this a.m.

I did not miss you sir, or m’am.

I hope now that we have returned from vacation our attention can be on teaching and learning...that the time and energy spent ensuring our students and staff can safely get to school will be lessened with better weather...and that the symptoms of superintendent snow day disorder will dissipate.

-Steve Bailey

My rural school’s future

(continued from page 5)

A [recent Bangor Daily News article](#), “The poorest Maine school districts that pay the most,” highlighted this truth using an interactive graphical tool that clearly shows less state aid to schools that are distanced from the I-95 corridor. Greenville’s local, per-student contribution of \$10,764, for example, is close to the \$10,881 found in the town of Wells, while Greenville’s family poverty rate is 24 percentage points higher.

The Maine Focus article states that, economically, the Moosehead Lake area is “betting on the lake.” This bet has full support from the school. Indeed, there is a way of life that exists here to which it is hard to affix a price tag.

Residents have grown used to covering more than 95 percent of the costs of education, an impressive commitment to the town’s children throughout difficult economic times. They express frustration about the state’s funding formula for education. The town generates millions of dollars each year in sales tax — mostly generated through local small businesses — but receives very little state aid.

Currently, local officials are discussing how to resolve some problems with a gymnasium that is many, many years past its life expectancy. The last time the state released school construction funds, the school ranked 41st on the priority list. Legislators continue to discuss and debate funding for rural schools.

Like the Economic Development Corporation, the school is now looking to thrive and not simply survive.

Thoreau wrote, “I frequently tramped eight or ten miles through the deepest snow to keep an appointment with a beech-tree, or a yellow birch, or an old acquaintance among the pines.”

There is no question that a physical-psychological-spiritual experience is part of Moosehead Lake. It brings with it a mindful wonder, a release of anxiety and the notion of being centered. It is a play land for the naturalist and can cure the strongest case of writer’s or painter’s block! The region has and will continue to have an impact on those that encounter it.

Follow us on Twitter and Facebook!

Twitter: @msma207

Facebook: “Like” our [Maine School Management Association page](#) and send us a “friend request” on our [MSMA page](#).

Mark Your Calendar



EVENT	VENUE	DATE	
2017 AASA National Conference on Education	Ernest N. Morial Convention Ctr. New Orleans, Louisiana	3/2-3/4/17	More info
MSSA Drive In Workshop "School Funding Issues"	Augusta Civic Center Augusta, Maine	3/10/17	More info
S-T-R-E-T-C-H Your Teaching Strategies	Gardiner Area High School Gardiner, Maine	3/18/17	More info
USM Ed. Leadership Program 50th Anniversary	Ocean Gateway Portland, Maine	5/12/17	Save the Date! More info

Professional Vacancies

**Glenburn School Department
Part Time Superintendent
Glenburn, Maine**

Accepting applications until suitable candidate is found.

Effective Date: July 1, 2017

**MSAD 8
Part Time Superintendent
Vinalhaven, Maine**

Accepting applications until suitable candidate is found.

Effective Date: July 1, 2017

Please visit the [MSMA website](#) for more details on all vacancies.



MAINE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Maine School Management Association
Augusta, Maine**

The Maine School Management Association (MSMA), is a statewide, non-profit federation of local school boards and superintendents consisting of the Maine School Boards Association (MSBA) and the Maine School Superintendents Association (MSSA). MSMA is seeking an Executive Director, who is a creative, strategic thinker with exceptional communication and analytical skills to effectively lead the organization.

The ideal candidate will exhibit a commitment to local lay governance of education and have an understanding of and experience with state and local legislative bodies. In addition to being a highly skilled communicator, the person must possess highly effective leadership qualities and a thoughtful approach to education and advocacy.

**APPLICATION DEADLINE: March 21, 2017
EFFECTIVE: July 1, 2017**

*To request an application, contact
MSMA Executive Director Search Committee by email at:
exdirsearch@msmaweb.com*

EOE



If you have questions about any articles in this newsletter or suggestions for improving this publication, please let us know.

You can contact me, MSSA Acting Executive Director Elaine Tomaszewski at etomaszewski@msmaweb.com.