

Strengthening Minnesota's K-12 independent schools through
advocacy and advancement



education

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LEGO® Education WeDo 2.0 is developed to engage and motivate 2nd - 4th grade students' interest in learning science-and engineering-related subjects. This is done through the use of motorized LEGO models and simple programming. WeDo 2.0 supports a hands-on, "minds-on" learning solution that gives students the confidence to ask questions and the tools to find the answers and solve real life problems. The materials do not tell students everything they need to know. Instead, it makes them question what they know and explore what they do not yet understand.

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Letter from the President

Dear MISF Member Schools, Staff, Colleagues, and Friends of Independent Schools:

As noted in our January edition, MISF will administer the 2016 SCOPE (Statewide Census of Private Education) study in the coming months. Conducted by Wilder Research, this project is the premier source of data about private and independent education in Minnesota. We will communicate in early March in greater detail and we are preparing a helpful FAQ to assist schools in completing the survey request. The data collected illustrates the significant footprint our schools make across the state. To review our 2012 SCOPE study, [click here](#).

The 2016 legislative session will begin on March 8. While the session is shorter this year, there will be lots of activity, including items remaining from the 2015 session. MISF is a proud partner in the Opportunity for All Kids coalition, a collaborative effort focused on providing greater parental choice in education. Key priorities this year include expansion of Tax Credits and Deduction, passage of the Equity and Opportunity Scholarship Act, and creation of Education Savings Accounts (ESAs). For further details on these priorities, check out www.oakmn.org.

Mark your calendars and join us for the 2016 Education Awards on Sunday, April 24. This is the premier opportunity to convene and celebrate the excellence and inspiration found in our schools across Minnesota. Details are included below.

Thank you for your support of MISF and private and independent education.

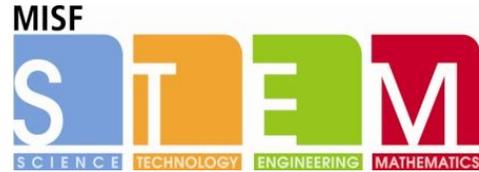
Tim Benz, CFRE
President

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STEM Scoop

STEM Grant Application Cycle

MISF received 55 Letters of Interest for this year's STEM Grant Application Cycle. This is the greatest level of participation in the program's history. Schools are developing ideas in a wide variety of areas, from design/build projects to microelectronics labs, from environmental science studies to invention/makerspace labs. We are looking forward to receiving the grant applications - **the deadline is midnight, February 19, 2016.**



STEM Education Conference

Plans are underway for our annual STEM Education Conference. We are grateful to Concordia Academy for hosting the conference again this year. **The date is August, 11, 2016.** Watch for registration to open this spring.

We are always interested in ideas for presenters and/or topics for breakout sessions. Please send your ideas to Margo Berg, STEM Program Manager, at mberg@misf.org

Advocacy Update

Title I, II & III Overview

The Minnesota Department of Education is providing an all day overview of Title I, II & III, which reviews the requirements for school year 2016-17. In addition, a brief outline of the reauthorization of the *Elementary Secondary Education Act (ESEA)*, *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)* will be presented. [Click here for training dates and locations.](#)

Private Schools & ESSA

Our partners at CAPE (Council for American Private Education) have produced a thorough summary of the implications which the Every Student Succeeds Act will have for private and independent schools. [Click here to read and download the document.](#)

Nonpublic pupil aids 2017

The promulgation memo from Greg Sogaard/MDE Department of School Finance with the 2017 nonpublic pupil aid rates of entitlement has been published. While the rate for textbooks has been decreased, rates for pupil health services and secondary guidance and counseling services has been increased. [Click here to read and download the memo.](#)

The ABCs of School Choice

Each year, the Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice provides a comprehensive guide to every school choice program in the United States. [Visit the Friedman page for more information about the 2016 report.](#)

Education Award Nominations

Nominations for the 2016 Education Awards will be accepted through February 15th. New this year is a revised and simplified nomination form, as well as a new award category honoring school leaders. Award categories include: Behind the Scenes, Community Champion, Leadership, and Honor Teacher. [Click here to read more](#) and submit a nomination today!



Private and Independent Education Awards

Your Pictures Needed

We enjoy sharing our member schools' pictures on our website, in eNewsletters, and in other marketing materials. If you have pictures from holiday programs, plays and concerts, STEM projects, or any great candid shots, please share them with us! Email them to photos@misf.org.



Member Schools in the Spotlight

Victory Christian Academy in Hibbing, has been an MISF member since 2015. [Click here](#) to learn more about this school, whose mission is to team with families and churches on the Iron Range to raise children to grow in truth, faith and integrity.



Holy Trinity School in Pierz, has been an MISF member since 2012. Their mission is to form a Christ-centered Catholic Community where faith and learning are lived and celebrated daily through Gospel values and academic excellence. [Click here](#) to read more about their school.



Rochester Arts and Sciences Academy, has been an MISF member since 2010. RASA, an International Baccalaureate World School, aims to develop active learners, well-rounded individuals and engaged world citizens. [Click here](#) to read more about them.



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