

September 2006



# Montana Association of School Business Officials

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## Membership News

We are pleased to announce a new addition to MASBO. Dwan Winden joined us as Administrative Assistant in August. She brings many years of experience in the admin support field and most recently spent four years with MTSBA's Insurance Services team. Please join us in welcoming her to our team!



### MCEL

October 18, 19, 20, 2006

The Montana Conference of Education Leadership is quickly approaching and there are many superb workshops to choose from. Also note the MASBO business meeting is Thursday, October 19, 2006, 2:40-4:30 pm. Hope to see you there! To register, go to [www.masbo.com](http://www.masbo.com) and click on the MCEL 2006 Registration link or you can e-mail Lisa Gowen at [lgowen@mtsba.org](mailto:lgowen@mtsba.org).

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“MASBO IS DEDICATED TO TRAINING AND SUPPORTING THE PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE FOR BUSINESS OPERATIONS OF MONTANA SCHOOLS. THE GOAL IS TO ENABLE MEMBERS TO MANAGE THE BUSINESS IN ORDER TO SUPPORT EDUCATION FOR MONTANA CHILDREN”





Greetings and Salutations:

In our lives, every end brings a new beginning, the circle of our lives. We begin school which signifies the end of summer. At MASBO, we are starting a new year with new Board members and staff. Let's celebrate the new additions and honor the ending of past Board members.

We are pleased to have Susie Zentz join us as Vice President for 2006-2007 and Dwan Winden as administrative assistant for the MASBO office.

We said goodbye to Donnie McVee as past president, as she has completed her term with MASBO. Her service to our organization is very much appreciated. We are very fortunate to have members such as Donnie that have been a part of our association for years and the depth of her knowledge is priceless to our organization. Thank you Donnie for all you have done for MASBO.

As President, I would like to challenge you with three thoughts. The first is to never forget where you've been, second remember who you are and third know where you are going. The same can be applied to our organization as well. Never forget where we've been, where we are now and where we want to be in the future. Who are we as an association? What is our purpose as an organization and what services do we need to provide to our members? Be mindful of the past, yet be progressive is a challenge. Your MASBO Board of Directors seeks your input as we make plans for the upcoming year.

Please take the time to think on these thoughts and give us your suggestions. WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!! But with every suggestion, be a team player and help us to solve the problems.

So, with every beginning there is an end, and here is where I will end. Have a great school year and I look forward to hearing from you!

*Evelyn Mull*  
President



## Progressive Discipline

### Progressive Discipline's True Meaning

Many supervisors consider progressive discipline as a necessary evil – an experience where the supervisor must document ongoing performance issues or violations and engage in a negative confrontation with the employee to deal with it "or else". The *or else* part usually refers to termination. The true goal of progressive discipline is to provide a positive fair process for correcting problems in a non-punitive way. It is interesting to note that the word "discipline" is derived from the Latin word "disciple", which means "to teach". It already sounds less daunting, doesn't it? Discipline, when administered properly, is not as unpleasant as you might think.

### What is progressive discipline?

It is the process for dealing with job-related behavior that does not meet performance standards. It is the role of the supervisor to provide clear expectations, identify performance problems and provide feedback to correct the problem. Unfortunately progressive discipline is often viewed as punishment on the road to termination. Although the final outcome can be termination, the desired outcome is for the behavior to change through coaching.

(continued on p. 3)



## What are the four stages in the progressive discipline cycle?

In brief they are:

- Verbal reprimand (or warning)
- Written reprimand (or warning)
- Suspension
- Termination or Successful Turnaround

Degrees of discipline are generally progressive and are used to ensure that the employee has the chance to correct their performance. There is no set standard of how many verbal warnings must be given prior to a written warning or how many warnings must precede termination. It is critical, however, that all warnings are documented to a file. When writing and issuing a warning consider these factors:

- How many offenses are involved
- The seriousness of the offense
- The time interval and employee response to prior disciplinary action(s)
- Previous work history

Exceptions exist. When serious offenses occur such as fighting, theft, violence, or abuse of alcohol on site, suspension may be the first disciplinary action taken followed by termination.

### Hot Stove Rule

To increase the likelihood of positively influencing employee performance and protecting against legal action, consider Douglas McGregor's "hot stove rule":

- **Foreseeable**  
Just as the flames provide warning that you will be burned by touching the stove, your employees should know in advance that poor conduct or performance will result in specific, predetermined consequences.

- **Immediate**  
When you touch a hot stove, you know instantaneously that you have done something wrong. Similarly, an employee should be quickly told if they are failing to meet expectations.
- **Impersonal**  
The fact that you are burned is a function of the stove, not who you are. Likewise, the discipline applied in a particular situation should reflect the offense, not the person who committed it.
- **Consistent**  
Regardless of who touches a hot stove, the result will always be the same each and every time. This is also true of discipline; it should not be applied arbitrarily, nor should it differ, for the same offense, from one person to the next.

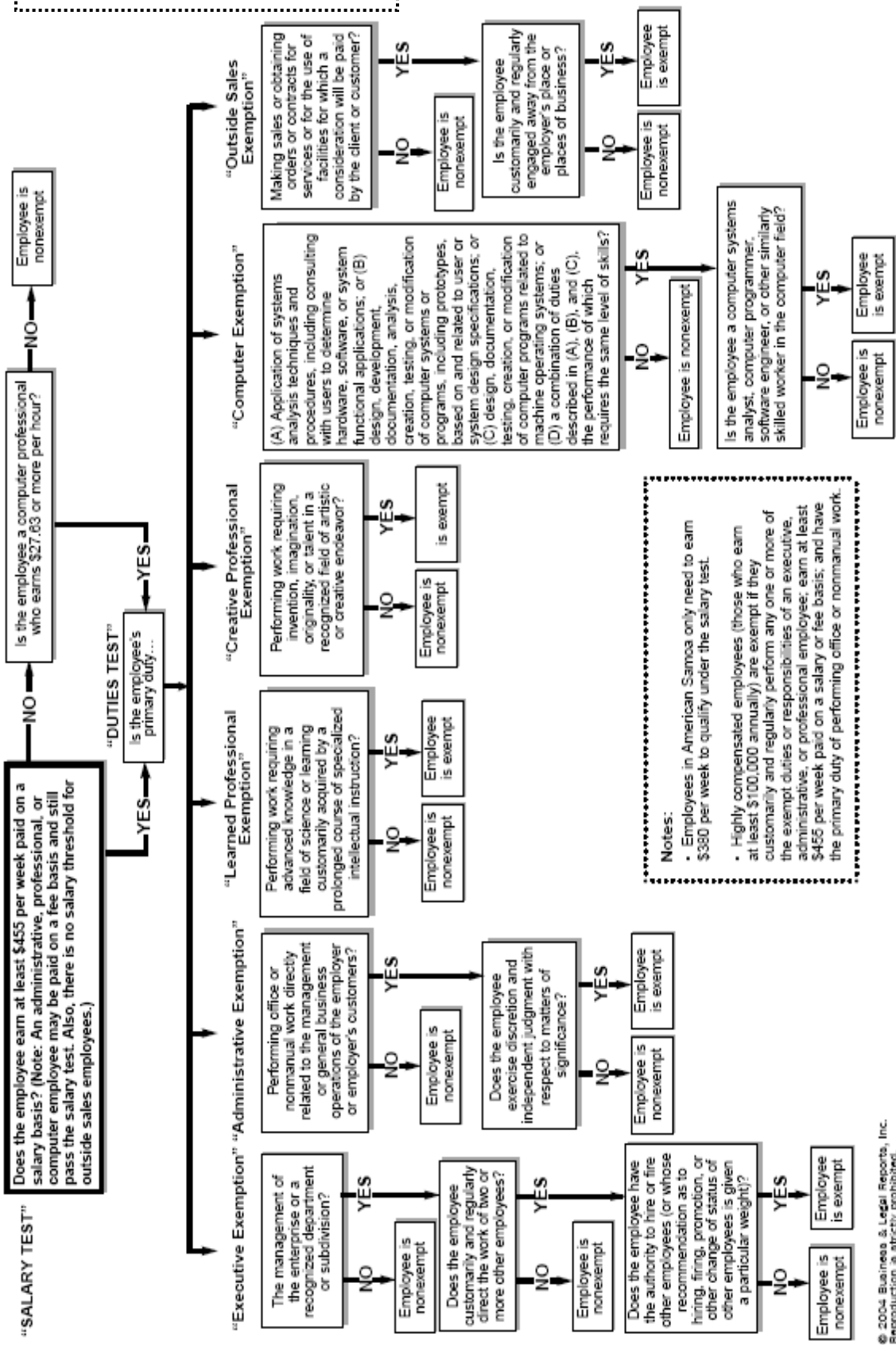
If we regard the idea of progressive discipline as coaching or as a positive fair process to help an employee get back on track, the negativity associated with it dissolves. Realistically not all performance issues or offenses end on a happy note and termination is often the end result. However, don't lose sight of progressive discipline as a healthy process that is corrective. Our Latin studies have a word for it – to teach.

*Theresia LeSueur*  
MSUIP UI Specialist

*The information contained herein is offered on an informational basis; always seek competent professional advice/council regarding specific questions. Mention of a product or service is not an endorsement.*

# APPENDIX II: FLOWCHART—DETERMINING EXEMPTION STATUS UNDER THE FLSA'S FINAL REGULATIONS

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## Become a MRSBO -

The certification program has been changed and updated to make becoming a Montana Registered School Business Official (MRSBO) more user friendly. If you are currently a Professional Level III active member, you will automatically be a Registered School Business Official. If you are currently a Professional Level I or II then you must complete the Level II and/or III test within the next three years. You should be receiving a communication soon listing out what you still need to do.

If you want to begin the process, the tests will be given on Thursday at MCEL. Go to the MASBO web page to get the new manual. MASBO must have an application with the documentation of completion of 120 continuing education credits before you can begin the testing process. With that in place, you are then able to take the Level I test. Completion and successful passage of all three tests must occur before you become a MRSBO. If you want to take the test October 19, 2006, please notify the MASBO office so adequate copies can be brought to the conference.

The basic differences from the past testing program to the new are:

- ▶ **Old:** On the old tests, subject areas (like elections) were tested on each level.
- **New:** Each level has specific subject areas and there are no repeat subject areas or questions. Once you pass a level with the specified subjects, you go onto new subject areas. All are identified in the new certification manual.
- ▶ **Old:** You could take the Level III test and be certified at the highest level.
- **New:** You take the tests in level order and cannot continue to the next level until you have successfully passed the previous level.

▶ **Old:** You could sign up and take the test in the first few months of employment as a business official.

● **New:** You must have completed 120 continuing education credit hours before you can qualify to take the Level I test.

The recipients of the MRSBO designation will also be released to the press and your board chair will also be notified so the school community can acknowledge this as well. This is still a voluntary program but we are seeing job postings indicating MASBO Professional Certification preferred. Get started and get recognized for the massive knowledge requirements you have learned as being the District Clerk and/or Business Manager.

*Lynda Brannon*  
MASBO Director



## New Technology = Greater Privacy

Worried about who might see those unemployment claims when they are faxed to your district? Well worry no more. MSUIP has developed a new process for sending claims to the member school districts. We will now be e-mailing them as a PDF file directly to your inbox. We believe that this will expedite the response process as well as give greater confidentiality to the claimant. With the obsession of social security numbers and privacy associated with them we have decided to use a more secure way of handling the claims. Faxing and mailing will no longer be completed for claims. Only the determinations will be mailed to member districts. If you have questions, please contact our office at 457-4407.

*Theresia LeSueur*  
MSUIP UI Specialist

# Events

**October 13-16, 2006**  
ASBO's 92nd Annual Meeting  
and Exhibits, Pittsburgh, PA

**October 18-20, 2006**  
MCEL Conference, Billings

**December 2006 (tentative)**  
New Clerks' Workshop, Helena

**June 20, 21, 22, 2007**  
2007 Summer Conference  
Butte Copper King



*"If you can imagine it,  
You can achieve it.  
If you can dream it,  
You can become it."*

*--William Arthur Ward*



## 2006 MASBO Board

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