

# Gov. Carlson lends a hand

*St. Cloud community receives \$600,000 for lab school grant*

*by Ryan Voz*

EDITOR

In an attempt to reduce illiteracy and develop our children for the next century, the state of Minnesota has invested additional capital for the future.

Gov. Arne Carlson has announced a \$2.5 million grant for laboratory schools benefiting six higher education institutions — including SCSU.

Carlson's official announcement came Tuesday at the Talahi Elementary School in St. Cloud. At this press conference, he officially confirmed a \$600,000 grant to the St. Cloud community which will be a partnership between St. Cloud School District 742 and SCSU.

This relationship has already begun, and representatives from both sides hope to have a program installed by next fall.

"We are hoping to have a staff development established by summer, but I think from my viewpoint I would prefer we proceed good sound process so we know what we're going to do," said Joane McKay, the dean of the College of Education.

Other universities awarded with a grant were Bemidji State University, University of Minnesota — Twin Cities, Metropolitan State University, University of St. Thomas and the University of Minnesota — Duluth.

"There are several goals, several objectives and there are obviously

disagreements, but one of them is to build a seamless system that allows a variety of different choices, different options for parents and children," Carlson said. "We have spent decades measuring inputs. Now let's measure what's coming out of the system."

The \$600,000 grant to the St. Cloud community is designed to help begin partnerships between education research, teachers-in-training and students in the classroom to help improve educational performance.



ARNE CARLSON

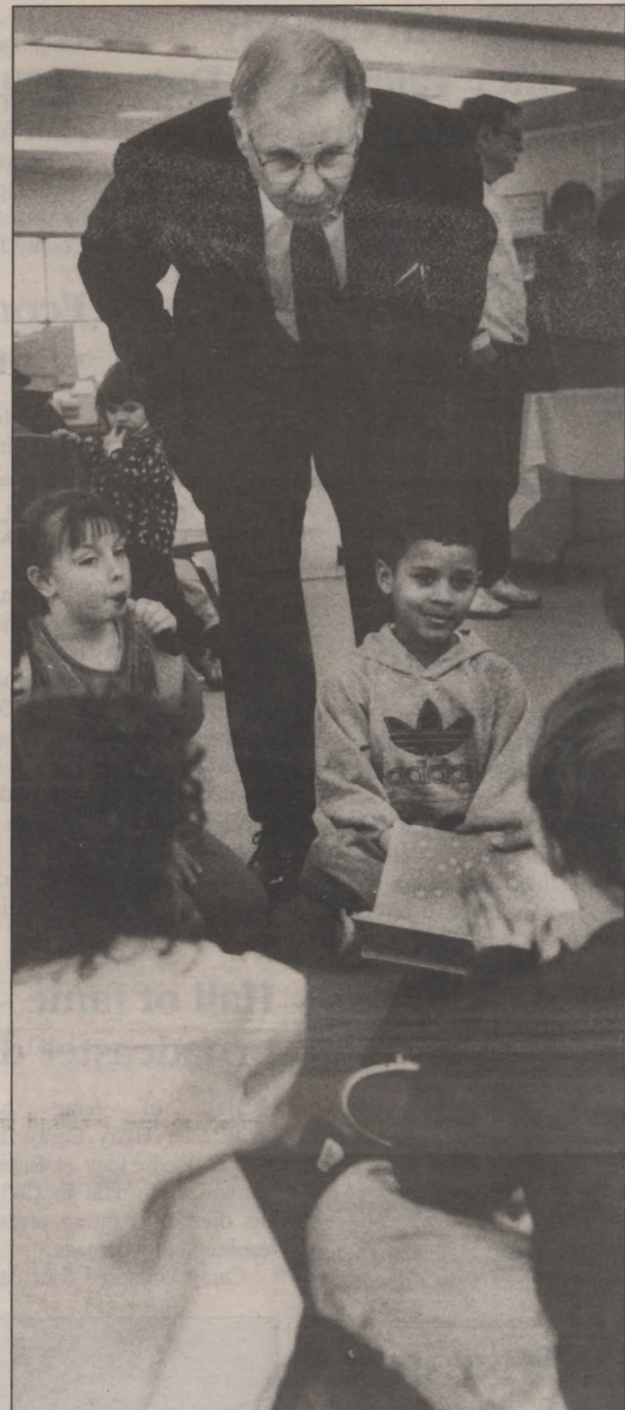
Lab school is a term of the past — SCSU would like to call it a Learning Lab Connection.

Lab schools were primarily private schools; however, this program will be dealing with higher education institutions and public schools in the St. Cloud area.

Also, the program will focus on improved reading and lifework skills for students in preschool through third grade.

"We looked at some of the needs as a district, and we noticed a focus on reading for those ages," said Gayla Holmgren, director of special projects for District 742.

Holmgren and Pamm Mattick (Minden), the director of research for the College of Education, headed the grant proposal. There was a total of 22 people involved in drafting the grant.



Shane Opatz/PHOTO EDITOR

Gov. Arne Carlson talks to children Tuesday at a press conference in which he announced the St. Cloud community will receive \$600,000 for a lab school.

"The faculty at our university and teachers of the district have put in a lot of hard work with this project," said SCSU President Bruce Grube.

The grant comes in part from the Department of Children and Families and Learning, in which Carlson originally requested a grant of \$10 million, but legislature reduced the original request to \$2.5 million.

Each of the six institutions receiving the grant has a specific purpose in mind for individual improvements through a lab school.

The grant set by Carlson will last until June 30, 1999.

After this date the program will have to look for additional funding, possibly as a continuation from the state of Minnesota.

"Our next step is to identify what elementary sites will be involved and what classrooms are going to be involved," Holmgren said.

Within District 742 there are 22 different sites, including elementary, middle and high schools. District 742 will make the decision as to where the lab schools will be located.

As of now there will be two sites established for the program, where it will be a school within a school.

SCSU in general, but specifically the College of Education, will now have additional alternatives in teaching.

"We have to produce a teacher to teach children in the new century in which we're

faced," McKay said. "We were always a guest in public schools, but now we're going to be a partner."

The classroom chosen will probably consist of student teachers, the classroom teacher and one university professor.

According to McKay, the classroom will also open the doors for parent interaction within the classroom and other constituents.

Holmgren said an advisory committee will have to be set up and that some of

the people involved in the drafting of the grant would probably be involved.

"It's a wonderful first step in the partnership between SCSU and St. Cloud," Holmgren said.

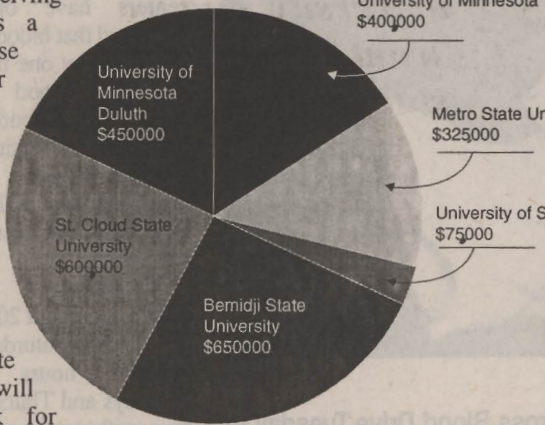
SCSU began as a teaching institute in 1869, and today it has more students graduate with a

teaching licensure than any other university in Minnesota. Also, the SCSU College of Education is one of three schools accredited in Minnesota.

SCSU on the average has 450 undergraduates and 150 graduate students each year.

However, a number of students earn their licensure in multiple areas, therefore the total number from SCSU could be closer to 700 licensures.

"We have become well known for our accreditation," Grube said. "One of our clearly largest missions remains for development of teachers to our school in the state of Minnesota."



Graphic by: Jon Jacobs



Shane Opatz/PHOTO EDITOR

## SCSU President Bruce Grube and Gov. Arne Carlson talk after the press conference Tuesday at Talahi Elementary School in St. Cloud.

SCSU once had a lab school on campus in 1983 located in the Engineering Building.

The lab school was called the Thomas J. Gray Lab School and accommodated for students from kindergarten through ninth grade. The lab school was named after Thomas J. Gray, the president of SCSU from 1881-1890. However the school closed because of a lack of funding by the state legislature.

"It (the lab) had a great reputation and there was a waiting list to get into the

school" said Professor of Information Media Fred Polesak, who taught at the lab school for five years and also student-taught at the school.

According to Polesak, the lack of funding came as there was different needs of the system in general.

SCSU and District 742 hope they can bring a successful program back to St. Cloud.

"I'm so thankful for having that experience as an educator," Polesak said.