Midwestern District Administrator

T. E. “Tom” Campbell, P.E. (F)  
Retired Assistant State Traffic Engineer –  
Minnesota Department of Transportation (1962-2014)

Education  
Bachelor of Civil Engineering –  
University of Minnesota

Professional Affiliations  
ITE Member since 1966; Fellow since 2003  
Minnesota Surveyors and Engineers Society (MSES) –  
Served as the 100th president in 2000

ITE Awards and Achievements  
NCITE Distinguished Member, 1998  
NCITE Transportation Professional of the Year, 2008  
Midwestern District Distinguished Member, 2018

ONE ITE Involvement  
Campbell plays an active part of the six-member ONE ITE Transition team, melding the Midwestern District (minus the MOVITE Section) into the new Great Lakes District.

“In more than four decades, Tom has made numerous contributions to ITE at all levels, including dedicating his time to serve as the Midwestern District’s Administrator since 1999. He has done an outstanding job advising the Midwestern Board in its governance of the District, and I have enjoyed learning from him and working alongside him over the last four years on the board.”  
– Martin M. Gugel, P.E., PTOE (F), Midwestern District Immediate Past President

In celebration of its 90th anniversary, ITE is recognizing each of its District Administrators throughout the year in a series of profiles. Each month this column will also feature historical facts and figures on the various Districts, including important dates and people throughout their history.

Tom Campbell has the singular distinction of serving the longest term of any of ITE’s District Administrators—22 years and counting. He fondly recalls to ITE Journal how it came to fruition. “Since I didn’t have to attend our District board meeting in Branson, MO, USA in June of 1999—I previously attended board meetings while I was the District Director from 1995-1997—I was able to participate in the District meeting golf event. Upon completing the 18th hole, our foursome walked directly into the scheduled ‘conference ice breaker.’ Doug Differt, who was part of the board at the time, walked up to me and said, ‘TC, have I got a deal for you!’ He always greeted me that way when he wanted me to be part of the LAC of some type of conference, committee, or important meeting, so I knew something was up that meant ‘extra work.’”

He continues, “It was a five-year commitment that could be terminated by either the board or myself or extended by the board.” That was more than 21 years ago, and Campbell has been the only administrator the District has had.

Speaking to him about ITE and the Midwestern District, one gets the impression that he doesn’t necessarily want to talk about things, so much as he wants to make them happen. At that 1999 board meeting, the board decided that they needed a non-voting administrator that would be required to attend all board meetings.

“I am not the guy that wants to stand in the front of the room with a microphone; I like to work in the background to help put all of the pieces together to get things done,” Campbell said.

His first order of business was to update the bylaws, which have been amended and updated over the years due to the evolving structure of the District and ITE. Campbell recalls a big change that occurred in 2004-2005. Up until 2004, all the four officers—treasurer, secretary, vice chair and chair—were appointed on a Sectional rotation basis (four Sections) and served for one year. In 2005, the District developed an election process where it voted for the entry position of secretary/treasurer (on a Sectional rotation basis). That person then moved up to vice president, president, then past president, effectively serving for four continuous years.

Campbell believes that was a pivotal moment for the District. “That was the start of our conversion from a strong Section/weak District to a strong Section/strong District,” he notes.

More changes occurred in 2018. The workload involved in the secretary/treasurer “entry” position seemed to be a lot of work for one person, so they split the secretary/treasurer into two separate offices. Now, officers serve on the District Board for five years, further enhancing the continuity of leadership.

Campbell attends all meetings as a parliamentarian and provides past historical information and institutional knowledge. Throughout the year, he keeps in close contact with the board and, on top of the various officer duties, answers or find answers to
questions asked by the board members. He also helps keep the webmaster up-to-date on information that should be on the Midwestern District website. He is authorized to do banking and make purchases, such as awards, on behalf of the District. Shortly after he started as administrator, it became apparent that the banking wasn’t working, so he moved the banking from Chicago, IL, USA to a bank close to his house in Minnesota so he could just walk in the door and get things done quickly.

Campbell worked for 42 years for the Minnesota Department of Transportation. Upon graduating, he knew he liked structures and thought that working in the bridge department would be his career. But the Minnesota Highway Department had a rotation program for newly hired engineers—for the first two years, they were rotated every six months through different offices. His rotation through the traffic engineering department sold him on the importance of traffic engineering, and he never looked back.

He remembers wondering in 1983 why anyone would ever want the position of ITE District director, simply because of the amount of work. In 1995, his District asked him to run. After much thought and encouragement, he agreed. “That was probably the best decision of my career. Those three years were a fantastic experience getting to know many super people all around the ITE community,” he says. “I can’t emphasize enough that everyone should take the opportunity to network at all the ITE meetings. My recommendation to people is to help and volunteer—if asked, say ‘YES!’”

Getting to Know ITE’s Midwestern District

Sections
Illinois Section of ITE (ILITE)
Missouri Valley Section of ITE (MOVITE)
North Central Section of ITE (NCITE)
Wisconsin Section of ITE (ITEWisconsin)

U.S. States Covered
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Members
Approximately 1,600 members, which includes 135 students.

Student Chapters: 24

District Leadership
President – Chad Hammerl, P.E., PTOE (M)
Vice President – Mike McCarthy, P.E., RSP1 (M)
Treasurer – Scott Poska, P.E., PTOE (F)
Secretary – Carissa McQuiston, P.E. (M)
Immediate Past President – Martin Gugel, P.E., PTOE (F)
ILITE Representative – Brian Roberts, P.E., PTOE (M)
MOVITE Representative – Lonnie Burklund, P.E., PTOE (M)
NCITE Representative – Jeff Preston, P.E. (M)
ITEWisconsin Representative – Allan Pacada, P.E. (M)
International Director – Kristi Sebastian, P.E., PTOE (F)

Did You Know?
The Midwestern District has nine chapters, the most of any ITE District. All nine Chapters are part of the MOVITE Section. Due to ONE ITE, most of these nine Chapters will become Sections in the new MOVITE District. The remainder of the Midwestern District Sections will join Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio to form the new Great Lakes District.

Historical Perspective
- The Midwestern District began in 1947 as the Midwest Section. The Chicago-area membership represented approximately 10 percent of the national membership at the time, and a group of traffic engineers met on the 38th floor of the Opera Building in the Electrical Club to discuss the organization of a Section.
- Membership included the following states: Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Indiana. The ITE Board of Direction approved the Charter and Bylaws on June 19, 1947.
- As the membership of ITE grew, it became apparent that the Midwest Section included too large a geographical area to be a section. The Section was eventually reorganized in 1951 and split into other groups, including the Indiana Section and the MOVITE Section. Indiana became part of District 3. The MOVITE Section continued to be part of Midwestern District. Arkansas and Oklahoma joined the District in 1961 and 1962, respectively, as part of MOVITE. The Wisconsin and Illinois Sections were originally organized in 1962, but not chartered as Sections of Midwestern District until 1966. The NCITE Section was organized and chartered in 1963.
- Since its formation in 1947, the Midwestern District has hosted the ITE Annual Meeting 12 times.