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School Administrators of Montana

BULLETIN

Visionary leaders united in providing, advocating, and creating education excellence for Montana students!

Volume XLI

April 2019

No. 284

Advocacy for SAM

by Peter Hamilton, MASSP President



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Upcoming Conferences, Meetings, & Events

April 3, 2019: SAM Membership Drive 2019-20 Launches

June 12, 2019: DaRud Cup 2019 - Helena

June 13, 2019: SAM Board Meeting - Helena

The weather is starting to warm and give us a glimmer of spring. Montana springs and summers are truly to be cherished for all the amazing opportunities we have to enjoy in the outdoors. I am thankful for the opportunity to serve as the MASSP President for the state of Montana this year and overwhelmed with gratitude to those who have helped me in this position. Within the journey, I have learned so much over the last four years being associated with SAM and MASSP. One important piece of being a High School Principal, and involvement in a leadership role in these organizations, is advocacy at the national and local levels.

What is advocacy? Why should you care about Delegate Assembly? Both concepts were foreign to me eight years ago in my first year as a High School Principal. The MASSP Conference, MCEL, and Administrators Institute are where I turned into a sponge and absorbed information. I learned about legislation and started to have a spark for how important it is for our schools, and most importantly, for our students. Formerly, my thoughts had followed believing it was the Superintendent's job to be saddled with the budget and to spend time in the political scene. A realization came over me when I reflected on my journey in advocacy; I was initially not comfortable or educated in the process on how to impact change and how to make a difference in legislation and the importance of the whole process. After understanding the why and how of advocacy, I understand how important it is in a Principal's role. If we are not telling our stories as Principals, who is?

Advocacy is important for everyone with a passion for the education of our youth. School leaders, including teachers and administration, as well as students themselves can impact change and be part of advocating for education. Interacting with legislators in Washington DC, and seeing our MASSP group make a difference, was as simple as talking about Montana Public School issues at the national level. Through learning, growing, and understanding the process of advocacy, I am now comfortable having conversations about education with our delegates. Our National Delegates write letters to me to ask for direction. It has been an honor to give our legislators my input and the tools to make decisions. Without SAM, I would have never opened my eyes to the idea of being part of education at the legislative level.

Delegate Assembly plays a vital role in SAM because it is our voice on a state level. Regarded as one of the most important meetings of the year, the Delegate Assembly gives all SAM affiliates equal representation to vote and give feedback on what SAM will stand for during the legislative year. SAM affiliates discuss and compromise on the positions statements, resolutions, and priorities for SAM as they go out to advocate during the session, allowing us to return to our positions as school leaders. SAM is basically our "boots on the ground" doing the work for all the affiliates during the legislative session. A few topics from 2018 Delegate assembly included: adequate and equitable school funding, recruitment and retention of quality educators, and school-based mental health services.

Advocating and the work done by the Delegate Assembly impacts our communities, schools, and students and it directly affects policy which makes a difference in the world of education.

*Peter Hamilton
MASSP President*

SAM...Creating Opportunities!

by Kirk Miller, SAM Executive Director

2019 Legislative Session SAM Update

Week 13 of the 66th legislative session gets underway on April 1 and we have completed 66

June 13, 2019: SAM Delegate Assembly Caucus- Helena

June 14, 2019: SAM Delegate Assembly - Helena

July 29-31: [SAM Administrators Institute 2019](#)

**** [View the full SAM Calendar](#)****

Thank you to this month's featured Business Partners!



April has arrived and I can feel the rush you are all experiencing in our schools to complete the spring of 2018-19 educational programming for our students and the planning for 2019-20! Thank you for the great work you do in balancing this very important completion

and planning process with such perseverance. At SAM, buried in advocacy (so important immediately because of the legislative session), this Bulletin article has given me the opportunity to think about more than just advocacy and reflect on SAM's rush to create opportunities that support you in your professional life, leading the education of our children.

Our SAM goals of leadership involved in decisions that impact education and professional learning and services are so very important, as is the advocacy goal. Check elsewhere in this Bulletin to learn about advocacy, and I will give some highlights of the first two listed goals in this bulletin.

Leadership involved in decisions that impact education has many of our SAM members participating in the decision making that drives policy and opportunities in our schools. SAM members are on the Variance to Standards Review Board, looking at requests for variance to standards from the perspective of practicing school administrators in order to help make the best decisions. SAM has members that are key participants in three separate Negotiated Rule Making processes that yield policy decisions for the best interest of our children. SAM is participating in the Montana Safe Schools Advisory Council grown out of the work of the Montana School Emergency Management Planning Advisory Council, to help Montana develop the best safe schools practices and make them readily available to all schools.

I would also touch briefly on the work of the SAM Leaders Professional Learning Program (LPLP) members and their impact in several areas. The SAM LPLP Trusted Learning Environment (TLE)

days of the session with 24 days remaining. As I described last month, we had early victories this session with HB 159 passing and signed into law on February 27, outlining the inflationary increase to the funding formula, giving our schools the ability to begin the plans for their 2019-20 district budgets. There are many items impacting education that still remain in this session and are getting great attention through the advocacy of the SAM Legislative Network (SAMLN19). Thanks to over 100 SAM members for your commitment to be involved in advocacy through the SAMLN19!

The best references to the details of the legislative session can be found on the [2019 Legislative Session](#) webpage. [SAM Followed Bills 3-29-19](#) are up to 128 with 260 bill drafts being monitored. [SAM Followed Bills Priority Status 3-29-19](#) describes the status of bills under the SAM advocacy priorities – Support Adequate and Equitable School Funding (21 bills), Support Recruitment and Retention of Quality Educators (5 bills), Oppose Privatization with Public Funds (1 bill), Support Facility and Technology Infrastructure (5 bills), Support School Based Mental Health Services (5 bills), and Other SAM Followed Bills (47 bills). At this point in the legislature, SAM has provided testimony on bills in our advocacy priorities 85 times on 50 different bills in Committee hearings. This robust effort has also been joined by individuals from the SAMLN19 providing testimony on various bills important to our Delegate Assembly developed [SAM advocacy positions, resolutions and priorities](#).

The remaining issues for the 24 days remaining include what will happen with preschool for Montana's youngest students and what final appropriations will be approved to meet our advocacy priorities for Recruitment and Retention of Quality Educators, Career and Technical Education (CTE), and Innovative Education Opportunities. We also continue to work on Special Education Funding and how this is to be treated going forward in the future.



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Collegial Learning Network (CLN) continues to work on leadership practices on student data privacy and security for their district to earn the TLE seal (a CoSN nationally recognized seal). The SAM LPLP Transformational Learning (TL) CLN, over the past three years have been collecting and sharing successes and challenges in their work to implement personalized learning/proficiency bases learning/student centered learning in their classrooms, school, and even entire districts. The work of the TL CLN has led to legislation to incentivize transformational learning (HB 351) that is headed for passing this 2019 legislature. The SAM LPLP Social Emotional Learning (SEL) CLN continues to work together on developing best practices for our schools around social emotional learning. Finally I bring to your attention the continuing work of the Aspiring Superintendents (AS) CLN, the New Leaders (NL) CLN, the Special Education (SPED) CLN and Comprehensive Schools (CS) CLN, all of whom are using collaborative practices and coach/mentors to make great progress on their work to improve student learning. This collective effort is making a difference for our state as we continue to work on best practices for educating our students. My thanks to all 54 SAM members who are actively contributing to our education system through your work with the SAM LPLP!

The discussion of the SAM LPLP crosses from insuring that leadership is involved in decisions that impact education in Montana, to the professional learning and member services SAM goal. Certainly, the SAM LPLP is a professional learning delivery system that is personalized to meet the needs of our SAM members who participate. SAM was happy to present our LPLP program at the National Conference on Education in Los Angeles in February. Our collective effort to develop this professional learning delivery system over the past 5 years is showing results about the impact this collaboration has on administrator satisfaction and longevity – ultimately the keys to improving student learning. You may want to consider joining this great opportunity and sign up for the SAM LPLP 2019-20! – just click [HERE](#) to learn more and get registered.

Checking out the latest [SAMLN19 Legislative Update 13.3-29-19](#) and [Podcast Week 13](#) will provide you with insight into our SAMLN19 work yet to accomplish in the days ahead. You can check these reports and podcasts out on the [SAM Legislative Updates 2019](#) webpage.

Again, a word of thanks to all SAM members who are helping insure that SAM's advocacy priorities are addressed in this legislative session!

Kirk

SAM Membership Drive 2019-20 Begins April 3rd!

The School Administrators of Montana (SAM) Membership Drive will begin on Wednesday, April 3rd for the 2019-20 year! We will once again be using the [online renewal process that was launched for the 2017-18 membership year](#). MCASE members and members not linked to a school district will receive an email that will include a link to their membership renewal form. As the "key contact" for a district, district clerks/business managers will receive an email that will include information for completing membership renewals for their district's MASS, MASSP, MAEMSP, and META members. Please work with your district clerk/business manager to be sure your membership is correct. We encourage you to renew your membership early so you can start the next fiscal year with full benefits of your membership in place and without any chance of it lapsing. Contact the SAM Office with any questions you may have.

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Kirk Miller

Executive Director

Gary Wagner

Director of Operations &

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Kim Scofield

*Director of Member Services
& Professional Learning*

In this Bulletin you will see other SAM professional learning and member services targeted to help you become the outstanding, complete administrator that you aspire to be in serving your students. Check out the membership drive information and the SAM Administrators Institute 2019 opportunity!

Thank you SAM members for your great effort to be leaders involved in the decision making that impacts the education of our children and for your focus on professional learning and member services to assist you in being the best administrator you can be. At SAM we are intent on creating opportunities for you! Here's to an outstanding April!!

Kwab J. Miller

Save the Date!

July 29-31, 2019

SAM AI 2019

The Montana HOW:

HOPE for Education...now and in the future

Providing OPPORTUNITY

Having the WILL to Succeed

**SAM Administrators
Institute 2019**

Monday, July 29.



Program 2019-20

It isn't too early to start thinking about professional learning for you and your district administrators for next year.

SAM LPLP's multi-faceted blended learning approach consists of a rich online resource center, collegial learning networks designed to be dynamic based upon topics of interest as they arise that allow participants to focus on specific areas of interest, and personal learning networks including the option of one-on-one coaching/mentoring with experienced Providers.

Tailored to meet the needs of new, experienced, and aspiring administrators, learning networks meet both virtually and face-to-face allowing participants to share challenges, successes, and thought leadership with like-minded Montana leaders experiencing similar job roles, situations, and context while bringing professional development to the administrator.

The goal of the SAM LPLP is to provide intentional, personalized professional learning to Montana educators through research-based strategies resulting in improvements in job satisfaction, administrator longevity, and ultimately to increased student achievement and quality of instruction which will positively impact the education of students across Montana.

[Register for SAM LPLP 2019-20!](#)

**Award Recipients Honored at
METAtchED 2019**

Havre Public Schools Senior Information Technology Director, Kelly Veis, received the [2019 META Technologist of the Year](#) and

MTASCD Summit -
Kristin Souers "A Culture of Safety & the New
 3 R's"

New Superintendent/Clerk Finance Summit
 - MASBO

Tuesday, July 30
 Instructional Leadership Summit

Keynote - **Sean Covell** - "The Power of How"

Clinic Sessions

Wednesday, July 31
 Instructional Leadership Summit

Keynote - **Garret Garrels** - Pink Gloves
 Boxing

Clinic Sessions

Wednesday, July 31
 LPLP Summit

Delta Hotel by Marriott, Helena Colonial

**[Click HERE for more
 information and to
 register!](#)**

**Celebrate Earth Day - Download
 the SAM Conference App**



Earth Day is April 22nd and we encourage you to go green by downloading the SAM Conference App for the next SAM conference you attend.

Evergreen School District Superintendent and SAM President, Laurie Barron, received the [META Empowered Superintendent of the Year Award](#) at METAtchED 2019 on Monday, March 18th. Kelly was honored for the impact she has had on the future technology readiness of her school district and her ability to create technology changes within her district. Laurie was recognized as a superintendent who supports the power of technology in engaging students and faculty and envisions the promise of emerging educational applications of technology to better prepare students for a competitive, digital world. Governor Bullock was also presented with the [CoSN Excellence in Public Service Award](#) for his dedication to ensuring children in Montana have access to digital learning and for his leadership in creating the MT Erate fiber match and creating a statewide fiber match. Lastly, META President and Lolo School District's Technology Director, Brian Norwood, was honored for his induction into the [CoSN Volunteer Hall of Fame](#) for the energy he dedicates to CoSN and META. To read more about these award recognitions, click on the following link: [META Awards](#).

Resources for Rural School Districts

The [Consortium for School Networking \(CoSN\)](#) and its state affiliate chapter, [Montana Educational Technologists Association \(META\)](#) are pleased to continue to support the work of current and aspiring superintendents and district leadership teams in leading all aspects of digital learning transformations. Last month we addressed the issues involved with [ensuring accessibility for all](#).

This month we focus on the topic of rural school districts taking the digital leap. More than half of school districts and about one-third of public schools in the United States are in rural areas. Rural districts have unique challenges, ranging from poverty and vast travel distances to lack of

The app was first launched for SAM AI 2018 and allows you to have the conference schedule, speaker and presentation information, and the conference evaluation at your fingertips. To

download the app, search “**School Administrators of MT**”

in either the App Store (Apple) or GooglePlay (Android) and install the app. Once in the app you can view the “Welcome” and “Schedule” tiles

without logging in, however, you will be prompted to log in to view the other tiles to ensure that only those registered for the conference will have access to the conference materials in their entirety.



affordable internet access. However, along with the challenges facing rural school districts, there are also some unique opportunities rural school districts can leverage due to their smaller size and direct impact on their communities. You can learn more and access a copy of the CoSN Report, "[Challenges and Opportunities of Rural Districts in Taking the Digital Leap](#)".

CoSN has partnered with edWeb to provide a monthly webinar series on topics essential for leading digital transformations. School superintendents serve as panelists on each webinar and share their stories and expertise. Every webinar is recorded for viewing by those who are not able to join the live broadcast. The title of the April 8, 2019 webinar (scheduled for 3:00 pm MT) is “*Rural School Districts Taking the Digital Leap*”. [Learn more and register for this free webinar HERE.](#)

If your school or district would like more information about joining CoSN or getting more involved with CoSN, please contact Brian Calvary, CAE, CoSN Director of Membership and Chapters, at bcalvary@cosn.org.

Thank you to SAM's Business Partners!

Please take time to visit their websites.

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- [March 2019 SAM Bulletin](#)
- [February 2019 SAM Bulletin](#)
- [January 2019 SAM Bulletin](#)
- [December 2018 SAM Bulletin](#)
- [November 2018 SAM Bulletin](#)
- [October 2018 SAM Bulletin](#)
- [September 2018 SAM Bulletin](#)
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