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School Administrators of Montana

BULLETIN

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

Volume XLIV

April 2023

No. 327



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Times...They Are A-Changin'

by K.J. Poepping, MASSP President

As I write my monthly school board reports, I often ponder how the months and years 'fly by' so quickly. And in those 20+ years of writing board reports, I also ponder the direction of education. It seems like only yesterday that I was walking into my first classroom in Opheim, Montana (Go Viks!). Where has the time gone? As we all know, whether good or bad, nothing stays the same. During my 30 years in this profession, obviously, the landscape has changed for schools, teachers, students, parents, and administrators. Theories have changed or evolved as they relate to learning. Gone are the days of the paddle for discipline, the three R's, and apparently writing in cursive in some places. Now we are working through PLCs, outlined standards and assessments, and social/emotional learning to name just a few. (Note: This is not to say that some of the current topics were not addressed 'back in the day'.) It's true that everything should evolve for the better. But my question is this...has everything evolved for the better?

The reason why I ask this question is that I often talk with our former graduates who have gone off to college, went into the military, or dove straight into the work force and ask them if they felt prepared and equipped for their future once they hit the 'real world'. In all honesty, I receive mixed replies. Some students have felt that they are well-equipped to handle what life throws at them, while others struggle with certain obstacles. So with that in mind, over the past couple of years I have had to take a good, hard look at what we are providing and in what manner to our students.

Admittedly, no two students learn at the same pace nor exactly in the same way. For the past 15+ years, our high school, like many others, has provided students with the option to turn in assessments late, retake

Upcoming Conferences, Meetings, & Events

SAM Week of Excellence

June 7, 2023:

- DaRud Cup Golf Scramble

June 8, 2023:

- SAM Board Meeting, 9:00am - 12:00pm
- SAM Delegate Assembly Caucuses, 1:00pm - 3:00pm
- SAM Evening of Excellence, 6:00pm - 8:00pm

June 9, 2023:

- SAM Delegate Assembly, 8:00am - 12:00pm

SAM Administrators Institute 2023

- **July 24-26**, Great Northern, Helena

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

assessments, and so on and so on. Yes, it is true that you do get some moments in life where you can ask for extensions (eg. taxes) and retakes (eg. written driver's test) but that is not the norm in this current world. So what were we really teaching our students?

In talking with those former students and looking at various data that we have accumulated over time, we have decided to go back to the basics. We feel that what we were allowing them to do throughout their high school careers was not setting them up for what the 'real world' was like; a disservice if you will. Thus, the struggles that some of them have had along the way. Turning assessments in on time, studying for that first summative assessment so that a retake is not necessary, and essentially having each student take back responsibility for their own education has been our focal point this year. For those that know how to 'play school well', nothing has changed. They will succeed no matter what and in spite of what we do. But for each student to take that responsibility for their own education has been instrumental in many of our decisions this year.

As I have talked to my staff, the students, and the parents this year, I have explained to them that I look at it as kind of a 'reset' in our building. And as can be expected, it has been met with some applause and some struggles, but surprisingly no complaints. Of course, we can not go "old school" in all aspects. However, with some of the 'simple' things, we are trying to reboot our system. We will continue to persevere and get to where we need to be so that our students will feel prepared.

In conclusion, I would just encourage everyone to make sure that we are all doing the right thing for all students. If that requires a 'reset', so be it.

K.J. Poepping
MASSP President

A Record of Innovation in MT Schools

by Dr. Rob Watson, SAM Executive Director

Last spring we put out a call to all SAM members to share information about their local initiatives that demonstrated innovation, advanced opportunities, and transformational learning for students. Many of you responded to our "Did You Know" call to action and we now have a great record of innovations that we have been able to share with legislators.

Through collaboration with Emily Dean at MTSBA, we were able to combine the examples from our members with her collection of statewide media found in the MTSBA Daily Dispatches. Take a look: [Innovation in Montana's Public Schools](#) A BIG thank you to Emily Dean, MTSBA and Kim Scofield, SAM for compiling this collection.

Why is this collection so important? As you know, some of the messages that we have received during this legislative session have been categorized as a lack of trust and transparency in today's public schools. In addition, there have been bills introduced that will have the effect of redirecting public funds to private education (charter schools established in [HB562](#) and education savings accounts established in [HB393](#)). Many times, the proponents of this type of legislation promote the idea that public schools have refused to innovate to meet the needs of students. Consequently, they claim that students/parents deserve a nonpublic choice. To the contrary, we believe our MT schools do innovate to meet the needs of students. A quick review of the collection of "Did You Know" examples from schools across the state clearly demonstrates that our schools ARE establishing relevant, successful, and innovative programs to meet the needs of students and communities.

**Thank you to this
month's featured
Business
Partners!**



In the collection you will find almost 200 examples, from 54 school districts from all corners of our state. Some examples: a transformational learning program to help students with dyslexia in Belt, advanced opportunities for students in Reed Point in the areas of dual enrollment and work based learning, and an innovative STEM project developed by students at the Montana School for the Deaf and Blind, which received national recognition. We can all be proud of the innovations that are occurring in our public schools. When someone questions the relevance of our work, point them to this collection as a way to demonstrate that we can and do adapt and innovate to serve the needs of our students. Thank you to everyone who participated in the “Did You Know” campaign!

Rob

You are Invited to the April SAM Professional Learning Webinar: *The Disruptive Teacher*

All SAM members are invited to attend a [Zoom](#) webinar on **Thursday, April 13 from 10:00-11:00 AM**. The webinar is part of the one-hour monthly professional learning webinar series. This month's topic is ***The Disruptive Teacher - How to Manage Conflict***.

Join SchoolSims facilitator Trent Grundmeyer and engage in a powerful experiential learning program, that enables you to “test out” different approaches to very complicated, difficult situations educational leaders face frequently (just like airplane pilots do). Simulations enable participants to tackle difficult situations, make decisions, and deal with the consequences of those actions in a safe environment, gaining practice that they can tap into when necessary.

This simulation is based on a collaborative teaching team. There is one teacher on the team, newer to the school but a mid-career teacher, who is “not a team player.” The simulation begins with another teacher on the team coming to the school leader and expressing concern over the way the disruptive teacher is behaving. The school leader ultimately ends up at a team meeting and witnesses behavior that is inappropriate and over-the-top. The simulation goals relate to school culture and climate, conflict

SAM Youth Endowment Gifts Dispursed

The SAM Board of Directors recently awarded \$5500 to assist Montana students with funds allocated through the SAM Youth Endowment. Six students were each gifted funds to assist with their specific financial needs.

The purpose of the SAM Youth Endowment is to make a positive impact on the youth of Montana by providing financial assistance to benefit children’s health, welfare, and/or education. Each of the six affiliates under the SAM umbrella contributes to the SAM Youth Endowment each year. Contributions are also received through donations and memorials.

The SAM Board of Directors first discussed the endowment possibilities in 1998. At that time the Board felt it was important for SAM to be involved financially with a cause that affected the youth of Montana. The discussion led to the establishment of an endowment that would contribute to different charities making a positive impact on the youth of Montana. In the spring of 2001, the Board approved the SAM Youth Endowment Fund Guidelines for Assistance.



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management, and responding to teacher concerns.

Now more than ever, schools need capable, visionary leaders to manage increasingly diverse schools in our ever-changing, ever-challenging world. School and district leaders have extraordinary responsibilities to satisfy multiple stakeholders while constantly facing new challenges.

Join SAM Webinar: -

<https://zoom.us/j/3923446729>

2023-24 SAM Membership Drive Launches April 6!

The School Administrators of Montana (SAM) Membership Drive will begin on Thursday, April 6 for the 2023-24 membership year! We will once again be using the online renewal process that we have used for the past several years. Members not linked to a school district will receive an email that will include a link to their individual 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, META, and MCASE members. **Please work with your district clerk/business manager to be sure your membership is correct.**

New this year: MCASE members part of a school district will be linked to the district renewal form and will not need to complete a separate individual form.

SAM members, we encourage you to renew your membership early so you can start the next fiscal year with the full benefits of your membership in place and without a chance of a lapse in membership. Contact the SAM Office with any questions you may have.

SAM membership dues to increase by \$5 for 2023-24 school year

In light of the rising costs of SAM operations, the SAM board recently discussed and approved a modest dues increase for the 2023-24 school year.

Thank you, SAM members, for submitting nominations for students in need and for your donations to the SAM Youth Endowment. The project is an excellent way for you to give back to the students you work with each day. The desire to assist Montana youth in helping to ease their specific financial need speaks to the integrity of each of you who are dedicated to creating education excellence for Montana students.

META Awards Winners Honored at Conference

The following META Awards were presented at the METAtchED and MASS Spring Conferences in Helena this week:

- **META Technologist of the Year: Elaine Higuera, Technology Director at Target Range Schools** - This award recognizes the fine achievements and successes of a Montana K-12 School Technologist at the State level.
- **META Empowered Superintendent of the Year: Amy Piazzola, Superintendent at Cayuse Prairie Schools** - This award recognizes a school superintendent who consistently and passionately provides educational technology leadership, support, understanding, and guidance in working with their school technologist(s) to create a successful and efficient network of tech-supported education for all students within their district.
- **CoSN Volunteer Hall of Fame: Eric Miletech, IT Director at Kalispell Public Schools** - CoSN recognizes volunteers who contribute to helping the organization accomplish

Sara Novak
President

MACSS
Erin Lipkind
President

META
Carol Phillips
President

SAM Office
Dr. Rob Watson
Executive Director
Kim Scofield
Director of Member
Services & Professional
Learning
Marcus Meyer
Director of Operations,
Membership & Finances

The dues will increase by \$5, bringing your total SAM dues to \$185. The amount of the increase was determined by using the K12 inflationary increase that has already been approved by the 2023 Legislature (2.7% of \$180). The last time the dues were increased was 2022-23, when the rate went from \$160 to \$180. Previously, the dues had remained the same for approximately 10 years. SAM operations costs have increased considerably in the past 12 months, due in part to increased travel costs and fees related to hosting conferences. SAM membership fees cover approximately 30% of the total SAM operations budget. The rest of the budget is made up of conference revenue, grants and business sponsorships. We continue to look for ways to increase conference revenue and establish new business sponsors. The board also agreed to exempt the MACSS group from this increase as their membership drive has already started and their dues are already set. The MACSS dues for SAM will increase in the 24-25 school year. The SAM dues will continue to be discussed by the SAM board each spring. If you have questions or concerns about the SAM dues, the SAM budget, or anything else related to your membership, please don't hesitate to reach out to the SAM office staff. We thank you for your continued support of our organization.

Save the Date: SAM



Summer Events

Mark your calendars with the following events happening at SAM this summer!

SAM Week of Excellence

- June 7, 2023:
 - DaRud Cup Golf Scramble
- June 8, 2023:
 - SAM Board Meeting, 9:00am - 12:00pm
 - SAM Delegate Assembly Caucuses, 1:00pm - 3:00pm
 - SAM Evening of Excellence, 6:00pm - 8:00pm
- June 9, 2023:

its mission of empowering educational leaders to leverage technology to create and grow engaging learning environments.

Congratulations to our most recent award winners! The SAM organization thanks you for the contribution you are making each day in your schools and communities to educate Montana's children!



The [Consortium for School Networking \(CoSN\)](#) and its Montana 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.

CoSN 2023 Driving K-12 Innovation Report

CoSN recently released the 2023 Driving K-12 Innovation Report. The Driving K-12 Innovation Series is the process by which CoSN shares high quality trend reports regarding the use of emerging technologies to transform K-12 teaching and learning.

Through the Driving K-12 Initiative, a global advisory board of K-12 leaders, practitioners, and changemakers engage in discourse about the major themes driving, hindering, and enabling teaching and learning innovation in K-12 schools. The results of the advisory board's work is divided into three main categories: Hurdles, Accelerators and Enablers. To learn which specific items fell into each of the three main categories as well as how to access the full report please go to <https://www.cosn.org/edtech-topics/driving-k-12-innovation/>. Plus, if you would like to be considered to be a

- SAM Delegate Assembly, 8:00am - 12:00pm

SAM Administrators Institute 2023

- July 24-26
 - Great Northern, Helena

Watch for more information and registration coming soon!

SAM Business Partner Update



The SAM Board recently approved a new business partnership with Communication Resources.

Communication Resources started in Missoula in 2004. Their mission has always been helping small businesses, commercial, industrial clients, and government entities obtain telecommunication, security, and life safety system goals. Accomplished by providing connectivity, solutions, and peace of mind in the ever-evolving world of technology.

With various employees throughout the state, including Missoula, Great Falls, Butte, Helena, and Plains, Communication Resources is able to service the majority of Montana and continues to grow.

For more information, contact Karl Moritz at karl@communicationres.com or 406-552-2374



Boardworks has been a valued SAM Business Partner of SAM for the past two years and we are happy to announce that they are expanding their partnership

part of the 2024 Driving K-12 Innovation Advisory Board, you will find a link to submit your notice of interest on that same web page.

EmpowerED Superintendents edLeader Panel Series

The EmpowerED Superintendents edLeader Panel broadcast series – sponsored by ClassLink -- is now in its fifth season. Each monthly broadcast is co-hosted by CoSN, AASA and edWeb.net. Participants can earn continuing education (CE) credits after viewing the live or recorded broadcasts. To learn more about CE credits please visit this [webpage](#).

Upcoming April 10 EmpowerED Superintendents edLeader Panel Broadcast:

The next broadcast of the CoSN / AASA EmpowerED Superintendents edLeader Panel Series is titled “***Leading and Implementing Educational Technology Innovations: Hurdles, Accelerators, and Tech Enablers***”, and airs on Monday, April 10, 2023, at 3:00 pm Mountain Time. The April 10 edLeader Panel Broadcast will focus on the main categories of CoSN’s 2023 Driving K-12 Innovation Report. Three superintendents who served on the international committee that researched and produced the CoSN 2023 Driving K-12 Innovation Report are the featured guest panelists. Superintendents Scott Borba, Todd Dugan and Dr. Kelly May-Vollmar will share how the Hurdles, Accelerators, and Tech Enablers specified in the CoSN 2023 Driving K-12 Innovation Report manifest themselves in their school districts and the strategies they have implemented to overcome the Hurdles as well as leverage the Accelerators and Tech Enablers. For more details and access to the web page for free registration for the April 10, 2023 edLeader Panel broadcast, please use this URL link: <https://home.edweb.net/webinar/supers20230410/>

with our organization to become a Glacier-level business partner!

A leader in supplemental K12 interactive curriculum, Boardworks provides 25K slides of ready-made presentations for Math, Science, ELA, and Social Studies. Simple to use content that empowers teachers, engages students, and improves learning.

SAM members receive consortium-type discounts on Boardworks resources. Also, Boardwork's content is priced as a non-subscription and more of a district-wide license at a one-time purchase. Professional development is included in the prices. This allows districts to bring consistency to their instruction along with support easing future budgets.

If you are not able to attend the live broadcast, the April 10 edLeader panel will be available at that same link as a recording and also as a podcast, a day or two after the live broadcast

CoSN Membership:

If you, your school or district would like more information about joining CoSN, please contact membership@cosn.org.

Thank you to SAM's Business Partners!

Please take time to visit their websites.

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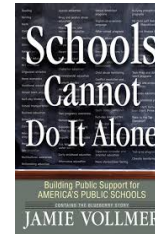


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900 N. Montana Ave., Suite A-4 Helena, MT 59601

Phone: (406)442-2510 Fax: (406)442-2518



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