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School Administrators of Montana

BULLETIN

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

Volume XLV

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No. 338



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A Work of Heart

by Sheri Heavrin, MASSP President

There are jobs, there are careers, and then there are works of the heart. If I have learned anything in my 24 years spent as an educator, it is that works of the heart are often the most challenging, but bring the most joy. Of all the blessings being an educational leader has provided me, genuine connections made with students, staff, parents, community and colleagues are by far the most rewarding. Connections build relationships, relationships build trust, and trust builds success for all of us...if that's not a true work of heart, I don't know what is!

We all know effective leadership isn't just about making decisions or grinding through the day to day. It's about approaching every challenge, every opportunity and every person with a sense of empathy, compassion, and a whole lot of enthusiasm. When we lead with heart, are passionate about what we do, and approach each day with a sense of purpose and excitement, we inspire others to do the same, and that is how meaningful change begins to happen.

For me, having the opportunity to create and maintain connections with colleagues over the years has been a wonderful gift and has made this calling even more fulfilling. These relationships reach far beyond emails, meetings, professional responsibilities and deadlines. It's in our conversations, shared humor, laughter at ourselves or current situations, and in moments of support, when the going gets tough, that real camaraderie grows. In my mind, it's pretty simple; together we are better.

[Scholarships Distributed](#)

7. [CoSN EmpowerED Superintendent Series](#)

Upcoming Conferences, Meetings, & Events

**DaRud Golf Tournament
June 12, 2024**

Bill Roberts Golf Course,
Helena

**SAM Board Meeting
June 13, 2024**

Delta Colonial Hotel,
Helena

**SAM Evening of Excellence
June 13, 2024**

Delta Colonial Hotel,
Helena

SAM Delegate Assembly

June 13-14, 2024
Delta Colonial Hotel,
Helena

SAM Administrators Institute

July 22-24, 2024
Helena

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

So, here's to us, my fellow heart-driven leaders! I see you; I embrace you; I am here cheering for you; I am you. Let's keep getting out of our comfort zones, putting ourselves out there, and nurturing those connections. Let's keep making a difference by leading with grace and enthusiasm, and let's keep showing the world just how powerful a work of heart can truly be.

With much love, respect, passion and gratitude,

Sheri Heavrin
MASSP President

Navigating Montana's Educational Policy Landscape: A Guide to the Key Players

You may have caught some news recently about a lot of pushing and shoving between state officials regarding education policy. It has been interesting to watch how all of this has unfolded. It has also caused some frustration and chaos, which seems to be a symptom of perhaps a larger issue.

As you know, our state constitution designates just a few entities that are responsible for the MT K12 education system: The Legislature, the Board of Public Ed, locally elected School Boards, and the State Superintendent. When these entities are all pulling in the same direction, things can be fairly smooth for our K12 system. Ideas are formed, important discussions happen, there is consistent guidance, and most importantly, the work gets done. When these entities are not working together, confusion occurs and schools are stuck in the middle. In my opinion, this is where we find ourselves today.

In navigating these interesting times, I find it beneficial to remind myself about the constitutional responsibilities for each of the education partners. Equally important is the interplay between each of these partners.

1. The Legislature: The Funding Architects

At the heart of Montana's educational policy is the Legislature, which has the critical responsibility of ensuring the state provides a basic system of free, quality public elementary and secondary schools. This body is tasked with the formidable challenge of funding and distributing the state's share of costs in an equitable manner across school districts. The Legislature's decisions directly impact the financial health and resource allocation of schools, making its role pivotal in the educational landscape.

2. Local Board of Trustees: The Local Guardians

The supervision and control of schools within each district are vested in a Board of Trustees. These boards are elected as per the law and act as the local governing bodies responsible for the direct oversight of educational institutions in their districts. Their responsibilities encompass a wide range of functions, from implementing policy to ensuring that the schools under their jurisdiction meet the community's educational standards and needs. The Local Board of Trustees serves as a vital link between the schools and the community, ensuring that local values and priorities are reflected in educational outcomes.

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3. Board of Public Education: State Oversight

The Board of Public Education plays a critical role in maintaining the integrity and quality of Montana's educational system. Tasked with the general supervision over the public school system, this board ensures that educational standards and policies are consistently applied across the state. It acts as a guardian of educational quality, working to ensure that the state's schools adhere to established standards and practices. This board's overarching supervision helps maintain a cohesive and unified educational system that serves all Montanans effectively.

4. State Superintendent: The Education Official

The State Superintendent is an elected official who represents the state's educational interests both within Montana and beyond. Serving on the state public land board, the Superintendent's role extends beyond education, linking it to broader issues of land and resources which are vital to Montana's economy and school funding. The Superintendent plays a crucial role in advocacy, policy implementation, and the ongoing dialogue about educational priorities.

The Interplay of Responsibilities

The collaborative interplay among these four entities ensures that Montana's educational policy is both dynamic and grounded in the state's constitutional commitments. The Legislature's role in funding sets the stage for the Local Board of Trustees to manage schools effectively, while the Board of Public Education and the State Superintendent provide overarching guidance and representation to ensure that the system remains cohesive and aligned with Montana's educational goals.

In an ideal world this interplay would be smooth and schools would benefit from this level of collaboration. In my opinion, we need these four partners to work together - both effectively and efficiently. We also need these four partners to each pull their own weight. Without that balance, schools will continue to struggle and our entire K12 system will not fulfill our constitutional responsibility to establish a system of education which will develop the full educational potential of each person.

*Rob Watson,
SAM Executive Director*

Mark Your Calendar: SAM Webinar Series

Thursday, April 11, 10:00 AM

Innovative Approach to Staffing

Dr. Jan Vesley, from Arizona State University's Next Education Workforce Initiative, will describe an innovative team-based approach to staffing that can help with short-term staffing challenges and also bring about long-term, positive changes in schools. Early results show positive outcomes for both educators and students. The session will provide several concrete resources for thinking differently about educator staffing.

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SAM MONTHLY
WEBINAR SERIES

 **THURSDAY**
APRIL 11

 **TIME**
10:00 - 11:00 AM

Innovative Approach to Staffing
Dr. Jan Vesley, Arizona State University's
Next Education Workforce Initiative

 **USE QR CODE TO
CONNECT TO SAM ZOOM**
[HTTPS://US06WEB.ZOOM.US/J/3923446729](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/3923446729)



SAM Webinars are scheduled for the 2nd Thursday of each month at 10:00 AM. Recordings and resources from past webinars can be found on the [SAM Member Landing Page](#).

Did you miss the March 14 SAM Webinar? Follow the links below to access the webinar resources:

[Webinar Recording](#)

[Chat Text](#)

[Webinar Agenda](#)

Resource Links:

[CAMPS Recent Challenges Presented by](#)

[Counterintuitive Interpretations of Legislation by OPI](#)

▪ [Link to sign up for virtual accreditation work sessions with OPI](#)

▪ [List of Districts](#) (Class I, II, III)

▪ [BPE - Notice of ARM Proposal](#)

▪ [MT Early Literacy Advisory Council](#)

▪ [OPI Early Literacy Resources](#)

▪ [BPE Early Childhood Education Standards](#)

▪ [HB203 ISAP Implications](#) - Darlene Schottle

▪ [Nichole Pieper ISAP doc](#)

▪ [MASBO FAQ](#)

▪ [Health Insurance Summit FAQ](#)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/3923446729>

Meeting ID: 392 344 6729



SAM Summer 2024 Events

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

SAM Week of Excellence:

- **DaRud Golf Tournament**

- **June 12, 2024**, Bill Roberts Golf Course, Helena
- **SAM Evening of Excellence**
 - **June 13, 2024**, Delta Colonial Hotel, Helena
- **SAM Delegate Assembly**
 - **June 13-14, 2024**, Delta Colonial Hotel, Helena

Contact one of the following hotels to make your reservation for the SAM Week of Excellence.

- Delta Colonial Hotel 406-443-2100, \$228 per night
- Great Northern Hotel, 406-457-5500, \$240 per night

2024 SAM Administrators Institute: July 22-24, 2024, Great Northern Hotel and Convention Center, Helena (*Registration Coming Soon*)

We are excited to invite you to attend the 2024 SAM Administrators Institute! This year's SAM AI is not just an event; it's a professional learning opportunity aimed at addressing the evolving needs and challenges of education leaders. Prepare to be inspired by our lineup of outstanding keynote speakers and explore in-depth discussions during the Focus Zone breakout sessions: Leadership, Teaching & Learning, Innovation!

Get ready for an inspiring start to the 2024 SAM Administrators Institute with the remarkable [Mr. Ron Clark](#) kicking off the SAM AI Pre-Conference on Monday, July 22! Ron Clark's outstanding success with students from low-wealth areas of North Carolina and New York City led him to be named Disney's American Teacher of the Year. He is a New York Times Best Selling author, and his classes have been honored at the White House on three separate occasions. Ron's teaching experiences in New York City are the subject of the uplifting film, *The Ron Clark Story*, starring Matthew Perry. Currently, Mr. Clark serves as a teacher and administrator at the Ron Clark Academy, an award winning and internationally acclaimed middle school in Atlanta, GA. The school serves as a training site for educators, and each year thousands of teachers and administrators from around the world visit the school to be trained in their methods for helping all students achieve success. **Consider registering your team to attend the SAM AI Pre-Conference** for a deep dive into Ron Clark's transformative educational strategies, notably PBIS strategies designed to foster a supportive and successful learning environment. Don't miss this unique opportunity to bring fresh inspiration and proven techniques back to your district. Watch for registration to open in the next few weeks.

Rooms blocks are available at the following hotels for the 2024 SAM Administrators Institute:

- Great Northern Hotel, 406-457-5500, \$179 per night
- DoubleTree Hilton, 406-443-2200, \$159 per night

T.E.S.T. Inc. and their partner of 21 years, Audio Enhancement, would like to encourage everyone to register for the 2024 SAM Administrators Institute on July 22-24. We hope to see you there!

Audio Enhancement is proud to support Montana educators by sponsoring a Day with Ron Clark to share in his passion and strategies for creating engaging classrooms and fostering a culture that allows teachers to make a difference in education. In addition, districts purchasing \$150K worth of qualifying Audio



Enhancement equipment will be awarded a 2-day scholarship, including travel, to the Ron Clark Academy Experience in Atlanta, GA, for any teacher they choose. Teachers will engage in invigorating professional development experiences and learn from inspiring leaders in education! We are thrilled to be giving back to teachers who impact our students directly!

Thank you, Montana educators, for your dedication and commitment to Montana students!!

2024-25 SAM Membership Drive Launches in April!

The School Administrators of Montana (SAM) Membership Drive will begin on April 9 for the 2024-25 membership year! We will once again be using the online renewal process that we have used for the past several years. 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, MCASE, and META members. **Please work with your district clerk/business manager to be sure your membership is correct.** Members not linked to a school district will receive an email that will include a link to their membership renewal form. 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

SAM Youth Endowment Scholarships Distributed

The SAM Board of Directors recently awarded \$2000 to assist Montana students with funds allocated through the SAM Youth Endowment. Two 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.

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

and without a chance of it lapsing. Contact the SAM Office with any questions you may have.

you who are dedicated to creating education excellence for Montana students.



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 K-12 Community Vendor Assessment Tool (K-12CVAT)

The CoSN K-12 Community Vendor Assessment Tool provides education leaders in K-12 schools and districts, and also broader education service districts, with a tool to measure vendor risk. School leaders are encouraged to include - as part of their process for purchasing a third-party solution - a request that their solution providers complete a K-12CVAT assessment prior to finalizing the purchase agreement. When a vendor completes the K-12CVAT assessment they are able to confirm that the information, data and cybersecurity policies that are included within their product will protect a school system's sensitive information as well as any Personal Identifiable Information (PII) belonging to constituents. CoSN recommends that school systems use the K-12CVAT as a regular step in their procurement processes, including having potential solution providers complete the K-12CVAT questionnaire as part of RFP processes and purchase evaluations.

To learn more about the CoSN K-12 Community Vendor Assessment Tool and access the link to download the tool visit the CoSN K-12CVAT web page at <https://www.cosn.org/tools-and-resources/resource/k-12cvat/>.

EmpowerED Superintendent edLeader Panel Series

CoSN, AASA, and edWeb.net co-host a monthly online edLeader Panel broadcast series, sponsored by ClassLink, to help superintendents and school leaders connect and collaborate. Registration is free and registered participants can join the live event and/or view recordings and podcast versions starting a day or two after the live broadcast.

The most recent monthly edLeader Panel broadcast, Leading Effective Data Privacy Processes Within a School District Setting, aired on Monday, March 11. Superintendents Bill Barr, Wrangell Public Schools, AK, Scott Elder, Albuquerque Public Schools, NM, and Dr. Mary Templeton, Washougal School District, WA, shared the strategies they have implemented to assess their school districts' privacy and compliance policies and also assure that data privacy is integrated into all aspects of technology use within their school districts. Five critical guidelines for making data privacy an essential commitment within any school system were reviewed. The superintendents were joined by Linnette Attai, CoSN Project Director for Data Privacy, who explained how and why a school district can earn the CoSN Trusted Learning Environment Seal. You are welcome to register to view the recording and/or podcast version of this and other previous edLeader Panel broadcasts at <https://home.edweb.net/supers/>.

CoSN 2024 Annual Conference, “Leading for Innovation: At Warp Speed”

Registration is now open for the CoSN 2024 Annual Conference, scheduled for April 8-10, 2024, in Miami, Florida. For conference and hotel information and registration links, see <https://www.cosn.org/cosn2024/>.

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

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Please take time to visit their websites.

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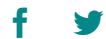
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