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# School Administrators of Montana

# BULLETIN

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

Volume XLIV

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## **Upon Reflection**

*by Ted Miller, MAEMSP President*

Welcome back! I hope you had a restful and rejuvenating break and were able to enjoy the holidays with loved ones. Like many of you have probably done, I have spent some time reflecting on how the first part of the school year went. So, here are a few things I have thought about and would like to share with you.

Revisit your goals. I have been a bit better about revisiting my goals more this year but have lots of room for improvement. I am a “tabs” guy, you know the people who have multiple tabs open on their computer screen. It helps me. I have important tabs open so I can hover over them and be reminded about what I need to complete or reminders for the year. One of my tabs is my goals for the year. I have been taking notes or adding ideas to them this year to help me reach my goals. I don’t think you need to become a “tabs” person but you should definitely revisit your goals. If you don’t have any, create some. If you have reached your goals, add another. I think it is important to always be learning and trying to improve. I urge you to review your goals and take some notes on how you have been doing and maybe an idea or two to reach them. One of mine is about connections. I have gotten better about making connections with staff and students. It is not always as easy as it sounds. One colleague told me that just being seen everyday and acknowledging each staff member is a way of making connections. I added that advice to my goal sheet. It doesn’t have to be a long conversation or check-in. A simple smile and a hello will do. With that said, it is important to try to check in with as many people as you can each day but it cannot always be done.

One way I make connections with students is by wearing great shoes, or at least what I consider great shoes. I have quite a few different pairs. From dress shoes to Jordans and everything in between (probably a few too many). I am told by my junior high students that my shoes are “fire,” “sic,” “on point,” and I have

[ClassLink](#)

## **Upcoming Conferences, Meetings, & Events**

**[Montana Principals  
Conference 2023:](#)  
January 22-24, Delta  
Colonial, Helena**

**Public Education  
Day: January 25,  
Helena**

**[MCEC and MCASE  
Conference 2023:](#)  
February 22-24,  
Billings**

**Day of Advocacy:  
March 13, Helena**

**MASS Spring  
Conference: March  
13-14, Great  
Northern, Helena**

**METAtechED:  
March 13-14, Delta  
Colonial, Helena**

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

**Thank you to  
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“drip” and “swag,” to name a few. This is one of the simplest ways I have ever stumbled across to start conversations with students and make a connection. Look for some “easy” wins to make gains towards reaching your goals as you embark on the rest of the school year.

Purpose. Along with the New Year, many people feel a renewed sense of purpose. I believe educators are no different. The winter break is a great way to feel reenergized for the rest of the year. However, I urge you to not get caught up in everything you see on Twitter and try to implement the newest and best strategies, ideas, and curriculum. Of course I too feel like many and have more energy and ready to attack the rest of the year. Whatever you decide to do with that new source of energy, connect it back to your purpose.

I am excited to start the second half of the year with our “Minute To Win It” assemblies (and continue to develop our interview podcast with the Media Team). This is nothing new, but we haven’t done this before. I think this small addition will be a great way to continue to strengthen our culture, address the whole student body each month, and build school community. Anytime we can get students to cheer for one another, include others, and have a safe, positive experience is a win in my book. Part of my purpose is to create a positive atmosphere where everyone feels like they belong and are a part of the school community. I believe our new addition will help do that.

My final reflection is to enjoy the moments. I get so caught up in the day to day operations and the next task on my list that I often forget what is the most important part of being a part of something as special as school administration. I look at the next meeting, due date, filling in to sub, and a plethora of other tasks, that I forget to enjoy the moments. We are lucky to be able to work in schools each and every day with professionals who want to help young people be successful. We get the pleasure of supporting students and staff in their journey to success. Being successful is so different for everyone. For some, just arriving at school today is a success. For others, they have to earn straight A’s. Another group of people are successful if they can have just one positive interaction with someone. Every piece of advice, conversation, greeting, and help you provide to someone is important. You need to be present in all the “small” moments throughout the day because you never know the effect it might have on someone. The important part is to lean in to each day, take a moment, assist someone to a success, and enjoy!

If you have any questions about our assembly plans, student Media Team, or the podcast please reach out. Also, if you would like to share ideas I would love to connect! I hope you have a great rest of your school year. As you start 2023, revisit a goal, go back to your purpose, and enjoy the moments.

*Ted Miller  
Columbia Falls Junior High Principal  
MAEMSP President*

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## **Educators' Opinions Matter!**

*by Dr. Rob Watson, SAM Executive Director*

Happy New Year! I hope that 2023 is a great year for you and your school community.

There has been much recent attention regarding “public” opinion of schools and educators. While we can all agree that we want what is best for kids, there seems to be some disagreement among stakeholders, which has created a general perception of mistrust. This rhetoric has likely contributed to issues of recruitment and retention. However, we know that our communities generally value their schools and



their educators. And there is great survey data available which shows that our stakeholders still place a lot of trust in their local educators.

Here are just a few examples from both national and local surveys.

From Lake Research Partners - national survey, Nov 2021

- How much do you trust each of the following when it comes to issues surrounding public schools? Teachers ranked the highest at 78% of survey respondents stating “a lot” or “a great deal.” Compare that with elected representatives scoring only 46%.
- Teachers and school personnel are an important part of our community. 95% of respondents agreed with this and the agreement was consistent across party affiliations.


From Zogby Poll - Montana survey, August 2022

- Who among the following public employees and officials do you trust the most when it comes to deciding what is best academically for students in Montana’s public schools? 65.3% ranked teachers, locally elected school boards and school administrators the highest. The next highest ranking was the Board of Public Ed at 11.5%.
- Thinking about how important K-12 public schools are to your community, have your experiences over the last year increased or decreased your perception regarding the importance of having quality K-12 public schools? 80.4% stated that their perception of importance increased or remained the same.

These are just a few examples of what we know about how most stakeholders feel about their public schools and their educators. In the face of disagreement and feelings of distrust, it is important to shed light on the thoughts of the silent majority. In addition, in this time of needed advocacy, remember that educators have a powerful and respected voice.

*Rob*

## Registration Closes Soon!



**2023 MONTANA PRINCIPALS CONFERENCE**  
**NO LIMITS - MT PRINCIPALS BREAKING BARRIERS**

<b>JANUARY 22-24</b>	Jessica Minahan Jessica Cabeen Cindy Cromwell Shawna Heiser	Jennifer Silva, NASSP Bob Green	Earl Franks, NAESP Ronn Nozoe, NASSP
<b>DELTA COLONIAL</b>	<b>HELENA</b>	<b>REGISTER HERE!</b>	

You still have a few days to register to attend the Montana Principals Conference 2023! The conference is scheduled for **January 22-24 in Helena at the Delta Colonial**. You will not want to miss the line-up of national speakers who will be presenting:

## **SAM Leadership**

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### **MACSS**

**Erin Lipkind**

*President*

### **META**

**Carol Phillips**

- **Jessica Minahan**
- **Jessica Cabeen**
- **Cindy Cromwell**
- **Shawna Heiser**

Shawna Heiser, Jennifer Silva (NASSP), and Bob Green are just a few of the additional speakers providing presentations. Several breakout sessions along with time for you to connect with your colleagues are also on the agenda.

Several breakout sessions along with time for you to connect with your colleagues are also on the agenda including:

- **Top Gun Themed Awards Night**
- **Cornhole Tournament**
- **Live Music - 10 Years Gone**

**Follow this link for more information and to Register:**

**[Montana Principals Conference 2023 Information and Registration](#)**

## **We Want to Hear from You: Please Complete the SAM Needs Assessment Survey**

**SAM Members:** Please take a few minutes to complete the [2023 SAM Needs Assessment Survey](#). The purpose of the survey is to gather information about our members' needs for Services, Professional Development, and Advocacy (Goals of the SAM Strategic Plan). **Please complete the survey by January 6, 2023.** The time required to complete the survey is approximately 15 minutes. We appreciate your responses to the survey and your assistance in making SAM the best it can be for your leadership needs.

## **MCASE, MACSS, and META Awards are Open for Nomination!**

The following MCASE, MACSS, and META awards are open for nominations. Please consider nominating a deserving candidate and recognizing them for the great work they are doing in their schools and communities. Follow the links below for more information about each award and to submit a nomination.

- **[MCASE Awards: \(Deadline Friday, January 13, 2023\)](#)**
  - [MCASE Outstanding Administrator of Special Education Award](#)
  - [MCASE Special Education Teacher Award](#)

President

**SAM Office**

**Dr. Rob Watson**

Executive Director

**Kim Scofield**

Director of Member  
Services & Professional  
Learning

**Marcus Meyer**

Director of Operations,  
Membership & Finances



## CAMPS Publication Released

The Coalition of Advocates for Montana's Public Schools (CAMPS) is a partnership of public education advocates focused on ensuring success for each child in every public school, in furtherance of the Peoples' goal under Article X, Section 1 "to develop the full educational potential of each person."

The Montana Association of School Business Officials (MASBO), Montana Rural Education Association (MREA), Montana School Boards Association (MTSBA), Montana Quality Education Coalition (MQEC), and School Administrators of Montana (SAM) are united by our shared commitment to this important goal.

The great work of Montana's public schools has never shined brighter. As reflected in the results of our recently completed poll of Montana voters, Montanans recognize and appreciate the value of Montana's public schools. We are proud to have consistently maintained that support over the course of the last decade and we are intent upon continuing to further build support and earn the trust of Montanans into the future.

CAMPS recently released findings from this year's Zogby poll of Montana voters' attitudes toward Montana's public schools today.

This [publication](#) shows results that prove that Montanans trust their public schools and those who work for them. Key findings from the poll results include:

- [MCASE General Education Teacher Award](#)
- [Lori Ruffier Legacy Award](#)
- [MCASE Nomination for CASE Awards](#)
- [Early Career Special Education Administrator Award Nomination](#)
- **MACSS Awards: (Deadline Friday, January 13, 2023)**
  - [County Superintendent of the Year](#)
  - [Rural Teacher of the Year Nomination Form](#)
- **META Awards: (Deadline Friday, February 17, 2023)**
  - [META Technologist of the Year](#)
  - [META Empowered Superintendent of the Year](#)



## edLeader Panel Series

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.

### **EmpowerED Superintendent edLeader Panel Series Upcoming January edLeader Panel Broadcast:**

The next live broadcast of the CoSN / AASA EmpowerED Superintendent edLeader Panel Series, **Leveraging**

- 48.2% of Montana voters give their local public schools a grade of either A or B.
- More than 62% of Montana voters believe school boards and local voters should have the most authority to determine how public schools operate in their communities. The support for federal and state officials having control over these issues was much lower for the federal government (5.0%), state superintendent (2.6%), governor (1.7%), and legislature (1.3%).
- 65.3% of Montana voters trust classroom teachers, locally elected school boards, and school administrators the most among public officials when it comes to deciding what is best for students in Montana's public schools.
- Montana voters overwhelmingly prefer a well-rounded public education system (85.1%) compared to only core curriculum (10.3%). 76.7% of Montana voters also support state-funded public preschool.
- 96.1% of Montana voters believe it is important to have quality K-12 public schools operating in their community.

Our community schools provide a launching point where Montanans rise and collaborate to support the growth and development of children, supporting academics, the arts, activities, athletics, and other components of a well-rounded public education. Our community schools also drive the economic success of our communities. For more information or to download the [latest publication](#) of the Coalition of Advocates for Montana's Public Schools, visit <http://www.coalitionofmtk12advocates.org/home>.

## SAM Youth Endowment Open for Nominations

Nominations are open until March 3 for the 2022-23 SAM Youth Endowment. The purpose of the School Administrators of Montana 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.

***Technology Tools to Provide Equitable Learning Opportunities for ALL Students***, airs on Monday, January 9, 2023, at 5:00 pm Eastern Time. Join the broadcast to hear from Dr. Baron R. Davis, Superintendent, Richland School District Two, SC, Dr. Susan Enfield, Superintendent, Washoe County School District, NV, and Ms. Cynthia Curry, Director of Technical Assistance, CAST, as they join in an interactive discussion around the strategies used to successfully lead accessibility for all. Training procedures for providing teachers and staff with the skills to effectively leverage technology to assist students, parents, guardians, and staff will be reviewed. Ann McMullan, CoSN Project Director for the CoSN / AASA EmpowerED Superintendents Initiative serves as the host/moderator of the edLeader Panel Broadcast series. Free registration for the upcoming January 9, 2023 live broadcast is available [HERE](#).

### **December 12, 2022 edLeader Panel Broadcast Recording:**

If you missed the recent CoSN / AASA EmpowerED Superintendent edLeader Panel broadcast, ***Planning and Sustaining Technology Innovations: Aligning Priorities, Costs, and Outcomes***, which aired on Monday, December 12, 2022, you are welcome to access the link to the recording [HERE](#). In this recent broadcast Dr. Chris Gaines, Superintendent, Mehlville School District, MO, along with Dr. Kelly May-Vollmar, Superintendent, Desert Sands Unified School District, CA, shared the leadership strategies they lead in their school districts to evaluate, rethink, and strengthen district technology decision making.

***CoSN Technology Planning Resources:***  
**CoSN Strategic Technology**

Awards to nominated recipients are given in April of each year and announced in the May SAM Bulletin. Emergency requests will be accepted and presented to the board on an as requested basis made throughout the year.

**Additional information, nomination guidelines, and access to the 2022-23 SAM Youth Endowment Nomination Form can be found [HERE](#).** Please note: submissions must be made by a current SAM member.

**Planning and Investment One-Pager** (found [HERE](#))

**CoSN Total Cost of Ownership Assessment Tool** (found [HERE](#))

**CoSN Value of Investment Project Cost Estimator, Project Benefits Tool and Case Studies** (found [HERE](#))

**CoSN Membership:**

If you, your school or district would like more information about joining CoSN, please contact [membership@cosn.org](mailto:membership@cosn.org).



**Thank you to SAM's Business Partners!**

**Please take time to visit their websites.**



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- [December 2022 SAM Bulletin](#)
- [November 2022 SAM Bulletin](#)
- [October 2022 SAM Bulletin](#)
- [September 2022 SAM Bulletin](#)
- [July-August 2022 SAM Bulletin](#)

## **[SAM Bulletins from Previous Years](#)**

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