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School Administrators of Montana

BULLETIN

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

Volume XL

OCTOBER 2017

No. 267

META...A Resource for all School Districts

by Rich Lawrence, META President



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Upcoming Conferences and Meetings

October 18-20 MCEL Billings

October 19 SAM Board Meeting

October 19 SAM Business Meeting

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

Thank you to this month's featured Business Partners!



Greetings from META! The School year has started and with that new challenges for us all. As you may have heard we had a Cyber Terrorists attack one of our School Districts here in the Flathead valley. They breached their Firewall and gained access to various types of Student and Staff data. Using this data they sent threatening messages and tried to extort money from the District. This attack emphasizes the need for Cyber Security awareness by all educational organizations throughout the State. META for the last 6 months has been working on putting together data to help inform and support those who manage Technology with relevant up-to-date best practices and procedures to help protect your data. We will be rolling out and presenting this data to various administrative and teacher groups over the next few months.

META is also working on what we call our Mega issues as well. Along with Cyber Security, we are working on our ERATE support and Consulting project which we hope will help fill the void of information related to ERATE that many School Districts in

Montana struggle with to the point that they do not request any funding from USAC because of the complexity of the requesting process. Millions of dollars of potential funding are left on the table every year because of this. Funding that could be used for much-needed Technology infrastructure. We are working in partnership with NCCE and the Department of Commerce on this project. META is also working to make known the number of Code opportunities that are available across the state. There are a number of wonderful programs available for Districts wanting to integrate this into their curriculum. More information on this will be coming soon.

META, of course, is always advocating for Instructional Technology as well as Educational Infrastructure Technology. As more and more technology is integrated into the classroom the need to provide secure, reliable and adequately funded technology resources is vital to providing a great educational experience to our students statewide.

META looks forward to these challenges and works extremely hard to be a strong reliable resource for Educational Instructional Technology for all School Districts and Educational Organizations statewide. On behalf of META, I want to thank you for the opportunity to serve.

Rich Lawrence, META President

Professional Learning and Advocacy in Focus at the Beginning of 2017-18

by Kirk Miller, SAM Executive Director

Great work Montana education leaders for launching the 2017-18 school year in a fantastic way for the students you serve. Montana administrators in our schools all across the state

Building Effective, Positive Relationships with Students - The Art of Connecting

by Pat Audet, SAM Associate Director

As a school leader, how do you approach the art of connecting with students? Throughout my experiences as an administrator, it has always been a challenge to instill the importance of the



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planned diligently to provide their school education teams and students with the right tools to create enthusiasm and a great foundation for learning. Your skills in developing relationships, networking resources, and collaborating with your

education team is greatly appreciated, and about now you realize how important all of that planning and delivery at the beginning of the year is for the education of the students in your community. Thanks for your leadership.

You will note that the SAM Bulletin has a new look and is more functional for your use with live links to further information included in the articles throughout the bulletin. SAM has focused attention on professional learning and advocacy early this school year. Here are some key items in each goal area...

Professional Learning and Services

Excellent professional learning and networking happened on September 18-19 at the MASS/MCASE Fall Conference 2017. “Equity and Empathy: Supporting ALL Students” theme included deep conversations around presentations from speakers Denny Dearden, Rob Watson, Leslie Finnan, AASA Superintendent of the Year Matt Utterback, and Joe Steele (link to the [Program](#)). MCASE provided a great look at state and federal regulations changes impacting the delivery of special education services, and orientation training for new special ed directors. MASS members can review all of the information from the Conference by following this [LINK](#), and MCASE members by following this [LINK](#). The Montana Association of County School Superintendents (MACSS) held a great conference on September 26-27, check it out by following this [LINK](#).

The SAM Leaders Professional Learning Program (LPLP) is off to a great start in 2017-18. Sixty-

classroom teacher being able to develop a rapport with their students. I have never had much doubt that most staff members have the knowledge base and expertise of their curricular area plus the ability to deliver information to their students during any given class time. However, the question that has always been applied to effective teaching: How are ALL students comfortably receiving that instruction, in turn, being able to individually participate in the instruction, understanding the details and finally being able to discuss, decide, and work with the delivered content in a practical and meaningful way – LEARNING. Throughout the ages, there have been many strategies, buzzwords, methods, and approaches designed on how to educate students in a better way through involving them. Besides the objective of improving teacher delivery and student learning, one very important baseline factor that I have noticed with every successful instructor is the art of connecting with students. There will always be those students that seek that additional support, care and nurturing outside the family structure. In fact, most students all yearn for some form of relevance in their lives that can be confirmed by those adults that see them on a daily basis for many months of the year – TEACHERS. The challenge comes to those teachers that seem to lack this art or character of reaching out to students in a different, caring way other than just “delivering today’s lesson”. Some staff may choose to keep this at a low level or low priority. Some other staff may be completely uncomfortable in approaching students in such a way. So, what is the approach that can help to instill the importance of connecting with kids? Are there classes, workshops, etc?? What do you do? I found the supervision cycle being a most practical theater for approaching the subject with individual staff that reflected the need for a better classroom environment. With this broad subject, I have found the following points stemming great conversation within a collaborative style of supervision and evaluation with individual teachers:

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SAM Office
Kirk Miller
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Pat Audet

four Montana administrators have joined the SAM LPLP professional learning delivery system that personalizes learning for each member, and we anticipate several more will join. Those involved benefit from access to a coach, the SAM LPLP Resource Center, and Collegial Learning Networks (CLN). The 64 members are participating in six (and growing) CLN's working together on key educational topics – e.g. Personalized Learning, Social Emotional Learning, Information Security (Trusted Learning Environments), GEAR UP Schools, University Cohorts, and New Special Ed Directors, soon EPAS Principal Evaluation. The CLN's work will help the individuals with implementation plans for their schools and also coordinate collaborative sharing of best practices while learning from each other. Great stuff! You can still become a part of this personalized learning if you wish. To learn more, follow this [LINK](#). To register, follow this [LINK](#).

The Montana Conference of Education Leadership (MCEL) is coming up on October 18-20 in Billings. Plans are complete to renew and develop an outstanding [MCEL 2017](#) (October 18-20, 2017). The venue is moved to downtown Billings at the Northern Hotel and DoubleTree Hotel. Innovative technology and general session speakers will invigorate and motivate our Montana education leaders! A review of the [Schedule at a Glance](#) will further entice you to attend the professional learning for school leaders.

Advocacy

Key advocacy issues have been followed through the summer and now at the beginning of the school year. To make it easy for you to have access to information on the key advocacy issues we have established [Advocacy Issues 2017-18](#) web page (a link under the 'Advocacy' tab on the SAM website – www.sammt.org). State revenue shortfalls impact on schools, broadband initiatives, and the [ESSA Montana Plan](#) implementation are advocacy areas you can review. We will also continue to update

- Being cared for... How have you felt before when an adult in a position of authority reached out to you in a caring way? Show care.
- Showing interest... Did you feel a sense of relevance and importance when a teacher or person of authority asked about your sport, activity, or maybe about your life? Show interest.
- Giving attention & recognition... All of us have felt very proud when recognized for any accolades to which we have felt accomplishment. Give recognition, despite the subject or activity not necessarily being an interest of yours.
- Be equitable in the classroom... Calling on ALL students for allowance of input and participation in discussion topics. Include all students in a comfortable, unthreatening approach giving them a sense of belonging.
- Greeting the students... Teachers and administration saying “hello”, “good morning” or “have a great day” followed by including the student's name is always effective showing care, interest, and attention to the individual student.
- Implementation of a personalized learning approach – this is a little more of a challenge and takes great planning but applies great food for thought on individualizing instruction.

There are many other approaches to “connecting” that can be discussed in collaboration with teachers. Next, what are the expected outcomes from improving or implementing such a subjective strategy? The following expectations formulate great discussion. However, through collaborative interaction, these should not be expressed as “expectations” but as “benefits” that one will observe and witness if practiced.

- Improvement in the demeanor of those students deemed as disciplinary problems.
- Improvement in classroom environment – creation of positive, constructive

Associate Director
Gary Wagner
Operations Manager
Kim Scofield
Communications Specialist

information on [Federal Issues](#) impacting Montana education under the 'Advocacy' tab on the SAM website.

The SAM Annual Business Meeting at MCEL will take place on October 19, 2017, in the Billings Clocktower Hotel Garden Terrace Room from 4:00 – 5:00 pm. This important meeting agenda includes the ratification of SAM's Advocacy Priorities and Delegate Assembly recommendations for Positions and Resolutions, by a vote of the SAM members present. The SAM Delegate Assembly Steering Committee will act as the resolutions committee during this portion of the meeting. The Committee has prepared the [SAM Delegate Assembly 2017 Recommendations for the SAM Annual Business Meeting](#) for your review prior to the meeting. The SAM Bylaws (Article V) allow for Non-Delegate Assembly resolutions and position statements to be considered at the Annual meeting by adhering to the following:

Non-Delegate Assembly resolutions and position statements must be submitted in writing to the Chair of the Delegate Assembly Steering Committee (Rick Duncan and please copy to Kirk Miller) by 8:00 am on October 18, 2017 (we would prefer this by October 13 if possible so that the information can be prepared for the Business meeting). Persons presenting a Non-Delegate Assembly resolution or position statement will have 5 minutes to present rationale for adoption during the meeting. A 3/4ths vote of members present and voting is required for further consideration of the resolution or position statement.

I hope you will attend the SAM Annual Business meeting and to ratify the SAM advocacy priorities for 2017-18!

Thanks for your leadership of our Montana schools and for your great contributions to SAM, your professional association. I hope October is great for you!

classroom to which students want to belong.

- Better school climate as a whole with staff embracing strategies to build positive relationships with students.
- Establishment of mutual respect.
- Students feeling comfortable in learning and finding themselves being more active in the learning process.

Many of these practices, for teachers connecting with students, also apply to the school leader. School administrators can employ these strategies, in turn, being role models for all staff and students – a “practice what you preach” mentality. The art of connecting with students is nothing new as far as importance, thoughts, strategies, contemplation, implementation, and challenges. Methods, practices, strategies and finding best practices are all important within the dynamic learning structure within all schools and classrooms. However, the building of constructive relationships and developing rapport are highly beneficial to the baseline platform to which ALL student learning can blossom.



National Principals Month - October 2017

GREAT SCHOOLS HAVE GREAT PRINCIPALS **OCTOBER 2017**



Join the [National Association of Secondary School Principals](#), the [National Association of Elementary School Principals](#), and the [American Federation of School Administrators](#) this October

Kirk J. Miller

MCEL

October 18-20, 2017 - Billings

[View Agenda and Register](#)



Did You Know?

Through your joint consistent membership with the national organizations of NAESP, NASSP and AASA, you build a defense fund of \$1000 per year up to \$10,000 maximum (equal to 10 years of consistent membership). This legal defense fund will start over at base level with any lapse in membership.

Thank you to SAM's Business Partners!

Please take time to visit their websites.

Montana Big Sky Sponsors

as we honor the hard work and dedication of America's principals all month long.

National Principals Month is an opportunity to say "thank you" to principals everywhere and to share with the community all the great things that principals do.

The key to student success is a great school, and the key to a great school is a great principal.

[See what people across the country are saying about their principals](#) and view the calendar of events. Be sure to #ThankAPrincipal yourself!

[Read Governor Bullock's Letter Supporting 2017 National Principals Month](#)

**Thank You to All of Our
Montana Principals!!**





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