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School Administrators of Montana

BULLETIN

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

Volume XLII

April 2021

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Find the Good in Every Day

by Justin Helvik, MASSP President



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Upcoming Conferences, Meetings, & Events

April 15, 2021:
MCASE/MCEC Conference

June 10, 2021: Evening of Excellence

June 10-11, 2021: SAM Delegate Assembly

July 26-28 2021: SAM Administrators Institute

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

Spring break of 2020 was unlike any spring break I had ever experienced. Not because I was relaxing on some pristine beach or on some great adventure but because a pandemic made its way to Montana. Students left for their break and never returned in person for what seemed like an eternity. In a short time, our lives and jobs changed drastically as we knew it. Our world was flipped upside down and educators were asked to redefine education in a blink of an eye.

A school administrator's job is an ever changing one. We have to be adaptable and professional problem solvers. The intricacies of education are more complex now. School leaders are at the forefront of shaping their school's culture and ensuring academic progress for our students. Family dynamics, academic accountability, a community's ever changing social economic status, and mental health/wellness are now more pressing pieces a school leader must take into account when leading a learning community. From teachers to administrators, to paraprofessionals we all have to try to balance continuity and change. It is often human nature to get hung up on the obstacles we face and dwell on the negative.

One of the most important lessons I have learned was not taught to me by a teacher, parent, or colleague. Rather, it was one of my former students, Sydney, who taught me perhaps the greatest lesson of all. Sydney was a student at the middle school where I landed my first job as a principal several years ago. Syd, as she was referred to, told everyone in our school that you have to "find the good in every day". She walked the halls of my former school with a smile and had a positive attitude that was truly contagious. When I was feeling sorry for myself and thought I was having a bad day I would look at Syd and she'd always greet me with a smile and ask how I was doing. I always walked away after talking to Syd with a brighter outlook and a smile on my face. To be honest, I almost felt guilty for having such a poor outlook at times. You see, Syd was not just any student with a positive attitude. Syd had been diagnosed with a life threatening brain tumor. The cancer had taken so much away from her. She wasn't able to do many of the things she used to cherish. She couldn't play sports anymore due to the disease impacting her coordination and balance. She had to spend months at a time in treatment in a faraway place from home. When faced with tragedy and adversity many people become lethargic, angry, or depressed but not Syd. She walked the halls with a smile and chose to find the good in every day.

Tragically, Syd is no longer physically with us. However, her legacy lives on. Anyone who had the pleasure of knowing Syd was impacted by her grit and positive outlook on life. She chose to be happy despite facing the most grave circumstances. I have a framed picture of Syd's touching words hanging in my office. "Find the good in every day." I carry this message with me every day and try to view life as Syd did. Yes, life is tough at times and we are constantly facing challenges that may seem insurmountable. However, with grit and the right attitude, we can choose to find the good in every day as Syd did.

Justin Helvik
MASSP President

SAM - Creating Opportunities!

by Kirk Miller, SAM Executive Director

2021 Legislative Session - SAM Update

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 2020-21 educational programming for our students in the midst of the ever changing Coronavirus pandemic effect, and the planning for 2021-22! This spring acceleration of activity and

planning is normal, and because of COVID-19, has added some significant issues to contemplate in the service to your students, school and community. 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 core purpose 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. Elsewhere in this Bulletin I have provided an update on our 'advocacy' goal. Following are some highlights of the first two listed goals.

'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 deeply involved in all of the planning efforts around mitigation of the impact of Coronavirus on the education of Montana's children. From ongoing efforts to determine the needs of our schools to be aligned with significant federal funding, to embracing learning recovery through acceleration and addressing social emotional needs, SAM members are at the table providing the necessary expertise to help guide decision-making. 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 Negotiated Rule Making processes that yield policy decisions. SAM members will be

Week 14 of the 67th legislative session gets underway on April 6 (following Easter break) and we have completed 64 days of the session with 26 days remaining. As I described at policy bill transmittal time (3/5/21), we had early victories this session with [HB 15](#) passing and signed into law on February 25, outlining the inflationary increase to the funding formula, giving our schools the ability to begin the plans for their 2021-22 district budgets. Progress continues on [HB 630](#) (ESSER II) and [HB 632](#) (ESSER III) to determine Montana's appropriation of Coronavirus federal funds allocated to public schools to mitigate the impact of COVID-19.

The best references to the details of the legislative session can be found on the SAM [2021 Legislative Session](#) webpage. [SAMLN21 Legislative Update 14 SAM Status Report 4-2-21](#) and [Podcast 14](#) have been prepared to give you a look at the progress of SAM Advocacy during this session.

The legislature as of 4/1/21 has produced 3367 bill drafts with 1273 introduced bills. SAM advocacy is tracking 366 bill drafts (10.9%) with 187 (14.7%) of those bills introduced. A review of [SAM Followed Bills 4-1-21](#), [SAM Followed Bills Status 4-1-21](#), and [SAM Followed Bills Priority Status 4-1-21](#) will provide a deep dive into the status of 187 SAM tracked introduced bills. The [SAM Testimony Log 2021 Legislative Session 4-1-21](#) shows that SAM/MT-PEC has provided testimony 113 times on 63 different bills at this point in the session.

[SAM Followed Bills Priority Status Report 4-1-21](#) describes the status of bills under the SAM advocacy priorities – Note the designation of SAM priorities: 1 SF School Funding (15 bills), 2 PP Privatization with Public Funds (5 bills), 3 RR Recruitment and Retention (4 bills), 4 MH Mental Health (11 bills), 5 IT Infrastructure &



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participating in the review of Chapter 57 and Chapter 58 administrative rules keeping the best interest of our children front and center in those discussions. SAM participates on the Montana School Safety Advisory Council that has grown out of the work of the Montana School Emergency Management Planning Advisory Council, to help Montana develop the best safe school practices and make them readily available to all schools. These are just a few instances of the contribution of administrators to the education profession and to our system of quality public schools in Montana.

I would also touch briefly on the work of the SAM Leaders Professional Learning Program (LPLP) members and their impact in several areas on the 'professional learning' SAM goal. The SAM LPLP Transformational Learning (TL) CLN, over the past five years has been collecting and sharing successes and challenges in their work to implement personalized learning/proficiency based learning/student centered learning in their classrooms, school and even entire district. The work of the TL CLN led to legislation to incentivize transformational learning (HB 351, 2019 legislature), and continues to be a leading think tank on successful practices in transformational learning. The SAM LPLP Social Emotional Learning (SEL) CLN continues to work together on developing best practices for our schools around social emotional learning, ever magnified by the COVID pandemic. I bring to your attention the continuing work of the Aspiring Superintendents (AS) CLN, the New Superintendent (NS) CLN, the New Principals (NP) CLN, the Special Education (SPED) CLN and Comprehensive Schools (CS) CLN, all of which are using collaborative practices and coach/mentors to make great progress on their work to improve student learning and meet the social emotional needs of the whole child. We are also seeing great success with the SAM LPLP Huddle - a monthly one-hour virtual discussion between SAM LPLP Members, Providers and SAM leadership, featuring monthly calendar items and resource update, thought-leader sessions around contemporary topics, and discussion/Q & A. This collective effort of the LPLP is making difference for our state as we continue to work on best practices for educating our students. My thanks to all 70 SAM Members and our

Technology (18 bills), 6 EP Education Policy (87 bills), 7 RT Revenue & Taxation (20 bills), 8 PL Pension Laws (8 bills), 9 SP State Policy (19 bills). The Report provides a brief discussion on the bill status and statistics of SAM progress on our advocacy priorities as of 4/1/21 (Day 64).

SAM advocacy statistics on the 187 SAM Followed Bills ...

- Support 36 bills, Oppose 24 bills and Monitor 127 bills
- 51 bills have Passed, 82 bills have Failed, 54 bills are still alive
- Big Wins – 17 of 36 Support bills have Passed (47.2%) and 16 of 24 Oppose Bills have Failed (66.7%)
- Challenges – 9 of 36 Support bills have Failed (25.0%) and 1 of 24 Oppose bills have Passed (4.2%)

A big thanks to all SAM members who are helping ensure that [SAM's Advocacy Priorities](#) are addressed with fidelity and vigor in this legislative session!

SAM Membership Drive 2021-22 Launches April 6th!

The School Administrators of Montana (SAM) Membership Drive will begin on **Tuesday, April 6th** for the 2021-22 membership year! We will once again be using the online renewal process that we have used 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, and META members. Please

MCASE
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President

SAM Office
Kirk Miller
Executive Director

Gary Wagner
Director of Operations,
Membership & Finances

Kim Scofield
Director of Member Services
& Professional Learning

10 SAM LPLP Providers 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 goals. Certainly, the SAM LPLP is a professional learning delivery system that is personalized to meet the needs of our SAM members who participate. Our collective effort to develop this professional learning delivery system over the past 7 years is showing results about the impact of this collaboration 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 2021-22! Details coming soon.

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 2021 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 leader you can be. At SAM, we are intent on creating opportunities for you! Here’s to an outstanding April!!

Kirk J. Miller

Registration Open for MCASE-MCEC Virtual Conference

April 15, 2021

work with your district clerk/business manager to be sure your membership is correct. MCASE members and 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 and without any chance of it lapsing. Contact the SAM Office with any questions you may have.



Driving K-12 Innovation: Looking Back and Looking Forward

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.

**The Empowered Superintendent
edWebinar Series – Monday, April
12, 2021, 3:00 pm MT**
***“Looking Back and Looking
Forward: Leading Teaching and
Learning in Today’s World”***

Register [HERE!](#)

This series includes:

April 15 - 8:30 - 12:30
CELEBRATING RESILIENCE- with keynote by
Kristin Souers, followed by awards

April 21st 8:30-9:30 a.m.
TRAUMA INVESTED COMMUNICATION with
Kristin Souers

April 22nd 8:30-9:30 a.m.
FOSTERING RESILIENCE and GIVING
GRACE with Kristin Souers



SAM Administrators Institute

July 26-28, 2021

This is going to be a special SAM Administrators Institute that you will not want to miss! It will mark the launch of SAM's 50th Anniversary. We are planning for a blended delivery model, offering both in-person and virtual delivery. Watch for more information coming soon.

The upcoming episode of the monthly EmpowerED Superintendent Webinar series, co-hosted by CoSN, AASA and edWeb.net, and sponsored by ClassLink, airs on Monday, April 12, 2021 at 3:00 pm Mountain Time. The April webinar is titled *Looking Back and Looking Forward: Leading Teaching and Learning in Today's World*. In this edWebinar, four education leaders: Dr. Carol Kelley, Superintendent, Oak Park Elementary District 97, IL, Dr. Chris Marczak, Chief of Instructional Leadership for the US Department of Defense Education Activity Pacific Center Japan, Dr. David Schuler, Superintendent Township HS District 214, IL, and Dr. Donna Wright, Director of Schools, Wilson County Schools, TN reflect on the lessons learned for dealing with a sudden crisis as they recall the steps they took in March and April of 2020 when the world was beginning to deal with the reality of a global pandemic. They will also share strategies, policies and practices they are implementing in their school systems to assure that effective learning for all students continues today and in the future. Frankie Jackson, Independent CTO, who served on the CoSN Driving K-12 Innovation Advisory Board, will share the latest updates from CoSN's 2021 Driving K-12 Innovation Report. Join in the conversation as together we look back and look forward.

Free registration for the April 12, 2021 webinar is now available [HERE](#). Webinars in this series are also freely available as recordings [HERE](#) and via podcast [HERE](#) a day or two after the initial live broadcast.

CoSN Resources - Driving K-12 Innovation

Through the Driving K-12 Innovation series, CoSN continues its commitment to sharing high-quality trend reports that support the use of emerging technology in



SAM Leaders Professional Learning Program 2021-22

It isn't too early to start thinking about professional learning for you and your district administrators for next year. 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. Watch for registration for SAM LPLP 2021-22 coming soon!



SAM Welcomes 45 Architecture, LLC as a New Business Partner

45 Architecture is a diverse planning, architecture and interior design firm that offers comprehensive services to

K-12 education to transform learning. The annual report identifies three areas that move K-12 Innovation forward: Hurdles, Accelerators and Tech Enablers. Hurdles are obstacles that make participants slow down, evaluate, practice, and then make the leap to better support teaching and learning. Accelerators are megatrends that drive change – sometimes suddenly and sometimes so gradually that the implications are not readily apparent. Tech Enablers are tools that support smoother leaps over the hurdles and expansive changes in global K-12 education. You are invited to view the results of the most recent 2021 Driving K-12 Innovation Survey and explore the Hurdles, Accelerators and Tech Enablers topics that rose to the top in each category [HERE](#).

CoSN Membership

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.



SAM Welcomes Boardworks as a New Business Partner

A leader in supplemental K12 interactive curriculum, Boardworks provides 25K slides of ready-made presentations for Math, Science, ELA, and Social Studies.

clients in both the public and private sector. 45 Architecture's work includes many public/ community projects throughout Montana, including, Libraries, K-12 Education Facilities, Stadium/ Athletic Facilities and Higher Education Facilities.

45 Architecture's design process brings together their experience as professionals with functional goals, project scope, challenges, and opportunities which combines the intimacy of a small design practice with the extensive national knowledge of a major design firm. They strive to serve their communities through the spaces they design and through their engaged design process. A process that adds value to those spaces which in turn strengthens their communities, schools, businesses, institutions, organizations and individuals.

Simple to use content that empowers teachers, engages students, and improves learning.

Boardwork's resources enhance any learning situation with any connected device. They keep teachers, teaching by giving them empowering tools to further instruction and engage students. Teachers are able to use provide synchronous or asynchronous instruction seamlessly and districts can integrate our content with any LMS.

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

Thank you to SAM's Business Partners!

Please take time to visit their websites.

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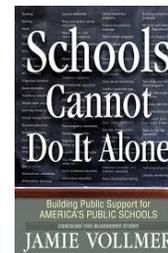
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