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School Administrators of Montana

BULLETIN

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

Volume XLII

December 2020

No. 302



20/20 Vision

by Cathy Maloney, MACSS President

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Upcoming Conferences, Meetings, & Events

January 24-26, 2021: Montana Principals Conference

Driving along on this road called life, I had my eyes checked and even adjusted my prescription, but like many of you I couldn't and didn't see this coming. The Year of 2020 has become a blur of COVID – 19, election banter and unforeseen challenges on behalf of education, health care, basic living and every other pursuit or activity.

None of us saw this coming, but the rapid response of educators, adapting to the students' needs for distance learning seemed to happen instantaneously. Probably not to those behind the scenes, they were problem solving and losing sleep, but the public didn't see or observe this. Thank you to the Administrators that coordinated those efforts.

Schools rose to the challenge creating brilliant plans for consistent education. I didn't know anyone that wasn't trying to do their best. Fabulous new models of in-person, distance learning or hybrids were created for student needs. This will have lasting effects on education as we knew it. Thank you to Governor Bullock for shutting things down in March, a hard choice to make, but we needed time to re-group and analyze, these have been some alarming times.

Thank you to the SAM Management Team and Affiliates for doing the important work and giving us the connections, suggestions, updates and vital information. This meant survival, supplying resources in these unprecedented times was essential. Once again, I was filled with gratitude for feeling connected to the greater cause. Good, solid, trust-worthy leadership and guidance from SAM was crucial, their work was very comforting and reassuring.

We're making progress - resilient and optimistic, educated and essential, we've stayed on the road, avoiding the ditches, there might still be a few bumps but we're going to come out upright, shiny side showing. There is light at the end of this lengthy tunnel, we can see it.

Despite it all, there have been some silver linings. In some ways, we're probably more focused, priorities have changed, families are sharing more time with each other and we've become better cooks. Education is at the forefront of everyone's mind. Plus, there is an unexpected perk of our predicament, a reduction in mileage on our vehicles.

Lastly, to the Zoom Conference creators, thanks, we needed a dose of reality, as I believe we were all starting to take ourselves way too seriously, this great leveler was fun to watch as everyone learned to familiarize themselves with this futuristic method of communication and conferencing.

I must admit that as I'm travelling along, I look forward to seeing this one in my rear-view mirror. Let's just say that "Hindsight is 20/20" and keep motoring, going toward the light at the end of this tunnel. My new glasses and better depth perception say it is getting closer. Hang in there!

Take care, stay safe, sane and well!

*Regards, Cathy Maloney
MACSS President*

Thankful for this Great Profession!

by Kirk Miller, SAM Executive Director

MAEMSP & MASSP Awards Open for Nominations

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Thank you to
this month's
featured
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President**



In the midst of the holiday season, it is a good time to reflect on the amazing profession you have chosen. The passion, expertise and work ethic of Montana school administrators is a credit to the education profession. As you create and implement an educational environment for the students and education team you serve, the holiday season is a great way to showcase your school and the value it provides to the community. With COVID impacting all communities, our schools are the center of progress and focus of reason. From innovative holiday programs at the center of virtually gathering your community, to the kind giving projects and community service, to the educational focus on supporting others at this time of year, your schools and the innovative work you do with your students are critical to the future of your community. Please consider this as you go about your work this month, knowing that you have a substantial purpose in helping students grow into healthy, happy productive citizens, and the impact of that great effort on your community

At SAM, we are coordinating efforts to assist our profession, and the administrators we serve, with professional learning and advocacy efforts. Professional learning opportunities are at an all-time high. We have 69 administrators in the [SAM Leaders Professional Learning Program](#) (LPLP) this year. Each of these administrators are working on their personalized professional learning plan that they have developed to impact their students, school and district. Great work is being accomplished in so many areas evidenced through 10 Collegial Learning Networks collaboratively involved in studying and finding solutions to key areas for their students and community. Additionally, every 2nd Thursday our LPLP members are participating in the SAM LPLP Huddle, a one-hour virtual discussion featuring monthly calendar items & resource update, thought-leader session about a timely topic, and full discussion Q&A about contemporary issues. SAM assists in the development of 11 conferences annually that are important for our Montana administrators to gather to learn together and plan together. This year, we have developed virtual conferences to meet the learning

The following MASSP and MAEMSP award nominations/applications are now open. Please consider nominating someone you would like to recognize for their outstanding service to the education of Montana's children. **Nomination forms must be completed by December 18, 2020.** Find out more about each award and nominate/apply by clicking [Current Award Opportunities](#) or on the links below.

MAEMSP Awards

- [MAEMSP/NAESP National Distinguished Principal](#)
- [Adrian Langstaff Award](#)
- [NAESP Conference Incentive Award](#)
- [MAEMSP Aspiring Principal Scholarship Award](#)
- [MAEMSP Friends of Education Award](#)
- [MAEMSP Appreciation Award](#)

MASSP Awards

- [MASSP National Principal of the Year](#)
- [NAESP Conference Incentive Award](#)
- [MASSP Community Partner in Education](#)
- [MASSP Future Administrator Scholarship](#)

2020-21 Montana District/School Leadership Staffing Report

The [2020-21 Leadership Staffing Report](#) has just been completed and is a compelling story of how efficient/effective the administrative structure is for our Montana public schools. We hope this is useful for you in discussions with your community and with your legislators. The following press release will be sent to all major Montana newspapers and media sources next week:

2020-21 Montana District/School Leadership Staffing Report Complete

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Rick Duncan
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Michelle Halberg
President

MACSS
Cathy Maloney

needs of our members, and the results have been favorably evaluated by the attendees. The [Montana Virtual Principals Conference 2021](#) is the next conference on the schedule, January 25-26, via Zoom. I hope all principals are planning to attend this outstanding agenda of contemporary issues around the theme ‘You Matter: Giving Grace, Practicing Flexibility, and Building Resiliency During a Pandemic’. Your engagement will help you with your work for students. District leaders please urge your principals to join their colleagues at this professional learning event. Further information and registration is in this Bulletin.

Advocacy work is front and center with the 67th legislative session fast approaching – begins on January 4, 2021. The preliminary work to get SAM’s advocacy priorities in front of legislators is underway. We are sending a letter to each legislator describing SAM, our advocacy package and our request to work with them on educational issues before, during and after the session. The SAM Advocacy webpage has been updated to include the [2021 Legislative Session](#) where all SAM activities before and during the session will be updated on a regular basis. As an example, the committees for the 2021 Session have been selected and you can review the legislators assigned to each committee on this webpage. The formation of the SAM Legislative Network ([SAMLN21](#)) is nearly complete – please sign up if you haven’t done so already. We are planning some webinar training for those participating in the SAMLN21 coming in late December. The SAM Delegate Assembly Steering Committee (DASC) continues to work on SAM Advocacy prioritization to give us the best opportunity for success on education issues this session. We are working on bills that are SAM action resolutions and are identifying legislators to carry these bills. Reports on our specific progress will be uploaded to the webpage on a regular basis, so check in often.

Advocacy work to support a great education for each child, every school continues to be a priority. Please review [GREAT 2020](#) (released by MT-PEC at MCEL 2020), and use this for reference to advocate in your school community. Develop a strategy to tell ‘your story’ widely in your community and include legislators in that distribution. Consider the strategic approach developed and promoted by Jamie Vollmer in the newly developed “Schools Cannot Do It Alone Network” found

School Administrators of Montana (SAM) has created the organization’s annual analysis of school administrator staffing in Montana’s schools. The 2020-21 Montana District/School Leadership Staffing report indicates that the administration of our Montana schools is effective and efficient with 1019 students per Superintendent and 249 students per Administrator (Superintendents and Principals). Each Administrator supervises an average of 26.7 licensed professional and paraprofessional staff. These ratios compare very favorably to the following public and private sector industries: 11.7 employees per healthcare administrator, 6.5 employees per construction manager, 5.6 employees per manufacturing manager (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics/Educational Research Service) and disprove the popular but inaccurate refrain that there is too much administration in Montana’s public schools. SAM hopes this report will be useful information for discussions with community members and legislators across the state. The 2020-21 District School Leadership Staffing Report can be found in its entirety on the SAM website at www.sammt.org under Headline and Features.

SAM Needs Assessment

Later this week you will be receiving an email with a link to the 2021 SAM Needs Assessment Survey. The purpose of the SAM Needs Assessment 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 8, 2021**. The time required to complete the survey is 15-20 minutes. We appreciate your responses to the survey and your assistance in making SAM the best it can be for your leadership needs. Please look for this email coming to your inbox in the next few days.

President

META
Everett Holm
President

SAM Office
Kirk Miller
Executive Director

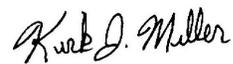
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Kim Scofield
Director of Member
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at <https://www.jamievollmer.com/>. You may even want to consider joining the Montana Chapter (info at <https://www.jamievollmer.com/video-series/>). This Bulletin also references the 2020-21 Montana District/School Leadership Staffing Report for your use in advocacy discussions with community members and legislators. This report emphasizes the effective and efficient administration of Montana's schools, giving you valid information to disprove the popular but inaccurate refrain that there is too much administration in Montana's public schools, and the reduction of administrators will resolve funding shortfalls. We are sending this report in our SAM package to all legislators very soon.

SAM efforts in professional learning and advocacy are examples of our collective effort to improve our great profession! Thank you SAM members for your participation in professional learning and advocacy, as this is how the difference is accomplished!

Have a great December and Holiday Season. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you from your team at SAM!



2021 Montana Virtual Principals Conference Registration is Open!

**You Matter: Giving Grace,
Practicing Flexibility and
Building Resiliency during a
Pandemic**

Monday, January 25



Digital Equity

The [Consortium for School Networking \(CoSN\)](#) in partnership with [School Administrators of Montana](#) and CoSN's 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 COVID-19 crisis has brought to light many challenges within the nation's K-12 education systems. Some are new and others may have existed for a while. One of the more confounding current problems is the matter of digital equity. As schools across the nation moved from their traditional in-school settings to both hybrid and fully remote teaching and learning, student access to appropriate digital devices and robust Internet access became even more critically urgent. Additionally, having the skills to leverage technology tools for learning is now essential for teachers and students – and to some degree, parents and families – in order for effective teaching and learning to continue.

The vision of anywhere, anytime learning depends on equitable access to devices and high-speed Internet for ALL students, as well as their families and guardians. In our current reality the issues around access go beyond the ability to continue learning. Today, everyone needs reliable broadband access in order to stay connected with family and friends, access health services, job opportunities and other critical resources. For all these reasons, the issues involved in leading digital transformation and assuring that all students have reliable digital access are now more relevant than ever. CoSN is pleased to provide multiple resources to assist school leaders in navigating the challenges of digital equity.

- **Ricky Ramirez** - Reach Them Before You Teach Them
- **Dr. Gerry Nolan** - You Are The Light of Your Community: Employing Self-Care to Keep Your Light Shining Bright
- **Tim Kanold** - Heart

Tuesday, January 26

- **Dr. Adolf Brown** - Teaching and Learning Excellence
- **Beth Houf** - Teaching Outside the Box: A Crash Course in Creativity



[Click HERE for more information and to REGISTER!](#)

**SAM Youth Endowment
Open for Nominations**

EmpowerED Superintendent Monthly Webinar: “Achieving Digital Equity: Innovative Leadership Strategies for Today’s School Leaders”

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, December 14, 2020. The title and focus of this upcoming webinar, broadcast live at 3:00 pm MT, is *Achieving Digital Equity: Innovative Leadership Strategies for Today’s School Leaders*. Solving the problem of digital equity requires a focused vision and strategic implementation of multiple innovative strategies. In this engaging webinar Dr. A. Katrise Perera, Superintendent, Gresham-Barlow School District, OR, Glenn Robbins, Superintendent, Brigantine Public Schools, NJ and Dr. Aaron Spence, Superintendent, Virginia Beach City Public Schools, VA share effective strategies for bringing their communities together to implement solutions that successfully address digital equity. Free registration for this December 14, 2020 webinar is now available at

<https://home.edweb.net/webinar/supers20201214/>

Webinars in this series are also freely available as recordings at <https://home.edweb.net/supers/> and via podcast at <https://home.edweb.net/podcasts/> a day or two after the initial live broadcast.

CoSN Critical Focus Areas: Issue One-Pager - *Creating Equitable Opportunities for All Learners: Digital Equity Strategies for Learning Inside and Outside the Classroom*

The [CoSN EmpowerED Superintendents web page](#) presents a series of “one-pagers” to guide and empower superintendents and their leadership teams in leading digital transformations. CoSN’s one-page document on [Creating Equitable Opportunities for All Learners](#) describes four impactful strategies for “thinking outside the box” to achieve digital equity within a school system.

CoSN Digital Equity Initiative

For an in-depth look at a variety of strategies to

Nominations are open until March 2nd for the 2020-21 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.

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 2020-21 SAM Youth Endowment Nomination Form can be found [HERE](#). Please note that only SAM members can make the actual nomination.

address digital equity check out the resources provided through CoSN's Digital Equity Initiative, including access to the Digital Equity Toolkit at <https://www.cosn.org/digitalequity>

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.



Thank you to SAM's Business Partners!

Please take time to visit their websites.

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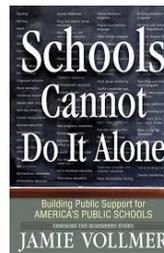
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[October 2020 Bulletin](#)
[September 2020 Bulletin](#)
[July-August 2020 Bulletin](#)

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