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School Administrators of Montana

BULLETIN

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

Volume XLIII

September 2021

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Remembering Why You Became an Educator

by Cal Ketchum, SAM President

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Upcoming Conferences, Meetings, & Events

**MASS/MCASE
Virtual Fall
Conference -
September 20-21**

**MCEL 2021 -
October 20-22**

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

It's hard to believe we have been dealing with this Pandemic for eighteen months now.

We made an abrupt change in the spring of 2019 from what we considered 'normal' to full remote learning in just a few weeks. In addition, we were faced with a multitude of other changes and challenges as we made plans to return to in person instruction this last year. This 2021-22 school year will continue to bring Covid-19 challenges along with others such as: CSCT funding, CRT (Critical Race Theory), masks on buses, vaccination, quarantine, finding quality employees and other issues that keep administrators up at night. With all of these challenges, let's not forget why we entered the profession of education in the first place; the kids! I would guess the majority of educators entered the profession because they love working with kids and watching them succeed! Administrators are often tasked with issues that don't directly deal with kids, making it easier to move further and further away from the contact with kids that once drove you to this career path.

As the 2021-22 school year begins, I would challenge each of you to rekindle that flame and find the passion in your job that called you from the beginning. Locally, statewide and nationally we are seeing educators leaving the profession, mainly due to the ever increasing demands of the job and lack of support throughout the profession. While it is getting increasingly difficult every year to find quality applicants for school positions, I am still encouraged to see we have great people entering the field. Even with all of the challenges the past eighteen months have presented, I was encouraged to see the passion and commitment to the profession our Montana Educators demonstrated. Instead of complaining, they rolled up their sleeves and got to work to provide a quality education no matter the obstacles.

While the past eighteen months have posed challenges for each of us, what I have discovered in our neck of the woods is we are better when we work together. I can't speak for each region of the state, but our NWMASS group has been working collaboratively over these past eighteen months to make sure we continue delivering a top notch education for the kids in our schools. With all of the moving targets that Covid-19 has prevented and the controversies created by this pandemic, I can confidently say I am extremely proud to be a Montana Educator! By working together, we delivered a consistent message to our staff and families, which made a difficult situation much easier. Not only did we work together as a NWMASS group, the work of the SAM Office also made our jobs much easier. We are incredibly fortunate to have Kirk, Kim, and now Marcus working for us to ensure we are well informed on all of the latest educational issues we are faced with.

While you will be faced with a plethora of new challenges this school year, remember the most important aspect of your job; the kids! I encourage you to visit classrooms as often as possible. Schedule this time into your day and stick to it. When you are having one of those especially difficult days, walk into a kindergarten classroom and I guarantee you will leave smiling. Being an administrator can be isolating but don't let it be. Work with other administrators in your area and always know you have support in the SAM office and they are only a call or email away.

Have a great school year and I thank each of you for the important work you do every day for the kids of Montana!

All the Best!

Cal Ketchum
SAM President 2021-22

Thank you to
this month's
featured
Business
Partners!



Montana School Leaders - Leading with Purpose in Changing Times!

by Kirk Miller, SAM Executive Director



The leadership (boards of directors) of both the MASS and MCASE associations on Monday morning brought into focus the truly great education leaders we have serving our schools and communities in Montana. The discussion topics were to deal with the immediate but soon moved to developing an understanding of the broad challenges/opportunities of opening our schools in 2021 and leading with optimism and hope. In both of the board meetings, the dialogue was intensely focused on providing great educational and social emotional opportunities for students to learn and grow. The biggest challenge with accomplishing that is all of the noise and negativity created by the COVID pandemic and how tired everyone is of the impact COVID has had on our lives. The epiphany was to set some thoughtful goals (broad perspectives) and actions to take in the immediate that will clarify the future. So, from the thoughts and dialogue of the education leaders in our state, I offer you the following ...

Broad perspectives are

- We're in this together. The students, the staff and the community.
- My purpose is greater than my challenges. The import work of schools - the safety, well-being and education of our kids is a worthy purpose worth fighting for and gives a higher calling to dig deep even when that tiredness of constant challenge tries to overshadow.

Actions are

- Set a goal in your self-talk and your actions (both subtle and overt) to assume positive intent in all interactions and actions this month. Wow, as this came forward during the MASS board meeting, it immediately caused me to reflect and be thoughtful about walking in others' shoes and to start thinking positively about the joys, gifts and challenges being encountered daily.
- How do you reorganize the message to the community from the noisy negativity to one of support for one of the most valuable assets your community possesses? How about these actions...In your work to reframe the dialogue be sure to show that superintendents and school district administrators are in this together with their community to create positive support of their school as a business in the community, as an employer of those working to care for and nurture our children, and to do everything they can to keep schools open to serve their community during the pandemic and at all times!
 - Reframe the dialogue about your school to one of supporting the many values the school in your community provides, not only for children, but the community as a whole. Using storytelling in multiple venues – from face-to-face interactions to community presentations to social media – flooding the market with the dialogue of support for your school. Remember the Jamie Vollmer strategies.
 - Help all audiences consider that your public school is a valuable economic driver in the community. Attention to the health of students and staff is important to the goal of keeping our schools open to in person learning as we come back to school and as the year progresses. In many communities, the community school is one of the largest employers and the activity of the community is based in the school building or the facilities supported by the school in the community (athletic fields, gymnasiums, auditoriums, gathering

SAM **Leadership**

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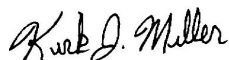
spaces). Assume positive intent in engaging your community by sharing that the purpose of creating healthy environments is to keep children, school staff and the community safe to do the business of schooling and keep your school open to benefit the entire community.

- In your work to reframe the dialogue be sure to show that superintendents and school district administrators are in this together with their community to create positive support of their school as a business in the community, as an employer of those working to care for and nurture our children, and to do everything they can to keep schools open to serve their community during the pandemic and at all times!

Your professional association, SAM is here to support you and we are working with the MT-PEC partners to help create resources that are valuable in helping you to reframe the dialogue in your community. The Zogby Analytics annual public opinion poll of Montana citizens is going on right now in order to better understand Montana voter perspectives on K-12 public education issues. The work of MT-PEC is informed by the Strategic Plan produced by the K-12 Vision Group, the results of the Zogby poll, and the input of stakeholders, teachers, school staff, administrators, and trustees. The intention of the MT-PEC partners is to release Volume IX of “The Great Work of Montana’s Public Schools” in October 2021 at MCEL. Wide distribution to stakeholders will allow you to use this information in your efforts with your community to promote trust in your goals for the education of children in your community and assume positive intent in all interactions and actions in your community.

You face challenges that are impacting schools and leadership of the highest magnitude. This has been the hardest year of our lives in the sense that we are all in this together. We are seeing changeover in leadership, quality administrators leaving the profession both nationwide and here in Montana. I hope you will ... focus within to control your own optimism, tell those stories of the resilience of your students and staff to rise, and then point your people to the future with hope and optimism.

Thank you to all of those in leadership of our SAM and affiliate associations! Your ability and great dialogue during the opening of the 2021-22 school year will create a year of success for the children in our communities all across the state. I have benefitted greatly, and am optimistic for our future, as a result of being present with you as you have diligently put into place the best opportunities for children in your community. This article is in support of the excellent leadership of our community schools working collaboratively with local communities to create the best education for our children and support our communities, by keeping schools open as a true economic driver in all communities across the state — we are in this together. Push on my friends and colleagues!



SAM Professional Learning Opportunities

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2021 MASS/MCASE Virtual Fall Conference



2021 MASS/MCASE VIRTUAL FALL CONFERENCE

**Inclusive Leadership -
An Invitation to Thrive Together**

September 20th & 21st

*Click here to
REGISTER!*

The MASS/MCASE **Virtual** Fall Conference is scheduled for September 20 - 21, 2021. Even though the conference is virtual, the same robust and rich professional learning is being planned by the MASS and MCASE leadership! The agenda has been updated and posted on the [conference landing page](#).

If you previously registered to take part in the 2021 MASS/MCASE Fall Conference in person, we are offering all in person registrants the choice of a conversion of your registration to virtual delivery or a full cancellation and refund of your registration fee. Cancellations must occur no later than Friday, September 10 by emailing your cancellation request to Kim Scofield (samks@sammt.org). We will convert the registration of those who do not cancel by 5 pm on September 10 to a virtual registration, subject to all ordinary registration and cancellation procedures. **We also ask that you immediately contact the hotel you may have made reservations at to cancel your reservation (and avoid being charged for your room).** Most conference registrants made reservations in the room block at the Best Western Great Northern Hotel – number to call is [\(406\) 457-5500](tel:4064575500).

Click [HERE](#) for more information! Register [HERE](#)!

SAM Leaders Professional Learning Program 2021-22

Connecting new, experienced, and aspiring administrators through SAM LPLP's multi-faceted blended learning approach!

1 One-on-One Coach/Mentor	2 Online Resource Center	3 Collegial Learning Networks (CLNs)
--	--	---


**SAM Leaders
Professional
Learning
Program 2021-22**
[Click
HERE
to
Register](#)

It isn't too late to consider how you might set yourself up to have the very best school year ever! New and experienced administrators have begun registering for the 2021-22 SAM Leaders Professional Learning Program! The first group event for the current program year is the **SAM LPLP Huddle** scheduled for **Thursday, September 9th from**

10:00 - 11:00 AM. The SAM LPLP Huddle is intended for members to engage in professional dialogue about current experiences and provide members with resources to help them succeed in their leadership roles. Tailored to meet the needs of new, experienced, and aspiring administrators, SAM LPLP may be the just-in-time professional learning that will meet the needs of you and your administrative team.

Click [HERE](#) for more information or [HERE](#) to Register!

MCEL Goes Virtual!



Virtual
MCEL 2021
October 20 - 22
Register [HERE!](#)

Registration is open! Find out more and register [HERE](#). The virtual delivery provides participants to attend virtually and/or watch the video recording of each session. Registered participants can earn up to 30 hours of continuing education credits if they watch all sessions.

Award Nominations Close October 1st!

The following awards are open for nominations. Now is the time to nominate the deserving administrators you know. Nominations close October 1st!

- [G.V. Erickson Award](#) - The G.V. Erickson Award is given to a member of the School Administrators of Montana who has made the greatest contribution to the betterment of education in Montana; something that G.V. did throughout his career. This is the most honored award a school administrator of Montana can receive.
- [Erdie Memorial Scholarship](#) - A Dr. Jay Erdie Memorial Mentor Scholarship in the amount of \$1000 will be awarded annually to a deserving educator. The purpose of the scholarship is to “train and mentor” new Montana school administrators. The scholarship will be awarded to a school administration candidate who plans to begin and/or complete his/her administrative credentials and intends to work in a Montana school district. Once the candidate has secured a position and notified the SAM office, a trained mentor will be provided through SAM’s Mentor Program to assist during his/her first year on the job.
- [MASSP Assistant Principal of the Year](#) - The National Assistant Principal of the Year program recognizes outstanding school leaders who have succeeded in providing high-quality learning opportunities for students. These assistant principals are acknowledged by their peers for the exemplary contributions they have made to the

profession. The program honors high school assistant principals who have demonstrated excellence in the areas addressed by the selection criteria.

- [MASS School Board of the Year](#) - The purpose of the award is to recognize and focus attention on the dedicated and ethical service rendered by school boards to the children of Montana. Nominations for the MASS School Board of the Year may be submitted by any Montana Superintendent of Schools. A committee reviews the applications and selects up to two (2) Outstanding School Boards in Montana. The winners are announced during the annual SAM Business Meeting in October.
- [MASS AASA Convention Incentive Award](#) - The Montana Association of School Superintendents Incentive Award Program is intended to provide an opportunity for two administrators to attend the AASA National Conference on Education (NCE) in Nashville February 17-19, 2022. Nominees must be members of MASS and AASA and must not have previously attended an AASA NCE.



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

The EmpowerED Superintendents edWebinar Series returns for its fourth season on Monday, September 13, 2021. CoSN is pleased to partner with AASA, The School Superintendents Association, and edWeb.net in hosting this professional learning opportunity for school leaders which is sponsored by ClassLink. There is no cost for webinar participants to sign up for the monthly webinars. Participants are invited to share their thoughts in the chat and through poll surveys and question and answer submissions during the live webinar broadcasts. They can also earn continuing education credits through the edWeb community.

“Learning Reimagined: Leveraging Technology to Meet the Needs of All Students”

Join Dr. David Schuler, Superintendent High School District 214, IL (Chair of the CoSN Superintendent Advisory Panel), Dr. Carol Kelley, Superintendent, Princeton Public Schools, NJ (Co-chair of CoSN’s Superintendent Advisory Panel) and Dr. John Malloy, Superintendent, San Ramon Valley USD, CA on Monday, September 13, at 3:00 pm MT for *“Learning Reimagined: Leveraging Technology to Meet the Needs of All Students”*. Each superintendent will each share how their school districts leverage technology to reimagine teaching and learning in new and innovative ways with goal of meeting the needs of all students, especially those most at risk. They will provide examples of technology implementations that they have each led to address: 1) Assessment and Data Driven Instruction 2) Blended Learning 3) Family Connections 4) Social Emotional Learning and 5) Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

Free registration for the Monday, September 13, 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:

1) *CoSN Digital Equity Toolkit*

CoSN and AASA, The School Superintendents Association, partnered together to release version 3.0 of the EmpowerED Superintendents Toolkit. The kit includes an Executive Summary that provides an overall introduction to the Toolkit and two Modules. Module 1 provides a detailed examination of the Five Imperatives for Technology Leadership. Packed with testimonials, case studies, and more, Module 1 gives a new perspective on the most important things you need to do to lead. Module 2 includes Four Action Steps for Strengthening the Technology Leadership Team. You are invited to download the complete EmpowerED Superintendents Toolkit [HERE](#).

2) *Additional EmpowerED Superintendents Resources*

Self-Assessments for Superintendents, District Leadership Teams and CTOs and other technology leadership resources are also freely available [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.

Thank you to SAM's Business Partners!

Please take time to visit their websites.

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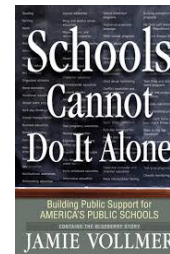
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