

**SAM Bulletin May 2021**

1 message

School Administrators of Montana &lt;saom@memberclicks-mail.net&gt;

Mon, May 3, 2021 at 11:50 AM

Reply-To: samks@sammt.org

To: samks@sammt.org

*School Administrators of Montana***BULLETIN***'Visionary leaders united in providing, advocating, and creating education excellence for Montana students!'***Volume XLII****May 2021****No. 307*****In This Issue...***

1. [MACSS President Message](#)
2. [SAM Executive Director Message](#)
3. [2021 Legislative Update](#)
4. [SAM Week of Excellence June 9-11](#)
5. [MCASE/MCEC Spring Conference](#)
6. [Save the Date: SAMAI 2021/SAM's 50th Anniversary](#)
7. [CoSN - Assuring Accessibility for All](#)
8. [2021-22 Membership Drive Launched April 6th](#)

**Upcoming Conferences, Meetings, & Events****June 9, 2021: SAM DaRud Cup Golf Scramble****June 10, 2021: SAM Board Meeting****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\*\*****School Board Trustees: Average People On An Extraordinary Mission***by Cathy Maloney, MACSS President*

I was able to attend my first in person school board meeting last night. I was delighted to see the people that have kept it all together during this pandemic. Zoom is not the same, there is a pleasant feeling about being in a room with like minded adults, topics are still challenging, and outcomes are not always predictable, but seeing the volunteers that take on these roles is good for the soul.

School board members are average citizens from all walks of life, and they have proven themselves to be valuable allies and contributors in the process of educating children and for this I wanted to remember to tell them thank you. I know it was not easy waiting on directives, having no directives, getting snippets of information from every corner and constituent, meeting directives, and then putting new policies in place. Challenging is an understatement, however, you have done it and done it well! – Congratulations!

Taking the initiative to act on uncertain outcomes has been brave indeed, forging forward in uncertainty takes grit, relying on your administrators or supervising teachers to assist and lead has undoubtedly built stronger bonds. We have all learned so much and through it all, the customers (the students and their parents), have come to depend on our service, strengths, stability, and fortitude to survive a difficult unprecedented situation.

Thanks to this leadership, we are off and running toward the finish line of this year and a fresh beginning for the next. I would like to encourage you to complete your missions with the welfare of the smallest of souls in mind, they are the future and will one day be taking care of you.

It is all part of the cycle, clear the path and pave it forward for success. Leave it better than you found it. School elections are here, and the next round of trustees will get to face challenges of their own, help them transition, encourage pulling together and make the most of strength in number. There should be a great deal of pride in knowing that you have done an extraordinary thing as a team and as a volunteer.

I am filled with gratitude for the hard work of so many in keeping schools upright and floating along. I would just like to take the opportunity to remind you to be positive and optimistic about the future. We have been blessed in many ways and survived many challenges; this year has been a testimony about the power of resilience.

Encourage and support those around you, no one knows the burdens that others are carrying, lighten their loads – sometimes a smile is enough.

Regards,

*Cathy Maloney  
MACSS President***SAM - Strategic Plan  
Goals Create a Cycle****2021 Legislative  
Session SAM**

Thank you to this month's featured Business Partners!



## SAM Leadership

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# of Success for the Education Montana Students!

by Kirk Miller, SAM Executive Director



The 67<sup>th</sup> legislative session came to an end at 4:40 pm on Thursday, April 29 with a motion to adjourn sine die in the Senate. The advocacy work of the SAM Legislative Network 2021 created many successes for the education of Montana

students during this tumultuous legislative session. Though not all of the bills are completely through the legislature (many still awaiting action of the Governor to sign or veto), I have prepared a current update of SAM progress in the 2021 session for the review of our members (see 2021 Legislative Session SAM Update in this Bulletin). A final 2021 SAM Legislative Summary will be prepared and shared with all SAM members.

Our SAM goals – leadership involved in decisions that impact education, professional learning and services, and advocacy – clearly come to the forefront and are so very important when reflecting on the legislative session. In fact, the results of the legislative session have compelled our organization to adjust our professional learning goal to provide our members with the information they need to serve their schools and students in the best manner possible going forward. The focus of SAM and MT-PEC has turned to the development of professional learning (training PD) for our members to leverage flexibility and resources during this politically charged, COVID pandemic impacted atmosphere. Helping our school administrators develop an understanding of the flexibility and resources resulting from the 2021 legislative session actions and that of the over \$500 million of CARES Act (ESSER I), CARES II (ESSER II), and ARPA (ESSER III) funds allocated to our schools, is of highest priority this spring, summer and into the fall of 2021. You can expect to see this professional learning opportunity at the SAM Administrators Institute 2021 in July, and also at MCEL in October 2021. SAM will make this effort because we know that our members, administrators all across the state, will benefit from learning about all of the opportunities that flexibility and resources can bring to their schools, and the impact it will have on creating learning opportunities for the students served in our schools.

We are seeing the cycle – SAM members involved in decisions impacting the education of our students; the research of our SAM Leaders Professional Learning Program Collegial Learning Networks (like Transformational Learning CLN and Social Emotional Learning CLN) impacting the bills during the 2021 legislative session; and advocacy – working symbiotically to create successful opportunities for our schools and our students. My thanks to all of the SAM members who have committed their energy and time to making a difference in advocacy and professional learning research that is causing this cyclical impact of our professional association supporting quality education for each Montana student

The advocacy process for SAM begins anew in May as we prepare for Delegate Assembly 2021 (which will take place on June 10-11 in Helena with a virtual option). SAM affiliate presidents will be selecting Delegates, a call for SAM positions and resolutions to be submitted will go out to all SAM members, the SAM Delegate Assembly Steering Committee will be meeting to put together all of the details for engaging in a robust and meaningful Delegate Assembly. My thanks to all SAM members

## Update

On Thursday, April 29 at 4:40 pm the 67<sup>th</sup> Montana Legislature adjourned Sine Die. Week 17 of the 2021 legislative session started, as expected, with multiple floor sessions of the House and Senate with Conference Committee actions in between. The results of action on bills remaining is tracked on the [SAM Followed Bills 4.29.21](#) list. Also, [SAM Followed Bills Priority Status Report 4.29.21](#) will give you a look at bill status organized by SAM's advocacy priorities. At end of the session our SAM advocacy has given testimony 123 times on 63 different bills – [SAM Testimony Log 2021 Legislative Session Final Updated 4.29.21](#). We will be preparing SAM 2021 Legislative Session Summary after the final status of all bills has been determined by signature or veto of the Governor.

[Highlights of Week 17 \(Apr 26-29\)](#)

See [SAMLN21 Schedule Week 17 Updated 4-27-21](#) changed often during this week given the scramble to move bills through the legislature.

The update on the SAM Priority Status Bills ...

### 1 SF. School Funding

- **HB 663 (Ler)** Support Generally revise school funding to increase GTB and lower property taxes, amended by the Senate Free Conference Committee passed the Senate 4/28 and the House on 4/29, sent to enrolling. This bill, supported by SAM and others, uses 20% of the new marijuana tax revenue to increase GTB and lower school taxes. Pending Governor signature, appears to have passed. **Passed – Big Win.**
- **HB 46 (Bedey)** Support Revise Special Education Funding, is sent to enrolling having passed third reading in the Senate on Wednesday 4/21. This bill places the Special Ed Allowable Costs into the K-12 school funding formula, develops a methodology for calculating the costs and applies inflation on this funding formula component into the future. SAM supported this bill as an **Action** priority. Pending Governor signature, appears to have passed. **Passed – Big Win.**
- **HB 630** Support Appropriate CARES II funds, supplemental, and temporarily revise ed funding, has passed the legislature, sent to enrolling 4/26. This bill has the ESSER II funding allocation supported by SAM and MT-PEC. Pending Governor signature, appears to have passed. **Passed – Big Win.**
- **HB 632** Support Implement receipt of and appropriate federal stimulus and COVID recovery funds, amended by the Senate Free Conference Committee passed the Senate 4/28 and the House on 4/29, sent to enrolling. This bill has the ESSER III funding allocation supported by SAM and MT-PEC, and the amendments in place protect schools from excluding funding for health restrictions. Pending Governor signature, appears to have passed. **Passed – Big Win.**

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who will be engaging in the process of SAM Delegate Assembly 2021. Your efforts will make a difference for education in Montana, just as the effort of the SAM Legislative Network 2021 made a big difference in SAM's advocacy during the 2021 legislative session!

All the best from our team at SAM as we are here to support you as you continue to lead the great effort to finish the 2020-21 school year with success for each student!



## SAM Week of Excellence June 9 - 11!

The SAM Week of Excellence is scheduled for June 9-11, 2021 in Helena. Take a look below at the list of events:

### June 9<sup>th</sup>

- **9:00am-3:00pm** – The DaRud Cup Golf Scramble – Bill Roberts Golf Course, Helena, MT

Click [HERE](#) to learn more and to register for the DaRud Cup

### June 10<sup>th</sup>

- **8:00am-9:00am** – SAM Investment/Finance Committee Meeting – Delta Hotel by Marriott, Helena, MT
- **9:00am-10:00am** – SAM New Board Members Orientation – Delta Hotel by Marriott, Helena, MT
- **10:00am-2:00pm** – SAM Board of Directors Meeting – Delta Hotel by Marriott, Helena, MT
- **2:00pm-4:00pm** – SAM Delegate Assembly Caucus – Delta Hotel by Marriott, Helena, MT
- **6:00pm-9:00pm** – SAM Evening of Excellence – Delta Hotel by Marriott, Helena, MT

### June 11<sup>th</sup>

**8:00am-12:00pm** – SAM Delegate Assembly – Delta Hotel by Marriott, Helena, MT

**Contact the SAM office for more information!**



## SAM Administrators Institute 2021 Launches SAM's 50th Anniversary Celebration

We are excited to launch the celebration of SAM's 50 years of service to Montana school administrators at the **SAM Administrators Institute on July 26-28** in Helena! Over the past 50 years, SAM members have worked to build a strong, relevant, effective organization whose members continue to strive to accomplish SAM's Strategic Plan Goals of Leadership Involved in Decisions that Impact Education, Advocacy, and Professional Learning and Services.

We welcome everyone to participate in the launch of the 50th Anniversary celebration by attending the SAM Administrators Institute: **Reimagining the Future with Strategies of Hope Moving Forward**. Focus Zone Sessions for the conference are:

- Social Emotional & Mental Health,

- **HB 2** (Jones) General appropriations act, amended by the Senate Free Conference Committee passed the Senate 4/28 and the House on 4/29 with much debate and **65-33** 3<sup>rd</sup> reading vote, sent to enrolling. HB 2 education portions of the appropriations bill remain in place. Pending Governor signature, appears to have passed. **Passed**.

### 2 PP. Privatization with Public Funds

- **HB 279** (Berglee) Oppose Revise laws related to tax credit scholarship and innovative education programs, passed the legislature, sent to enrolling 4/27. SAMLN21 Call to Action #8 was initiated to oppose this bill in the Senate. This bill extends the tax credit for individuals to invest in funding individual student attendance in private (and private religious) schools as well as public schools. HB 279 increases the individual tax credit from \$150 to \$200,000, and also eliminates the accountability measures (like testing and verifying progress made by students) from the Student Scholarship Organizations that provide the scholarships for students attending private schools. Amendment 2 added to the bill does clarify that donations to the public side of the bill can be targeted to go to a school district for support of innovative programs (clearly defined as the criteria passed in HB 246 – much flexibility for public schools), this was a positive addition to the bill. Amendment 4 added to the bill added 15 pages to the 11 page bill with language to allow the Governor's budget Director to annually review the tax credit status to ensure that implementation will not trigger federal ARPA funding to be withheld from Montana. The fact that this concern exists (sacrificing \$1.2 billion in funding to Montana) is an indication of how much risk this bill puts our state in. Pending Governor signature, appears to have passed. **Passed - Big Challenge**.
- **HB 329** (Vinton) Oppose Establish students with special needs savings account, was tabled in Senate Education and Cultural Resources Committee on 4/7. HB 329 would create a special needs education savings account program, whereby parents of a qualified special education student can sign a contract to use the funds to attend a non-public school program for services. SAMLN21 Call to Action #5, #6 and #7 were implemented to oppose this bill because this bill blasted off the table and onto the Senate floor at any time from now until the end of the legislative session. A blast motion happened on 4/23 during the 1:00 pm Senate floor session with the vote failing 15-34! Thank you to all administrators who have working on these Calls to Action. No further blast motions occurred up to Sine Die, bill failed to pass the legislature. **Failed – Big Win**.

### 3 RR. Recruitment and Retention

- **HB 403** (Running Wolf) Support Create "grow your own" teacher

- Accelerating Learning, and
- Infrastructure Needs

Both in-person and virtual delivery models are being planned in order to meet the needs of all SAM members.

Watch for registration information coming soon!

## SAM Leaders Professional Learning Program 2021-22 Registration is Open



It's time to start planning professional learning for you and your district administrators for next year. The SAM Leaders Professional Learning Program (LPLP) may be the solution. Tailored to meet the needs of new, experienced, and aspiring administrators, learning networks meet both virtually and face-to-face allowing participants to share challenges, successes, and thought leadership with like-minded Montana leaders experiencing similar job roles, situations, and context while bringing professional development to the administrator. Over the past seven years, nearly 500 Montana administrators have benefited from their participation in SAM LPLP.

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. SAM LPLP's multi-faceted blended learning approach consists of personal learning networks including the option of one-on-one coaching/mentoring with experienced Providers, collegial learning networks designed to be dynamic based upon topics of interest as they arise that allow participants to focus on specific areas of interest, and a rich online resource center.

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

## SAM Membership Drive 2021-22 is Underway!

The School Administrators of Montana (SAM) Membership Drive began on **Tuesday, April 6th** for the 2021-22 membership year! We are once again using the online renewal process that we have used for the past several years. As the "key contact" for a district, district clerks/business managers received an email that includes information for completing membership renewals for their district's MASS, MASSP, MAEMSP, and META members. Please work with your district clerk/business manager to be sure your membership is correct. MCASE members and members not linked to a school district received an email that includes 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.

## SAM Youth Endowment Gifts Disbursed

grant program, is sent to enrolling having passed third reading in the Senate on 4/23. SAM and education partners support this bill for its innovative strategies to create grow your own programs across the state. Pending Governor signature, appears to have passed. **Passed – Big Win.**

### 5 IT. Infrastructure and Technology

- **HB 181** (Zolnikov) Support Reauthorizing the e-rate broadband program, is sent to enrolling having passed the Senate 49-0 on Tuesday, 4/20. SAM and education partners support this bill to support broadband expansion for our schools using e-rate and match from the state. Pending Governor signature, appears to have passed. **Passed – Big Win.**
- **SB 297** (Ellsworth) Support ConnectMT Act to establish broadband deployment, is sent to enrolling having passed the Senate on 4/27. This bill has coordinating language to merge the federal funds and state funds for developing the broadband access planning for the State going forward. SAM supported the bill as amended. Pending Governor signature, appears to have passed. **Passed – Big Win.**

### 6 EP. Education Policy

- **SB 400** (Manzella) Oppose Restrict governmental entities from interfering with parental rights, is sent to enrolling having passed Senate on 4/27. This bill is nearly identical to **SB 259**, with minor changes articulating a standard of review that already exists through common-law doctrine on fundamental rights and the addition of a filing fee, to allow for a transmittal deadline. The bill would allow a cause of action against any party, including a school district, who a parent deems as interfering with their rights. This will, in turn, cause unnecessary expense for school districts and taxpayers in addressing these issue. MT-PEC has stood opposed to this bill. Pending Governor signature, appears to have passed. **Passed - Big Challenge.**
- **HB 206** (Bedey) Support Revise education laws related to tuition and in-state treatment, is transmitted to the Governor having passed the Senate on Thursday 4/15. This bill modifies the sections of law that establish the rate to be paid for education services for children at a children's psychiatric hospital (CPH) or residential treatment program (RTF) and the tuition rates paid by the district of residence for a child placed in another district. Pending Governor signature, appears to have passed. **Passed - Big Win.**
- **HB 671** (Bedey) Implement provisions of HB2 - Section E – education, is sent to enrolling having passed the House on 4/26. The amendment passed contains the language that resolves the challenges that put at risk the CSCT Medicaid reimbursement programs. The amendment promoted by the MT-PEC partners is now in the bill. Pending Governor signature, appears to have passed. **Passed - Big Win.**

The SAM Board of Directors recently awarded \$9750 to assist Montana students through funds allocated through the SAM Youth Endowment. Eleven students were each gifted funds to assist with their specific financial needs. Since 2010, the SAM Youth Endowment has disbursed more than \$76,000 to Montana youth in need.

The purpose of the SAM 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. Each of the six affiliates under the SAM umbrella contributes to the SAM Youth Endowment each year. Contributions are also received through donations and memorials.

The SAM Board of Directors first discussed the endowment possibilities in 1998. At that time the Board felt it was important for SAM to be involved financially with a cause that affected the youth of Montana. The discussion led to the establishment of an endowment that would contribute to different charities making a positive impact on the youth of Montana. In the Spring of 2001, the Board approved the SAM Youth Endowment Fund Guidelines for Assistance.

Thank you, SAM members, for submitting nominations for students in need. The SAM Youth Endowment is an excellent way for you to give back to the students you work with each day. The desire to assist Montana youth in helping to ease their specific financial need speaks to the integrity of each of you who are dedicated to creating education excellence for Montana students.



## Assuring Accessibility for All

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, May 10, 2021, 3:00 pm MT “Creating and Leading Equitable, Effective Learning Systems – Assuring Accessibility for All”**

The next episode of the monthly EmpowerED Superintendent Webinar series, co-hosted by CoSN, AASA and edWeb.net, and sponsored by ClassLink, airs on Monday, May 10, 2021 at 3:00 pm Mountain Time. The May webinar is titled “Creating and Leading Equitable, Effective Learning Systems – Assuring Accessibility for All”. Accessibility has long been an essential principle for delivering equitable educational opportunities for all students, especially those with disabilities or learning differences, English language learners, and students from lower socio-economic communities. In this edWebinar, Dr. Michael Brophy, Superintendent of West Valley School District #208, WA, Dr. Nick Polyak, Superintendent of Leyden High School District 212, IL, Dr. Michael Salvatore, Vice President, Kean University and former Superintendent Long Branch Public Schools, NJ, and Marlon Styles, Superintendent Middletown City School District, OH, join in an interactive conversation to share how they are leading the complex issues involved in ensuring accessibility for all within their school districts. Five compelling steps for addressing accessibility will be articulated and illustrated through shared resources and real-world examples of successful strategies that have been used to assure

Free registration for the May 10, 2021 webinar is now available [HERE](#). Webinars in this series are also freely

## 7 RT. Revenue and Taxation

- **SB 388** (Hertz) Oppose Provide for infrastructure through tax increment financing, is sent to enrolling having passed the Senate as amended on 4/26. This bill expands the purposes for which tax increment financing can be used to fund infrastructure and would only exempt half the state school equalization mills. SAM and MT-PEC partners have stood in opposition to this bill and requested amendments that would exclude all of the equalization mills and clarify that school districts have the authority to exclude their current levies from the TIF. The amendments approved by the House Appropriations Committee do help clarify how a school district can confer with the county commission to exclude current levies from the TIF. The amendment to exclude the state equalization mills failed in the committee. Pending Governor signature, appears to have passed. **Passed - Big Challenge.**

## 9 SP. State Policy

- **HB 435** (Mercer) Generally revise civil liability laws for government, is sent to enrolling having passed the Senate on 4/29 with the 2/3 vote required on 3<sup>rd</sup> reading after having failed and then blasted back to the floor. This bill provides civil liability protection for government entities (school districts are included) from actions like those related to health and implementation of COVID-19 guidelines. SAM has monitored this bill but do support the concept because if it passes it would protect schools in addition to what currently exists in law for protections. This bill will require 2/3 majority vote of the Senate. **Passed - Big Win.**

SAM advocacy tracked 364 bill drafts with 190 of those bills introduced. Check out the [SAM Followed Bills 4.29.21](#) and [SAM Followed Bills Priority Status Report 4.29.21](#) to see the status of SAM Followed Bills awaiting final action by the Governor. At end of the session our SAM advocacy has given testimony 123 times on 63 different bills – [SAM Testimony Log 2021 Legislative Session Final Updated 4.29.21](#)

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



## T.E.S.T. Offers Informational Product Webinars

When you hear T.E.S.T., Inc. many of you think of SMART Boards!! This is still the case as we are proud to be a Platinum SMART Reseller thanks to all of the

available as recordings [HERE](#) and via podcast [HERE](#) a day or two after the initial live broadcast.

### CoSN Resources: Accessibility Toolkit and One-Page Guide

As learning environments continue their increasing transitions toward digital learning settings, it is critical that all schools assure that an equitable, effective learning ecosystem exists everywhere, at all times, for all students. CoSN is pleased to provide a [Digital Accessibility Toolkit](#) that offers resources, tips, and information for state and district leaders on how to ensure that accessibility is part of the educational equation. [CoSN's EmpowerED Superintendent Critical Focus Area One Pager on Accessibility](#) provides school leaders with five compelling steps to take now to ensure accessibility for all.

### 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](mailto:bcalvary@cosn.org).

continued support from our valued Montana schools!!! But we have expanded into several additional areas as well, including Audio Enhancement, Avigilon Security Solutions and American Time. We have been receiving a lot of inquiries regarding if and how our products can be purchased using the ESSER funds that are being released soon so we thought it would be a great time to offer informative webinars! [Please feel free to register for the webinars that you will be able to attend as there are limited "seats" with our webinar platform.](#) If you would like more information on one of these product lines but can not participate in a webinar, feel free to email us and we will send you a link to the recording of the webinar.

## Thank you to SAM's Business Partners!

Please take time to visit their websites.

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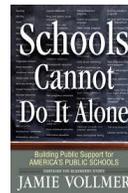


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