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## *School Administrators of Montana*

# BULLETIN

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

**Volume XLIV**

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***In This Issue...***

### **Collaboration & Legal Considerations**

*by Sara Novak, MCASE President/SAM President Elect*

I begin each school year with enthusiasm and hope that it will be a better year than the previous year. Yet as time goes on, things continue to be chaotic as we are flooded with more challenges and the level and intensity of these challenges seems to increase exponentially. In visiting with my colleagues, it seems that

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## **Upcoming Conferences, Meetings, & Events**

**Montana Principals Conference 2023: January 22-24, Helena**

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

**Thank you to this month's featured Business Partners!**

We are all seeing an increase in high needs students in every district, including the smallest most rural schools with limited services. There are so many concerns and more pressing are the legal implications surrounding these challenging cases.

We are seeing a large number of students who have not been in school in years. Not surprisingly, they are very behind. The initial reaction is to go straight to special education. I find myself reminding folks that a lack of exposure and opportunity to learn is not a disability and the child must first have that exposure and intervention. This is equally important for both academics and behavior.

To complicate things, we are also seeing a large uptick in the number of medical professionals and clinical providers making requests of districts. It is important to remember that while their professional opinions and recommendations should trigger a conversation, it is the IEP team that makes the decision on what is relevant and necessary at school. A neuropsychic report stating a one-one is needed is not the lay of the land. A prescription for an IEP is not how a student gets identified for special education. These examples would trigger child find and the school should evaluate if that student is not currently identified. If they are identified, the IEP team will come together to review it. It is hard for parents to understand the difference between clinical services and school-based services. Everything we are providing in a school needs to be necessary for the student to access the curriculum and be successful.

I use the examples of these clinical services and provider requests due to the increase we are seeing in private providers in schools or during school time. These examples range from a private speech or OT session to dyslexia tutoring, mental health and applied behavior analysis (ABA) therapy. These scenarios have the potential to create legal issues for the district. As an outside provider comes into the school, the district must now allow that every other student that would request it and foot the bill for this as well. The scope of responsibility to provide services under IDEA needs to stay clear. If a child qualifies for speech at school, that is provided by the school. If it is clinical, that is not part of the school day. Schools can and do provide reading instruction and interventions daily, just as they are providing behavioral interventions. Things are not better in the school or the private sector, they are just different. Private companies/providers asking to serve students during the day are putting districts in a sticky legal situation.

Parents are pulled in different directions, as their trusted providers tell them what the school “needs to do” and others have hope that a highly regarded, high dollar program will be life-changing for them and their child. The reality is that the school district has an obligation to provide a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). There is no rule that a district needs to implement things that are not already adopted and approved by the local board of trustees. Just because a parent does not like a specific provider or the manner in which that service is provided (in person vs. remote), does not mean the school has to do something different in place of that.

Collaboration and partnerships can be key to offering a wider variety of services than what a district can provide on their own. Mental health therapy is a perfect example. Whether it is a coop or consortium or a district working with a local hospital or community agency, there are a lot of opportunities out there in the name of doing what is right to help the kids. Collaboration can be wonderful and have far reaching positive impacts on not just the school, but also the community.

The struggle of balancing collaboration and weighing the liability for your district is very real. Communication is key. We must keep open lines of communication to understand the financial and legal obligations for all.

Our number one obligation is our kids. You all know this and are doing a great job. Thank you & keep up the hard work. It is noticed and you are making a difference. I’m not giving up hope that things can get easier for us. If we work together, we will make great things happen.



## SAM Leadership

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# School Leaders Have Impact!

*by Dr. Rob Watson, SAM Executive Director*

We just completed National Principals Month, where we had the opportunity to celebrate the work of our school leaders. Thanks for all you did to help recognize the dedicated principals in your schools. In my discussions with Superintendents, I hear that most of us continue to struggle with staffing issues, learning loss, and mental health. As such, I am reminded about the importance of quality school leadership. The principal can not only impact student achievement, but also school culture - critically important topics for the success of our schools.

Many times we have a chance to celebrate the important work of teachers. We should also take the opportunity to remind everyone about the critical role of the school leader. Recently, there have been recommended changes to the state rules that govern FTE assignment of school leaders. Now more than ever, we need to highlight the important work of principals. Here are a few quick facts that may help when you have this conversation with your community.

- After almost two decades of research, it is clear that effective school principals have a positive impact, not only on student achievement, but also student attendance and teacher satisfaction and retention. (Grissom, Egalite, and Lindsay, 2021)
- A high quality school leader, one in the upper quartile of effectiveness, can positively impact reading and math scores, showing almost a 3 months gain over a leader in the bottom quartile. While this achievement gain is also seen with high quality teachers, a school leader can impact the entire school. (Kraft, 2020)
- There are specific behaviors that school principals possess that contribute to positive school outcomes. The synthesis of research found the following:
  - They engage in instructionally driven conversations with teachers.
  - They build a productive school climate.
  - They facilitate collaborative learning communities.
  - They manage resources strategically. (Grissom, Egalite, and Lindsay, 2021)

With the years of research available to us now, it has been shown that the importance of school leadership is second only to the impact of the classroom teacher. School leaders are critical to the success of our students and communities. Their impact should be noted and celebrated throughout the school year. Thank you to our MT school leaders!

Read more about it: Grissom, Jason A., Anna J. Egalite, and Constance A. Lindsay. 2021. "How Principals Affect Students and Schools: A Systematic Synthesis of Two Decades of Research." New York: The Wallace Foundation.

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## You are Invited to a SAM Webinar: The SEL Leader

All SAM members are invited to attend a [Zoom](#) webinar on **Thursday, November 10 from 10:00-11:00 AM**. The webinar is part of the one-hour monthly meeting series intended for SAM LPLP members. However, we think the topic may be of interest to all SAM members. Authors James Bailey and Randy Weiner (The Daily SEL Leader) will discuss why adult SEL is important for successful leadership and provide quick ways for you to incorporate SEL into your leadership toolkit. Strengthening your SEL skills may be the self-care you need now.

Join SAM Zoom Webinar: <https://zoom.us/j/3923446729>



## Montana Principals Conference 2023: January 22-24!

Be sure to mark your calendars for the Montana Principals Conference 2023! The conference is scheduled for January 22-24 in Helena at the Delta Colonial. You will not want to miss the line-up of national speakers who will be presenting:

- **Jessica Minahan**
- **Jessica Cabeen**
- **Cindy Cromwell**

Shawna Heiser, Jennifer Silva (NASSP), and Bob Green are just a few of the additional speakers providing presentations. Several breakout sessions along with time for you to connect with your colleagues are also on the agenda. Watch for registration and more information coming soon!

## MAEMSP and MASSP Awards are Open for Nomination!

The following awards are open for nominations until **Friday, December 16, 2022**. Please consider nominating a deserving candidate and recognizing them for the great work they are doing in their schools and communities to educate Montana children. Follow the links below for more information about each award and to submit a nomination.

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

# SAM Awards

## Presented at MCEL

### 2022

SAM is proud to announce the award recipients who were recognized during MCEL in Missoula October 19-21, 2022. SAM congratulates all award winners!

- **2022 G.V. Erickson Award - Dave Wick:** Dave Wick is the Superintendent at Columbia Falls School District. Click [HERE](#) for more information about Dave and the G.V. Erickson Award.
- **MASS Superintendent of the Year - Dr. Mike Perry:** Dr. Perry is the Superintendent at Arlee Public Schools. He is eligible for the National Superintendent of the Year Award. AASA will announce the National Superintendent of the Year in February 2023. Click [HERE](#) to learn more.
- **MASS Honor School Boards of the Year - School boards from Columbia Falls and Bozeman** were recognized as recipients of the Montana Association of School Superintendent (MASS) Honor School Boards of the Year. Click [HERE](#) for more information about the outstanding work of these school boards.
- **Jay Erdie Memorial Scholarship - Lindsay Siroky,** teacher and guidance counselor at Roy Schools is the recipient of the Jay Erdie Memorial Scholarship. Click [HERE](#) to learn more about Lindsay and this scholarship.

## SAM Youth

### Endowment Now



## EmpowerED

### Superintendent

### edLeader Panel Series

### and Cybersecurity

### Resources

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.

#### ***EmpowerED Superintendent edLeader Panel Series***

The most recent live broadcast of the EmpowerED Superintendent edLeader Panel Series, *Creating and Leading a Professional Team of Lifelong Learners*, aired on Monday, October 10, 2022 at 5:00 pm Eastern Time. Dr. Deborah Kerr, Superintendent, St. Francis School District, WI, Dr. John Malloy, Superintendent, San Ramon Valley Unified School District, CA and Mr. Marlon Styles, Superintendent, Middletown City School District, OH shared the strategies they lead in their school districts to assure that not only students, but also the entire district staff, have the opportunities to participate in ongoing, effective, and impactful technology professional learning opportunities that specifically target digital literacy and the technology capacity of their educators, administrators, students, parents and families. . If you missed the live broadcast, you can watch the recording or listen to the podcast version of the panel presentation [HERE](#).

The next live broadcast of the EmpowerED Superintendent edLeader Panel Series, *Leadership Challenges and Solutions Regarding Data*

# Open for Nominations

Nominations are open until March 3, 2023, for the 2022-23 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 2022-23 SAM Youth Endowment Nomination Form can be found [HERE](#). Please note: submissions must be made by a current SAM member.



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*Privacy in Technology-Enriched Learning Environments*, will air on Monday, November 14, 2022, at 5:00 pm Eastern Time. Casey Bertram, Superintendent of Bozeman Public Schools, MT joins Dr. Alex Marrero, Superintendent of Denver Public Schools, CO and Dr. Penelope Martin-Knox, Superintendent of Raytown Quality Schools, MO will share the leadership strategies they implement to assess their school districts' privacy and compliance polices. The superintendents will address specific critical guidelines including how to stay current with state and federal laws while also keeping instructional impacts in mind and share effective training strategies for staff and students. All three superintendents represent school districts that have earned the Trusted Learning Environment (TLE) Seal, the nation's only privacy framework designed specifically for school systems. Attendees will learn how their own school districts can earn the TLE Seal. Free registration for the upcoming November 14, 2022 live broadcast is available [HERE](#).

## **New CoSN Resources**

*Making the Case for Increased Investment in Cybersecurity: A Primer for K12 School Districts Just Getting Started with Cybersecurity*  
This new primer identifies five actions a school system IT staff can take to better defend IT infrastructure. It is focused on low-cost solutions for districts with minimal resources. Learn more [HERE](#).

*Schools and Social Media: The Critical Need for Verification and Dedicated Reporting Processes*  
CoSN and NSPRA (National School Public Relations Association) recently released this collaborative report on the critical need for verification and dedicated reporting processes for schools and districts in order to prevent harm to students and staff caused by malicious and fraudulent accounts. Access the Executive Summary and other information [HERE](#).

## *Challenges and Opportunities of Cybersecurity Positions in K-12 Organizations*

CoSN released a new resource for K-12 schools and districts seeking to address the need for advanced cybersecurity skill sets within their technology teams. This report was commissioned by the State Educational Technology Directors Association



designed by freepik

(SETDA) as part of the work of its Cybersecurity & Privacy Collaborative and was funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Access to the full report can be found [HERE](#).

**CoSN Membership:**

If you, your school or district would like more information about joining CoSN or getting more involved with CoSN, please contact Me'Shell Sheffield, CoSN Director of Membership and State Chapters, at [MSheffield@cosn.org](mailto:MSheffield@cosn.org).

## Thank you to SAM's Business Partners!

Please take time to visit their websites.

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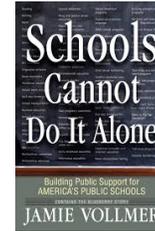
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