

SAM Bulletin - April 2020

1 message

School Administrators of Montana <saom@memberclicks-mail.net>

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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****April 2020****No. 295*****In This Issue...***

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Upcoming Conferences, Meetings, & Events**June 11-12: SAM Board Meeting and Delegate Assembly - Helena****July 27-29, 2020: SAM Administrators Institute 2020 - Helena****January 24-26, 2021: Montana Principals Conference - Helena****** View the full SAM Calendar******Create a Spring Environment***by Jake Haynes, MASSP President*

Spring typically means warmer weather in Montana unless you are planning a track meet! With the warmer weather we start to see the grass begin to grow and new life taking shape. Most of the change happens because of the warmth of the environment. Reflecting on this process made me realize that just as the plants begin to grow and shoot towards the warmth hopefully the same could be said for the environment within our schools. A caring school climate and positive relationships between students and staff are critical to student success. A warm and caring atmosphere provides an environment where academics flourish. If the students are feeling the warmth of this environment they too will want to grow and develop. It will also provide them a sense of security allowing them to feel safe during these uncertain and challenging times.

What if students want to achieve and do well because they like their teachers and their school? As naïve as that may sound I really believe students, parents and community members will do more for their teachers and the school because of the positive connection and relationships that form out of a warm and caring environment. Are our classrooms, offices and gathering places in our school a warm and caring environment? Do your stakeholders feel the warmth or do they feel the cold of a Montana Hi-Line blizzard?

Maya Angelou said, "At the end of the day people won't remember what you said or did, they will remember how you made them feel." As the 2019-2020 school year draws to a close, how will your students, staff and community remember the year? Are you doing all you can to help create the "Spring environment" in our schools and not just "finish the year." I admit there are times when I say, "If I can only get through Wednesday." We need to keep the growth mindset if we are wanting to improve the culture and climate now and for next year. It starts with you as the educational leader. Jimmy Casas often says, "When you forget your Why you forget your way!" How easy would it be to get lost in a cold Montana Blizzard! Certainly this is one of the things that helps me strive to facilitate a warm and caring environment is remembering why I became an educator!

Malcolm Gladwell stated, "Hard work is a prison sentence only if it does not have meaning." Be the change in the season! Reflect on your job—Don't serve a prison sentence! Find your meaning! Find your why! Create a warm, caring, positive environment. Find the enthusiasm! Have a Growth Mindset! Do Better and Be Better!! Make a difference! Love it!

*Jake Haynes
MASSP President***COVID-19 Creates a Brave New World for Montana Educators!***by Kirk Miller, SAM Executive Director*

Thank you Montana school administrators for being a great example of the spirit of leadership that is so necessary during times of crisis! The COVID-19

SAM Membership Drive 2020-21 Launches April 20th!

The School Administrators of Montana (SAM) Membership Drive will begin on **Monday, April 20th** for the 2020-21 year! We will once again be using the online renewal process that was launched for the 2017-18 membership year.

Thank you to this month's featured Business Partners!



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world-wide pandemic threatening our lives and future takes on a wider lens when you are a school administrator responsible for not only the well-being of your family and loved ones, but also the children in our schools, families and entire community that you serve in your profession. What I have observed from the moments in mid-March when the pandemic rose to the level of attention of Montana's citizens and the Governor's directives that followed to protect our citizens, has been nothing short of amazing in the leadership each-and-every-one of you has assumed for your school community!

The request to turn our education delivery system on a dime required ...

- collaboration with your education team to develop strategies
- recommendations to your Boards of Trustees to bring the voice of your community into the urgent work
- communication with your children, families and community
- care for the well-being of your children and education team
- development of a Plan of Action for offsite delivery of education service with special attention to each child/every day, school meal programs, students with disabilities, and many other services customarily provided by your school. Submitting the Plan to the Governor, that ultimately led to approval of 401(100%) of Montana school district plans! – Wow!
- creation of professional learning for all aspects of off site education service delivery
- ongoing collaboration and sharing with your fellow administrators and educators to continue transforming the model strategies to meet the ever changing needs during this pandemic
- time to focus on the needs of your own family and children who are going through tremendous change

Deep breath I could go on, but I wanted to put in print the outstanding work that you as leader of your school community have accomplished over these 17 days. You are literally and figuratively a CHAMPION!

Our effort here at SAM has been to provide you with as many supports as we possibly can in helping you to accomplish all of the above. We have been at the table with our state leaders, ensuring the voice of our schools be heard loud and clear to support the important work you must continue to lead in order to provide for the education services for the children in your community. Your great work brings a calming, steady presence to your entire community as everyone works through the pandemic and its impact on our lives. We have worked closely with the MT-PEC partners to coordinate and streamline (still working on this) the resources that you must have access to in order to accomplish your work. We have tried to create modes of communicating with you that bolster your work without adding to the information overload. These will all be ongoing efforts in the weeks ahead.

The [SAM COVID-19 Information for Schools](#) webpage is a source of that streamlined information, and I hope you will follow this webpage as an information resource as you work in the days ahead. Using a COVID-19 Outline (couple of pages of the most important breaking information) and Podcast (to allow your ability to listen to what is in the outline), we will keep you connected to the most important resources. These items will be pushed to you via email and will also be uploaded to the [SAM COVID-19 Information for](#)

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 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 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 Leaders Professional Learning Program 2020-21

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.

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,
- a rich online resource center

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.

Register for SAM LPLP 2020-21!



Leading Digital Transformations in Rural School Districts & Dealing with COVID-19

The [Consortium for School Networking \(CoSN\)](#) and its 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.

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Schools webpage. This webpage also has links to the MT-PEC COVID-19 website and OPI COVID-19 website where all of the details and guidance for the many issues you are working with can be explored.

I close by thanking you once again for your leadership in transforming education to meet the needs of our children in this brave new world!

Be Safe! Be Well!

Kirk J. Miller



SAM Administrators Institute

2020:

July 27 - 29!

Preparation for the **SAM Administrators Institute 2020** (July 27-29 in Helena) is underway. The Institute theme is **"Tell Your Story"** with support of strategies for telling your schools' great story in the most effective way. Keynote and clinic sessions will be organized around the focus zones -- Social Emotional Learning, Safe Schools, and Strategies for Excellent Leadership/Flexibility and Efficiency. A Call for Presentations went out to all SAM members on April 1st and is open until June 12th. Contact the SAM office with any questions you may have.



Click [HERE](#) for Montana Census Resources

via GIPHY **SAM Members:** *Thank you for your outstanding leadership to ensure that Montana's children are being provided a quality education through new and innovative ways during this unprecedented time!*

Last month we addressed the issues involved with ensuring accessibility for all. As learning environments continue to move toward digital learning settings, it is critical that schools assure that an equitable, effective learning ecosystem exists everywhere, at all times, for all students. CoSN is pleased to provide school leaders (and all the stakeholders they serve) with five compelling steps to take now to ensure accessibility in the **CoSN Critical Focus Area: Issue One Pager on Accessibility**.

This month we focus on the topic of leading digital transformations in rural school districts and also on how school district leaders can safely and successfully leverage technology resources during the current COVID-19 national crisis.

COVID-19

CoSN has created a special web page with resources to provide information for school leaders as they deal with this current national emergency: **"Responding to Coronavirus (COVID-19)"** at <https://www.cosn.org/coronavirus>. Under the "CoSN Resources" Tab there is a document titled, **"Preparing To Take Your Schools Online"** and another on **"Cybersecurity Consideration in a COVID-19 World"**. More resources and papers to come in the next weeks and months.

Leading Digital Transformations in Rural School Districts

More than half of school districts and about one-third of public schools in the United States are in rural areas. Rural districts have unique challenges, ranging from poverty and vast travel distances to lack of affordable internet access. However, along with the challenges facing rural school districts there are also some unique opportunities rural school districts can leverage due to their smaller size and direct impact on their communities. You can learn more and access a copy of the CoSN Report, **"Challenges and Opportunities of Rural Districts in Taking the Digital Leap"** at <https://www.cosn.org/Rural>

CoSN, in partnership with [edWeb.net](https://www.edweb.net), hosts *The EmpowerED Superintendent* monthly webinar series on topics that are essential for all educators engaged in leading digital transformations. The focus of the April 13, 2020 webinar (5:00 pm ET) is "Leading Digital Transformations in Rural School Districts". Three superintendents share the strategies they use to maximize the opportunities and overcome the challenges in leading digital transformation within their rural school districts. Each will also update webinar participants on how they are leading learning in their school districts during our current national COVID-19 health crisis. Their stories and expertise have great value for all school leaders. You are invited to register for this free webinar, as well as access recordings of previously broadcast CoSN/edWeb webinars, at <https://home.edweb.net/supers/>.

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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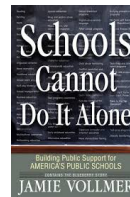


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