

**SAM March 2019 Bulletin**

1 message

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## *School Administrators of Montana*

# BULLETIN

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

Volume XLI

MARCH 2019

No. 283

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### Upcoming Conferences and Meetings

**March 18: MT-PEC Day of Advocacy - Helena**

**March 18-19: MASS Spring Conference - Helena**

**March 18-19: METATechED - Helena**

**June 12, 2019: DaRud Cup 2019 - Helena**

**June 13, 2019: SAM Board Meeting - Helena**

**June 13, 2019: SAM Delegate Assembly Caucus- Helena**

**June 14, 2019: SAM Delegate Assembly - Helena**

**July 29-31: SAM Administrators Institute 2019**

**\*\* View the full SAM Calendar\*\***

## Being Our Best Selves and Doing Our Best Work!

*by Brian Norwood, META President*

Greetings,

It has been a busy year for all of us as we move into the spring and hopefully warmer weather. Soon we will begin and in some cases continue with ongoing student testing. The past few years have changed how we conduct testing across the state with more online testing than ever before. META's involvement in the SBAC Testing Project in 2014 has placed Montana's school districts in the forefront across the country when it comes to online student assessment. This was just the beginning of our impact on education and how technology can assist educators in real time and real-life strategies.

Our mission continues today with a variety of projects including Data Security, Student Safety both at school and on the web, Terms of Service Contracts and School Liability, Legislation Advocacy for Education, and Web-based Professional Development for all META member district administrators through our CoSN partnership. These projects are just some of the ongoing work that META is doing behind the scenes to provide support and a positive impact on all education in Montana.

As part of your membership in META, all district administrators also receive a membership to the Consortium for School Networking. CoSN is a national organization that advocates for education and provides a wide range of services and support to its members. I would highly recommend utilizing CoSN and the benefits you receive as a META member. CoSN's web address is <https://www.cosn.org/> or you can go to our META section on the SAM webpage to learn more about this great benefit.

The METATechEd conference is just around the corner! This year we are hosting the event at the Delta Hotel Marriott in Helena on March 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>. This event has become the "Go To" conference for education technology in Montana and this year is no exception. The sessions will cover a wide range of issues we deal with every day and options of how to manage the challenges placed upon us as technologists, teachers, and administrators. Please plan on attending and register at <https://www.sammt.org/meta-conferences-and-conventions>. If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact me or Gary Wagner at the SAM office.

As we move into a busy spring and thoughts of summer, camping, fishing, and family time start creeping into our minds, let's celebrate our accomplishments this year and know what we do is important to many people. We all have busy lives and sometimes forget to stop and take a moment to look at all the good we do. As a group of people brought together with the common goal of educating students in a safe environment, we can take pride in knowing there is no other group that impacts so many people in a positive way enriching our students and future generations to come. Thank you all for what you do and the sacrifices you make!

Have a Great Spring!

*Brian Norwood  
META President*

### SAM Members...Making a Difference!

*by Kirk Miller, SAM Executive Director*

Late winter/early spring has brought the vengeance of weather impacting our schools and communities all across the state. Balancing the safety of your

### SAM Legislative Mid-Session Update

Saturday, March 2 will be Day 45 and mark the halfway point of the 66th Legislative Session. It's been extremely busy with the schedule changing

Thank you to this month's featured Business Partners!



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students and continuing the education of those students has been an administrator challenge in nearly all corners of our state. Thank you administrators for your ability to weigh all of the local issues and to make decisions that are in the best interest of your students,

schools, and community. You are making a positive difference.

In March, your SAM association begins the evaluation of what is yet to be accomplished in the current year and planning for the 2019-20 school year. The SAM Executive Board will be meeting in March to review and take action on these big concepts that drive the work our association to support the needs of our members. These decisions will be made with the SAM Strategic Plan providing guidance.

SAM Strategic Plan Goals

**Leadership Involved in Decisions that Impact Education:** SAM affiliate members modeling and promoting the highest levels of professionalism, integrity, and leadership actively engage in impactful discussions on education.

**Advocacy:** SAM members will be equipped with accurate information and prepared to use it to advocate for public education.

**Professional Learning and Services:** SAM will extend and expand the professional learning delivery system using the expertise of the SAM affiliate's, as well as other service providers through professional development, mentorship, and other member services.

SAM members are at the table assisting in decision making on many, many topics that will impact the education of our students. Those of you providing this expertise and effort - Thank You ... You are Making a Difference!

In this Bulletin, you can read about SAM's advocacy during the 2019 Legislative Session. You will note that I have boldly stated that we have accomplished about 90% of the SAM advocacy priorities in the first half of this session. That has only happened as a result of our members working on advocacy through the SAM Legislative Network 2019 - Thank You ... You are Making a Difference!

February professional learning opportunities included the MCEC Conference 2019 for our MCASE members and administrators working with exceptional children, and the MACSS Mid-Winter Conference 2019 for our County Superintendents to discuss key education issues and learn together. Both of these Conferences were well attended (even with the extreme weather). Note that in March the [MT-PEC Day of Advocacy \(3/18\)](#), [MASS Spring Conference 2019 \(3/19\)](#) and [METATechED Conference 2019 \(3/18-19\)](#) are planned with outstanding agendas for learning together and building relationships for future success. I hope you will register and attend these opportunities. For all of our SAM members pursuing professional learning - Thank You ... You are Making a Difference!

Our SAM office team wishes you great success in all you set off to accomplish in March and for the end of the 2018-19 school year. Contact us if we can assist you in Making a Difference!

*Rueb D. Miller*

**Upcoming Conferences**  
**MASS Spring Conference**

almost daily leading up to the last day to transmit general bills for the session.

[SAM Followed Bills 3-1-19](#) are up to 110 with 257 bill drafts being monitored. [SAM Followed Bills Priority Status 3-1-19](#) describes the status of bills under the SAM advocacy priorities - Support Adequate and Equitable School Funding (21 bills), Support Recruitment and Retention of Quality Educators (5 bills), Oppose Privatization with Public Funds (0 bills), Support Facility and Technology Infrastructure (4 bills), Support School-Based Mental Health Services (5 bills), and a new category of Other SAM Followed Bills (29 bills). Please review [SAMLN19 Legislative Update 9 3-1-19](#) and listen to [Podcast Week 9](#) for the most current legislative information. At the Transmittal Break, SAM has provided testimony 54 times in Committees on 39 different Bills. See the [2019 Legislative Session - SAM Testimony Log](#).

I would like to thank the SAM Legislative Network 2019 for quickly reacting to the Call to Action requests that have taken place so far and to the SAM Membership for contacting their legislators when necessary. Your collective voice has made an impact on legislators and their decision making. [HB 27](#) (Revise special education funding), [HB 225](#) (Revise school laws related to inflation, preschool, and special education), [SB 297](#) (Revise laws related to school elections involving property taxes), [SB 298](#) (Referendum to revise laws related to school elections involving property taxes). We have heard directly from legislators that they appreciate the emails they receive from constituents in their districts, especially those that include personal stories of what is happening in education across the state as told by Montana administrators. I expect to continue to request your communication with your legislators throughout the last half of the session.

The following SAM supported bills have been signed by the Governor: [HB 61 \(Bedey\)](#) Revise school data privacy laws, [SB 10 \(Salomon\)](#) Revise school funding related to major maintenance aid, [SB 16 \(Salomon\)](#) Revise school funding related to special education joint boards, [SB 11 \(Salomon\)](#) Clarify age requirements related to the definition of pupil to include 5-Year Olds - all of these bills were supported by SAM. [HB 159 \(Grubbs\)](#) Generally revise education funding laws was signed into law by the Governor on Wednesday, 2-27-19 leading to school districts being able to estimate their budgets for the 2019-20 school year. OPI sent the [FY 2020 Preliminary Budget Data Sheets](#) to all school districts on Thursday, 2-28-19. These early accomplishments can be characterized as accomplishing about 90% of our SAM priorities for advocacy in the 1st half of the 2019 legislative session!

[SAM Advocacy Priorities Positions Resolutions](#) were voted on by the SAM membership on October 19, 2018 and are the culmination of approximately two years of work and provide the five advocacy priorities. The SAM Delegate Assembly process provides the opportunity for SAM to have one voice and powerfully get through the SAM advocacy package. Individual school districts may disagree with pieces of the advocacy package, but the SAM Advocacy Priorities, Positions, and Resolutions have been vetted by the SAM membership, which includes administrators from all areas of education, and provide advocacy that is best for education as a whole and help effect in a positive way the education of the students in Montana.

To stay up to date on the legislative session and the status of SAM followed bills, I encourage you to visit the [2019 Legislative Session](#) page on the SAM website.

Kirk

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CONFERENCE****Tuesday, March 19 in Helena -  
following the Day of Advocacy!****Register HERE****March 19, 2019  
8:00 am-Noon***Best Western Premier - Great Northern, Helena*Keynote Speaker - Steve Rizzo  
Day of Advocacy Debrief  
School Size Breakout Sessions  
Awards/Retirement Celebration  
MASS Business Meeting**METAtchED 2019****March 18-19, 2019  
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July 29-31, 2019****SAM AI 2019**

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## MONTANA PUBLIC EDUCATION CENTER

**Day of Advocacy**MONTANA STATE CAPITOL  
MONDAY, MARCH 18, 2019

In our joint efforts of advocacy for our public schools and students, we ask trustees and administrators to travel to Helena to speak with legislators about the issues facing Montana's public schools. We invite you to register and bring your student trustee or student council leader.

We will begin the day with a panel discussion with the leaders of MT-PEC, followed by a luncheon in the Montana State Capitol Rotunda with legislators. A reception with legislators will be held at MTSBA Headquarters to conclude this day of advocacy.

**Click HERE to Register****SAM Youth Endowment  
Deadline Approaching**

Nominations are open until March 15th for the 2018-19 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.

The School Administrators of Montana Youth Endowment has reached fruition. Awards to nominated recipients will be 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. Recognition of the award will also be given yearly at the SAM Administrators Institute.

**Nomination guidelines are listed in the brochure that can be accessed by clicking HERE. Please note that only SAM members can make the actual nomination.**

**Click HERE to access the 2018-19 SAM Youth Endowment Nomination Form! (Application deadline is March 15, 2019)**


**Accessibility**

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. Last month we addressed the issues involved with leading and successfully implementing [online assessments](#).

This month we focus on the topic of Accessibility. As learning environments continue the move toward digital learning settings, it is critical that everyone involved in student learning has ready access to all essential learning tools and materials. CoSN is pleased to provide school leaders (and all the stakeholders they serve) with five compelling steps to take now to ensure accessibility. You are welcome to access the CoSN One-Pager Document on Accessibility.

CoSN has partnered with edWeb to provide a monthly webinar series on topics essential for leading digital transformations. School superintendents serve as panelists on each webinar

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and share their stories and expertise. Every webinar is recorded for viewing by those who are not able to join the live broadcast. The title of the March 11, 2019 webinar (scheduled for 5:00 pm ET) is "Accessibility: Effective, Equitable Learning Environments for All Students". [Learn more and register for this free webinar HERE.](#)

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).



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