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School Administrators of Montana

BULLETIN

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

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Upcoming Conferences, Meetings, & Events

MASS/MCASE Fall Conference, September 18-19,
GranTree, Bozeman

MACSS Fall Conference, September 28-29,
Malta

MCEL, October 18-20,
DoubleTree, Billings

SAM Annual Business Meeting, October 19,
DoubleTree, Billings

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

Welcome to the 2023-24 School Year!

by Sara Novak, SAM President

I want to take this time to welcome you all back and thank you for the dedication and passion you bring every day.

Back to School is always an exciting time. In my house, there was much hype about school supplies, where the lockers would be located, who their teachers would be and what friends were in their classes. All three kids in the same school along with the transition from elementary to the Junior/Senior High has brought immense excitement. From the 7-period schedule to after school sports, the novelty of the new school year has created many positive conversations. However, the best part is not fighting with them to get out of bed. They are up and ready.

I am sure my household is not much different than others. The reality is the excitement and desire to show up every day comes from the work you all do. You have created positive climates and filled your schools with staff who love the children and are just as excited about learning.

A new school year is a fresh start for many. Some folks are starting out in a new classroom, new building or even a new district. New students and new staff alike, everyone is finding their way. It is up to us as educational leaders to help ensure that we all have the best experiences possible.

Over the years, I would always impress upon my students the value of a fresh start. Sometimes it was just a needed break from the room or area to self-regulate and re-group. Other times it was during the morning greeting, reminding the kids that "today is a new day." Maybe it was at the beginning of the semester when the student had not earned credit or the grade they were shooting for. The same rings true for all of us adults. A fresh start can be a good thing and the beginning of a new school year offers that opportunity.

As educational leaders, we are the ones providing this encouragement and support to our teams. The guidance to help them navigate through the first years or a rough patch. Engaging with SAM will provide that same support to you. I encourage you to make the most of your SAM membership by connecting with your colleagues and taking advantage of the many different professional learning and networking opportunities. There is something for everyone and the support from the SAM office is always top notch.

If it is your first year, your last year or somewhere in the middle, I hope you have the best year yet. I look forward to meeting all of you and connecting throughout the school year. Know the impression you have on the students and staff you work with. Thank you for bringing passion and that Back To School excitement to each of your school communities.

*Sara Novak
SAM President
MCASE Past President*

**2023-24: Make this your year to engage
with SAM**

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by Dr. Rob Watson, SAM Executive Director

We have all heard the old saying, "leaders eat last," sometimes also described as "servant leadership." There is a good chance that you entered this profession because you enjoy helping others. So it is no surprise that most school leaders always invest time and resources in the success of others, but rarely make that same investment in themselves.

As you plan for a new school year, I would encourage you to make a plan to invest in yourself, which includes investing in your own professional learning. What can your professional organization do for you? How does your involvement with SAM help to sustain resiliency? How does an investment in your learning also benefit your school and district? Perhaps SAM can help answer some of these important questions.

Our SAM Theme for 2023-24 is *Resilient Leaders, Healthy Schools*. The health and success of your school depends on your well-being and resilience. In other words, your school and district will benefit when YOU invest in YOU. Your professional organization can support you on your journey of self-investment.

This year, we have designed several ways for our members to engage with SAM. Beyond face-to-face conferences, we are exploring interactive webinars, PLCs, and new social media venues. Here are some simple ways to invest in yourself, while at the same time engage with your professional organization: [SAM Engagement Opportunities 2023-24](#).

Thanks for considering involvement with SAM. We look forward to supporting you in your important work.

Rob

Upcoming SAM Events and Professional Learning Opportunities

- **MASS/MCASE Fall Conference**



There is still time to register for the MASS/MCASE Fall Conference 2023, "Resilient Leaders, Healthy Schools" September 18-19 at the GranTree in Bozeman.

Dr. Joe Sanfelippo, renowned thought leader and educator, invites all MASS and MCASE members to attend the fall conference. He has been a featured speaker in multiple states focusing on leading with intention, leading with connection, and leading with direction.

The conference agenda also includes legal and policy updates from both the state and federal level. There will be breakout sessions related to threat assessment processes, proficiency-based learning, and school-based health care. In addition, the OPI special education division will coordinate with MCASE for specific training and updates for our special education directors. ([DRAFT Agenda](#))

SAM and Affiliate Award Nominations Close Soon!

Nominations are now being accepted for the following awards. Who will you nominate to be recognized for their outstanding dedication to the education of the children in their school/district? Applications are also open for the Erdie Memorial Scholarship. Please encourage aspiring administrators in your district to apply.

- **G.V. Erickson Award** - Nominations are open until Friday, September 29, 2023: 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** - Applications will be accepted until Friday, September 29, 2023: 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

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Follow this link for more information
and to register: [2023.MASS/MCASE
Fall Conference](#)

- **SAM Webinar Series -
Thursday, September 14:
Generative AI & ChatGPT**

The poster is titled "SAM MONTHLY WEBINAR SERIES" and "Generative AI & ChatGPT". It features a calendar icon for "THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 14" and a clock icon for "TIME 10:00 - 11:00 AM". A circular portrait of Jason Neiffer is shown with the label "PRESENTER". Below the portrait is the text "JASON NEIFFER MONTANA DIGITAL ACADEMY". A QR code is on the left with the text "USE QR CODE TO CONNECT TO SAM ZOOM" and the URL "HTTPS://US06WEB.ZOOM.US/j/3923446729". A small SAM logo is in the bottom right corner.

The appearance of “Generative Artificial Intelligence” in the last six months presents an incredible challenge and opportunity to schools, already facing an unprecedented reflection point in education.

Join Jason Neiffer, Executive Director of Montana Digital Academy, for the first webinar of the 2023-24 SAM Webinar Series.

Jason will provide a quick tour of the current and quickly-changing landscape of G.A.I., a look at the questions you and your staff should be asking about teaching and learning in these new times, and ways it can be a benefit to your educational program. **Join SAM Zoom:** <https://uso6web.zoom.us/j/3923446729>

- **MCEL 2023**

Calling all Public School Leaders and Advocates! Register Now to Attend! Become inspired and improve your skills at Montana’s largest gathering of school leaders! Join us on October 18-20, 2023 in Billings! Both in-person and virtual attendance options are available. Follow this link for more information: [MCEL 2023 Registration](#)

- **SAM Annual Membership Meeting**

All SAM members are invited to attend the Annual Membership Meeting on **Friday, October 20 at 8:00 AM either in person at MCEL or via Zoom**. Agenda items include voting on the SAM Delegate Assembly 2023 Advocacy Recommendations, affiliate reports, and an update on the work of your association. Watch for more information coming soon.

2023 Regional Advisory Committees Meeting Information

district. Once the candidate has secured a position and notified the SAM office, a trained mentor will be provided through the SAM Leaders Professional Learning Program to assist during his/her first year on the job.

- **MASS Outstanding School Board of the Year Award - Applications will be accepted until Friday, September 29, 2023:** 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 Awards may be submitted by any Montana Superintendent of Schools. The MASS Executive Board recommends that each of the nine regions submit a nomination. Two Outstanding School Boards in Montana will be chosen. The winners will be announced at the annual MCEL meeting in October.
- **AASA Conference Incentive Award - Applications will be accepted until Friday, September 29, 2023:** The Montana Association of School Superintendents Incentive Award Program is intended to provide a special opportunity for MASS members to attend the AASA National Conference on Education (NCE) that will be held in San Diego February 15-17, 2024.
- **MASSP Assistant Principal of the Year - Applications will be accepted until Friday, October 13, 2023:** This award recognizes outstanding school leaders who have succeeded in providing high-quality learning opportunities for students. The program honors high school assistant principals who have demonstrated excellence in the areas of personal excellence; collaborative leadership; curriculum, instruction and assessment; and personalization. To be eligible, the nominee must be an active assistant principal and have been an active assistant principal for at least three consecutive years.



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.

White House Cybersecurity Summit for K-12 Schools: On Tuesday, August 8, 2023, the Biden-Harris Administration announced new efforts to strengthen Cybersecurity in America’s K-12 school systems during an event held at the White

and Request for Public Comment

The Secretary of Education has established Regional Advisory Committees (RACs), one for each region served by the Regional Educational Laboratories, in order to collect information on the education needs of each region and how those needs may be addressed through technical assistance activities.

The RACs will seek input regarding the need for technical assistance activities and how those needs would be most effectively addressed. The goal of these processes is to solicit the views and needs of schools, educators, parents, teachers, administrators, members of the regional educational laboratory governing board, LEAs, librarians, businesses, SEAs, and other customers (such as adult education programs) within the region regarding the need for the activities described in 20 U.S.C. sections 9564 and 9602 and how those needs would be most effectively addressed.

All RAC meetings will be open to members of the public. Montana is part of the Northwest region. The next meeting is scheduled for September 19, 2023, from 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. MT

- [Registration link](#)

Submit Written Comments. Members of the public are invited to submit written comments to the RACs for consideration as they conduct needs-sensing activities and determine priorities for their region. Members of the public may submit written comments at the link below. Comments must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. ET, two business days before the RAC meeting date.

- [Link to submit public comments](#)

Visit the [Regional Advisory Committee website](#) for more information.

House. First Lady Jill Biden was joined by Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona and Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas in welcoming school administrators, educators and private sector companies to the event to discuss best practices and new resources available to strengthen cybersecurity throughout our nation's school systems. Keith Krueger, CoSN CEO, and Diane Doersch, CoSN Board Chair, joined the other participants at the White House for this critically important conversation.

During the August 8 White House Cybersecurity Summit several new and continuing federal initiatives were shared that aim to meet the growing challenges involved in assuring that cybersecurity is both a top priority and a successful endeavor for all school districts. To learn more about the current administration initiatives and read an overview of the August 8 White House Cybersecurity Summit for K-12 Schools visit this website:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/08/07/biden-harris-administration-launches-new-efforts-to-strengthen-americas-k-12-schools-cybersecurity/>

If you were not able to view the live stream of the August 8, 2023, Whitehouse Cybersecurity Summit for K-12 Schools, you can access the full recording here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GaH9oJdbQZk>

CoSN has a wide range of resources on leading Cybersecurity Initiatives that are readily accessible at:

<https://www.cosn.org/edtech-topics/cybersecurity/>

Roadmap to Innovation: CoSN Driving K-12 Innovation Newsletter

CoSN's Driving K-12 Innovation project management team is now producing a new free monthly newsletter called the *Roadmap to Innovation Newsletter*. Subscribers receive the Driving K-12 Innovation Advisory Board's tips, advice, and resources in order to impact global education changemaking efforts. To sign up for this free CoSN Driving K-12 Innovation monthly publication click the "Subscribe" button found at this link: [Roadmap to Innovation Newsletter Registration](#)

CoSN/AASA EmpowerED Superintendents edLeader Panel Series: Season 6 Premier

The CoSN/AASA EmpowerED Superintendents edLeader Panel Series begins its sixth season on Monday, September 11, 2023, at 5:00 pm ET, with *"Leading Learning in the 2023-2024 School Year: Challenges and Opportunities"*. The featured guest panelists are Dr. Carol Kelley, Superintendent of Schools, Princeton Public Schools (NJ), and Chair of CoSN/AASA EmpowerED Superintendents Advisory Panel; Dr. Aaron Spence, Superintendent, Loudoun County Public Schools (VA), and Co-Chair of CoSN/AASA EmpowerED Superintendents Advisory Panel; and Dr.



David R. Schuler, Executive Director, AASA, The School Superintendents Association. The series is co-hosted by [AASA](#) and [CoSN](#) in partnership with [edWeb.net](#) and is once again graciously sponsored by [ClassLink](#). Free registration for the September 11 broadcast – as well as access to previous broadcasts - is available at <https://home.edweb.net/supers/>.

CoSN Membership: If you, your school or district would like more information about joining CoSN or getting more involved with CoSN, please contact membership@cosn.org.

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Please take time to visit their websites.

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