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## *School Administrators of Montana*

# BULLETIN

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

**Volume XLIII**

**May 2022**

**No. 318**



### **Know your County Superintendent**

*by Erin Lipkind, MACSS President*

How well do you know your County Superintendent? Every County has one. Do you know the duties of the County Superintendent's office as prescribed by statute? This unique position harkens back to the early years of Montana Territory, when Montana was composed of just nine counties. In 1901, in a

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

1. [MACSS President Message](#)
2. [SAM Executive Director Message](#)
3. [SAM LPLP 2022-23](#)
4. [Save the Date - SAM Summer Events](#)
5. [SAM AI Call for Presentations](#)
6. [MT Educator Wins CoSN National Award](#)
7. [SAM 2022-23 Membership Drive](#)
8. [CoSN Update](#)

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

**June 8, 2022: DaRud Golf Scramble**

**June 9, 2022:**

- **SAM Board Meeting**
- **Delegate Assembly Caucuses**
- **Evening of Excellence**

**June 10, 2022: Delegate Assembly**

**July 25 - 27, 2022: SAM Administrators Institute**

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

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

territory consisting of 146,000 square miles, just 696 public schools had been established serving 39,430 students taught by 1,214 teachers, of which 83% were unmarried females (upon marriage, women were ineligible to teach). 159 schools enrolled fewer than 14 students, and 70 fewer than ten. 227 schools ran for six months, while many others ran for five, four, three or even just two months per year, which was one month less than required constitutionally to qualify for state funding. Why might this be? Harvest, impassable winter conditions, distance to the school house and, in the case of my little Woodman School, the tick season killed students and teachers alike before a cure for Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever was developed by what became Rocky Mountain Labs in Hamilton, Montana.

After the 10th Montana legislative session (1907), County Superintendents were elected for two-year terms, could be male or female, must *hold a certificate of the highest County grade*, have twelve months teaching experience, and be a US citizen and County resident for one year. Their statutory duties included the following:

1. Visit all schools in the County at least 1x per year, observe the mental and moral instruction, judge the teacher's ability, and keep a record of each visit. (There might be over 50 schools in a County, one every 5 miles or so, and transportation was by horse).
2. Administer the oath of office to school officials.
3. Keep records of all official acts.
4. Decide matters of school controversy.
5. Apportion all school monies.
6. Issue temporary teaching certificates.
7. Prepare an annual report for the Superintendent of Public Instruction.
8. Review and maintain a description of the boundaries of each district.
9. The County Superintendent *could not* teach during their term of office.

Many of those duties remain, some without modification, and new ones have been codified in current statute. I bet some of you SAM members out there wish that we still had the power to issue temporary teaching certificates! With the evolution of education in our state and the consolidation of school districts and County level elected positions, the execution of the job duties of County Superintendent varies considerably across the state. Some positions are full or part-time elected, unconsolidated offices while others have been consolidated with clerk and recorder, treasurer, or another County office. In the latter cases, the duties of the County Superintendent are often performed by a qualified deputy or by contract with a licensed administrator.

County Superintendents are now elected for four-year terms, and must run in partisan elections, though a few counties have done away with that unfortunate requirement. The statutorily prescribed duties of our office can be found in [MCA 20-3-205](#). Some counties have no schools with a hired administrator, and the County Superintendent role is limited. Others may oversee one or half a dozen rural schools. County Superintendents work with every one of those rural school boards and clerks, hiring, supervising, and terminating teachers, handling parent complaints, and reviewing curricula. We build calendars, chair committees, draft student and staff handbooks, advise on board policies, plan summer school and after school programs, complete the TEAMS reports for multiple districts, E-Grants applications, CSIP--in other words, doing the same tasks Superintendents and principals of Class A and B schools perform while at the same time completing all the unique duties and reporting requirements of the office. We are homeless liaisons, Title IX coordinators, IEFA implementation specialists, librarians, school counselors, substitute teachers, bus drivers, professional development providers. We work with Hutterite colonies and Reservation schools, farming and ranching communities, home school families, in counties with large populations and small populations. We compete with all you higher paid districts to recruit and retain teachers and specialists. Most County Superintendents are grossly undercompensated. We don't ALL do everything listed above, but based on the unique nature of our individual setting and educational



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background, we take a poorly understood position whose powers and duties are defined by Montana law and make it our own.

A huge number of County Superintendents have retired over the last few years, or will be retiring at the end of their current term. Much institutional knowledge has been lost as a result. Many newbies started during Covid, arguably the worst time to begin a new job in the field of education. Some of our peers are facing contested races, and others chose not to run again. Across the state, there will be many new faces in your County office when newly elected County Superintendents are sworn into office January 1, 2023. Do you know your County Superintendent? If not, introduce yourself. Invite them to your regional MASS meeting. And be kind and helpful as our new MACSS members learn their jobs and do their part to be effective and caring public servants to Montana students, teachers, administrators, parents, and communities.

#### Sources

The Revised Codes of Montana of 1907.

The Sixth Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, State of Montana, 1901.

Lolo Creek Women’s Club. (1999). *Lolo creek reflections: A history of early settlers of Lolo Creek*. Stevensville, MT: Stoneysdale Press.

*Erin Lipkind*

*Missoula County Superintendent of Schools*

*MACSS President*

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## Springtime in Montana Schools - Transforming in our Changing World!

*by Kirk Miller, SAM Executive Director*



Springtime in Montana schools is always a blend – working to accomplish the learning goals for your students while planning for the ensuing school year! Culminating exercises and activities, school elections for Trustees and operational/other levy considerations, budget development, staffing and planning for the 2022-23 are on your mind and agenda. Interesting that all of these elements, that are a regular course of events, are still necessary during the time of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and brazen political atmosphere, but the lens for accomplishing what is necessary is very different.

We are all in the deep discussion and planning of contemplating what that means for our schools and the delivery of education services to our students through the end of this school year and next school year. At SAM we are planning strategies and resources with the intention of acknowledging what we learned from 2021-22 and how it can make us stronger in meeting the educational, social emotional and whole child needs of our students in 2022-23.

My first reference is a thank you to the extensive support network that has been established through our SAM affiliate associations and their ability to communicate and provide resources through regional networks. Join me in a shout out to 100 Montana administrators who are serving in leadership roles in their affiliate associations to support colleague administrators in their work for children. Click on the affiliate link to see the board members we are thanking -- [SAM Board](#), [MASS Board](#), [MASSP Board](#), [MAEMSP Board](#), [MCASE Board](#), [MACSS Board](#), [META Board](#)! The collective work of these 100 leaders of

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our professional association have served with distinction through the challenges and opportunities this school year has presented, providing opportunities for all 1061 members of SAM. Know that this leadership network is being fully established for the next school year and we will be providing supports to you through the 2022-23 school year.

The accomplishments of the SAM Leaders Professional Learning Program (LPLP) 2021-22 are significant in the progress we have made educationally for Montana children. Fifty-six Montana administrators have been engaged in the SAM LPLP and the final executive summary of progress will be completed in June (check out the [Mid Year Executive Summary](#)). At SAM, we are launching the [LPLP 2022-23](#) program which will continue to emphasize personalized learning with one-on-one coaching/mentoring with experienced providers, collegial learning networks based on contemporary topics of interest, and a unique new national professional learning opportunity for educational leaders striving to meet the overwhelming demands of educational leadership today – The Source! We are creating these innovations in the SAM LPLP for next year and I invite you to reference further information in this Bulletin and encourage you to engage in the SAM LPLP 2022-23 (click [HERE](#) for more info and to sign up).

SAM has created a [SAM Strategy - Promote the Value Your School Brings to the Community](#) in cooperation with education partners of the Montana Public Education Center to provide you with resources for getting the attention of your community to understand the excellent and critical role your school contributes to the health and well-being of communities all across the state. SAM is currently working with the partners of MTPEC to establish advocacy for innovation currently underway, and being planned for our schools. The “Did You Know ... Telling Your Story of Innovation” concept is being prepared for your use to be able to tell your story of innovation in a way that can be used to make a difference for future advocacy for the education of our children. You can expect to see this launch by the middle of May and into the 2022-23 school year.

SAM (our office team and your many colleague administrators) will be there for you and your schools to assist you with resources and strategies as you contemplate these deep discussions to end the 2021-22 school year and launch the 2022-23 school year!

*Wishing you the very best May and close of the 2021-22 school year with thanks from our team at SAM for all you do for your children, school and community!*

*Kirk D. Miller*

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## **SAM Leaders Professional Learning Program 2022-23 Registration is Open**

It's time to start planning professional learning for you and your district admin team for next year. The SAM Leaders Professional



## **SAM Week of Excellence Events**

Be sure to mark your calendars with the following events happening at SAM in June!

[SAM Week of Excellence](#)

Learning Program (LPLP) may be the perfect solution. Tailored to meet the needs of new, experienced, and aspiring administrators; SAM LPLP's multi-faceted blended learning approach consists of...

- personal learning networks including the option of working with an experienced provider for **one-on-one coaching/mentoring**,
- **Collegial Learning Networks (CLNs)** designed to be dynamic based on topics of interest as they arise that allow participants to focus on specific areas of interest (i.e. Social Emotional Learning, Transformational Learning, New Superintendents, New Principals) and,
- rich online resources that are being expanded to include a unique national professional learning opportunity - *The Source*.

*The Source*, available to all SAM LPLP 2022-23 members, is a digital platform designed to deliver what busy educational leaders need including...

- **Access** to up-to-date resources.
- **Connection** to colleagues across the country for dialog, feedback, sharing challenges, successes and practice;
- **Engagement** with deeper learning, application and implementation.

Serving more than 500 administrators to date, 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.

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

- **June 8, 2022:**

- DaRud Cup Golf Scramble - Registration coming soon

- **June 9, 2022:**

- SAM Board Meeting
- SAM Delegate Assembly Caucuses
- SAM Evening of Excellence

- **June 10, 2022:**

- SAM Delegate Assembly

## SAM Administrators Institute 2022



### "Did You Know" ...Telling Your Story of Innovation

You will not want to miss the opportunity to connect with your colleagues from across the state at the [SAM Administrators Institute 2022!](#) The conference will be held **July 25-27, 2022** at the **Best Western Premier Helena Great Northern**. Please contact the hotel directly at 406-457-5500 to receive a room under the conference room block.

The Conference will include outstanding information and dialogue around the topics most on the minds of Montana educators including **Recruitment and Retention of Quality Educators; Social, Emotional, Behavioral Health; and Innovations in Education**. On the schedule are four general keynote sessions and 18 break-out sessions. The conference will also provide many opportunities to network and connect with other administrators.

Watch for Registration to open soon!

# Elder Grove Technology Director Named 2022 National CTO of the Year!

Carol Phillips, District Technology Director at Elder Grove Schools in Billings, was awarded the [Withrow Outstanding CTO of the Year Award](#), on April 12 in Nashville during the CoSN 2022 Conference. The award is sponsored by [ClassLink](#) and named after long-time edtech leader Frank Withrow and recognizes an individual who has been a key education innovator. This award is the highest honor CoSN gives to an individual district technology leader.

Carol has been at the forefront of edtech leadership in the Elder Grove School District since she began her time there. Each year, she has presented different ways for the administration to continue moving forward to become a 1:1 district, which they finally achieved in April 2021. Carol has since worked tirelessly to make sure they remain at 1:1 through grant writing and donations, leading to an increase in student keyboarding skills, several computer science classes, robotics, coding, and art activities. Watch a video showcasing Carol's accomplishments [here](#).

Carol has been an active member of META for the past seven years, serving as President-Elect 2020-2022, representing META as a delegate during SAM Delegate Assembly, and is currently serving as the 2022-2024 META President.

Congratulations, Carol, on your recognition for this prestigious award and for the great work you do as an educator to make a difference for the education of our students in Montana and across the country!

## SAM AI 2022 Call for Presentations:

If you are interested in potentially presenting at this event, please [click HERE](#) to complete this brief **Google Form by the May 20, 2022 deadline.**

## 2022-23 SAM Membership Drive Underway!

The School Administrators of Montana (SAM) Membership Drive began on Tuesday, April 12 for the 2022-23 membership year! We are once again using the online renewal process. As the "key contact" for a district, district clerks/business managers received an email that included 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 included 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.



## edWebinar Series

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.

### **CoSN Annual Report: "Onward - CoSN from 2020 to Now"**

During the recent CoSN 2022 Annual Conference in Nashville, TN, CoSN released its annual report. This very special report shares the story of CoSN over the past two years. You are invited to read how the CoSN leadership, staff and members responded to the circumstances brought on by the pandemic. Learn how CoSN found innovative ways to stay committed to the association's strategies and goals within the context of multiple new challenges. You can access the full report [HERE](#).

### **The EmpowerED Superintendent edWebinar Series: *Leading for Digital Equity: Award Winning Community Engagement Strategies***

The next episode of the EmpowerED Superintendent Webinar series titled, "*Leading for Digital Equity: Award Winning Community Engagement Strategies*" will be broadcast on Monday, May 9, 2022, at 3:00 pm Mountain Time. Digital equity has proven to be one of the most critical issues of our times. Lessons learned over the past two years have taught education leaders that they cannot solve the challenges of digital equity in their school districts without actively engaging a wide range of community groups. CoSN annually awards a school district with the association's Community Leadership Award for Digital Equity to honor and recognize those districts that are working to eliminate inequities and narrow the digital access gap. Louisa County Public Schools in Virginia is the recipient of CoSN's 2022 Community Leadership Award for Digital Equity.

Louisa County Public Schools Superintendent Doug Straley will be joined by David Childress, Louisa County Director of Technology and Kenny Bouwens, District Director of STEAM and Innovation, as featured guest panelists in the May 9, 2022, edWebinar broadcast. Keith Krueger, CoSN CEO, joins in the conversation. The school district leaders will share the strategies they use to lead their work with their community in leveraging technology innovations to meet the needs of all students. The development of the district's "Wireless on Wheels (WOW)" program to provide high speed access to previously unconnected areas is one of the innovations that will be shared. Free registration for the May 9, 2022, webinar, produced in partnership with AASA and edWeb.net and sponsored by ClassLink, is available at <https://home.edweb.net/supers/>. If you cannot join the live broadcast you are welcome to register for the recording or podcast edition.

### **CoSN Resources:**

#### **1) *Defining Digital Equity 2022***

Creating a shared understanding of what digital equity is and what district leaders can do to realize digital equity for the students that they serve is more important than ever. CoSN has created this resource to help

leaders build a shared understanding of digital equity for their district. Available at <https://cosn.org/digitalequity>

### 2) CoSN Student Home Internet Connectivity Study

CoSN has published a study on students' at-home internet connectivity which provides guidelines on bandwidth, devices, and other remote learning needs. The study was supported by a grant from the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative. The findings serve as a guide for school district leaders who are working to improve online learning equity. Read an overview or download the complete report at <https://cosn.org/digitalequity>

### 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).

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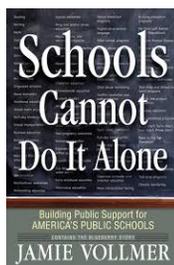
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- [April 2022 Bulletin](#)
- [March 2022 Bulletin](#)
- [February SAM Bulletin](#)
- [January SAM Bulletin](#)
- [December SAM Bulletin](#)
- [November 2021 Bulletin](#)
- [October 2021 Bulletin](#)
- [September 2021 Bulletin](#)
- [July - August 2021 Bulletin](#)

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