

Maureen King, *President, RSU 21*
 Kim Bedard, *President-Elect, Kittery*
 Sue Hawes, *Vice President, Bangor*
 Steven W. Bailey, *Executive Director, sbailey@msmaweb.com*
 Victoria A. Wallack, *Director of Communications & Government Relations, vwallack@msmaweb.com*

UPDATE...

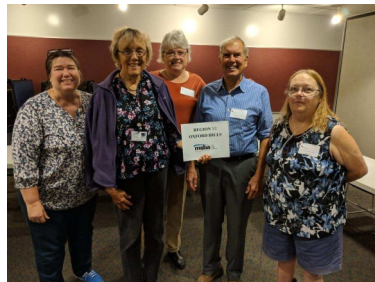
October 2018

9 Region Listening Tour

MSBA Executive Director Steven Bailey and President-Elect Kim Bedard have begun a Listening Tour of the 9 school board/superintendent regions in the state. They visited Oxford Hills on Sept. 19 (Region VI) and Ellsworth (Region IV) on Oct. 17. They'll be heading to Machias (Region III) on Oct. 31 and Herman (Region II) on Nov. 7. They meet with board members and representatives from the schools to see the good work going on in districts. In turn, they spread the word about MSBA services and advocacy.



Paul Markosian, Brenda Thomas, Kim Bedard and Skip Greenlaw



Kim Bedard, Judy Green, Stacia Cordwell, Donald Ware and Denise Rodzen

Conference clinics explore key issues

The lineup of clinics for the 45th Annual Fall Conference – the largest professional development venue for school leaders in the state – is reflective of issues facing schools, from effectively using social media, to spending wisely on school security, confronting the vaping epidemic and understanding the impact of the #MeToo movement on staff and students.

There is a strong strand on academics, with a special focus on improving math comprehension, understanding and dealing with the impact chronic absenteeism has on student learning, supporting students socially and emotionally so they can learn, developing a public and universal pre-K program and changes in the use of time and staff to improve student learning.

Hiring and keeping good staff also will be discussed, from a new teacher orientation program to considering incentive pay, and the latest in collective bargaining initiatives.

To see the entire clinic lineup go to: <https://www.msmaweb.com/about-msma/fall-conference/>.

Increasing community involvement in public education is a theme *(continued on page 4)*



MSMA joins national education groups representing School Boards and Superintendents to celebrate the achievements our public schools are making in Maine and the critical roles they play in developing future generations of successful students. There is no better time than now to speak out about the outstanding contributions made by our public schools.

The Maine ♥ Public Education campaign is an ongoing effort to highlight why Maine public schools are essential to developing the future generations that will maintain our state's status as an innovative leader in Public Education. The campaign is a direct extension of a commitment to ensure all students have access to a high-quality public education.

It is time to change the state dialogue around public education. Public education is the bedrock of America, it is the foundation for informed and knowledgeable citizens. As our public schools succeed, so too will the students of Maine. The success of the future leaders of this great state critically depend on the support given to public education by each of our communities in Maine.

To show your support for public education in Maine, please pick up your **FREE** Maine ♥ Public Education T-shirt at tables **1, 6, and 40** in the vendor area.

MAINE SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

Resolutions Update

The following resolution was submitted by the AOS 90 School Board and will be considered by the MSBA Board of Directors at its meeting on Oct. 24 for inclusion in the resolutions packet considered by Delegate Assembly on Oct. 25.

Funding for School Infrastructure

The Maine School Boards Association supports action by the Legislature that would provide \$30 million from the state's Rainy Day Fund to begin the process of rebuilding the infrastructure of our local public schools. This money would support small maintenance and construction projects with a fund separate from the major construction fund. Funding for small projects has been cut in recent years, and it is estimated there are \$1 billion in deferred maintenance and facility improvements in Maine schools – a situation that will continue to affect the quality of education, if not addressed.

Rationale

A strong educational program is necessary to support a vibrant economy, and the learning environment where this education occurs matters. Since the state has continually been unable to

(continued on page 4)

Regional meetings on Educational Platform

This year's Regional Meetings at Fall Conference, scheduled for Thursday, Oct. 25, from 1:25 to 2:05, will be used to discuss the Educational Platform approved by the Maine School Boards Association Board of Directors and the Maine School Superintendents Association Executive Committee.

MSSA membership will vote on the platform at its annual meeting on Oct. 24 and MSBA Delegate Assembly will vote on resolutions that support the plan on Oct. 25.

The platform is designed to help the incoming governor and Legislature understand the educational priorities for MSBA and MSSA.

To accommodate the widest audience possible there will be three regional meetings, with three regions invited to each. MSBA and MSSA officers will facilitate the meetings.

The platform addresses four key planks:

- Attracting, Developing and Keeping Excellent Teachers
- Support for the Whole Child
- Workforce Development
- Proficiency-based Education

The room assignments are:

<u>REGIONS</u>	<u>ROOM</u>
Aroostook (I), Penquis (II) & Cumberland (VII)	Augusta Room
Washington (III), Mid-Coast (V) & Western Maine (VI)	Fort Western Room
Hancock (IV), Kennebec (VIII) & York (IX)	Washington/York Room

Signs will be posted at the Conference Registration Table and on the meeting rooms showing the districts in each region.

Legislative Update

The Maine Legislature officially adjourned on Sept. 13 – nearly five months late – ending a contentious session that upended the proficiency-based diploma law and slowed the proposed transfer of CDS to school districts that now will be dealt with by a new administration.

Only one new education bill was added to the list previously considered by the Education Committee in the prolonged session, and it was unanimously supported by the Legislature

The bill, **L.D. 1924, An Act to Improve Information Sharing Relating to Investigations of Educators**, requires school districts to notify the Department of Education when they start and complete investigations that could reasonably be expected to affect a person's employment and involve alleged illegal drug and alcohol abuse; physical and emotional abuse; inappropriate contact with students; stalking; and, other threatening behaviors.

The bill requires the DOE to follow the same notification requirements to districts when it conducts an investigation.

The notification deadline is 15 days at the start of an investigation and 5 days at the conclusion. The bill also requires major substantive rule-making around implementation of the new law, and those rules will come back to the next Legislature for final approval.

The most significant bill to pass this session was **L.D. 1666, An Act To Ensure the Successful Implementation of Proficiency-based Diplomas**. It makes proficiency-based diplomas optional in school districts and allows schools to stick with credit-based diplomas. The Department of Education is still trying to determine the legal and reporting ramifications of having two diploma systems on the books.

A disappointment was the failure to pass a bill to implement proposals from a task force charged with finding ways to control the cost of special education. **L.D. 1902, An Act To Implement Certain Recommendations of the Task Force To Identify Special Education Cost Drivers and Innovative Approaches to Services**, was one step away from enactment, but did not get the needed approval by the Appropriations Committee. The focus of the bill was narrowed in the Education Committee to include a more robust response to intervention systems for both general and special education students; promotion of dual certification programs for general and special education teachers; school-wide use of Title I programs; a review of the purpose and efficacy of maintenance of effort funding; and review and improvement of MaineCare billing practices. It died when the Legislature finally adjourned.

The MSBA Delegate Assembly will consider a resolution at Fall Conference calling on the Legislature to introduce a new bill next year that would implement the task force's recommendations.

A multi-faceted bill, L.D. 925, that essentially tied up loose ends at the end of the session included language to create **The Task Force To Study and Plan for the Implementation of Maine's Early Childhood Special Education Services**. The task force replaced a bill that would have begun the process of moving Child Development Services (CDS) into public schools. The task force has a school board and superintendent representative on it, but has not yet officially been formed.

Maine Schools in Focus:

Addressing the Complex Needs of Students with Mental Health and Behavioral Challenges

By Jim Artesani, Associate Professor of Special Education/University of Maine

Schools in Maine and across the country face a wide variety of complex challenges as they seek to provide effective and equitable educational opportunities for their students. Teachers are tasked, both in state and federal legislation and in public discourse, with educating all students and adhering to high standards of achievement. While these are laudable goals, the challenges inherent in their accomplishment are widely underestimated.

A growing body of research has demonstrated what educators have long alleged: mental health and social/behavioral competence play a significant role in academic achievement, as well as in each student's capacity to meet educational standards (DiPerna & Elliott, 2002; Diperna, 2006). Further, decades of research have confirmed that complex and interrelated biological, familial, community, and school risk factors can create pathways toward a host of negative school and life outcomes for far too many students (Reid, Patterson, & Snyder, 2002).

Addressing such concerns typically requires schools to expand their capacity to identify, implement, and sustain effective mental health and behavioral services, as well as increase their collaboration with related community agencies.

A greater understanding of the serious and often long-lasting effects of complex risk factors has led to the development of systems-oriented models of prevention and intervention. Researchers over the past 30 years have demonstrated that evidence-based practices implemented through the coordinated efforts of knowledgeable and skilled professionals, nurturing family members, and other caring adults can have profound positive effects on students at risk. Over time, prevention and intervention have proven to be a coherent conceptual model for guiding research and practice aimed at addressing the multifaceted needs of students considered to be at risk and their families.

More recently, district and school-wide multi-tiered systems of prevention have emerged as the primary organizational framework for the delivery of evidence-based services to meet the social, emotional, and behavioral needs of all students. Two prime examples of multi-tiered systems of prevention in schools are Response to Intervention (RtI) and Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support (PBIS), which are utilized in a growing number of schools across the country, including Maine.

It is important to note that PBIS and RtI are not programs; they are organizational frameworks for the systematic implementation of the effective practice. Each district and school chooses the specific approaches to be included in their support system. Recently, researchers and practitioners have shown an increased interest in integrating various methods into the system of prevention. While many practices can be successfully integrated (and studies have indicated that this is a promising direction), trying to implement too many programs too quickly is a common pitfall. Not surprisingly, this often leads to a sense of initiative overload among staff members, a duplication of efforts, the inefficient use of limited resources, and most importantly, unsatisfactory student outcomes. This is particularly evident when schools attempt to integrate multiple large-scale initiatives, such as PBIS, trauma-informed care, restorative practices, and schoolwide bullying prevention, along with a host of social skills curricula.

Successfully assimilating such approaches is a complex undertaking that should be done with a great deal of pre-planning. Given the organizational structure provided by multi-tiered systems, such as PBIS, it makes sense to begin by implementing that framework and then integrating approaches, such as trauma-informed practices. It is essential that the addition of new practices does not get ahead of establishing a system to support their implementation adequately. Further, when building multi-tiered systems of support developing a strong foundational tier is the key to success.

Although there are many challenges, schools have well-researched, system-oriented organizational frameworks to guide the development of prevention and intervention in their schools. Moreover, there has been a dramatic increase in the availability of effective emotional and behavioral practices that schools can incorporate into their systems of prevention. That said, it is essential to keep in mind that the benefits of well-conceived systems and evidence-based methods of prevention and intervention are best achieved when implemented by compassionate adults, ready and willing to create supportive and caring environments.

According to the Harvard's Center on the Developing Child, a single, stable and committed relationship with a parent or other caring adult is the most frequently cited factor in the lives of children that develop resiliency to risk. They advocate the creation of "an environment of relationships" to support mental and emotional well-being and behavioral growth. Similarly, Anthony Biglan, noted Senior Scientist at the Oregon Research Institute, reminds us in *The Nurture Effect: How the Science of Human Behavior Can Improve Our Lives and Our World* that the science of prevention and intervention has dramatically expanded our ability to support students at risk, but it is not a replacement for genuine caring relationships and nurturing environments. He maintains that nurturing environments are an essential component of prevention and intervention services.

This brief closes with a list of core features of prevention efforts in schools and questions to consider.

Cornerstones of prevention in schools include:

- Caring adults
- Nurturing environments
- Culturally responsive programming
- Systems orientation

(continued on page 4)

Maine Teacher of the Year

English teacher Joseph Hennessey of Piscataquis Community High School has been named Maine's 2019 Teacher of the Year.



Hennessey was selected earlier this year as the 2018 Piscataquis County Teacher of the Year. He began his teaching career in 2012 and has held teaching positions as both an English teacher and a teacher for at-risk youth ever since. He specializes in English literature and composition and has taught speech and debate as well. In his current position at Piscataquis Community High School, Hennessey has implemented a college prep, literature based interdisciplinary course that focuses on students' interests and aims to prepare them for life after graduation.

"Mr. Hennessey is a unique and highly effective teacher. His formal manner and personality combined with a dry sense of humor and setting high standards for his students, make him an icon of our school," said Piscataquis Community High School Principal John Keane in a written statement nominating Hennessey for 2019 Teacher of the Year. "With only four years with us, he has become legendary amongst his students and their families. Watching him in class is truly watching a person who has honed his craft to perfection," he added.

Hennessey was selected from more than 300 teachers who were nominated by a member of their community earlier this year. The Teacher of the Year Program is a year-long process that involves educator portfolio and resume submissions, interviews, oral presentations, and classroom visits made by a selection panel.

Maine Schools in Focus

(continued from page 3)

- Theory-driven evidence-based practice
- Family involvement
- Early intervention for young children
- Rapid response for later-onset concerns
- Intensity and duration of services that match student needs
- Delivered across multiple settings (e.g., individual, home, school, community)
- Collaboration between key stakeholders in home, school, and community and mental health agencies.

"Maine Schools in Focus" is an informational briefing about important education issues in Maine, produced by the University of Maine College of Education and Human Development as a resource for educators and policy makers.

Conference clinics

(continued from page 1)

of both the keynote and endnote speakers.

Jamie Vollmer, who is speaking Thursday morning, with a seminar to follow, will talk about the need to increase community understanding, trust and support in public education to win community permission to make needed changes.

Senator Brian Langley, chair of the Education Committee, and Educate Maine Executive Director Ed Cervone will have an armchair discussion on stage Friday at lunchtime. They will talk about the urgency for school board members and superintendents to help develop and support a statewide education plan to address workforce shortages, involve the business community in that effort, improve achievement in critical skills and address inequities created by poverty.

An Educational Platform supported by the MSSA Executive Committee and the MSBA Board of Directors also will be discussed during the conference (see Regional Meetings on Educational Platform, page 2) and will help inform a statewide plan.

Resolutions Update

(continued from page 2)

meet the obligation of 55% state funding for Essential Programs and Services, the Legislature has continued to raise the local effort/mill rate to cover these costs. The result is local boards have delayed the necessary repairs and additions to their buildings. An infusion of money from the Rainy Day Fund would save districts and the state money in the long run by extending the life of school buildings. It would have the immediate payoff of a better learning environment for our students. It is suggested that funding be awarded for approved projects at a rate no less than the current state share of EPS, which is roughly 50 percent, and up to the percent of state share used to calculate an individual district's state aid.

Additional information also has been added to the rationale around the resolution on **Gun Free Schools**. It further clarifies existing state law, and the resolution proposes no change to existing law.

The additional information reads:

The ban in law does not apply to law enforcement officials. It also does not apply to persons who have an unloaded firearm for use in an approved firearms training program or for a person who has an unloaded firearm in a vehicle during a hunter's breakfast in hunting season, as long as that policy is approved by the School Board and the breakfast takes place outside of regular school hours.



If you have questions about any articles in this newsletter or suggestions for improving this publication, let us know.

You can contact me, MSBA Executive Director, Steven Bailey. sbailey@msmaweb.com