

# NEWSLETTER

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*“Better Schools for Maine Students”*

Volume 50, Number 3, November/December 2017

## President’s Message



Dear Colleagues,

At this time of the year, one cannot help but to become more reflective and to count one’s blessings. As a Maine Superintendent, I am thankful for the following:

**Maine students** – I would put our students up against any others. The young people we work with every day give me great hope. They are smart, kind, hard working, and they truly want to make a difference in the world. Our students are meeting higher standards, are more involved in school and community activities, and they recognize their family members more often as their heroes. We are so fortunate!

**Maine educators and staff** – Maine educators and staff (including ed techs, secretaries, custodians, maintenance, food service, bus drivers, administrators, nurses, teachers, OT, PT, SLP, etc.) are among the very best. I have had the pleasure of hundreds of interactions with educators and staff from all over the state and I continually meet and see passionate, dedicated, knowledgeable people giving their all to do what is in the best interest of students.

**MSBA, Maine School Boards, and Communities** – If the MSMA /MSBA/ MSSA Fall Conference attendance is any indication of support; Maine schools have incredible support from their elected officials and communities. The attendees gave Laurie LaChance a standing ovation for sharing her vision of education as the way to provide economic prosperity to our state. Our communities and School Boards desire local control of determining the best educational pathways for their students. School board members volunteer hours upon hours of their time to govern and lead Maine school districts and we are extremely appreciative of their knowledge, commitment, and advocacy.

**MPA, MADSEC, MEA, Educate Maine, Great Maine Schools Partnership, and other organizations** – Thank you for making education of all Maine students your priority. MSSA appreciates opportunities to partner with you.

**MDOE** - Thank you for extending the rule making for Chapter 134 and for listening to our concerns. You have created an opportunity to do right by all Maine students and we are counting on you to support *Redefining Ready* as a way to

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## 2018 MSSA Winter Convocation

January 18 – 19, 2018

Portland Marriott at Sable Oaks, South Portland

The MSSA Professional Development Committee once again has worked intently to craft a meaningful professional learning experience for members at the Winter Convocation. With a combination of practical learning, problem/solution exploration, and legislative insights this promises to be a very rewarding two-day experience.

On Thursday afternoon, Matt Utterback, AASA Superintendent of the Year, and Superintendent of North Clackamas School District in Milwaukie, OR will lead us for an interactive presentation on Leading for Educational Equity. Utterback has identified six principles he believes are necessary for educational equity and has implemented them within the district he leads. Utilizing actions that build success upon success, the district has created momentum for sustained change. In Matt’s words, “when we build momentum, we positively impact the trajectory for each of our students, allowing them to reach their full potential.”

Friday morning will begin with a Leadership Consultancy, led by the MSSA PD committee. You’ll have an opportunity to share or assist a colleague with a current issue that is being experienced. This will be an interactive process providing colleagues with time to listen and work with your professional peers.

Later Friday morning, Senator Brian Langley and Representative Victoria Kornfield will share highlights from the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee. Other members of this Committee have also been invited to attend this late morning session.

The Convocation is developed for you, our members, to provide networking and professional learning opportunities for you in your leadership role.

Registration is open now. Online registration information has been sent to your Administrative Assistant. Should you wish early bird hotel registration click [here](#) to book your hotel room for the 2018 Winter Convocation.

Early bird Hotel Registration is open only until Wednesday, December 27.



## MSSA Mission Statement

*The Maine School Superintendents Association (MSSA) is an organization that is committed to leadership:*

- Leadership to provide equity, create opportunities for and promote the success of every student;
- Leadership to develop ethical, visionary and competent leaders by
  - Offering professional learning opportunities for leaders
  - Promoting community and legislative support for education
  - Providing member services

### Core Values and Beliefs

We believe members shall:

- Maintain high expectations for all students, staff and ourselves
- Advocate for resources essential to student learning
- Act with integrity and model professional behavior
- Champion the advancement of public education

### President's Message

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guide and document students' pathways to college, career, and life readiness!

**Maine legislative representatives - both at the national and state level** – Thank you to all who have supported public education and Maine students and schools. Your job is not an easy one and the many competing issues you face make decision making complicated. I am thankful to those who stay the course in prioritizing the importance of educating our youth well.

**MSSA** – It is an honor and privilege to work with all of you. You inspire me and keep me focused on the joyful parts of our work. At times critics want to label superintendents in less than respectful ways; I totally disagree with these labels. Maine superintendents work tirelessly to improve efficiency and effectiveness of Maine schools and the results are incredibly impressive. Furthermore, 104 districts are researching potential next steps to find even more than the hundreds of ways we currently collaborate!

**MSMA** – Steve, Vicki, Terry and the rest of the staff are only a phone call away at any time, any day. Your continual support, guidance, leadership, and pleasant style are most appreciated for the little things and for the big things.

Yes, I am thankful for these and many other things in 2017 and I look forward to our work together in 2018.

*Happy Holidays and Happy New Years!*

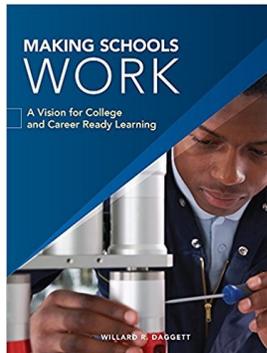
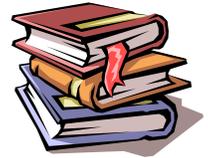
Sincerely,  
Betsy

## On the Bookshelf

### Making Schools Work

**A Vision for College and Career Ready Learning**

By Willard R. Daggett



From the back cover:

Why are some districts and schools capable of making systemwide changes that align education to the demands of the twenty-first century, while others stay stuck in the past? Why aren't more schools innovating and keeping pace with the rapidly changing world in which tomorrow's adults will live and work?

These are the questions to which Dr. Bill Daggett—nationally recognized education thought leader and advisor to education, government, and business leaders—has devoted his career. He learned early on that answers to these questions are not static; they must evolve as the world evolves around us.

In *Making Schools Work: A Vision for College and Career Ready Learning*, Dr. Daggett shares his latest observations of educators taking bold steps to instruct students for this century—one shaped by technological advancements and globalization. These educators grasp that they must prepare students not just for college, but also for careers—careers that are yet to exist.

Educators at today's most rapidly improving schools understand that a future-focused vision is fundamental to making student-centered decisions systemwide. Dr. Daggett outlines the six core values that underpin the vision at these leading-edge schools, as well as frameworks to fold them into your own district, school, and classrooms.

Students remain our most important focus and our greatest hope for a better future. In a changing and often confusing world, *Making Schools Work* shows the way forward.

## Upcoming Legislative Session

Senators and representatives will return to Augusta on Jan. 3 to begin what is known as the short session of the Legislature, which is supposed to wrap up its business by mid-April.

There are some key bills that will be heard affecting education, including some carried over from last session and new proposals.

The list includes:

### **Carry-Over Bills**

- LD 40, "An Act to Strengthen Requirements for Water Testing for Schools" is about testing for lead in water in schools that are on public water supplies i.e. they don't have their own wells. Schools with wells already have to

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## Running the Store

### AASA State Executives Meeting November 29-December 2, 2017

Acting MSSA Executive Director Steve Bailey attended the AASA Running the Store winter meeting with State Executives from nearly 40 other states during the end of November. On Thursday, five new State Execs from Maine, Connecticut, Tennessee, Rhode Island and Wyoming met with the Association of State Executives officers to learn tips and strategies for running an effective state superintendents' organization. The second and third days were spent learning and sharing legislative advocacy information and tips from AASA lobbyists, gaining greater insights on the legal ins and outs of running a not for profit professional support organization, and seeing how Nebraska has developed a strong "I love Public Schools" campaign through video documentaries and reporting. The NE loves Public Schools effort is built around the concept of Engaging Advocacy Through Storytelling. Acting Executive Director Bailey will continue work with MSSA leadership to explore how Maine can develop similar strategies to get out the messages of our strong Maine students and schools.

The meeting was a very effective means to get to know the executives from the other states, learn of challenges and strategies to combat these challenges, and gain from the years of experience brought to the meeting by others. The State Executives will meet again at the AASA National Conference on Education in Nashville, TN being held this year February 15-17, 2018.

### SPED task force nearing final recommendations

The Special Education Task Force, created by law to look at cost drivers and innovative approaches, will be presenting its findings to the Education Committee when the Legislature convenes in 2018, with a focus on early intervention for all students, increased emphasis on reading skills and ways to make sure staff and other resources are focused on helping all children learn.

A general theme was the need to break down the silos between regular education and special education and treat public education as one system for all students.

The group, whose members have strong backgrounds in the field, held five meetings since mid-October.

The task force included two special education directors – Katherine Cox of South Portland and Lesley Snyder from RSU 87 in Carmel; special education teacher, Jill Watson of Maranacook; parent advocate, Carrie Woodcock of Maine Parent Federation and student advocate, Lynn Maddocks of Dedham; Business Manager Andrea Disch of MSAD 11 in Gardiner; Principal Jennifer McGee from Atwood Primary in Oakland; RSU 17 Oxford Hills Supt. Rick Colpitts; and, RSU 12 Sheepscot Valley School Board Chair Jerry Nault.

The task force was chaired by Education Committee Chair Sen. Brian Langley, R-Hancock, and committee member, Rep. Richard Farnsworth, D-Portland. The bill that created it was sponsored by Education Committee House Chair Tori Kornfield, D-Bangor.

The group's work was informed by guest speakers including RSU 21 Supt. Dr. Katie Hawes, a former special education director, who spoke of the importance of early intervention for all students, which has proven to reduce the number identified as having special needs.

Foundational work for the task force was presented by Dr. Amy Johnson, director of the Maine Education Policy Research Institute at USM, who co-authored the MEPRI Report: "Analysis of the Essential Programs and Services Special Education Cost Component" written in 2016. Click [here](#) to read.

Nathan Levenson, a nationally known expert in the field, also came to Maine to present his work and theories on best practices – focusing again on early intervention for all students; putting the best teachers in front of all students; and an emphasis on reading skills in the earliest grades. The task force was first introduced to his work through his paper, "Something Has Got to Change: Rethinking Special Education." To read the paper click [here](#).

At its final meeting on Dec. 19, task force members submitted recommendations, which ultimately will be culled into an action plan. The general concerns shared by many include:

#### Staffing Needs/Shortages

- Look at starting teacher salaries
- Grow your own
- Career path for ed techs to be teachers
- Lack of available specialists
- Regional collaboration

#### Align State and Federal Regulations

- Chapter 101 (state) can be streamlined
- Eliminate redundancy
- Reduce paperwork requirements

#### Enhance Response to Intervention (RTI)

- Pull RTI out of Chapter 101
- RTI is a system for all students
- Look at resources
- Consider a per student allocation for RTI

#### Facilitate MaineCare Billing

- More training needed on billing
- Seed money major concern

#### Miscellaneous

- Make sure one-on-one is appropriate
- Work toward student independence
- Impact of moving CDS into schools

# Mark Your Calendar



EVENT	VENUE	DATE	
<b>MSSA 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Winter Convocation</b>	Marriott at Sable Oaks South Portland, Maine	1/18-1/19/18	<a href="#">More info</a>
<b>2018 AASA National Conference on Education— Education in the Digital Age</b>	Nashville Convention Center Nashville, Tennessee	2/15-2/17/18	<a href="#">More info</a>
<b>2018 Women’s Leadership Conference NJ</b>	Forsgate Country Club Monroe Township, NJ	3/15-3/16/2018	<a href="#">More info</a>

## Upcoming Legislative Session

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test their water. The plan right now is to work with the state’s Drinking Water Program (part of DHHS) and design something that works. The problem in Maine is not with water mains, but most often with fixtures, like faucets and bubblers, and pipes connected with lead solder. The bill is before the Health and Human Services Committee. MSBA and MSSA last session testified we need to test, but also need a reasonable protocol and access to funding if major renovation is needed.

- LD 1331, “An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Recapitalize the School Revolving Renovation Fund”, would put \$20 million into the revolving renovation fund and that could help with the lead bill and other needs.
- LD 1562, “An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Capitalize a Career and Technical Revolving Equipment and Renovation Fund” asks for \$10 million to help capitalize equipment purchases for CTE programs and improve CTE buildings.

## **New Bills**

- An Act to Repeal Certain Provisions Regarding System Administration Allocation Affecting Maine School Districts in the 2018-2019 Biennial Budget” was put in by Senator Troy Jackson, D-Aroostook, to repeal the cuts to system administration funding currently tied to participation in School Management Leadership Centers.
- “An Act to Ensure the Successful Implementation of Proficiency-based Diplomas by Extending the Timing for Phasing in Their Implementation” is being sponsored by Rep. Tori Kornfield, D-Bangor, to extend the timeline for requiring proficiency in all the Learning Results. Under current law, this year’s freshman class is supposed to be proficient in the core four – English, Math, Science and Social Studies – by the time they graduate in 2021. The remaining standards are supposed to be phased in through a 2025 deadline.
- The push for allowing guns on school property is back. “An Act Regarding the Prohibition on the Possession of a Fire Arm” is being sponsored by Rep. John Martin, D-Eagle Lake. The bill likely will mirror a bill defeated last year. That bill said the prohibition on the possession of a firearm on public school property does not apply to a person who possesses a firearm in a motor vehicle while dropping off or picking up a student. MSBA and MSSA have supported keeping the bright line on prohibiting guns on school property.
- “An Act to Restore Maine’s School-based Health Centers”, sponsored by Rep. James Handy, D-Lewiston, is in response to the elimination of funds for school-based health centers that was done at the last minute as part of the biennial budget negotiations.
- Two bills have been submitted by the administration around Career and Technical Education (CTE), with the goal of running CTE funding through the EPS formula, versus funding based on prior expenditures. The two titles are An Act To Amend Career and Technical Education Statutes and An Act Concerning Membership in Career and Technical Education Regions and Centers.



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

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