

# NEWSLETTER

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*"Better Schools for Maine Students"*

Volume 49, Number 1, September 2016

## President's Message

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the 2016-2017 school year. I am amazed at how quickly the first month of school flies by once the schools are filled with students and staff, and our calendars become filled with events, Board meetings, and our many other activities!



While the results of many activities and events (elections) are unknown, the certainty and stability that we can provide to our students are very important factors in the success of our collective school years. As we begin each new September, positive routines help create stability for our students. They feel safe in our presence; they know we are working to help their individual interests; and they feel the warmth and support of those around helping them to succeed.

I always like the start of each new school year. It is a re-birth each and every year. Energy is high, anticipation is great, supports are in place, and optimism at a peak. It's like the start to every Red Sox season I can remember (all the way back to the late 50's)! I also like to think of the great good that each of you do in your systems to make your district ready for each new school year. What a dedicated group of professionals we have in our organization! I continue to be amazed at what you take on, the challenges that you face and the skill with which you navigate the difficult situations that face us all. Kudos to you as you start this new year. As the leader of your district, not only do you have that awesome responsibility, you are to be recognized and applauded for all you do to support students in your district. You are the prime *Champion* for each and every student in your schools - not always appreciated or acknowledged, but certainly so true!

As we start this school year, I have become aware of what I think can be a terrific opportunity for some of our students who may not have the same advantage as others in our schools. The Maine Children's Alliance, along with other partner organizations, including our AASA, the Superintendents Association, has access to resources to help students without insurance get coverage. The **Insure All Children** initiative is an effort to provide coverage to those who don't have it. With the changes in Maine for those families who can (or cannot) access MaineCare, there was a change from 2012 to 2015 that showed a decrease in the MaineCare enrollment of children

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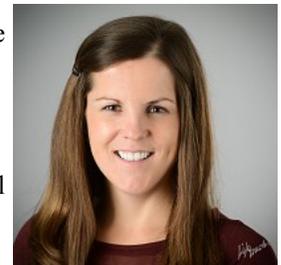
## MSSA Annual Fall Meeting October 26



The Annual Fall Meeting of the Maine School Superintendents Association will be held on Wednesday, October 26, in the Augusta/Capitol/Pine Tree Rooms at the Augusta Civic Center. David Schuler, past president of AASA and current superintendent of Township High School District 2014 in Illinois, with a student enrollment of 12,300, will be our keynote speaker.

His topic will be defining college, career and life ready and it will be followed by work sessions on the topic. For a preview of Dr. Schuler's work log onto: [www.redefiningready.org/](http://www.redefiningready.org/).

The afternoon session will be presented by Noelle Ellerson, Associate Executive Director, Policy and Advocacy for AASA. Ellerson directs the legislative and advocacy efforts of AASA in Congress and the U.S. Department of Education and is well versed in all the developing aspects of ESSA. In addition to up to the minute ESSA updates, Ellerson will address school leader's roles in effective advocacy as we share information to various groups.



Noelle Ellerson

[Agenda & Registration Form](#)

## MSMA Annual Fall Conference October 27 & 28



Miranda Beard

This year's 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual MSMA Fall Conference will celebrate the achievements of Maine schools under the theme of "Public Education: The Gold Standard" focusing on progress toward major initiatives and effective school governance.

The conference runs over two days, Thursday, Oct. 27, and Friday Oct. 28, at the Augusta Civic Center. The keynotes are NSBA President Miranda Beard and well known labor and school attorney Harry Pringle of Drummond Woodsum who helped shape school law in Maine.

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## 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

## For a Leader...

*We are preparing kids for THEIR future and not for OUR past.*

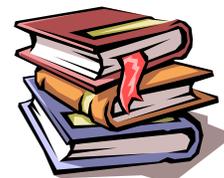
~Bill Daggett, Ed.D., Founder and Chairman of the International Center for Leadership in Education

*A true leader has the confidence to stand alone, the courage to make tough decisions, and the compassion to listen to the needs of others. He does not set out to be a leader, but becomes one by the equality of his actions and the integrity of his intent.*

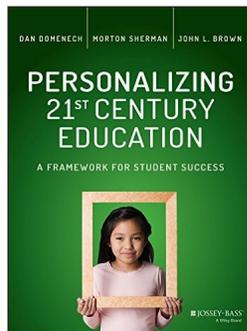
~Douglas MacArthur (1880-1964), American five-star general and field marshal of the Philippine Army

## On the Bookshelf

### Personalizing 21st Century Education: A Framework for Student Success



**By Dan Domenech, Morton Sherman and John L. Brown**



This book begins with the authors overreaching questions, “How can we raise the level of personalization in education so that each and every child learns to the highest, deepest and broadest possible levels? What existing models might we look to for guidance, insight and inspiration?”

Important chapters include *A vision for personalized learning*, *Personalizing the system not just the classroom*, *Teaching and Learning in a personalized school environment* and *Making Assessment meaningful in 21st Century School Systems*.

Notable is the teaching aspect of the book. In Chapter 2 each of the ‘ten building blocks of a successful personalized 21st Century educational system’ is clearly explained followed by sections on:

- Vision
- Current reality
- Implementation steps
- Push back and predictable resistance

Refreshing too are the *Answers to ten common questions about Personalization* in the Epilogue.

Dr. Mark Edwards, Superintendent of the Mooreville, N.C. Schools, says of the book, "Creating school environments where students are 'leading their own learning' is a powerful focus of *Personalizing 21st Century Education*. This compelling yet practical book provides readers with the foundation and motivation to move personalized learning to the top of the agenda!"

## WELCOME TO OUR COLLEAGUES

As the new school year opens we are pleased to welcome the following new superintendents and assistant superintendents:

<u>Name</u>	<u>District</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>District</u>
Cynthia Alexander, Asst. Supt	RSU 05	Jane McCall, Asst. Supt	RSU 39
Xavier Botana, Supt	Portland	Jonathan Moody, Asst. Supt	RSU 54/MSAD 54
Kimberly Brandt, Supt	MSAD 52	Paul Penna, Interim Supt	MSAD 06
James Chasse, Supt	School Union 60	Christopher Record, Asst. Supt	Gorham
Pam Doyen, Asst. Supt	RSU 10	Jonathan Ross, Supt	Acton
Christian Elkington, Supt	School Union 76/Isle Au Haut	Michael Roy, Asst. Supt	MSAD 06
Becky Foley, Supt	RSU 05	Stacy Shorey, Supt	RSU 68/MSAD 68
Meredith Higgins, Asst. Supt	AOS 43	Jean Skorapa, Asst. Supt	RSU 03
Julie Kukenberger, Supt	Scarborough	John Suttie, Supt	RSU 23
Peter Lancia, Supt	Westbrook	Michael Tracy, Interim Supt	RSU 26

## 2016 Commissioner's Conference

Title 20-A, Maine Education and School Statutes Subchapter 2, Section 254-4 states, "Annually the commissioner shall hold a conference for the instruction of superintendents." More commonly referred to as the "Commissioner's Conference," this year it was held at the Bangor Cross Center, June 26<sup>th</sup> through the 28<sup>th</sup>.

The program, developed by DOE staff and Deputy Commissioner Beardsley, was a mix of national and state presenters (Catherine Barbour, Carmen Coleman and David Silvernail) as well as Department of Education staff. It was a combination of large group and smaller breakout sessions as well as individual technical assistance in the areas of school finance, transportation, construction and certification.



Deputy Commissioner Beardsley

Following tradition, the Sunday evening banquet was followed by the MSSA honors and recognition.

### Honorees included:

**Superintendent Service Awards:** Henry Aliberti, Jr., Lloyd Crocker, Kenneth Coville, John Davis, Marc Gendron, Deryl Holt, David Morrill, William E. Pullen

**Longevity Awards—15 years:** Donn S. Davis, Fern M.Y. Desjardins, Eric L. Haley, Dr. Betsy M. Webb; **25 years:** William P. Braun, Emil P. Genest; **30 years:** John Backus

**2016 Outstanding Leadership Awards:** James S. Boothby, James D. Hodgkin, Eileen K. King, Scott K. Porter, Gary Newell Smith

**2016 President's Award:** Susan A. Pratt

**2016 Distinguished Service Award:** Rep. Paul A. Stearns

To read Representative Stearns thank you click [here](#).

For more photos from the Commissioner's Conference click [here](#).

### Fall Conference

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Harry Pringle

### Keynotes

NSBA President Beard will be the keynote on Thursday morning talking about how her life influenced her desire and decision to be active in board service. In addition to her national duties at NSBA, Beard is president of the Laurel School District Board of Trustees and past president of the Mississippi School Boards Association. She also will conduct a clinic on building stronger communities through board service.

Attorney Pringle will share his reflections gleaned from 40 years of working with Maine school boards and superintendents. Pringle was co-founder of the school law practice at Drummond Woodsum and represented schools on an array of issues, ranging from labor law to special education to civil rights. He was the attorney for school boards in leading court decisions that helped shape the course of school law in Maine.

### Clinics

There are more than 50 clinics scheduled; 19 from attorneys skilled in school law. The legal clinics will focus on a range of issues, including protecting students from sexual harassment; an update on school unit de-consolidation; understanding the rights of transgendered students; employee political speech; what teacher evaluation systems can and cannot achieve; and the legal year in review.

Outside of the legal arena, there are clinics planned on effective strategies to reduce absenteeism; summer school for incoming kindergartners; making the change to a later school start time; supporting proficiency-based teaching; collaborative strategic planning; and, an update on the new Major Capital School Construction rating cycle, as part of an array being offered by Department of Education staff.

The DOE also will be doing one-to-one conferences on a variety of subjects ranging from finance and data access to school transportation, school construction and child nutrition.

Conference registration should be made through the superintendent's office.

## Welcome Back

*As sure as the calendar turns to September, our schools open their doors for another year of learning. Along with that comes the pressure on school leaders to ensure a smooth start. Are all the buses ready to roll? Are we fully staffed? Have we created the year's meeting schedule? And perhaps 100 other questions are moving through your thoughts. As the following article by Jennifer Abrams highlights, remember to add, "How can I pace myself?" to your list of questions.*

### Pace Yourself

Happy September! We're off! Out of the gate. Running fast.

Endorphins are kicking in. Adrenalin is rushing. We are flying high. Until we start to sputter. It's an inelegant way to say it, but we poop out. We can't keep up this pace. Emotionally. Psychologically. We need to take a nap.

One of my friends, John, had mentioned in an email I read as I was moving fast, teaching daily and flying across several time zones per week, "Pace yourself." I thought, "Yeah, yeah...I'm fine. Thanks for the reminder. Not needed, but thanks for the thought."

And then the thought became reality. I got snippy with a participant in a session. The title of the session? Identity Safe Classrooms. Yes, seriously. Of all of the workshops I could have been facilitating that day, Identity Safe Classrooms was the one. It was right after morning break. It was a silly moment. I said something aloud unnecessarily. In front of everyone. (Grimace.)

Pow. "Pace yourself" hit me straight on. On a Friday morning—after a long week—and there I was...not my best adult self. In THAT session of all sessions. Oy. Nothing like irony...

And when the participant called me on it when I went up to his table, he was right. I hadn't paced myself. I just didn't have the emotional stamina to handle the moment as maturely as I should have. Ugh. I hate admitting I am human. No fun.

We think at the start of school we are invincible. We're fine. We had a good summer. A fun time. A restful vacation. And then we find out we don't have the stamina we thought we had. We need to pace. It's the beginning of the school year—full of many adventures, and Monday mornings, and learnings. Breathe deep. It's just the beginning, folks.

Sleep. Hydrate. Eat well. Walk. Practice extreme self-care. Meditate. Take naps when you can. Go easy, my fellow travelers.

Reprinted courtesy of Jennifer Abrams

REMINDER: Jennifer Abrams is the Maine Principals' Association workshop speaker September 27th and 28th, 2016.

Please click [here](#) for links to the agenda and registration.

### President's Message

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aged 0-17 of 11,000 or a 7.6% decrease. The uninsured rate of children ages 0-17 from 2010 to 2015 increased from 4.4% to 6.5%. Healthy children are better students and can learn more efficiently and more effectively. County by county, the percentage of students without health coverage is from 6-12% with an average in the high 8%. The Maine Children's Alliance is in position to help families navigate the challenges of accessing health coverage. Children can still gain coverage through MaineCare though the parents may not be eligible. Through community resources, help can be given and students can receive the helpful benefits that coverage can provide. Eric Buch of Maine Children's Alliance will be contacting the presidents of our regional superintendent associations to schedule a time to speak more about this initiative.

Additionally, Dan Domenech of AASA notes that "for the past five years, AASA has partnered with the Children's Defense Fund (CDF) to support the **Insure All Children** effort. AASA has just launched "**Happy, Healthy and Ready to Learn: Insure All Children**" a toolkit on how schools and communities can enroll students in healthcare coverage through routine school registration processes. To access this, visit [www.insureallchildren.org](http://www.insureallchildren.org).

There are many other important educational initiatives we have on our plates this year: initiation of ESSA, follow through on Proficiency-based Education; PEPG implementation and all that entails, along with each of the individual district areas of focus that you have. Another is to ensure communication with our elected officials who represent our districts in Augusta. Being clear communicators with them as to the benefits or concerns with proposed legislation will go a long way to being strong advocates for our students and our community of learners.

Best wishes to you on a great start to the school year. I hope to see you all at the MSSA Fall Meeting on October 26. As a preview, in the morning, we will have the privilege of hearing from David Schuler, Past President of AASA, who will present on the Redefining Ready (college, career & life) national initiative. More information on this topic can be found at [www.redefiningready.org](http://www.redefiningready.org). In the afternoon, Noelle Ellerson, the Associate Executive Director of AASA dealing with Policy and Advocacy, will be with us to speak about updates to ESSA and advocacy at the local, state and national level. It promises to be a great day. See you soon.

# Mark Your Calendar



EVENT	VENUE	DATE	
2016 Annual MSSA Fall Meeting	Augusta Civic Center Augusta, Maine	10/26/16	<a href="#">More info</a>
43 <sup>rd</sup> Annual MSMA Fall Conference	Augusta Civic Center Augusta, Maine	10/27-10/28/16	<a href="#">More info</a>
Leveraging Learning Institute	Hilton Garden Inn Riverwatch Auburn, Maine	11/9-11/10/16	<a href="#">More info</a>
2017 AASA National Conference on Education	Ernest N. Morial Convention Center New Orleans, Louisiana	3/2-3/4/17	<a href="#">More info</a>

## New Superintendent/Assistant Superintendent Meetings

- ◆ **November 16<sup>th</sup>** (Wednesday)  
Topics: Budget Development/ ED 279/ Case study
- ◆ **March 14<sup>th</sup>** (Tuesday) Topics: Negotiations/ Case Study

### Follow us on Twitter and Facebook!

**Twitter:** @msma207

**Facebook:** “Like” our [Maine School Management Association page](#) and send us a “friend request” on our [MSMA page](#).

## AASA News

AUGUST 31, 2016

[AASA Statement on Supplement-Supplant Regulations](#)

AUGUST 31, 2016

[Obama Administration Encourages Schools and Districts to Enroll Students in Healthcare Coverage through School Registration](#)

AUGUST 29, 2016

[AASA Issues Statement on the 2016 PDK Poll](#)

AUGUST 26, 2016

[AASA, Howard University to Host 2nd Annual Urban Superintendents Summit](#)

AUGUST 18, 2016

[Media Advisory: AASA, Howard University to host 2nd Annual Urban Supts. Summit](#)

AUGUST 02, 2016

[School District Leaders Earn National Superintendent Certification](#)

JULY 26, 2016

[School District Leaders Convene in Chicago for AASA’s Digital Consortium](#)



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

You can contact me, MSSA Acting Executive Director Elaine Tomaszewski at [etomaszewski@msmaweb.com](mailto:etomaszewski@msmaweb.com).