

MASC/MASS JOINT CONFERENCE 2023



Register now!

**Conference
Updates**

November 8-10, 2023

Emerald Resort/Cape Cod Irish Village, Hyannis

(formerly the Resort and Conference Center at Hyannis)

www.masc.org

REGISTER NOW

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION: WWW.MASC.ORG

Meal Registrations: don't forget to sign up for meals when you register for the conference. If you are registered as an early bird, check that you are also registered for meals.

Hotel Reservations: **Reservations must be made directly through the hotel.** The hotel reservation link can be accessed on the **MASC website www.masc.org** on the conference page.

#MASCMAS23

Program at a Glance

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8

Collaborative Schools Meeting: 10:30am-Noon

Meet and greet your Collaborative colleagues from across the state. A follow-up to last year's gathering, this session will provide a forum for you to network with other collaboratives' board members and to increase your knowledge of MOEC as an entity. A brief presentation will be provided about the work of MOEC on your collaborative's behalf.

PANEL SESSION I: 12:30-1:40pm

• Leading for Equity: Cultivating Culturally Responsive Leaders and Schools

This session will introduce DESE and MASS resources developed over the past two years that explicitly work to build culturally responsive leadership and community in our districts and schools. Panelists will discuss the opportunities and challenges of this work within the current social and political context.

• Leading in the Age of Climate Change: How Districts Can Build and Fund Healthy, Sustainable, Carbon Free Schools

Schools across Massachusetts are looking to create healthier learning environments for students and staff while saving money, enhancing efficiency and resilience, and achieving sustainability goals. In this session, you will hear from districts who succeeded in building net zero schools. Why did they choose this pathway? What challenges did they face and how did they overcome those challenges?

• Wrap-around Services that Strengthen Alliances between Families and Schools

In recent years, needs of students, families, and school districts have shifted from supporting basic needs and short-term interventions and support to supporting mental health needs and school re-entry, while also continuing to support basic needs and facilitating community connections. This presentation will discuss the Family Success Partnership model, and how supports have shifted to align with current needs

• Getting Started with DEI: One District's Pathway to Learning and Decision-Making

The Chelmsford School Committee will walk participants through their process for learning about, starting, and continuing the work on DEI, and the role the school committee plays in decision-making and providing resources to promote a more welcoming and racially equitable PreK-12 education system.

• Basics of Policy

Come and learn how to incorporate regular policy

manual review into your committee work, the difference between policy and procedure, and who is responsible for what.

• Role of the Chair

In this session presenters will discuss the administrative aspects of the job, such as planning the agenda and running the meeting. They will also discuss the relationship side of the job, such as facilitating communication, working with the superintendent and helping your committee work as a team.

• Addressing the Unique Challenges of Regional Schools

Revenue analysis, budget planning and management, and transportation in regional districts are often different compared with municipal districts, for example, in E&D and stabilization. Learn how to address those unique challenges to deploy efficiencies that result in greater availability of time and money for direct services to students.

PANEL SESSION II: 1:50-3:00pm

• Let's get REAL: A Comprehensive Approach to Race, Equity, Access and Leadership

Needham Public Schools' REAL Coalition meets several times per year to address challenges, check in on district progress toward prioritized goals, and deepen members' understanding of issues related to race, equity, and access as a leadership group. Panelists will discuss current initiatives that support equity and inclusion.

• Toward a Better MCAS

MCAS is undoubtedly in need of important revisions – as DESE's recently released report "Toward a Better MCAS: Consensus Recommendations from Organizations Serving the Commonwealth's Students" cites. This panel will engage in discussions about the value of common state standardized assessments as a tool for equity as well impactful and feasible changes to make it more helpful and efficient tool for school leaders, teachers, students, and families.

• Get on the Bus—for Transportation Cost Savings and Better Customer Service

Many districts are studying the benefits of moving from contracted service to district-operated student transportation. This decision may not work for everyone, but the Worcester Public Schools completed this transition last year and will share their journey and success for a full district operated transportation system. Leave the session with the tools necessary to start the analysis for your own district.

• Getting the Message Right during a Crisis

This panel discussion will highlight the importance of having a strong communications strategy and plan in place for your district when a crisis strikes and the school committee's crucial role in that plan.

- **Hiring Staff in a Competitive Environment**

How do school districts compete with private industry for non-teaching staff given limited budgets and traditional workplace cultures? We think outside the box! Learn tips and tricks for shifting the mindset, setting protocols, and adding flexibilities to help with staff retention as well as attracting new talent for your critical staffing needs.

- **Partnering for Equity in Early Literacy**

Panelists will provide an overview of the early literacy initiatives underway at the state level; and trends happening in many districts statewide to strengthen early literacy.

- **HR: Current Trends in Collective Bargaining**

Leaves, collective bargaining, and other hot topics present a wide variety of challenges. Hear some real-life situations and some tips to help avoid trouble in your district.

- **Stay On Message: Keeping Your Strategic Plan at the Forefront**

In this session, a veteran K-12 communications specialist will share best practices and outline strategies to publicize, promote, and leverage the strategic plan as the core messaging for your district.

- **Legal Issues**

MASC and MASS attorneys will discuss recent parental rights/public comment cases as well as updates on arbitrations/DLR decisions and strike cases.

BUFFET NETWORKING LUNCH: 12:30-1:45pm

ICE CREAM SOCIAL WITH EXHIBITORS: 1:15-2:15pm

GENERAL SESSION: 2:30-3:45pm

Topic: "Transformative Relationships: Best Practices in Long-Term Planning for Equity and Strategic Communications"

Presenter: Darnisa Amante-Jackson, CEO The Disruptive Equity Education Project (DEEP)/lecturer, Harvard Graduate School of Education

- **Follow-up panel to General Session: 4:00-5:00pm**

Moderated by MA Secretary of Education Patrick Tutwiler, a select panel of superintendent/school committee members will react to the General Session presentation from their professional and/or board member experience.

MASC PRESIDENTS' RECEPTION: 5:15-6:30pm

AWARDS DINNER: 6:30pm

Guest Speaker: Danielle Charbonneau, MA Teacher of the Year 2023 (Martha's Vineyard)

2023 Legislators of the Year: To be Announced

MEET YOUR COLLEAGUES SOCIAL: 9:00-midnite

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 10

CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST: 7:00-9:00am

MASC CHARTING THE COURSE NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION: 8:00am-4:00pm

DIVISIONS IX AND X MEETINGS: 8:15-8:45am

GENERAL SESSION: 9:00-10:15am

Topic: Artificial Intelligence: What is its Role in Teaching and Learning?

Presenter: Justin Reich, Director, MIT Teaching Systems Lab

PANEL SESSION VII: 10:30-11:45am

- **Career Readiness: How Blackstone Valley Leveraged Finances, Resources and Talents to Create Opportunities for All**

As MA school districts move forward with diversity, equity, and inclusion work it is critical to ensure new career readiness opportunities for all students. Learn how you can collaborate with communities that surround you in order to increase access for students to diverse opportunities, equitable courses, and inclusive career pathways.

- **Paws for Student Success**

Social/emotional learning is widely recognized as an essential practice for student success. Fitchburg Public School is the first public school district in Massachusetts to include therapy pets as part of regular classroom activity – a need which only expanded during and post-COVID. We will discuss the paws-itive impact of pets in the classroom and schools on students, teachers, and staff.

- **Rural Schools: Unique Mental Health Challenges (and Solutions)**

Rural school districts face unique challenges in supporting the mental health of their students. Panelists will discuss the barriers rural schools are facing, how that compares to other schools in the nation, and how organizations like the JED Foundation and Kyle Cares can support educators in building stronger mental health supports.

- **Your Superintendent has Left: Now What?**

Panelists will discuss how districts can manage effectively and engage in a search process that leads to the best superintendent for the community, including the contract process.

- **Equity in Action: A District's Journey Towards becoming Antiracist**

This session will highlight the work of the Pittsfield Public Schools on their journey to become an antiracist.

LEADERSHIP LUNCH: Noon-1:15pm

Join two leading national and state school board association attorneys who will discuss recent Supreme Court rulings and the impact of those decisions on school districts and K-12 education.

- **Special Education Update**

This session features our legal specialists who navigate that sensitive ground between advocacy, appropriateness, and economics when it comes to students with special needs. Join with a panel of administrators and attorneys to track recent developments, trends and strategies for special education.

- **Building Leadership Capacity and Equity in the School Committee/Superintendent Relationship**

The session will be highly interactive, and attendees will leave with ideas to strengthen the school committee/central office relationship and promote longevity in the central office.

- **Communities Divided: How to Navigate Polarizing Issues**

A veteran K-12 communications specialist will share experiences and strategies to help your district navigate and manage highly politicized issues.

- **Vocational Technical Issues: Part 1**

Leaders from the MA Association of Vocational Administrators and school committee members from our vocational, technical and agricultural schools will engage each other and their colleagues in districts across the state with the important public policy and school administrative issues for their schools.

Part two of the program will include the annual meeting that host leadership elections include for Division VIII.???

PANEL SESSION V: 9:20-10:20am

- **Supporting Culturally Responsive Social Studies with Investigating History**

Investigating History is a free, open-source curriculum developed by DESE, newly released for grades 5 through 7 for the 2023-24 school year, that seeks to engage all students in inquiry-based, culturally affirming, and civically relevant social studies learning. This session will share how the curriculum and professional development are intentionally designed to foster this type of inclusive, equitable instruction.

- **School District Planning and Implementation: The Updated MA IEP Form and Process**

Schools and districts will be required by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to adopt the new IEP in the fall of 2023 or the fall of 2024. This session will provide school committee members with

- a brief overview and rationale for DESE's multi-year IEP Improvement Project;
- the required timeline, and
- policy implications at the local level.

- **System Approach to Supporting Equity in Chelsea Public Schools**

School committee members and central office leaders from Chelsea will share how their equity work is supported from the school committee to the district office and then to schools— with the goal of creating schools where every student is known by name, strength and story. Students

will share how this work is having a direct impact at their school and in their educational experience.

- **Recruiting the Right Superintendent for Your District**

You need a new Superintendent, so how do you set the table for your district's current and future needs? Learn how to assess district needs, craft the job description, and explore and consider candidates with diverse backgrounds that can be a great fit.

- **Addressing Health Care Staffing and Servicing Needs through Partnerships**

The health care needs of the school age population have been accelerating dramatically, yet the pool of available healthcare professionals has shrunk precipitously. Fortunately, models for simultaneously addressing both needs have been emerging among school districts and SCEC healthcare staff members.

- **Understanding Chapter 70**

Often referenced, seldom explained, the Massachusetts formula for funding education is central to how the revenue for your districts is calculated by the state. Come to this session to learn how it works, how it is changing, and what that means for your district.

- **Embedding Equity Work in Partnership with District and Community**

This session will involve district leaders currently advancing equity in their community with their community, as well as field researchers, as they share their experiences, considerations, and approaches toward developing equity mindedness in their districts.

- **Vocational Technical Issues: Part 2**

See Part 1 in the 8:15-9:10am block

PANEL SESSION VI: 11:15am-12:15pm

- **From Equity Audit to Strategic Planning**

Members of the Ayer-Shirley Regional School District will discuss their journey that took them from equity audit to strategic plan, including the stages involved in identifying areas of strength and those needing improvement in terms of diversity, equity, and inclusion, and using the data to inform strategic planning.

- **Partnering with Your Educational Collaborative**

This session will share information about what programs Collaboratives offer and what services they provide to their member and non-member districts.

- **Standards-based Approach for Assessing the Quality of Athletics Programs**

Increasingly, school athletic programs are facing challenges, including poor sportsmanship, hazing, and a win-first perspective not compatible with educationally based programs. Panelists will discuss how standards can be used to support school leadership in developing and maintaining quality school athletic programs.

- **Effective Meetings**

Learn how to plan meetings from a big-picture perspective, considering the important work to accomplish throughout the year. Participants will come away with proven strategies for keeping meetings efficient and focused on student achievement.

- **Cooperation, Consolidation, and Regionalization Efforts**

Come and hear from experts in Berkshire County leading work in the area of small and rural communities interested in improving the quality of education and outcomes for their students by joining forces.

MASC DELEGATE REGISTRATION: 2:15-3:00pm

MASC RESOLUTIONS CLINIC: 2:30pm

EXHIBIT HALL OPENS: 3:00pm

MASC DELEGATE ASSEMBLY: 3:15pm

PANEL SESSION III: 3:15-4:30pm

- **Building Bridges for Equity in Polarizing Times**

Anxiety is a normal biological response to being overwhelmed by the accelerated change we are experiencing related to climate, technology, globalization, demographic change, ethnonationalism, and more. Those anxieties can deepen polarization. Presenters will explore a powerful framework and adaptive practices for bridging between individuals and groups.

- **Implementing a New High-Quality Literacy Curriculum**

Pentucket has made several changes in the past five years with literacy curriculum and systems. It has been a partnership between the School Committee, teachers and administration and has resulted in significant student performance gain. Learn what districts can do to support system changes that will result in stronger literacy outcomes for all students.

- **Electrification of School Bus Fleets**

Interested in electrifying your school bus fleet but not sure where to start? Join the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC) and EPA Region 1 for an overview of the school bus electrification landscape and federal and state funding opportunities for school districts within the Commonwealth.

- **Why Medicaid Funding Matters to Schools**

With historic one-time infusions like ESSER set to expire in 2024, Medicaid funding can help sustain the investments in schools and student health that pandemic-related federal aid made possible. Learn about the School Based Medicaid Program and identify opportunities for growth as well as the infrastructure (i.e., policies & procedures, staff training, etc.) to support district programs.

- **Supporting the Whole Child: Putting Local Wellness Policies into Practice**

Investing time in school wellness helps students thrive in the classroom and community. While many MA schools have a Local Wellness Policy, putting policy into practice can be challenging. Join Massachusetts Safe Routes to Schools and DESE's School Wellness Specialist as they dive into best policy practices around nutrition, physical education, and active transportation.

MASS BUSINESS MEETING: 4:30pm

EXHIBITORS RECEPTION: 5:00-6:30pm

KEYNOTE DINNER: 7:00pm

Guest Speaker: DESE Commissioner Jeffrey Riley

Sponsored by: Comcast

MEET YOUR COLLEAGUES SOCIAL: 9:00-midnight

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 9

CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST WITH EXHIBITORS: 7:00-9:00am

MASC COSCAP PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM: 8:00am-3:30pm

PANEL SESSION IV: 8:15-9:10am

- **Know the Signs for School Violence Prevention**

In this session, you'll hear case studies from MA districts, and learn more about how to train students and educators to recognize the warning signs of a person who may be in crisis and when and how to intervene.

- **Is Virtual Reality Right for our District? Implications of Educational VR for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion**

What is driving schools to adopt VR, and what might its implications be for our most under-served students? What does empirical research tell us about VR's effectiveness for learning? What should educational leaders know about VR? In this session, a VR researcher, an EdTech specialist, and a district leader share their perspectives on these vital questions, and offer a set of guidelines to help schools with VR integration.

- **Providing District-based Daycare for Educators**

Burlington has been providing a daycare for staff since 2009. This session will describe their program from concept to practice and the positive impact it has had on recruitment and retention in the district.

- **Promoting Equity through Social & Emotional Skills**

This interactive session will explore areas which strengthen the social and emotional foundation needed for equity and inclusion, including staff professional development, integrating social emotional learning within academics, data collection and utilization, and the strengthening of district-wide systems and supports.

Division I-VII Meetings: 1:20-2:00pm

PANEL SESSION VIII: 2:15-3:30pm

• Book Banning on the Rise

According to the American Library Association, there were 45 challenges on more than 30 books in school and public libraries. Panelists will share their experiences when they were faced with a petition to ban books.

• Dealing with the MOST DIFFICULT People

Most people expect meetings with civil debate and discussion and respect for the appropriate roles and responsibilities of school committees and superintendents, but this is not always the case. There are strategies and tactics that can help bring about changes in even the most difficult people in the room. This session tackles the worst of them.

• MA School Building Authority: Processes, Initiatives, Funding

Key leaders of the Massachusetts School Building Authority will update attendees on the most effective approaches to working with the MSBA. Focusing on the MSBA processes, new initiatives, explanation of MSBA funding and the various MSBA support program endeavors (Accelerated Repair and Core Program) will be shared and discussed.

• Chair Chat

What happens when board chairs and aspiring chairs from all over the state get together to talk about their roles? Find out at Chair-Chat, a new concept that brings school committee leaders together to share their best practices, skills, and tricks of the trade.

PANEL SESSION IX: 3:45-4:45pm

• Working Effectively with Different and Personal Styles

This session will focus on identifying these different styles and developing strategies to take advantage of the differences and develop one proactive voice.

• Liaising with your PACS

Your special education advisory council and the districts' English Language Learner councils are important vehicles for advocates and policy makers to come together in what is often highly both careful planning sessions or highly charged discussions. Other advisory groups represent the arts, pursuit of diversity, health and wellness. Hear from leaders and members of local PACS to get a sense of best practices and what is happening in the council sessions across the state.

• Parliamentary Procedures

Yes, you can run an orderly meeting. This update on the parliamentary rules for meetings is a must for chairs and those who want to preside.

LIFE MEMBER RECEPTION: 5:00-6:00pm

LIFE MEMBER/LEADERSHIP DINNER: 6:30pm

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