

# MASC/MASS JOINT CONFERENCE

## Conference Updates 2024



**November 6-9, 2024**

**Emerald Resort/  
Cape Cod Irish Village  
Hyannis**

*(formerly the Resort and  
Conference Center at Hyannis)*

**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](http://www.masc.org) on the conference page.

**(Program subject to change)**



## PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 6

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

#### • Addressing the Unique Challenges of Regional Schools

Learn how to address the unique challenges of regional schools (e.g. revenue analysis, budget planning and management, transportation) to deploy efficiencies that result in greater availability of time and money for direct services to students.

#### • A Framework and Approach for Strategic Problem Solving

This session will prepare participants to systemically and strategically identify, plan for, and ultimately solve high leverage, pressing problems in their districts.

#### • Building/Sustaining a Diverse Pipeline of Educators

Presenters from Chelsea will share their strategies and experience leading the state in increasing the district's diversity of educators and leaders.

#### • Addressing Student Digital Media Use to Promote Mental Health

This session will address the risks of digital media use on students' mental health while harnessing its benefits. This session shows how using Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) approach provides a suitable, evidence-based framework for districts to guide students' healthy digital media use.

#### • Basics of Policy

Learn how to incorporate regular policy manual review into your committee work, the difference between policy and procedure, and who is responsible for what.

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

#### • Jump from the Fiscal Cliff (and Sustain Fewer Injuries)

The end of expanded federal funding may mean sunset programs, services, and staff positions. Learn how to maximize continuance of high-impact services and mitigate the loss of supports and capacity.

#### • Navigating Change: Effective Communication Strategies for Operational Overrides

As the state budget decreases and budgets continue to increase, there is growing need for towns to pass operational overrides to keep level service in their schools. Learn strategies on how to best communicate to your constituents why an override is essential.

#### • Walking Together Toward a More Just Education: Equity Audits and Inquiry Cycles in Small and Mid-Sized Districts

This session will present ideas on how to conduct equity inquiry cycles as a continuous and humanizing process

that centers reflection and action to facilitate the process of transformative change in small and mid-sized districts.

#### • Partnering with your Collaborative: Building Capacity for Tier 1 Supports through a Shared Instructional Coaching Model

Learn how eight suburban districts are working individually and in partnership through their local Collaborative to build equitable and inclusive learning communities through a shared instructional coach.

#### • AI Update: Model Policies

This session will present recent developments around AI and education, and the current state of policy development for K-12 schools.

#### • Unlocking the Healing Power of the Arts

Arts for Learning/Massachusetts will showcase the vital role of arts education in schools. Experience interactive activities, engage with stakeholders who have witnessed the impact firsthand, and discover the profound benefits of integrating the arts into educational settings.

#### • The Sense of Belonging: The Role of the School Committee and Superintendents

This interactive workshop presents evidence-based strategies for creating sense of belonging in our schools, and the role school committee members and superintendents can and should play to make sure all students feel welcome in our schools.

#### • Creating Unique Partnerships with High Schools & Job Corps Programs

Learn how the Job Corps program helps students 16-24 years old discover employability strengths and passion while earning credentials and hands on experience to begin a career, whether that be the workforce, apprenticeship, college, military, or advanced trade.

### EXHIBIT HALL OPENS: 3:00pm

### PANEL SESSION III: 3:25-4:30pm

#### • Strategic Planning in a Post-Pandemic World

Dighton-Rehoboth will share its innovative approach to strategic planning using their "Portrait of a Graduate" as the foundation for the process. The presentation will include real-world examples, data-driven outcomes, and insights from teachers, parents, and students.

#### • School Success Stories and Strategies for DEI: Using Walkthroughs to Calibrate and Make Connections between Equity and Inclusive Practices

Learn how the SEEM Collaborative and North Reading School District developed a scaffolded approach that blends Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles with equity best practices to support administrators in implementing DESE's newly updated model rubrics that are designed to integrate and enrich culturally and linguistically sustaining practices.

**• Executive Coaching for Leaders in Education**

This session introduces the essentials of the evidence-based Columbia University framework for leadership coaching. Distinct from, yet complementary to, consulting or content-based support, executive coaching engenders co-created, professional relationships that yield action steps and learning.

**• Overrides: Parachutes from the Fiscal Cliff**

With skyrocketing costs and the end of large-scale federal funding, many districts must look to their towns for increased financial support. Explore Proposition 2 ½ override resources and learn about override do’s and don’ts from colleagues who have traveled that road.

**• Demystifying the Legislative Process: A Guide for School Committees**

This session offers school committee members a clear understanding of the state legislative cycle and its role in shaping education policy. Learn how to navigate the process effectively, ensuring your district’s priorities are both understood and addressed in state legislation.

**• Chair Chat**

For current Chairs and Chairs-in-waiting: Join your fellow Chairs (and Vice Chairs) to talk about strategies and practices for efficient meetings and effective leadership.

**• What Should be in Your Budget**

Your annual budget document is among the most important policy documents adopted by your school committee, but what should it contain? This session will cover what should be included in your annual budget document, and the benefits districts have found in having a more comprehensive document.

**• Courts and Schools**

An update provided by MASC General Counsel on recent and pending state and federal rulings that impact education process and polity.

**MASS BUSINESS MEETING: 4:30pm**

**EXHIBITORS RECEPTION: 5:00-6:30pm**

**KEYNOTE DINNER: 7:00pm**

**Guest Speaker:** DESE Interim Commissioner Russell Johnston

**Sponsored by:** KP Law



**MEET YOUR COLLEAGUES SOCIAL: 9:00-midnite**

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7**

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

**PRODUCT SHOWCASE SESSIONS: 7:45-8:30am**

**GENERAL SESSION: 8:45-10:00am**

**Topic:** The Dignity Index: How do We Talk to Each Other (with Dignity) When We Disagree?

**Presenter:** Timothy Shriver, Co-Creator/CEO, The Dignity Project

**COFFEE WITH EXHIBITORS: 10:30-10:45am**

**PANEL SESSION IV: 10:45-Noon**

**• Unveiling Cyber Threats: What Your Tech Director Hopes You Stay Blissfully Unaware Of!**

Cybersecurity isn’t just for tech nerds; it’s for everyone who doesn’t want their personal data floating around the dark corners of the internet. Takeaways from this session can help your district avoid a data-leak disaster.

**• Cultivating Positive School Environments: A Holistic Approach to Tier 1 Mental Health Education**

Participants will gain insights into comprehensive and preventative interventions designed to positively impact students, educators, coaches, and caregivers, fostering collaboration and trust within the school community.

**• Using Data to Inform School Budgets and Policy**

The MA Education-to-Career Research and Data Hub (E2C Hub) works with DESE on data and tools to help you compare programs, evaluate investments, and understand trends in your district and across the state. Learn about powerful new tools and how data can give you a fuller picture of your district performance.

**• School and Municipal Collaboration: Supporting Common Goals**

Learn key partnering strategies and tactics through one budget cycle for both a city and a town to create common understanding, develop awareness, and model high-quality governance in your locality.

**• Special Education Update**

This popular session identifies some of the significant current challenges for special educators and their students and reports on trends in public policy that will impact children, faculty and families.

**• Therapy Pets in Schools: Be Pawsitive**

Visit with therapy pets at the Conference and learn how pets in the schoolroom can help students with reading and social/emotional issues. Share a moment of furry serenity while you’re here!

**• Mentoring New School Committee Members**

Ensuring new members are ready to hit the ground running can help keep your committee on track after election season. Learn how Nashoba Tech has been successfully bringing new committee members on board.

**BUFFET NETWORKING LUNCH: Noon-1:30pm**

**ICE CREAM SOCIAL WITH EXHIBITORS: 1:00-2:15pm**

## **PANEL SESSION V: 2:30-3:45pm**

### **• Leadership Stability for Positive Outcomes in Urban and Suburban Districts**

In this interactive session, panelists from Needham and Taunton will focus on the important relationship between the school committee and the superintendent and discuss how they have supported the positive cultures that both districts have enjoyed over the years.

### **• Engaging your Newcomer Students**

While the state's decisions on newcomer families have been making headlines, rarely have those working in districts with newcomer students been heard from. Listen to those creating community, grappling with challenges, leveraging the cultural richness of newcomers as community assets, and expanding the capacities of their districts.

### **• Green Today, Blue Tomorrow: One District's Effort to Reimagine Learning is their Solution to Sustainability.**

Falmouth Public Schools (FPS) is a 2024 National Green Ribbon School District. As part of the coastal Cape Cod region, FPS accepts the imperative to educate all students to be stewards of Falmouth's future.. Learn how the district is making investments that are leading to innovation and forward progress that will be the community's legacy.

### **• Current Trends in Collective Bargaining**

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

### **• Update on Title IX**

Significant changes have been proposed and implemented under the Title IX program. In addition, legal challenges to regulatory changes may affect how they are implemented. Experts on the law and regulations will explain where school committee members and educators will need to pay close attention and update their current policies.

### **• Proactive Political Leaders in the Superintendency**

This interactive session will introduce and explore research-based framework that describes the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of a politically astute superintendent, with a focus on proactive leadership skills. Presenters will also discuss implications for superintendent support and practice.

### **• Leading with your PACS**

SEPACs, MLPACs, and ELPACs are an invaluable resource. This panel will review what PACs are and how school committees can work with their members to develop policies and practices that represent all stakeholders.

### **• Vocational Issues Update**

Presenters will review important public policy and administrative issues impacting vocational technical and agricultural schools in Massachusetts.

## **PANEL SESSION VI: 4:00-5:15pm**

### **• School Budgeting: School Committee Authority/Fiscal Responsibilities**

While state law is clear that the role of the school committee is to "review and approve budgets," it can be less clear, as the year goes along, what that entails. This session will review the role of the school committee in district finance, looking particularly at frequent questions from members.

### **• Engaging Families and Communities Living with Poverty**

Learn the science and the hidden impact of poverty on the brain, body, and behavior. With more knowledge about poverty's impact, we can find more effective ways to help our students and families living in the crisis of poverty.

### **• Securing Top-Notch School Finance Leaders: Strategies that Work**

Elevate your district's financial leadership by learning proven strategies to attract, hire, and retain exceptional school business officials. Presenters will share actionable tips for crafting compelling job descriptions, conducting interviews that identify top talent, and structuring competitive compensation packages.

### **• Building Bridges: Innovative Partnerships between K-12 and Higher Education to Address Critical Educator Shortages**

This session will spotlight a successful partnership between American International College (AIC) and Springfield Public Schools (SPS) and other districts in Massachusetts, addressing critical educator shortages and emergency licensing challenges.

### **• Unlocking the Power of the Collaborative Relationship: What an Educational Collaborative Is (and Isn't) and how to Tap into the Benefits of your District's Membership**

Learn how MA collaboratives work to bring school districts together to cooperatively undertake ways to strengthen school districts and expand their capacity.

### **• When Rules Apply to Everyone - School Circulation Design**

Join MassDOT's Safe Routes to School program as we identify best practices in exterior circulation design using policy, site planning, and education.

### **• The Role of the School Librarian and Current Challenges to the Right to Read**

School Librarians explain the importance and value of their work helping students experience and benefit from resources they oversee. This session also explores many important aspects of their work that are not well known and how the current challenges to books and practices affects their work.



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

**LEADERSHIP DINNER: 6:30pm**

**Sponsored by Someone**

**Guest Speaker: Jimmy Tingle**

**MEET YOUR COLLEAGUES SOCIAL: 9:00-midnite**

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**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 8**

**CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST: 7:00-9:00am**

**Collaborative Schools Meeting: 7:30-8:30am**

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 increase your knowledge of MOEC. A brief presentation will be provided about the work of MOEC on your Collaborative's behalf and the priority initiatives we are addressing this year.

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

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

**GENERAL SESSION: 9:00-10:15am**

**Topic: Post-Election: The Future of Education**

**Moderator: Jon Keller, Political Analyst/Commentator, WBZ-TV, Boston**

**Panelists: To Be Announced**

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

**• Building a Shared Culture of Belonging**

Lenox Public Schools will share how they moved beyond addressing acts of intolerance toward building a culture of belonging for all students, families, and staff.

**• Raising Awareness in School Communities about Secure Firearm Storage to Keep Students, Families, and Schools Safe**

This session will focus on raising awareness about the critical importance of lawful and responsible firearm storage in the community, and actions every adult can take to help prevent gun-related tragedies and injuries in schools, homes and communities.

**• Data-Driven Strategies to Support ALL Learners**

Learn about a new progress monitoring tool for grades 3, 4, and 5 that was implemented in Sudbury, which led to the school becoming the highest performing school in the district, based on MCAS data.

**• Exploring State Funding for Equitable Facilities for Students Served through Educational Collaboratives**

Approximately 5,000 students with high needs attend col-

laborative schools and programs in buildings owned and/or operated by collaboratives or their member districts. Many of these are in need of critical capital upgrades, improvements and expansions to provide additional appropriate spaces. Presenters will share MOEC's action plan to address these needs at the state level, with state backing for collaborative capital projects.

**• Advanced Learners, Giftedness & Twice Exceptionality: The Outliers**

This session will discuss neurodiversity, the re-researched-backed pedagogical theories behind meeting the needs of high-potential neurodiverse learners, and how supporting this population addresses excellence gaps and socio-economic inequities.

**• Communicating Through Crisis and Controversy**

Is your school board prepared to respond effectively when crises and controversies arise in your district? A veteran K-12 communications strategist will provide practical tips for communicating with families, staff, the community and the media about difficult topics.

**• Legislative Update**

A panel of legislators will review the 2024 session and highlight changes and fiscal outcomes as well as present a view of the next General Court sessions in 2025-2026.

**LEADERSHIP LUNCH: Noon-1:30pm**

**Sponsored by: Academic Discoveries**

**Honoring: MA Teacher of the Year**

**De'Shawn Washington (Lexington)**



**CHARTING THE COURSE: PART 1: 1:30-5:00pm**

**DIVISION I-VII MEETINGS: 1:45-2:15pm**

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

**MASC RESOLUTIONS CLINIC: 2:30pm**

**MASC DELEGATE ASSEMBLY: 3:15pm**

**PANEL SESSION VIII: 2:30-3:45pm**

**• In the Eye of the Storm: Insights from MA Superintendents on Navigating the Convergent Crises and Turbulent Social and Political Climate of 2020-2021**

This interactive workshop highlights recent research on MA school superintendents' experiences navigating the convergent crises and tense social and political climate of 2020 and 2021 and the impact of these experiences on them both personally and professionally.

**• Soul of Leadership: Building the Foundation for Trustworthy and Inclusive School Communities through SEL for Leaders**

Soul of Leadership is a unique year-long professional learning experience for school leaders, sponsored by MSAA. The program deepens the ability to listen, reflect, and be more fully present, which are foundational to

building trust and creating inclusive communities. Learn about the core principles and practices of the program and the research that supports it.

**• Building Inclusive Schools: Strategies for Supporting Marginalized Youth and Navigating Community Challenges**

This workshop equips school and district leaders with the skills to create an inclusive educational environment for all students, especially those with multiple marginalized identities, such as LGBTQ youth. Participants will gain practical tools for promoting inclusive practices.

**• 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.

**PANEL SESSION IX: 4:00-5:00pm**

**• Making the Superintendent Evaluation Meaningful**

The annual (or biennial) evaluation of the superintendent is among the most important jobs of the school committee. Too often, however, it can become another box to be checked, rather than a meaningful process for both committee and superintendent. Hear from superintendents and school committee members about how they have worked to integrate the evaluation into the larger work of the district, focusing on superintendent professional growth.

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

**Massachusetts Association of School Committees**  
**One McKinley Square**  
**Boston, MA 02109**

**LIFE MEMBER/LEADERSHIP AWARDS DINNER: 6:00pm**

**MEET YOUR COLLEAGUES SOCIAL: 9:00-midnight**

DJ: KJ Hardy

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**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9**

**CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST: 7:30-9:00am**

**CHARTING THE COURSE: PART 2: 8:00-11:45am**

**9:00-10:15am**

**Parliamentary Procedure**

This session will highlight the most important parliamentary rules and explain why effective procedures that are followed are an important part of effective meetings, public awareness of your work, and respectful debate.

**School Law 101**

MASC General Counsel will introduce fundamental legal principles and strategies that will guide you through your school committee service.

**• Dealing with our Most Difficult People: 10:30-11:45am**

There are occasions when the presence of one or more difficult people can turn a regular meeting into chaos, create unnecessary tension with colleagues, or misdirect discussions so that business cannot be conducted. This session guides the chairs and the school committee members in strategies to work with the most challenging personalities in the board room.

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