



Executive Director's Update

Massachusetts School Administrators' Association

33 Forge Parkway | Franklin, MA 02038 | 508-541-7997 | msaa.net

From Executive Director Robert Baldwin

Massachusetts School Administrators' Association

December 11, 2024



Maya Smith Named MSAA Assistant Principal of the Year

Mrs. Maya Smith, Associate Head of School at Fenway High School in Boston, has been named the 2025 MSAA Assistant Principal of the Year. She has served at Fenway High School for the past three years. Maya graduated from the University of Hartford with a Bachelor of

Science degree and earned her Master of Science in Education from Simmons College.

Prior to her current role as Associate Head of School, Maya led the Special Education Department at Fenway as the Special Education Director. Over her 21 years in education, she has dedicated 15 years to quasi-administrative roles, including leading grade-level and content teams, in addition to teaching math. Maya is deeply committed to improving educational outcomes for all students by ensuring they receive rigorous daily instruction and by breaking down barriers for the most marginalized communities. Leading meaningful change within the Boston Public Schools district has always been, and continues to be, a driving force in her career. Maya firmly believes that, no matter where students live within the city of Boston, every student deserves and should have access to a high-quality education.

Maya was nominated by Fenway High School Principal Dr. Geoffrey Walker, who wrote in his nomination: *"Maya has profoundly shaped the culture at Fenway High School through her dedication to bridging opportunity gaps and her commitment to Fenway's core values: Work Hard. Be Yourself. Do the Right Thing. Her leadership is characterized by integrity and high standards, which she not only sets but also exemplifies through her hard work and passion for the well-being of our students, staff, and families."*

Maya's impact as an instructional leader is especially significant. She drives improvement within the instructional core by examining curriculum, teaching practices, and student learning data to inform decisions that promote effective learning. Her guidance has propelled the Math Team, which she leads, to achieve the highest student growth percentile in Boston and one of the highest in Massachusetts."

Maya grew up in the Roslindale area of Boston and now lives in Dorchester with her husband and two sons. Outside of work, Maya finds joy in spending time with family and friends, which is incredibly important to her. She also enjoys cooking, swimming, and exploring new countries through travel.



Sponsored by Hoarce Mann and Riveting Results

9:00 - 10:00 AM – Keynote Speakers

- Dr. Mary M. Bourque, M.A.S.S., Executive Director - Legislative Platform
- Craig Aarons-Martin, CCM Education Group – Braving Leadership: Guiding Our Communities with Empathy and Belonging

10:00 - 10:50 AM – Breakout Sessions 1

- Martin R. Geoghegan, Principal of Henri A. Yelle Elementary School, Interactive Discussion: Motivating Students and Engaging Your School Community
- Dr. Stacy L. Monette, Principal of Charlton Middle School, Exhausting All Options- Implementing MTSS at the Middle School Level
- Dr. Michael Rubin, Principal of Uxbridge High School, Utilizing AI in Your School
- Karen Vernamonti, Horace Mann - Retirement Insights

10:50-11:00 AM - Networking Break

11:00 - 11:50 AM - Breakout Sessions 2

- Liz Garden, Principal of Henry P. Clough Elementary School, The Write Stuff Cafe - Prioritizing Writing Instruction
- Dr. Robert N. Baldwin, MSAA/MIAA Executive Director and Mary K. DeCoursey, Assistant Principal of Webster Middle School, Unleashing Middle Level Belonging
- East Boston High School and Brockton High School, Cell Phone-Free Schools
- Arthur Unobskey, CEO, Riveting Results

11:50 AM-12:00 PM - Networking Break

12:00 - 12:30 PM –Committee Roundtable Discussion

- (Urban, Rural, Elementary, Middle, High, and Assistant Principals)



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Call for SY 2025-2026 Presenters is Now Open!

Please consider facilitating a Professional Development Workshop for the upcoming school year. We believe attendees will greatly benefit from your expertise! Workshops are scheduled on weekdays, and they can be held in-person at the MSAA Office (8:30 -11:30 am) or online via Zoom, lasting between 1.5 to 3 hours. If you are interested, please fill out [this form](#) to submit your proposal. The deadline for submissions is May 5, 2025.

Confidential Hotline

The Confidential Support Hotline has been established this year and is a service for all members to get advice and support to challenging questions. [This link](#) allows you to see the specifics of this new and confidential service. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of assistance.

Membership

The energy and excitement around the Association continues to build as we increase the number of school leaders committed to our mission. If you are a member, THANK YOU- If you are not a member, please consider joining today for access to discounted Professional Development, a voice on state and national committees, access to a confidential support hotline, or simply collaboration and a network with other school leaders. Also, as a Principal, we strongly encourage you to register your Assistant Principals or other Principals in your district as we celebrate the profession. [Click here](#) for more information.

Professional Development Workshops for SY24-25!

In October, we scheduled 17 professional development workshops; however, we had to cancel 9 due to low enrollment. In November, we scheduled 11 workshops and canceled 7. In December, we scheduled 7 workshops and canceled 4. We require a minimum of 11 participants to proceed with a half-day workshop (8:30-11:30 am) and 17 participants for a full-day workshop (8:30 am-3 pm). To promote these workshops, we have implemented a variety of outreach strategies, including:

- Requesting presenters to share the PD flyer with their networks via email and social media
- Posting on our website (since June)
- Distributing PD Workshop Books at the Summer Institute
- Sending email blasts to members, with individual workshop flyers included
- Highlighting workshops in our weekly compendium
- Featuring workshop information in the monthly Update
- Providing a QR code for upcoming workshops during scheduled sessions

We will continue our efforts to promote these workshops, and we kindly ask that you share the information with your colleagues as well.

Upcoming Professional Development Workshops:

[Please click](#) here for a full list of our PD offerings.

- January 7 - Adaptive School Leadership
- January 8 - Components of a Multi-Tiered System of Supports and the Role of the S.S.T. (Student Success Team): How Do Both Structures Impact Teaching and Learning? (8:30 am-3:00 pm)
- January 9 - The Exclusive Melting Pot: Leveraging the Cultural Wealth of Black and Brown Students in Educational Settings
- January 10 - Beyond Evaluation: Using the Danielson Group's Updated Framework for Teaching (FFT) to Develop Great Teachers
- January 15 - Want the Biggest Impact on Student Achievement? Here's the Secret...Collective Teacher Efficacy
- January 16 - Empowering Educators for Trauma-Sensitive Success
- January 21 - Controlling Conflict for School Leaders
- January 22 - How to Make Lessons Student-Centered by Including Different Models of Teaching and Different Principles of Learning
- January 23 - Thriving in the Principalship
- January 27 - 4 Ps of the N-Word
- January 28 - Teach to Remember (8:30 am -3:00 pm)
- January 29 - LevelED-Up Learners: Using Executive Function Skills to Support All Learners
- January 30 - The Opposing Forces of Organizational Behavior and Culture
- January 31 - Creating Equity through Positive Relationships

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Summit

The 8th Annual MSAA/MIAA Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Summit is scheduled for January 17, 2025 at Holy Cross in Worcester. This year's theme is "Leading With Courage". The event will include a variety of breakout workshop sessions and a keynote presentation. Space is limited and registration will close when capacity is reached. [Click here](#) for registration information.

Esports

Good luck to schools competing at the MSAA Esports Finals December 12th and 13th at the All Systems Go (ASG in Worcester). For more information, please [click here](#).



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Congratulations – MSAA State Cheerleading, Game Day and Dance Champions:

Cheer:

- Division 1 – Franklin High School
- Division 2 – Billerica Memorial High School
- Division 3 – Hanover High School
- Division 4 – Rockland High School
- Small Coed – Foxborough High School
- Large Coed – Duxbury High School

Game Day:

- Bridgewater-Raynham Reg. High School

Dance:

- Jazz – Braintree High School
- Hip Hop – Wakefield High School
- POM – Braintree High School

[Click here](#) for a complete listing of results

Coaching Program for New Administrators

We are thrilled to offer 36 trained and experienced Coaches who are available to support new administrators as they navigate their leadership roles. Our coaches bring a wealth of knowledge and expertise to help guide and empower school leaders in creating positive change.

Check out the details of our Coaching Program through the following links:

- [Outline](#)
- [Coaching Directory](#)
- [Request a Coach](#)

Whether you're a new administrator or know someone who could benefit, this program is designed to provide tailored guidance and practical solutions. Explore the program and take advantage of this valuable resource!



Happy Holidays from your MSAA Staff!

Student Council Award Nominations

Each year, MSAA/MASC awards are presented to students, advisors, administrators and schools that have made significant contributions to student council activities. Nominations are currently being accepted online for each of these awards. Please utilize the links below to access the online nomination forms and additional award details. Awards will be presented at the MASC Annual Conference that is scheduled for March 5-7, 2025 at the Emerald Resort in Hyannis.

*Please note - nominations must be submitted by schools that have registered Student Council as an MSAA Student Activity and are due by Friday, January 17, 2025.

Nomination Information:

[Administrator of the Year Award](#)

This award is presented to one school administrator in recognition of outstanding support for student council activities.

[Henry Sullivan Advisor of the Year Award](#)

This award is presented to one student council advisor in recognition of a commitment to excellence and service to young people in their school.

[Top Ten Project Awards](#)

These awards are presented to ten student councils who have submitted one of the ten most outstanding projects during the school year.

[Unsung Hero Awards](#)

These awards are presented to one student council member from each region of the state who goes above and beyond the call of duty on a regular basis with little or no recognition.

[Council of Excellence Awards](#)

These awards are designed to recognize and reward the achievements of outstanding student councils and provide standards of effective student leadership.*

**The due date for this nomination information is February 3, 2025.*

For additional information:

- Please contact State Director Paul Branagan (pbranagan@middleboro.k12.ma.us) or Student Council Liaison Peter Smith (psmith@msaa.net) with any questions regarding the nomination process for state officers.
- [Click here](#) to visit the new Student Council page on the MSAA website



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Upcoming Events:

- December 14 – MASC
- January 4 – MASC
- January 17 – DEI Summit
- January 30 – MSAA Winter Conference & Board meeting
- Assistant Principals Conference – Monday, April 7 – Holy Cross

Holiday Office Hours

- December 24 – Close at noon
- December 25, 26 & 27 – Closed
- December 31 – Close at noon
- January 1 & 2 - Closed

Thanks for your continued support!

Robert Baldwin

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Is your "sleigh" covered?

The holiday season is here, and for many of us, that means visiting family and friends. As you get ready for your travels, it's a good idea to double check that your "sleigh" has coverage that meets your needs, just in case something unexpected happens on the road. Safe travels!

Horace Mann is a long-time corporate supporter, offering unique auto insurance coverages and discounts for educators.

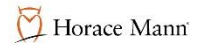
Click [here](#) or call 833-422-2617 to get a no-obligation quote.



We are grateful for our clients, colleagues, family and friends and wish you all a joyous holiday season!

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