



# 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

**November 20, 2025**

## MSAA Assistant Principal of the Year



Michael Lavelle, Assistant Principal of Quaboag Regional Middle/High School in Warren, has been named the 2026 MSAA Assistant Principal of the Year. He has served at Quaboag Regional Middle/High School for the past four years. Michael earned an associate degree from Springfield Technical Community College, a bachelor's degree from Westfield State College, and a master's degree from Westfield State University. Prior to his

current role as Assistant Principal, Michael led the New England Center for Change as the head therapeutic socialization counselor. He also taught History for eight years at the Baird Middle School in Ludlow. He has served the Commonwealth as an Assistant Principal in the Towns of Belchertown, Auburn, and Oxford respectively.

A teacher and an administrator provided the following statements in Michael's Assistant Principal of the Year application: *"Mr. Lavelle knows all the students by name and has built positive relationships with them. He is always available for students and works with the staff to ensure their needs are met. He is a member of our Early Intervention Team and creates safety plans for students as needed.*

*Mr. Lavelle has brought calmness and professionalism to the role of Assistant Principal at Quaboag Regional. When dealing with discipline issues, he actively listens to all students involved in any situation and provides them with tiered disciplinary measures to help curb the behavior so that it does not happen again. He helps to continually improve the safety of the school and those in it by being present and visible throughout the school. Always is approachable for anything that comes up during the day. All students are treated equally. He does not give favor to any one student based on who they are in the school or who their parents are. Putting all students on the same playing field is essential to building trust amongst students with him and with each other."*

Michael grew up in the City of Chicopee, and currently resides in the Town of Ludlow with his wife Erica (a second grade teacher) and his dog Jameson. He also has 13 nieces and nephews that he is the proud uncle to. Outside of work, Michael finds joy in visiting the ocean as often as he can. Watching his family grow and compete in all types of sporting events. Playing and listening to all sorts of music and attending live concerts. He also enjoys watching and attending Boston Celtics basketball games. Celebrating his Irish heritage, and serving his community as a Town Meeting member and serving at his local church as a eucharistic minister.

## Tap on the Shoulder Initiative

The Tap on the Shoulder initiative invites school leaders to recognize and support aspiring administrators who demonstrate leadership potential. [Click here](#) for information outlining the purpose of the initiative. [Click here](#) to share contact information for an aspiring leader who is ready to take the next step in their professional journey. By giving a "Tap on the Shoulder," you help strengthen the future of educational leadership across Massachusetts.

We invite school leaders to recognize and support aspiring administrators who demonstrate leadership potential. Please encourage an emerging leader who is ready to take the next step in their professional journey to attend our **Aspiring Administrators Panel on Monday, December 8 (9-11 AM)**.

This free panel is designed for aspiring school leaders to gain insights, ask questions, and hear directly from experienced administrators about their leadership journeys and strategies for success.

This is a wonderful opportunity to:

- Learn practical leadership skills
- Network with current and future school leaders
- Gain inspiration and guidance for your own path in education leadership

**Date:** Monday, December 8, 2025

**Time:** 9:00-11:00 AM

**Location:** MSAA Office (33 Forge Parkway, Franklin, MA 02038)

**RSVP:** [Click Here to Register](#)

## December Early Learning Network Meetings

As part of a collaboration with the Massachusetts School Administrators' Association, DESE's Early Learning Team will host four in-person Early Learning Network meetings for public school early childhood and elementary administrators (preschool through third grade). These sessions will be hosted from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on Monday, December 8 in Framingham; Tuesday, December 9 in Wareham; Friday, December 12 in Holyoke; and Wednesday, December 17 in Beverly. Please [register online for a network meeting](#). Note that the December sessions are the only in-person Early Learning Network sessions that will be offered this school year.

## SY26-27 Professional Development Survey

At MSAA, we are committed to supporting Massachusetts school leaders and highlighting best practices across our schools. To that end, we strive to provide high-quality professional development workshops that meet your needs. Your input is invaluable! By completing this *brief survey*, you will help us design workshops that are practical, engaging, and meaningful for school leaders across the state.

Please take a few minutes to complete the survey by **Friday, December 19**. Click here: [SY26-27 MSAA Professional Development Survey](#). Thank you in advance for your time and insights!



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## Administrators Coaching and Mentoring Program

We are thrilled to offer 34 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. This year, we've set a goal of recruiting 75 new leaders into our coaching program. As of now, we have 26 new leaders enrolled - that's 49 more to go! We need your help to reach this milestone. Could you please refer at least one new leader (Principal, Assistant Principal or Central Office Leader) by sending their name, email, and telephone number to Yolanda at [yburnett@msaa.net](mailto:yburnett@msaa.net).

Together, we can ensure that more school leaders benefit from the support and guidance of the MSAA Coaching Program. Check out the details of our Coaching Program through the following links: [Outline](#); [Request a Coach](#); or view our [Coaching Directory](#). 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!

## Save the Date – DESE Meeting

The MSAA is excited to announce a great opportunity for our school leaders to interact with **Erica Gonzalez, the Associate Commissioner of Data and Accountability at the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education**. This presentation and subsequent Q and A will provide all school leaders a forum to ask questions regarding MCAS data, attendance, and other factors that affect a school's accountability report.

The MSAA feels this is a great opportunity for our voices to be heard as well as seeing the vision of DESE under the new leadership of Commissioner Pedro Martinez.

**This meeting will be held on December 11, 2025, 10am at our MSAA office, 33 Forge Parkway, Franklin, MA, 02038.**

[Please RSVP and reserve your seat today by clicking this link.](#)

## Soul of Leadership Alumni Offerings

Open to all past participants in Soul of Leadership and Feed Your Soul. [Click here](#) for more information.

## Professional Development Workshops for SY25-26!

We are excited to announce the offerings for the SY25-26 [Professional Development Workshops](#)! These workshops are designed to support educators, school leaders, and staff in enhancing their skills and practices. Please share these opportunities with your school community, network, and colleagues. It's a great chance to learn, grow, and collaborate with professionals across the state. Together, we can foster professional growth and continue making an impact on our schools!

## Online Workshops

- **Supporting the Whole Teacher through Inclusive and Equitable Practices for Coaching, Mentoring, and Evaluating** - *Craig Aarons-Martin* (December 3, 12:00-3:00 PM)
- **Making ADHD Work for Students-Proactive Classroom Strategies** - *Melissa Davis* (December 9, 9:00-11:00 AM)
- **Brave Leadership in Schools: Leading with Equity, Courage, and Vision** - *Craig Aarons-Martin* (January 20, 12:00-3:00 PM)

## In-Person Workshops

- **MSAA/MIAA: Quality Physical Education Program: How it Integrates with Other Subjects** - *Maria Melchionda* (December 2)
- **Harnessing AI for Effective Learning** - *Elvio Ferreira and Katie Warren* (December 4)
- **MSAA/MIAA:The Organized Educator: Strategies to Maximize Your Time** - *Tom Millett* (December 5, 8:30-3:00 PM)
- **Supporting and Sustaining Co-Teaching at the Secondary Level for Administrators** - *Dan Bauer* (December 10)
- **Did Someone Call 9-1-1? Crisis Management That Works From Everyday Disruptions to Real Emergencies - Planning, Partnering, Responding with Confidence** - *Nicole Bottomley and Michael Cassidy* (December 11)
- **Coaching Teachers to Excellence: Exploring What Department Chair and Administration Partnerships Look, Sound, and Feel Like** - *Tom Millett and Kate Holmes* (January 7, 8:30-3:00 PM)
- **The Three Vs of Leadership** - *Dr. Joseph Baeta* (January 8)
- **Pie the Principal, Pitch a Tent, Positive Peer Visit: How Are You Adding Purposeful Positivity to Your School?** - *Tyler Steffey* (January 9)
- **Introduction to Kingian Nonviolence Conflict Reconciliation** - *Holly Cachimuel and Ruth Henry* (January 14, 8:30 AM-3:00 PM)
- **Changes and Celebrations of Practices** - *Kim Woodford* (January 15)
- **Empowering Educators for Trauma-Sensitive Success** - *Tara Rossi* (January 21)
- **MSAA/MIAA: Lights! Camera! Action! Setting the Stage for a Positive Climate and Culture in Our Schools** - *Kimberly Taylor* (January 22)

## LLP 2026-2027 Cohort

We are so pleased to announce that the 2026-2027 LLP Cohort is accepting applications. As many of you know our program combines hands on experiences in schools through the practicum as well as coupling that experience with practical and meaningful instruction. Please find below a more detailed description of LLP.

The Massachusetts School Administrators' Association (MSAA) Leadership Licensure Program (LLP) is a rigorous and comprehensive program designed to support aspiring PK-12 educational leaders across the Commonwealth. This program



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goes beyond simply fulfilling licensure requirements, aiming to build a significant and lasting Personal Learning Network (PLN)

for its candidates. Through a blend of robust instruction, collaborative learning, and practical, performance-based assessments, LLP offers extensive professional learning opportunities. Our faculty consists of Superintendents, Principals and Special Education Directors. Its curriculum is grounded in effective teaching practices, instructional leadership, and Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Practices, with the ultimate goal of cultivating transformative, equity-driven leaders.

Participants will engage with the Massachusetts Administrative Leader Guidelines and relevant curriculum frameworks, preparing them to lead with impact in public schools. The program's unique integrated approach, which includes a focus on DESE's Performance Assessment for Leaders (PAL) Tasks woven into each module, ensures candidates are well-prepared to meet the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Professional Standards and Indicators for Administrators. So, tap the shoulder of the teacher, counselor in your district or school who just has "it".

### 2026-2027 Student Council State Officer Candidates

Candidates must be aware of the responsibilities that go along with the acceptance of an office on the MASC Executive Board. Due to the commitment of both time and energies, only those students of strong academic quality should consider becoming a nominee for any of the positions on the MASC Executive Board.

Advisors and principals must agree that the below-named student is capable of representing their high school and the MASC at any and all functions. [Click here](#) to apply. The deadline to submit this nomination form is *Friday, December 12, 2025*.

### MASC State Conference Workshop Proposals

Proposals are now being accepted from students interested in presenting a workshop at the MASC Annual Conference in March. Each school participating in the conference is encouraged to submit one workshop proposal. Please note - advisors must review and approve all proposals prior to submission. [Click here](#) to submit a workshop proposal.

### Student Council Award Nomination Information

Each year, MSA/MASC awards are presented to students, advisors, administrators and schools that have made significant contributions to student council activities. Nominations are currently being accepted for each of these awards. Please utilize the links below to access the online forms and additional award details. Awards will be presented at the MASC Annual Conference that is scheduled for March 4-6, 2026 at the Emerald Resort in Hyannis. \*Please note - nominations must be submitted by schools that have registered Student Council as an MSA Student Activity and are due by **Friday, January 16, 2026**.

### [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, 2026.

### Esports

Esports continue to grow in our MSA high schools. The best way to get started is to pass along the flyer linked below to a staff member, often times a teacher, to help start an esports club and eventual team. Please pass along and see what your school can offer to excited and motivated esports students!

[Esports Flyer](#)

### Calendar

- November 27-28 – Office Closed
- December 3 – Assistant Principals Committee
- December 5-6 – Hate & Bias Training
- December 8 – MSA Board of Directors
- December 8 – Middle School Committee
- December 13 – MASC
- December 24-26 – Office Closed
- December 31-January 2 – Office Closed

### Thanks for your continued support!

Robert Baldwin

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