



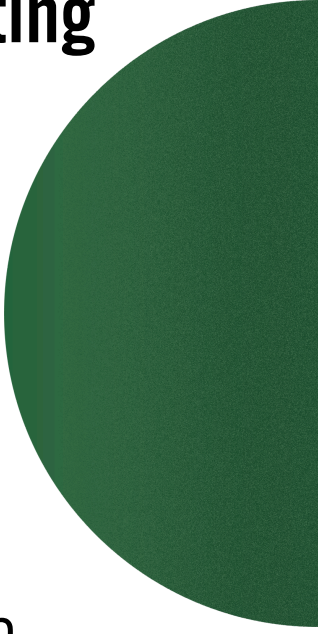
2026 Conference on Education Leadership & 85th Annual Business Meeting



June 29th - July 1st



Omni Mount Washington Resort & Spa, Bretton Woods



Connect



Celebrate

Inspire



BETTER TOGETHER!

7:00am - 8:30am

Breakfast Buffet

Sun Dining Room

7:30am - 8:30am

Registration

Webster/Franklin Foyer

8:30am - 8:45am

Welcome | Conference Introduction
~ Dr. Mark MacLean, Executive Director, NHSAA

Ballroom A South

8:45am - 9:15am

Tri-Pod Teams - UNITE! 🧑‍🤝‍🧑

Ballroom A South

Tri-Pods are a model on how to show up effectively at a conference. We will break off into tri-pod groupings during this time to strategize how to maximize the conference experience.

9:15am - 9:45am

Keynote: "Road to the Superintendency: Lessons Learned Along the Way" - 2026 Superintendent of the Year Address - Dr. Michael Whaland, Superintendent, SAU #13

Ballroom A South

This presentation reflects on the journey to superintendent; exploring the experiences, relationships, and challenges that shape leadership over time. Grounded in the theme of **Connect, Celebrate, Inspire**, the presentation highlights how influential people, defining moments, and unexpected challenges create the pathways that guide our work.

9:45am - 9:55am

Break / Transition to Breakout Sessions

9:55am - 10:45am

Breakout Sessions (details on page 2)

Various (see pg. 2)

10:45am - 11:00am

Refreshment Break

Ballroom B South

11:00am - 1:00pm

Keynote: "The Science of Leadership & Happiness" - Michelle Bartsch, VP of Education, Cook Center for Human Connection

Ballroom A South

What if the key to more effective leadership - and healthier school communities - starts with understanding the science of happiness? Blending cutting-edge neuroscience with the research of Arthur Brooks, Michelle reveals what truly drives lasting well-being, meaningful connection and high-impact leadership. Walk away with powerful insights and practical strategies to inspire your teams, strengthen relationships, and build cultures where people truly thrive.

1:00pm - 2:00pm

Lunch Buffet

Ballroom B South

2:00pm - 3:00pm

Tri-Pod / Team Time! 🧑‍🤝‍🧑

Various

5:00pm - 6:00pm

Welcome Reception

Special thanks to our sponsors

Renaissance
See Every Student.



Presidential Foyer/
Garden

6:00pm - 8:00pm

Dinner Buffet & Awards

Ballroom B South

8:00pm - 10:00pm

Casino Night Fundraiser

Special thanks to our co-sponsors

Presidential Ballroom



District to Classroom: Coherent Systems That Strengthen Tier 1 Instruction - Dr. Renee Beauregard-Bennett, Assistant Superintendent/Chief Officer of Student Services, & Jill Lizier, M.Ed., Chief Academic Officer, SAU #16

While MTSS is often associated with intervention, its effectiveness depends on the quality and coherence of core instruction. When curriculum and student services operate in isolation, systems become fragmented and reactive. To build sustainable structures, the left hand must talk to the right hand, from the district office to school leadership teams and into grade-level practice. This session explores what meaningful alignment between curriculum and student services looks like in practice. Participants will examine how intentional collaboration strengthens Tier 1 instruction, creates shared responsibility for all learners, and reinforces Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles.

These Are (and Aren't) the Robots We Are Looking For: How Rural Leaders Are Making Sense of AI & Workload - Adam Houghton, Superintendent, SAU #64

Join Adam for an interactive session that draws on a qualitative study of rural New Hampshire school leaders to explore how administrators are thoughtfully navigating the role of AI in their work. Current findings show that AI is used cautiously - as a supportive assistant rather than a decision-maker - while workload, isolation, and ethical concerns shape its adoption. Participants will reflect on key tensions and leave with practical language to guide informed, context-sensitive conversations about AI in district leadership.

A Shared Responsibility: The Superintendent & Business Administrator Partnership - Christine Landwehrle, Superintendent, SAU #82 & Amy Facey, Business Administrator, SAU #39

Superintendents are ultimately accountable for district finances, yet many receive limited preparation for supervising the Business Administrator role. Co-presented by a superintendent and a business administrator, this session walks through the business administrator's responsibilities across the fiscal year, highlighting critical checkpoints where superintendent awareness, input, and oversight are essential. Participants will learn what questions to ask at each stage, where decision-making matters most, and how to provide effective support without needing to be financial experts. Attendees will leave with practical strategies to reduce risk, prevent errors, and strengthen the superintendent & BA partnership.

Building Coherence Across Your District - George Edwards, Chief Accreditation Officer, New England Association of Schools and Colleges

Do you lead a district of individual schools or schools that are part of a district? George explores practical strategies for building genuine coherence across schools - shared terminology, aligned goals, common assessment criteria, and consistent instructional language - without erasing the individual character of each building. Participants will leave with ideas for auditing where their district currently stands, strategies for creating shared ownership, and concrete first steps for the school year ahead. Come ready to connect with colleagues facing the same challenge, celebrate what alignment makes possible, and leave inspired to lead your district as one system rather than a collection of schools.

Ballroom A
South

Jefferson
Room

Reagan
Room

Washington
Boardroom



7:00am - 8:30am

Breakfast Buffet

Sun Dining Room

8:30am - 8:45am

Welcome & Announcements | Keynote Introduction
 ~ Dr. Mark MacLean, Executive Director, NHSAA

Ballroom A
 South

8:45am - 9:45am

Keynote: "Celebrating Public Education, the Public Education Promise in Action" - David Law, President, AASA & Superintendent of the Minnetonka, MN Public Schools

Ballroom A
 South

David Law, AASA President and Superintendent in Minnetonka, Minnesota, will share what AASA has learned about what is right in public education, some strategies for communicating about public education, and local examples of how districts are rising to the challenge.

9:45am - 9:55am


Break / Transition to Breakout Sessions

9:55am - 10:45am

Breakout Sessions (detail on page 4)

Various (see pg. 4)

10:45am - 11:00am

Refreshment Break | Tri-Pod Check In 

Ballroom B South

11:00am - 11:50am

Keynote: "Mission for Well Being" - Anne Brown, President & CEO, Cook Center for Human Connection

Ballroom A
 South

Anne Brown delivers a compelling call to action for educators, staff, and families to rethink how we approach belonging and connections in our schools and communities. Blending insight with practical strategies, Anne equips leaders with the tools to build resilience, foster meaningful connection, and create a culture where well-being is prioritized and sustained. Walk away inspired and empowered to lead a movement toward healthier, more connected communities.

11:50am - 12:00pm

Break / Transition to Keynote

12:00pm - 1:00pm

Keynote: "Thriving Through Uncertainty: Tools & Strategies for Today's Challenges" - Mike Veny, CEO, Lovely Refinement

Ballroom A
 South

Mike's high energy, practical strategies, and real-world wisdom teach audience members not just to survive but truly thrive today - in spite of the rapid change and constant pressure that they face. With his dynamic style and relatable stories, he equips the audience with the tools to navigate stress, build resilience, and turn uncertainty into an opportunity for growth and strength. This isn't just a talk - it's a roadmap to reclaiming joy and stepping boldly into the future with confidence. Be prepared for drumming, movement, and truth that unleash new levels of growth!

1:00pm - 2:00pm

Lunch Buffet

Ballroom B South

2:00pm - 4:45pm

Choose Your Own Adventure / Networking Time!

Various

4:45pm - 5:30pm

Group Photo Time! 

Back Patio Bar

5:30pm - 6:30pm

Retiree Reception

Curriculum Associates
 Ready I-Ready BRIGANCE

Presidential Foyer/
 Garden

Special thanks to our sponsors



6:30pm - 8:00pm

Retiree Dinner & Awards



Presidential Ballroom

Special thanks to our retiree dinner sponsor

8:00pm - 10:00pm

6th Annual Trivia Time!



Presidential Ballroom



Beyond Buy-In: Practical Leadership Moves to Transform Team Culture in a Professional Learning Community - Brian Stack, Superintendent, SAU #83, & Jill Lizier, M.Ed., Chief Academic Officer, SAU #16

Schools committed to Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) understand the power of collaboration, but many leaders encounter stalled progress, hidden resistance, or teams unable to move beyond polite collegiality. In this session, Jill and Brian draw from their leadership work and real-world coaching experiences across NH and the country to examine the predictable obstacles that prevent PLCs from thriving. Participants will explore how resistance shows up in schools, and team collaborative structures, and what leaders can do, day by day, to shift culture, strengthen trust, and build shared accountability. This session will equip participants to lead the right work: clarifying purpose, addressing behaviors that undermine progress, and creating a system where collective efficacy leads to positive results for all students.

Ballroom A
South

AIIR Instructional Rounds through Appreciative Inquiry - Dr. Christopher Andriski, Superintendent, & Dr. Alison Bryant, Assistant Superintendent, SAU #16

Instructional rounds, inspired by medical rounds, are a form of professional learning where educators observe, discuss, and analyze teaching and learning in classrooms. Utilizing Appreciative Inquiry and Theories of Action can deepen the effectiveness of instructional rounds by focusing on strengths and linking observations to broader educational goals.

Jefferson
Room

AI Productivity Hacks for Educational Leaders - Dr. Randy Wormald, Superintendent, SAU #46

In this session Randy guides you to unlock the potential of Artificial Intelligence to streamline your leadership duties and reclaim your schedule. Designed for beginning and intermediate users, this session moves beyond the basics to explore a robust suite of tools including Gemini, ChatGPT, Claude, NotebookLM, and custom Gems. Randy will share a "live" success story: how he and his team utilized AI to rapidly launch a dynamic new website featuring weekly multimedia updates for our 2026 budget process.

Reagan
Room

NH Statewide Collaborative Network - Ellen Hume-Howard, Executive Director, NHLI, Paul Leather, Partner for Policy & Local State Relationships, & Doannie Tran, Managing Partner, Center for Innovation in Education

The New Hampshire Learning Initiative (NHLI) and The Center for Innovation in Education (CIE) invites NH district and school leaders to a collaborative, solution-focused discussion in this era of unique mutual challenges in NH's Public Education System. CIE has national experience in strategic planning and network building and will support our shared efforts to address the evolving needs of New Hampshire's schools and districts. We envision a statewide network that will help us all to seek and share practical approaches to emerging NH policy challenges in ways that best meet the needs of our communities.

Washington
Boardroom



7:45am - 9:45am

Members Only Breakfast & Business Meeting Ballroom A&B South

9:00am - 10:00am

AASA Update: Noelle Ellerson-Ng, Chief Advocacy & Governance Officer, AASA Ballroom A&B South

Noelle Ellerson-Ng, AASA Chief Advocacy & Governance Officer, will share a comprehensive update of what's happening in DC that impacts K-12 education. She will cover appropriations and legislative updates, key priorities for the 120th Congress and Trump Administration, and which Supreme Court cases we are watching.

10:00 - 10:30am

Refreshment Break | Tri-Pod Final Check In

10:30am - 10:45am

Critical Incident Mapping - Alex Carney, Regional Director, Critical Response Group Ballroom A South

Learn about the Critical Incident Mapping initiative, including the RFP opportunity, contract scope, and implementation process. This session will highlight CRG's mapping approach and outline how schools and public safety partners will collaborate to support safer, more coordinated emergency response planning.

10:45am - 11:30am

Legislative Update, Jerry Frew, Associate Executive Director, NHSA Ballroom A South

11:30am

Ajournment & Send Off - Dr. Chip McGee, Superintendent, SAU #28 Ballroom A South

Special THANKS to our **Diamond & Platinum** Partners





Hardy Allen, Regional Director, Critical Response Group

Hardy Allen is CRG's Regional Director in New England. He previously served as a United States Navy SEAL where he held several different roles over multiple combat deployments. He is a Massachusetts native and resides there now with his wife and 4 young children.



Dr. Christopher Andriski, Superintendent, SAU #16

Dr. Christopher Andriski has worked in education for 26 years, serving as a school counselor, behavior specialist, athletic trainer, assistant principal, principal, and assistant superintendent before joining SAU 16 in 2018. He earned his doctorate in Educational Leadership from Southern New Hampshire University. He serves on the Executive Board of the New Hampshire School Administrators Association, the Advisory Board for the Goulder Center for Innovative Practices in Education, and the Superintendent Licensure Advisory Board at SNHU. Dr. Andriski is also President of MRA Charities and an adjunct professor for Spalding University. Outside of work, he enjoys coaching youth sports and spending time with his family.



Michelle Bartsch, VP of Education, Cook Center for Human Connection

Michelle Bartsch, Vice President of Education at Cook Center for Human Connection, has been leading the charge in mental wellness and non-profit initiatives across communities, schools and organizations nationwide. In her work, Michelle focuses on youth mental health initiatives and critical mental health support for staff, families and communities. Her voice has driven change at both state and national levels, championing the importance of education, leadership and human connection.

PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES



Dr. Renee Beauregard-Bennett, Assistant Superintendent/Chief Officer of Student Services, SAU #16

Dr. Bennett has a strong background in trauma-informed practices and inclusive school systems. She is committed to helping educators create learning environments that are responsive, supportive, and grounded in strong relationships, while also maintaining high expectations for all students. Her leadership emphasizes the importance of strengthening Tier 1 instruction, using data to guide decisions, and ensuring that students receive timely and targeted support. In addition, Dr. Bennett writes for AASA's School of Thought blog, where she has contributed to conversations about trauma-informed practices and the role of school systems in supporting student well-being. She brings a practical, student-centered perspective to her work, focusing on translating research and best practices into clear routines, shared expectations, and sustainable systems across schools.



Dr. Anne Brown, President & CEO, Cook Center for Human Connection

Dr. Anne Brown is President and CEO of the Cook Center for Human Connection, where she leads initiatives focused on student well-being, family engagement, and strengthening school communities. With more than 20 years of nonprofit leadership experience, she has helped expand access to support resources for thousands of schools and millions of families nationwide. Anne founded ParentGuidance.org and co-created My Life is Worth Living, an animated series supporting youth resilience and connection. She also helped launch the AASA Mental Health Cohort for superintendents and serves as a public commissioner on the SafeUT Commission. Anne is a national speaker on leadership, connection, and building healthier communities through education.



Dr. Alison Bryant, Assistant Superintendent, SAU #16

Dr. Alison Bryant serves as the Assistant Superintendent for Systems & Operations in SAU 16. Over the course of her career in public education, she has held a wide range of roles, including paraprofessional, English teacher, drama director, Scrabble coach, curriculum coordinator, and middle school principal. Dr. Bryant earned her Master of Education in English Education and Teaching Writing, as well as a CAGS in Educational Leadership from Plymouth State University, where she was also an adjunct professor and a Writing Fellow in the New Hampshire chapter of the National Writing Project. She later earned her Doctorate from Northeastern University, where her dissertation focused on student engagement in learning at the middle level.



George Edwards, Chief Accreditation Officer, New England Association of Schools and Colleges

George serves as Chief Accreditation Officer for NEASC, overseeing accreditation efforts across public, independent, and international schools. He earned a Master of Education in Educational Administration and spent 30 years in public education, including 21 years as a high school principal in New Hampshire, where he helped open two high schools using NEASC Standards as a foundation. Since joining NEASC in 2009, George has advanced innovation and continuous improvement through new accreditation models, strategic partnerships, and expanded support for schools and educational organizations. He is a strong advocate for reflection, growth, and helping students develop thoughtful perspectives in a complex world.



Noelle Ellerson Ng, Chief Advocacy & Governance Officer, AASA

Noelle Ellerson Ng is Chief Advocacy & Governance Officer at AASA, leading the association's federal advocacy, policy, and governance efforts. She directs engagement with Congress and the U.S. Department of Education, oversees research and policy analysis, supports AASA's governing board and state affiliates, and leads the Student and Child Privacy Center. A former special education teacher, she regularly speaks nationwide on federal education policy and its impact on school system leaders and students.



Amy Facey, Business Administrator, SAU #39

Amy Facey is Business Administrator for SAU 39, serving the Amherst, Mont Vernon, and Souhegan school districts. She oversees budget development, financial operations, contracts, transportation, food service, and risk management. A former member and chair of the Amherst and SAU school boards, Facey brings both governance and administrative experience to her leadership role. With more than 20 years in finance, operations, and administration across the public and private sectors, she advises school boards and district leaders on educational and financial matters while promoting transparency, compliance, and effective fiscal management.



Adam Houghton, Superintendent, SAU #64

Adam Houghton is the Superintendent of the Milton School District and the incoming Superintendent of the Sanborn Regional School District. He recently completed his doctorate at Southern New Hampshire University, where his dissertation examined the impact of artificial intelligence on the work-life balance of school district administrators. His presentation explores the study’s findings, including the conclusion that without changes to leadership structures and expectations, artificial intelligence cannot be meaningfully integrated into the work of school district leaders



Ellen Hume-Howard, Executive Director, NHLI

Ellen Hume-Howard has served as Executive Director of the New Hampshire Learning Initiative (NHLI), a leading organization dedicated to advancing innovative, student-centered learning practices since 2017. A visionary leader and champion for competency-based education, Ellen has played a pivotal role in transforming instructional practices in New Hampshire and influencing educational reform nationwide. Under her guidance, NHLI has become a model for designing equitable and personalized learning systems that prepare students for future success. With a career spanning decades in public education, Ellen is known for her ability to empower educators, foster collaborative partnerships, and inspire systemic change that resonates far beyond state lines.



Christine Landwehrle, Superintendent, SAU #82

Christine Landwehrle is Superintendent of SAU 82 and an education leader with more than two decades of experience in curriculum, instruction, professional learning, and district leadership. Prior to her current role, she served as Assistant Superintendent and Director of Curriculum and Professional Development in SAU 39, where she led initiatives focused on student achievement, mastery-based learning, professional development, data-informed decision-making, and continuous improvement. Christine has served on several statewide committees and advisory groups related to assessment and accountability and brings a practical district leadership perspective to her work.



David Law, President, AASA & Superintendent of the Minnetonka, MN Public Schools

David Law is superintendent of Minnetonka Public Schools, one of Minnesota’s top-performing school districts. A former middle and high school teacher in California and Minnesota, he began his administrative career in 1998 and later served as superintendent of Anoka-Hennepin School District, Minnesota’s largest school district, for eight years. Law holds degrees from Hamline University, University of Minnesota Twin Cities, and William Mitchell College of Law. He has taught as an adjunct professor, served on numerous education and nonprofit boards, and was named Minnesota Superintendent of the Year in 2019–20.



Paul Leather, Partner for Policy & Local State Relationships, NHLI

Paul Leather is Partner for Policy and Local and State Partnerships at Center for Innovation in Education, where he directs the Interstate Learning Community. With more than 40 years in education leadership, counseling, and administration, he previously served as Deputy Commissioner of the New Hampshire Department of Education. Leather helped develop New Hampshire’s competency-based education system and led creation of the nation’s first performance-based assessment and accountability model, PACE. He now supports states and districts nationwide in designing innovative, inclusive assessment and accountability systems.



Jill Lizier, M.Ed., Chief Academic Officer, SAU #16

Jill Lizier is the Chief Academic Officer for SAU 16. Over the course of her career in education, she has served as an assistant principal and special education building coordinator, an elementary curriculum coordinator, and a first-grade teacher. With more than 20 years in education, Jill is passionate about building systems that support high-quality teaching and learning for all students. Her work focuses on curriculum, instruction, assessment, professional learning communities, and collaborative practices that strengthen outcomes for students and staff across K–12 school.



Brian Stack, Superintendent, SAU #83

Brian M. Stack is the Superintendent of SAU83 Fremont and the former principal of Sanborn Regional High School, a Model PLC at Work® high school. He is a co-founder and lead associate for V&S School Solutions and an associate for Solution Tree, and specializes in supporting teachers and administrators in schools and districts across the country in developing, sustaining, and enhancing structures to support all learners with a PLC model. He has written three books for Solution Tree. His latest, Elevating Competency-Based Learning in a PLC at Work®: Actionable Assessment, Defensible Evidence, and Equitable Grading, was co-authored with Karin Hess and Jonathan Vander Els to help school leaders refine and deepen their work. Brian received the New Hampshire Secondary School Principal of the Year award from the New Hampshire Association of School Principals in 2017. He earned a Bachelor's from Boston University, an M.Ed. from the University of Massachusetts at Lowell, and a CAGS from New England College.



Doannie Tran, Managing Partner, Center for Innovation in Education

Prior to joining CIE, Doannie led the Innovative Programs Division at Fulton County Schools and the Academics and Professional Learning Department in Boston Public Schools. His primary work currently focuses on community-driven assessment and accountability redesign in Kentucky and the scaling of deeper learning in Georgia. Doannie received his doctorate in Education Leadership from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.



Dr. Michael Whaland, Superintendent, SAU #13

Dr. Michael Whaland is Superintendent of SAU 13 in New Hampshire, serving the communities of Tamworth, Madison, and Freedom. An experienced educational leader, he is recognized for advancing student-centered practices, strengthening school culture, and expanding access to early childhood, nutrition, and student support services. Dr. Whaland earned his Doctorate of Education from Plymouth State University and was named the New Hampshire School Administrators Association's 2026 Superintendent of the Year. He also serves as an adjunct professor at New England College and remains active in educational and community organizations across New Hampshire.



Dr. Randy Wormald, Superintendent, SAU #46

Dr. Randy Wormald is an educational leader currently serving as the Superintendent of SAU #46. Randy is a past New Hampshire Teacher of the Year and Disney Outstanding High School Teacher of the Year. His career is defined by a passion for effective professional development and the strategic integration of technology in education. Backed by a recent Google AI Professional Certification, Randy is a sought-after keynote speaker on the future of generative AI for school systems. Through his presentations and strategic consulting, he equips fellow administrators with high-impact technology strategies to maximize technology for innovative teaching and learning.



Mike Veny, CEO, Lovely Refinement

Mike Veny is a globally recognized mental health speaker and Certified Corporate Wellness Specialist® who has made it his mission to transform stigma into strength through rhythm and story. Known for his electrifying drumming keynotes and raw, real talk, Mike helps organizations create emotionally healthy cultures. His work bridges inclusive excellence, mental health, and professional development—and is known for producing measurable change. He has been booked by NAMI, Microsoft, Merck, and hundreds more. Mike is also the CEO of Lovely Refinement, a women's mental health and wellness brand, which owns the Training Refinery, a continuing education powerhouse.