M.A.S.S. Guide to Resources for Massachusetts Superintendents

Overview

This *Guide to Resources for Massachusetts Superintendents* contains a carefully-selected set of resources designed to provide you with information you can use to help you address common challenges, including:

* Working with your school committee, legal counsel and unions;
* Managing your district’s personnel, finance, budget and operations;
* Implementing the process for your own evaluation by the school committee; and,
* Knowing ways to get useful information and help when you need it.

The Guide points you to relevant resources available from an alphabet soup of useful organizations we think can be helpful, including M.A.S.S.[[1]](#footnote-1), MASC[[2]](#footnote-2), MASBO[[3]](#footnote-3), MARS[[4]](#footnote-4), and DESE[[5]](#footnote-5).

M.A.S.S. has prepared the *Guide* primarily to help superintendents attend to key *technical* challenges of the job of superintendent because addressing technical challenges effectively and efficiently is important. Yet that, alone, is not sufficient for effective leadership in today’s complex world. As superintendents, we must address the *adaptive* challenges of leadership as well: we must recognize and navigate political and cultural forces, compensate for our own limitations, manage the change process, and tackle even seemingly simple and straightforward issues strategically to leverage finite resources of time, talent and money.

For the latter, we all need to build networks of reliable people and organizations; talk candidly with colleagues and listen; build constructive relationships with our school committees, union leaders, principals, municipal leaders and others. And we need to recognize the adaptive challenges and opportunities embedded within even seemingly straightforward technical challenges. That is why you will find here both technical and adaptive guidance. For example, the first entry suggests questions to ask when you are transitioning into your new position that will give you information to help you gather technical information as well as information about the cultural and political context you are entering. Similarly, the first entry under unions is less of a recipe for “doing” collective bargaining than it is a strategy for gathering information that will help you develop an approach to collective bargaining that holds the most promise for making a positive difference in the lives of schoolchildren in your district.

This is an experiment. We are piloting the *Guide* with you this year. We will want your feedback during and at the end of the year so that we can make it more useful in the future. That said, we hope very much that you will find the Guide – as it is in its pilot form – a relevant resource for your work as a superintendent of schools in Massachusetts. Know that M.A.S.S. stands behind you in every way we can to help you be successful.

Good luck!

1. Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (M.A.S.S.) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Massachusetts Association of School Business Officials (MASBO) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Massachusetts Association of Regional Schools (MARS) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)