**The November M.A.S.S.-MASC Joint Conference:**

**Building a Strong Relationship with your School Committee**

The early November Joint Conference held at the Conference Center on 35 Scudder Road in Hyannis is MASC’s major event of the year and attracts many school committee members and their superintendents. Scheduled from Wednesday through Saturday, it is held during either the first or second week in November (depending on the date of the local/national elections). Superintendents typically arrive Wednesday afternoon, at least in time for the 4:30pm M.A.S.S. Annual Business and leave late Friday afternoon.

Attending this Conference with one or more of your Committee members can be time well spent. You can get to know committee members in an environment that is social and also offers substantive professional development. You can have informal conversations that can be hard to make time for in the district, attend workshops with them to learn more about their particular interests and perspectives as committee members, and also make some time to touch base with colleague superintendents.

Typically, but not always, the superintendent takes the lead in arranging socializing away from the conference. Conference organizers make it easy for participants to decide how they want to socialize: there is a separate cost for each lunch and dinner on the registration form, so your team can decide whether and when to eat at one of the many restaurants within walking distance on the main street in Hyannis. Consider making reservations in advance especially for dinner. Be sure to check with your business office to learn the past practice for reimbursement for meals and beverages. Of course, be mindful of your role as superintendent especially during cocktail receptions and other social events during the conference.

**Wednesday**

* The Conference begins at 12:30 and offers multiple break-out sessions.
* The superintendent-only M.A.S.S Annual Business Meeting is held at 4:30 followed by a reception
* The Wednesday night dinner has a keynote speaker, remarks from the M.A.S.S. President and usually the Commissioner of Education; hosted by MASS, it is generally attended by all school committee members and superintendents.

**Thursday**

* A full day of keynotes, speakers and breakout sessions from 8:30AM-5:00PM
* A buffet lunch is available, and MASC hosts a Thursday night dinner.

**Friday**

* This day follows Thursday’s format, but the lunch meal is a sit down, plated event.
* There is a special session for administrative assistants hosted by MASC.
* MASC hosts the Friday night dinner, and generally honors MASC members.

**Saturday**

* The Conference ends at noon; breakout sessions are tailored for committee members, so superintendents generally leave on Friday.

**Superintendent’s Role**

**Before the Conference**

* Learn the past practice of your committee with respect to this Conference. In some districts all members attend while others send a few members and some school committees do not attend.
* ***Register your members and book the hotel reservation at the Conference Center.***
* Learn the past practice about the meals at the Conference.
* Present your school committee with the delegate assembly nomination during the summer prior to the Conference. This will be sent to your office and should be included on a school committee agenda so that they committee can elect the delegate.
* Remind new members of your committee that this Conference fulfills their obligation for new member training. They will be issued a form at the Conference outlining the sessions that qualify as components for the training.
* Decide with the members who will be attending if they want to purchase the advance meals or if they would prefer to dine out.

**During the Conference**

* Review the schedule with your members who are attending. Be strategic in selecting the sessions that are of most value to the district.
* There is a lunch spot (casual) on the first floor that can be a comfortable place for lunch and a chance to “check in” with your committee members.
* The lunch spot converts to a tavern in the evening; many folks end the day in this space.
* Visit the vendors with your committee in the exhibition hall as some committee members welcome the chance to talk with vendors with you.

**After the Conference**

* Agree on the format for the report to the school committee (and public) of the Conference and the person(s) who will present the report.