

# 2025-26 School Year Portfolio of Professional Learning Opportunities

*United Today  
Stronger Tomorrow*  
**MAASE**





MAASE Colleagues,

Welcome to the 2025–26 MAASE Professional Learning Portfolio! We're excited to share this comprehensive guide to our professional learning offerings - an essential resource that continues to grow in scope and impact each year.

Building on the progress and momentum of the past year, MAASE has further expanded its commitment to high-quality professional development. Thanks to sustained grant funding and the leadership of our dedicated volunteers, project managers, staff, contractors, and partner organizations, we are proud to offer a diverse array of relevant, accessible learning opportunities designed to support our members and colleagues across the state.

This year's portfolio highlights new and evolving initiatives alongside the foundational learning experiences MAASE is known for: Tuesday Professional Learning, Developing Leaders, General Membership Meetings, SLIP Conference, MiSELS, and the Technical Assistance Conference.

In addition to our regular lineup of events, we're proud of the development and expanding participation in many of our newly developed 'programs' which provide a structured learning approach to specific audiences on specialized topics:

- Adaptive Schools Foundation Seminar
- New Administrator Academy
- Mentor and Leadership Coaching
- Paraeducator Bootcamp Trainers
- Developing Inclusive Leaders
- Horizons+SE Alternate Route Program
- High Leverage Practice
- Full Focus Webinar Series

Another exciting addition to the MAASE portfolio is the development of the MAASE Community learning platform. Focused, on-demand learning is currently available on a small number of topics and the library of courses will continue to grow over the course of the year. Check back often on this new member benefit or suggest topics that you'd like to see addressed.

We encourage you to reflect on your professional learning goals and use this portfolio to create a customized pathway that meets your needs. Whether you're looking to sharpen your leadership skills, deepen your technical expertise, or stay on the leading edge of special education, there's something here for everyone.

And remember—learning is even more powerful when shared. We hope you'll invite a colleague to join you on this journey! Thank you for your ongoing support and participation in MAASE's mission to lead and learn together in service of students with disabilities and those who support them. We look forward to another year of inspiration, collaboration, and growth as MAASE Leads and MAASE Learns.

Ben Hicks  
Associate Executive Director of Training and Development







**Adaptive Schools Foundation Seminar**

**Administrator Coaching and Mentorship Program**

**Developing Leaders & General Membership**

**First Annual Paraeducator Trainer Conference**

**Michigan: High-Leverage Practices (HLP) Training**

**MiSELS** (Michigan Special Education Legislative Summit)

**New Administrator Academy**

**Special Education Leadership & Accountability Summit**

**SLIP** (Supervisors of Low Incidence Programs) **Conference**

**Summer Institute Conference**

**The Focused Leader: Designing a Life You Love Retreat**

**Tuesday Professional Learning**

Pricing and more information can be found by visiting our website at <https://www.maase.org/events/>





# Adaptive Schools

## Adaptive Schools Foundation Seminar

**Dates:** September 29-30, 2025 and March 2-3, 2026:

**Description:** The Adaptive Schools Foundation Seminar presents a productive, practical set of ideas and tools to develop collaborative groups to become effective and better equipped to resolve complex student learning issues. The work of the Adaptive Schools Seminars is to develop the resources and capacities of the organization and of individuals to cohesively respond to the changing needs of students and society. In this four-day Adaptive Schools Training, participants will develop:

- An increased capacity to initiate, develop and sustain high-functioning groups
- New lenses for diagnosing the stages and phases of group development
- An expanded repertoire of practical facilitation tools
- An understanding of when and how to engage groups in dialogue and discussion, the limitations, forms and values of each
- Skills to move groups beyond consensus to common focus
- Ways to value and use dissension, argument and conflict
- Strategies for keeping group members on track, on topic, energized and resourceful





## Administrator Coaching and Mentorship Program

### Administrator Coaching and Mentorship Program

**Dates:** Launching Fall 2025

**Description:** The MAASE 27h Mentoring Project supports new and developing Special Education Administrators through a comprehensive, high-quality induction program aligned with Michigan's Foundations, Structures, and Practices framework.

This initiative connects mentees with experienced administrators for structured, relationship-based mentorship that emphasizes leadership growth, collaboration, and advocacy. Participants benefit from cross-cohort learning, alumni engagement, and a strong mentor pipeline with opportunities for ongoing training.

Highlights include monthly check-ins, access to the mentor Community of Practice (CoP), and practical tools to strengthen job satisfaction, retention, and instructional leadership. Funding support is available through mentor scholarships and anticipated stipends.

Interested in participating? Sign up as a coach or a coachee at the [link here](#).

### Leadership Coaching Preparation

**Dates:** October 29, 2025

**Description:** This training will explore the core competencies, mindsets, and structures of effective leadership coaching. Participants will deepen their understanding of the distinctions between mentoring and coaching, engage in structured coaching conversations, and practice using tools such as coaching maps, strategic questioning, and reflective listening.

**Additional Benefits:** Upon completion and assignment to a coaching role, participants may be eligible for a \$1,000 annual stipend per coachee and access to a monthly Community of Practice



## Developing Leaders & General Membership

### Developing Leaders & General Membership Meetings

**Dates:** October 15, 2025, December 3, 2025, February 11, 2026, April 15, 2026, & June 9, 2026

**Description:** One of the biggest MAASE member benefits is participating in our Wednesday professional learning throughout the year. This day follows Tuesday PL, but is more intimate, Michigan focused and provides top notch networking and timely information.

Developing Leaders is THE place to solve current problems of practice with other MAASE members. Topics for this informal "Ed Camp" opportunity are brainstormed the day prior. Notes are taken to capture the information and resources shared by fellow MAASE members on the hot topic of the day. Participants will have the opportunity to select two topics that are the most relevant to their current work, one from 8:30-9:15 am and one from 9:30-10:15 am.

Immediately following the Developing Leaders session, from 10:30-12:00 am, is the General Membership Meeting where you will hear state level updates from the Michigan Department of Education Office of Special Education and our lobbyist. You will also hear updates from the President on the Board meetings, current MAASE work and have the opportunity to give input on the direction of the organization.

We hope you will stay for lunch and join one of our Community of Practice (CoP) meetings or network with colleagues.

When you purchase the All Access ticket you gain access to Tuesday PL, Developing Leaders sessions and the General Membership Meeting. This makes for a comprehensive two day conference experience.





# First Annual Paraeducator Trainer Conference

## First Annual Paraeducator Trainer Conference

**Date:** February 19, 2026

**Description:** Join us for the inaugural MAASE Paraeducator Trainer Conference — a professional learning event designed for current paraeducator trainers, administrators, ancillary staff, and educational leaders interested in building and sustaining high-quality paraeducator training programs. Participants will get early access to new Level 2 modules, enhancement packs, and implementation supports aligned with the CEC's Core Competencies and High Leverage Practices.

Highlights include the launch of Level 2 modules, previews of expanded content in academic and behavioral supports, sessions for onboarding new trainers and updating veteran trainers, and opportunities to connect with MAASE partners and peers from across the state.

Paraeducator  
Train the  
Trainer





## Michigan: High-Leverage Practices (HLP) Training

### Michigan: High-Leverage Practices (HLP) Training

**Host Site:** Berrien RESA

**Day 1&2:** September 29-30, 2025, **Day 3:** January 21, 2026, **Day 4:** May 19, 2026

**Host Site:** Kent ISD

**Day 1&2:** October 22-24, 2025, **Day 3:** February 4, 2026, **Day 4:** May 20, 2026

**Presenters:** Dr. Paula Lancaster, Dr. Corey Drake, Dr. Alice Williams and Dr. Nicole Garcia

**Description:** Transform how your instructional teams support students with disabilities with the NEW in Michigan High-Leverage Practices (HLP) Training. This statewide professional learning opportunity focuses on evidence-based instructional strategies to improve academic and behavioral outcomes for students with disabilities. Designed for special education teachers, general education teachers, instructional coaches, teacher consultants, administrators, and higher education partners, this training builds confidence, consistency, and supportive networks that strengthen retention and instructional effectiveness. Participants will gain practical, high-fidelity strategies to implement immediately, create a plan to sustain and scale practices districtwide, and collaborate in a dynamic learning community with regional trainers. Join the 2025 pilot, build your team, and help shape the future of special education training in Michigan.



BERRIEN RESA



KENT ISD



**Mi SELS**

## **Michigan Special Education Legislative Summit**

**Dates:** March 3-4, 2026

**Description:** The **M**ichigan **S**pecial **E**ducation **L**egislative **S**ummit (Mi SELS) is hosted by the MAASE Advocacy Committee. This professional learning event will allow you to advocate for students with disabilities by building meaningful relationships with your state legislators. The two-day event will give you the knowledge and skills to advocate, and then give you the opportunity to use those skills in a safe and supportive environment. The first day will review MAASE's Legislative Platform and Priorities document, give you an overview of the political landscape and provide a panel discussion to hear multiple perspectives on current issues. You will have an opportunity to practice what you have learned during our evening reception the first night and our legislative office visits the second day. All activities will be done in teams so that new attendees can learn from those more experienced. Advocacy is a foundational leadership skill and an opportunity you will not want to miss.







## New Administrator Academy

### New Administrator Academy

**Dates:** October 15, 2025, November 12, 2025, December 3, 2025, January 14, 2026, February 11, 2026, March 11, 2026, April 15, 2026, May 13, 2026, & June 10, 2026

**Description:** The MAASE New Administrator Academy is a support structure that allows opportunities for:

- Newly employed Michigan special education administrators (first three years of administration) to explore and implement the skills needed for success in the position
- Support for real-world application of MDE Standards of Practice for Special Education Administrators
- Mentorship with experienced, practicing administrators who are members of MAASE
- Exploration of relevant content with support from “in the field” special education administrators, identified professionals with content-specific knowledge, or state/federal staff.

Interested in joining? Access additional information and an application link at the [web page linked here](#).







## Special Education Leadership & Accountability Summit

(formerly known as the TA/Monitors Conference)

### **Special Education Leadership & Accountability Summit: L.E.A.D.ing for Results** (*Leadership, Equity, Accountability, & Data*)

**Date:** December 1, 2025

**Description:** Join us for the Special Education Leadership & Accountability Summit, where we'll explore how to lead for meaningful results through the lens of Leadership, Equity, Accountability, and Data (L.E.A.D.). This summit is specially designed for professionals who provide technical assistance and support effective systems in schools. Whether you're working at the district, ISD, or state level, you'll gain targeted strategies and insights that strengthen your ability to drive sustainable, system-wide improvement in special education.

Participants will engage in a variety of breakout sessions, each focused on relevant, timely topics that reflect the evolving needs of the field. Sessions will offer opportunities to collaborate with colleagues, learn from experienced practitioners, and explore practical tools to enhance implementation and impact. This summit promises to be both inspirational and actionable, equipping you to return to your role with renewed focus, aligned practices, and a clear commitment to improving outcomes for students with disabilities.





## SLIP Conference

### **SLIP (Supervisors of Low Incidence Programs) Conference**

**Dates:** January 12-13, 2026

**Description:** Hosted by the Supervisors of Low Incidence Programs (SLIP) community of practice, the SLIP Winter Conference is back! We're inviting YOU to be part of this annual gathering of passionate professionals dedicated to low incidence programs and center-based services. While the focus is on supporting supervisors and leaders in these specialized areas, everyone is welcome—and encouraged—to attend.

#### What to Expect:

- Timely, relevant sessions led by statewide experts and experienced peers
- Interactive learning formats that go beyond sit-and-get
- Networking and peer collaboration to share ideas, challenges, and solutions
- Dedicated time for reflection and action planning, so you leave ready to implement

This is more than just a conference—it's a space to connect, recharge, and advance your leadership in meaningful ways. Bring your team to maximize learning and build shared momentum!



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## Summer Institute

### August 9-12, 2026

In keeping with MAASE's mission of providing "...opportunities for leadership development, collaboration, and advocacy...", each year over 800 special educators convene in August to engage in leadership development and shared learning on topics critical to the field of special education.

This premier event for special education administrators in Michigan will feature the following:

- Keynote Speaker Jimmy Casas
- Michigan Department of Education Office of Special Education Updates
- Attorney Presentations
- Numerous Breakout Sessions
- Special Appearances from National Association Guests
- Awards & Networking Opportunities

Participants will engage in full days of learning on Monday and Tuesday through whole group sessions, breakouts, and networking with hospitality receptions at the close of each day. The conference finale happens mid-morning on Wednesday. Participants will leave Summer Institute with new professional connections, feeling energized & engaged, and equipped with new tools for success for the upcoming school year!





## The Focused Leader Retreat

### **The Focused Leader: Designing a Life You Love Retreat**

**Date:** November 21, 2025

**Presenters:** Abby Cypher & Cheryl-Marie Manson

**Description:** Step away from the daily grind and join us for a transformative one-day retreat inspired by the LifeFocus philosophy. Set in a comfortable loft environment, this immersive experience is designed to help you gain clarity, re-center your priorities, and create a personalized roadmap for your future.

#### **What to Expect**

- **Life Focus Sessions:** Engage in guided, interactive, hands on activities that help you delve into your core values, articulate your purpose, and design a clear, actionable life plan. Drawing inspiration from the proven LifeFocus system, you'll gain the clarity and momentum to steer your future with confidence.
- **Inspiring Loft Setting:** This unique meeting space offers the perfect environment to disconnect from the noise of everyday life. The peaceful ambiance encourages self-reflection, deep connection, and renewed inspiration.

#### **Why Attend?**

- **Clarity & Direction:** Transform confusion into a clear vision for your future. The day's sessions are designed to help you pinpoint what truly matters and to outline actionable steps for a fulfilling life- setting goals for years to come.
- **Mind-Body Renewal:** With balanced activities that nurture both your inner self and your outer well-being, you'll leave the retreat feeling energized and empowered.
- **Community Connection:** Connect with like-minded individuals who are also committed to intentional living. Share insights, experiences, and the journey toward a more purposeful life.

Join us for a day of deep personal discovery and intentional planning.

Rediscover your purpose, refine your life focus, and set the stage for a future that excites you. Design your future—one intentional step at a time.



## Tuesday Professional Learning

### **Instructional Leadership for Inclusive Excellence: Strengthening Systems for All Learners**

**Date:** October 14, 2025

**Presenter:** John O'Connor

**Description:** John O'Connor is a nationally recognized special education leader with over 30 years of experience improving instructional systems at the school, district, and state levels. As the author of *Great Instruction, Great Achievement for Students with Disabilities*, he offers practical, research-based strategies to strengthen outcomes for all learners. This session will include topics such as instructional improvement, effective co-teaching, developing master schedules that support inclusive practices, and improving instruction in the least restrictive environment. Participants will also explore how to build an instructionally focused special education department and implement Michigan's new dyslexia laws to ensure access and success for all learners. Enhance your ability to lead, collaborate, and drive meaningful outcomes in your district.

### **Systems in Action: Collaborative Change to Strengthen Access & Outcomes in Special Education**

**Date:** December 2, 2025

**Presenters:** MAASE Members from ISDs, LEAs, & PSAs

**Description:** This session will highlight the innovative efforts of our members in developing and implementing effective systems of support for special education. This session will feature a diverse panel of practitioners sharing real-world examples from across the state, including voices from intermediate school districts (ISDs), local districts, and public school academies. Participants will gain insights into the varied approaches used to align supports, strengthen compliance and results, and foster collaborative practices that ensure high-quality outcomes for students with disabilities. This event is designed to inspire, inform, and connect members working toward system-level improvement.

## **Hot Topics in Special Education Law**

**Date:** February 10, 2026

**Presenters:** Prominent special education attorneys

**Description:** This learning event provides an essential overview of key federal and state laws governing special education, IDEA, Section 504, and MARSE. Participants will explore legal responsibilities related to IEP development, FAPE, LRE, discipline, and procedural safeguards. Designed for new and emerging leaders, this session connects legal requirements to daily practice and decision-making. Real-world scenarios and recent case examples will be used to strengthen understanding and support legal confidence.

## **Design a Life You Love: Win at Work & Succeed at Life**

**Date:** April 15, 2026

**Presenters:** Abby Cypher & Cheryl-Marie Manson

**Description:** Join us for an energizing one-day session designed for educational leaders ready to escape the hustle trap and embrace a more balanced, fulfilling life. This training introduces the Full Focus System—a practical, proven framework that helps leaders flourish across nine life domains by shifting from doing more to doing what matters most. Through tools like the Freedom Compass and Full Focus Planner, participants will uncover limiting beliefs, prioritize high-leverage tasks, and create sustainable routines. You'll walk away with a clear Double Win mindset, strategies to automate and delegate effectively, and a personalized plan to protect your energy, focus, and well-being in daily leadership.

## **Learning à la Carte**

**Date:** June 9, 2026

**Description:** For our final professional learning event of the school year, we are offering a series of virtual sessions tailored to deepen your understanding of the various topics we've explored throughout the year. Join us for this flexible and engaging opportunity to continue your professional growth and gain new insights from the comfort of your own space. Don't miss out on this chance to reinforce and expand your knowledge before the summer break. There is no requirement to have attended previous sessions.



4



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## **Communities of Practice (CoP)**

These are groups of people who share a common interest, profession, or expertise and actively engage in sharing knowledge, experiences, and best practices within that domain. CoPs form communities to facilitate communication, collaboration, and learning among members. Scan one or more of the codes to find your CoP today!

*Deaf/Hard of Hearing  
Program Administrators CoP*



*Early Childhood Program  
Administrators CoP*



*ISD Collaborative CoP*



*SEI/Adjudicated Youth  
Program Administrators CoP*



*Local District Administrators  
CoP*



*Secondary Transition  
Administrators CoP*



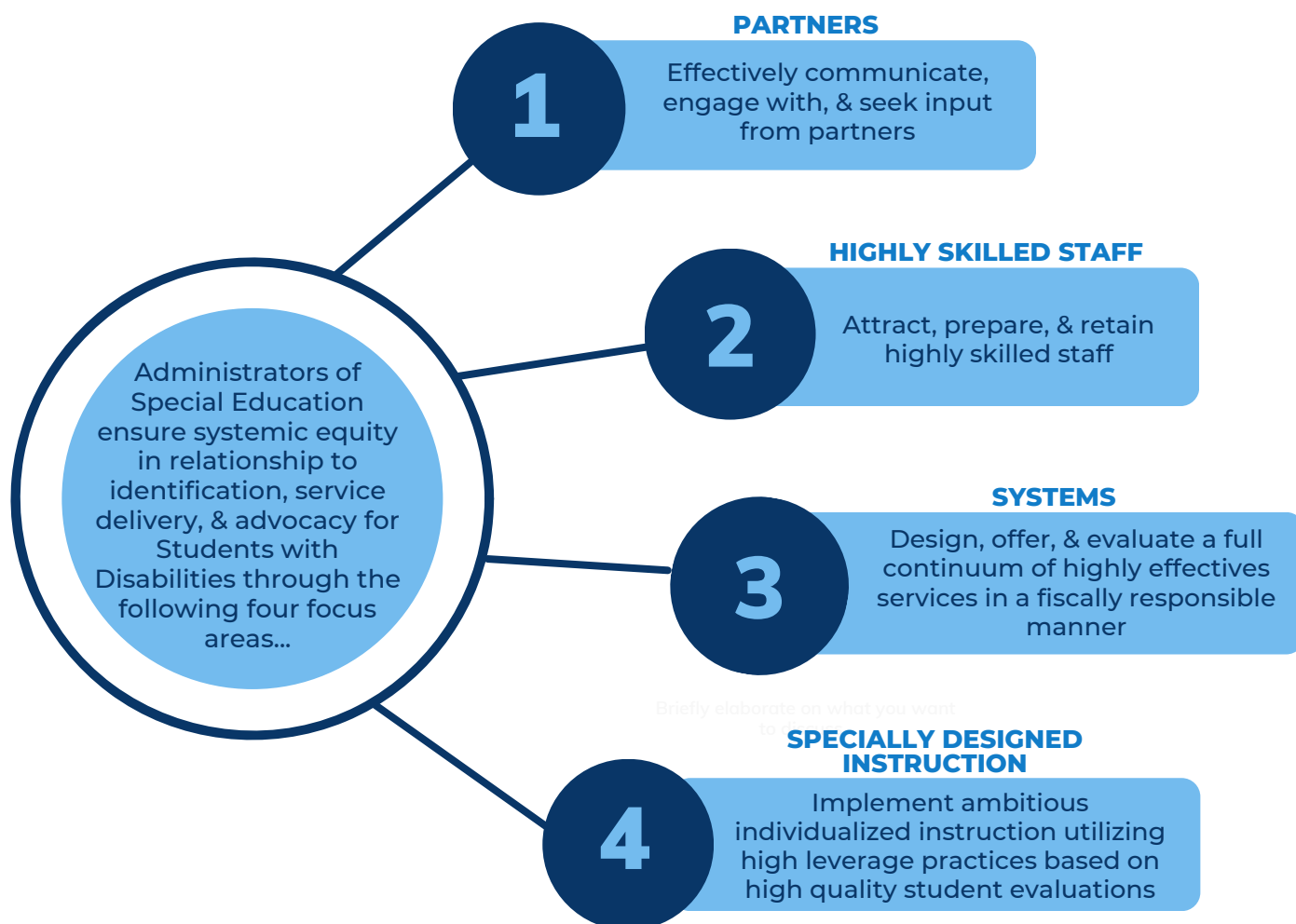
*Supervisors of Low Incidence  
Programs (SLIP) CoP*





## Guiding Principles for Special Education Administrators

To ensure alignment among our various offerings, MAASE has identified the foundational body of knowledge necessary for Administrators of Special Education. The competencies below are what separate Administrators of Special Education from their General Education counterparts, essentially what is “special” about an Administrator of Special Education.



To learn more about the MAASE Guiding Principles and to access a self assessment tool, visit our website at <https://www.maase.org/about> or scan this code today!

