



Horace Mann League of the USA

Founded in 1922 to Support Public Education

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**An Honorary Association of
Public Education Leaders**

June 30, 2026

Greetings!

**Welcome
The HML Post,**

**News, Insights, and Perspectives
Shaping Public Education**

The HML Post is published every Tuesday to engage and inform the League's members of trends and issues facing public school leaders.

*If you change your email address, **please send us a note** so you can continue receiving the Post.*

Editor
James Minichello, Executive Director, The Horace Mann League



Celebrating Independence Day

As we celebrate our nation's Independence Day, we extend our sincere thanks to each of our members for your unwavering commitment to public education and the students, families, and communities you serve. Your leadership, dedication, and belief in the promise of public education help strengthen our democracy every day.

On behalf of the Horace Mann League, we wish you and your families a safe, relaxing, and joyful Fourth of July. We hope you find time to rest, recharge, and enjoy the holiday with those who matter most. Happy Independence Day!

Photo by James Minichello

Thought of the Week

"Public education does not need a miracle cure. It needs thoughtful leadership, adequate resources, and meaningful professional development. It needs reforms guided by evidence rather than ideology. Most importantly, it needs a continued commitment to our students."



— **Greg Wyman, executive director, Arizona Rural Schools Association; member, HML's Board of Directors**

HML News



Editor's Note: A Season to Recharge

July offers something school leaders rarely experience during the academic year: the opportunity to pause. While many educators will spend the coming weeks planning for the fall, we also hope you'll take time to rest, reconnect with family and friends, and recharge.

Leadership is demanding work, and periods of reflection often lead to our best ideas. We wish you a safe, relaxing summer and look forward to another academic year of advancing public education together.

Photo by James Minichello

HML Leadership Approves 5-Year Vision



The Horace Mann League Board of Directors has unanimously approved a new five-year vision statement designed to guide the League's work through 2031.

Building on the organization's rich history and enduring commitment to public education, the vision statement outlines a strategic framework to strengthen the League's voice, expand member engagement, and advance democratic public education at a time of significant change and challenge.

The statement reaffirms the League's founding principles while charting a path toward greater impact through focused advocacy, strategic partnerships, thoughtful governance, and meaningful member involvement.

The Horace Mann League's 5-year vision statement

Within the next five years, the Horace Mann League will be recognized not only as a guardian of Horace Mann's legacy, but as a dynamic and respected national voice for democratic public education.

The Horace Mann League's Board of Directors will work with our members and partner organizations to realize this vision through operationalizing the following seven goals:

1. **Over the next five years, the League will move deliberately** from a primarily honorary society to a strategically focused advocacy organization — one that translates our ideals into organized action. Our influence will no longer rest primarily on legacy. It will rest on visible impact.
2. **We will remain rooted in our founding principles** — that publicly governed public schools are a cornerstone of our communities and of our democracy, that they serve the public good through universal access to equitable and excellent educational opportunity, and that our public schools are, and remain, non-sectarian.
3. **We will identify and pursue clear, national priorities aligned with our mission.** Whether making a strong case for uniform accountability measures for all educational systems receiving public funds, promoting the civic purpose of education, safeguarding constitutional principles, or other issues of educational significance, our voice will be coherent, disciplined, and consistent.

4. **Our publications will speak with clarity.** Our public statements will reinforce shared priorities. Our programming will reflect strategic focus. Our partnerships will amplify our influence, and we will act with intention and continuity.
5. **Membership will evolve from affiliation to engagement.** League members will see themselves not only as supporters of an idea, but as participants in a structured effort to advance public education nationally. We will create opportunities for scholarship, public dialogue, and coordinated advocacy with other like-minded educational organizations to strengthen intellectual engagement, civic presence, and action.
6. **Governance will reflect strategic discipline.** The Board of Directors will guard focus carefully, ensuring that resources — financial, intellectual, and reputational — are aligned with clearly defined objectives. We will measure our influence thoughtfully, tracking growth in membership, public presence, policy engagement, and strategic partnerships.
7. **The Horace Mann League will be seen as a strong and influential voice for public education** — an organization that speaks for democratic principles without rancor, that defends public education without apology, and that models critical thinking and reasoned civic leadership.

We will not attempt to compete with larger organizations in scale. Our influence will come from clarity, coherence, and credibility.

The League was founded in 1922 to perpetuate the ideals of Horace Mann. In the coming five years, we will ensure that those ideals are not only remembered — but actively advanced.

“For more than a century, the Horace Mann League has championed the principles that underpin public education. This vision statement represents our commitment not only to preserving that legacy, but to advancing it with purpose, focus, and renewed energy in the years ahead,” said Carl Hermanns, president of the Horace Mann League. “I want to thank our Board of Directors for the care, insight, and dedication they brought to this process. Their collective efforts have helped create a vision that honors our past while positioning the League for an even stronger future.”

Feature Stories



Podcast: Is TikTok Now a Teacher Training Tool? - *EdSurge*

Two educators are reckoning with who is really in charge: technology or the teacher.

[Read More](#)



Your Annual Meeting is a Membership Product

by Chris Vaughan for *The Center for Association Leadership*

When a registration discount is the primary member benefit, your annual meeting is doing event work, not membership work.

[Read More](#)



Four Urban Students Named 2026 Math and Science Scholars / *Council of the Great City Schools*

Four graduating high school seniors who plan to major in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) have been selected by the Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS) to receive a \$10,000 CGCS-Peters Pharis Foundation Math and Science Scholarship.

The students were chosen from more than 200 applicants in big-city school districts across the country for their academic achievements, community involvement, and leadership qualities.

This year's award winners are:

- **Mia Abreu**, Colonial High School, Orange County Public Schools (FL)
- **Jasmine Lewis**, Richmond Community High School, Richmond Public Schools (VA)
- **Jonathan McNair**, STEM Early College at NC A&T, Guilford County Schools (NC)
- **Erwing Perez Valenzuela**, Providence Career and Technical Academy, Providence Public School District (RI)

Sponsored by the Peters Pharis Foundation, the scholarship program is a partnership between the Foundation and CGCS. It is designed for outstanding urban high school students, particularly those who are the first in their family to attend college, and who plan to pursue STEM studies at a four-year college or university in the fall.



Vibe Coding Sparked a Love of Reading in My Classroom

by David Webb / *EdSurge*

I have had big ideas before. Ideas that felt urgent and important at 11 p.m. and somehow evaporated by morning. So, when the idea for creating an AI-powered reading recommendation system to generate student excitement about our school's library catalog came to me, I asked my partner what she thought about me giving up evenings and weekends for a year or two. "Just go for it," she said.

[Read More](#)

Issues of the Week



Most Kindergartners who Start School Behind Never Reach Proficiency: Study

by Erica Meltzer / *Chalkbeat*

Kindergarten test scores can be an important warning sign, researchers said, and early gaps don't just clear up on their own. But the solutions aren't obvious.

[Read More](#)



FCC Wants to Know: Should the E-rate Program be Eliminated?

by Anna Merod / *K-12 Dive*

The Federal Communications Commission voted (earlier this month) to seek public comment on whether the federal E-rate “should be narrowed or reoriented” to meet the goals Congress established 30 years ago for the program.

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Teacher Burnout is at an All-Time High

RAND Media / eSchool News

Teacher stress declined modestly in 2026, but teachers were still far more likely than similar working adults to report higher stress, worse well-being and greater financial strain, extending a pattern that has persisted since 2021, according to new [RAND research](#).

[Read More](#)

Leadership Ideas



What America's 'Greatest Sentence' Teaches Leaders About Communicating Big Ideas In The AI Age

by Carmine Gallo / *Forbes*

Great communication has never been about producing more words. It's about producing the right words at the right time to move people to act.

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Founders Share the Worst Business Advice They Ever Got

by Marina Khidekelf for *Inc.*

Early in my [startup](#) journey, I got advice that sounded practical in the way bad advice often does. When I was first building [Hugimals World](#) — my nearly four-year-old brand of premium, therapist-designed weighted plushies, pillows, and wearables made to comfort both adults and kids — an early adviser suggested I partner with a

company he knew that sold discounted consumer packaged goods on [Amazon](#).

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How Do I Carve Out Time for What I Need to Do as a Leader?

by **Andrew Miller** / *Edutopia*

“I don’t remember this being part of my role.” We’ve all had this thought as leaders, where we find ourselves getting busy and supporting others in multifaceted ways, but at the same time, we might wonder if some of what we do is the best use of our time.

[Read More](#)



Why thinking in silos is the biggest leadership mistake of 2026

CEO Magazine

Today's leaders face a growing number of competing priorities. The challenge is understanding how they intersect.

HML Wants to Hear From You

Share Your News With the League

One of the greatest strengths of the Horace Mann League is the remarkable work our members do every day on behalf of students, schools, and communities.

We invite you to share your accomplishments—or those of a member of your staff—including publications, awards, leadership transitions, innovative programs, noteworthy events, and other news that may be of interest to fellow members.

By sharing your stories, you help strengthen our community and showcase the many ways League members are advancing public education.

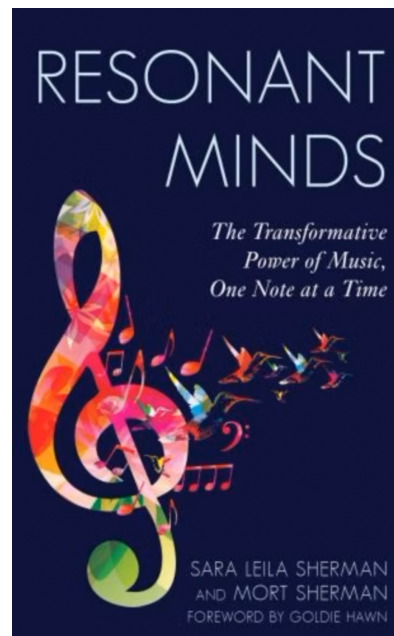
Please send submissions and ideas to James Minichello, executive director of the Horace Mann League, at jminichello@hmleague.org. We look forward to hearing from you.



Featured Book

Resonant Minds calls for a movement of significant scale, connecting music, mindful action, executive function, and technology. The nexus among those elements creates exciting and new possibilities. For parents, educators, and other curious minds, *Resonant Minds* provides guidance on integrating music into daily routines, educational settings, and community activities—making it accessible for all ages.

“The music that once filled our home became the foundation for my love of movement, my love of music, and the



ChatGPT and AI



How People Are Really Using AI in 2026

by Marc Zao-Sanders / *Harvard Business Review*

It's been three-and-a-half years since generative AI exploded onto the scene. In this past year, progress has continued its relentless pace: **Vibe coding** took off, companies embraced **agentic workflows**, regular users of **ChatGPT** hit 900 million and Google's **Gemini** surpassed 750 million, and OpenAI posted an **\$852 billion valuation in its latest funding round**.

[Read More](#)



What School and District Leaders Need to Know Before They Invest in AI

by Steve Agular for *The 74*

The end of the fiscal year is near. For many school administrators, that means scrambling to decide whether to spend more money on artificial intelligence-driven ed tech products that promise everything from letting teachers operate on autopilot to ensuring that all students receive exactly what they need, minute by minute.

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Spotlight Conversations



Tobin Novasio, Superintendent of Montana's Hardin Public Schools

"In rural education, our greatest strength is the power of relationships."

"The future of rural communities depends on our ability to attract, support, and retain great educators."



Louis Wool, Superintendent of New York's Harrison Central School District

"If we don't see that connection, that very precious thing that has defined my life, given me so much opportunity, can soon be gone. And when we lose public school, in my mind, we lose America."



The Horace Mann League's Video Archives

Special Reports for League Members

Click on the title to view (and download) the topic of interest.

1. [Wisdom and Leadership](#) (updated on May 11, 2026)
 2. [Letters to the Editor from the Superintendent](#)
(updated on June 9 2026)
 3. [Arguments by Conservatives to Diminish Public Schools. \(New\)](#)
 4. [OP-ED Letters to the Editor: Ideological and Policy Arguments About Public Education \(new\)](#)
 5. [Most Common Theories of Leadership](#)
 6. [Long-Range Planning](#)
 7. [Quotes for Leadership](#)
 8. [Good to Great: The Guide to the Superintendent's Success](#)
 9. [The Blueberry Story: Operating Schools Like a Business.](#)
 10. [What Teachers Make: Wow! You Asked Me What I make?](#)
 11. [Better Interview Questions and Possible Responses](#)
 12. [Suggestions Guidelines for Better Presentations](#)
 13. [Opening the Schoolhouse Door for Patrons](#)
 14. [Signals in the Life of the Superintendent](#)
 15. [Best Leadership Quotes of All](#)
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Podcasts by Education Leaders

The Horace Mann League's Podcast Series. (Click on the [blue](#) title to listen.)

Glenn Robbins: Nationally recognized leader in education technology.

Glenn was recently honored with the 2026 School Leader of the Year Award from EdTech Digest. During the conversation, he reflects on what the recognition means to him, his district, and the Brigantine community.

A Tribute to David Berliner by Dr. Gene Sharratt.

We honor the life and legacy of Dr. David Berliner, one of the most influential education researchers of our time and a steadfast advocate



for public education and democracy.

Growing Partnerships that Strengthen Learning Communities by David Law, President of AASA and Superintendent of the Minnetonka Public Schools.

Rural Schools are the Backbone of Many Communities by Dr. Melissa Sadorf, Executive Director of the National Rural Education Association.

On Fire, Under Fire, or Fired: Reclaiming Passion, Purpose, & Progress in Troubling Times by Dr. Kristi Wilson and Dr. Susan Enfield.

Schools Reimagined with Dr. Jacqueline Grennon Brooks. Unifying the Science of Learning.

Path to Leadership by Dr. Martha Bruckner
Suggestions for women educators striving to advance their careers in education administration.

Artificial Intelligence in School Settings by Dr. Ray McNulty

Equity Paradoxes Created by Educational Policies
Dr. Alfredo J. Artiles:

Diversity in America: Teaching Students to Know, to Care, & to Act in Global Times by Dr. James Banks

Women in Leadership by Andi Fournalis
Andi Fournalis describes her career journey and shares suggestions for women seeking to grow their public education careers.

The Journey with Dr. Jack McKay. An opportunity to meet some great public educators.

Artificial Intelligence, the Landscape of Public Schools by Joshua Starr

Artificial Intelligence and the impact it has on public education today by Ben Williamson

Equity and Leadership with Gary Orfield and Patricia Gande

The Future of Public Education with Gloria Ladson Billings, professor at the University of Wisconsin. (Annual Meeting Presentation)

Democracy and Education: The Crisis of our Times with David Berliner and Joel Westheimer

The Future of Public Education with Valerie Strauss, education journalist for the Washington Post. (Annual Meeting Presentation)

Why Public Education is the Best Safety Net for Democracy with James Harvey and Jimmy Minnichello.

Recent Supreme Court Decision and the Implications for Public Schools with Derek Black and Jessica Levin.

Equity and Equality in the Public Schools with Linda Darling Hammond and Joshua Starr.

The U.S. Dept. of Education and the Local Public School with Secretary Miguel Cardona and Julie Underwood.

Critical Race Theory and School Board Meetings with Bryan Brayboy, Adrienne Dixson, and Daniel G. Solorzano.

The Implications of Charters and Privatization of Public Education with Carol Burris and Kevin Welner

Challenges and Opportunities of Leading with Jeanne Collins, Doug Burge, and Laurie Barron.

Leading a School District During a Pandemic with Jim Sutfin, Luvelle Brown, and Andi Furlis.

Thoughts on the State of Public Education by David Berliner and Diane Ravitch.

Notable Books and Reports for Members

Click on the title to download.
Long-Range Planning -
(Strategic Plans: Benefits and Consequences)

Good to Great: The Guide to the Superintendent's Success by Jack McKay

The Guide for Using AI - ChatGPT (Getting Started)



Cartoon for the Week



The School Leader's Special Topics

1. Better Interview Questions and Possible Responses
2. Suggestions Guidelines for Better Presentations
3. Opening the Schoolhouse Door for Patrons
4. Signals in the Life of the Superintendent
5. Best Leadership Quotes of All
6. Horace Mann: An Exemplar of Reform

7. The Blueberry Story
8. What Teachers Make. . .
9. **Examples of "Letters to the Editor"** (updated)

[Website](#)

[About Us](#)



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Purpose

The Horace Mann League, founded in 1922, perpetuates the ideals of Horace Mann, the founder of the American public school system. Its basic purpose and activities are to strengthen our public schools. The League's members believe that the public school system of the United States is an indispensable agency for strengthening the ideals of our democracy and the most necessary unifying and dynamic influence in American life. Accordingly, our public schools should be free, classless, non-sectarian, and open to all children of all the people. The school system should be dominated by such purposes that will insure

The Horace Mann League Past Presidents

2025 Kevin Riley, (NE)
2024 Brent Clark, (IL)
2023 Bill Mathis (VT)
2022 Ruben Alejandro (TX)
2021 James Harvey (WA)
2020 Lisa Parady AK
2019 Laurie Barron, MT
2018 Eric King, IL
2017 Martha Bruckner IA
2016 Christine Johns, MI
2015 Charles Fowler, NH
2014 Gary Marx, VA
2013 Joe Hairston, MD
2012 Mark Edwards NC
2011 Julie Underwood, WI
2010 George Garcia, CO
2009 Steve Rasmussen, WA
2008 Fred Hartmeister, TX
2007 Colleen Wilcox, CA
2006 Walt Warfield, IL
2005 John Simpson, VA
2004 Spike Jorgensen, AK
2003 Larry Dlugosh NE
2002 Arthur Stellar, MI
2001 Ben Canada, OR
2000 Kenneth Bird NE

Bd. of Governors, Metro
Comm. College, Omaha,
NE

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Supt., Zillah, WA

Dr. Roxann Caserio,
Supt. North Ridgefield,
OH

**Dr. Linda Darling
Hammond**

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University,
Palo Alto, CA

Dr. Jim Lloyd,
Supt., Omstead Falls
schools, OH

Mr. Tobin

Novasio, Supt, Hardin
School Districts,
Billings, (MT)

Dr. Theresa Rouse,
Supt, Joliet Schools, (IL)

Dr. Ray Sanchez
Supt. of Schools
Tarrytown, NY

Dr. Michael Simeck,
Supt. Deerfield 109 (IL).

Dr. Kenneth Spells,
Supt., Hoke County
School District, Raeford,
NC

Dr. Jerry Thacker, Supt.
Penn-Harris-Madison
School, Mishawaka, (IN)

Dr. Louis N, Wool,
Supt of School, Harrison
Central School District
(NY)

Dr. Greg Wyman
Exec. Dir., Arizona Rural
Schools Association

Executive Director
of the HML
James Minichello
Alexandria, VA

Past Executive Directors

2025 Jack McKay
2023-24 Jeanne Collins
1993-23 Jack McKay
1992-93 Paul Rossey
1977-91 Robert
Fleischer
1972-77 Clayton
Hutchins
1963-71 William Early
1959-63 Benjamin Smith
1955-59 E.I. Williams

the preparation of
children and youth for
effective citizenship in
our democracy.

The League believes
that the American
tradition of separation of
church and state must
be preserved and should
be most vigorously and
zealously safeguarded.
The League grants the
right to special interest
groups, including various
religious sects, to
maintain their own
schools so long as such
schools meet the
standards defined by the
states in which they are
located.

The League believes
that these separate or
non-public schools
should be financed
entirely by their
supporters. It is therefore
unalterably opposed to
proposals to devote
public funds to the direct
or indirect support of
private schools.

The League favors the
generous financial
support of the public
schools by local, state,
and federal funds. It
believes, however, that
those federal grants
should be so made that
there will be no federal
control or interference in
local schools'
administration,
curriculum, personnel, or
instructional procedures.

1999 Beverly Reep OH
1998 Jane Hammond CO
1997 Cleve Hammonds MO
1996 Terry Grier, CA
1995 Paul Houston, VA
1994 Edna Manning, OK
1993 Malcolm Katz, GA
1992 Bob Fortenberry, MS
1991 Ron Etheridge, OH
1990 John Prasch NE
1989 Jack Mawdsley, MI
1988 Linton Deck NC
1987 Patrick Hoban WA
1986 M Donald Thomas UT
1985 Anne Campbell NE
1984 Floyd W. Parsons AR
1983 Paul Shelly NJ
1982 Orvin Plucker KS
1981 Albert Ayers VA
1980 Ken Hansen CO
1979 Homer Elseroad CO
1978 W J. House NC
1977 Paul Rossey NJ
1976 Charles Weaver NC
1975 Frank Yulo CT
1974 Archibald Shaw MI
1973 George Brain WA
1972 Mildred F. Reed DC
1971 Eugene Mellon IL
1970 Walter Hetzel IA
1968 Chester Swanson CA
1967 Phillip Weaver NC
1966 Edward Rutter CT
1965 Shirley Cooper WV
1964 Lynn Bennion UT
1963 John L Buford IL
1962 Frank W. Cyr NY
1960 L. Stacy Weaver NC
1959 Edgar Fuller DC
1958 Richard Kennan MD
1957 Henry H. Hill TN
1955 Selmer H. Berg CA
1953 Virgil Rogers VA
1951 Mark A. Smith GA
1950 Benjamin L. Smith NC
1948 I. E. F. Williams OH
1947 James Edmonson MI
1946 Howard Driggs NY
1944 Homer Anderson MA
1942 Harold J.
Benjamin MD
1941 L.J. Nuttall UT
1940 Alexander Stoddard RI
1939 Willard Given DC
1938 John Sexton CA

1946-54 Joy Elmer
Morgan
1925-45 Carroll Pearce
1924 Robert Wright
1923 John R. Kirk
1922 John A. Smith

1937 Millard Leffler NE
1936 Ben G. Graham PA
1935 John K. Norton NY
1934 H Lester Smith IN
1933 E.E. Oberholtzer TX
1932 Fred M. Hunter OR
1931 George Strayer NY
1930 George M. Child UT
1926 Payson Smith ME
1922 Carroll Pearce WI



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