



Horace Mann League of the USA

Founded in 1922 to Support Public Education

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Become A Member

An Honorary Association of Public Education Leaders

July 7, 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

Thought of the Week

"There is a need to double down and share the amazing things happening in public education. We are forward-thinking. We are anchors in the community. We are envisioning what the needs of our students are moving forward."



— David Law, superintendent, Minnesota's Minnetonka Public Schools; 2025-26 President of AASA

HML News



Editor's Note: A Season to Recharge

We hope you enjoyed a safe and relaxing Independence Day and had the opportunity to spend time with family, friends, and those who matter most.

As summer continues, we encourage school leaders to embrace this season as an opportunity to rest, reflect, and recharge before the start of another academic year. While the weeks ahead will undoubtedly bring planning and preparation, they also offer a valuable chance to step back, gain perspective, and return with renewed energy. We wish you a wonderful summer and thank you for

your continued leadership and unwavering commitment to public education.

An Update About The Post

Beginning later this summer, *The Post* will transition to a biweekly publication schedule. This change will allow us to devote more time to developing original content, including member profiles, leadership conversations, interviews, and stories highlighting the outstanding work taking place in school districts and organizations across the country.



Our goal is simple: to make each edition of *The Post* even more timely, engaging, and valuable to our members. As always, we welcome your feedback and ideas as we continue to evolve the newsletter. If you have suggestions or thoughts you'd like to share, we'd be delighted to hear from you.

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

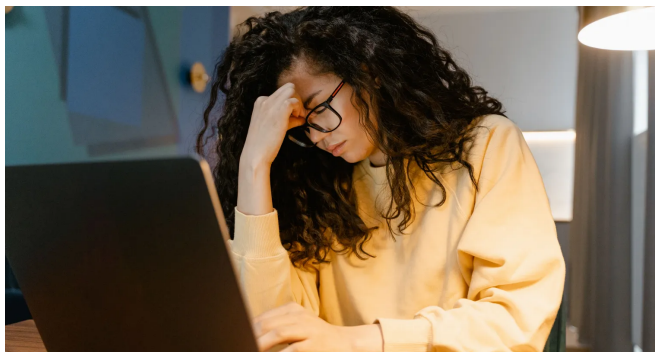


Making AI Work For Your Finance Team

by Megan Poiniski / *Forbes*

Finance departments at any company can be messy, and AI platforms are often pitched as solutions to straighten out problems, create more accurate reports and free up employees to do more interesting work.

[Read More](#)



The Price of Flexibility

by John Tsilimparis for *Psychology Today*

Remote work sounds like a dream, but new data reveals a quiet epidemic of isolation and psychological distress.

[Read More](#)



DC Public Schools Leads Nation in Academic Recovery. Here's why.

by Lewis Ferebee for *K-12 Dive*

D.C. Public Schools just concluded another season of state testing, the results of which I am confident will demonstrate the accelerated learning that has now become part and parcel of education in our nation's capital.

[Read More](#)



Here's who helped an Indiana School System Rebrand District Logos

by MJ Slaby / *Chalkbeat*

When the Metropolitan School District of Decatur Township unveiled its **rebranded logos** last school year, it turned to an in-house marketing firm: Jessica Sandvold's Strategic Marketing and Digital Marketing classes at Decatur Central High School.

[Read More](#)



Why Access to STEM Must Include students who Learn and Think Differently

by Kara Ball for *K-12 Dive*

Designing STEM programs with neurodivergent learners in mind strengthens outcomes for all students.

[Read More](#)

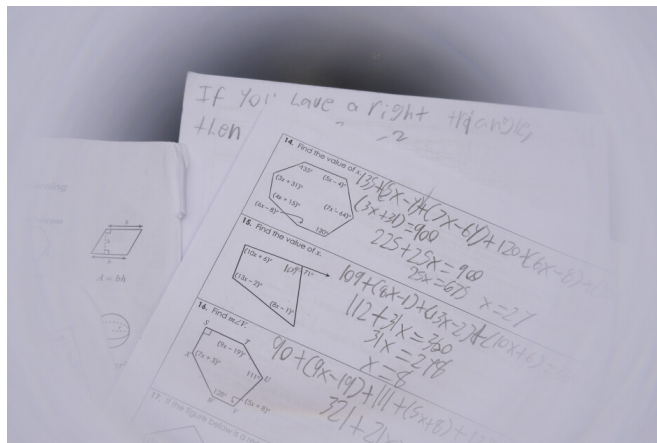


What Today's College Students Need That Previous Generations Didn't

by Patrick O'Donnell / *The 74*

College degrees don't guarantee good jobs anymore, so students must build resumes and AI skills in high school and college, experts say.

[Read More](#)



Teachers Want Their Math Curricula to Do More. Here's How.

by Sarah Schwartz / *Education Week*

The Gates Foundation has awarded several grants focused on instructional "coherence" in math.

[Read More](#)



Data-driven Decision-Making is the Key to Unlocking K-12 District Success

by Jennifer Duvall for *eSchool News*

Data-driven decision-making helps districts create a more stable and motivated educational environment that benefits both staff and students.

[Read More](#)



International Society for Transforming Education Expands its AI-Ready Framework

On June 28, the International Society for Transforming Education - the organization behind the editorially independent news site *EdSurge* - released an expanded version of its "Profile of an AI-Ready Graduate," a framework designed to help K-12 educators teach students how to work with artificial intelligence.

[Read More](#)

Leadership Ideas



The CEO's Guide to Building a Team of A Players

by Rick Crossland for *CEO Magazine*

A team of 100 percent A Players may seem unattainable, but increasing your company's talent density will have a dramatic and positive impact.

[Read More](#)



Protecting Your Time and Attention as a New Leader

by Rachel Lawton / *Edutopia*

These four mental models can help new school leaders learn to protect their time and attention so they can better serve their schools.

[Read More](#)

This question is all about educators stepping into a new leadership role. / *Edutopia*

What is your biggest question about leading in a new position?
Experienced leaders, what is your number one piece of advice?

[Read More](#)



12 Books for School Leaders and Principals to Read This Summer / *fellowship.newleaders.org*

Looking to recharge this summer? Consider making a good book part of your plans. These 12 reads-spanning leadership, education, and personal growth-will supply both fresh ideas and meaningful reflection.

[Read More](#)

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.

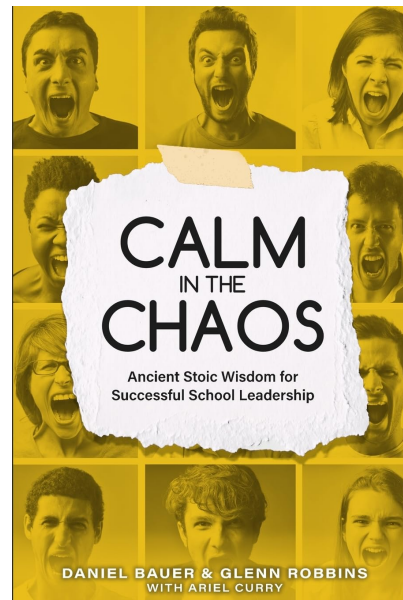
Please send submissions and ideas to James Minichello, executive director of the Horace Mann League, at jminichello@hmleague.org. We look forward to hearing from you.



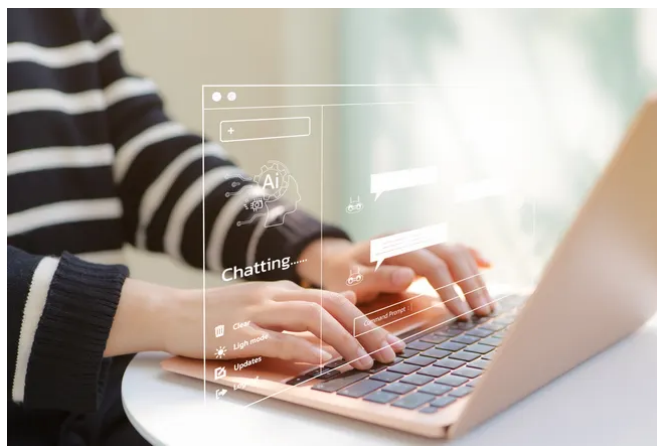
Featured Book

As school leaders take time this summer to rest, reflect, and prepare for the year ahead, *Calm in the Chaos* offers practical insights for leading with resilience, clarity, and purpose during challenging times. Co-authored by Glenn Robbins and Daniel Bauer, the book draws on timeless Stoic principles to help school leaders navigate uncertainty, build strong organizational cultures, and maintain a steady focus on what matters most: students, staff, and communities.

Whether you're looking for a summer read or new ideas to strengthen your leadership, *Calm in the Chaos* provides thoughtful guidance for leading with confidence when the demands of the job are at their greatest. School district leaders may also enjoy Robbins' recent conversation on the Horace Mann League Podcast, where he shares additional insights on leadership and resilience.



ChatGPT and AI



Where Chatbots Fit in the Curriculum Conversation

by Ed Finkel / *K-12 Dive*

Students' use of the AI-powered tools to boost their writing and studying skills comes with advantages and disadvantages.

[Read More](#)



I Almost Let AI Take My Voice. Here's the Framework I Use Now.

by Michelle Odemwingie for *EdTech Digest*

AI can make us more capable-or less original. After a close call on a panel discussion, I developed a simple framework for deciding when AI should extend human thinking and when it risks replacing it. GUEST COLUMN | by Michelle Odemwingie I was halfway through a virtual panel when it happened.

[Read More](#)

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

HML Gallery 1996-2023

2023 Annual Meeting Video -Presidents and Boards

HML Board Meeting and Annual Meeting 2015

The Iceberg Effect - Student Achievement

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 Fourlis.

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)

The Book of Wisdom (Good coffee - Great Friendships)

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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Horace Mann League Officers, Directors, and Past Presidents

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Arizona State Univ
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Board of Directors

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Weslaco, TX
Dr. Martin Brooks

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

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

Executive Director. Tri-State Consortium, Setauket, NY
Dr. Martha Bruckner
Bd. of Governors, Metro Comm. College, Omaha, NE

Mr. Douglas Burge,
Supt., Zillah, WA

Dr. Roxann Caserio,
Supt. North Ridgefield, OH

Dr. Linda Darling Hammond

Professor, Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA

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

Mr. Tobin Novasio, Supt, Hardin School Districts, Billing, (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

school system should be dominated by such purposes that will insure 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.

2001 Ben Canada, OR
2000 Kenneth Bird NE
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

1972-77 Clayton
Hutchins
1963-71 William Early
1959-63 Benjamin Smith
1955-59 E.I. Williams
1946-54 Joy Elmer
Morgan
1925-45 Carroll Pearce
1924 Robert Wright
1923 John R. Kirk
1922 John A. Smith

1939 Willard Given DC
1938 John Sexton CA
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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