

**Great Start Cohort Workshop
Wednesday, April 27, 2023
Presenter Contact List and Bios**

Session Facilitator

Ryan Fetters

Director

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Ryan Fetters is a director and municipal advisor with Baker Tilly Municipal Advisors, LLC. Ryan has served as a municipal advisor for K-12 schools, libraries, and other municipalities for more than 14 years. His experience includes: Tax-exempt and taxable municipal bond structuring and issuance, school budgeting, and capital planning. He is a member of the National Association of Municipal Advisors (NAMA). He holds a master's degree in Public Affairs from Indiana University and a bachelor's degree from Wabash College (Crawfordsville, Indiana). Ryan is a registered Municipal Advisor with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

Presenters

Michael J. Lovett, Ph.D.

Lecturer, University of Minnesota

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From 2008 through 2017, Dr. Michael Lovett was superintendent of the White Bear Lake Public Schools in Minnesota, after serving as assistant superintendent with the Minnetonka Public Schools from 1988 to 2008. Previously he was a public school teacher in New York, an administrator at school site and district levels, and at the Minnesota Department of Education.

He teaches graduate level courses in educational leadership and policy at the University of Minnesota and the University of St. Thomas. Areas of teaching experience include human resources; school finance; strategic planning; research design, analysis and critique; and the superintendency.

During his career he has regularly presented to Minnesota and National conferences; traveled internationally to Asia, Africa, and Europe for education and nonprofit partnerships; is the author of journal articles on educational finance and law; published a book on teacher retention; and is a contributor to national publications on education topics.

He provides strategic leadership mentoring and consulting to educational and nonprofit leaders through Lovett Leadership LLC; and is active on several nonprofit boards.

Dr. Lovett earned his B.A. in History from Carleton College, Northfield, MN, in 1970; attended Doshisha University in Kyoto, Japan in 1969; and earned M.A. (1973) and Ph.D. (1979) degrees in Educational Leadership and Policy from the University of Minnesota.

James Martin

Attorney

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Mr. James Martin has practiced employment law for over thirty (30) years and currently practices law at Martin Law Firm PLLC. Prior to starting Martin Law Firm PLLC in April 2019, Mr. Martin has worked at small, medium and large law firms practicing in the areas of labor, employment and school law.

During his career he has served as the Executive Director of Human Resources for Bloomington Public Schools from 1998 to 2005, and the Director of Human Resources for St. Louis Park Public Schools from 1993 to 1998.

Mr. Martin also serves as a neutral investigator conducting employment investigations and has served as a hearing officer in employment arbitrations and student expulsion hearings.

He earned his B.A. in Psychology from William Jewell College, Liberty, MO, his M.S. in Industrial Relations from Purdue University and his J.D. from William Mitchell (now Mitchell/Hamline) College of Law, St. Paul, MN.

Tonya Allen, MSW, LICSW, Ed.S.

Executive Director of Student Support

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Tonya Allen is the Executive Director of Student Support in Intermediate District 287. Tonya has worked a variety of roles within the field of education over the last 25 years, most recently as a Principal and Director of Mental Health and Family Engagement. Tonya earned her Bachelor degree in History from Drake University and Master of Social Work from the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. Tonya earned her K-12 Principal certificate, Director of Special Education certificate and an Education Specialist degree from Saint Mary's University of Minnesota. Tonya is currently a doctoral candidate in Educational Leadership with a focus on studying Black teachers at Minnesota State University Moorhead.

Brenna MacDonald, MSW, LICSW

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Brenna MacDonald, MSW, LICSW is the Senior Manager of School and Community Outreach at Intermediate District 287. Previously, Brenna has worked with children and families in a variety of settings, including child welfare, community mental health, school-linked mental health, and day treatment. Brenna's professional interests include best practices in trauma-informed care and improving collaboration between professionals across helping systems.

Kristin C. Nierengarten

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Kristin Nierengarten is a shareholder attorney with Rupp, Anderson, Squires, Waldspurger & Mace, P.A. Kristin is focused on providing practical, timely, and cost-effective advice and solutions to school, city, county, and other government clients. Her areas of practice include general municipal law, school law, data practices, labor and employment, land use and zoning, constitutional law, and civil and appellate litigation. She regularly speaks on a variety of topics including the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, student and employee discipline, investigations, constitutional rights, and other issues facing her clients. She earned her B.A., cum laude, from Carleton College, and her J.D., magna cum laude, from William Mitchell College of Law. Prior to joining the RASWM in 2014, Kristin served as a judicial law clerk at the Minnesota Court of Appeals.