



**KANSAS MISSOURI  
SUPERINTENDENTS  
LEADERSHIP FORUM**



# **SERVING AS A LEAD LEARNER: KMSLF AT 30 YEARS**

## **FALL FORUM 2025**

October 9-10, 2025  
Intercontinental Hotel  
Kansas City, MO

# LEADERSHIP

(n) the act of guiding and directing people or organizations



**Executive Director**  
Suzan Patton



**Business Director**  
Teresa Redlingshafer

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The purpose of the Kansas Missouri Superintendents Leadership Forum is to provide members with learning opportunities that can expand the impact of their leadership in their communities and schools.



# AGENDA

## THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9

8:30 - 9:40 AM, PAVILLION 3

### **KMSLF Board of Directors Meeting**

9:45 AM - 10:20 AM, PAVILLION 3

### **KMSLF New Member Orientation**

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM, SALON 1A, FOYER

### **Registration**

10:30 - 11:30 PM, SALON 1A, 1B

### **Fall Legal Issues Update**

*Jessica Bernard, Guin Mundorf, LLC*

*Anthony McDaniel, Guin Mundorf, LLC*

Join a one-hour update on key school legal issues. This session is optional and open to all members.

11:45 AM - 12:45 PM, SALON 1A, FOYER

### **Lunch**

12:45 - 1:30 PM, SALON 1A

### **Call to Order & Welcome**

*Adrian Howie, USD 210 Hugoton,*

*KMSLF Board of Directors President*

### **KMSLF Business Partner Introductions Membership Recognition**

*Suzan Patton, Executive Director*

1:30 - 3:00 PM, SALON 1A, 1B

### **Serving as a Lead Learner**

*Dr. Peter Stiepleman*

This keynote explores how embracing imperfection and reflecting on our leadership journeys can help us grow as vulnerable, empathetic, and effective leaders in our communities.

It connects to Dr. Stiepleman's forthcoming book, *Serving as Lead Learners: Lessons from America's Superintendents*, which is dedicated to the many leaders who trusted him with their stories.

The central message: today's most effective school leaders see themselves not as flawless authorities, but as "imperfect leaders" and "lead learners." By owning our imperfections and learning from our experiences, we can build stronger connections, show greater empathy, and model lifelong learning for those we serve.

3:00-3:15 PM, SALON 1A, 1B FOYER

### **Break**

3:15-3:30 PM

### **Partner Introductions**

*Suzan Patton, Executive Director*

3:30 - 4:30 PM, SALON 1A, 1B

**Embracing Imperfection: Learning From Our Toughest Decisions**

*Dr. Peter Stiepleman*

*Adrian Howie, USD 210*

*Dr. Amy Ruzika, Bayless School District*

*Dr. David Schmitz, Lebanon R-III*

*Dr. Anna Stubblefield, USD 500 Kansas City, KS*

This panel will focus on how leaders handle challenges, mistakes, and setbacks; not as failures, but as valuable opportunities to learn and grow.

Panelists will share stories about decisions they made that didn't go as planned, what they may have overlooked or what surprised them along the way, and the lessons they discovered about leadership, collaboration, and working with people through those experiences.

5:00-6:15 PM, ROOFTOP BAR

**30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration & Networking**

6:15 PM-8:30 PM, ROOFTOP BALLROOM

**KMSLF Dinner**

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2024 Midwest Transactions Ranked by Number of Deals

Rank	Firm	No. of Deals	Per (\$ MIL)
1	Piper Sandler & Co	206	3,798
2	Robert W Baird & Co Inc	183	1,211
3	Northland Securities	163	670
4	Ehlers & Associates	125	1,974
5	D A Davidson & Co	123	1,341
6	Sitfel Nicolaus & Co Inc	107	1,686
7	Baker Tilly Municipal Advisors	97	1,495
8	PFM Financial Advisors LLC	89	4,023
9	LJ Hart & Company	75	414
10	RBC Capital Markets	66	3,199

Source: 1000+ Member SIPs and 915SE, ©2024 Piper Sandler & Co. 09/26/2024 8:00

# FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10

7:00 - 8:00 AM, SALON 1A, 1B, Foyer

## Breakfast

8:00 - 9:15 AM, SALON 1A, 1B

### Partnering for Progress: Engaging the Board as Lead Learners

*Dr. Peter Stiepleman, Facilitator*  
*Dr. Gillian Chapman, USD 229 Blue Valley*  
*Dr. Cory Gibson, USD 232 DeSoto*  
*Dr. Kenny Rodriquez, Grandview C-4*

This panel will examine the superintendent-school board relationship, focusing on building trust, credibility, and navigating politically charged issues. Panelists will share strategies for leading with transparency, engaging in difficult conversations, and collaborating effectively with their boards and communities, while highlighting how this relationship is rarely taught and requires a “lead learner” mindset of continuous learning and adaptation.

9:15- 9:30 AM

## Break

9:45 - 11 AM, SALON 1A, 1B

### Closing the Trust Gap

*Cory Scheer, Ed.D., EMBA*

If trust is so important for personal and professional relationships, why is it in such short supply? If trust is an inarguable universal truth, why does it seem so difficult to define and even more difficult to measure? If trust is vital for employee retention, team productivity, and a healthy workplace culture, why is there a growing epidemic of distrust in all industries?

Cory Scheer will share the vital truth about the current condition of workplace trust and how to take action on it. Drawing from his doctoral research, national research, 25+

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 Kansas City

**Chad Remboldt**  
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**Dr. Jason Dial**  
 Springfield

**Dan Whisler**  
 Kansas City

**Mariyah Presley**  
 Midwest

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years in professional leadership experiences, and various national and international client engagements, Cory will share how trust is definable, measurable, vital, and actionable.

You will walk away with a deeper understanding of why trust is so vitally important, a practical and memorable trust framework, and proven methods to take action on strengthening trust to create a world-class workplace culture.

10:30- 10:40 AM

**Break**

**10:40 - 11:40 AM, SALON 1A, 1B**  
**Navigating Uncertainty: Lessons from Leading Through Crisis**

*Dr. Peter Stiepleman, Facilitator*  
*Cody Hirschi, Reeds Spring Schools*  
*Cindy Couchman, USD 313 Buhler*  
*Dr. Jeremy Tucker, Liberty*  
*Dr. Brent Yeager, USD 233 Olathe*

Crises amplify imperfection. Leaders don't have all the answers, information is imperfect, and decisions must be made under pressure. The Lead Learner model is essential for adapting, innovating, and learning in real-time. This panel will explore the balance of urgency and reflection during a crisis, the emotional toll on leaders and staff, and the importance of emotional intelligence.

This panel will explore the biggest lessons they learned about leadership during the crisis and how they balanced the need for quick decisions with the need for reflection and stakeholder input.

11:45 AM, Salon 1A, 1B

**Prize Drawings and Wrap Up**

*Suzan Patton, KMSLF Director*

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**DARIN HEADRICK**  
DIRECTOR, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

**KIRK KEZEL**  
Digital Learning  
K12 Kansas & Missouri  
[kirk.kezel@instructure.com](mailto:kirk.kezel@instructure.com)  
847.322.5776

**DR RYAN STANLEY**  
Digital Learning  
K12 Kansas & Missouri  
[ryan.stanley@instructure.com](mailto:ryan.stanley@instructure.com)  
913.231.1259

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# SPEAKER PROFILES

## DR. PETER STIEPLEMAN



Peter Stiepleman brings broad experience as a superintendent, principal, consultant, and advisor in both public education and the private sector. As Superintendent of Columbia Public Schools, Missouri's fourth largest district, he led 19,000 students and 3,000 staff while advancing programs that expanded equity and access. He co-founded COMOEd, a teacher pipeline that supports local students of color to graduate debt-free and return as educators in their community, and launched Early College, which gave high school students the opportunity to complete two years of college at no cost. Under his leadership, Columbia students consistently outperformed state, national, and international peers on SAT, ACT, and AP exams, while the district improved attendance, graduation rates, access to rigorous coursework, and overall community satisfaction.

A recognized thought leader, Peter is the author of *An Imperfect Leader: Human-Centered Leadership in (After) Action* and the forthcoming *Serving as a Lead Learner: Powerful Reflections from America's Superintendents*. His work explores the realities of leadership in schools, addressing challenges such as technology use, equity in education, and navigating race and class in diverse communities. Beyond his writing, Peter is a sought-after advisor, sharing insights on how leaders can model vulnerability, reflection, and continuous learning while guiding their districts through complex challenges.

Peter's leadership has been recognized with multiple honors, including Missouri Superintendent of the Year (2021), the NAACP Distinguished Community Service Award (2021), the Columbia Values Diversity Award (2021), the National School Board Association Magna Award (2019), and the National Reading Recovery Teacher Leader Award (2015). Today, he continues to support educational leaders and organizations nationwide, helping them strengthen board relations, build community trust, and approach leadership with courage and a human-centered mindset.

# CORY SCHEER



In addition to over 25 years in leadership roles in various sectors, Cory Scheer, Founder and CEO of TrustCentric® Consulting, has obtained an Executive MBA (Rockhurst University) and a Doctorate in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis (University of Missouri).

Cory and his Team have worked with nonprofit organizations, small businesses, corporations, school districts, academic institutions, municipalities, ministries and the United States Military to provide vital support and clear direction on how to ensure people, practices, and policies become more trustworthy so that key performance indicators improve and work cultures become more healthy.

Cory is the co-author of *The National Survey on Brand and Trust* and the developer of the online course, *The Complete Guide to Building Organizational Trust*. Cory is also the author of the book *Closing the Trust Gap: Taking Action on What Matters Most for Leaders, Teams, and Organizations*.

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**FREEDOM INTERIORS**

**Tyler Bosley**  
VP of Sales  
[tbosley@freedom.net](mailto:tbosley@freedom.net)

**Carol Sokolenko**  
CEO  
[csokolenko@freedom.net](mailto:csokolenko@freedom.net)

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785.400.6136



**THE CORE COLLABORATIVE**

**Brian Roy**  
Executive Director of Partnerships  
[brian@thecorecollaborative.com](mailto:brian@thecorecollaborative.com)

**Sarah Stevens**  
Executive Director of Quality Implementation  
[Sarah@thecorecollaborative.com](mailto:Sarah@thecorecollaborative.com)

# 2025 BUSINESS PARTNERS



## Conscious Discipline

Jill Molli

jill.molli@consciousdiscipline.com  
(407) 901-3193



## The Core Collaborative

Sarah Stevens

sarah@thecorecollaborative.com  
620-404-8782



## Coryell Roofing

Mindy Bruce

mindy@coryellroofing.com  
316-304-?



## DLR Group

Rachel Treanor

rtreanor@DLRGROUP.com 816-359-7625



## DS Bus Lines (Beacon)

Scott Brügge

scott.bruegge@dsbuslines.com  
913-302-2427



## FRE3DOM INTERIORS

Tyler Bosley

tbosley@fre3dom.net  
816-810-3735



## Guin Mundorf, LLC

Jessica Bernard

jbernard@gmschoollaw.com  
816-333-1700



## Instructure

Ryan Stanley

ryan.stanley@instructure.com  
913.231.1259



## MAMMOTH

### Mammoth Sports Construction & Design

Olivia Mayer

olivia.mayer@mammothbuilt.com  
785.400.6136



## McCown Gordon

Sara Holmes

sholmes@mccowngordon.com  
913-207-3723



## Midwest Bus Sales (Beacon)

Phil Mathews

pmathews@midwestbussales.com  
913-302-2427



## SSC Services for Education

Stephanie Schwab

Stephanie.Schwab@sscserv.com  
(636) 215-3995



## SWC South Western Communications

Stacy Menhusen Security  
stacy.menhusen@swc.net  
314.973.9268



## TRANE

Jason Dial  
jason.dial@trane.com  
417-399-5291