

# Minnesota Administrators for Special Education

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News Release

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## Jan Ostrom Receives MASE Distinguished Service Award

(St. Paul, MN) – The Minnesota Administrators for Special Education (MASE) has named Jan Ostrom, Owner of Brih Design, the recipient of the 2021 Distinguished Service Award. Ostrom will be honored for her positive history and association with Minnesota public education, contribution to improving Minnesota’s public education, and reputation as a person who willingly “goes the extra mile” at a statewide recognition ceremony during the virtual MASA/MASE Spring Conference, March 11-12, 2021.

“Jan’s consistent focus in all of her work is the student and understanding their needs. She is dedicated to developing and carrying out effective programming that results in positive growth for our students,” said Melissa Schaller, Executive Director of Student Services of Intermediate School District 917. “Jan is an ultimate advocate for students with disabilities. She can see all perspectives of an issue and move teams toward the shared purpose of improving the lives of children with disabilities. Jan is a valuable asset to MASE, the field of special education, and most importantly to the students that we serve.”

Ostrom has more than 20 years of experience working with individuals of different abilities, including Autism Spectrum Disorders, emotional behavior disorders, and mental illness. She is a co-founder of Brih Design, a company specializing in behavioral supports in schools; comprehensive functional behavior assessments; positive behavior support planning, training and implementation across individuals, groups, and systems; and consultation in understanding behavior and behavior change across children, adolescents, and adults with a myriad of diagnoses and levels of functioning.

Ostrom is well known in Minnesota’s education community and in the autism community. She has proven herself to be dedicated, positive, and effective as she consults with countless school districts and cooperatives in all corners of Minnesota. She is thorough in her analysis of the student and clear in her communication of the student’s goals and outcomes. Ostrom is an education professional who “goes the extra” mile by providing a specific lens of support based on the individual needs of each student.

Ostrom is an active educator and advocate for advancing the professional learning of special education administrators. She is a frequent speaker and trainer in the design of effective interventions, accommodations, and modifications for comprehensive behavior supports. Ostrom has presented and provided training to administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, parents, and other mental health professionals. It is her work across Minnesota that has led to her positive association with improving Minnesota’s public education. Ostrom was also included on the Minnesota Department of Education’s Reducing Restrictive Procedures Expert List.

“Jan’s skills in providing direction for interventions goes far beyond anyone I have ever worked with. She is able to conduct professional and empathetic conversations with families and their school district,” said Chad Williams, Director of Special Services at Jordan Public Schools. “Jan works with grace and humility during the most difficult and sensitive situations with the central goal of meeting the student’s needs. I strongly recommend Jan for the MASE Distinguished Service Award.”

Ostrom holds a master’s degree in Applied Psychology from St. Cloud State University and a bachelor’s degree in Elementary Education and Teaching from the University of Minnesota.

*MASE is a professional association organized to promote programs and services to improve the education of children with disabilities, to foster high quality programs of professional development, and to study problems relating to serving children with disabilities and improving the leadership of administrators for special education. MASE members are administrators for special*

*education in public or private schools, cooperative regional, state and other education administrative units, college and university professors of special education teacher or administrator preparation programs, and administrators, coordinators or consultants for the Minnesota Department of Education.*

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