Special Updates: School Safety & Security

Safety Grant Program Timelines: October 12 Deadline

More than $52 million in new school safety grants are available to school entities through the new PA School Safety and Security Grant Program. However, any school entity seeking to receive a grant MUST register online AND apply no later than Oct. 12, 2018 to the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD), which oversees the program (not the PDE).

Grant applications may be revised by the applicants at a later date, but applications must be submitted by Oct. 12 in order for a school entity to be considered for a grant.

Know what you need to do – and be sure your district is registered and prepared to apply! Click here for information.

School Safety & Security Exchange: November 8-9

PASA, along with PSBA, PSEA, the PA State Police, the PA Attorney General’s Office, PEMA and other municipal and security agencies and associations, are offering to LEAs a special School Safety & Security Exchange on Nov. 8-9 at the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center.

Join school and local government leaders from across the state to discuss implementation of new requirements outlined in Act 44 of 2018. By attending this two-day learning program, you’ll walk away with the latest information regarding School Safety and Security assessments, planning, reporting and response.

Listen, learn, exchange ideas and network. With access to the right people and resources, you’ll be equipped to meet the ambitious compliance timelines established by the law. Join us for targeted keynotes, Q&A sessions, roundtable discussions and ongoing opportunities for peer learning and strategizing.

Registration is open! See the PASA and PSBA websites for information. We strongly urge each school district to send at least one person to this important event!

School Safety Resources

To support the work of school administrators in ensuring student safety, PASA maintains an online list of school safety resources (with links). Click here to access the resources.
We Need Local Control of High School Graduation

Pennsylvania had been known as a state that provided local control over public education. However, over the past two decades, more control over public education has been usurped by the state in an effort to improve accountability and assure all students are graduating with the skills and knowledge they need to be successful in post secondary education and the workforce.

The general education reform movement began in earnest in the early 1980’s in England and quickly migrated to the United States. Reports such as A Nation At Risk caused considerable panic among governors and legislators in state houses across the nation, which led to increased testing, the development of standards, and public reporting systems to identify how well schools were performing.

School leaders soon found themselves revamping their curriculum to include more rigor in their academic courses. As state testing systems began to develop in the early ‘90s, more classroom time was devoted to preparing students for state exams. When No Child Left Behind was authorized by the federal government in 2001, testing and accountability hit our schools at fever pitch. Testing was here to stay – and the scores mattered.

Today our testing programs drive instruction in our schools and the data can be helpful to educators when used appropriately. Teachers, principals and central office leaders use data from standardized exams to help design curricula, identify students who need additional assistance, and provide trend lines for longitudinal analysis of a school’s performance. This is the intended use for standardized test data that can be very beneficial in developing instructional programs for children.

Standardized exams were never designed to rank schools and serve as a public report card for accountability purposes. It has been one of the greatest misuses of resources in the history of our nation.

A bevy of standardized exams are currently being used in Pennsylvania high schools to assess students’ acquisition of the academic standards and determine the effectiveness of the school. The Pennsylvania Keystone Exams, SAT, ACT, AP Exams, and IB Exams are some of the assessments used to evaluate how well the students are achieving the standards and how well the school is educating the students in learning the standards. All this standardized testing has come at great cost to the state, local school districts and students in both financial terms and instructional loss of time.

Yet, as the testing engine continues to roar, we have overlooked the one indicator of academic success that has stood the test of time and is replete in the research as the best indicator of educational accountability and future success of students: the high school transcript.

Several research studies, reports and articles have indicated that the high school transcript is a better predictor of post-secondary success than any standardized tests, including Keystones, SAT, ACT and college entry exams. It stands to reason, therefore, that the high school transcript is the best indicator of future achievement as it reflects much more than just knowledge or aptitude. The high school transcript reveals work effort, study habits, participation, punctuality, and many other characteristics that are not only needed to be successful in a higher education classroom, but also are needed to be successful in any career or workplace.

Amazingly, the high school transcript has lost credibility with policymakers. There is a tendency to believe that too much variability exists in high school transcripts from school to school – and that local districts can’t be trusted to ensure that all graduating students have met rigorous requirements to earn a high school diploma. Such thinking is a sad state of affairs and reflective of the baseless negativity being projected toward public education.

However, there is hope on the horizon.

The PA Senate passed SB 1095 unanimously during the spring legislative session. Several of the state education associations, including PASA, were at the table to help craft a multi-option approach to high school graduation that will provide students a variety of pathways for success.
NEWS RECAP

Don’t forget to check the PASA website for the weekly Education Update that provides a summary of up-to-date legislative, state and national education news. For more information on the following news briefs, see the PASA Web site at www.pasa-net.org. (Click on “News and Advocacy” to access the current and archived updates.) And follow us on Twitter for the latest updates @PASASupts.

School Safety News

School Safety Grants: School districts have been urged to meet the Oct. 12 deadline to apply for a share of $52 million available for safety/security grants. All applications need to be completed online through the PA Commission on Crime & Delinquency’s Egrants website.

School Safety Report: Gov. Wolf and Auditor General Eugene Pasquale have released the report from the Pennsylvania School Safety Task Force with recommendations compiled from public discussions across the commonwealth. Some recommendations include improving communication/information sharing, more emphasis on social and emotional learning, and increased access to mental health services, including more health professionals in schools. Click here to read the report. PASA Executive Director Dr. Mark DiRocco served as a vice-chair of the task force.

Federal Funds to Buy Guns: Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos sparked a firestorm of controversy last month when word in Washington was that the USDE was considering allowing school districts to use federal funding set aside for academic enrichment and student services to purchase guns for educators. Since that time, DeVos has stated she would support giving states the right to make that decision. AASA and PASA are opposed to this idea.

State Budget News

Act 1 Index: The PDE has set 2.3 percent as the Act 1 base index for Fiscal Year 2019-20.

General Fund Revenue: According to the PA Department of Revenue, Pennsylvania collected $2.3 billion in General Fund revenue in August, about $27.1 million (or 1.2 percent) more than anticipated.

School Funding Lawsuit: Commonwealth Court Judge Robert Simpson last month issued a ruling denying the latest challenge to have the school funding lawsuit move forward. Objections filed with the court insisted that the passage of a new school funding formula in 2016 rendered the case moot. The court found that sufficient legal and factual issues remain in the case to allow it to proceed.

Executive Director’s Message

Continued from page 2

...to graduate, including passing all their high school course needed for graduation and gaining admission to higher education. This has been the gold standard of academic success for years, and PASA is advocating that it become a stand-alone, non-testing graduation option as the bill moves to the House for consideration this fall.

We need YOUR help to move this measure to the finish line.

Please join us in advocating for SB 1095 by contacting your House representative to support the bill and bring back the prominence of the high school transcript and admission to higher education as a trustworthy, time-tested indicator of academic success.

In Legislative News

Session Schedule: Both the House and Senate return to voting session on Sept. 24 for a limited number of session days before the November election.

State News

Review of Gifted Ed Regulations: The State Board of Education is beginning the process of reviewing Chapter 16 (Gifted Education) regulations for possible changes. As part of the process, the Board’s Commission on Special & Gifted Education will hold three roundtables to gather input from the field, beginning next month. Pre-registration is required. See the State Board website for information.

Truancy Oversight: The PDE last month reminded school districts that, while Act 39 of 2018 (passed with the budget) takes from school districts the responsibility to provide oversight of attendance and truancy in charter schools and places that authority solely on the charter school, school districts now are required to exercise similar oversight over private and parochial schools. The department intends to issue a revised Basic Education Circular (BEC) on the issue soon. Questions should be directed to Carol Kuntz, Director for the Office of Safe Schools, at (717) 783-6469.

National News

Superintendent Survey: According to a recently released Gallup poll, while the vast majority of superintendents remain excited about the future of their school district, less than half (42 percent) are enthusiastic about the future of K-12 public education in the U.S. The biggest challenges superintendents reported include recruiting and retaining talented teachers, as well as budget shortfalls.

Future of Teaching: The PDK International poll on education reveals that, while a growing number of people believe teacher salaries are too low and teachers should be respected more, an equally growing number do not want their children to become teachers. Reasons given included inadequate pay and benefits, student behavior, lack of discipline, and teaching as a thankless profession that isn’t respected or valued in society.

COMING UP

The legislative agenda for the fall and the post-election voting days remains relatively unknown. PASA, among other education organizations, is working hard at the Capitol to ensure the House takes up SB 1095, the graduation requirements bill, before the two-year session ends on Nov. 30. All bills not passed and signed into law by that time will need to be reintroduced in the next session. As always, stay tuned for the latest information by following us on Twitter @PASASupts.
FROM THE PRESIDENT’S PEN

It Was the Best of Times...

BY DR. EMILIE LONARDI, 2017-18 PASA PRESIDENT

“It was the best of times. It was the worst of times.”

I think that old Charles Dickens line perfectly describes the state of mind of so many school leaders.

On one hand, new regulations, financial inequities, anti-public school sentiment, teacher shortages, school violence, and sundry issues surrounding social media, among other 21st century nuances, have made our jobs as leaders incredibly complex. Some leaders long for how things used to be, but as author Diane Ravitch so eloquently reminds us, “The rose colored nostalgia is ever so strong.”

But, on the other hand, when you reflect on serving as a superintendent in 2018, in so many ways, it is actually the best of times.

Our schools are better than they ever have been in the history of schooling. Graduation rates continue to climb, more students attend and graduate from colleges/technical schools, the achievement gap is closing, there are increased opportunities for students in STEM fields, curricula are more rigorous, and additional athletic and club opportunities abound. Student philanthropic outreach continues to proliferate, as does environmental sensitivity, and anti-bully initiatives. Growth mindset is flourishing among our teachers, and technology is increasingly used as a creation device to engage learners, differentiate instruction and provide student agency. Our schools are filled with teachers and administrators of the highest caliber. Each and every day, classrooms have the hum of learning and thousands of “Ah-Ha!” moments where extraordinary experiences are taking shape.

AASA advocates for education with the slogan “I Love Public Education.” Our schools are better than ever, so tell our story loudly and often. Advocate for the sacred work that we do and remind your staff to do the same. Be intentional, be positive and let your attitude be a contagion to those around you.

We, and only we, can silence the uninformed voices saying otherwise. We are the profession that makes all others possible, and that is ours alone to own. Let’s revel in that importance and continually advance our humble cause.

As my role as president of this wonderful PASA organization winds down, it is with continued excitement for our future, passion for the work that we do and appreciation for the opportunity to serve you.

My friends, it is indeed the best of times. Have a fantastic year!

Thank you!

On behalf of the PASA Board of Governors, we thank Dr. Emilie Lonardi for her year of service to PASA as PASA President. Dr. Lonardi will be formally recognized at the PASA Recognition Luncheon on October 18 during the PASA/PSBA Annual Leadership Conference in Hershey.

A “Thank You” also to Dr. John Bell for his service as PASA Treasurer, to Dr. Richard Fry for his service as President-Elect and chair of the Resolutions Committee, and to Dr. Patrick O’Toole, as he completes his three-year commitment of service to PASA serving as President-Elect, President and Past-President.

Roundtables Set for Review of Gifted Education Regulations

The State Board of Education is beginning a review of Chapter 16 (Gifted Education) regulations, with the intent to draft changes as needed. To facilitate that review, the State Board Committee on Special and Gifted Education has scheduled a series of public roundtable discussions to receive input on the current regulations.

Members of the public, including school district officials, are invited to submit a request to participate in one of three scheduled roundtables, beginning next month, as follows:

- October 3 – I.U. 3 (10 a.m. – noon)  
  Registration deadline: noon on Sept. 28

- October 9 – I.U. 23 (10 a.m. – noon)  
  Registration deadline: noon on Oct. 4

- November 1 – PDE Building Harrisburg (noon – 2 p.m.)  
  Registration deadline: noon on Oct. 29

Those interested in participating in one of the roundtable meetings should register with the State Board office at (717) 787-3787 or by email at ra-stateboardofed@pa.gov. Click here for more information.

Communication Tip of the Month

“More than anything, district and school leaders can be spokespeople and advocates for supporting learning that honors the whole student and for making social, emotional and academic learning an explicit mission of schools. School leaders need to build this vision into what they do and how they talk about education and build it into their strategic plans.” — Linda Darling-Hammond, from “What Makes Social-Emotion Learning So Important?,” as published in the September issue of AASA’s School Administrator. The issue examines how social-emotional learning can make schools developmentally healthy places.
We have all heard of the “Starfish Story.” A young child is feverishly throwing stranded starfish back into the ocean. When asked why he continues to make this seemingly fruitless effort, the child answers, “It matters to this one.”

Like the young child in the “Starfish Story,” I, too, am often asked about our efforts to mass customize learning in Central York School District.

Why would we take a perfectly “good” school system and change it? The answer is, simply, it matters to this one, to this student, and to that student over there, and to the next, and so on.

Mass customized learning requires educators to look at how we do school in a different way. It’s not about focusing on how we perform on a standardized test or in comparison to some country. Education was never about what we can prove in the aggregate or the whole or the basis for some comparison, as if growing one year’s growth in one year’s time is a given. Education is about growing productive citizens who could contribute to our country in whatever job or area they desired.

Changing how you think about education and shifting to a mass customized learning mindset requires you think different about your school “system,” and really place the student at the forefront. Here are three tips to get started.

**Embrace Fork in the Road Thinking**

We can all agree that public education has stayed structurally the same for well over 100 years (180 days = a grade level). How do you question conventional wisdom and be compliantly deviant and still follow the rules in a new and unique manner? (Credit to Duff Rearick, retired superintendent and mentor to many for the term “compliant deviance”)

According to Seth Godin, “The fork in the road offers two difficulties…seeing it and taking it.” The first step is seeing that there are alternative ways of teaching and learning. Just because it has been done that way, always, does not mean it’s best for our learners today and in the future. The second step is to be bold enough to take it and move in a different direction despite others questioning your every move.

**Adopt an “x+1” Mindset**

If last year was “x,” how will this year become “x+1” or a little better? How will this day be just a little better than yesterday? How will the next conversation you are about to have make you a little better?

We need to busy ourselves with creating a school system that improves the learner experience each day. Imagine a school district, a school, a leadership team all adopting this mindset and the impact on that child right over there.

**Start Making Things Up / Innovate**

Where do ideas come from? Really, who made up the notion that if you swallow gum it will take seven years to digest? Or that you must wait 30 minutes prior to swimming after your lunch? Somebody with a bias for ideas made it up…just like the Carnegie Unit (180 days equals a grade level) and that it takes a full 180 days to master Algebra 1.

What ideas can you come up with that will help a child achieve their full potential? Why wouldn’t we send a 1st grader to 2nd grade for math if she was really ready?

So right here, right now, commit to the following:

Be a compliant deviant.
Be x+1.
Start making things up / innovate!
Why? Because it matters to this one!

Dr. Michael Snell is superintendent of the Central York SD. He is a member of the PASA Professional Development and the 2018 Pennsylvania Superintendent of the Year.

**From the Professional Development Committee…**

**Starfish Accountability**

**BY DR. MICHAEL SNELL**

**Coming to the PASA/PSBA School Leadership Conference next month?**

Remember to register for the PASA RECOGNITION LUNCHEON on October 18!
Resolutions Corner: Well-Being

BY BARBARA W. JEWETT, ASSISTANT TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

"Please know that we are taking these moisture and mold issues very seriously, and that the health and well-being of our students and staff is a top priority.” – Dr. Alexis McGloin, superintendent of the Upper Perkiomen SD, in a message to parents explaining school closure due to the discovery of mold and subsequent remediation efforts

Mother Nature has dealt us a beastly school start this year. The high heat, humidity and rainfall of the summer have generated numerous school-opening challenges, including mold. Just Google “Pennsylvania schools mold” and you will get pages of hits, as school buildings and even districts across the commonwealth have been delayed or closed after the school-start due to high heat and humidity and/or the discovery of mold in classrooms, duct work, janitor’s closets and many other hidden areas. And the mold problem is continuing into mid-September.

Now the remnants of Hurricane Florence are moving through parts of Pennsylvania, bringing even more rain and humidity. Rivers and streams are high, the ground is saturated, and the cold, crisp, dry fall season doesn’t appear to be looming on the horizon. That doesn’t bode well for alleviating mold problems. Who knew there would be as many closures this year due to heat, humidity and mold as there usually are for snow days?

It’s not a great way to start the year.

No matter how hard you try, no matter how many tests you run, phone calls you make, inspections you have, forecasts you watch and meetings you hold throughout the year, it sometimes isn’t enough. In the end, Mother Nature more often has her way.

But, as Dr. McGloin wrote in her message to parents, “the health and well-being of our students and staff is a top priority,” even when the impact on family schedules is negative, even when it throws the academic calendar into disarray. Student and staff well-being comes before academics, before football, before convenience.

And a growing component of the concern for well-being is concern about student and staff safety and security, the issue that is foremost on everyone’s mind. Lawmakers and state agencies continue to work on developing Safe2Say and safety grant programs, and local school and law enforcement officials grapple with developing procedures and strategies to safeguard the well-being of all those working and learning in school buildings. And, as always, what comes with that planning are discussions about how to pay for it.

That is why the draft 2018-19 PASA Resolutions identifies school safety and security as a priority this year. While this has always been a high concern for school officials, events across the nation over the last five years have added to the urgency of doing everything possible to ensure schools are safe places for students.

The cost is high, the responsibility is great. But there are a lot of kids, a lot of teachers and janitors and bus drivers and coaches counting on you to have a strong, informed hand at the helm, to focus on student and staff well-being, no matter the obstacles or the criticism.

You know and we know that your commitment is to do what is best for kids – always. It is no easy job, and takes a high level of wise leadership to do it right. For that, PASA thanks you.

So for your sake, and the sake of all those who work and learn in your schools, let’s just hope for an easy winter and a quiet school year.

**SAVE THE DATE**

PASA Leadership Forum

(formerly the PASA Education Congress)

Leading the Future of Public Education:

Bold Leaders Breaking Barriers

March 17 - 18, 2019

Harrisburg Hilton Hotel

systemic and structural transformations for the future of public education and the change process

**KEYNOTE PRESENTERS**

Anthony Kim

CEO and founder of Education Elements

Heidi Hayes Jacobs

founder and president of Curriculum Designers

Dr. Joseph Erardi

former superintendent of Newtown School District

ALSO: Table Talks, Research Symposium & “Ed Talks”

Watch the PASA website for more information at https://www.pasa-net.org/leadsummit.

Registration opens soon!

Are you an urban school district administrator?

Join us at the

PLUS Caucus Breakfast

7:30 am

Oct. 17 - Hershey Lodge

RSVP to PASA at pasa@pasa-net.org

PASA Flyer 6

September 2018
From the Women’s Caucus
How Networked Are You?
BY LYNN FUINI-HETTEN, CAUCUS PRESIDENT

Networking isn’t new, as we all know. Many of us connect with one another through local same-role groups, state conferences, twitter chats and more!

Our jobs are complex and specialized, and often we can benefit from the insights of others. Networking requires an investment of our time, a precious commodity. Why is it important, now more than ever, to allocate time to networking?

Networking serves operational, personal and strategic purposes. Networking helps us share resources, celebrate successes, process challenges we experienced, make important decisions, broaden opportunities, and ultimately improve our schools.

Maybe you want to learn more about how other school districts across the state are handling mold, or you are trying to decipher the new PCCD Egrants system. Building and maintaining a network of other professionals will help you uncover the answers, gather more information, and make informed decisions. Networks also serve as opportunities for informal coaching and mentoring, allowing us to learn from others who have had similar experiences.

Who is in your current network? How can we develop our networks? How do we go beyond our same-role groups, our local IUs, or even our district contacts?

Think about how you can expand your network both face-to-face and virtually.

Many face-to-face opportunities exist across the state. Looking to meet and spend time with fellow PASA members? Join other members at the PASA/PSBA Annual School Leadership Conference, coming to Hershey Lodge October 17-19. If you haven’t already registered, I encourage you to consider joining educational leaders and board members from across the Commonwealth as we learn, grow and network.

For those of you interested in joining Women’s Caucus, or just want to know more about it on behalf of your district team, there will be a meet-and-greet during the conference on Thursday, Oct 18 from 1:30-3:00 p.m. in Cocoa 4.

While you are at the conference, don’t forget to schedule some time to really connect with your colleagues.

Maybe you are looking for a more sustained connection to colleagues, one you can support virtually. You can join Facebook groups, slack chats and voxel groups, and even participate in Twitter chats. These virtual tools make it possible for us to connect with colleagues around the world who have similar interests and/or challenges.

For example, there is a voxel channel - isupt - which superintendents and assistant superintendents might find valuable. In the iSupt channel, leaders can share a question and multiple superintendents will provide their insight - the good, bad, and ugly!

I recently joined a Slack chat group with Education Reimagined to continue the conversation about learner-centered learning environments. This group meets periodically online for synchronous chats, but you can also share resources asynchronously. In addition, there are many twitter hashtags for leaders: #suptchat, #digilead, #leadership, etc. These diverse tools provide avenues to connect with others locally, regionally and globally – and on your own time.

Face-to-face and virtual networks exist and are easily accessible. Think about what you want to learn, with whom you want to learn, and how you want to learn. There are networks for you (and your colleagues)!

**for women in school administration serving in or near I.U.s 22, 23, 24, 25 and 26**

PASA WOMEN’S CAUCUS SOUTHEAST REGIONAL DINNER

October 29, 2018
Maggiano’s Restaurant
205 Mall Boulevard
King of Prussia

Begins at 4 - 5:15 p.m. with registration, appetizers
Dinner and featured presentation follows

PRESENTATION: “TAKE CONTROL: MANAGING & INVESTING YOUR MONEY”
Anne Barton
financial advisor with Kades Margolis

COST:
$55 if paid by October 18
$65 after October 18

**payment due in advance; cash or credit card only**

In conjunction with this year’s event, donations will be collected for Career Wardrobe, dedicated to helping job-seekers make a great impression at interviews. See the event website for a suggested item list.

In conjunction with this year’s event, donations will be collected for Career Wardrobe, dedicated to helping job-seekers make a great impression at interviews. See the event website for a suggested item list.

Register online or with the registration form.

TO REGISTER:
Members to Vote Next Month on Proposed PASA Resolutions

During the PASA Recognition Luncheon on Thursday, October 18 in Hershey, part of the PASA/PSBA School Leadership Conference, the PASA members present will vote to accept the draft 2018-19 Resolutions. The updated document will offer guidelines for PASA’s positions on both ongoing and “new” education issues.

The draft emphasizes three priorities: School Safety, State Funding Priorities and Advocacy. In addition, new language in the draft emphasizes the need for partnerships in support of public schools, balancing accountability with resources, providing adequate and sustainable resources for ensuring school safety and security, local responsibility and authority for the content of superintendent contracts, and repeal of the requirement that school districts are responsible for monitoring student attendance and enforcing state truancy requirements in nonpublic schools.

To review the draft, see the PASA website at www.pasa-net.org/resolpriorities.

PASA Legal Services

PASA’s legal staff offers a wide range of employment-related legal resources and services to PASA members who are Commissioned Officers. These services include consulting services, employment contract services, non-litigation dispute resolution, and assistance with the negotiation and development of separation agreements. Go to http://www.pasa-net.org/legalservices to read more about it.

 DEADLINE: SEPT. 24
Seeking Proposals for the 2019 PASA Webinar Series, Leadership Forum

PASA is aware of the many bold leaders in Pennsylvania who are facilitating exciting student-centered learning initiatives in their school(s), and seeks to provide opportunities to learn from each other.

Therefore, we are seeking proposals for our 2019 Barrier-Breaking Leadership Webinar Series and our 2019 Leadership Forum (formerly the Education Congress), which is scheduled for March 17-18 in Harrisburg and focused on “The Future of Public Education: Bold Leaders Breaking Barriers.”

If you are leading transformation in your school(s) that impacts student-centered learning, please submit a proposal to share your initiative with colleagues across the commonwealth.

For specific information and to submit your proposal, click here for details about the programs and for the RFP form.

Deadline for receipt of proposals is SEPTEMBER 24.

Also, if you know a bold leader who is breaking barriers in his/her school(s), please also consider submitting his/her name and contact information to Connie Kindler, PASA Consultant for Professional Development, at ckindler@pasa-net.org.

Questions on the programs should be directed to Connie Kindler.

Newsworthy Quotes…

On the Teaching Profession…

“The overarching message behind these findings points to the following: The survey highlights the steadfast support for educators who are at the front of the classroom. However, the report also tells us that we, as a nation, must step up our efforts to elevate the teaching profession in order to attract and retain top-notch teacher candidates on behalf of the millions of children learning and growing in our public schools and for generations to come.” – Dan Domenech, AASA Executive Director, responding to a recent PDK poll that reveals support for public school teachers but fewer parents interested in having their children become teachers

“We’ve had too many school teachers for a long time. We cannot afford to keep that many people on the payroll. I consider it right-sizing by getting rid of people.” – Sen. John Eichelberger, chairman of the PA Senate Education Committee, agreeing with a comment by Republican gubernatorial candidate Scott Wagner, who alleges that the state could lay off 10 percent of its public school teachers and they “wouldn’t be missed,” as reported in The Record Herold (8/22/18)

School Safety…

“I’m not a fan of arming teachers, but the safe schools block grant [Title IV] for many years has allowed states to make the decision about how to use those federal dollars to make schools safer for children.” – Sen. Lamar Alexander, R-Tenn, chairman of the Senate Education Committee, on the question of whether states can use federal funds to buy guns for school staff (from Education Week, 9/23/18)

“Say I had a gun. Would I have left my terrified children? Never. Would I have been able to find, approach and fire at him, and not somebody else, without perhaps, a child getting in the way? It’s completely unrealistic to think that an educator … would have been able to navigate all of this in such a short period of time and take down the gunman without interfering with law enforcement’s response, or harming or killing other educators, or, God forbid, children. … This is not the movies. This is school.” – Abbey Clemens, teacher-survivor at Sandy Hook Elementary School, speaking before the federal School Safety Commission on the idea of arming teachers (from Education Week, 8/23/18)

“We crafted these recommendations while recognizing there’s no one-size-fits-all solution for schools across Pennsylvania. The diversity of our school sizes and makeup creates a unique challenge to creating standardized security guidelines.” – PA Auditor General Eugene DePasquale on the school safety recommendations in a final report issued by the Pennsylvania School Safety Task Force

PASA Legal Services

PASA's legal staff offers a wide range of employment-related legal resources and services to PASA members who are Commissioned Officers. These services include consulting services, employment contract services, non-litigation dispute resolution, and assistance with the negotiation and development of separation agreements. Go to http://www.pasa-net.org/legalservices to read more about it.

PASA Flyer

8 September 2018
Professional Learning: Take Advantage of These Upcoming Opportunities!

Are you a new superintendent? Someone aspiring to higher levels of school system leadership? An assistant superintendent looking to connect with your peers? Or a school administrator who is looking to build your knowledge base and grow your leadership skills?

PASA has a program for YOU!

Don’t miss these professional development opportunities beginning this month – and developed with YOUR needs in mind!

2018 Fall Webinar Series: “Avoiding the Pitfalls”

Take a short time out of your day and take advantage of these one-hour informational webinars focused on issues important to YOU!

Sept. 24  (noon to 1 p.m.)
Professional Ethics and the Educator Discipline Act

Oct. 10  (noon to 1 p.m.)
PSERS Issues: Retirement, Compensation, Return-to-Service and Pension Forfeitures

Nov. 14  (noon to 1 p.m.)
PA Public Official and Employees Ethics Act: Overview & Issues

Dec. 10  (noon to 1:30 p.m.)
The Leader’s Role in Guiding Board Members on Sunshine Law, Use of Social Media and Email

Register for one, two or all four!
See more at https://www.pasa-net.org/webinars.

New Superintendents’ Academy Part 2: Systems Leadership

New to the superintendency – or know someone who is? The New Superintendents’ Academy is a “must” for those new to the role or getting ready to make that move. Join your colleagues from across the commonwealth within a network of school leaders, learn from experienced superintendents, and grow your knowledge base and leadership skills.

In Session 2, scheduled for Sept. 26-27 in the PASA office, you will gain understanding about the importance of assuring systems and processes for managing and allocating resources transparently, efficiently, effectively and safely to foster equitable access to learning opportunities. (NOTE: You do NOT have to take Academy sessions in order. Jump in!)

And mark your calendar for Session 3: Professional & Community Leadership, scheduled for Jan. 8-9, 2019. (25 PIL credits available per two-day session)

See more at https://www.pasa-net.org/workshopnsa.

PA Summit for Assistant Superintendents

Attend this one-of-a-kind event on Thursday, Oct. 25 in the PASA office and join your colleagues from across the Commonwealth to focus on research theory and the practical application of the Assistant Superintendent’s critical leadership behaviors that most favorably impact student outcomes.

You will learn how to create the culture, capacity, coherence and courage to implement the ESSA across your district, assuring equity and opportunity in teaching and learning.

Dr. Tracey Severns, nationally recognized teacher and school administrator, and Chief Academic Officer for the New Jersey Department of Education, will inspire you to “Reach4Results.”

See more at https://www.pasa-net.org/asstsummit.

Aspiring to Leadership Workshops

Aimed at growing successful school system leaders, these workshops are designed to provide practical information and tools to assist those considering a move into district cabinet-level leadership and/or the superintendency.

Aspiring to Cabinet-Level/Central Office Leadership

Nov. 1 – Allegheny I.U. 3
Jan. 31 – PASA Office (Harrisburg)

• overview of tenured and contacted term positions
• preparation for the move into Central Office
• interviewing practice and feedback
• transition and entry into Central Office

Aspiring to the Superintendency

Nov. 2 – Allegheny I.U. 3
Feb. 1 – PASA office (Harrisburg)

• leadership
• assuring the right match
• the search process (led by practicing Search consultants)
• negotiating a sound contract
• entry planning and transition

See more at https://www.pasa-net.org/aspiring.

PA Licensure Exam Prep Sessions

The Center for Educational Leadership at Shippensburg University, in sponsorship with PASA, is offering a low-cost, half-day prep session to help interested educators prepare for either the Superintendent’s Letter or the Principal Certification exam on Saturday, Sept. 29 at Shippensburg University. Sessions are available on a first-come, first-served basis!

9 a.m. to 12 p.m. - Superintendent’s Exam Preparation
1 p.m. - 4 p.m. - Principal’s Certification Exam Preparation
To receive a registration packet, complete the survey: CLICK HERE.

Don’t forget to SAVE THE DATE!

March 17 - 18, 2019
Harrisburg Hilton Hotel

PASA Leadership Forum
In Informing, Engaging, Inspiring School Leaders

September 2018
STILL TIME TO REGISTER!
Don’t miss this year’s Keynote Speakers:

Dr. Robyn Jackson, master teacher and founder of Mindsteps Inc., a professional development firm for teachers and administrators

Chuck Underwood, founder of consulting firm The Generational Imperative and international expert on generational study

Darrell Scott, author and founder of Rachel’s Challenge, an organization focused on creating a culture of kindness to combat bullying

Also… Featured Speakers
- John Gerdy, author and founder/executive director of Music For Everyone
- Dr. G. Terry Madonna, Professor of Public Affairs and Director of the Center for Politics and Public Affairs at Franklin and Marshall College
- Thomas Murray, director of innovation for Future Ready Schools

PASA Events at the Conference: DON’T FORGET TO REGISTER!
*Do you work in an urban school district? Join us for discussion at the Pennsylvania League of Urban Schools (PLUS) Caucus Breakfast on Wednesday, Oct. 17, from 7:30 – 9 a.m. Send your RSVP directly to pasa@pasa-net.org. (no charge for this event)

*Don’t forget to register for the special PASA Recognition Luncheon on Thursday, Oct. 18, from 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. Take a break during the conference to network with your colleagues and recognize our outgoing President Dr. Emilie Lonardi and three recipients of the PASA Awards of Achievement. Check your conference registration to make sure you also registered for the luncheon! Luncheon registration is NOT included in general conference registration but is a special-fee event.

*Also on Thursday, Oct. 18, from 1:30 – 3 p.m., the PASA Women’s Caucus will have a drop-in session for conversation and networking in Cocoa 4 (no fee). Come join us!

SEE YOU IN HERSHEY!
For registration and program details, see the conference website: https://www.paschoolleaders.org/

AASA Advocacy
The AASA policy and advocacy team collaborates with like-minded groups throughout DC to amplify your voice. Noelle Ellerson-Ng serves as the president of the Committee for Education Funding, which pulls together education groups from Pre-K to higher education to advocate for adequate federal investment in education.

Response to Survey of Superintendents
The Gallup 2018 Survey of K-12 School District Superintendents, released in late August, found that, while the vast majority of superintendents remain excited about the future of their school district, less than half (42 percent) are enthusiastic about the future of K-12 education in the U.S. According to survey results, the biggest challenges superintendents reported include recruiting and retaining talented teachers, as well as budget shortfalls. In response, they are crafting policies that they believe will better educate students and better prepare them for the future. But if they are to achieve that, they know they must continue striving to reach their most important indicators of success, including high graduation rates, engaged cultures and students who are hopeful about the future.

“The key message [from the survey] is that we, as a nation, must continue to scale up our efforts to showcase and promote the outstanding work being done by our public schools,” said AASA Executive Director Dan Domenech in response to the survey report. “The results also indicate that a major challenge facing school districts is keeping talented teachers. This should also send a signal to the education community, as well as business leaders and philanthropic communities, parents and the media that our support for the educators in front of the classroom is vitally important if the students of today are going to become successful members of society tomorrow.”

Domenech also noted that earlier this year, AASA’s policy and advocacy team organized the first-ever Public Schools Week (March 12-16, 2018). “Forty-nine education groups representing teachers, principals, superintendents, parents and other civic organizations joined us to celebrate the achievements public schools are making,” he said. “As the national organization for school superintendents across the country, AASA continues to work with school system leaders from coast to coast to lead, shape and grow the broad dialogue in support of public education.”

Reminder: Nominations for AASA Awards…
AASA awards recognize excellence in public education and honor leaders from inside and outside the field of school administration whose contributions have made a significant impact on the lives and learning of children. Nominations are now open for AASA’s Women in School Leadership Awards, The Effie H. Jones Humanitarian Award, and AASA Distinguished Service Awards. The nomination window closes soon!

National Conference on Education

Join AASA today and become part of a supported community of school leaders nationwide who advocate for public education! See the AASA website, www.aasa.org, for details or contact the PASA office.
For the past year, AASA has been raising the alarm bell about a tax shelter in a dozen states that permits supporters of private school voucher programs to profit from their donations to these programs. In a move that caught us totally off-guard, the IRS decided two weeks ago to issue a proposed regulation that would end this tax shelter and prohibit taxpayers from turning a profit by claiming both state tax credits and federal tax deductions.

Here’s how it works: Today, someone who donates $1,000 and receives all of it ($1,000) back in state tax cuts (i.e. tax credits) can still claim that the $1,000 they donated was charitable and receive a federal charitable giving deduction, despite the fact they have been fully reimbursed for their donation. The proposed IRS regulations put an end to this practice of allowing voucher supporters to get a federal deduction and be allowed to turn a profit from the donation to private school programs.

Why is the IRS issuing this regulation now?
I wish I could say they are doing it because they want to support public education, but that’s far from the reason.

When Congress was considering capping the deduction for state and local tax (SALT) payments last year, numerous lawyers warned that states would likely circumvent the hastily devised cap by helping their residents convert state tax payments into fully deductible charitable gifts. Lawyers knew to offer this warning, which Congress ignored, because this abuse of the charitable giving deduction was already taking place in many “red states,” with tax credits supporting K-12 private school vouchers.

Guess what happened? This spring, we saw high-tax states like New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Oregon start to offer “work-around tax credits” offsetting most or all of the cost of “donating” to support public services. They modeled their workarounds after the voucher tax credit programs in place.

So, the IRS had a decision to make when issuing the regulations: Should they provide preferential tax treatment for states with generous tax credit voucher programs while striking down the tax credits for public schools/works projects that were the result of the cap on state and local taxes? Given this Administration’s passion for vouchers, we assumed they would carve-out private school voucher programs from the regulation and only limit tax-credit profiteering to “blue states” that wanted to invest more in public education and services.

But, we were wrong.

The beauty of Washington D.C. these days is that nothing is a sure thing, and the IRS decided to issue regulations that would treat red-state and blue-state tax credit programs—both programs that support private schools and those that support public schools—identically.

What would happen if they shut down this tax shelter?
If you listen to groups like EdChoice, the American Federation of Children and other voucher proponents, they will tell you the sky is falling, and the insane growth of their tax credit voucher programs is likely to decline and jeopardize the education of thousands of kids attending private schools.

Our take is a bit different.
We think that if you shut down this tax shelter in 12 states it won’t mean these tax credit programs go away, but they certainly won’t be as popular. Less voucher money being diverted to public schools and to rich people’s pockets means more money at state and local levels for public education.

What if the IRS carves out voucher programs?
If the IRS carves out voucher tax credit programs from this regulation, things could get much worse. Because of the cap on state and local taxes in the new tax bill, these voucher tax credit programs became extremely popular in a few states because tax accountants, private schools and SGOs are steering folks toward this tax shelter as a way of substantially reducing taxable income.

There is no question that the IRS will shut down these blue-state work-arounds, which means it will put pressure on states to find relief for taxpayers. Consequently, we could see a huge surge in the popularity of these programs in states that have the tax credit voucher programs in place already. States that have considered voucher tax credit programs in the past may feel pressured to pass an IRS-approved tax shelter to appease wealthy taxpayers who need or demand relief.

How can you help? If you live in Alabama, Arizona, Georgia, Kansas, Louisiana, Montana, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina or Virginia, then you already have major skin in the game since you have voucher tax credits programs in place already. States that have considered voucher tax credit programs in the past may feel pressured to pass an IRS-approved tax shelter to appease wealthy taxpayers who need or demand relief.

We expect thousands of comments in support of a private school voucher carve-out—and, for that reason, it is critical that the IRS hears from educators and parents who support this regulation.

The fight is ours to lose. Can you help?

PASA Website Career Center
Have an administrative position you need to fill? Or are you considering moving forward in your professional career?

As a courtesy to school administrators, those seeking positions in school administration and public school employers, PASA provides on its website the “PASA Career Center,” a listing of job openings, both in Pennsylvania and in the Mid-Atlantic region. Vacancies and available positions for public schools are posted at no charge upon request and review.

To request a vacancy announcement posting on this website, send a message to pasapasa@pasanet.org. Please include your phone number with your e-mail request. Information needed includes: position, entity, contact name/address, description of the position, application deadline and application process. Additional position information may be included, depending on length. (PASA reserves the right not to publish an open position or to modify submitted information.)
Please report member news to PASA at pasa@pasa-net.org.
Announcements of professional vacancies across Pennsylvania and in neighboring states are posted on the PASA Web site at www.pasa-net.org (Click on the “Leadership Development” button and look for “Career Center.”)

PASA Acting Superintendent Search Service

In an effort to provide continuity of leadership in school districts due to the departure or leave of the current superintendent, PASA has developed a search service for districts that need a substitute superintendent or acting superintendent, as provided in the School Code.

PASA maintains a list of retired educators who have served as district superintendents and are available to work in school districts on a temporary basis during a district’s search for a permanent superintendent or during a temporary leave of the current superintendent.

When contacted by a school district, PASA will share a list of individuals who are available to serve in the geographical location of the requesting district, meet with the school board and help them conduct interviews if requested.

PASA maintains a list of retired superintendents who are available to serve on an interim basis during a district’s search for a permanent superintendent replacement. When contacted, we will share a list of individuals who are available to serve on an interim basis in the geographical location of the requesting district and help them conduct interviews if requested.

If you are a retiring superintendent and would like to be part of this service, or if you would like to utilize PASA’s assistance in securing an acting superintendent, please contact Deborah Banks (dbanks@pasa-net.org) or Mark DiRocco (mdirocco@pasa-net.org) in the PASA office.

PASA is sad to report the passing of Dr. Charles “Chick” Hill. Dr. Hill served as superintendent of the Altoona Area SD from 1984 to 1998 before moving into a second career in higher education. Our sincere condolences to Dr. Hill’s family and friends.

REGION 7
Dr. Gary Peiffer has been appointed superintendent of the Greensburg Salem SD. He currently serves as superintendent of the Carlynton SD (I.U. 3).

SEPTEMBER
24 PASA Webinar: Professional Ethics, Educator Discipline Act
26-27 New Superintendents’ Academy Session 2 (PASA office)
29 PA Licensure Exam Prep Sessions (Shippensburg)

OCTOBER
1 PASA membership year begins
3 Professional Development Committee meeting (virtual)
10 PASA Webinar: PSERS Issues
17-19 PASA/PSBA School Leadership Conference (Hershey)
25 Assistant Superintendent Workshop (PASA office)
29 Southeast Women’s Caucus dinner/meeting (King of Prussia)

NOVEMBER
1-2 Aspiring to Leadership Workshops (Allegheny I.U. 3)
8 Women’s Caucus Board meeting (PASA office)
8-9 School Safety & Security Exchange (Hershey)
13 Technology Committee meeting (virtual)
14 PASA Webinar: PSERS and Pensions
15 Superintendent of the Year Luncheon (Harrisburg)
Board of Governors’ meetings (Harrisburg)
16 Board of Governors’ liaison meetings (PASA office)
22-23 PASA office closed

DECEMBER
5 Professional Development Committee meeting (virtual)
10 PASA Webinar: The Board’s Governance Role, Communications
17 Free Webinar with CoSN: The Empowered Superintendent
24-25 PASA office closed
31 PASA office closed