BAUGH SELECTED 2020 PENNSYLVANIA SUPERINTENDENT OF THE YEAR

Dr. David E. Baugh, Superintendent of the Centennial School District, has been named the 2020 Pennsylvania Superintendent of the Year.

Since 2015, Dr. Baugh has demonstrated visionary leadership in education to positively impact administrators, teachers, families, students and the larger community. His forward thinking and planning ensures his district is poised to be on the cutting edge of teaching and learning, brain-based research and collaborative leadership to ensure the greatest impact upon student and district outcomes.

In Centennial, Dr. Baugh has focused on disrupting a district-wide downward spiral by changing how people think about their work and deliver instruction. Under his direction, the district is creating systems that transcend valuing scores, instead valuing important metrics, creating cultures of community and respect, and supporting the individual child and the frontline educator. To build that positive system, Dr. Baugh focuses on identifying and bringing in stable, competent administrative staff both at the building and district level, leaders that embrace instructional leadership as well as nurture the culture of learning among the faculty and parents.

Over the past three years, Dr. Baugh has led the initiative to make Centennial a math-centric district, a focus that is beginning to yield results. In the high school, Dr. Baugh has expanded student access to Advanced Placement courses, while providing support and structure to the students in those courses, leading to a dramatic increase in the number of students taking AP courses and maintaining rigorous academic standards.

With his leadership, the district focused on making many other systemic changes to grow student learning, including implementing full-day kindergarten, launching a Spanish immersion program, and restructuring the middle and high school schedules and program offerings with added opportunity for student choices and course offerings that create pathways for students to take the most rigorous courses, an initiative that receives recognition from other area high schools interested in innovative learning.

Dr. Baugh leads the district through clear expectations, communication, collaboration and distributive leadership that is inclusive of all stakeholders in the organization to ensure achievement of the district’s goals. He encourages aspiring leaders and promotes a “passing of the torch” of leadership at all levels to ensure continuity of a community of leaders committed to greatness and inspiring leadership. He is not afraid to “release the reigns” to allow others to step out of the box, experiment with innovative ideas and create an impact.

Don’t Forget to Register!

“Responsive Schools, Resilient Students”
March 29 - 31, 2020 in State College
See p. 13
FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
DR. MARK DIROCCO

MAKING A LIST

The holiday season is upon us with all its merriment and good cheer. It usually is a time when the political bickering in Harrisburg takes a short break to allow for some yuletide celebrations. This is often a time of reflection as we prepare for the holidays and a new year. As I reflect on the current state of public education, I have developed a list of wishes for the year ahead.

I wish…

• that the proponents of school choice, vouchers, and the current charter school law in Pennsylvania would wake up and realize that the public funding of these schooling options is undermining the education of students in traditional public schools, which constitutes far more students than all the private, parochial, and charter school students combined. Such initiatives help the few at the expense of the many.

• that the Pennsylvania legislature would provide the appropriate financial support to our public schools that is desperately needed to ensure that all our children receive an equitable and excellent education, and realize that public school appropriations are an investment in Pennsylvania’s future, not an expense.

• that all citizens of our commonwealth honor the great American tradition of each generation providing the resources needed to educate the next generation of children in their community to ensure the future of our nation. We seem to be losing this time-honored obligation of coming together for the common good of all children.

• that more than three decades of negative media coverage of our public schools since the “Nation at Risk” report was issued would begin to subside and the real facts about our public schools would be shared highlighting the many wonderful programs, activities, and opportunities for our children being provided in the vast majority of our public schools.

• that young adults will consider entering the education profession to teach, mentor and lead the next generation of Americans through their formative years in preK-12 education. Teaching is one of the most important and noble professions in our society. Yet, we have been in the midst of a 60% reduction of enrollment in our teacher preparation programs in Pennsylvania over the past seven years.

• that more teachers will be willing to become building principals, supervisors, directors, assistant superintendents and superintendents as the dwindling teacher pipeline has significantly diminished the leadership pool in our public schools. Without excellent leadership in our public schools, America’s future will suffer.

• that all educators will be given more respect for the difficult and challenging jobs that they hold. I especially wish that the continued negativity directed at our school superintendents be diminished. In the past three years, 301 superintendent positions have changed in the 500 Pennsylvania school districts, creating tremendous instability across our school systems. The position of school district superintendent is one of the most difficult jobs in America and is deserving of support, respect, longevity, and excellent pay.

Although I don’t think Santa can grant my wishes by December 25, I do believe that there can be an awakening of our citizens to understand the many important and wonderful aspects of the public education system in America. As educational leaders, we need to be at the forefront of delivering a positive message about our schools and the children we serve. All we need to do is share the facts, tell the truth, and focus on all that is good about public education.

PASA wishes all our educators a wonderful holiday season, and we thank you for your service to our children. Please take some time for yourself, family, and friends. I am sure it is well-deserved!
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.

Budget & Finance News

State Revenue: Pennsylvania collected $2.4 billion in General Fund revenue in November, which was $1.8 million, or 0.1 percent, more than anticipated. Fiscal year-to-date General Fund collections total $12.7 billion, which is $166.1 million, or 1.3 percent, above estimate.

Property Tax Reform: Following numerous meetings in 2019, an informal group of seven House members and five Senate members are now developing at least five specific proposals that would either eliminate or reduce school property tax, with the expectation that some or all will be considered this spring. Most rely on increases in sales and or income taxes to make up the difference.

IFO Projections: Last month the PA Independent Fiscal Office released its projections of the Commonwealth’s fiscal condition through fiscal year 2024-25. The analysis projects a deficit for the current fiscal year that is carried forward to future years and results in a structural imbalance. The IFO also found that birth rates continue to decline, the 62-and-younger population is contracting, and the 65+ population is continuing to expand, with that trend expected to continue.

School Health & Safety News

Physical Activity: According to an analysis from the World Health Organization, kids ages 11-17 aren’t getting enough physical activity. In a comparison of 49 countries, the WHO found that 75 percent of them have a failing grade for physical activity in children.

School Police Authority: Last month Gov. Wolf signed into law HB 49, concerning financial literacy. The bill also contained a provision that restores arrest authority to individuals employed as school police officers and allows for extension of the training requirement to the next school year (2020-21).

Tobacco Purchases: Also now signed into law are bills that raise from 18 to 21 the age minors may purchase tobacco products and that prohibit the use and possession of vaping products on school property.

Legislative News

Session Schedule: After Dec. 18, the House and Senate will be in recess. The 2020 legislative session scheduled has not yet been published.

Voucher Bill: Speaker of the House Mike Turzai (R-Allegheny) attempted to push through the House a bill that would create a voucher pilot program in the Harrisburg SD. While the bill (HB 1800) was narrowly approved by the House Education Committee, it did not come up for a vote on the House floor, as there were insufficient votes among Republicans for the plan. Turzai has vowed to continue pressing for action on the bill or some kind of “school choice” plan that will bolster non-public education in Pennsylvania.

Charter Reform Bill: The Senate attempted to adopt a charter school reform amendment to an existing bill last month, the result of negotiations between Senate leaders and the Governor’s Office. The bill included important provisions concerning accountability, transparency and management of charter schools but did very little to address their cost. Although the Senate Education Committee approved the bill, the compromise on the amended language apparently fell apart and never came up for a vote on the Senate floor.

National News

Federal Budget: According to AASA, lawmakers have reached an agreement in principle to avert a federal government shutdown and fund the government past the Dec. 20 deadline. The $2.3 trillion deal encompasses all 12 appropriations bills and largely sticks with the status quo on border wall issues.

COMING UP

With lawmakers in recess, Harrisburg will be quiet for now. Looking ahead, once the Governor’s budget is released (February) and appropriations hearings are completed (March), expect a busy spring with multiple “hot-button” issues coming to the fore as everything will be focused toward the 2020 election. As always, stay tuned for the latest information by following us on Twitter @PASASupts.
SUPERINTENDENT
OF THE YEAR
continued from page 1
for students and staff in new and profound ways.

In his role as the district’s professional leader, Dr. Baugh uses the power of courageous conversations to exemplify and model being a true champion for children. He continuously supports his leaders through encouragement and belief in their abilities and strongly encourages his leadership team to continue their personal development and impact as leaders both professionally and personally.

Dr. Baugh models a commitment to professional leadership himself, serving as chair of the PASA Research & Development Committee, a member of the PASA Board of Governors, and with membership and active involvement with AASA. Dr. Baugh also is a member of the Bucks County School Administrators Association and the Center for Study Councils at the University of Pennsylvania, has served on education advisory committees and community leadership boards, and has had numerous articles published in professional publications.

In addition, he has led presentations at both the state and national level and co-led the initiative to launch PASA’s new Innovation Spotlight, which celebrates innovation across the Commonwealth. He always is looking for ways to institute innovation within his own district, including support for STEM and the district’s mobile manufacturing lab, an initiative that has gained the project recognition as a model of leadership development and STEM education.

Dr. Baugh utilizes a wide variety of approaches to communicate with the district’s stakeholders, all aimed at transparency and engagement. Some include town hall meetings, a wide variety of social and conventional media, ongoing meetings with school executive councils and a newly formed “Council of Presidents” advisory group for the superintendent and cabinet, numerous “coffee meetings” with stakeholders, an online community engagement project (“Let’s Go Jake”) on Facebook during summer activities, and engagement with policymakers and enhancing advocacy efforts to promote public education.

Dr. Baugh will be recognized at a special PASA luncheon on Monday, December 16 in Warminster. As the Pennsylvania honoree, he and 49 other state honorees will be recognized in February during the AASA National Conference on Education in San Diego, California.

Congratulations, Dr. Baugh!

The National Superintendent of the Year Program was instituted 33 years ago by AASA, The School Superintendents Association® to honor outstanding public school superintendents. First Student, AIG Retirement Services and AASA are co-sponsors of the award program. The goal of the prestigious awards program is to further inspire exemplary educational leadership and promote a sense of confidence and pride in the nation’s public schools. The Pennsylvania Superintendent of the Year is selected by a PASA panel of school administrators. Superintendent of the Year nominees are evaluated on how each candidate demonstrates leadership for learning, communication skills, professionalism and community involvement – active participation in local community activities, and understanding of regional, national and international issues.
FROM THE PRESIDENT’S PEN

Early this week, members of the PASA Board of Governors and PASA staff joined representatives from the Centennial School District Board of School Directors, administrators, teachers, support staff, students and many others to recognize Dr. David Baugh as Pennsylvania’s 2020 Superintendent of the Year. This special event included many guests who spoke of Dr. Baugh’s accomplishments in his work to lead the Centennial School District forward. Dr. Baugh will now move on to represent all of us as the National Superintendent of the Year is announced at the AASA National Conference on Education in San Diego. We hope that many of you will join us there in February!

Of the many recognitions that were shared today, perhaps the most heartfelt were spoken by the current and former members of the Centennial Board of School Directors. They spoke of a commitment to open communication and working together as a team for the benefit of students.

As we have all gone through the process of Board reorganization in our own districts over the last few weeks, we recognize that these are especially important commitments to be made from both superintendents and board members in all districts. Whether your reorganization went as expected or not, it always brings a bit of stress as we seek to establish a new normal in the important relationships we share with our board members. The hard work that goes into this pays dividends throughout the year. We need to build those relationships, and we also need to build-in time for ourselves personally and professionally. As we enter the holiday season, it is my sincere hope that each of you can step aside from your daily duties for an extended period of time to unwind and spend time with your families. For me, I will be found in my woodshop. I may even start to build myself a new kayak so that I am ready for my next adventure.

I encourage you to be intentional about this. Put the phone, tablet and computer away and allow yourself the privilege of rest. It is far easier to say than it is to do, but you and your family are worth it.

Happy Holidays!

TOPIC: LEADING DIGITAL LEARNING

The Consortium for School Networking (CoSN) and its state affiliate chapter, Pennsylvania Association for Educational Communications and Technology (PAECT) are honored to support the work of current and aspiring superintendents and district leadership teams in leading all aspects of digital learning transformations.

Last month we focused on effective professional learning and the need for a coordinated leadership strategy when planning and delivering professional learning experiences within a school district. CoSN’s one-page guide for school leaders on effective professional development offers school leaders three critical guidelines for professional learning that improve classroom practice and also presents an overview of the essential factors school leaders must consider when planning for and evaluating professional learning.

This month we examine the strategies necessary for leading digital learning, with an emphasis on succeeding with 1:1 implementations. CoSN’s Leadership for Digital Learning Critical Issues Guide provides – in a concise, single-page format - an itemized check list for each of the four main systems (human and technological) that need to be properly established when implementing 1:1 technology for learning initiatives.

CoSN, in partnership with edWeb.net, hosts The EmpowerED Superintendent monthly webinar series on topics that are essential for all educators engaged in leading digital transformations. The focus of the January 13, 2020 webinar (5:00 pm ET) is on “Leading Digital Learning: Successful Strategies for 1:1 Implementations.” Four superintendents who are recognized as technology leaders in their field will share what it takes to successfully deploy, implement and sustain a commitment to digital learning. Each will share the “why” behind their successful technology initiatives.

Learn more and register for this free webinar and access recordings of previously broadcast CoSN/edWeb webinars at https://home.edweb.net/supers/.

If your school or district would like more information about joining CoSN or getting more involved with CoSN, please contact Brian Calvary, CAE, CoSN Director of Membership and Chapters, at bcalvary@cosn.org.

OF BOARDS AND WOODWORKING

BY DR. JEFFREY A. FULLER, 2019-20 PASA PRESIDENT

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Happy Holidays!
Most educational leaders, superintendents, assistants, directors and principals started in the classroom or working directly with students in some form or other. We are educators first and foremost. But when you attach the word "leader" on to the back of that title, there is a new or perhaps stronger dynamic to the role: politics.

It is often said that “all politics is local,” and educational politics is no different. We all have boards, parents and communities we are beholden to every day. Yet so much of what we deal with is decided in Harrisburg. So many struggles could be reduced with Legislative Action, rather than our own local leadership decisions. That’s where advocacy becomes vitally important.

Our students need us to make good decisions at the local level, but they also need a champion who will speak on their behalf at the highest level of policymaking. Without that voice and representation, students for years to come will be getting less than they deserve, and less than our best.

As a group, the PLUS Caucus of PASA has made advocacy our single most important issue, and we are acting on it. Presently, we are focused on cyber and charter school funding reform.

On November 15, I had the pleasure of meeting Governor Wolf, who presented his plan to the PASA Board of Governors to reform cyber charter school funding through new legislation. In a nutshell, there would be a base rate across the state that cyber schools would receive which would be less or significantly less for most districts and the same or more for some districts.

Three days later, Speaker of the House Mike Turzai introduced HB 1800, voucher legislation for the Harrisburg School District and, inevitably, a school district near you. I think it’s safe to say that without advocacy from around the state, we would have had the new worst policy in the country: voucher education, or ‘gouger’ education, depending on your view.

Advocacy is critically important to the future of education, but it’s important that we, as a group of educational leaders become proactive rather than reactive in our advocacy efforts! To that end, we are taking action.

On December 5, the PLUS Caucus conducted a joint press conference from one end of the commonwealth to the other. We decided to celebrate the start of the bus boycott from 1955 when civil rights activist Rosa Parks stood up for her rights, in what turned out to be a year-long protest. We as a collective group stood up for our students as well as the taxpayers of our communities and highlighted the taxpayer-funded cyber school and charter school dilemma in urban districts. The map clearly demonstrates that this was a statewide collective effort, and with the help of social media (we streamed locally), as well as print and TV media, there is no question that this first-of-its-kind educational advocacy event will inform both the public and legislators of the serious need for reform on these issues.

Some would say that advocacy work for a superintendent doesn’t change anything quickly, so it’s a waste of time in one of the busiest jobs around. The PLUS Caucus of PASA would counter that thinking with the idea that those who wish to tear down public education as we know it want you to think exactly that way. But in fact, the more we become active both locally and as a group, the more effective we become in changing things for the better.

Many of Pennsylvania’s urban school districts participated in today’s simultaneous statewide call for action. Urban schools are calling on legislators to enact charter and cyber funding reform and to provide more equitable funding for the state’s urban schools.

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**Map of Pennsylvania’s Urban School Districts**

1. Steel Valley School District
2. Wilkinsburg School District
3. Clairton City School District
4. Duquesne School District
5. Woodland Hills School District
7. Penn Hills School District
8. McKeesport School District
9. Greater Johnstown School District
10. Aliquippa School District
11. Sto-Rox School District
12. Norristown Area School District
13. York City School District
14. School District of Lancaster
15. Pottstown School District
16. Bethlehem Area School District
17. Easton Area School District
The tradition of gift-giving during the holiday season has existed for centuries. It started for religious reasons, and through the years has been embraced and embellished by merchants and consumers alike. Between the glitz and glitter of the holiday television ads, I welcome the human-interest stories about charitable gifts.

However, rarely do we hear about the ongoing, extraordinary gifts of time and commitment that school administrators give throughout the year. Far beyond the holiday season, you advocate and provide for others, and often under highly stressful conditions. You work hard to gain and maintain the support of your school communities and government officials. To meet the needs of your students, you inspire your staff and lead your school boards. Your compassion and bounteousness for those you serve pervade your daily work.

The fulfillment of your noble mission is admirable, but do you sometimes find yourself wondering how long you will be able to manage the daily requirements and resulting pace?

The upcoming holiday break provides an opportune time for you to pause for genuine reflection and self-care. David Whyte's *The Heart Aroused: Poetry and the Preservation of the Soul in Corporate America* explores the necessity of addressing one's own heart and soul through the essential act of digging deep beneath the surface of concerns that occupy our minds on a daily basis. He emphasizes the critical importance of taking the necessary time to have courageous conversations with yourself about your own requirements and desires, and to act upon them. He claims that doing so will enable you to rise above the enormity of your work responsibilities, and maintain perspective and longevity.

I hope that you will heed his advice by giving yourself a true break during this holiday season. Sit in the woods, walk along a waterfront, stroll through freshly fallen snow, or anywhere that will sufficiently clear the air and provide you with the environment for profound reflection. When you make a personal commitment to the actions necessary for nourishing yourself, you may find a renewed, sustainable sense of energy and improved endurance for the long haul. Take time during this holiday season of giving to connect with your own heart and soul. Best wishes for true solace and joy throughout your new year-long season of giving!

 Sometimes
Sometimes if you move carefully through the forest, breathing like the ones in the old stories, who could cross a shimmering bed of leaves without a sound, you come to a place whose only task is to trouble you with tiny but frightening requests conceived out of nowhere but in this place beginning to lead everywhere. Requests to stop what you are doing right now, and to stop what you are becoming while you do it, questions that can make or unmake a life, questions that have patiently waited for you questions that have no right to go away.

David Whyte, from *Everything is Waiting for You*
On November 12, 2019, the Southeastern Region of the Women’s Caucus held their annual fall dinner and networking event at Maggiano’s Restaurant in King of Prussia. Over 90 women from the metropolitan Philadelphia region attended this event, which was the highest number of attendees in years.

An annual tradition of the SE Region is to sponsor a local charitable organization. This year, attendees were asked to bring gift cards for the Boys and Girls Club of Chester. Janet S. Riley Ford and Donna Northern shared the leadership roles they have at the organization and thanked everyone for the gift cards.

Our keynote speaker (right) was Dr. Michelle Saylor, Superintendent of the Bellefonte Area School District and past president of the Women’s Caucus. The title of Michelle’s presentation was “Leadership as an Opportunity for Reflection.”

Michelle spoke about the importance of listening. She shared that effective, active listening is a necessary element for healthy communication and connecting with others. Michelle asked the audience to take a moment and think about how they listen to others, jot it down and then share with others at their respective tables.

Michelle summarized that leaders pay attention to verbal and non-verbal clues, listen without obligation to act, value silence, don’t judge or criticize or hijack the conversation. As a result of this, leaders are able to build relationships and move forward with efficiency and efficacy. She then focused on understanding how we listen to others, but more importantly, how understanding what we listen for colors what we hear.

By paying attention, leaders create a pathway for reflection and greater understanding of self, which will only improve how one listens to others. By extension, this will increase a leader’s depth of understanding and the effectiveness by which one communicates.

Michelle asked the audience to reflect upon what it is one listens for when you listen to others. Attendees jotted down their reflections and shared them with others.

Michelle summarized that they have begun to define their context, which is unique. By reflecting and acknowledging what one listens for, leaders have taken the first steps in bridging any gaps in understanding. This will enable leaders to clearly be able to communicate more effectively and by extension be an even better leader.

Thank you, Michelle, for your inspirational presentation.

Be certain to “save the date” for next year’s dinner – November 10, 2020!
ANTICIPATION
BY BARBARA W. JEWETT, ASSISTANT TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It’s that time of year again – December, the time for holidays, family – and making New Year’s Resolutions.

There is a lot of anticipation this time of year, particularly for those who celebrate the Christmas holiday. We spend a lot of time preparing: picking the right tree, decorating, baking, shopping for just the right gifts and then wrapping them, planning the holiday meal, and enjoying numerous special activities in schools, churches and the community.

Children particularly are full of anticipation this time of year, which definitely makes keeping them focused in school and home a challenge. They can feel it in their bones, just waiting for Christmas and presents under the tree. For the adults, we also enjoy the season, but there also is a good chance that the anticipation is exciting and exhausting at the same time because preparation is a key component of that anticipation. We work pretty hard to get it right because the holidays always come too quickly, and 2020 is right around the corner.

There’s a lot of anticipation for PASA going into 2020 too. We are hitting the ground running with a lot of great professional development programs in January: session 3 of the New Superintendents’ Academy, the first in another four-webinar series and the Aspiring to Leadership Workshop. February brings the AASA National Conference on Education, March the PASA Leadership Forum, April the PASA/PASBO School Construction Workshop at I.U. 3, May the Women’s Caucus Conference, July another session 1 in the New Superintendents’ Academy, and August the PA Education Leadership Summit.

Anticipating all those programs, we’ve spent a lot of time this holiday season preparing – and we hope you’ll take advantage of it!

We also are anticipating something else: the 2020 legislative session. Gov. Wolf presents his 2020-21 state budget in early February, which is followed by a month or more of appropriations hearings to examine it.

And it’s an election year. That means we anticipate all the unresolved “hot-button” issues – such as property tax reform, charter & cyber charter reform, vouchers, etc. – will be popping up along with the dogwood blooms this spring. We’ve had a preview of some of that already, with the sudden appearance of a charter school reform amendment that ended up stymied, the equally sudden attempt to rush a voucher bill through the House last month, and now the introduction of numerous property tax reform bills, with many legislators insistent that it “must be done” in 2020. In other words, this anticipation is something not to be savored but is very real: and we need to prepare for it.

As we have always done, in 2020 PASA will be joining you and other education groups to advocate not only for more state support of education but also to oppose policies, spending and programs that will erode our public schools and the essential role they have in our democracy. We will need you to gear up for advocacy as well. It’s a continuing challenge, but the PASA Resolutions will continue to direct our focus.

For now, let’s just pause for a bit before the anticipation becomes reality. Take some time to breathe. Enjoy the time with family and friends. Celebrate and toast the new year. Happy holidays.
Meeting with the Governor

Speaking with the PASA Board of Governors on Nov. 15 in the PASA office, Governor Tom Wolf outlined his plan to improve the educational quality of charter schools and control rising costs, a three-part plan he said would save nearly $280 million a year. The governor’s proposal would better align charter school funding to actual costs, would cap online cyber school tuition payments, apply a moratorium on new charter schools “until we can improve the performance of ones we already have,” and would apply the special education funding formula to charter schools, as it does for traditional public schools, as recommended by a bipartisan Special Education Funding Commission. The plan also would require more charter and cyber charter school accountability and public oversight.

In addition, the governor’s plan includes executive action and overhauling regulations. The Department of Education is using a fee-for-service model to recoup the costs of thousands of staff hours to implement the Charter School Law. The department is also developing new regulations for charter schools that will prioritize educational quality and transparency.

Click here to watch video of the Governor’s meeting with the PASA Board of Governors.

PASA supports Gov. Wolf’s plan for overdue reforms in the Commonwealth’s charter school law. “The increasing and unrealistic costs for charter schools and lack of real accountability and transparency need to be addressed,” said PASA Executive Director Dr. Mark DiRocco. “We stand with the governor in calling for real reform that will have a positive impact on school districts, students and local taxpayers.”

Charter School Reform Plan

Also last month, Senate leadership and the Governor’s Office made an attempt to address a pressing problem in education, charter school reform, by developing a compromise plan that addressed many long-neglected issues of transparency, management and accountability – but did little to nothing about cost issues.

PASA has sought charter school reform for many years. Although there were many positive aspects to the drafted plan, it did very little to provide financial relief to districts or the many related issues regarding cyber charter schools. For that reason, PASA expressed serious concerns about the amendments through direct calls with the Governor’s Office and other channels.

Although the Senate Education Committee approved HB 355 and sent it to the floor, and an amendment was drafted to the bill to reflect the compromise plan, as the week progressed it became apparent that the compromise itself was falling apart. Eventually, consideration of both the bill and the extensive amendment was off the table, with no further action.

PASA is very leery of last-minute deals in the legislative process that affect significant pieces of legislation such as charter school reform. We will continue to work with the governor and the legislature to promote substantial reform, such as what is outlined in Governor Wolf’s legislative proposal and in HB 1897, a bill concerning cyber programs and sponsored by House Education Committee Chair Curt Sonney.

PASAs alert and made those calls. Numbers matter!

PLUS Caucus of PASA Advocacy

On December 4 more than a dozen members of the PLUS Caucus of PASA, representing urban school districts across the commonwealth, held simultaneous local press events in their districts to call attention to the pressing need for equity in education funding and charter school reform.

The superintendents noted how the lack of funding equity has produced a flawed system that puts students in high-poverty urban areas at a disadvantage, with those schools less able to offer the supports and opportunities those students desperately need. In addition, the group stated that the high cost of charter schools further depletes public school districts of badly needed resources for their students.

See this week’s PLUS Caucus column by Stephen Rodriguez (page 6) for more on the event.

Be a Better Advocate!

Want to be a better advocate for your school, your community and, most importantly, your students? Get ready for advocacy this fall! The PASA website provides you with resources you need! Check it out: https://www.pasa-net.org/advocacy.

To learn more about the PA Schools Work Campaign, click here.
This November, the Environmental Protection Agency announced new provisions to the Lead and Copper Pipe Rule (LCR), which, for the first time, dictates how Community Water Systems (CWS) test for the prevalence of lead in schools’ and childcare centers’ drinking water.

The EPA proposal would require Community Water Systems to collect samples from five drinking water outlets at each school and two drinking water outlets at each childcare facility served by the CWS. This rule will signify the first federal regulation dictating how schools must test for lead since the passage of the LCR in 1981.

This regulation has the potential to be helpful to districts. Seventeen states have no laws requiring that all schools test for lead in drinking water and this will be a positive step in the right direction for school leaders in those states. However, the revised rule doesn’t go far enough to ensure that school leaders are given an accurate picture of the safety of their students’ drinking water.

The regulation fails to outline effective lead testing procedures for CWS’s that serve public schools and childcare facilities, which could lead to confusion and false negatives for superintendents who are trying to interpret, inform and remediate lead testing results for their students and communities.

Specifically, the rule would require CWS’s that serve a public school or childcare facility to alert school system leaders to any testing results that score above the EPA’s 15 micrograms of lead per liter of water (15 ppb) action level. While this does signify an improvement from the status quo, we’re concerned that this criterion could mislead school system leaders into believing their water systems are safe for consumption.

The reason for this goes back to the establishment of the action level in 1991. During that time, the EPA created the action level under the rationale that it was a realistic metric of compliance for CWS’s. At the time, the EPA also acknowledged that there was no established safe level of lead exposure, and since then, has put forth research indicating that even low lead blood levels in children highly correlate to physical and neurological disabilities.

Considering this research and the expanded scope of the LCR to test schools and childcare facilities, it is incomprehensible that the EPA has not adopted a more stringent action threshold in the 28 years since its implementation.

Moreover, the EPA’s action level is practically useless because the testing results do not show superintendents whether their schools’ drinking water is safe. Instead, the test indicates whether a CWS is complying with the 15ppb action level. This is a borderline negligent misstep by the EPA, as it could cause superintendents, who are looking to be transparent with lead testing results, to unknowingly misrepresent the safety of their drinking water.

In response, AASA is advocating for the EPA to fix this flaw by urging the agency to adopt a 1 ppb standard for lead in schools’ drinking water and share guidance to any district that undergoes lead testing. Additionally, we are imploring the EPA to continue working with the U.S. Dept. of Education to develop strategies that help LEAs properly communicate lead testing results to their stakeholders.

Similarly to the EPA’s action level, there are also flaws with the proposed regulation’s lead testing procedures for CWS’s. While the multiple testing requirements are a step in the right direction, it is not enough since the corrosion and breaking off of lead particles from pipes can be highly variable.

According to Environment America’s 2019 report “Get the Lead Out,” multiple water tests from one tap can result in highly variable lead levels between samples. For example, in a lead sampling study conducted in 2013, researchers concluded that a single sample from a water tap could not accurately reflect the levels of lead flowing through the fixture. Consequently, this means that, depending on multiple variables (e.g., weather, time of day, or location of an outlet), LEAs may receive inaccurate results from federal lead testing. To address the variability of lead testing, AASA is pushing the EPA to amend the rule so that CWS’s must test all water drinking outlets in a district to ensure our members have access to the most accurate information.

Finally, AASA is concerned about the lack of federal funding that is available to implement these new testing provisions for LEAs that act as their own CWS. According to the EPA, approximately 7,000 schools control their water supply (such as a well) and are regulated under the LCR. For these entities, the new provisions of the LCR could create financial hardships for LEAs with limited resources.

In addition, for districts that discover that there is lead in their water, there is no funding for remediation at the federal level that they can access. They would have to dip into local education funding to acquire filters, replace faucets and fountains and take other steps to get the lead out. At a minimum the EPA should include a list of federal and state funding resources for LEAs that independently conduct their lead testing and that may have to remove lead from water systems when it is found.

However, we also believe it’s imperative that EPA and the Administration propose new funding to help schools fix the problem - i.e., install filters, replace lead-bearing fixtures, etc.

Overall, AASA believes this regulation is a long overdue step in the right direction, but feels the rule falls short of ensuring children and school personnel are not exposed to lead in schools. However, by amending the action level to 1 ppb, increasing LEAs’ access to lead testing guidance, improving testing procedures for CWS’s, and making funding materials more available to districts, this proposal has the potential to ensure greater steps are taken to improve the safety of drinking water at public schools and childcare facilities.

AASA will comment on the NPRM before the closing date on January 13, 2020. We will provide a template on the Leading Edge Blog for you to comment as well. We hope you take a moment to weigh in on this important regulation.
**National Conference on Education**


**Helping Kids Mini-Grants**

AASA recently announced the recipients of the 2020 Helping Kids Mini-Grants, a program funded by AASA through a partnership with Sourcewell. The grants this year have been increased to $70,000 to help families with needs in areas such as clothing, medical and dental care, eyeglasses, prescriptions, food, shelter and related supplies. For 2020, 27 districts nationwide were named as mini-grant recipients, including four Pennsylvania school districts: Butler Area (I.U. 4), Franklin Regional (I.U. 7), Halifax Area (I.U. 15) and Mt. Lebanon (I.U. 3).

**Comments on Civil Rights Data Collection**

Last month AASA submitted comments on the new Civil Rights Data Collection request for 2019-20. In its comments, AASA recognized that the Department has taken steps to reduce the number of items districts must report on by 22%, but that this is still a time and resource-intensive process that must be greatly diminished in future collection cycles. AASA also commented on the new data points that the Department is planning to add to the collection related to bullying and sexual assault. [Click here](#) to read the comments.

**Comments on FTC Proposal**

Also last month, AASA submitted comments to the FTC on proposed changes to the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA). If not amended, the FTC proposal could pose major administrative obstacles for school districts by guaranteeing many new rights to parents in connection with the data collected from their children who are under the age of 13 in schools. These include the right to receive a direct notice before the collection of such data, the right to review the personal information collected from their child, the right to revoke their consent and refuse the further use or collection of personal information from their child, and the right to delete their child's personal information. AASA believes that the rights enumerated above should remain in the hands of schools and not placed into the hands of parents in order to assure the administrative, educational, privacy, and equity benefits of the use of Ed Tech. [Check out the full details on the Leading Edge Blog](#).

Join AASA today and become part of a supported community of school leaders nationwide who advocate for public education! See the AASA website, [http://www.aasa.org](http://www.aasa.org), for details or contact the PASA office.

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**2019 WINTER SERIES: "RESPONSIVE SCHOOLS, RESILIENT STUDENTS"**

Take a short time out of your day - and take advantage of these four one-hour informational PASA webinars focused on what you need to know! Provided to school administrators online, this webinar series features both information and opportunity for Q & A.

- **Jan. 29:** The Six Critical Components to a Trauma Informed School
- **Feb. 20:** Beyond Test Scores - Mt. Lebanon's Vision to Develop SEL Competence
- **March 17:** A Community Commitment to School Safety
- **April 27:** Building Resilient Students from the Inside Out

All webinars offered from noon to 1 p.m.

Single-webinar and full-series registration available!

[https://www.pasa-net.org/webinars](https://www.pasa-net.org/webinars)

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**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, public school employers, and those seeking positions in school administration, PASA provides on its website the "PASA Career Center," a listing of school administrator 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 the [Webmaster](mailto:Webmaster@pasa-net.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.)
Whether you are a new superintendent or a school administrator who is looking to build your knowledge base and grow your and your team’s leadership skills – PASA has a program for you in 2020!

New Superintendents’ Academy Part 3: Professional & Community Leadership
January 7-8 in the PASA Office
PASA Office
https://www.pasa-net.org/workshops

2020 Winter Webinar Series: Responsive Schools, Resilient Students
One-hour sessions (noon – 1 p.m.)
January 29, February 20, March 17, April 27
https://www.pasa-net.org/webinars

Aspiring to Leadership Workshop
Friday, January 31 in the PASA Office
https://www.pasa-net.org/aspiring

Commonwealth Budget Seminars
Thursday, Feb. 6: South Hills Country Club
Friday, Feb. 7: Riverview I.U. 6 (Clarion)
Wednesday, Feb. 12: Webcast (includes one computer connection) (9 – 11:45 a.m.)
https://www.pasa-net.org/budget

PASA Leadership Forum: Responsive Schools, Resilient Students
March 29-31 at The Nittany Lion Inn in State College
https://www.pasa-net.org/leadforum

PASA Women’s Caucus Spring Conference
May 17-19 at The Hotel Hershey
https://www.pasa-net.org/wccconf

REGISTRATION IS OPEN!
National Conference on Education
San Diego
February 13 - 15, 2020
http://nce.aasa.org

40 Hours of PIL credit
Responsive Schools, Resilient Students
March 29-31, 2020
Nittany Lion Inn ~ State College
https://www.pasa-net.org/leadforum

REGISTRATION FEE:
PASA Member: $349
Non-Member: $449

NOTE: Payment is due in advance.
Hotel rooms available at a special rate of $133 +tax.
Deadline: Feb. 27.
COMMONWEALTH BUDGET SEMINARS

The governor presents his state budget on February 4, 2020. The Commonwealth Budget Seminar will decipher the numbers and help you to determine how the proposed budget will impact your district. The seminar will cover education funding along with other education-related policy highlighted in the governor’s budget proposal.

Click on the date to register.*

Thursday, Feb. 6 – South Hills Country Club

Friday, Feb. 7 – Riverview I.U. 6 (Clarion)

Wednesday, Feb. 12 – Webcast

(Includes one computer connection)

[PASBO is handling all registrations.]

Time: 9 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

Check-in for face-to-face programs will begin at 8:30 a.m. and will include a continental breakfast.

Important Note on Registration:

There is a promotional code for anyone bringing more than one person to the face-to-face workshops. The first registrant will receive this code in their confirmation and should give it to the additional representative(s) of the LEA to use. This code cannot be combined with the PASA member discount. PASA members should register as the primary registrant and the business manager or other staff can use the 25% discount code. Discount code for PASA members is PASA2020CBS.

Tuesday, April 28
8 a.m. - 3 p.m.
continental breakfast & lunch included
Allegheny I.U. 3
475 E. Waterfront Dr., Homestead, PA 15120

Whether you are facing a district construction project in the near future or just getting prepared for that eventuality, this workshop is for YOU! Learn the basics of the process from company representatives and experienced school leaders who have been-there/done-that, all focused on key elements of the process: planning, management & finance.

REGISTER TODAY... and be prepared for your next project!

https://www.pasa-net.org/construction

for school leaders and district leadership teams
to learn, network and plan
approved for 40 hours of PIL/Act 45 credit
(additional 40 hours for Ed Camp, with additional fee)

Keynote speakers, high quality breakout sessions, table talks on hot topics, Ed Camp and district team planning and job-alike sessions will provide practical ideas that can be immediately reviewed and discussed at the summit and utilized at the district level.

Interested in leading a session? CLICK HERE for the proposal form. (Deadline extended to Jan. 24)

For more information, see the PASA website at: https://www.pasa-net.org/leadsummit.

Sponsored by

Scarlett Lewis
Dr. Adam Drummond

For more information, see the PASA website at: https://www.pasa-net.org/leadsummit.
On Vouchers…

“If a patient is suffering from a loss of blood, you don’t make the bleeding worse and hope for the best. This bill would bleed out the Harrisburg School District and its taxpayers, and could ultimately lead to the district’s collapse. It’s simply not in the best interest of the district or its students.” – PA State Auditor Eugene DePasquale, from a press release outlining initial findings of a recent real-time audit of the Harrisburg School District’s fiscal and management progress and the potential impact of a voucher plan for the district (HB 1800), as promoted by Speaker of the House Mike Turzai, 11/25/19

“This bill [HB 1800] would be a ‘camel’s nose under the tent.’ Though funded by taxpayer dollars, it paves the way for future expansion of the program across the state – far from scrutiny and accountability by taxpayers. Public money is public money, and it belongs in our public schools.” – Lawrence Feinberg, from an op-ed published in the Daily Times, 11/16/19

“If vouchers are costly, do not improve the achievement of students who use them, and do nothing to improve public schools, then why are we talking about them in Harrisburg?” – from an op-ed published on penncapital-star.com, 11/17/19

“As president, I am fighting every day for the forgotten American. Now is the time to fight for the forgotten child, and that’s what we are doing with respect to education. For decades, countless children have been trapped in failing government schools. In my administration, these children are forgotten no longer.” – President Trump, in an event held to promote school choice through federal tax credits for private school tuition, 12/9/19

On Charter Schools…

“There are high-quality charter schools, but some of them, especially some cyber charter schools, are underperforming. The inequities are not fair to students in charter schools or to the children in traditional public schools. It’s time for change.” – Gov. Wolf, from a press release on his charter school accountability plan, 11/15/19

“We want to make sure that nobody constrains or restricts these schools, and we want to see them expand.” – Speaker of the House Mike Turzai (R-Allegheny), at a pro-charter school rally in the Capitol Rotunda on November 19

“The charter school families of Pennsylvania and the thousands of others waiting to enroll in charter schools deserve the educational opportunity they have decided is best for them. Removing and undervaluing that choice, as proposed by Gov. Tom Wolf, is an abandonment of the families in our commonwealth.” – Ana Meyers, executive director of the Pennsylvania Coalition of Public Charter schools, from a press release, 11/20/19

“The charter schools – they’re sucking up our funding, They’re getting a higher percentage of school district funds. We don’t have enough money because it’s going to the charter schools. That’s one of the arguments, that financially we’re not doing well, but financially we’re not doing well because we’re giving them the money.” – Dariah Jackson, a life skills teacher in the Chester-Upland SD and vice president of the local teacher’s union, on a petition to turn over all of the district’s elementary students into the Chester Community Charter School, as published in The Delaware County Times, 11/26/19

On Other Issues…

“We are coming together in solidarity to stand up for fair funding. In Pennsylvania the bulk of funding for public schools comes from local taxes, which puts urban schools at a dramatic disadvantage. We feel the quality of a child’s education should not be dependent upon a zip code. But the state’s urban schools are increasingly asked to do more with less. It’s simply cheating our students.” – Stephen Rodriguez, superintendent of the Pottstown SD and president of the PLUS Caucus of PASA, in a press release concerning simultaneous rallies held Dec. 5 in urban districts across the commonwealth

“There needs to be some kind of adjustment and change to the property tax situation. There has to be some kind of stabilization factor with any change that we see in these laws. We just don’t want to see a fluctuation where one year you can maintain your staff and the next year you have to lay off a certain amount of people because personal income tax is down or sales and use tax is down.” – Dr. Mark DiRocco, PASA Executive Director, on recently announced property tax reform plans that would reduce or eliminate local school property tax in favor of personal income tax hikes
### PASA CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2019 - 2020
For more information, see the PASA web site at [www.pasa-net.org](http://www.pasa-net.org).

#### DECEMBER
- 23-31 PASA office closed

#### JANUARY
- 1 PASA office closed
- 7-8 New Superintendents’ Academy Session 3 (PASA office)
- 20 PASA office closed
- 22 Women’s Caucus Board meeting (virtual)
- 23 Joint Boards Dinner (TBA)
- 24 Board of Governors’ meeting (PASA office)
- 29 Webinar: Six Critical Components to a Trauma-Informed School
- 31 Aspiring to Leadership Workshop (PASA office)

#### FEBRUARY
- 4 Governor’s 2020-21 Budget Address
- 13-15 AASA National Conference on Education (San Diego)
- 17 PASA office closed
- 20 Webinar: A Vision to Develop SEL Competence

#### MARCH
- 17 Webinar: A Community Commitment to School Safety
- 19-20 National Superintendent Certification Program, Session 2
- 26 Women’s Caucus Board meeting (virtual)
- 29-31 PASA Leadership Forum: Responsive Schools, Resilient Students

#### COMMUNICATIONS TIP OF THE MONTH
“"If you don’t tell your story, someone else will – and it might not be a story you recognize. Communicate consistently. When you can’t talk details, explain the process and share your values. Be empathetic. Today’s parents get their news from the internet (42 percent) and social media (22 percent) and generally not newspapers (8 percent), according to a survey by Pew Research Center. Make your district website the go-to spot for the most current and complete news. Use e-mail and social media daily to point to your website.” – Larry Nyland, retired 27-year veteran superintendent, from “Leading with Grit and Grace Through Turbulence,” as published in the December issue of AASA’s *School Administrator*. The issue looks at leading with grace and grit through turbulence in the superintendency.

### REGION 4
- **Sean Arney**, superintendent of the Moniteau SD, has resigned from the position.

### REGION 5
- **William Hall**, superintendent of the Millcreek Township SD, has announced he will retire from the position, effective this month. He has served in the position for six years.

### REGION 10
- **Dr. J. Hugh Dwyer**, executive director of Central I.U. 10, has announced his intention to retire. Dwyer has served in the position since 2008.

### REGION 12
- **Dr. Christopher Rudisill** has been appointed superintendent of the Conewago Valley SD, effective next month. He has been serving as the district’s assistant superintendent since 2015. Rudisill replaces **Dr. Russell Greenholt**, who is retiring.

### REGION 13
- **Dr. Krista Antonis** has been appointed the next superintendent in the Annville-Cleona SD. Antonis, currently the secondary principal in the district, will succeed **Dr. Cheryl Potteiger**, who is resigning from the position, effective June 30, 2020.

### REGION 15
- **Evan Williams** has retired from his position as superintendent of the Upper Dauphin Area SD as of November 18.

### REGION 16
- **Dr. Steven Skalka** has resigned from his position as superintendent of the Lewisburg Area SD, effective June 30, 2020.
- **Wendy Kupsy** has been appointed superintendent of the Berwick Area SD, effective in August 2020. She has been serving as assistant superintendent in the district. Kupsy will replace **Wayne Brookhart**, who is retiring.

### REGION 18
- **Joseph Long Jr.** has been appointed superintendent of the Northwest Area SD. He has been serving as a principal in the Wyoming Area SD.

### REGION 25
- **Dr. Stephen Butz** has been appointed Director of Career & Technical Education for the Delaware County I.U. He has been serving as superintendent of the Southeast Delco SD.

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Please report member news to PASA at [pasa@pasa-net.org](mailto: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](http://www.pasa-net.org) (Click on the “Leadership Development” button and look for “Career Center.”)