GOVERNOR PROPOSES CHANGES TO CHARTER SCHOOL LAW, REGULATIONS

Last month Gov. Wolf announced he is taking executive actions that would make changes in charter school law through regulatory changes, PDE action, changes in the charter appeals process, and legislation.

“There are good charter schools in Pennsylvania, but we must do more to hold underperforming charter schools – especially cyber charter schools – accountable to students, parents and taxpayers,” said Gov. Wolf in a press announcement.

The governor has directed the PDE to develop regulations to limit enrollment in underachieving charter schools, improve management transparency, require sound fiscal practices, provide for transparency in decision-making and practices of a Board of Trustees and operating/charter school management companies, require more detailed charter applications to provide better analysis of actual operations, and develop a process for accurately documenting real costs to prevent over-charging school districts for educational services.

In addition, the governor has instructed the Department to establish a fee-for-service model to assess fees on charter schools to recoup the staff costs associated with administering the charter school law.

Finally, the governor plans to propose comprehensive charter school reform legislation that will include establishing performance standards, establishing a moratorium on new cyber charters and capping current enrollment until outcomes improve, requiring charter management to be subject to RTK and the Ethics Act, establishing a Charter School Funding Commission, and creating fair, predictable and equitable funding for school districts, including the areas of special education and charter school payments.

“Pennsylvania’s charter school law is one of the worst in the country and is failing students, teachers, school districts and taxpayers,” said Gov. Wolf. “We cannot wait any longer to take action. Improving transparency and holding underperforming charter and cyber charter schools accountable will level the playing field with school districts and help to control costs for taxpayers.”

Click here to read Governor Wolf’s plan.

Click here to read a press release from the Governor’s Office. See Dr. DiRocco’s column in this issue of The PASA Flyer for PASA’s position on the governor’s initiatives.

Seeking Public Comment on Proposed Regulations

The governor and the Department have already begun the process of revising charter school regulations.

In the August 23 issue of The Pennsylvania Bulletin, the Department provided Ad-See Charter School Law, page 9

CAUTION

THIS COULD BE YOUR LAST ISSUE OF THE PASA FLYER!

If you have not already done so, renew your PASA membership for 2019-20 before the October 1 deadline to ensure that you will continue to receive the monthly newsletter. For our Commissioned Officer, Small District Leader, Central Office and Associate members, keep connected to PASA through the weekly E-Update by renewing your membership today!

Not sure if you are renewed for 2019-20? Call the PASA office at (717) 540-4448 or contact Jolene Zelinski via email at jolenez@pasa-net.org.
FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
DR. MARK DIROCCO

THE GOVERNOR WEIGHS IN ON CHARTER SCHOOL REFORM

We finally have significant momentum for charter school reform in Pennsylvania!

On August 13, Governor Wolf launched a series of initiatives to reform the charter school law in Pennsylvania. PASA is in full support of the governor’s efforts.

During the press conference, the governor stated, “Today I’m announcing comprehensive charter school reform through executive action, regulation, and legislation. These changes will level the playing field for all taxpayer-funded public schools, strengthen the accountability and transparency of charter and cyber charter schools, and better serve all students.”

PASA could not agree more with the governor. We are pleased that he has stepped forward to address this lingering political issue that has been a financial nightmare for public school districts, an academic debacle for many students in cyber charter schools, and a waste of taxpayer money with almost no oversight or accountability of how taxpayer dollars are being spent on these venues.

Below is a description of the governor’s plan from his website.

CHANGES IN REGULATIONS

Governor Wolf is tasking the Department of Education (PDE) with developing regulations to achieve the following:

Access to High-Quality Education for All Students

- Allow school districts to limit student enrollment at charters that do not provide a high-quality, equitable education to students.
- Require transparent charter school admission and enrollment policies that do not discriminate based on intellectual or athletic ability, race/ethnicity, gender or disability, among other student characteristics.

Transparency and Accountability for All School Leadership

- Hold charter schools and their operators to the same transparency standards as school districts because they are public schools and receive more than $1.8 billion in state and property tax dollars annually.
- Require that charter school Board of Trustees and operating companies—like school district school boards—are free from conflicts of interest and prohibit them from making decisions that provide a financial benefit to themselves, friends and/or family members.
- Require charter schools to use sound fiscal management, provide regular financial audits to state regulators, publicly bid contracts for supplies and services, use fair contracting practices, and engage their communities.
- Provide greater oversight over charter school management companies, the businesses that often profit at the expense of Pennsylvania students and families.
- Establish a model state application to start a new charter school or renew an existing charter school that provides school districts with comprehensive information on how the school will be run and allow for rigorous analysis.

Fair and Predictable Funding for All Public Schools

- Establish a clear process that requires charters to accurately document their costs.
- Prevent charters from over charging districts and taxpayers for the educational services they provide.
- Initiate a fee-for-service model to cover the department’s costs associated with implementing the charter school law.
- Recoup taxpayer costs for thousands of hours of currently free services that the Department provides to charter schools when it reviews applications, processes millions of payments, and provides legal and administrative support.

See Executive Director’s Message, page 5
Early Childhood Education: According to a new analysis by financial literacy site WalletHub, PA ranks 38th among states for the quality of its early childhood education system.

National News

National Education Survey: Results from the most recent PDF International survey show that Americans rate their local schools far higher than they do the nation’s schools in general, that nearly two-thirds of adults support teaching Bible studies in public schools, and that half of teachers said they have seriously considered leaving the profession.

IDEA Funding: Bipartisan bills have been introduced in both the chambers of Congress that would restore federal funding for special education to the initially promised 40% over a span of ten years. Six Pennsylvania House members have signed on to the House bill, three as original co-sponsors, and Sen. Casey has signed on to the Senate bill.

Immigrant Rule and Federal Benefits: A new federal rule promoted by the Trump administration that would prevent immigrants from seeking benefits could have an impact on children in families that are currently eligible for programs such as CHIP. Those opposed to the change are concerned that the shift would make children and families more reliant on school-based nutrition, health and other services and would impact students’ readiness to learn.

Quality Counts Report: In the latest Quality Counts report released by the Education Week Research Center, New Jersey moved into the top spot among all 50 states, based on 39 indicators reflecting school finance, academic achievement and socioeconomic facts affecting the quality of state school systems. Pennsylvania earned a B- in the latest report, ranking 9th. The nation as a whole earned a C.

Vaping and Student Health: The number of teenagers experiencing lung damage due to vaping and electronic cigarettes is on the rise across the country, with many requiring hospitalization. For that reason, more school districts, municipalities and states are developing policies and laws that would prevent teen access to the products, as researchers continue to investigate chemical interactions related to health problems.

COMING UP

Lawmakers will be returning to the Capitol this month, the House on September 17 and the Senate on September 23. Although specific agenda items remain unknown, Gov. Wolf’s announcement about initiatives in charter school reform and gun violence will likely have an impact on the legislative agenda, along with continuing discussion about school property taxes and some “fixes” to budget-related legislation pushed through both chambers during the last week of June. As always, stay tuned for the latest information by following us on Twitter @PASASupts.
Well, Day 1 is in the books, and most of us have settled in to the school year. We are working through back-to-school nights, fall athletic events and the general duties of running a school district.

Face-time during this stretch of our calendar is so very important within our role as district leaders. We strive to make a presence throughout our buildings during the school year, but these first few weeks of school present a golden opportunity to not only be seen, but also tell our story. A new year provides an avenue to remind all that come through our doors that what we do on a daily basis unlocks the potential within each and every student while also preparing them to become “life-ready.” This is who we are as public school educators, and advocating that standing is critical to our role as district leaders.

Throughout much of my communication as PASA president this last year, I’ve touched on the importance of advocacy within our role as school leaders. If we don’t advocate and, within that process, tell our story, someone else will absolutely do it for us.

From an education perspective, we know the importance, relevance and reliability that emanates from storytelling. It is critical that we assume the role of storyteller for our learning organization. This time of year provides the opportunity for this critical role. So be sure that you and your team are quite comfortable with your local story and take advantage of the opportunity.

Obviously, storytelling is only a part of advocating for what our schools need. But it is a critical part that we must always build within our advocacy framework. Understanding the importance of full-funding for IDEA is critical, and advocating for such with congressional staff is paramount, but sharing specific facts of what the underfunding of IDEA has done for your district resonates within our advocacy role. Charter reform is something that we know is paramount for public educators in the Commonwealth. As such, knowing the exact effect that “cybers” have on our districts when we are advocating is critical to helping our community understand the challenge.

Telling our story never ends, and the beginning of the school year provides a fantastic forum to push that story at all levels. Our schools throughout the Commonwealth are absolutely better than ever. Be proud and tell your local story with pride and vigor!

My role as president of PASA is now winding to a close. I’ve appreciated the opportunity to connect with new leaders and reconnect with old friends. PASA is a special organization that truly does work tirelessly to better the educational process for all students throughout Pennsylvania.

That growth does not happen without courageous and passionate leaders in each and every school district. Thank you for answering the call to be one of those leaders. I’ve certainly appreciated the opportunity to work with you and for you over the last year. Wishing you an amazing school year!

On behalf of the PASA Board of Governors, we thank Dr. Richard Fry for his year of service to PASA as PASA President. Dr. Fry will be formally recognized at the PASA Recognition Luncheon on October 16 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. Jeffrey Fuller for his service as President-Elect and chair of the Resolutions Committee, and to Dr. Emilie Lomardi, as she completes her three-year commitment of service to PASA serving as President-Elect, President and Past-President.

The Resolutions Committee has drafted a revision of the PASA Resolutions for 2020 and will present it to the PASA Board of Governors for its consideration this week.

During their meeting on September 12, the Board will review the draft and vote to recommend the draft as is or with additional edits. After that time, the draft will be posted on the PASA website for review by the full membership.

During the annual association meeting during the PASA Recognition Luncheon on Wednesday, October 16 in Hershey, part of the PASA/PSBA School Leadership Conference, the PASA members present will vote to accept the draft 2019-20 Resolutions. The updated document will offer guidelines for PASA’s positions on both ongoing and “new” education issues.

The draft resolutions will be posted on the PASA website the week of September 16 at www.pasa-net.org/resolpriorities. Voting members will receive notice via email when the Board-approved draft is available for review.
THE HEART OF THE MATTER
BY CONNIE KINDLER,
PASA CONSULTANT FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The impact of shootings, suicides and bullying in our schools have risen to the top of school leaders’ concerns. Topics such as mental health, social and emotional learning, trauma-informed leadership, school climate, etc., have become the most highly discussed among school leaders today, and they comprised most presentations throughout the recent Pennsylvania Educational Leadership Summit, held August 4-6 and sponsored by PASA and the PA Principals Association.

While facilitating a cabinet-level leaders’ job-alike discussion during the summit, I asked participants to share something about the upcoming school year that excited them. One would expect that they would be excited by a new innovation within their districts. However, they all identified an improved or new mental health support or service that their districts will be implementing. Although comforted by their responsiveness to their students’ mental health, I was saddened by this reality.

The two keynote presenters, Dr. Joe Sanfelippo, Superintendent of the Fall Creek School District in Wisconsin, and Jessica Cabeen, Principal of Ellis Middle School in Austin, Minnesota, and a former kindergarten principal, emphasized the importance of intentionally leading a welcoming, calming, caring and safe school culture. Dr. Sanfelippo stressed strong leadership in his simple but profound statement, “No high performing school has low performing leaders.” Also, as a former kindergarten teacher and elementary principal, I loved Ms. Cabeen’s twist on school readiness as she said, “It’s not about students being ready for kindergarten, but about kindergarten being ready for students.”

I was especially inspired by JC Pohl, President and CEO of Teen Truth, who I believed got to the heart of the matter during one of the small group sessions. He discussed “school culture from the inside out,” urging school leaders to purposefully create cultures in which students’ voices lead. He cautioned that students who look great on the outside may not be so great on the inside, and urged school leaders to design experiences that connect all students and empower all voices.

As I reflected upon the matters discussed during this conference, I was reminded of the significance of heart in school leadership. When I think about the teachers who inspired me, I remember those who cared enough to help me to recognize my value. Similarly, students and staff thrive when school leaders intentionally create cultures in which ALL people feel a sense of belonging and are heard.

As we lead our schools during these unsettled times, let us be reminded of the “heart of the matter.”

Ah…these times are so uncertain.
There’s a yearning undefined
And people filled with rage.
We all need a little tenderness…

- Don Henley, “The Heart of the Matter”
from The End of Innocence (1989)
Open houses... football games and fall sports....brightly waxed floors...picture day...the familiar sight of the gleaming yellow school buses. It is official! Our 2019-20 school year is underway.

What opportunities lie ahead for us this year? How will we release agency to our leaders and learners? How will we impact the work in our buildings? How will we create the conditions for innovation?

First, let’s think about the work we do on a daily, weekly and monthly basis. What are the long-term goals you hope to achieve this year? Beyond the duties in your job description, what is your important work?

For our leaders in Salisbury Township School District, the superintendent (Randy Ziegenfuss, Ed.D.) and I have identified the important work of moving forward to realize our community’s vision. We utilized a collaborative visioning process to develop a clear district-wide vision, which includes our Profile of a Graduate and Learning Beliefs.

Our Profile of a Graduate clearly articulates the knowledge, skills, and dispositions Salisbury’s community desires for its learners when they leave Salisbury to pursue their future aspirations. In order for learners to develop this knowledge, skills, and dispositions, we need to shift our thinking about learning. We articulated clear Learning Beliefs which are organized around the 5-pillar “north star” developed by Education Reimagined in their white paper, A Transformational Vision for Education in the US.

We need to ensure our classrooms are learner-centered, and the learning experiences are aligned to our beliefs about learning. This is heavy lifting and requires significant instructional leadership, which can be difficult for our building leaders.

Our building and department leaders manage significant operational and human resource responsibilities on a daily basis. How can they (and we) continue to make time for the important work while the urgent work is forever competing for our attention?

What do I mean by “urgent work”? Each community, building, and department has its own contextualized urgent work: testing, parent concerns, discipline issues, facility issues, employee challenges, etc. There are so many issues which need our attention on a daily basis. It would be easy for any of us to get stuck in our office all day. We could be busy and productive with phone calls, emails, etc., but we may not be getting to the important work.

Have you read Poke the Box? In the book, Seth Godin asks us to identify the last time we did something for the first time. He encourages us to commit to make something happen. What are you curious about in your role? How can pursuing your curiosity result in the production of something that is “scarce”? Godin encourages us to take initiative and innovate at every level in every department. This is important work. This is the work which will help us move forward to realize our vision. (Learn more about the book through an interview with Seth at https://vimeo.com/20759976.)

One example of producing something scarce at our middle school is Project Wonder. The building principal (Ken Parliman) and Director of Teaching and Learning (Kelly Pauling) have collaborated with two highly motivated and learner-centered teachers to build a school-within-a-school for learners in grades 6 and 7. These teachers are re-thinking everything about school: teaching and learning, assessment/grading/feedback, how to personalize content while meeting PA state standards, student-led conference, personal learning profiles, etc. This is heavy lifting, and these teachers are doing this important work with the support of the building and district leadership. The leaders have created the conditions for this innovation and released the agency to these teachers. Not only are they carving out time, but they sit at the table alongside these teachers as they experience productive struggle. They work to keep the flame burning while celebrating the risk-taking and successes as much as they celebrate the failures. This is certainly no easy task when these busy leaders have many competing priorities.

How will you create the conditions for your staff to innovate? What is “allowed” and “not allowed” in your organization? Godin proffers most employees can give a long list of things they are not allowed to do, but may not be able to articulate what is allowed. Are you and your leaders allowed to spend all of your time on urgent work? Do you expect more from each other? If you expect more, what structures can you put in place to encourage this practice?

This year, we are developing an action research cohort. We are allocating professional learning time to a group of teachers who want to take a look at a problem of practice and implement a solution. This cohort of teachers will come together multiple times this year for a pull-out professional learning, facilitated by Kelly, Randy and me. Using a mentor text, The Reflective Educator’s Guide to Classroom Research, these teachers will complete an inquiry project in which they identify a problem of practice, brainstorm, implement and iterate solutions and tell the story of what was learned. Throughout the process, we will encourage risk-taking and failure!

How will you promote risk-taking and celebrate failures with the same joy in which you celebrate successes? As a leader, how do you challenge people to step outside of their current structures? What structures or opportunities do you have in place?

There are so many leaders who are doing this important work. This fall, reach out to the women around you, those you mentor, those you meet, and those you work with, novice leaders and veterans alike. Encourage them, if they haven’t already, to join our organization and engage a network that is eager to help them grow.

In order to ensure your membership in the Women’s Caucus, you must select Women’s Caucus on the membership form. There is no additional fee to be a part of the Women’s Caucus. Membership Information can be found at: http://www.pasa-net.org/wcabout.
I just returned from a trip to my hometown of Waupun, Wisconsin (population 11,297), where I had the chance to relax and enjoy time with family and the BBC: beer, brats and cheese. You can take the girl out of Wisconsin, but you can’t take Wisconsin out of the girl. I’m a proud Cheesehead.

While there, my daughter and I took some time to drive east of town and visit the Horicon Marsh, a national wildlife refuge home to birds, ducks, geese, muskrats and unique vegetation. It brought back many memories, particularly waking up to the sound of thousands of Canadian geese heading out of the marsh and both watching them and listening to them return in the evening. That migration always marked the change in seasons, as it still does today.

Our hike in the marsh included two distinct and unique paths: one through the patches of woods and one through the marsh itself. Each was unique, with very different scenery, but both were the same in one respect: silence.

With schools in session, chilly (68) air with a steady breeze and overcast skies, and a significant drop in tourists, we pretty much had the place to ourselves. There was the occasional call of a duck or goose, a sudden bird on the wing, or a gentle slap in the water as a muskrat dove back into its den, but otherwise all we heard was the sound of waving rushes, the swish of leaves, and our steps on the creaky wooden bridge through the marsh and on the crunchy pathways through the woods. It truly was a quiet place, a place to quiet the mind and let the silence bring you to another place.

Quiet is something we don’t get a lot of in our lives. Whether it is physical noise or just the demands of our work and family life, we don’t always have time or make time for absolute quiet. Even vacations can get hectic and noisy, depending on where we go and who is with us. Our family trip to England six years ago was wonderful, but it was not quiet. It usually isn’t until we are in a truly quiet place that we appreciate that chance to just breathe, just be.

School leaders need to make time for that. There are so many demands on your time, so many of the “unexpect-eds,” so much activity and so much of so much. Leading the district, advocating for what is best for kids, and engaging the community all take time and energy. It is not a quiet enterprise. And, with school back in session and the legislature set to head back into session this fall with many issues on its plate (charter school reform, property taxes, etc.), things are ramping up once again.

But, as I did for a week, remember to make some truly quiet time for yourself throughout the year. Don’t wait until summer to take a little time from the craziness and truly just be in your own little quiet place. You will be a better leader and a better person for it.
SCIO Events at the Conference: Remember to Register!

Don’t forget to register for the special PASA Recognition Luncheon on Wednesday, Oct. 16, a special event for school administrators at the conference. Take a break during the conference to network with your colleagues and recognize our outgoing President Dr. Richard Fry and three recipients of the PASA Awards of Achievement.

On Thursday afternoon (Oct. 17), the PASA Women’s Caucus will have a drop-in session for conversation and networking during the conference – no fee and no registration necessary.

For registration and program details, see the conference website: https://www.paschoolleaders.org/

SEE YOU IN HERSHEY!

Are you registered?

Don’t miss this year’s conference featuring:
Keynote Speakers… Education Sessions… Learning Labs…
Education Excellence Fair… PASA Events… Student
Celebration Showcase… Exhibits… and more!

Opening Keynotes

ROBIN GREY
CEO of Arts Empower and executive producer of the award-winning documentary Purple Dreams

COREY MITCHELL
Recipient of the 2015 Excellence in Theatre Education Tony Award and dramatic arts teacher in the Northwest School of the Arts in Charlotte, NC

NOTE:
Purple Dreams will be shown on Tuesday evening.

Thursday Keynote

DR. ADOLPH BROWN III
A leading innovator in business and education, and a Master Teacher

Closing Keynote

DR. AMY CUDDY
Social psychologist and expert on the behavioral science of power, presence, purpose and prejudice

A MEMBERSHIP BENEFIT!
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 www.pasa-net.org/legalservices to read more about it.

BE A BETTER ADVOCATE!

Want to be a better advocate for your school, your community and, most importantly, our students?

Looking for resources to enhance your own advocacy?

The PASA website provides you with resources you need!

Check it out…
https://www.pasa-net.org/advocacy

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SEE YOU IN HERSHEY!
Each month, PASA, in coordination with the Technology Committee and CoSN (Consortium for School Networking), will publish a monthly technology-focused news item of interest to members of PASA.

TOPIC: CoSN EMPOWERED SUPERINTENDENT INITIATIVE & DRIVING K-12 INNOVATION REPORT

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

We begin this new school year with a look at the CoSN Empowered Superintendent Initiative and the recently released CoSN Driving K-12 Innovation Report.

The CoSN Empowered Superintendent Initiative was initially created when CoSN and AASA, The School Superintendents Association® joined together to create The Empowered Superintendent Toolkit, available for download at http://www.cosn.org/superintendents. The toolkit provides free high quality resources for superintendents and school leaders to support their work in leading digital transformations.

In July of this year, CoSN and AASA announced a new partnership agreement that will continue the collaboration of these two associations in helping PreK-12 school leaders lead and leverage technology tools for learning and school operations.

CoSN has partnered with edWeb to provide a monthly webinar series on topics essential for leading digital transformations. School superintendents serve as panelists on each webinar and share their stories and expertise. Every webinar is recorded for viewing by those who are not able to join the live broadcast.

Season 2 of the CoSN/edWeb Empowered Superintendent webinar series began on Monday, September 9 with a review of the Empowered Superintendent Toolkit and a look at the CoSN Driving K-12 Innovation report. Deborah Kerr, Superintendent of Brown Deer School District, WI (and current president of AASA) and David Schuler, Superintendent of High School District 214, IL (and chair of the CoSN Superintendent Advisory Panel) joined Keith Krueger, CoSN CEO, as webinar guest panelists. Click here to learn more about how you can access records of past webinars and register upcoming free webinars.

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.

CHARTER SCHOOL LAW

continued from page 1

vance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPR) to begin the process and is now soliciting public comment on multiple issues related to current charter school law and regulations, including, but not limited to, application requirements, admission policies, accountability of Board of Trustees, information related to charter school management companies, liability coverage, fiscal and auditing standards, funding for charter schools, and academic accountability.

Toward that end, the Department invites any person or entity to provide data, information and comment on the proposals discussed in the announcement that would be helpful to the Department in preparing the proposed rulemaking. Comment areas include:

- the proper standard of review of the Charter School Appeal Board (CAB);
- whether the proposed rulemaking should include a process for the submission of amendments to a charter;
- whether parameters should be defined related to the requirements for delivery of curriculum and instruction to students through the Internet and other electronic means, and the proper use of a cyber charter school’s physical facilities;
- whether Chapter 711 should be amended to establish caseload requirements for special education teachers who provide special education supports and services to students with disabilities in charter school entities; and
- whether charter school entities should be subject to a law similar to the Financial Recovery Act.

The PDE notes that the published list of issues being considered for amendment may not be an exhaustive list, depending on comments and recommendations received.

School officials are urged to provide to the PDE comments, data and analysis, and other information on these issues. Forward information to the Office of the Secretary, 333 Market Street, 10th Floor, Harrisburg, PA 17126. Questions concerning the ANPR and the subsequent rulemaking may be addressed to Adam Schott, Special Assistant to the Secretary at adschott@pa.gov.

PASA POSITION

PASA supports the Governor’s efforts to make these overdue changes in current law and to require the same level of accountability and transparency for student outcomes, management practice and financial operations as is required of Pennsylvania’s school districts. In addition, PASA strongly supports the Governor’s efforts to bring meaningful change to the oversight and regulation of cyber charter schools to ensure academic and fiscal accountability to students and taxpayers. PASA also supports legislation that would exempt a school district from paying cyber charter school tuition when the district offers a comparable online program for resident students.
School district leaders and teams gathered at Kalahari Resort Poconos on August 4-6 to learn, share and plan together at the 2019 Educational Leadership Summit, co-sponsored by PASA and the Pennsylvania Principals Association.

The summit featured two keynotes: **Dr. Joe Sanfelippo**, superintendent of the Fall Creek SD in Wisconsin, whose book *Hacking Leadership: 10 Ways Great Leaders Inspire Learning That Teachers, Students and Parents Love* inspired his presentation; and **Jessica Cabeen**, principal of Ellis Middle School in Austin, Minnesota, the 2017 Minnesota National Distinguished Principal, and the recipient of the 2016 NAESP/VINCI Digital Leader of Early Learning Award.

In addition, high quality breakout sessions, vendor displays, table talks on hot topics and district team planning and job-alike sessions provided attendees with practical ideas to discuss and bring back to their districts.

**IMAGES FROM THE EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT**

More photos on page 11

(Photos courtesy of Lifetouch)
NASRO Training

With the advent of Act 67 requiring National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO) Training for all current SRO’s, school police officers, and security officers by February 20, 2020, many school districts are looking for training sites and schedules. Concerns are being expressed that a district’s entire security staff will be missing work for the required week of training leaving the district vulnerable during the training.

PCCD and PDE released a joint Act 67 Guidance Document on August 15. In that document PCCD released a NASRO Training Schedule of ten sites across the commonwealth with 427 slots available. You can access the schedule at www.nasro.org/training/. We understand that some intermediate units are scheduling training sessions for their local districts as well, which will give your more options. We encourage all school leaders to schedule their training sessions as soon as possible.

2019-20 School Safety and Security Grants

The application window is now open for school safety and security grants through the PCCD.

The first application, the “2019/20 School Safety and Security – Meritorious” funding announcement, is available for school districts only (total of more than $33.7 million available); the second application, the “2019/20 School Safety and Security – Competitive” funding announcement, is available for all other school entities eligible to apply (i.e., a school district, intermediate unit, area career and technical school, charter school, cyber charter school, regional charter school, approved private school, chartered school for the education of the deaf or blind or private residential rehabilitation institution; more than $18.7 million available).

Due dates for grant applications is November 4.

Grant Guides are immediately available for assistance with the application process and general grant administration. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) will also be available to provide additional information for potential applicants. PCCD is in the process of creating a webinar to walk applicants through the grant process as well, and anticipate having that up on the website within the week.

Please contact PCCD at RA-CD-SSSC@pa.gov with any questions.

Trauma-Informed Approaches

The School Safety and Security webpage has been updated to include the Model Trauma Informed Approaches Plan adopted at the August 28th meeting of the School Safety and Security Committee (SSSC).

PASA 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.

If you know of additional sources that would be useful to other school leaders, let us know at pasapasa-net.org.
SHARE WITH YOUR STAFF!

PA LICENSURE EXAM PREP SESSION
Saturday, September 28

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

Superintendent’s Letter Exam Test Prep Session
9 a.m. - noon
Principal Exam Test Prep Session
12:30 - 3:30 p.m.

Offered at Shippensburg University – Shippen Hall Room 160

Cost:
$55 pp for Shippensburg University students and alumni
$65 pp for all others

Facilitators:
Mark Blanchard, Executive Director, Cumberland Valley HS
Kelly DeWees, Supervisor of Special Education, Gettysburg Area SD

To Register:
Supt. Exam Test Prep Session
Principal Exam Test Prep Session

AASA/PASA National Superintendent Certification Program®
PA Cohort

Registration Deadline Extended to October 11!
NEW PA PROGRAM DEVELOPED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH AASA®
THE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION

Excellence in leadership within our nation’s public schools has never been more vital to our children’s success than it is today. To provide a dynamic and interactive professional development program that will positively impact student achievement, PASA is partnering with AASA to facilitate a Pennsylvania cohort of AASA’s premier National Superintendent Certification Program®.

This program, designed by superintendents for superintendents, will be open to PASA members who are new and experienced Pennsylvania superintendents who aim to provide world-class leadership within their districts. Enrollment is available for those who are first year superintendents and enrolled in PASA’s New Superintendents Academies and also for superintendents with one or more years of experience.

Participants will be able to earn 105 PIL hours and earn national certification through AASA!

The program, which begins in November, includes five sessions held in the PASA Office, as follows: November 6-7, 2019; March 19-20, 2020; June 24-25, 2020; October 12-13, 2020; and March 4-5, 2021.

Don’t miss this opportunity to join your colleagues and be part of the PA 2021 Cohort!

See the PASA website for details at…
https://www.pasa-net.org/suptcert

COMMUNICATIONS TIP OF THE MONTH

“I made a habit of sending chief school officers to stand in for me at community and civic meetings, knowing you don’t learn how to handle difficult situations without doing it firsthand. We would meet and rehearse potential difficult questions and topics beforehand and would make sure they were equipped with informative talking points. I coached them to be humble, listen intently, try to defuse anger and avoid bluffing an answer or make promises they couldn’t keep.” – Terry Grier, a retired superintendent and now CEO of the Woodway Fisher Group in Wilmington, NC, from “Pay It Forward” Our Obligation to the Next Wave of CEOs, as published in the September issue of AASA’s School Administrator.

The issue focuses on executive coaching: mentoring in the ranks of new and aspiring superintendents.
PA Superintendent Voices

Two Pennsylvania superintendents, Dr. David Baugh, Centennial SD, and Richard Sniscak, Parkland SD, recently were highlighted in AASA’s “Superintendent Spotlight,” which focused on their leadership stories. Click here to read their stories.

Dr. Amy Sichel, former superintendent of the Abington SD and now lead superintendent of the AASA National Superintendent Certification Program®, was one of the education leaders highlighted in “Vignettes of Superintendent Mentoring,” as published in the September issue of School Administrator, AASA’s monthly publication. Amy wrote about her experience serving as a mentor for two school system leaders.

Publication Honors

The National School Public Relations Association has given AASA’s School Administrator magazine and the 2019 edition of Conference Daily Online the Award of Excellence, the top award, in NSPRA’s 2019 Publications and Digital Media Awards program.

NSPRA’s recognition is for two issues of the magazine (August 2018 on youth apprenticeships and February 2019 on student mental health). The conference publication, produced over four consecutive days at AASA’s National Conference on Education in Los Angeles in February, was honored in the electronic newsletter category.

Jay P. Goldman serves as editor of both publications. Liz Griffin is managing editor of School Administrator magazine, and Juli Valentine is the managing editor of Conference Daily Online.

Guidance on Mental Health & Substance Abuse in Schools

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) recently issued a Joint Informational Bulletin to provide school districts with information about addressing mental health and substance use issues in schools.

Specifically, this guidance includes examples of approaches for mental health and substance use disorder related treatment services in schools and describes some of the Medicaid state plan benefits and other Medicaid authorities that states may use to cover mental health and SUD related treatment services. Additionally, the guidance summarizes best practice models to facilitate implementation of quality, evidence based comprehensive mental health and SUD related services for students.

National Conference on Education


Women in School Leadership Awards

AASA is seeking nominations and applications for its Women in School Leadership Awards, which recognize the exceptional leadership of active, front-line female leaders who are making a difference in the lives of students every day. Any female superintendent, central office staff, school principal, classroom teacher, school-based specialist or non-educator in a leadership role may be nominated. Applications are due Oct. 11. Click here for more information.

Join AASA today and become part of a supported community of school leaders nationwide who advocate for public education! See the AASA website for details or contact the PASA office.

Earlier this summer, USDA released a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) that would limit states’ ability to implement Broad-based Categorical Eligibility for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which provides eligible low-income households with an electronic benefit transfer (EBT) card that can be used at authorized grocery stores.

Under current law, families may become SNAP-eligible by either (1) meeting program-specific federal eligibility requirements, or (2) being deemed automatic or “categorically” eligible for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families grant (TANF).

Originally, TANF was designed as a broad-purposed block grant to finance a wide range of social welfare activities, including government-subsidized employment, childcare and cash. By automatically enrolling TANF eligible households in SNAP, the Categorical Eligibility (Cat El) program enabled states to support families on the cusp of the federal poverty line through short-term financial crises by ensuring their continued access to food security. Cat El also benefited schools by making TANF students automatically eligible for free and reduced priced lunch.

The effect of this change on students and schools will be immense, as many families will no longer be eligible to receive free and reduced priced breakfast and lunch if the regulation passes. According to early estimates from Food Nutritional Service, more than 500,000 students will lose their automatic eligibility for free school meals as a result of the change.

Additionally, by limiting states’ ability to confer Categorical Eligibility to TANF families, the NPRM could hurt schools’ Title I Funding. Under the new regulation, fewer students will be eligible to receive the FRPL designation, which is one of the key metrics the U.S. Department of Education uses to allocate funding. Thus, the NPRM presents us with a double whammy scenario that will hurt the federal school meals and Title I programs.

Cat El policies have been in place for more than two decades. Although House Republicans tried to gut the program during the 2011 Reauthorization of the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act, Congress has overwhelmingly rejected efforts to make Cat El more restrictive, including during its consideration of the 2005 budget reconciliation and the 2018 Farm Bill. This USDA rulemaking is an attempt to sidestep Congress and is outside of USDA’s authority.

Remember, in 2019 we’re asking all our members to take their advocacy up to the next level. Let USDA know that this is unacceptable!

Comments must be filed on or before September 23. To help broadcast the importance of Cat El for students and schools, you can file comments by copying and pasting this letter to the following link. If you’re looking for something shorter, feel free to copy and paste an abridged template for filing comments here.
DON’T MISS OUT on these upcoming, learning-rich professional development opportunities, beginning this fall. Whether you are a new superintendent, someone aspiring to higher levels of school system leadership, or a school administrator who is looking to build your knowledge base and grow your leadership skills – PASA has a program for YOU!

**Fall Series: Avoiding the Pitfalls - Part 2**

One-hour sessions (noon - 1 pm)
What Every School Administrator Should Know

- Sept. 24 Educator Discipline Act - Mandatory Reporting and Personal Liability
- Oct. 23 The Pennsylvania Public Official and Employee Ethics Act - Compliance & Unintended Consequences
- Nov. 20 Record Retention, Right-to-Know and Litigation Holds
- Dec. 10 Red Flags and Salvaging Your Career When Board Relationships Go South

**Part 2: Systems Leadership**
Wed, Sept. 25 - Thurs, Sept. 26
PASA Office
https://www.pasa-net.org/workshopns
APPROVED FOR 25 HOURS OF PIL/ACT 45 CREDIT

New superintendents 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.

**Thursday, October 3**
PASA Office
https://www.pasa-net.org/asstsuptsummit
Evidence-Centered Leadership: Actionable Solutions for the Assistant Superintendent

Continue the conversation with a deeper dive into the practical, actionable aspects of the 4Cs - Culture, Capacity, Coherence and Courage - as they apply to Assistant Superintendents.

**SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION WORKSHOP RECAP**

Superintendents, Business Managers and Facility Directors attended the PASA/PASBO School Construction Workshop on September 10 in the PASA office. The program focused on the construction project, from planning to implementation.

Presenters and topics during the one-day event included:
- Trends in the Design and Build of School Construction Projects
  - Crabtree, Rohrbaugh and Associates Architects
- Financing Your School Construction Project without PlanCon
  - PFM Financial Consulting
- Construction Contracts: Do’s and Don’ts
  - Saul Ewing Arnstein & Lehr LLP
- Construction Management Best Practices
  - Fidevia Construction Management Services
- School Construction: What School Leaders Need to Know
  - Dr. Mark DiRocco, PASA Executive Director
  - Dr. Wayne McCullough, PASBO Executive Director

ABOVE: Crabtree, Rohrbaugh and Associates Architects opened the workshop, which was at capacity.

LEFT: Brad Remig & Melissa Hughes of PFM Financial Consulting discussed financing school construction projects.
**ADVOCACY UPDATE...**

**Press Event on School Funding**

Governor Tom Wolf joined students, parents, teachers, and school administrators on August 21 in Delaware County to celebrate investments in education during the governor’s tenure.

Over the past five years the governor has secured an additional $1.4 billion in funding for pre-k through college, including nearly $800 million for basic education, $140 million for special education, and $40 million for career and technical education.

“There’s no better investment we can make than ensuring our children get a quality public education,” said Governor Wolf. “Every student – from our big cities to the growing suburbs and small towns – needs and deserves a great education. Strong public schools create a well-educated and skilled workforce that will continue to attract jobs to Pennsylvania and grow the economy for everyone.”

Dr. George Steinhoff, superintendent of the Penn-Delco SD and a member of the PASA Legislative Committee (pictured below), welcomed Gov. Wolf and spoke of the importance of commitment to public education. “Ensuring that Pennsylvania makes its necessary investments in public education is a bipartisan and common aim that is easy to agree upon,” he said. “Improving the workforce, improving local economies, improving achievement outcomes, increasing property values, and decreasing the burden of property taxes are common sense goals that are met when states commit to properly funding public education systems. In the process, they meet the responsibility of ensuring that every child is prepared to make a positive contribution to our future.”

**SAVE THE DATE**

**Responsive Schools, Resilient Students**

March 29-31, 2020

Nittany Lion Inn ~ State College

a conference for superintendents, assistant superintendents, curriculum leaders, technology coordinators, principals, and student services & facility leaders

**KEYNOTE PRESENTERS:**

**DAVID J. SCHONFELD, M.D.**
National Center for School Crisis and Bereavement

**JC POHL**
certified counselor and award-winning producer of groundbreaking programs such as TEEN TRUTH and RISING UP

**Details & Registration Coming Soon!**

**PASA Flyer - September 2019**

ABOVE: Superintendents and school administrators from the region attended the event to thank the governor for his commitment to public education as part of the PA Schools Work Campaign. Among those attending were: (L-R) Dr. Maureen Reusche (Haverford Township), Dr. John Sanville (Unionville-Chadds Ford), Dr. Stephen Butz (Southeast Delco), Gov. Wolf, Dr. Steinhoff, Christopher Dormer (Norristown Area) and Bernadette Reiley (Interboro).

**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](https://www.pasa-net.org/advocacy).

To learn more about the PA Schools Work Campaign, [click here.](#)

**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.](#) 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.)
About Charter School Reform

“Pennsylvania’s charter school law is unfair for students, parents, school districts and taxpayers. While many charter schools are succeeding, others, especially some cyber charter schools, are underperforming, and we are not doing enough to hold them accountable to the taxpaying public and the children they serve. Today I’m announcing comprehensive charter school reform through executive action, regulation and legislation. These changes will level the playing field for all taxpayer-funded public schools, strengthen the accountability and transparency of charter and cyber charter schools, and better serve all students.” – Gov. Tom Wolf, from a press release on August 13

“One out of every six dollars spent by the Allentown School District goes to educating kids at charter schools – and increase of over 2000 percent in twenty years. This inequity is wildly unfair to our students, taxpayers and teachers. These moves will help control costs and increase educational opportunities for all Allentown students. I fully support these moves and appreciate the governor for having the courage to stand up for our students and taxpayers.” – Rep. Peter Schweyer (D-Lehigh), from a press release

“We will be watching how the governor implements his proposal in the coming days and weeks, and are prepared to challenge this administration in court if the Charter School Law is broken in any way.” – Ana Meyers, executive director of the Pennsylvania Coalition of Public Charter Schools, on the governor’s initiatives

“Charters started as a means of improved innovation and educational outcomes. Twenty-two years into the experiment, the results are mixed. Sure, there are success stories of children who thrived in these alternative settings and we applaud those. But we also have to ask, at what cost?” – Sen. Tommy Tomlinson (R-Bucks) in a recent guest column published in The Daily Times, 8/23/19

“We had a recent case where a cyber charter school student missed 108 days of school but [that] school still received its payment. Ask yourself, is that the best use of taxpayer dollars?” – Mark Kudlawiec, superintendent of the Chestnut Ridge SD, during an August 14 Senate Education Committee hearing in Everett on charter school accountability and funding

“The charter school funding formula was established 22 years ago and was the best available platform at that time. However, now it has created an irreconcilable financial conflict between charter and traditional schools which mandates both in-depth review and responsible legislative and executive action to address.” – Sen. Pat Browne (R-Lehigh)

On Property Tax Reform

“We’re looking at all the options. At some point, we need to count heads. How many votes for this [plan]? How many votes for this? How many votes for this? My goal is not to let this drag into next year.” – Sen. Majority Policy Committee Chair David Argall (R-Schuylkill) during a committee workshop on what to do about school property taxes

“We may not have the demographic balance to turn all the replacement of property taxes over to the working population.” – Ray Landis, AARP Pennsylvania during the Senate committee workshop

On Other Issues

“We simply are not doing enough to stop people from dying and to give communities the peace of mind that they deserve. This order will make sure the executive branch is doing more and focusing on gun violence as both a public safety problem and public health crisis. I will continue to engage the General Assembly in order to advance important gun safety reforms when they return to session.” – Gov. Tom Wolf, announcing an executive order to reduce gun violence (8/14/19)

“When we look at broadband, what we fail to do sometimes is peel back the layers and see how this is impacting families and educators and real-life people. The broadband issue in Pennsylvania is extremely complicated and extremely expensive, but we have got to take a leadership position and solves these issues.” – Sheri Collins, director of the Governor’s Office of Broadband Initiatives

“The last two or three years, it has really come to the point where if you’re not online, if you’re not able to access the internet, then you’re really missing out on just being able to do things.” – Tracy Krum, superintendent of the Dover Area SD (York County) on the lack of sufficient internet access of students

“If there is one theme that emerges from this year’s findings, one theme that spans every community in every town in America, large and small, it’s that our nation’s public schools, the students they serve, and the educators that work in them need continued and expanded support. How we get there is where the work remains, but it is a clear consensus.” – Daniel Domenech, Executive Director of AASA, The School Superintendents Association, on findings from the 51st annual PDK Poll of the Public’s Attitudes Toward the Public Schools
REGION 15
Dr. John George is currently serving as acting superintendent in the Harrisburg SD. He had been serving as the district’s financial recovery plan service director since July. George also serves as executive director of Montgomery County I.U. 23.

Chris Celmer is now serving as chief operating officer and acting assistant superintendent for Harrisburg. He previously served as assistant superintendent in the Reading SD.

Dr. Norman Miller is now serving as superintendent of the Central Dauphin SD. He had been an assistant superintendent in the district and had served as interim superintendent following the resignation of Dr. Carol Johnson in April.

REGION 20

Dr. Christopher Wolfel is the new executive director of the Colonial Intermediate Unit, beginning his term on July 1. He previously served as assistant to the executive director for student services at the I.U. Wolfel replaces Dr. Charlene Brennan, who has retired, after having served as executive director since 2006.

REGION 23

Dr. Tomorrow Jenkins has been appointed middle school principal in the North Penn SD. She formerly served as a high school assistant principal in the Kennett-Consolidated SD. Jenkins serves as secretary and conference chair for the PASA Women’s Caucus.

REGION 24

Dr. Cathy Taschner has left her position as superintendent of the Coatesville Area SD. Dr. Richard Dunlap is serving as the district’s interim superintendent.

REGION 25

Dr. Eleanor DiMarino-Linnen began her tenure as superintendent of the Rose Tree Media SD in April, replacing Dr. James Wigo, who has retired.

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.”)