

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN

TOUGH TIMES CALL FOR GREAT LEADERSHIP

BY DR. JOHN BELL, 2020-21 PASA PRESIDENT

I was in a local supermarket recently and a parent said to me, "You have great job security." I asked, "Why is that?" He replied, "Because nobody wants your job!"

He's probably right. We are leading our communities through uncharted territory without a map but plenty of opinions.

None of us could have imagined a year like 2020. For me, the spring was bad, the summer was worse, but the fall has actually been better. Whether your schools reopened in-person, online or hybrid, at least we are back to doing what we do – teaching, learning and leading. If your schools are 100% online, I hope you get a chance to have students on campus soon. Nothing boosts my spirits more than seeing kids in class, in the hallways and on the playing fields.

Many of us have had positive cases and students/staff quarantined by now. Everyone has gotten used to wearing masks and

sitting six feet apart. No one is missing the barrage of Friday afternoon PDE updates that were so common during the spring and summer. Most people out in the public are oblivious to these daily issues we confront. This is the new world we live in. In fact, we have even created a new verb – zooming! It's amazing to think how different the world is now compared to back on March 12.

My message to you is to be a great leader! It is much easier to be an effective leader when things are going smoothly. However, it's when the going gets tough that our communities count on us more than ever. In many communities, the school district is the biggest employer and the center of all activities. In most presidential election years, education is a back-burner issue that gets little or no attention during the campaign. In 2020, schools are front and center, and that means so are superintendents!

To deal with this newfound attention and stress, I urge you to consult widely to learn what others are doing, share the workload with your administrative teams, and share the decision-making responsibility with your school boards. In other words, don't go it alone. At the same



See From the President's Pen, page 3

PASA COMMITTEE UPDATE...

The following PASA members have been appointed chairs of PASA committees for 2020-21:

Legislative: Dr. Shane Hotchkiss, Bermudian Springs

Resolutions: Dr. Jay Burkhardt, South Western (President-Elect)

Membership: Dr. Jeffrey Fuller, Freedom Area (Past-President)

Professional Development: Dr. Francine Endler, Central I.U. 10

Elections: Dr. Jay Burkhardt, South Western

Technology: Dr. David Christopher, Cumberland Valley

Updated lists of members serving on these committees are maintained on the PASA website. Click on the "About" button on the home page at www.pasa-net.org.

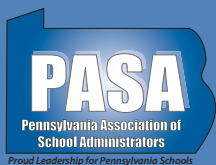
Representatives to the Legislative and Resolutions committees are elected by I.U. Appearances to at-large committees* are made as needed by the PASA President.

Thank you to all PASA members who served on the PASA Board of Governors and PASA committees in 2019-20!

*Thank you to all who expressed an interest in serving on the Elections, Technology and Professional Development committees this year. Appointments were made from among very qualified candidates to ensure equitable geographic/demographic representation on each committee. We appreciate your interest!

Inside this issue...

Executive Director's Message	2
At the Capitol	3
PA's 2020 Blue Ribbon Schools	4
Contacting PASA	4
Members Approve Proposed PASA Resolutions.....	4
PASA/PSBA School Leadership Conf ..	4
Navigating a New School Year: Resources & Updates	5
PLUS Caucus of PASA	6
Resources from PASA Sponsors.....	6
A System that Accelerates Responses to Challenges.....	7
This Could Be Your Last Issue of PASA Flyer!	7
A Better Priority	8
Proposed PASA Bylaws	8
Advocacy Update	9
Thought for the Day	9
COSN	9
WC: Four Strategies to See Inside the Online Classroom	10
PASA Virtual Learning Programs	11
Fall Programs Recap	12
UV-C Disinfection Devices.....	13
Communications Tip	13
The Advocate	14
AASA News & Advocacy	15
Membership News	15
Noteworthy Quotes.....	16
Calendar.....	16



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PRESIDENT

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Dr. Jeffrey Fuller, Superintendent
Freedom Area School District

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dr. Mark DiRocco

EDITOR

Barbara W. Jewett

DESIGN EDITOR

Suzanne K. Yorty

Correspondence regarding the
PASA Flyer can be mailed to:

PASA

2608 Market Place
Harrisburg, PA 17110
(717) 540-4448
(717) 540-4405 fax
email to pasa@pasa-net.org

Visit our web site at
www.pasa-net.org

PASA Members:

Please report your appointments, renewals, awards or special achievements, or that of others in your region to **Barbara Jewett** at PASA either by phone (717) 540-4448, by fax (717) 540-4405, or via email at pasa@pasa-net.org. Copy deadline is the 1st of each month.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DR. MARK DIROCCO

VOUCHERS IN THE MIDST OF THE PANDEMIC

Unbelievably, some legislators are pushing another voucher scheme during the pandemic. There is an adage in politics that states you should never waste a crisis to try to push your agenda. This past week we witnessed that political strategy in action.

Without much notice, House Bill 2696 appeared on the House Education Committee agenda. This bill, called the Back on Track Scholarship Program, creates a \$500 million scholarship program to assist students who have been affected negatively in their learning progress due to COVID-19. Parents would be eligible to receive a scholarship for educational expenses that can be used at public and non-public schools.

However, the educational services described in the bill are already provided free of charge to students in public schools. The bill is clearly designed to funnel public dollars to non-public schools. It is another voucher scheme using a pseudo name to disguise the program as something it is not.

The Senate has a companion bill, SB 1230, that has identical wording to HB 2696, and the Senate Education Committee held a hearing on the bill on October 5.

Most Americans do not support using public taxpayer dollars for non-public education. They reject the idea of giving tax dollars to non-public schools where there is absolutely no accountability for how the money is spent and no reports back to the public as to how the students are progressing. Legislators know that using the term "voucher" is a losing proposition with their constituents, no matter their politics. Consequently, policymakers who desperately want a significant voucher program in Pennsylvania try to disguise voucher programs with other names such as scholarships and tax credits, hoping the public will see the program as something different than voucher.

After it was announced that the House Education Committee would take up the bill, PASA sent a Legislative Alert to members, and many other educational associations did the same. After a few days of many members contacting their legislators, the bill was pulled from the House Education Committee agenda. While the Senate Education Committee has not put Senate Bill 1230 up for a vote yet, they decided to hold a hearing on the matter.

Our public schools are dealing with countless financial and logistical issues due to COVID-19. While we were grateful for public education being funded for the complete 2020-2021 fiscal year, we only received level-funding. Local revenues are down, and additional federal stimulus dollars may not be coming due to the gridlock in Washington. Public school districts need additional funds **now**, and the \$500 million proposed for the Back on Track Scholarship Program would go a long way to help many more students across the state than this proposed voucher scheme.

Why would the leadership in the House and Senate push these bills now? Let's not forget that we have a general election next month, and there are many political donors who want legislators to push for more public dollars for non-public schools. These are powerful forces with significant political and financial muscle who want to see more "choice" options for parents using public dollars.

It is another clear example why public school educators and stakeholders need to be in a constant state of advocacy to push back against these efforts. While we don't have the political clout or financial means of the voucher advocates, we do have clout among the general public and with our local communities. We need to engage our local stakeholders to the greatest extent possible to neutralize the voucher proponents and those who want to take funds from public education.

PASA will continue to work with our members and collaborate with other education associations to fight for full and adequate funding for public education and guard against public dollars being transferred to non-public schools. We thank you for your advocacy and encourage you to stay in contact with your legislators and your school stakeholders to make sure that we can push back vigorously on voucher and choice schemes that will take needed funds from children attending our public schools.





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.

In Budget & Finance News

State Revenue: Pennsylvania collected \$3.3 billion in General Fund revenue in September, which was \$248.7 million, or 8.3 percent, more than anticipated. Fiscal year-to-date General Fund collections total \$9.9 billion, which is \$459 million, or 4.9 percent, above estimates.

Legislative News

Session Schedule: The House and Senate will be in session just a handful of days before the Nov. 3 election. The House schedule was curtailed three days when a Franklin County lawmaker tested

positive for COVID two days after he had been at the Capitol for a session day.

State News

Act 1 Index: The PA Department of Education has certified the Act 1 Base Index for FY 2021-22 as 3.0%. The index is the average of the percentage increase in the statewide average weekly wage and the Employment Cost Index.

Schools as Polling Places: The PA Department of State has posted [FAQs](#) about the polling site process to assist school officials with deciding whether they can make school facilities available as a polling place if called upon by a county board of elections.

Broadband Funding: Gov. Wolf announced last month that he is dedicating \$15 million for schools to secure broadband, mobile hot spots, and other platforms that increase equitable access to remote learning through the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Funds.

National News

CARES Act Rule: U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos has withdrawn a final interim rule concerning equitable services and CARES Act funding distribution after court decisions in three states blocked the rule. The rule would have directed more funding to nonpublic schools than would be distributed under Title I.

Federal Spending: Congress passed and Pres. Trump signed a last-minute continuing resolution to extend about \$1.4 trillion in government funding until Dec. 11. The plan includes nearly \$8 billion to extend the Department of Agriculture's school nutrition waivers that provide the flexibility necessary for districts to safely serve meals to all students until September 2021.

U.S. Census: On September 30 a three-judge panel of the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled 2 to 1 to let stand a preliminary injunction barring the Trump administration from shutting down the census count on September 30 in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic. The administration had also wanted to exclude counting undocumented immigrants, but that was blocked by federal court in New York. Both cases are on appeal. Census data directs funding and reapportionment.

COMING UP

Pandemic and even election issues continue as a source of political bickering in Harrisburg, although numerous other bills are slowly making their way through both chambers. In September and into October the House and Senate played tag-team, with one chamber in session one week and the other chamber the next. How many bills will cross the finish line before the election is unknown. Following the election, the legislature and the governor have to develop a seven-month state budget for Dec. 1 through June 30. Depending on the eventual result of the November 3 election, that could make for an "interesting" lame-duck session. Meanwhile, talks to provide some additional federal COVID aid are stalled, as the upcoming election, the President's positive COVID test and a fast-track Supreme Court nomination process have taken center stage. Stay tuned for the latest information by following us on **Twitter** @PASASupts.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN

continued from page 1

time, take care of yourself which includes eating well, exercising, putting the cellphone down, and dedicating time for family and friends.

It hasn't been easy, but I have been able to sneak out and play golf with my sons, take my wife to dinner out of town, and enjoy a good book.

Speaking of books, reading good leadership books is a great way to help you work through tough times and decompress at the same time. Some of my favorites include Stephen Covey's *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, John Maxwell's *21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, Donald Phillips' *Lincoln on Leadership*, Doris Kearns-Goodwin's *Leadership in Turbulent Times*, and Jon Gordon's *The Power of Positive Leadership*.

Covey's *7 Habits* have been a huge help to me in relieving stress, focusing on the most important tasks and engaging others in the work. Let me give you a refresher on the *7 Habits* in case it has been a while since you have looked at them:

Habit #1 is to be proactive. Habit #2 is to begin with end in mind. Habit #3 is to put first things first. These first three habits are all about you – don't be reactive, know what your goal is and focus on what's most important.

Habit #4 is to think win-win. There doesn't have to be a loser when generating solutions. Habit #5 is to first understand others before trying to be understood. This is about using your two ears more than your one mouth. Habit #6 is to synergize. Covey said that $1+1 > 2$ because of the collective brain power when people collaborate. As you can see, these three habits are about successfully interacting with others.

Habit #7 is called "sharpen the saw". It is all about taking care of yourself because if you don't, you are of no good to those you lead. It involves your physical, mental, social and emotional health.

Tough times call for great leadership and you have it to offer. Go forth and be great!

PENNSYLVANIA'S 2020 BLUE RIBBON SCHOOLS

The U.S. Department of Education last month announced that thirteen Pennsylvania schools have been selected among 367 public and nonpublic schools as 2020 "National Blue Ribbon Schools."

The program, established in 1982, recognizes schools based on overall academic excellence or progress in closing achievement gaps among student subgroups.

The public and private Pennsylvania schools named as this year's "Blue Ribbon Schools" include:

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

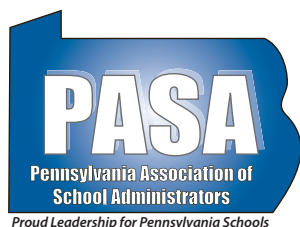
B.F. Morey Elementary – Stroudsburg Area (I.U. 20: Monroe Co.)
Conemaugh Township Area Elementary – Conemaugh Township Area (I.U. 8: Somerset Co.)
Dallastown Elementary – Dallastown Area (I.U. 12: York Co.)
Freeport Area Senior High – Freeport Area (I.U. 28: Armstrong Co.)
Kutztown Area Senior High – Kutztown Area (I.U. 14: Berks Co.)
Liberty Elementary – Southern Tioga (I.U. 17: Tioga Co.)
Lincoln Elementary – Erie City (I.U. 5: Erie Co.)
Loomis Elementary – Marple Newtown (I.U. 25: Delaware Co.)
Marvine Elementary – Bethlehem Area (I.U. 20: Northampton Co.)
Rhawnhurst School – Philadelphia City

PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Mother of Providence Regional – Philadelphia Archdiocese
Saint Katharine of Siena – Philadelphia Archdiocese
Waldron Mercy Academy in Merion Station

All Blue Ribbon schools will be recognized in a virtual awards ceremony on Nov. 12-13. See the [USDE press release](#) for more information on Blue Ribbon Schools.

Congratulations!



Contacting PASA

PASA staff continues to work remotely. However, we are available for you as we always have been. For urgent questions and concerns, call our alternative phone number: 717-514-8718. For general questions, contact PASA via the general email (pasa@pasa-net.org) and your question will be directed appropriately and promptly.

In addition, you may send an email directly to specific PASA staff members. ([Click here](#) for the staff list.) We monitor all correspondence and respond as quickly as possible. Please do not hesitate to contact us with your questions and concerns!

MEMBERS APPROVE PROPOSED PASA RESOLUTIONS

Last month the PASA Board of Governors recommended and PASA voting members approved the draft 2020-21 PASA Resolutions developed by the PASA Resolutions Committee.

The PASA Resolutions direct PASA's advocacy efforts and serve to guide the Board of Governors, Executive Director and committees in carrying out the work of PASA and identifying specific actions that need to be taken in order to achieve the goals of the association. The annually updated document offers guidelines for PASA's positions on both ongoing and "new" education issues.

[Click here](#) for the 2020-21 Resolutions.

STILL TIME TO REGISTER!



October 14-15

From top-notch keynotes and relevant educational sessions to networking opportunities and interaction with exhibitors, it's the same signature conference experience in a new **virtual** format.

Don't miss sessions in eight concurrent session blocks, virtual exhibits, online student performances and keynote presentations.

FEATURED KEYNOTES:

Baruti Kafele

"Diversity, Race and Equity:
Considering All of the Learners"

Dr. John Hodge

"Helping Students to Bounce Back: Effective Strategies in Traditional and Virtual Learning Environments"

Conference registration is FREE for PSBA and PASA members!

REGISTER TODAY!

<https://www.paschoolleaders.org>

NAVIGATING A NEW SCHOOL YEAR: RESOURCES & UPDATES

Event Ping Pong...

Since the September issue of *The PASA Flyer* was published, the controversial issue of athletics, particularly high school athletics, has become even more heated.

First, federal judge William Stickman, Jr., in Pittsburgh found in favor of several schools and communities who challenged Gov. Wolf's order concerning capacity at events (sports or otherwise), ruling that the order (and other restrictions that have since expired) were unconstitutional.

The governor immediately stated he would appeal the decision – and did. He also sought a stay from Judge Stickman pending the appeal. That was denied.

At the same time, the Republican-controlled legislature passed HB 2787, which would have left the decision with local school leaders. Gov. Wolf vetoed that bill, and, even though it passed both chambers with some votes from Democrats, a House vote to override the veto fell short. Still, Stickman's ruling remained in effect.

Then the governor went to the next level, the 3rd Circuit Court of Appeals in Philadelphia, and asked for a stay of Stickman's ruling. This time it was granted. As a result, with the issue under appeal in the lower court, Gov. Wolf's original order concerning capacity remained in effect.

You might call it Event Ping Pong.

Before Judge Stickman's ruling, there were a few districts who, due to their more isolated locations within the commonwealth, community/parental pressure, and local politics, were unhappy with the governor's order and determined to move forward as normal, essentially taking the risk of ignoring it. When the governor's order was found unconstitutional, other districts also moved forward to open up games and events to more people while keeping social distancing and mask requirements in place, requirements that were NOT overturned in Stickman's ruling.

This week – another change. On Oct. 6 Gov. Wolf and the PA Department of Health released [amended guidelines on safe gathering limits](#) aimed at providing some more flexibility in event capacity. [Click here](#) for the FAQ.

However, it is also important to recognize that there have been documented cases of COVID infection not only in schools but also within high school athletic teams this fall. The spread continues in Pennsylvania – and even into the White House. That reality also presents a challenge.

There are no easy answers, and the shifting rulings and orders and realities of the virus have made decision-making on this issue highly contentious. The appeal is still out there. But here are the facts. Pending any action on the appeal, there now is updated guidance on safe gathering limits, and that is in effect. And the statewide order requiring masks and social distancing remains in effect. **PASA strongly urges all school leaders to be continuously engaged with their county departments of health, their solicitors and their insurance providers concerning this issue.**

And stay tuned....

Federal News Updates...

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently issued [new guidance](#) for schools seeking to open for in-person learning, using various community infection rates and school safety

thresholds to create a five-tiered color-coded risk scale.

- Following three court decisions ruling that the U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos's flawed guidance the USDE's interim rule concerning equitable services and CARES Act funding, the department withdraw the rule and will not attempt to further the attempt to divert more CARES funds to nonpublic schools.

- USED's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) released a new COVID-19-related technical assistance for elementary and secondary schools. The technical assistance document, [Questions and Answers for K-12 Public Schools in the Current COVID-19 Environment](#), overviews frequently asked inquiries received by the Department and provides important information related to districts' obligations under Section 504/Title II, Title VI, and Title IX as schools continue to make decisions regarding the provision of educational services for all children.

State News Updates...

- The PA Department of State last month provided to school officials [Frequently Asked Questions](#) (FAQs) about the polling site process to assist school officials with deciding whether they can make school facilities available as a polling place if called upon by a county board of elections.

- The PDE has developed a [What's New?](#) web page to provide an overview of information, specific to COVID-19 and school communities, that has been added to/updated on the Pennsylvania Department of Education's (PDE) website.

- A new [Mathematica report](#) posted by the PDE last month provides every school leader with highly relevant modeling around various reopening strategies, information on what those strategies imply for when an infection presents, and projections for what the longer-term school year may look like (i.e., how often students and staff could reasonably expect to be in school). The report is particularly useful for communications with parents, community members and local officials.

- Gov. Wolf last month dedicated \$15 million for schools to secure broadband, mobile hot spots, and other platforms to increase equitable access to remote learning through the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) funds.

PASA Resources...

We are providing on the PASA website links to updates, resources, information and strategies from both the state and federal level to help in school planning and management. Find the resources here: <https://www.pasa-net.org/coronavirus>. PASA updates this growing list as information and resources continue to develop. If you know of a website that provides useful ideas and guidance for school leaders, please let us know at pasa@pasa-net.org.

Daily Briefings...

Although PASA no longer holds weekly web briefings on issues related to the pandemic, we continue to hold special briefings for superintendents as needed when issues arise or new guidance is issued to provide chief school administrators with the information they need.

DEAR ME! IS THIS JOB STILL WORTH DOING?

BY STEPHEN RODRIGUEZ, CAUCUS PRESIDENT
AND SUPERINTENDENT OF THE POTTSTOWN SD



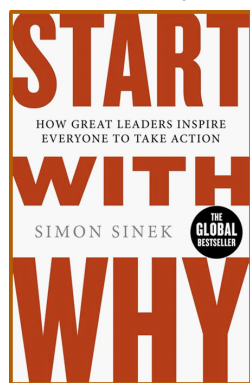
If you made it past the title, then like me, you have questioned your purpose over the past several months.

As I write this, the current dilemma facing our district is regarding sports involvement. A few months ago it was how to open schools. A few months before that it was the graduation debate. With the election looming, I have a feeling we are far from getting back to normal anytime soon.

I think any school leader who has not gone through some serious soul-searching and/or questioned themselves should keep that fact a secret! As for the rest of us, that questioning might look something like this:

- ♦ How long until I retire?
- ♦ Should I update my resume?
- ♦ What good is having vacation if I can't use it?
- ♦ How is anyone supposed to be successful in this environment?
- ♦ Am I doing any good here?
- ♦ Will this ever get better?
- ♦ Or this madness the new normal?
- ♦ Is this job still worth doing?

Whether you are a Rural, Suburban, or Urban school leader, I think we can all relate to those questions. As the leader of an urban school district and in speaking with other urban leaders, all of the above feelings, with the compounded reality of a lack of resources, can lead to a real sense of hopelessness.



I just finished reading the book *Start With Why* by Simon Sinek, which is a book targeted toward business leaders, but so applicable to educational leaders too. Most people talk about what they do or how they do it: "I teach 9th grade science," "I help students learn to read with a series called...", "I handle all the discipline at our middle school," and so on.

But these are examples of the mechanics of our jobs, devoid of the reason we do them. Simon Sinek vividly brought me back to **WHY** I became an educator in the first place, and forced me to contemplate why I might want to keep going. Here is a short list I came up with for why we do what we do:

1. Educational leaders have a moral high calling to serve our students and our community.
2. Educational leaders equip students to become productive members of our country and provide for their families.
3. We ensure democracy for future families.
4. We are literally fighting for the next generation of our society.

But more than that, it's up to us to remind our staff, our community, and our students of the importance of this work. It's because we can answer that age-old question "Why am I here?" that ensures we accomplish the above four goals! True, we won't see results immediately, but those results will be lasting, and I can't think of a more influential and meaningful career choice.

As the challenges over the next few months continue to mount, there will be fierce pressure for school leaders to do what one particular group wants over another, but if we are driven by what matters most, our students, we can't go wrong. I don't think I'm alone in my opinion that 2020 may go down in history as one of the worst years EVER for public education, but... this job we do? Yeah, it's still worth it.



RESOURCES FROM PASA SPONSORS

PASA is grateful for the ongoing support of our Sponsors at all levels. Although PASA does not promote or endorse any product or service offered by our sponsors, we are pleased to share information they offer that may be helpful to school leaders, particularly concerning return-to-school issues.

Several of our sponsors have offered free webinars and other unique opportunities and resources to assist PASA members in planning for the school year. A recording of several of these webinars and a list of additional **FREE** resources and information is available at <https://www.pasa-net.org/sponsoropportunities>.

Also, for a list of our sponsors and the products and services they offer PASA members and public schools, go to: <https://www.pasa-net.org/sponsors2>.



A SYSTEM THAT ACCELERATES RESPONSES TO CHALLENGES

BY CONNIE KINDLER,
CONSULTANT FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



COVID-19 continues to force difficult decisions, and its ongoing impact on education is significant. One change is the evolution of a new decision-making system. In many districts the traditional organizational hierarchy is merging with a nimble web-like framework described as a “dual operating system” by John Kotter in *Accelerate XLR8* (2014). Kotter credits it as the key to the longevity of corporations that survive turbulence.

This system consists of two connected sides. One side is the traditional structure in which those at the top of the hierarchy develop vision, assure compliance, and maintain focus on the execution of the organization’s mission, values and goals. The other side is a web with interconnected networks resembling the solar system. Each network consists of a leader and non-management staff, and the networks flexibly evolve and disband to make and implement decisions relevant to changing conditions. This dual operating system accelerates rapid reactions and the flow of information across the organization.

Kotter states that over time the merging of the hierarchy and network becomes seamless, and the dual operating system creates an agile organization. Because non-management staff are empowered to make decisions, leadership capacity evolves throughout the organization. If instituted, this system will quickly flex and respond to ever-changing needs.

Consider the rate at which decisions were made last spring and reflect upon the outcomes. Networks immediately evolved to deliver education and related services in new ways. Teachers had ownership of instructional decisions, and teacher mentors and leaders organically emerged. The dual operating system accelerated the district’s capacity for quick action, resulting in a cooperative, responsive culture that supported risk-taking and innovation.

Below are the factors that Kotter identifies as accelerators. Last spring many districts operationalized those that are checked:

- ♦ a strong sense of urgency around a big opportunity
- ♦ a guiding coalition
- ♦ a change vision and strategic initiatives
- ♦ a volunteer army
- ♦ enabled action by the removal of barriers
- ♦ short term wins
 - sustained acceleration
 - instituted change

Considering the disrupted comfort zones and familiar realities of our public, the last two accelerators will be difficult to achieve. Resisting your stakeholders’ attempts to influence a return to the past will require persistence and resilience.

Although COVID-19 has been painful in many respects, it is unraveling antiquated, restrictive structures and practices that school leaders have been trying to dismantle for decades. The opportunity for cultures that inspire and support fluid and innovative learner centered environments is now! Embracing a dynamic operational framework that accelerates responsiveness will remain core to your district’s ability to survive and thrive in a world that presents ongoing challenges.

CAUTION

THIS COULD BE YOUR LAST ISSUE OF THE PASA FLYER!

If you have not already done so, renew your PASA membership for 2020-21 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 2020-21?

Contact Jolene Zelinski via email at jolenez@pasa-net.org.

****SAVE THE DATE****

PASA Leadership Forum
March 29, 2021

Keynote Presenter: Dr. Bill Daggett

A one-day conference for superintendents, assistant superintendents, curriculum leaders, technology coordinators, principals, and student services & facility leaders

Details Coming Soon!



A BETTER PRIORITY

BY BARBARA WALVORT JEWETT, ASSISTANT TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As Mark DiRocco noted in his column this month, lawmakers espousing school choice are bringing to the fore legislation that would create yet another “education scholarship/grant” program. This attempt uses the pandemic as a reason to promote HB 26969 and SB 1230, bills that would direct \$500 million in state CARES funds directly to parents who believe their children have been shortchanged educationally since last spring and allow them to use those funds for any kind of supplemental education they want, including private schools. PASA strongly opposes both bills for reasons Mark clearly laid out.

It’s all about the kids, we’re told both in Harrisburg and Washington: We should be able to use public funds for personal use, for personal choices in education. Doesn’t matter what the Constitution says about public and nonpublic education.

Let’s be clear: No one would say kids shouldn’t get the best education possible. No one would say that the vast majority of parents love their kids and want the best for them. But using a concern for the welfare of children as a reason to essentially de-fund public schools is hardly a worthy enterprise.

How could our public schools use that money instead?

As school leaders well know, both in Pennsylvania and across the nation, one of the most pressing needs to address the welfare of children is funding to address mental health issues. In fact, it is rapidly becoming a Number 1 issue. It was a big concern before the pandemic; it is an even bigger concern now, as children have been increasingly isolated in a sincere attempt to keep them and their families physically healthy. And children struggle to learn when they are facing mental health issues.

The impact of social distancing, virtual learning and even hybrid learning – and a lack of direct access to mental health professionals – has put increasing strains on parents and educators seeking ways to address growing mental health concerns when students are not always in the school and their lives have fundamentally changed.

The 2020-21 PASA Resolutions strengthens earlier resolutions to address this growing problem. The first Emphasized Priority directly focuses on student welfare:

School Health and Safety

“PASA calls for state and federal officials to work in partnership with public school officials to identify critical needs in schools and ensure that public schools have access to adequate and equitable funding that will effectively address the safety needs, educational needs, and physical, **mental and social/emotional health of all students** and maximize their learning in a secure and positive school environment, whether in the tradi-

tional classroom or in virtual environments. PASA also urges state policymakers to seek input from local public school officials when developing educational policy to meet that goal and coordinate policies and guidance to clearly support public schools in providing a healthy and safe learning environment for students....Finally, PASA believes that school communities and the larger public community must work together to ensure that each public school is equitably and adequately supported to meet the unique educational, health and safety needs and challenges of students in all communities throughout Pennsylvania.”

Public schools could use \$500 million in CARES funds for many things, including strengthening the virtual learning environment generally, ensuring the physical environment is safe and healthy, and enhancing supports for teachers working in either one. Our schools are facing local revenue deficits as costs for coping with the pandemic continue to rise. But our schools could also use that money to address the very real mental health needs of students working in either a virtual, hybrid or in-person learning environment. Children coping with issues related to isolation, depression, anger management and a host of other challenges need more supports, whatever environment they are in.

That goal, not another voucher plan, should be a priority.

PROPOSED PASA BYLAWS

The PASA Board of Governors established a PASA Bylaws Committee in 2019 to review and update the PASA Bylaws to reflect current IRS and state law requirements for a non-profit organization, and to conform with best practices.

The Committee presented a proposed comprehensive amendment of the current Bylaws to the Board of Governors at its September 10, 2020 meeting, and the Board of Governors approved the [proposed PASA Bylaws](#) as presented. The proposed amendment to the PASA Bylaws must now be approved by a majority of PASA voting members.

After a 30-day review period (on or about November 5, 2020), PASA voting members will vote to approve or reject the proposed PASA Bylaws. (Current voting members include those who join PASA as a Commissioned Officer, Small School District Leader or District Cabinet/Central Office Administrator.) Voting members who have renewed their PASA membership for 2020-21 prior to November 5 will receive ballot information by email.

ADVOCACY UPDATE

PASA continues to both provide information to members and advocate on their behalf. Some of these activities since the August issue of *The PASA Flyer* was published included the following:

- Dr. Mark DiRocco participated in virtual meetings with AASA and representatives from other state administrator associations to discuss return-to-school issues and concerns nationwide.
- PASA led an advocacy effort with our members to express opposition to HB 2696, which would create an “education scholarship program” with \$500 million of the state’s CARES funds. PASA also sent comments in opposition to an identical Senate bill that was the focus of a public hearing before the Senate Education Committee on Oct. 5.
- Dr. DiRocco provided three special virtual briefings for school superintendents and executive directors focused on policy and guidance updates and sent post-briefing documents and links.
- PASA continued to advocate with the Governor’s Office and legislative leaders for actions to address district liability issues involving return-to-school and the urgent need for charter school reform.
- Dr. DiRocco continues to speak with officials from the PA Departments of Education and Health to share questions from our members and seek clarity on state guidance.

PASA will continue providing information and advocacy for and on behalf of public school administrators both during this challenging time and moving forward.

PASA Points

Last month PASA sent to lawmakers the [latest issue](#) of PASA Points, a monthly update sent to Pennsylvania lawmakers highlighting education issues and priorities of school leaders across Pennsylvania. The September issue focused on the need for limited liability protection, along with a list of additional priorities.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

“Instead of emphasizing individualism and our separateness, let’s teach students that we are connected. We can demonstrate how a decision made halfway around the world affected the entire planet. We can teach student how to value each other and the importance of physical connection because the only way we rise is together. When we rebuild, my hope is education once again is appreciated, good health is a universal goal, and the world is brought together in unity to create a future where we value and cultivate each other’s differences.” – Cynthia Stocker, superintendent of the Stockbridge Valley Central School (NY), from “I’m Not Accepting This ‘New Normal,’” as published in the October issue of *School Administrator*

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: CYBERSECURITY

The month of October is designated as National Cybersecurity Awareness Month. In keeping with the focus on cybersecurity, CoSN is pleased to offer multiple pathways for school leaders to learn how to identify, manage and prevent cybersecurity attacks within school and school district settings

EmpowerED Superintendent Webinar: “Cybersecurity: Keeping Everyone Safe in Today’s Learning Environments”

The second episode of Season 3 of the EmpowerED Superintendent Webinar series, co-hosted by CoSN and AASA on edWeb.net, airs on Monday, October 12, 2020 in conjunction with National Cybersecurity Awareness Month. The title of the webinar, which airs at 5:00 pm ET, is *Cybersecurity: Keeping Everyone Safe in Today’s Learning Environments*.

In this edWebinar, Dr. Luvelle Brown (Superintendent, Ithaca City SD, NY), Dr. Susan Enfield (Superintendent, Highline Public Schools, WA), Dr. Chris Gaines (Superintendent, Mehlville SD, MO), and Amy McLaughlin, CoSN Cybersecurity Initiative Project Director, share their perspectives and experiences in dealing with the complexities of managing and assuring cybersecurity in today’s K-12 learning environments. They will examine the liability concerns that arise when schools experience network security incidents and the impact those events can have on a district’s professional reputation, as well as the effects cyber-attacks have on teaching and learning. Strategies for effectively preventing, managing and communicating cybersecurity threats will be reviewed. Free registration for is now available. [Click here](#) to register.

The complete list of free recordings of all previously broadcast EmpowerED Superintendent webinars is also available at <https://home.edweb.net/supers/>. In addition to the free access to live and recorded webinars, the EmpowerED Superintendent webinars are now accessible via podcast. [Click here](#) to learn more.

Critical Focus Areas: Issue One-Pager on Cybersecurity

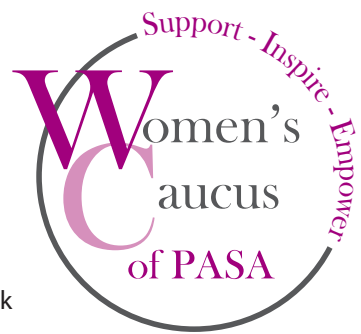
The [CoSN EmpowerED Superintendents web page](#) presents a series of “one-pagers” to guide and empower superintendents and their leadership teams in leading digital transformations. CoSN’s one-page document on The Importance of Cybersecurity defines the top five reasons why school system leaders must make cybersecurity a priority. It is available to view and download at: <https://tinyurl.com/cybersecurity-CoSN>.

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. 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.



FOUR STRATEGIES TO SEE INSIDE THE ONLINE CLASSROOM

BY LYNN FUINI-HETTEN, CAUCUS PRESIDENT AND ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT, SALISBURY TOWNSHIP



Last week I had new countertops installed in my kitchen. Two skilled contractors spent about three hours transforming the look of the centerpiece of my home, the kitchen.

Methodical in their process, they started by surveying the kitchen and identifying what needed to be done. Disconnect the plumbing. Check. Remove multiple pieces of old, damaged countertop from sections in the kitchen and the island. Check. Reinforce areas near appliances to ensure the granite would be flush against the wall. Check. They knew exactly what needed to be done before they transferred the heavy slabs of granite into the kitchen.

Within a couple of hours, it was amazing to see how the dated kitchen was transformed. When they were finished, I complimented them on their work and asked them how it felt to be able to see these dramatic transformations in just a few hours every single day. As I asked the question and praised them on their craftsmanship, I could see the pride on their faces and the lift in their shoulders.

It made me think about our teachers in the online learning environment. How can we see the fruits of their labor? Are they feeling pride in their work? How can we celebrate their work?

Like the craftsmen implementing a process to install a new countertop, our teachers implement an instructional process to transform the lives of our learners. Through formative assessments and curriculum mapping, our teachers know exactly what needs to be done before learners even enter our physical or virtual classroom. Every day in their live Zoom sessions, teachers check in with their learners and implement a learning plan for what they hope to achieve.

Maybe some of our leaders have not had a chance to really see what our online teaching and learning looks like. How can we create an opportunity to visualize the teachers' and learners' success in the same way I was able to visualize a new kitchen?

Here are a few strategies to visualize and better understand the successes in our online classrooms:

Visit the Virtual Classrooms

It has been difficult as a leader to not be able to walk into physical classrooms on a weekly basis. Over the last two weeks, I've spent time on Zoom visiting our teachers' virtual classrooms. Prior to joining their live zoom sessions, I sent a short email to the entire building staff. I let them know I will be popping into their Zoom rooms as I would stop by the physical classrooms when school is in session for face-to-face instruction. I also set boundaries by inviting them to let me know if it wasn't a good time for a visit. I shared with them to feel free to tell me the

class is just getting started and ask me to pop in another time.

In setting boundaries, hopefully I was able to alleviate some of the potential stress or anxiety teachers might feel having visitors come to their classrooms in the still very new online instructional environment. After the visits, I was able to send some positive feedback to many of the teachers. Teachers appreciated me taking the time to visit and share some comments with them. Our teachers are working diligently in these challenging times, and it feels good to see their work.

Seek and share staff and parent/guardian feedback

Many districts are using surveys to gather input from diverse stakeholders, including parents and staff members. Surveys are distributed through AppTegy, our school messaging system. We asked questions about their perceptions of the synchronous and asynchronous learning environment. In our latest survey we asked parents/guardians to compliment a Falcon. We will share these compliments with staff members. We also ask staff members about their successes, challenges and concerns. As a leadership team, we met to review the data to better understand the diverse perspectives.

Learn about the user experience - directly from the users.

As we have completed almost five weeks of online learning, we are also launching a survey for our users - our learners. We anticipate launching the survey for students in grades 3-12. Some of our questions ask students' opinions about the live virtual instruction and the daily asynchronous activities. School and district leaders will review the survey data to determine areas of success and opportunities for improvement. It is important to hear the learners' voices.

Check out the social media channels

If your schools use social media, take a few minutes to see what is posted each day. Here are a couple recent examples I saw when scrolling through the pages. One of our elementary teachers is conducting an optional yoga/movement class on Wellness Wednesdays. I was able to jump in and participate for a few minutes last Wednesday. I also saw one of our elementary teachers pass on the school Falcon Award to another staff member to celebrate her work. Seeing those posts allowed me to connect with those staff members and send a short email to celebrate their work.

These are just a few strategies that can help us visualize what is happening in our online classrooms. How else can we see the successes our teachers and learners are experiencing?

SAVE THE DATE

Virtual Networking Session

October 19

2021 Women's Caucus Conference

May 16 - 18

2021 Southeast Region Caucus Dinner

November 10



PASA VIRTUAL LEARNING PROGRAMS

See the PASA website for program updates at

<https://www.pasa-net.org/programs>



Fall Webinar Series: "Cultivating a Culture of Social Justice and Equity"

Noon to 1:00 p.m.

Series continues in October!

This series of webinars will focus on enhancing school leaders' capacity for the creation of fair and just environments in which all learners experience equity and excellence. Participants will explore leadership strategies to combat biases and hatred through responsive practices that encompass, recognize and value the experiences and cultures of all learners.

October 21: Problem Child: Leading Students Living in Poverty Toward Infinite Possibilities of Success

Presenter: Dr. Khalid N. Mumin, author of *Problem Child* and superintendent of the Reading SD; 2019 Jesse S. Heiges Distinguished Alumni Award (Shippensburg University), 2018 PSBA Innovative School Leader (PSBA), 2017 Courageous Institution Award (Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium), and 2016 Superintendent to Watch (National School Public Relations Association)

Sponsored by: [Newsela](#), a PASA Platinum Sponsor

November 18: Implicit Bias in Schools

Presenter: Dr. Gina L. Gullo, author of *Implicit Bias in Schools*, educational data and equity consultant with GLG Consulting, and clinical faculty at Seton Hall University (Educational Leadership, Management and Policy)

December 16: Culturally Relevant Leadership for Equitable Schools

Presenter: Dr. Floyd D. Beachum, author of *Improving Educational Outcomes of Vulnerable Children* and Bennett Professor of Urban School Leadership at Lehigh University

Series Fee: No fee for PASA members (pre-registration required); \$120 for nonmembers

(Registrants will have access to ALL four webinar recordings in the series.)

<https://www.pasa-net.org/culture>



Part 2: "Systems Leadership"

November 16 - 17

(PIL/Act 45 approved for 25 hours)

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.

<https://www.pasa-net.org/workshopnsa>

Coming Up...

Part 3: Professional & Community Leadership (Jan. 21-22)



"Bridging SEL Research and the Applied Implementation of SEL in Schools"

November 6 - 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Presenter: Carol Paxton, Ph.D., Director of the Center for the Promotion of Social and Emotional Learning

(PIL/Act 45 approved for 25 hours)

Focused on the model of social and emotional learning utilized by the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) and implementation considerations that rely on the latest SEL research, the Summit will provide an overview of SEL, its importance, and basic considerations for successfully implementing and sustaining SEL in districts, schools and the community.

Learn how to: increase district-wide awareness of SEL particularly during the COVID pandemic, with its emphasis on virtual learning and parent support, and during a time of racial tension; establish an SEL committee(s) within your district; create SEL action plans for implementation; develop strategies for supporting the SEL of those who are supporting staff and students (including self-care and self-efficacy); and seek SEL funding.

Encourage your assistant superintendents and supervisors to register for this PIL-approved program!

****SUMMIT SPONSOR****



<https://www.pasa-net.org/2020pasasummit>

FALL PROGRAMS RECAP

PASA kicked off the school year last month with virtual programs for school administrators, one focused on empowering students in building school culture and the other as the first of three sessions for new superintendents and other school administrators.

Webinar: Building School Culture from the Inside-Out

JC Pohl, co-founder of TEEN TRUTH, award-winning producer for Warner Brothers, ESPN, and Disney, and nationally recognized speaker on suicide prevention and anti-bullying, led a discussion on how to use student voice for "Building School Culture in the COVID Era." The interactive workshop reveals a framework for giving students a voice and empowering them to take ownership of their school culture.

New Superintendents' Academy, Session 1

Fifty-five new and aspiring superintendents/CEOs participated in Part 1 of the 2020-21 New Superintendents' Academy, held September 22-23 virtually via Zoom, using Canvas LMS, a learning management platform. The PIL-approved program focused on "Strategic & Cultural Leadership," and featured numerous virtual sessions, as well as several recorded sessions, led by experienced administrators and other professionals:

- *Tips and Tricks for New Superintendents* – **Dr. John Bell**, Delaware Valley
- *A Team of 10: Developing an Effective School Board and Superintendent Relationships for Strategic and Cultural Leadership* – **Dr. Emilie Lonardi**, Downingtown Area
- *The Superintendent and School Board President's Role in the Development of a Collaborative and Responsible School Board* – **Dr. Mark Kudlawiec** (superintendent) and **William S. Pataki** (board president), Chestnut Ridge
- *Organizational Structure and Team development for Strategic & Cultural Leadership* – **Dr. Mark Leidy**, Mechanicsburg Area
- *Creating a Culture of Learning for All Students* – **Dr. Khalid Mumin**, Reading
- *Leading and Living with Peace, Purpose and Power* – **Dr. Timothy Steinhauer**, Mt. Lebanon
- *Superintendent Evaluation* – **Dr. Mark DiRocco**, Executive Director, and **Virginia Montgomery, Esq.**, General Counsel, PASA
- *School Safety and Crisis Management* – **Dr. Mark DiRocco**
- *School Board Transition and Orientation for Strategic & Cultural Leadership* – **Connie Kindler**, PASA Consultant for Professional Development

PASA Silver Sponsor



<https://www.pars.org>

Academy Graduates

Ten participants, including new superintendents and other school administrators, were recognized for completing all three parts of the New Superintendents' Academy. Captured in a screen shot (below) at the conclusion of the virtual program were (L-R): Row 1: **Marydenise Feroce** (New Brighton Area), **Connie Kindler** (PASA), **Dr. Mark DiRocco** (PASA) and **Dr. Jill Daloisio** (Sayre Area) Row 2: **Dr. Georgia Teppert** (Greater Latrobe), **Dr. Nathan Van Deusen** (South Eastern), **Stephanie Keebler** (Titusville Area) and **Dr. Michael Boccella** (Valley View) Row 3: **Dr. Ryan Giffing** (Conrad Weiser Area), **Dr. Carise Comstock** (Lehigh Valley Charter HS for the Arts), and **Dr. Stuart Savin** (Lancaster County Career & Technical Center) Not pictured: **Dr. Steven Yanni** (Upper Dublin)



COMING UP:

Part 2 of the Academy (Systems Leadership) – Nov. 16-17

Part 3 of the Academy (Professional & Community Leadership) – Jan. 21-22

Career Center

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 web site, 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.)

As school districts across the nation reopen amidst the coronavirus pandemic, many are looking to incorporate new disinfection technologies to protect students, teachers and staff. For the first time, schools can access hospital-grade UV-C disinfection devices that are designed for dynamic education environments.

UV-C is a specific form of ultraviolet light with a wavelength from 200-280 nanometers. It destroys or inactivates bacteria and viruses — including SARS-CoV-2, E. coli, and influenza — by disrupting the molecular bonds of their DNA and RNA. This prevents the viruses from reproducing or causing illness.

History of UV-C light as a proven technology

The germicidal properties of UV-C have been well established and understood for over 100 years. In 1903, the Nobel Prize for Medicine was awarded to Neils Finsen for his use of UV-C light to treat lupus vulgaris. UV-C was first used to sterilize drinking water in 1910 and it was introduced into HVAC installations in the 1920's to help control the spread of airborne pathogens. Notably, William F. Wells installed upper-room UV-C lamps in suburban Philadelphia day schools to combat the spread of measles. Subsequently, the schools without UV-C saw a 53.6 percent infection rate, while the schools with the lamps saw a 13.3 percent infection rate.¹

The gold standard in hospitals

Hospitals have some of the highest disinfection standards in the world, and whole-room UV-C systems are a critical part of their multi-modal approach to reducing hospital-acquired infections (HAIs) such as methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA). While traditional cleaning and the use of chemical wipes play an important role, studies show that this approach alone is only about 50% effective in the patient environment and over 30% of high-touch surfaces are missed.² However, a study of MRSA samples collected from patient rooms revealed that when manual cleaning was supplemented by UV-C light treatment, the bacterial counts were 93% lower than with manual cleaning alone.³

Democratizing access to UV-C technology

Companies specializing in hospital-grade UV-C typically price their products based on the value they provide in reducing costly HAIs. As a result, this technology has historically been cost-prohibitive to organizations outside of hospitals. However, as the need for highly effective disinfection solutions has expanded, new market entrants have introduced hospital-grade UV-C technologies that are priced to fit the mass market, making them accessible to schools for the first time. For example, R-Zero offers a UV-C disinfection device that destroys over 99.9% of pathogens in the average classroom in just 7 minutes - the same efficacy of UV-C systems used in hospitals, but for a fraction of the cost.

An ideal disinfection solution for schools

According to Dr. Richard Wade, the former head of Cal/OSHA and a leading expert on environmental risk management, "UV-C is extremely effective at sanitizing air and touch surfaces. Air and touch surfaces are what's spreading the virus, and what we need to be concerned with." Due to low touch time, ease of use and maneuverability, portable UV-C devices can be integrated into existing workflows with no additional staff or extra PPE required. Select devices, such as the R-Zero Arc, also feature an embedded LTE chip with GPS connectivity, empowering leadership to remotely monitor usage and compliance and share disinfection data with staff and parents.

Germicidal UV-C is also a non-toxic and eco-friendly disinfection solution. It quickly disinfects spaces without chemicals or pesticides and leaves a room safe for people to re-enter immediately after a cycle is complete. Dr. Brent Clark, Executive Director of the Illinois Association of School Administrators and former superintendent, states, "I am extremely optimistic about germicidal UV-C as a whole-room disinfection solution for a school environment. Incorporating this hospital-grade technology into regular cleaning and disinfecting protocols will provide an added layer of protection for students and teachers, without the use of chemicals, which is critical."

UV-C devices are eligible "disinfection equipment and services" expenses under the CARES Act.

For more information about this article, please contact R-Zero President, Eli Harris, at eli@rzerosystems.com or (435) 565-1359. You can also visit www.rzero.com.

¹ Reed, N.G. (2010). The history of ultraviolet germicidal irradiation for air disinfection. *Public Health Reports*, 125(1), 15–27.

² Carling, P.C., Parry, M.F., & Von Behren, S.M. (2008). Identifying opportunities to enhance environmental cleaning in 23 acute care hospitals. *Infection Control & Hospital Epidemiology*, 29(1), 1-7; and Xie, A., Rock, C., Hsu, Y.J., Osei, P., Andonian, J., Scheeler, V., Keller, S.C., Gurses, A.P. (2018). Improving daily patient room cleaning: an observational study using a human factors and systems engineering approach. *IJSE Transactions on Occupational Ergonomics and Human Factors*, 11, 1–4.

³ Zeber, J. E., Coppin, J. D., Villamaria, F. C., Williams, M. D., Copeland, L. A., Chatterjee, P., Choi, H., & Jinadatha, C. (2019). Use of ultraviolet irradiation in addition to commonly used hospital disinfectants or cleaners further reduces the bioburden on high-touch surfaces. *Open Forum Infectious Diseases*, 6(12).

Although PASA does not promote or endorse any product or service offered by our sponsors, we are pleased to share information that may be helpful to school leaders.

COMMUNICATIONS TIP OF THE MONTH

"I think there's a paradox to humility. We think of it as weak, but it's actually quite muscular. Sure, we want leaders to be confident, but it's possible to be confident and humble simultaneously. In this moment, leaders need to say, 'I don't know. What do you think?' That's one of the most important things leaders can do: demonstrate transparency and humility." – Daniel Pink, nationally known author and speaker, in an interview with Jill Stiler, superintendent of the Gunter Independent School District in Texas, from "A Conversation with Daniel Pink," as published in the October issue of *School Administrator*, AASA's monthly publication. This month's issue looks at school management, teaching and relationships in the midst of upheaval brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The ADVOCATE

October means... the start of the federal fiscal year. As hard as it may be to believe in 2020, Congress will have to divert its attention from the campaign cycle, the push to confirm a SCOTUS nominee, and the federal COVID response to focus on annual appropriations. Similar to other years, Congress must adopt either an extension or final funding bill. Moreover, they have to do so ahead of October 1 if they want to avoid a federal shutdown.

As a reminder, if the federal appropriations process worked as we learned about it in civics class, each chamber of Congress—House and Senate alike—would each independently adopt a budget resolution, allocate the overall dollar amount across 12 independent appropriations bills (the “slices” of the funding pie), work via its respective appropriations subcommittees to determine program-specific funding levels for any and all programs within each slice of the pie, pass those 12 individual bills, reconcile differences between the House and Senate version of each of those 12 bills, and then adopt the compromise for each of those bills.

That won’t be happening in 2020, and in fact, hasn’t happened in more than two decades. The last time Congress completed its funding work on time and in normal order was in the mid-1990s.

When Congress can’t/won’t complete its funding work by October 1, there are two options: a federal shutdown or a continuing resolution (CR). A CR is the funding mechanism that buys Congress more time to complete its funding work. In its pure form, a CR freezes government funding at the previous year’s level, but allows government to keep running. Therefore, a CR essentially allows Congress to kick the can down the road to buy more time. CRs are commonplace at this point, and in fact, the more common debate when it comes to annual appropriations is less “Will there be a shutdown or a CR?” and more “How long will the CR last, and will there be policy riders?”

Which brings us to 2020.

In a presidential election year, especially one as partisan and political as this one, with a pandemic and economic downturn to boot, a CR was all but a forgone conclusion. So where do we stand with funding?

In mid-September, House Democrats released a CR proposal that would level-fund the federal government through December 11. The bill lacked the support of both Republicans and the administration, as well as exemptions requested by the White House. [Click here](#) for a section-by-section description of that bill, which makes no changes to the FY20 education funding levels.

Treasury Secretary Mnuchin and Speaker Pelosi had agreed to a “clean CR”, absent any contentious policy decisions. The exclusion of the White House exemptions and the Senate Republican-requested farm subsidies was explained by House Democrats as sticking to the idea of a clean CR and balanced by the exclusion of the Democrat priority of additional funding/authorization for school lunches at closed schools.

While the exclusion of those items initially derailed an intended vote, the bill was revised to include those provisions, after which the House passed the CR, leaving it up to the Senate to vote to keep the federal government funded to and through December 11.

THE CONTINUING RESOLUTION ON FEDERAL SPENDING

(Note: This column was written just before the federal continuing resolution was passed and signed into law.)

Critical to an AASA priority, the CR does include nearly \$8 billion for two nutrition provisions that are essential to feeding kids and families during the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, the bill expands Pandemic EBT and extends it through the end of the current school year, and gives the USDA the authority and funding to extend waivers that give schools and community organizations much-needed flexibility for how they serve meals during the pandemic. This legislation removes the last roadblock to USDA extending these waivers through the end of the current school year.

The Senate passed the bill on September 30 [and it was signed just after midnight], setting us up for a post-election, lame-duck congressional to-do list that includes another round of FY21 negotiations.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW!



For breaking education news and the latest from the Capitol, follow us on Twitter @PASASupts.

Find what you need to know in the weekly “Education Update.” Watch your email on **Mondays** for the E-Update and link to this weekly report, a source for the latest in education and budget news from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania and the nation.



Check the PASA website at www.pasa-net.org for reports, testimony, the program and meeting schedule, archived Updates, the PASA Career Center (job postings)...and more!



AASA's National COVID-19 School Response Dashboard: Enroll Your District Today!

Last month AASA, NASSP, NAESP, and Brown University Professor of Economics, Emily Oster, released a COVID-19 school response data dashboard to provide educational leaders and policymakers with information on how schools are reopening, and what factors contribute to safe reopening. Specifically, the effort will collect baseline information on schools as the year progresses, and then follow them over time to record enrollments, staffing, and COVID-19 cases. You can access the preliminary findings from the dashboard by [clicking here](#).

AASA is committed to making the data entry straightforward and simple and, as such, is asking school leaders to [enroll](#) their districts in the dashboard. Participants would complete the baseline survey, which should take no more than 10 to 20 minutes, and then sign-up to participate in a five-question, bi-weekly follow-up survey. Questions should be directed to Noelle Ellerson at nellerson@aes.org.

Advocating for Federal COVID Funding

As part of its work with The [Re]Build America's School Infrastructure Coalition (BASIC), AASA released a statement thanking the U.S. House of Representatives for the inclusion of \$5 billion for emergency repairs to public school facilities as part of the funding proposed for education in the Heroes Act 2.0.

"The inclusion of these funds is critical for the well being of our families and communities and codifies the House's commitment to the health and safety of our students and educators," the coalition said. "It also demonstrates the understanding that without public schools opening safely, our economy cannot thrive." Check out the full press release [here](#).

In addition, 19 national education groups, including AASA, have sent a [joint letter](#) to Congressional leaders in response to the revised House HEROES Act, and expressed support for a bipartisan COVID response package.

Virtual Conference in 2021

The 2021 National Conference on Education, scheduled for New Orleans, will instead be VIRTUAL and held over two days, February 18-19. The virtual format will provide convenience and safety for participants while still providing access to data, research and best practices shared among other superintendents and school districts across the nation. Watch the AASA website, <https://nce.aasa.org>, for information and updates.

AASA Coronavirus Resources

AASA continues to work with federal officials and members of Congress to influence legislation and policy concerning the coronavirus pandemic and its effect on schools. The AASA website offers school leaders updated information and resources from the federal levels, including Congress, the CDC, the Department of Education and the Department of Agriculture. [Click here](#) to see a list of resources and information provided by AASA.

From the AASA President

"The constant need to communicate the relevance and the role district-level administrators play in supporting teaching and learning cannot be understated. Ongoing engagement with teachers, parents, political supporters and governing board members sustains commitment. People often forget just how important the role of central-office administrators is, not only in the operations of a district, but in championing consistent reform efforts for teaching and learning. It is too easy for these administrators to be viewed as 'the others.' It is up to us to be sure our value is understood." – Kristi Wilson, AASA President, from "The Central Role in Transformation," as published in the October issue of *School Administrator*.

Join AASA today and become part of a supported community of school leaders nationwide who advocate for public education. AASA, The School Superintendents Association, is the only national organization that represents and promotes the concerns of chief school administrators across the nation! **See the AASA website, <http://www.aasa.org>, for details or contact the PASA office.**

MEMBER NEWS

REGION 3

Alan Johnson is now serving as superintendent of the East Allegheny SD. He previously served as superintendent of the Woodland Hills SD until he retired at the end of the 2017-18 school year.

Jeffrey Soles is now serving as superintendent of the West Mifflin Area SD. He previously served as superintendent of the Blairsville-Saltsburg School District. Soles replaces **Mark Hoover**, who has retired.

REGION 5

Dr. Dean Maynard is retiring from his position as executive director of Northwest Tri-County I.U, effective October 9. He has served in the position since 2008.

Ian Roberts is now serving as superintendent of the Millcreek Township SD. He previously served as chief schools officer of Aspire Charter Schools. Roberts replaces **William Hall**, who retired in January.

REGION 17

Dr. Eric Stair is now serving as superintendent of the Troy Area SD. He formerly served as a principal in the district.

REGION 21

Dr. Randy Ziegenfuss, superintendent of the Salisbury Township SD, has announced he will retire, effective January 1, 2021. He has served in the district for 15 years, five years as superintendent. **Lynn Fuinni-Hetten**, who currently serves as associate superintendent in the district, has been appointed as the district's next superintendent, effective January 2. She also is president of the PASA Women's Caucus.

REGION 23

Dr. Michael Roth is now serving as superintendent of the Upper Moreland SD. He previously served as assistant superintendent in the Southern Lehigh SD. Roth replaced **Dr. Robert Milrod**, who retired in August.

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.")

“NOTEWORTHY QUOTES”

On Wearing Masks...

"I don't wear masks like him. Every time you see him, he's got a mask. He could be speaking 200-feet away from – and he shows up with the biggest mask I've ever seen." – President Trump on Vice President Biden, during the presidential debate on September 29, two days before the White House announced the President had tested positive for COVID-19

"Any Pennsylvanian who chooses to attend a rally, or any large gathering, should take protective steps like wearing a mask and maintaining proper social distancing for the duration of the event. Mitigation efforts like these will help protect Pennsylvanians from potentially contracting this deadly virus and bringing it home to their families. It is dangerous and disappointing that the president continues to ignore science and his own health advisors while putting the lives of those who support him at risk." – Gov. Wolf in a statement on September 25 concerning in-person campaign events in Pennsylvania when attendees did not follow statewide orders

"One of the biggest lessons that we have learned from this pandemic is that we are all interconnected and interdependent on each other really in every way." – PA Secretary of Health Rachel Levine, during a press conference last month

On Capacity at Statewide Events...

"The liberties protected by the Constitution are not fair-weather freedoms — in place when times are good but able to be cast aside in times of trouble. There is no question that this Country has faced, and will face, emergencies of every sort. But the solution to a national crisis can never be permitted to supersede the commitment to individual liberty that stands as the foundation of the American experiment. The Constitution cannot accept the concept of a 'new normal' where the basic liberties of the people can be subordinated to open-ended emergency mitigation measures." – from the opinion written by U.S. Federal Judge William Stickman

"The administration is disappointed with the result and will seek a stay of the decision and file an appeal. The actions taken by the administration were mirrored by governors across the country and saved, and continue to save lives in the absence of federal action. This decision is especially worrying as Pennsylvania and the rest of the country are likely to face a challenging time with the possible resurgence of COVID-19 and the flu in the fall and winter." – Wolf spokesperson Lyndsay Kensinger

"The governor does not have a corner on the market when it comes to caring about people's health and taking this virus seriously. But what kind of life are we living when we are still separated from our loved ones, denied opportunities to support our children, driving so many small business owners out of business and sending their workers to a wreck of an unemployment compensation system. We MUST find balance and be reasonable in our approach to this virus." – Rep. Mike Reese (R-Westmoreland/Somerset) on the governor's veto of HB 2787

"It's not me. Let's stop on the 'me.' It's the virus. What is the virus looking for? The virus is looking for places where people gather together with close contact. I think that's what we've got to keep in mind. We have to recognize we have a virus out there. I don't like it. You don't like it. No one likes it. We have to be careful about how we gather together. If we can do things to mitigate — to wear masks, to practice social distancing, to avoid crowds and other people when we can — that's going to be helpful. I think we've got to recognize that's the reality we're all dealing with." – Gov. Wolf, during an October 1 press conference, after the Third Circuit Court of Appeals granted a stay on Judge Stickman's decision pending an appeal, thus reinstating the statewide order concerning crowd limitations at public events

PASA CALENDAR

All programs and meetings through December are virtual.
See the PASA web site at www.pasa-net.org.

October

- 12-13 National Superintendent Certification Program
- 14 Women's Caucus Board meeting
- 14-15 PASA/PSBA Virtual School Leadership Conference
- 19 Women's Caucus Virtual Networking Session
- 21 Fall Webinar Series #2: Leading Students in Poverty to Success

November

- 6 PA Summit for Assistant Superintendents and Supervisors
- 12 Board of Governors' meeting
- 16 Women's Caucus Virtual Networking Session
- 16-17 New Superintendents' Academy Part 2
- 18 all Webinar Series #3: Implicit Bias in Schools
- 19 National Superintendent Certification Program
- 26-27 PASA office closed

December

- 2 Professional Development Committee
- 16 Webinar: Culturally Relevant Leadership
- 24-31 PASA office closed

January

- 1 PASA office closed
- 6 Winter Series Webinar #1
- 13 National Superintendent Certification Program
- 15 Aspiring to Leadership Workshop
- 18 PASA office closed
- 21-22 New Superintendents' Academy Part 3
- 28 Joint Boards dinner
- 29 Board of Governors' meeting