

2020 PASA Awards of Achievement

THREE ADMINISTRATORS RECOGNIZED FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO EDUCATION AND SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

Three Pennsylvania educators have been selected for PASA awards recognizing outstanding leadership in education.

The PASA Awards of Achievement were established by the PASA Board of Governors to recognize outstanding leadership among school administrators. Each award sponsor is contributing \$1,000 toward the Pennsylvania administrator preparation program or scholarship fund of the recipient's choice. Recipients were chosen by the PASA Executive Committee from among those nominated.

Thank you to our award sponsors:
**PLGIT/PFM, Lincoln Investment
Planning, Inc. and Horace Mann!**

Dr. Richard Fry
Superintendent, Big Spring
LEADERSHIP IN PUBLIC EDUCATION
Sponsor: PLGIT/PFM

The award recognizes an individual who demonstrates commitment to school administration as a profession, to public ed-



ucation and to one's colleagues, including participation in and leadership with the Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators.

Dr. Fry has served the Big Spring School District as Superintendent for 17 years, and, in that role, his impact has been tremendous at the district, regional, state, and national levels as a true advocate for public education.

Rich not only has a passion for mentoring educators and aspiring leaders but also has committed his life's work to adding value to these leaders both within and beyond his school district. Within his school district, he has leveraged leadership meetings, administrator goals, and each individual's aspirations to help push them forward to realizing their fullest potential. His impact is visible through an administrative team

ripe with doctoral degrees, professional confidence, and a willingness to boldly lead in challenging times.

Beyond his district, Rich serves as an adjunct professor to support teacher preparation programs, principal certification programs, and superintendent's letter of eligibility programs. Throughout each, he helps build leadership among the ranks of educators and fosters pride in the profession.

In addition, Rich intentionally works to provide support to his colleagues. Through

See 2020 PASA Awards, page 4

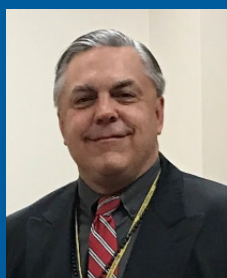
Inside this issue...

Executive Director's Message	2
At the Capitol	3
PASA Mentor Coachin Program.....	3
PASA Legal Services.....	4
Contacting PASA.....	4
We Are In the Home Stretch	5
PLUS Caucus of PASA	6
Professional Development.....	7
Changing Priorities to Reflect a Changing World	8
Professional Learning Listing	9
Summer Forum for Adminstrators.....	9
Women's Caucus Awards.....	10
Pearson Article	12
Recap: PASA Leadership Forum ..	13
Advocacy Update	14
Call for Presenteres	14
Communications Tip	15
COSN	15
AASA News & Advocacy.....	16
The Advocate	17
Pandemic Updates.....	18
Membership News.....	18
Noteworthy Quotes.....	19
PA Educational Leadership Summit	20
Calendar.....	20
PASA Career Center.....	20

PASA ELECTION RESULTS



Dr. John Sanville (left), superintendent of the Unionville-Chadds Ford SD, has been elected 2021-22 PASA President-Elect and **Dr. Thomas Lesniewski (right)**, superintendent of the Punxsutawney SD, has been elected 2021-22 PASA Treasurer, both effective October 1.



Dr. Shane Hotchkiss, superintendent of the Bermudian Springs SD, and **Dr. Gennaro Piraino, Jr.**, superintendent of the Franklin Regional

SD, have been elected to serve a three-year term on the AASA Governing Board, effective July 1. Also serving on the board are **Dr. Nicholas Guarente** (Greenwood), **Dr. Bridget O'Connell** (Palisades) and **LeeAnn Wentzel** (Ridley).

AASA REPRESENTATIVES (AS OF 7/1/21)



O'Connell



Wentzel



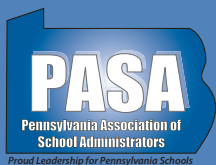
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Please report your appointments, renewals, awards or special achievements, or that of others in your region to **Barbara Jewett** at PASA either by phone (717) 540-4448, by fax (717) 540-4405, or via email at pasa@pasa-net.org. Copy deadline is the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

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DR. MARK DIROCCO

WHY WE NEED STATE SUBSIDY INCREASES IN THE MIDST OF HUGE FEDERAL STIMULUS FUNDS



This will be one of the most challenging budget seasons for school leaders since the great recession. During the infamous state budget of 2010-11, severe reductions were made to public education subsidies as a result of federal stimulus dollars from the previous two years being exhausted. Simply put, the state did not have enough money to continue the previous level of subsidies for our schools because they could not replace the federal funds with state funds they were using to help support public education. Likewise, some districts used the federal stimulus dollars to offset personnel and benefit costs, only to realize they could not sustain those expenses once the federal dollars were gone. It was a horrible situation for public education, and the debate rages on to this day as to who was responsible for nearly \$1 billion in funding cuts to public education that year.

Today's state policymakers need look back on what happened a decade ago and resolve to not have history repeat itself. Although the current budget situation is different from 2010-11, there are many similar aspects, and we all need to head the lessons of the past.

Just like a decade ago, school districts will be receiving large sums of stimulus dollars that should only be used for one-time, non-recurring expenditures in schools to overcome the many challenges of the pandemic including prevention, mitigation and recovery. Pennsylvania will be receiving approximately \$7 billion for public school districts and charter schools from the three stimulus laws that were passed, known as ESSER I, ESSER II, and ESSER III. It is a **HUGE** amount of money, the likes of which our schools have never seen in the past. It overshadows the ARRA federal stimulus dollars of the great recession.

The challenge for school districts becomes explaining to your legislators and local community that large amounts of one-time federal stimulus dollars will not help districts pay for ongoing mandated expenses such as PSERS, charter school tuition, and special education. ESSER funds are **not** to be used for ongoing personnel expenses such as salaries and benefits. Therefore, the majority of districts will find themselves struggling to balance their budgets, even though they have hundreds of thousands or millions of federal stimulus dollars sitting in their financial accounts. We need our state legislators to understand that basic subsidy, special education subsidy, and career technology subsidy increases will be needed, despite the influx of historic federal dollars, if we are to recover from the long-term effects of the pandemic.

Schools will need to implement both short-term and long-term plans to overcome learning loss and emotional trauma caused by the pandemic. Federal stimulus dollars can assist with immediate efforts such as summer programs, after school tutoring, temporary counseling, and social services for the next two to three years. However, these issues will remain with schools beyond the timeframe that federal dollars need to be spent. These programs and services will need to continue for many years to come. This will require significant funds, resources, and personnel beyond what most schools have in place now.

There is tremendous need for additional counselors, social workers, nurses, and psychologists in our schools. This need was present before the pandemic and has increased substantially since the pandemic began. Unfortunately, there are few stable financial resources available to pay for these additional positions, and federal stimulus dollars are not the long-term answer. Our schools need significant subsidy increases in the coming years to meet the immediate and ongoing challenges of recovering from the pandemic. This effort will extend well beyond the time frame that federal stimulus dollars are available, and districts will need consistent and stable state funding to pay for these critical services.

PASA and many other educational associations are working together to advocate for a significant increase in state subsidies for our schools in the coming year. We are holding a Virtual Advocacy Day on April 26 in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Association of Rural and Small Schools and the Pennsylvania Principals Association. Whether you join us that day or not, please reach out to your legislators to let them know that a generation of students need their help to recover from this pandemic, and the best thing they can do is fairly fund our schools with needed subsidy increases.

Your voice matters. Use it!



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

Budget Hearings: Appropriations hearings on Gov. Wolf's proposed policy and budget plans conclude this month.

State Revenue: Pennsylvania collected \$4.8 billion in General Fund revenue in March, which was \$378.2 million, or 8.5 percent, more than anticipated. Fiscal year-to-date General Fund collections total \$28.7 billion, which is \$1.3 billion, or 4.7 percent, above estimate.

School Funding Lawsuit: The school funding lawsuit, first filed in 2014, is now scheduled to be heard in Commonwealth Court this September. The lawsuit, brought by six school districts, seven parents and two advocacy organizations, contends that Pennsylvania has failed to uphold its constitutional obligation to "provide for the maintenance and support of a thorough and efficient system of public education to serve the needs of the Commonwealth."

Legislative News

Session Schedule: Work at the Capitol will be ramping up this month into June, with more session days scheduled in both chambers.

Bill Action: The House last month passed and sent to the Senate HB 412, which amends the School Code to provide school entities with day-to-day substitute teacher flexibility. Other bills slowly moving through the legislature concern first-aid training, teacher certification reciprocity, state spending limits and Daylight Savings Time.

Limited Liability: The House recently passed HB 605. The bill initially concerned compulsory arbitration of civil actions for exposure to COVID-19. However, it was amended to provide COVID-19 related liability protections for schools and childcare facilities, businesses, government services and health care providers absent a showing, by clear and convincing evidence, of gross negligence, recklessness, willful misconduct or intentional infliction of harm.

Opening the Capitol: Last month the state Capitol reopened to the public with enhanced security protocols.

State News

Educator Effectiveness Tools: The PDE last month published in The Pennsylvania Bulletin final-omitted rulemaking that amends Chapter 19 of the School Code relating to educator effectiveness rating tools. The changes, which took effect on March 31, reflect provisions from SB 751 (Act 13 of 2020). Use of the revised rating tools will begin in the 2021-22 school year.

Testing for Lead: Gov. Wolf last month advised all schools and childcare programs of the Voluntary Lead in Child Care and School Drinking Water Testing Program, which will provide \$1.74 million from a federal grant for testing lead in drinking water.

National News

Infrastructure Plan: Pres. Biden recently released a \$2 trillion infrastructure plan that would provide \$100 billion for new school construction and upgrades to existing buildings. The plan also would expand broadband Internet access, replace lead pipes across the country, and address energy and physical infrastructure issues.

Proposed Federal Budget: Pres. Biden has released \$1.5 trillion federal spending plan that includes an approximate 41 percent increase for education - \$102 billion in the next fiscal year - with significant increases for Title I and special education.

COMING UP

With appropriations hearings on the budget winding down, lawmakers continue their attention on elections but also on negotiations to develop a budget plan that will garner sufficient support for passage, along with policy measures, many of them education-related. The number of session days are increasing, more committee hearings are being scheduled, and foremost on everyone's mind is moving into the next fiscal year with continuing impacts from the pandemic. What remains to be seen is how or if lawmakers will address issues such as providing schools with operational flexibility in a "new normal," enacting meaningful charter and cyber charter school reform, and determining how to allocate federal COVID aid. Stay tuned for the latest information by following us on **Twitter** @PASASupts.

For Educational Leaders, By Educational Leaders

PASA MENTOR COACHING PROGRAM



Our superintendents and assistant superintendents continue to be challenged in ways we never imagined possible. The pandemic related complexities above and beyond the "normal" requirements for leading a school district are overwhelming, especially to those who are just beginning their roles as superintendents or assistant superintendents. The support of an experienced current or former Pennsylvania-based superintendent can be especially beneficial to the new career superintendent or assistant superintendent's peace of mind, decision-making, and goal achievement.

PASA has developed and is piloting a mentor coaching program to assist with the unexpected and normal challenges of the job. Our program is based upon various international and national mentoring and coaching models. It provides a highly personalized approach, customized to the mentee's needs and/or goals, in which an experienced, skilled mentor coach serves as the mentee's thought partner.

Most successful executives, athletes, musicians, etc. utilize an experienced and skilled mentor and/or coach for ongoing guidance and training. You, too, deserve this opportunity.

For more information about PASA's program, visit our website at <https://www.pasa-net.org/mentor> or contact Connie Kindler at ckindler@pasa-net.org.

2020 PASA AWARDS

continued from page 1

meetings with colleagues, phone calls to check in on local leaders, or a positive note shared to help others succeed in challenging times, he always demonstrates care and compassion for his fellow administrators.

Through his active presence in various organizations and committees, Rich willingly gives of his time to ensure that those around him are successful. His involvement with advisory committees, collaborative meetings with local superintendents, presentations at state and national conferences, testimony before the General Assembly, and his advocacy for public education both in Harrisburg and Washington all illustrate his passion for education and school leadership.

In his roles as PASA's Legislative Committee chair, as PASA Treasurer, and as the 2018-2019 PASA President, Rich has used his leadership and advocacy platform to build awareness of the many outstanding accomplishments of public education, the tremendous leadership that exists in our schools, and the responsibility that those at the local, state, and national levels have to adequately support the great things happening in public schools.

Although he will be retiring at the close of this school year, his lasting legacy will be the impact he has had not only on Big Spring but on school leaders across Pennsylvania.



Richard Sniscak

**Superintendent, Parkland
INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

Sponsor: Lincoln Investment Planning, Inc.

The award recognizes a school administrator who has demonstrated commitment to excellence in teaching and learning by developing, nurturing and supporting exemplary programs that support the academic achievement of particular student populations, enrich

student learning in a particular content area, or implement strategies to enhance student learning across the curriculum.

Rich Sniscak's 37-year career in education has included teaching, coaching and administration, culminating in his role as superintendent of Parkland, a position he has held since 2011. By the time he retires after the current school year, Rich will have served 26 years in the Parkland School District.

Students learn best when their school environment ensures safety and security, provides the tools and teaching they need, and encourages them to be the best they can be. As superintendent, Rich has exercised effective leadership to ensure the district met that benchmark and met the needs of all students by initiating programs that supported student learning, building and transforming facilities, working with the school board to establish a strong financial base, and encouraging a community-wide commitment to education – all efforts that promoted and supported teaching and learning throughout the district.

Among these accomplishments were:

- Implementing Full-day Kindergarten to help boost literacy;
- Establishing a K-12 initiative that assigns a personal Chrome book to every student to help foster equity and enhance skills necessary to compete in a 21st century global workforce;
- Overseeing school construction projects to ensure that district infrastructure supported a safe and supportive teaching and learning environment;

- Navigating several economic downturns and maintaining good financial stewardship that helped Parkland not only maintain its bond rating but continue to move the bar in addressing learning goals;
- Creating partnerships with local hospital networks that resulted in learning opportunities for students;
- Launching Project "Lead the Way" Biomedical and Computer Science Programs at Parkland High School, both of which offer hands-on opportunities aimed at exposing teens to careers in science;
- Exploring the need to help every learner through the vibrant conversations that exist on the District's Multicultural Awareness Committee and Equity and Inclusion Committees;
- Establishing food pantries in Parkland's three secondary schools so that students can acquire confidential food assistance to help bridge the hunger gap in households during weekends and holidays; and
- Helping to establish the Parkland Education Foundation.

Rich has been recognized by numerous organizations for his support of instruction and learning, including awards from the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association, the National School Public Relations Association, and AASA, the School Superintendents Association. In addition, he has and continues to serve on numerous local and regional boards and consortiums, and is a current member of the PASA Board of Governors.



Dr. Jill Hackman

**Executive Director, Berks County I.U. 14
SERVICE TO THE PROFESSION**

Sponsor: Horace Mann

The award recognizes a school administrator who has demonstrated commitment to excellence as evidenced through notable service to the profession.

Dr. Hackman's service and commitment to excellence, although initiated at Berks County Intermediate Unit (BCIU), have made a significant impact across all 29 Intermediate Units and the entire Commonwealth. Her focus on servant leadership, government relations for student advocacy, and local and state leadership efforts set her apart from others in the field of education. Even more importantly, she is an authentic humanitarian and leads with her heart for the best interest of students with all of her endeavors.

Dr. Hackman's contributions begin with a "serve-first" mindset as the epitome of a servant leader, facing obstacles positively without a focus on the negatives. In her approach to any situation facing public education, it is always, "How do we move forward together?" as she seeks to bring out the best in others and help them grow professionally and personally.

More importantly, she possesses integrity, exhibits humility, and does not seek recognition or credit for accomplishments. Dr. Hackman celebrates the successes of the organization but is quick to give credit and shine light on the contributions of others, whatever their role.

When Dr. Hackman sees a need or is asked for support, she finds ways to involve all stakeholders to champion a cause, communicating with the Pennsylvania General Assembly and keeping the goal of supporting students at the forefront of her work each and every

See 2020 PASA Awards, page 5

PASA Flyer - April 2021

WE ARE IN THE HOME STRETCH!

BY DR. JOHN BELL, 2020-21 PASA PRESIDENT

Last summer, we were working day and night to figure out how to start the 2020-21 school year. Now, we are in the fourth marking period, and the end of the year is in sight. It has been a crazy year with remote, hybrid and in-person learning. No two districts are completely alike. I applaud your continued leadership in a year like no other.

The good news is that we are in a much better place than we were this time last year. Hospitalizations and deaths were at unbelievable numbers last spring, and we weren't sure how long it was going to last or how it was going to end. This spring, the vaccine supply continues to increase, and approximately 3.5 million Americans are getting vaccinated daily. The CDC estimates that 70% of Americans could be fully vaccinated by July 19 and 85% by August 18. A recent USA Today frontpage article said the vaccine for ages 12-16 will be available this summer. This is all good news toward next school year being "more normal."

The spring is always a hectic time of year because we face the normal day-to-day issues as well as preparing for the many end-of-year events, recruiting and interviewing for next year, and developing our budgets. When you add the pandemic issues on top of everything else, the stress can be high and dangerous to your health. Please take care of yourself by eating right, exercising and finding ways to turn off work. Sometimes even a quick ride in the car at mid-day can clear your head and lower your blood pressure. When you are feeling down, go visit an elementary school. The energy, excitement and positivity will lift your spirits and remind you of why we do what we do.

2020 PASA AWARDS

continued from page 4

day. Whether testifying at a hearing, serving on commissions, leading roundtables, meeting with state officials, promoting discussion between policymakers and school officials or leading advocacy initiatives, she firmly believes in bringing people together, modeling to others how their voice can make a difference for students.

Dr. Hackman always makes herself available to assist and act as a resource to her constituent schools with local, county, and state officials, as well as many community and regional organizations. Whether engaging in discussions to strengthen school safety and security, spearheading conversations about standards and curriculum, or coordinating actions with regional partners, she is often the first phone call when assistance or information is needed on a myriad of issues, listening with an open mind to learn and understand other perspectives, identifying solutions, leading, and getting things done. Most recently, during the COVID-19 health emergency, she coordinated efforts to prepare for a variety of scenarios, offering guidance documents and plans tailored to individual districts to assist school leaders in making decisions while navigating quickly changing conditions.

Her dedication to supporting and encouraging those working as school leaders in our public schools clearly is an example of true servant leadership.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2020 PASA AWARD
OF ACHIEVEMENT RECIPIENTS!**

Last month, I wrote about Doris Kearns Goodwin's *Leadership in Turbulent Times*. This month, I'm going to tell you a little bit about my favorite leadership book of all-time, *Winning* by legendary General Electric CEO Jack Welch. He turned the giant and slow-moving corporation into a fast-moving, high-performance organization during his twenty-year tenure (1981-2001). After reading this book, Warren Buffett said, "No other management book will ever be needed."

Winning was published in 2005, and certainly the world has changed since then. However, Welch's focus on people over programs will never go out of style. He believed in recruiting great people, training them extensively and giving them plenty of space to do the job with which they were tasked. He also set very high expectations and a rigorous accountability system to track performance. He demanded excellence and believed in being very candid with people about their abilities.

To give you a feel for the book, here are some of the chapter titles: mission and values, candor, differentiation, voice and dignity, leadership, hiring, people management, parting ways, change, crisis management, strategy, budgeting and work-life balance.

Many of you may have *Winning* on your bookshelves. If you do, I encourage you to take it down and read it again. My copy is full of underlined sentences and dog-eared pages. I like to take it off the shelf every summer and just re-read the underlined sentences again to help me focus on what matters most. If you haven't read it, I encourage you to put it on your summer reading list.

In closing, let me thank you again for all you have done for the students of Pennsylvania this year. Being a school leader has never been tougher nor more important. I'm proud to stand shoulder to shoulder with my colleagues. I also promise you the end is in sight and next year will be better.

Dr. Bell is superintendent of the Delaware Valley SD.



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"As a superintendent, you need, more and more, to see your role as being one of a social architect, where the goal is not simply running the system, managing the budgets, managing the personnel issues, but really thinking about what kind of systems, structures, processes, incentives, information systems, are going to get the very best out of the people who work in that school system. As a school superintendent, if I really want the biggest impact over the longest period of time, it will be creating an environment in which others thrive rather than any particular innovation I might lead." – Gary P. Hamel, author of *Humanocracy: Creating Organizations as Amazing as the People Inside Them*, in an interview with Mary Hermann, as published in the April issue of *School Administrator* ("Unleashing Talent")



A CONVERSATION WITH CARING CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL PARENTS

BY STEPHEN RODRIGUEZ, CAUCUS PRESIDENT



I'd like to share a personal experience with you and point out a few lessons I learned.

About a week ago, I had an opportunity to speak with parents who have been sending their children to cyber charter school for many years. They are wonderful people who are family-oriented and great advocates for their children. They were former homeschoolers and highly engaged with their five children's education. These children are active in sports, the arts, get straight A's and take advanced courses. Any one of them could be used as a poster child for what is right and good about cyber charter school.

Yes, you read that correctly folks; you don't have to reread it.

I digress. The purpose of the conversation was that mom had concerns with the curriculum being taught to one child. She outlined some of those concerns and how the teacher was implementing the curriculum. It was a valid concern. I gave her the typical advice. Reach out to the teacher and share your concerns, reach out to the principal if that doesn't work. All educational environments that are healthy will seek out feedback and be responsive to your issues.

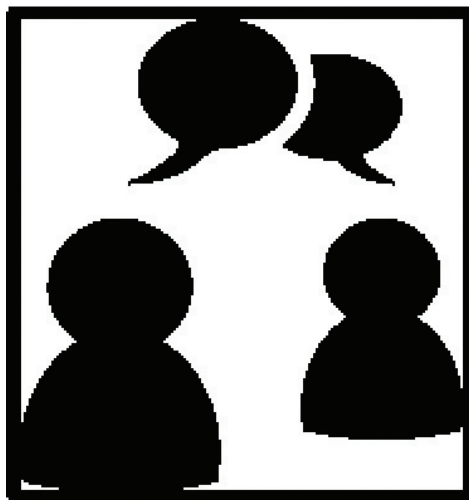
We quickly moved past that and into this mother's desire to run for school board. She wanted to devote some time to make things better for her younger children. She asked me how to do that, and when I informed her that cyber charter school boards are not elected but rather appointed, both mom and dad were aghast. She then asked about the public school in the municipality for which she lived (not in my district). When I told her that the two were completely unrelated and the public school has zero influence or accountability powers over their cyber charter school, again they were aghast!

Then, the questions came at a rapid pace. Our cyber charter school tells us they get less money than public schools and public schools lie all the time to protect unions; is that right? We thought that cyber charter school requirements were the same as a public school. What do you mean cyber charter schools hire private companies? How is it legal for them to make a profit off taxpayer dollars?

School choice: You are against school choice, aren't you? I thought all public educators were against school choice, right? What is Future Ready Index? What is school performance profile? What is the Fair Funding Formula? Why would a cyber charter school have less than 100% of teachers certified?

Taxpayer dollars pay for those radio commercials? Those billboards? Those Internet ads, T-shirts, school bags, and TV spots? Cyber charters can keep the money they don't use? They get pandemic relief money? That's not ok!

This wonderful couple walked away with a very different and better informed view of the complicated state of education. What are the chances they won't share this new-found knowledge with others? Slim.



Lessons Learned:

- ♦ Most parents, most citizens are far less informed than we realize.
- ♦ Many people are not informed by newspaper articles or school board meetings.
- ♦ Dialogue takes time; it's inefficient, but it is equally long-lasting and effective at informing parents and citizens.
- ♦ This conversation did not happen in my office or at a basketball game. It's also not the first time I've had such conversations with parents. As a devout Christian, people from totally different points of view from mine on education will engage me because of that commonality.
- ♦ We all have such commonalities. Use them!

CHARTERS DON'T PLAY BY THE SAME RULES

- Exempt from special education funding formula
- Exempt from teacher evaluation requirements
- Have fewer certified teachers
- Run by private boards of directors



CHARTER SCHOOLS PERFORM POORLY

Charter students perform worse than district students on state assessments. All 14 cyber charter schools are on the worst performing school list.





A REFLECTION ON DAGGETT'S “PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THEIR FUTURE, NOT OUR PAST”



BY DR. CINDY MIERZEJEWSKI
MEMBER, PASA PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

On March 29, PASA presented the 2021 PASA Leadership Forum. The keynote speaker was Dr. Bill Daggett, speaking on “Preparing Students for Their Future, Not Our Past.”

Dr. Daggett, the founder of the International Center for Leadership in Education and the Successful Practices Network, has spent much time on research and sharing the important topic of making learning meaningful through rigor, relevance and relationships. As always, when Dr. Daggett presents, there were so many great, thought-provoking topics packed into the presentation.

The first areas that Dr. Daggett addressed were the changes that the pandemic environment brought to education.

He specifically noted all of the changes and quick transitions that schools have had to make in the area of technology. Dr. Daggett expanded on this idea with a segment on Artificial Intelligence (AI). He gave some examples of the use of AI from a second language immediate translator to virtual reality to a friendly piece of AI that can “read” students’ expressions as they work with online software.

Dr. Daggett also discussed social-emotional skills (SEL), a topic that has been in the forefront of a lot of the work that is happening in education, especially in light of our students learning remotely and also returning to a slightly different environment in schools.

All of this is very relevant to the work that we do in professional development. In adapting to all of the changes and transitions, we need to reflect on what the current structure and themes of our professional development programs are. What is our professional development program’s plan for adapting? How much can we do this year, next year, in five years? What is our ultimate goal for our students?

In relation to all of this, Dr. Daggett discussed the work of the AASA commission, Learning 2025: National Commission on Student-Centered, Equity-Focused Education, of which he is a co-chair. The commission released [its report](#) this month, but Dr. Daggett highlighted some of them for the group:

- Learners co-authoring their learning journeys emphasizing the need for learner engagement
- Educators re-engineering the learning journey to provide the learner engagement in their journey
- Leaders redesigning the learning systems that provide support and foundation for the journeys

The commission is recommending a growth model of measurement based on social, emotional, and cognitive growth. This moves the standards from those just focused on basic academic skills to more comprehensive and relevant measures of higher cognitive skills.

Dr. Daggett often made connections to two major underlying themes throughout the session. I believe these are crucial for any work that we as educators are doing.

The first was “change is evolutionary, not revolutionary.” We all know how difficult change can be and in the very unsettled times in which we currently work, change can be even more challenging. Looking at the three highlights of the commission’s recommendations, we can see implications for learners, educators and leaders. How do these recommendations change the role of each? If change is evolutionary, what is the pace that we can go? How do we lay out our plan from here knowing where we want to go?

The second theme was the understanding that all of this must be done with a strong foundation that is built on professional development and a strong professional development plan. Dr. Daggett described starting with the culture and planning for the integration of SEL, along with how to use emerging technologies effectively – and maybe differently. There is a lot to consider, and a focused team to assist with the work will be beneficial for the whole school community.

If you are interested in continuing conversations with colleagues about these topics, you can consider participation in PASA’s summer book study based on Michael Fullan’s *Leading in a Culture of Change*. It’s an opportunity to be part of collegial conversations, share insights, and possibly gain some new ideas. More information and registration can be found at: <https://www.pasa-net.org/leadingchange>.

Dr. Mierzejewski is a retired superintendent, Consultant/Adjunct at Alvernia University and Neumann University, and a member of the PASA Professional Development Committee.

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](https://www.pasa-net.org/legalservices)
to read more about it.

CHANGING PRIORITIES TO REFLECT A CHANGING WORLD

BY BARBARA WALVORT JEWETT, ASSISTANT TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



If the pandemic has taught us anything, it is that drastically changed circumstances require drastic changes in thinking and in the way we do things. It has laid bare deficiencies in resources within school systems and communities. And it is redefining what schools and students need and need to do moving forward.

Too many children have lost too much during the pandemic. Many have not made sufficient academic progress or have disappeared off the radar. Social and emotional wellbeing suffered. Mental health issues multiplied. The result is that students need to be reconnected and supported, perhaps now more than ever.

And, while that is the immediate focus, we also need to think about how this changed world must change the way everyone sees the future of work – and how our schools prepare students for that. The old models need not apply.

Education Week ran a great article last month: “[Top U.S. Companies: These Are the Skills Students Need in a Post-Pandemic World](#)” by Mark Lieberman (March 2, 2021). Lieberman interviewed numerous U.S. companies, including Apple, Hyatt, Delta and Microsoft, among others, with a key question: “What skills does the workforce need?” Here is the list:

Personal Skills: Agility and flexibility (asking questions and having the courage to move quickly), a growth mindset and resiliency, openness to continued growth and self-motivation, equanimity (being vs. doing, being grounded and centered), critical thinking and creativity, cognitive flexibility, self-regulation, self-awareness and personal well-being, learning to learn/anticipating change and adjusting to it, adaptability, learning agility, ability to keep going amidst heightened ambiguity and uncertainty

Social Skills: Teamwork and collaboration, practicing empathy, developing trust and respect for others, social/emotional skills and relationship-building, innovative, global and strategic thinking

Technical & Practical Skills: technological skills, coding, the ability to manage a fragmented suite of collaboration tools and technologies, ability to express yourself, communicating effectively through a host of mobile devices and digital platforms

If the responses of corporate leaders are any indication, a focus on academics alone won’t cut it, even though that is the focus of most education policy, curricular mandates and assessments. In fact, too many lawmakers and policymakers would say that most of the skills those companies identified were “secondary” (translation: “non assessment-able”). Yet, it is those “secondary” skills that employers are saying kids **need** to have.

How do we get there? It begins with a change in focus among policymakers. In the immediate post-pandemic world, policymakers must have as priorities: 1) providing **adequate resources** to support schools and their work to address student social/emotional/mental health needs; 2) focusing on **equity**, because too many kids in woefully under-resourced schools and communities have literally been left behind; and 3) focusing on giving schools the **flexibility** they need to address the specific needs of every student, rethink what school should be and do to meet those needs, and initiate that change.

During last month’s PASA Leadership Forum, Bill Daggett talked about leading change in a changing world, how many existing structures and rules and attitudes about education need to change within schools, communities and the nation at large, including those within the policymaking business, before that change can happen. The April issue of AASA’s *School Administrator* also showcases the importance of rethinking what education should be and restructuring how it operates. And a [new report](#) from AASA is recommending “a holistic redesign of our nation’s schools aimed at capturing a new vision of future-focused, rigorous, energetic and culturally-vibrant learning through the empowerment of districts to enact change on behalf of learners, families and communities.”

We don’t get to a new vision by focusing on assessments and instructional days and curricular and structural mandates and fretting over how schools spend federal COVID aid. The agrarian-based, factory-based, seat-time system of education is a dinosaur, and policymakers need to catch up to that reality. Instead of getting caught up in policy debates about what should be in public school curriculum and how schools should spend their money, they need to see the much larger picture – and focus instead on adequately support a new, nimble education model rather than a strictly regulated model that puts up more roadblocks to innovation.

As Dr. Stuart Lustig, senior medical director with Cigna, said, “To build a more resilient generation and future workforce, it’s critical that today’s students have the support they need – resources and personal skills – to continue to build that muscle.”

To do that, schools need support and flexibility. It’s a matter of priorities.



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!



PASA GOLD SPONSOR

COVID has changed the way educators teach, interact with families, and measure academics.

Here are **7 TIPS FOR REPORTING ON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT** to your board this year.

Teach. Learn. Grow. The education blog brought to you by NWEA.

Professional Learning



See the PASA website for program updates at
<https://www.pasa-net.org/programs>.

Webinar for Superintendents: Crisis Communications
April 20

Summer Forum: Leading in a Culture of Change
VIRTUAL

For ALL school administrators
Approved for 40 PIL/Act 45 hours
10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
June 16, July 21, August 18

PA Educational Leadership Summit
Approved for up to 80 PIL/Act 45 hours
August 1-3
Kalahari Poconos

SAVE THE DATE...
Learning Through October

New Superintendents' Virtual Session:
Introduction to the Superintendency
July 27

New Superintendents' Academy
Part 1: Strategic & Cultural Leadership
September 23-24

PASA/PSBA School Leadership Conference
September 27-29
Kalahari Poconos

PA Summit for Assistant Superintendents & Supervisors
"Leader Actions for Continuous School Improvement" with
Pat Greco
sponsored by Studer EducationSM
October 15



VIRTUAL FORUM
June 16, July 21 and August 18
10:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

for ALL district leaders, including central office and school building administrators seeking to lead change in their districts and schools

40 PIL Hours (approval pending)
(See the website for requirements)

The fallout of COVID-19, combined with continuing advances in digital technology and an increasing demand for authentic student-centered learning, presents an unprecedented opportunity to transform education across whole systems. For that reason, ***Leading in a Culture of Change, 2nd edition*** (2020), by Michael Fullan, will provide the foundation and focus of this facilitated forum that will provide an opportunity for school administrators to discuss leading change in their own districts. The program consists of inquiry-based small and large group discussions about the leadership components within Fullan's book. (Participants must purchase their own copy of the book.)

FEE* - \$199 for PASA members/\$259 for non-members
***Payments are due by June 9.**

Virtual information will be sent to paid registrants.

See the PASA website at
<https://www.pasa-net.org/leadingchange>.



WOMEN'S CAUCUS AWARDS

The PASA Women's Caucus honors two individuals annually for special awards of recognition. Both awards are based on four criteria: leadership, significant contributions in inspiring women and/or their peers, significant accomplishments, and evidence of continuing professional and/or personal growth.

This year's recipients were recognized in several virtual events. They are:



WANDA MCDANIEL AWARD

Karen Dobda
Director of Innovation and Strategic Initiatives,
Quaker Valley SD

The Wanda McDaniel Award is given to an aspiring female school administrator who shows evidence of great leadership potential. The award is named for Dr. Wanda McDaniel, an outstanding administrator and superintendent who displayed a high quality of leadership.

Karen Dobda is described by her peers as a "teacher of teachers," whether building professional opportunities, introducing applications to staff, creating podcasts, or guiding new teachers through the district's induction plan.

To support teaching and learning, she led the district through an extensive comprehensive planning process and introduced a 1:1 iPad initiative for students and staff in grades 6-12, a program she plans to move into the elementary schools.

In addition, Karen has worked tirelessly on the district's student information system, tackled board meeting videotaping, updates district policies, and supports teachers with technology integration in the classroom. In fact, her peers note that, as someone who always works harder than everyone else, she has grown a small cadre of interested "techies" into her own group of Technology Integrators and leaders.

Those who nominated her point to her energy and engagement as a goal-setter, an innate leader whose true interest is life-long learning. Karen has been a semi-finalist for Pennsylvania Teacher of the Year, serves on numerous association boards, and has helped the district secure numerous grants to support teaching initiatives.

Her expertise with technology and curriculum, willingness to serve as a presenter at numerous conferences and take on additional challenges in the district, and her support for professional development both in the district and statewide all show evidence of her commitment to teaching and learning in Quaker Valley and public education across Pennsylvania – and to her ongoing leadership journey.

Congratulations, Karen!

MARGARET SMITH LEADERSHIP AWARD

Dr. Rina Vassallo
Education Consultant and
retired administrator



The Margaret Smith Leadership Award is given to a female administrator who has demonstrated proven leadership in education. The award is named for Dr. Margaret Smith, first president of the Women's Caucus, a former Pennsylvania superintendent and a former Pennsylvania Secretary of Education.

For over four decades, Dr. Rina Vassallo has been the consummate professional whose career embodies servant leadership, a passion for public education, and community service.

Beginning as a teacher in the Rose Tree Media School District, Rina moved into administration in the Springfield School District, demonstrating outstanding leadership in curriculum development and revision, teacher evaluation, student assessment, development of a model Freshman Academy at the high school, formulation of a new hiring protocol, and commitment to a teacher induction program and professional development & supports for teachers.

When she took on the role of Director of Curriculum, instructional Improvement & Assessment for CCIU and until her retirement in 2013, Rina was known for outstanding collegial support for county educators, establishing partnerships with higher education agencies, and negotiating contractual agreements that reduced costs to educators as they continued their education.

Not only has Rina excelled in her education leadership role, throughout her career she has been committed to community service, PASCD, and the PASA Women's Caucus. As a member of the Caucus Board and a leader in the southeast region, she has helped to coordinate events and promote Caucus membership among young administrators.

Her peers describe her as someone who always work to create a positive climate, making decisions through consensus-building, a team player with a work ethic and sense of dedication to others that is second to none.

As one administrator stated, "Rina was always supportive of the key role that women in educational leadership play in our school systems across the state – and Rina was always mentoring and developing our female leaders and the voices of women in education."

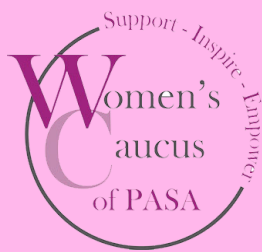
Congratulations, Rina!

SAVE THE DATES:
2021 Southeast Region Caucus Dinner
November 10

2022 Women's Caucus
Spring Conference
May 22 - 24

Due to ongoing COVID and district travel concerns, the scheduled 2021 spring conference in Hershey has been postponed to spring 2022.

Watch for details on other events to be scheduled between now and the next conference!



GENDER DIVIDE FACTS THAT STILL EXIST

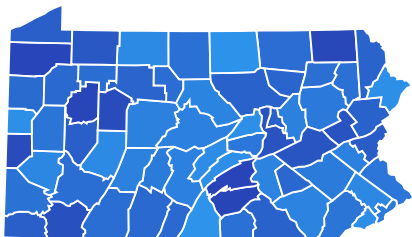
This infographic communicates the history from 2009 - 2020 of women educators compared to male educators as well as Superintendent positions. All tables, charts, and graphics are derived from publicly available data available on the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) Professional Personnel Individual Staff website.

Tina M. Kane, Ed.D., Women's Caucus Secretary

1

72% of all educators in PA are female

28% of all educators in PA are male



2

34% of all Superintendents in PA are female

66% of all Superintendents in PA are male



3

The average salary of the same Superintendents in PA

\$129,337.03
is the average salary of all female Superintendents in PA



\$135,468.24
is the average salary of all male Superintendents in PA



4

The average salary of the same Superintendents in PA by college degree



Bachelors Degree
\$95,615.10 for female
\$116,713.86 for males



Master's Degree
\$115,716.54 for female
\$123,669.05 for males



Doctoral Degree
\$147,127.05 for female
\$149,350.11 for males

TWO NUMBERS ARE DRIVING SUPERINTENDENTS TO SEEK SUMMER CREDIT RECOVERY SOLUTIONS

INFORMATION PROVIDED BY PEARSON, A PASA DIAMOND SPONSOR

Educators are coming to the end of a school year full of challenges, but also a year overflowing with innovative solutions and new competencies. As we say farewell to 2020-21, many educators are paying attention to two important numbers—metrics that are causing some concern and prompting a need to plan ahead.

The first number is the alarming increase in the failure rate of their high school students subsequent to the impact of COVID-19 school closures and the quick adoption of home-grown online solutions. In Maryland, according to *The Washington Post*¹, “failure rates surged...during the second quarter, with new data showing percentages doubling or tripling in key classes in most of the state’s 24 school districts,” with vulnerable students being impacted at greater rates than other students. Many states are seeing similar trends.

The second critical number is the “burnout” or resignation rate of teachers in their districts. From *The New York Times*², “a pandemic teacher exodus is not hypothetical. In Minnesota, the number of teachers applying for retirement benefits increased by 35 percent this August and September compared with the same period in 2019. In Pennsylvania, the increase in retirement-benefit applications among school employees, including administrators and bus drivers, was even higher — 60 percent over the same time period.”

Combined, these numbers create adversity for high school students who are falling behind or who are in need of credit recovery for graduation. How are districts able to provide the credit-bearing and credit recovery courses their students so desperately need while still giving their teachers need time to rest and recalibrate for the summer?

More and more administrators are turning to online summer school partnerships to help.

Combating learning loss? Online summer school may help close the gap.

Districts are turning to organizations like Pearson’s online and blended learning division that offer turnkey online summer programs for additional options for summer 2021. Many states and districts are working to mitigate learning loss by using Phase III Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER) funds to provide classroom instruction or online learning during the summer months.

It’s clear that the need for online K-12 core and credit recovery courses will continue past June, and programs like Pearson’s give superintendents the chance to use tried-and-true online courses, complete with certified teachers, to help their high schoolers and give their teachers a much-needed break.

A variety of course options to address the whole academic community

Online summer school programs are not just for high school credit recovery, though. They can be used to address the needs of all learners, including:

- ♦ elementary and middle students struggling in core subjects;
- ♦ high school students needing core or elective courses;
- ♦ at-risk students who have fallen behind in the hybrid or

online learning environment;

- ♦ elementary and middle-school Summer Smarts reading and math courses which include placement assessment, goal-setting, and regular check-ins; and
- ♦ even students who need NCAA-eligible courses.

Superintendents know that focused summer learning can help get students back on track, and keeping the wellness of their teachers in mind can help lower burnout and attrition rates. A partnership for the turnkey delivery of online summer school may be just the thing that districts should be examining with relief funds allocated from recent legislation.

[Learn more](#) about Pearson’s district partnerships, or explore our [summer courses](#).

¹St. George, Donna. “Maryland schools report surge in failure rates for second quarter”. *Washington Post*.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/maryland-schools-failing-grades/2021/03/22/fe33bc86-8b21-11eb-9423-04079921c915_story.html. 22 March 2021

²Singer, Natasha. “Teaching in the Pandemic: ‘This Is Not Sustainable’” *New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/us/teachers-remote-learning-burnout.html>. 30 November 2020

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.

Learn together...

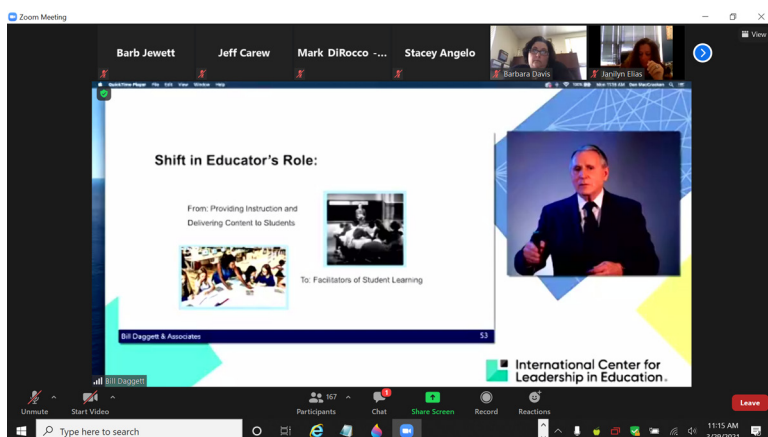
Grow together...

Lead together!

Take advantage of the numerous professional learning programs PASA is offering for school administrators in 2021!

See the list on page 9.

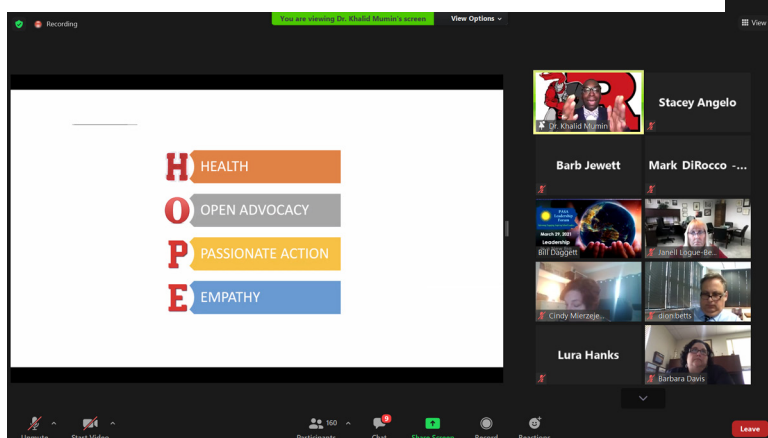
RECAP: PASA LEADERSHIP FORUM



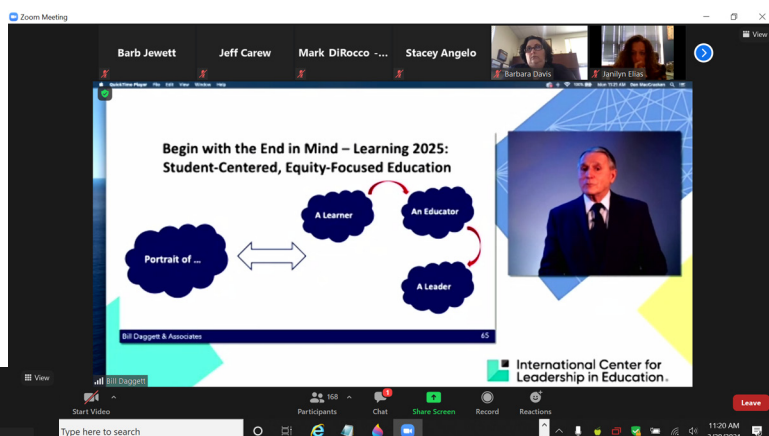
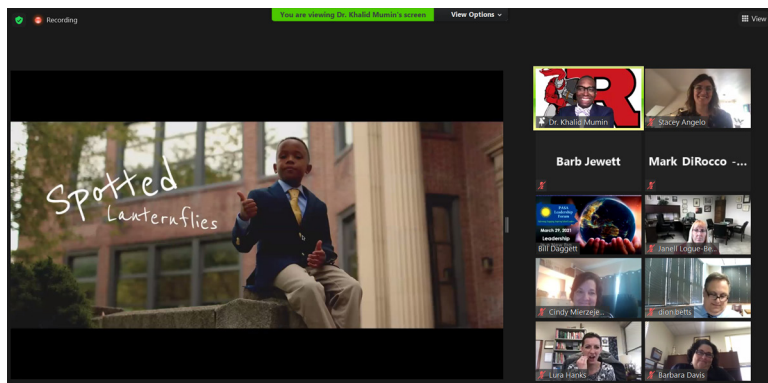
LEFT: **Dr. Bill Daggett**, founder of both the Successful Practices Network and the International Center for Leadership in Education, spoke about the need to focus more on our children's future than on maintaining the schools of our youth. Daggett is recognized worldwide for his proven ability to move preK-12 education systems towards more rigorous and relevant skills and knowledge for all students.

BELOW: Daggett told participants that change in education doesn't come through revolution; it must come through evolution, and it starts by building a culture. He also talked about the work of Learning 2025: A National Commission on Student-Centered Equity-Focused Education, which he co-chairs.

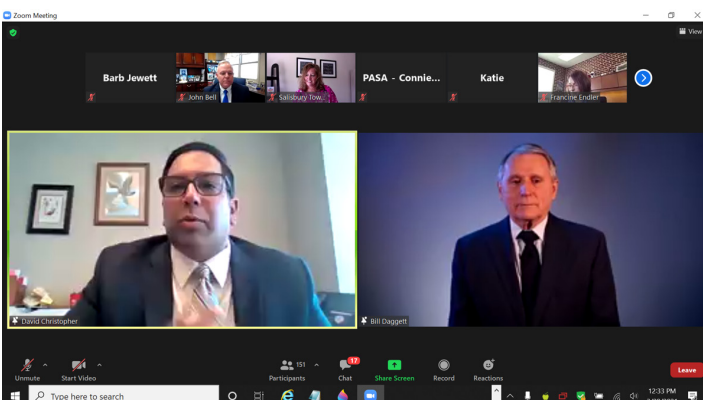
BELOW: **Dr. Khalid Mumin**, superintendent of the Reading SD, was recognized as the 2021 Pennsylvania Superintendent of the Year and talked about the importance of HOPE.



BELOW: Dr. Mumin shared a Reading School District [video](#) welcoming parents and students to the challenges of the 2020-21 school year and featuring the "Kid Superintendent."



BELOW: **Dr. David Christopher**, superintendent of the Cumberland Valley SD and chair of the PASA Innovative Learning & Teaching Committee, led a Q&A session with Dr. Daggett.



**Thank you to our
2021 Leadership Forum Sponsors!
Forecast5
Newsela**

ADVOCACY UPDATE

Advocacy Day

PASA, PARSS, and the PA Principals Association are sponsoring a **Leadership Team Virtual Advocacy Day on Monday, April 26** for school leaders to speak directly with their state senators and representatives. We will assist in the scheduling of 15-minute virtual sessions or phone conferences with your legislators and provide you with talking points on the most important issues affecting our schools.

Please register by emailing PASA's Administrative Assistant Deb Banks at dbanks@pasa-net.org and provide us with your name, school district, House representative(s) and Senator(s). We will contact you with the appropriate virtual links or phone conference numbers when your session has been scheduled. **Please register by Friday, April 16 to ensure we have enough time to schedule appointments.**

PASA Advocacy & Information

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

Advocacy:

- We continue to work with our lobbyist and other education associations on many issues, including the need for charter/cyber charter reform, assessments and the importance of adequate funding to comply with ongoing state and federal mandates as well as pandemic-related issues.
- PASA continues to communicate with the PDE and Department of Health concerning member questions and updated guidance released by both departments.

- Dr. DiRocco continues to meet via Zoom with AASA legislative advocacy staff and executives from other state superintendent associations to share information and updates related to school operations and state education policy.
- PASA sent to lawmakers and the governor's office last month the latest issue of [PASA Points](#), a monthly update sent to Pennsylvania lawmakers highlighting education issues and priorities of school leaders across Pennsylvania. The March edition focused on two topics: why school districts need subsidy increases and why the time is **now** for a flat tuition rate for cyber charter schools.

Information:

- On March 10 PASA shared with superintendent members an invitation to register for a March 22 PARSS webinar focused on allowable uses of new federal COVID relief funds.
- PASA held a Special PASA Briefing via Zoom on March 31 to review updates from the PDE and DOH, including ESSERS III funding, changes to social distancing guidelines in schools, changes to handling COVID cases and school closures, and summer camp guidance.
- On April 5 PASA sent an E-Alert to superintendent and executive director members concerning newly revised instructional model recommendations released by the PDE.
- Dr. DiRocco meets virtually with the PASA Legislative Committee during weeks in which the General Assembly is in session to provide additional legislative updates, discuss issues of high concern and plan for advocacy.

In addition, PASA continues to update the [coronavirus web page](#) and provide additional education news and information through the weekly Update on Mondays and *The PASA Flyer*.



2021 PASA/PSBA School Leadership Conference CALL FOR PRESENTERS

PASA and PSBA are now seeking relevant and compelling sessions presentations on topics that would appeal to a broad school leader audience during the 2021 PASA/PSBA School Leadership Conference, scheduled for **September 27-29** in a new venue – **Kalahari Poconos**.*

Presentations will be considered in a variety of formats:

* **Traditional Presentation:** The session focuses on a single topic or program, typically including a talk or presentation followed by questions and answers.

* **Roundtable Discussions:** Presenters briefly introduce the idea or issue they wish to explore and then open the discussion for input and exchange of ideas among participants. The purpose of this format is "more discussion, less lecture" and a focus on content delivery.

* **Interactive Presentation:** Interactive sessions provide an extended opportunity for participant engagement (small group discussions, polls, quizzes, etc.).

* **Panel Discussion:** Discussion focuses on a specific topic among a selected group of panelists who share differing perspectives. Panels may not have more than four participants plus a moderator.

* **Inspiration Session Short** (20-25 minute) discussion sessions on topics related to best practices or current trends. NO presentation slides or other audiovisual aides should be utilized.

Deadline for RFPs is June 18. [Click here](#) for the presentation form.

* **NOTE:** *Every effort is being made to hold the annual conference in person. We continue to monitor the status of the pandemic and CDC recommendations. A determination will be made by July 7, 2021 as to whether the conference will be held onsite at Kalahari Resorts and Conventions or virtually. Should the event change to a virtual platform, all accepted in-person presentations cannot be held virtually due to time and platform limitations. PSBA and PASA therefore reserve the right to make final determinations regarding virtual presentations.*



TOPIC: DRIVING K-12 INNOVATION: LOOKING BACK AND LOOKING FORWARD

EmpowerED Superintendent Monthly Webinar

The free recording of the April 12 EmpowerED Superintendent Webinar, co-hosted by CoSN, AASA and edWeb.net, and sponsored by ClassLink is now available.

The webinar, "Looking Back and Looking Forward: Leading Teaching and Learning in Today's World," features four education leaders – Dr. Carol Kelley (superintendent, Oak Park Elementary District 97, IL,) Dr. David Schuler (superintendent, Township HS District 214, IL,) Dr. Donna Wright (Director of Schools, Wilson County Schools, TN) and Dr. Chris Marczak (Chief of Instructional Leadership for the US Department of Defense Education Activity Pacific Center Japan). The four school leaders reflected on the lessons learned for dealing with a sudden crisis as they recall the steps they took in March and April of 2020 when the world was beginning to deal with the reality of a global pandemic.

They also shared strategies, policies and practices they are implementing in their school systems to assure that effective learning for all students continues today and in the future. Frankie Jackson, Independent CTO, who serves on the CoSN Driving K-12 Innovation Advisory Board, reviewed the latest updates from CoSN's 2021 "Driving K-12 Innovation Report."

[Click here](#) for free registration for the recording of the April 12 webinar.

Multiple other webinars in this series are also freely available as recordings at <https://home.edweb.net/supers/> and via podcast at <https://home.edweb.net/podcasts/>.

CoSN Resources – Driving K-12 Innovation

Through the Driving K-12 Innovation series, CoSN continues its commitment to sharing high-quality trend reports that support the use of emerging technology in K-12 education to transform learning.

The annual report identifies three areas that move K-12 Innovation forward: Hurdles, Accelerators and Tech Enablers. Hurdles are obstacles that make participants slow down, evaluate, practice, and then make the leap to better support teaching and learning. Accelerators are megatrends that drive change – sometimes suddenly and sometimes so gradually that the implications are not readily apparent. Tech Enablers are tools that support smoother leaps over the hurdles and expansive changes in global K-12 education.

You are invited to view the results of the most recent 2021 Driving K-12 Innovation Survey and explore the Hurdles, Accelerators and Tech Enablers topics that rose to the top in each category at <https://www.cosn.org/k12innovation>.

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.



COMMUNICATIONS TIP OF THE MONTH

"During a pandemic, heartfelt stories that highlight our connections can feel a bit like propaganda if you aren't in tune with your public. When times are tough, district leaders need to share the reality of the situation. That doesn't mean you abandon your focus on your district's successes. Instead, take a pause. Start a playlist of interviews that focus on the people in the trenches, which allows them to talk about their experiences, the good and the bad. After all, this is history in the making." – Angie Smith, chief of staff and clerk of the board with Chesapeake Public Schools (Virginia), from "Leveraging YouTube During a Pandemic," as published in the April issue of *School Administrator*. This month's issue features a handful of small, rural school districts that use systemic practices to ensure their students graduate with a strong education despite adverse conditions.

SPONSORS AND SPONSOR RESOURCES

We are grateful for the ongoing support of our PASA 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 that may be helpful to school leaders.

The PASA website includes a page listing COVID-related resources and information offered by several PASA sponsors. Check it out [here](#).

See more information about our [PASA Sponsors](#) and [PASA Business-Level Sponsors](#).

A New Vision of Public Schools

A report released last week by AASA is recommending a holistic redesign of our nation's schools aimed at capturing a new vision of future-focused, rigorous, energetic and culturally-vibrant learning through the empowerment of districts to enact change on behalf of learners, families and communities.

The report, [*An American Imperative: A New Vision of Public Schools*](#), was created by Learning 2025: A National Commission on Student-Centered Equity-Focused Education, a cadre of thought leaders in education, business, community and philanthropy, launched earlier this year by AASA.

The report outlines critical functions—leading, teaching and learning—for realizing systemic change and affirms that leaders, teachers and learners play a role in redesigning systems, reengineering instruction and co-authoring the learning journey. Further, core component areas are essential and must be present to address any school system and community to meet the commission's vision. These core areas include resources; culture; and social, emotional and cognitive growth.

AASA, in partnership with other national collaborative organizations, will identify demonstration school districts, a collection of forward-leaning urban, suburban and rural districts that exemplify the actions expressed in the report to serve as national models.

AASA Statement on Violence Against Asian Americans

On March 18, Daniel A. Domenech, executive director of AASA, The School Superintendents Association, issued the following statement in response to the latest violence pitted against Asian Americans.

"AASA condemns, in the strongest possible terms, the recent unrest in Georgia that has resulted in the killings of several Asian American women, escalating a surge in anti-Asian hate crimes nationwide. These senseless acts of violence are adding a new layer of fear in our communities large and small throughout the country at a time when our school systems are shifting toward more in-person instruction.

"As school district leaders continue to grapple with the COVID-19 pandemic that has claimed the lives of half a million Americans, this violence opens a fresh wound in our society that is affecting the efforts of our administrators, building leaders, teachers and other educators who are working diligently every single day to strengthen the social and emotional well-being of our young learners while trying to eliminate the learning loss that has taken place over the past year.

"AASA remains committed to equity, working to prepare and support school system leaders who value equity, and to dismantling systemic racism and discrimination. We remain committed to support the efforts of our school districts to ensure that the safety and welfare of all students and staff remains a top priority."

USDE Letter: Recommendations to Improve Rural Education Outreach

AASA and 16 other allied organizations sent [a letter](#) to Secretary Cardona last month requesting that the Department of Education expand its efforts to increase engagement with rural education stakeholders, promote staff understanding of the challenges facing

rural local education agencies, and improve the intra-agency rural education-related policymaking efforts of and between the Department's senior leadership, White House Domestic Policy Council, and U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Call for Proposals

AASA is searching for the "best of the best" presenters to engage attendees of the 2022 National Conference in Education (Feb. 17-19 in Nashville) in conversations around cutting edge trends, issues and solutions in education. Participation as a presenter will help attendees increase their leadership skills and professional competence, provide for an exchange of ideas and solutions and help attendees address the controversial issues facing today's educators. [Click here](#) to submit a proposal.

2021-22 President-Elect

Shari L. Camhi, superintendent of the Baldwin Union Free School District in Baldwin, N.Y., has been elected as the association's 2021-22 president-elect. She and other newly elected AASA governance members will begin their terms on July 1. Camhi and Paul Imhoff, superintendent of Upper Arlington Schools in Upper Arlington, Ohio, will be sworn in as president and president-elect, respectively, in July at a summer meeting of the AASA Governing Board.

In This Month's School Administrator

"When leaders are attuned to their own blind spots, they are better able to provide guidance to others on overcoming challenges, exposing blind spots, providing opportunities to learn and grow collaboratively and ultimately achieving organizational excellence. Once understood, blind spots are no longer blind spots." – Kristi Wilson, AASA President, from "Culture, Core Processes and Organizational Excellence"

"Shift the focus to a model that provides a personalized learning path for each student. Transition local instructional programs and assessment systems to a growth model based on formative data. Remove outdated grade/age-based groupings and shift to readiness learning. Use technology to transform learning by increasing engagement during the school day and extend learning beyond the classroom." – Daniel Domenech, AASA Executive Director, from "An AASA Commission Plots Path to Excellence"

AASA Pandemic 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.

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.

As AASA has highlighted in newsletters and blog posts, one of President Biden's policy priorities this year is to move legislation that would drastically rebuild the nation's infrastructure after decades of disinvestment in school facilities, broadband, water systems, bridges and roads.

Acting in good faith on this campaign promise, on March 31, the Biden administration released [the American Jobs Plan](#). If passed, this sweeping proposal would invest a total of \$2 trillion in funding over 10-years in infrastructure improvements and would include more than \$200 billion in direct grants and bonds for education and childcare infrastructure and workforce training programs.

Specifically, the President's plan calls on Congress to allocate \$100 billion for school construction and modernization, to be broken down into \$50 billion in direct grants and an additional \$50 billion leveraged through bonds. Moreover, this funding would likely be appropriated on an as-needed basis to procure equipment and make repairs that enable schools to improve indoor air quality and safely reopen with in-person learning (i.e., HVAC repairs). This funding may also be used for school district efforts around (1) creating energy-efficient and innovative school buildings with cutting-edge technology and labs, (2) improving school kitchens, or (3) reducing or eliminating the use of paper plates and other disposable materials.

While AASA is appreciative of any federal investment for public school facilities, it is important to note that the President's proposed investment around school construction and modernization efforts represents a significant dip in funding from other proposals that have moved forth on Capitol Hill. For comparison, the chair-

man of the House Education and Labor Committee, Bobby Scott, has championed the Reopen and Rebuild America's Schools Act (RRASA). This proposal would allocate \$100 billion in grants and 30 billion in capital outlay bonds. Therefore, this portion of the American Jobs Plan represents a \$50B reduction in total grant funding compared to other House Democrat proposals on school infrastructure.

The Build Back Better proposal would also appropriate \$100 billion to build high-speed broadband infrastructure. Specifically, this funding would be used to help America reach the 100 percent high-speed broadband coverage threshold.

In addition to K-12 school infrastructure, Biden is calling on Congress to invest \$12 billion in community colleges to improve facilities and technology, address education higher education deserts (particularly for rural communities), grow local economies, improve energy efficiency and resilience, and narrow funding inequities in higher education. The proposal also urges Congress to appropriate \$25 billion for states to upgrade and increase the supply of childcare facilities. Specifically, this funding would flow through a Child Care Growth and Innovation Fund directed at building states' supply of infant and toddler care in high-need areas.

[School Lead Pipes and Service Lines](#)

Also, of important note to AASA members, the proposal calls on Congress to provide \$45 billion in federal investments to eliminate all lead. The benefit of this investment to AASA members is that it would significantly solve the schools' burden of complying with Environmental Protection Agency requirements around the prevalence of lead in schools' drinking water. For more background around this topic, please [click here](#).

[Workforce Training and Apprenticeships](#)

Biden's Build Back Better plan also calls on Congress to allocate \$48 billion in federal investments to improve the capacity of existing workforce development and worker protection systems. Ultimately, the goal of this investment would be to support registered apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships, create one to two million new registered apprenticeship-slots, and strengthen the pipeline for more women and people of color to access these types of workforce training programs.

Senate Democrats are exploring whether they could have an additional opportunity to use budget reconciliation to pass these two bills. Congress could revise the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 budget resolution that included the reconciliation instructions, which were used to create and pass the American Rescue Plan, and then use the new reconciliation instructions to pass this latest infrastructure proposal. This would benefit Democrats by leaving the FY 2022 budget resolution available for a third reconciliation bill, which only requires a simple majority vote in the Senate for passage.

Speaker Pelosi has announced her intention to pass this bill before the July 4th recess, but many are skeptical given the lack of detail in this proposal how realistic that timeline actually is.

AASA will certainly make a hard push to ensure school infrastructure is included in any Congressional package and funded in an appropriate, equity-centered way. Please stay tuned to see how you can advocate for the maximum funding needed to address the longstanding crumbling and decrepit condition of some of our nation's school buildings and grounds.

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!



NAVIGATING THE SCHOOL YEAR: UPDATES & RESOURCES

Federal COVID Aid...

In mid-March Pres. Biden signed into law the American Rescue Plan (ARP), a \$2 trillion federal emergency supplemental appropriation package that includes supports for vaccines, schools, small businesses, individuals and anti-poverty programs. Pennsylvania is expected to receive more than \$13.4 billion, with about \$7.3 billion coming to state government and \$6.1 billion to counties, municipalities and school districts.

According to Gov. Wolf, K-12 schools in Pennsylvania are expected to receive \$4.5 billion, with each entity receiving an amount proportional to the federal Title I-A funds received in 2020 under the Every Student Succeeds Act. School districts and charter schools must use at least 20 percent of this money to address learning loss and the social, emotional and academic needs of underrepresented students, including students from low-income families, students with disabilities, English learners, migrant students, students experiencing homelessness, and children in foster care. Schools can use the rest of the funding for a wide range of activities, including food service, professional training, technology purchases, sanitization and cleaning supplies, summer and after-school programs, and mental health supports. Funds must be used by September 2024.

Guidance, Research and News Updates...

- The PDE and Department of Health have released updates to health and safety recommendations that went into effect April 5. They include: [updated social/physical distancing recommendations](#) (changes regarding 3 feet versus 6 feet of physical distancing in classroom settings, as per CDC guidelines); updated recommendations on [handling COVID cases in schools](#); and summer camp [guidance](#).
- Also this month, the PDE opened up the application process for the [Flexible Instructional Day \(FID\) program](#) during the 2021-22 school year. Deadline for submitting applications is June 1.
- The PDE has released its updated [Instructional Model Recommendations](#). The significant change in the guidelines is that districts with **moderate** transmission rates are recommended to use the Full In-Person Learning Model as well as Blended, and districts with a **substantial** transmission rate are recommended to use the Blended Learning Model as well as Remote.
- Pfizer has begun testing its Covid-19 vaccine in children under 12. The trial's first participants, a pair of 9-year-old twin girls, were immunized at Duke University in North Carolina late last month. Results from the trial are expected in the second half of the year, and the company hopes to vaccinate younger children early next year, said Sharon Castillo, a spokeswoman for the pharmaceutical company. Moderna also is beginning a trial of its vaccine in children six months to 12 years of age. Both companies have been testing their vaccines in children 12 and older, and expect those results in the next few weeks. (from The New York Times, 3/31/21)

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 planning and management. Find the resources here: <https://www.pasa-net.org/coronavirus>. PASA updates the 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.

MEMBER NEWS

REGION 1

Stephen Puskar has been appointed superintendent of the Burgettstown Area SD. He currently serves as junior/senior high principal of the Claysburg-Kimmel SD. Puskar replaces **Dr. James Walsh**, who is now serving as superintendent of the Bethel Park SD.

REGION 7

Dr. Christine Oldham, superintendent of the Ligonier Valley SD, has announced her intention to retire at the conclusion of the current school year. She has been with the district for 13 years.

REGION 16

Dr. Cathy Keegan, superintendent of the Milton Area SD, recently received a three-year contract renewal through June 30, 2024.

REGION 21

Kathleen Evison, superintendent of the Southern Lehigh SD, has announced she will retire from the position, effective July 2. She has served in the position since 2016.

REGION 23

Robert Rizzo is currently serving as acting superintendent in the Spring-Ford SD. He has been the district's assistant superintendent. Rizzo replaces **Dr. David Goodin**, who resigned in December to take a superintendent position in North Carolina.

REGION 24

Dr. James Scanlon, superintendent of the West Chester Area SD, has announced his intention to retire in August 2021. Scanlon has served 39 years in education, 16 in West Chester, and 12 as the district's superintendent, and has been a long-standing member of the PASA Advocacy Committee (formerly Resolutions Committee) for I.U. 24. **Dr. Robert Sokoloski**, the district's assistant superintendent, has been selected to replace Scanlon.

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



"All schools have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and I commend school communities for rising to the challenge to combat the toll it has taken. This extra funding is critical to help schools meet the unique needs of educating students at this time while keeping school buildings safe when students return to the classroom." – Gov. Tom Wolf, from a press release, 3/29/21

"I believe in choice, but choice without quality does not sound like an option." – Noe Ortega, Acting Secretary of Education, concerning Gov. Wolf's proposed cyber charter tuition rate, during a Senate Appropriations Committee hearing on March 18

"Many schools in Pennsylvania have worked hard over the past year to keep their doors open to students while providing a safe learning environment. They should be commended. Unfortunately, we continue to see too many special interests and others fighting to keep other schools closed to in-person instruction. We appropriate over \$16.6 billion from the state's General Fund to support PreK-12 and higher education. If school districts, technical schools, community colleges or universities do not open their doors to full-time, in-person instruction, working with my colleagues, I will push to ensure the School Code prohibits them from accessing these dollars." Rep. Stan Saylor (R-York), chairman of the PA House Appropriations Committee, from a March 24 press release

"This is another thing I would tell teachers— is just to really see your students. Let them feel heard and seen." – Erika Brown, a kindergarten teacher in New Orleans, on addressing students needs during and after the pandemic, from "The Pandemic Will Affect Students' Mental Health for Years to Come. How Schools Can Help" ([Education Week](#), 3/31/21)

"It is important to note that when transitioning between any instructional models, it is critical to continue to stay vigilant around mitigation strategies, including face coverings and social distancing. We believe the announcements made over the past week create additional flexibilities for school leaders, like yourself, to make decisions at the local level consistent with best practices and with public health and safety at the forefront. As always, we will continue to monitor evolving research and guidance and modify our operational strategies accordingly." – Matt Stem, Deputy Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education, PDE, from a letter to superintendents on April 5 outlining newly revised Instructional Model Recommendations issued by the department

"Returning to the past following the end of this pandemic is not an option for our schools. What makes this report stand out and what gives us hope is that it will impact practice at the classroom and school levels. It's a call to action comprised of recommendations, coupled with specific action steps. Everyone associated with a school district—superintendents, principals, teachers, school boards, parents, and community and business leaders—must take bold steps to work together as systems on behalf of the well-being, self-sufficiency and success of our students." – Daniel Domenech, AASA executive director on the recently released report **An American Imperative: A New Vision of Public Schools**

"We have to start engaging the broader 'family.' Reach out to them on their turf and have deep conversations. What worked? What didn't? How could we have helped you better? Many times we in education are guilty of thinking the family has the responsibility to help us. But the reality is it is a two-way street. More and more, kids are going to want to be in the remote environment. Not all adults, not all kids will be tied down to one place with the movement toward working at 'home.' Engage parents by listening to them, supporting them, and identify the support you need back from them." – Bill Daggett, founder of the Successful Practices Network and co-chair of Learning 2025: A National Commission on Student-Centered Equity-Focused Education, speaking during the PASA Leadership Forum on March 29

"This is great news not just for students and teachers, but for the entire community. To say life during the COVID-19 pandemic has been difficult — especially for parents and guardians of school-aged children whose routines were thrown into chaos — is the ultimate understatement. But this funding provides a significant boost to getting students and school faculty safely back on a familiar path, and addresses student learning loss and other educational needs that may have come up over the past year." – State Rep. Joe Ciresi (D-146th Dist.) on federal COVID aid (as published in *The Pottstown Mercury*, 4/13/21)

"You don't make up that time in five or six weeks. What we're trying to do is reduce regression. That's going to be something that we're going to have to continue to work on over the next several years." – Philadelphia School District Superintendent William Hite, on the district's plan to offer summer school to all students

"We have two groups. We have an 'A' group and we have a 'B' group, and they're coming in on different days. So we'll have about half of the student population there on one day which then allows us to have enough room in a classroom to continue to be six feet apart. It feels like new life. We're bringing them back. School's actually happening. Education is actually happening, and I hope our children are actually as excited as we are." – Janet Serino, superintendent of the Wyoming Area SD, on student return to school (from *PAHomePage*, 3/22/21)

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.)

PASA CALENDAR

All programs and meetings are virtual.

See the PASA web site at www.pasa-net.org.

APRIL

- 15 Advocacy Committee meeting
Board of Governors' meeting
- 20 Webinar for Superintendents: Crisis Communications
- 26 Leadership Team Virtual Advocacy Day

MAY

- 6 Superintendent Forum: Leading Change
- 12 Women's Caucus Board meeting (virtual)
- 31 PASA office closed

JUNE

- 16 Summer Forum Session 1: Leading in a Culture of Change
- 23-24 National Superintendent Certification Program

JULY

- 5 PASA office closed
- 21 Leading in a Culture of Change Session 1 (virtual)

AUGUST

- 1-3 PA Education Leadership Summit (Poconos Kalahari)
- 4 Professional Development Committee meeting (virtual)
- 18 Leading in a Culture of Change Session 2 (virtual)

PA Educational Leadership Summit

August 1-3, 2021
Kalahari Resorts & Convention Ctr.
Pocono Manor, PA

**** REGISTRATION OPEN! ****

PA EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

August 1-3

at Kalahari Resorts & Convention Center

for school leaders and district leadership teams to learn, network and plan

approved for 40 PIL/Act 45 hours

(up to 40 additional hours available with Ed Camp registration)

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

KEYNOTES



Scarlett Lewis



Dr. Adam Drummond

To register, go to:

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

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