

SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET REPORT

Last month PASBO, PASA and PARSS released results of the spring 2021 school district budget survey, which reveals how school districts are using—or expect to use—their federal COVID funds. The report used data collected in the spring of 2021 from two separate surveys – one for school district superintendents and one for school district business managers – and also was informed by 2019-20 Annual Financial Report data posted by the PA Department of Education.

Survey responses indicate a commonality in the use of federal COVID funds to address learning loss through various strategies, provide for technology expansion and access, engage in facility upgrades and improvements to enhance air quality and safety, and investigate strategies to improve sustainability of programs in preparation for expiration of the funds. In addition, the survey reveals that school districts also are

focused on addressing the unique needs of their individual student subgroups by combatting food insecurity, enhancing mental health services and supports, and providing staff training.

While the survey shows that school leader optimism and expectations for the outcomes associated with the expenditure of these federal funds are high, the optimism comes with apprehension regarding sustainability of programs, supports, and improvements made with federal funds. “The wide pre-COVID variation in local tax bases and state funding support make this a much greater challenge for many districts,” the associations state. “As state mandates continue to grow significantly while local and state revenue growth slows or pauses, the pandemic has served to widen the existing gaps across districts.”

In addition, despite a short time period to implement the federal investment, school districts see this as an opportunity to reshape k-12 education in Pennsylvania and move public education ahead post-COVID, but the report notes that their success in this effort will not be sustainable without the support and partnership of state

policymakers. “As school districts navigate these challenging times, mandated costs continue to rise and policymakers continue to discuss efforts to further de-fund public education,” the associations conclude. “Without additional future state support for education, along with changes in existing policies, students, school districts and taxpayers are worse off, and the promise of the improvements and advancements made as a result of the federal funding will be fleeting at best.”

[Click here](#) to read the report.

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NOTICE TO MEMBERS: PASA ANNUAL MEETING SET FOR SEPTEMBER 9

The PASA Annual Meeting will be held in conjunction with the PASA Recognition Luncheon on September 9 at the Sheraton Harrisburg Hershey beginning at 11:00 a.m.

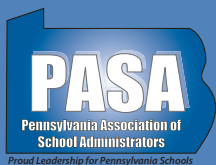
PASA President Dr. John Bell will preside over the annual meeting, which will a State of the Association Report and acceptance of PASA’s Advocacy Priorities (*formerly PASA Resolutions*). (Eligible voting members, which include those who are PASA members as Commissioned Officers and Small District Leaders, will be able to vote on the Priorities.) The final draft of the Advocacy Priorities will be available for review online in early August. Members will be sent a link to the draft.

The PASA Recognition Luncheon, formerly held during the PASA/PSBA School Leadership Conference, will follow the meeting and introduce and honor the recipients of the 2021 PASA Awards of Achievement and honor Dr. Bell for his year of service as president of the association.

The PASA Board of Governors will hold its September meeting immediately following the luncheon.

PASA members are invited to attend the annual meeting. Those who wish to attend the Recognition Luncheon will be able to register for a fee (TBA).

More information will be available in the August issue of *The PASA Flyer*.



The *PASA Flyer* is published monthly by the Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators.

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PASA Members:

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

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DR. MARK DIROCCO

STATE BUDGET AND SCHOOL CODE AUTOPSY

At PASA, we want to take a moment to thank all our members as well as the members of other education associations for their tireless advocacy efforts over the past few months.

Together, we were able to hold off legislation that would have negatively impacted public education such as Senate Bill 1, that would have sent millions to nonpublic schools and been favorable to charter schools, and Senate Bill 733, that would have established a new voucher program sending additional millions to nonpublic schools with no public accountability.

On a positive note, we appreciate the additional federal funds from the state that will help to augment pandemic recovery efforts in our schools. We are also thankful for the \$200 million increase in basic subsidy and a \$50 million increase special education subsidy to help with the exploding cost of PSERS, charter school tuition, and special education services.

Additionally, we are grateful that the Governor and General Assembly acknowledged that there are serious inequities in the state funding formula and instituted the Level Up initiative by sending an additional \$100 million to our 100 most underfunded schools. This was a good start, but far from what is needed to financially stabilize our districts.

Unfortunately, the subsidy increases will not cover the rising mandated cost of PSERS, charter school tuition and special education. These three areas alone will have increased by more than \$1 billion over the 2020-21 and 2021-22 school years. Because subsidies were level-funded last year, the new subsidy dollars for 2021-22 will not be enough to cover these rising costs. Once again, districts will have to raise property taxes, cut personnel, cut programming, or some combination of the three to balance their budgets.

We realize that some legislators did not want to provide any increase in school subsidies due to the large infusion of federal stimulus funds. However, the legislature sent a letter to every superintendent cautioning them not to spend federal stimulus dollars on reoccurring expenses, which are the same state mandates that I previously mentioned, meaning that state subsidies and local tax dollars are the revenues that have to be used for ongoing district expenses, not federal stimulus dollars.

This sets up a troublesome scenario in which it is difficult for school leaders to explain to their communities why they have to make difficult financial and personnel decisions despite having large amounts of federal dollars to spend. We are disappointed that, despite higher-than-expected state revenues received in 2020-21 and nearly \$7 billion in federal funds given to the state, a rare window of opportunity to adequately fund our schools was missed.

Additionally, the failure to acknowledge the data concerning charter school management and funding and the deficiencies in the state's charter school law will only exacerbate the stress on school district budgets. PASA is very disappointed that despite general acknowledgement among legislators that the charter school law and charter school funding need to change, state lawmakers once again have failed to address the issue.

We made limited progress this year to accomplish our advocacy goals, and still have much work to do to ensure that our public school districts are properly funded. We hope you will join us in the ongoing advocacy effort to adequately and equitably fund our school districts as we move into the fall legislative session.

In the meantime, we encourage all school leaders to take some much needed time away from the office to enhance your physical and mental well-being. We appreciate all you have done for children you serve during these unprecedented past 18 months and encourage you to take some time for yourself over the next few weeks.

You have my best wishes for a nice summer.





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 State Budget & Finance News

Final Budget: The 2021-22 state budget is now final. The \$40.8 billion spending package includes a 2.6% spending increase, no new taxes or fees, transfers \$2.5 billion into the state's Rainy Day Fund, and sets aside an additional \$5 billion in federal relief funds to be used in future budgets, thanks to federal aid and higher-than-anticipated state revenues.

Education Funding: Both the BEF and SEF will have an increase in 2021-22, \$300 million and \$50 million, respectively. \$100 million of the BEF increase will go toward the "Level Up" program for the 100 most underfunded schools. The BEF increase also includes the state's share of Social Security payments for school employees. SEF allocations will be based on 2019-20 data.

Federal Aid Grant: About \$300 million in federal aid will be driven out to school districts and cyber/charter schools through a new state grant application process for three uses: learning loss programs, summer enrichment programs, and comprehensive afterschool programs. [Click here](#) for unofficial district allocations.

PlanCon: The budget bill extends the moratorium an additional 18 months.

EITC: The budget increases the amount of tax credits available for scholarships under the EITC/OITC programs by \$40 million, a 22% increase over the 2019-20 allocation.

School Code Bill: Even though many education bills passed either the House or Senate in June, very few of those proposals were included in the School Code bill passed with the budget, as House and Senate leaders and the governor could not come to agreement on many issues. The only K-12 amendments to the Code included moving back the due date of the Special Education Commission report to December 31, 2021, continuing the PlanCon moratorium, and extending the ability of individuals without a teaching certificate to serve as a substitute teacher.

Extra Year of Education: SB 664, now Act 66 of 2021, allows any parent the option to have their child repeat a grade in 2021-22, whether the child has met benchmarks or not. The option also extends to students with IEPs who have "aged-out" during the past year. The PDE has provided [information](#) to school districts to share with parents, who have until June 15 to complete the PDE form to request the extra year.

For more details on the state budget, see the [June 28 Education Update](#). Also, see the [PDE website](#) for more information.

In Other Budget & Finance News

State Revenue: Pennsylvania ended the fiscal year with \$40.4 billion in General Fund collections, which is \$3.4 billion, or 9.3 percent, above estimate. Final revenue collections were stronger than expected in nearly every tax type, and, according to the Department of Revenue, the fiscal year closed with the largest surplus in the commonwealth's history.

State Funding Lawsuit: The lawsuit alleging that the General Assembly has violated the state Constitution by failing to provide fair and adequate funding for public education is now scheduled to go to trial in September, beginning September 9. The case was first brought in 2014 by six school districts, PARSS, the NAACP-PA and five public school parents.

Legislative News

Session Schedule: After the usual flurry of activity at the Capitol last month, lawmakers passed the budget on June 25 and are now in recess until late September, with a limited number of session days planned for the fall.

Bill Signed into Law: SB 554 (now Act 65 of 2021) requires that public agencies (including school districts) make their meeting agendas available to the public and, once posted, may not take any official action on unlisted items except in emergency situations or to consider matters that are de minimis in nature.

Charter "Reform" Bill: Although the Senate Education Committee passed a bill (SB 1) that would have greatly expanded the EITC program and provide limited charter school "reform" that did not significantly address the funding issue, the Senate did not consider it before the summer recess. **PASA opposed the bill.**

Voucher Bill: The Senate also did not consider a bill that would provide tuition vouchers to parents of all children with IEPs. The bill, approved by the Senate Education Committee on June 7, could easily have an estimated \$600 million impact on school districts. **PASA strongly opposed the bill.**

Other Legislation: Many education bills, some good and some bad, were left far from the finish line last month, even though many went through committee. Issues such as CTE certifications, mandating the uses of federal COVID aid, foster children and graduation goals and no-bid contracts.

State News

Ortega Confirmed: The Senate last month confirmed Noe Ortega as Secretary of Education with a 44-6 vote.

In National News

Transgender Students Rights: The U.S. Supreme Court last month declined to take up the appeal in a Virginia case about the right of a transgender student to use a restroom consistent with his gender identity. The decision leaves in place a federal appeals court decision that stated the school district violated both the equal protection clause and Title IX by adopting a policy that barred the student from the boys' restroom.

Updated CDC Guidance: The CDC on July 9 released [updated guidance](#) for COVID-19 prevention in K-12 schools concerning return-to-school in the fall. The update emphasizes the need for localities to monitor community transmission, vaccination coverage, screening testing, and occurrence of outbreaks to guide decisions on the level of layered prevention strategies, and also adds language on the importance of offering in-person learning, regardless of whether all of the prevention strategies can be implemented at the school. The updated language also aligns with current mask guidance, clarifying that, in general, people do not need to wear masks when outdoors, and adds language on safety and

See From the Capitol, page 4

SUPERINTENDENT OF THE YEAR LUNCHEON

Dr. Khalid Mumin, Superintendent of the Reading School District and the 2021 Pennsylvania Superintendent of the Year, was feted at a special luncheon held in his honor on June 18 in Reading.

Attendees at the event included: Hon. Chrissy Houlahan of the U.S. House of Representatives; Hon. Manuel Guzman from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives; Secretary of Education Noe Ortega; Abe Amoros, Managing Director for the City of Reading; members of the Reading School Board; members of the PASA Board of Governors; staff and students from the school district; and family and friends of Dr. Mumin.



LEFT: Wayne Brookhart represented SiteLogiQ, sponsor of the PA Superintendent of the Year program.



Dr. Khalid Mumin



LEFT: PASA President Dr. Jay Burkhart, superintendent of the South Western SD (R), presided over the program, and, along with PASA Executive Director Dr. Mark DiRocco (L), made a formal presentation to Dr. Mumin.

BELOW: Members of the Reading High School Choir, under the direction of Joe Smith, performed several numbers from "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown."



RIGHT: State Rep. Manny Guzman (R), who was a member of the Reading School Board when Mumin was hired seven years ago, recalled how he and his fellow board members toiled to find a new leader for the district in the spring of 2014. Guzman presented a formal citation to Dr. Mumin.



FROM THE CAPITOL

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health protections for workers in K-12 schools. The agency also calls on school districts to use local health data to guide decisions about when to tighten or relax prevention measures like mask wearing and physical distancing.

COMING UP

After a highly political and polarized spring session, lawmakers have left Harrisburg and won't return until mid- to late-September. As noted, lawmakers failed to come to consensus on a significant number of education policy issues as their attention was diverted to other issues, such as election reform. As a result, badly needed reform of the state's charter school law, which most lawmakers agree needs to be changed, was one of the issues dropped last month. Overcoming the pro-charter school influence with Republican leaders will be challenging. At this point, it is doubtful the issue will come up in the short fall session, which means it will be a political football yet again in 2022 (an election year) and a continuing financial drain on school districts. PASA will be working to keep that issue front-and-center, despite the challenge. Stay tuned for the latest information by following us on **Twitter @PASASupts**.



LEFT: The "Kid Superintendent" from the district, who starred in a district video about opening school, participated in the program.

RIGHT: Secretary of Education Noe Ortega thanked Dr. Mumin for his service, saying that he has helped benefit not just the district and Reading, but the entire commonwealth.



Congratulations, Dr. Mumin!



SHARPEN THE SAW

BY DR. JOHN BELL, 2020-21 PASA PRESIDENT

In his worldwide bestseller, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, Stephen Covey calls Habit #7 "Sharpen the Saw." He chose that title because of the story of the man who is using a dull saw to cut down a tree and it is taking him hours to accomplish the task. When the man is asked why doesn't he take a break and sharpen the saw, he responds, "I can't.

I'm too busy sawing!"

I think most of us will agree we have done a lot more sawing than sharpening over the last 16 months. Our communities needed us to rise to the occasion, and we did so with remarkable leadership. However, we must not forget about taking care of ourselves. It truly is a matter of life and death.

Covey cites four key areas on which one must sharpen the saw – body, brain, heart and soul. In terms of the body or physical dimension, he cites exercise, eating healthy, sleeping well and relaxing as key components. When it comes to the brain or mental dimension, he says to read, educate, write and learn new skills. For the heart or emotional dimension, he advocates building relationships, giving service and laughing. In the soul or spiritual dimension, he recommends you meditate, keep a journal, pray and take in quality media.

I encourage you to take time to sharpen the saw as much as possible this summer. Equally as important is to build "saw time" into your daily routine during the school year as well. I know how busy all of us are, but keeping yourself sharp will pay dividends professionally and personally.

Find some things you like to do in all four areas – body, brain, heart and soul – and make them part of your weekly schedule. Covey trainers recommend planning out your entire week before it starts so that the "big rocks" (the most important things in your

life) are built into your weekly schedule before anything else. If the big rocks are in the schedule first, your little rocks can be scheduled in the remaining open blocks of time, delegated, deleted or postponed. This prioritization is called "putting first things first", which is Covey Habit #3.

Last month, I provided a long list of leadership books for you to consider. I hope you have had time to relax and enjoy a good book. This month's highlighted book is *Smarter Budgets, Smarter Schools* by Nathan Levenson. He was a business executive turned superintendent in Massachusetts. Upon retirement from the superintendency, he worked for the District Management Council in Boston.

Being a non-educator, he shares many out-of-the-box ideas to better serve students through the budgeting process. He provides ideas related to staffing, technology, special education and employee benefits. He also details his theory of academic return on investment (A-ROI). Businesses talk about ROI all the time, but schools have been slow to adopt this rigorous scrutiny. He has identified three powerful concepts behind A-ROI: not all money spent to help kids learn is effective, money spent should lead to positive outcomes, and spending \$1,000 to help a student is better than \$2,000 for similar gains.

If you are looking for creative ways to balance your budget and/or want to rigorously evaluate the effectiveness of how you currently spend your dollars, I think you would enjoy this book. His take is refreshing and his stories are interesting.

Enjoy the rest of your summer and keep sharpening your saw!

Dr. Bell is superintendent of the Delaware Valley SD.

STILL TIME TO APPLY!

EPLC'S 2021-2022 PA EDUCATION POLICY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Applications are now being accepted for the [2021-22 Education Policy Fellowship Program](#). The Education Policy Fellowship Program is sponsored in Pennsylvania by The Education Policy and Leadership Center (EPLC)*.

Similar to the 2020-21 Program, the format and schedule of the 2021-22 program is changed from the traditional Fellowship Program held from 1999 to 2019 and will be conducted in briefer, more frequent, and mostly online sessions. In-person sessions are planned for the Gettysburg Battlefield and Army War College (October), Washington DC (April), and Harrisburg (May), with proof of COVID vaccination required for these events.

The online content will be substantially the same as the traditional Fellowship Program, with some changes necessitated by the online format and a desire to reduce costs to sponsors in these uncertain fiscal times. But with the new virtual format, the program is able to broaden the scope of experience and perspective represented by our session leaders and guests.

The commitment of EPLC remains the same. The Fellowship Program will continue to be Pennsylvania's premier education policy leadership program for education, community, policy and

advocacy leaders --- with more than 600 graduates since 1999. Many superintendents and aspiring superintendents are alumni of the program, which provides a wide view of education policy issues both in Pennsylvania and nationally.

The Fellowship Program begins with three-hour virtual morning sessions on September 17 and 24, and the program ends with a graduation event in June 2022.

The [application](#) may be copied from the EPLC web site, but it must be submitted by mail or scanned and e-mailed with the necessary signatures of applicant and sponsor. To discuss any aspect of the Fellowship Program and its requirements, contact EPLC Executive Director Ron Cowell at 412-298-4796 or COWELL@EPLC.ORG.

*The Education Policy and Leadership Center (EPLC) is a Pennsylvania-based, not-for-profit corporation established in 1998 and governed by a board of directors that includes members who have significant experience with education policy, government and not-for-profit organizations. The Center conducts its policy and leadership programs in cooperation with numerous local, statewide and national organizations. PASA is a founder and supporter of EPLC.



LEVEL UP FUNDING IS A GOOD 'FIRST DOWN' BUT NOT A WIN FOR STUDENTS

BY STEPHEN RODRIGUEZ, CAUCUS PRESIDENT



It was my honor to represent urban schools, diverse, high poverty schools, and rural districts in a press conference last month with Governor Tom Wolf, Representative Mike Schlossberg, and the 2021 PASA Superintendent of the Year Dr. Khalid Mumin (right). His school district, and Reading, saw an increase of \$6.5 million this year.



We were there for two reasons: to celebrate the passage of "Level Up" legislation that provided for \$100 million to the most underfunded school district in the commonwealth, and \$300 million overall to the fair funding formula. This gets us to less than 15% of education dollars going through said formula since 2016 and does not even keep pace with the growing costs of education we are all experiencing, but it's more than we've seen in a while. The second reason we were there was to call out the fact that there is a very, very long way to go before we achieve equity and appropriate levels of state support for school districts.



I stated quite clearly that, while any additional dollars for school districts is welcome news, this is just a "first down" and not a touchdown, and certainly not a win for the majority of our students in our Commonwealth. (Yes, the majority of students are in underfunded schools, 52% before the pandemic, and the latest number I saw, that is not official yet, was 58%, but as I said, not official yet.)

In fact, some legislators who felt strongly that we needed to take the humongous, ginormous, REALLY big budget surplus and put it to use to start recovering from the pandemic actually voted against the budget. I applaud that notion. Again, additional funding is wel-



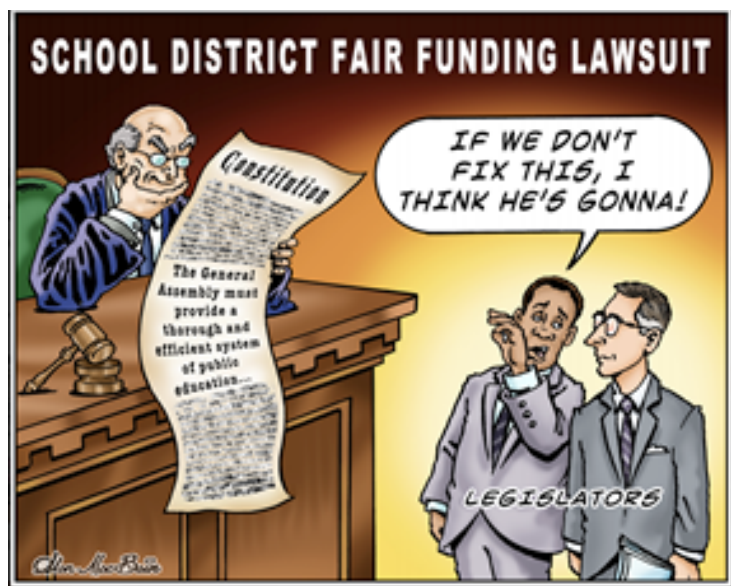
come news, but it's not enough, and it hasn't been for many years. We missed an opportunity to correct a big problem. The phrase "bandaid on a chest wound" comes to mind.

Looming over the legislature is the state Supreme Court trial regarding this very issue. Interestingly, I have heard some say that the very slow increase in use of the fair funding formula will be evidence against the school district plaintiffs, who believe our students state Constitutional rights are being violated.

If anything, it's more likely that the case against the PA state legislature is stronger than ever because the very modest increases literally don't keep pace with the need factor. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that the local economies of urban and rural school districts have been extremely and negatively affected by the pandemic. So school districts like mine have actually lost ground at a greater pace than the legislature has increased funding.

"Bated Breath" is how I'd describe the mood of both advocates and opponents of the upcoming lawsuit trial. Most parents and community members don't need to be told that the public school system and legislatively controlled school funding is broken beyond comprehension, but most also agree that no matter what the outcome of the lawsuit, it will still be up to our elected officials to solve the problem.

Does "Level Up" legislation provide a potential path forward? I would opine that it depends on the time it takes to "catch up" using "level up" as the model. The jury is still out, and our students/communities can only hope. Meanwhile, it is up to educational and community leaders to continue advocating ferociously for our students. If we don't, our students will pay the price.





RECOVERY

BY CONNIE KINDLER

PASA CONSULTANT FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



During a recent kayaking excursion, I encountered unexpected turbulence. I was prepared for an enjoyable ride to a specific destination. However, the changing wind and tide caused unstable conditions pushing and pulling me in various directions and I feared losing my way. Fortunately, I stayed afloat by remaining calm, drawing upon past experiences, and anticipating the currents. Although it was an unsettling ride, I eventually reached my destination.

The magnitude of my incident dulls in comparison to the adversity you experienced throughout the last 16 months, but it reminded me of your extended period of twists and turns. Throughout a brutal, enduring storm, you remained courageous and steadfast as you navigated ever-changing currents. As a seasoned, professional captain, you remained informed of the shifting conditions, used data to guide your decisions, communicated up, down, and across the ranks, and successfully directed your crew to safely lead all passengers to their varied destinations.

When I finished my brief excursion, I was able to quickly recover by talking through my experience with another kayaker. Simple measures often work for short durations of stress. How-

ever, extended periods of trauma, like the one you experienced, are difficult to overcome without intentional, proven interventions.

I hope you are already on your road to recovery. If not, the season is now. How many times throughout the last school year did you say, "I can't wait for July!" Well...it is here! You have courageously endured a relentless and often ruthless storm, and you owe yourself this time and space to fully recover from the resulting emotional, psychological, and physiological pain.

An important first step is to deliberately dismiss the noise and chaos that remain within your head. Scream and cry if you must, but remove the turmoil from your thoughts. Recovery requires the elimination of destructive thoughts that evoke negative feelings. To expedite this process, replace each with an image of one of the many humane actions you led.

You experienced an extended period of trauma, and if you find that you cannot move beyond the negative feelings, seek professional help. Signs such as sleeplessness, difficulty focusing, uncontrollable bursts of anger or sadness, self-medication, suicidal thoughts, etc., are indicative of the need for expertise beyond your own powers. Engaging the assistance of a mental or physical health professional for these serious symptoms reveals your strength, not weakness.

As you are removing unhelpful thoughts, consider common recovery measures such as simplifying your days, connecting with others, and self-caretaking. The practice of stillness steadies your mind. Talking with trusted others creates a sense of being cared for and supported. Enjoyable physical activities also provide comfort and renewal.

Most important to full recovery is the intentional reconstruction of your reason for being. When ready, recommit to your purpose as a person and a leader. While experiencing trauma, we often unintentionally forget or ignore who and what matters most. Ask yourself who and what matters most personally and professionally and make them your everyday musts. To fully restore your commitment to your purpose, pledge to prioritize them. After all, your purpose is the essence of your being, and its reinstatement is essential to your recovery.

Happy July!

REGISTRATION IS OPEN



Part 1: Strategic and Cultural Leadership

September 23-24

PASA Office, Harrisburg

(This program will be held in person unless circumstances require a virtual event.)

For new superintendents and those close to moving into the position

Successful leaders intentionally create cultures that prioritize relationships and value all children, families and staff. Learn strategies for assuring a great start within the new role, including the creation of a strong board of directors and leadership team.

Registrants for Part 1 will be able to participate in a free "Introduction to the Superintendency" Zoom webinar on July 27. Details will be sent in advance.

Cost: \$249 - PASA Members / \$299 - nonmembers

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

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"I wouldn't want your job" is the clarion call for leadership. When others say that to you, you know they need your leadership the most. If it were easy, anyone could do it." – Jim Mahoney, retired superintendent from Ohio, from "I Wouldn't Want Your Job," as published in the July issue of *School Administrator*



GIVING, GETTING AND TELLING THE TRUTH

BY BARBARA WALVORT JEWETT, ASSISTANT TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

During every budget season, including this one, the emphasis publicly is always on how much the state is GIVING to school districts and how much they are GETTING. Not whether that “get” is adequate or equitable – just that it’s a lot. Historic. Huge. Biggest chunk of the state budget. Numbers to provide shock and awe to the general public – millions and billions!

“We’re spending WHAT??”

When funding is seen solely in those terms, it becomes easy commentary fodder for those lawmakers, organizations and columnists for whom an extra drop of state funding for “failing government schools” is “throwing our money away” on a system that doesn’t work for kids but only seeks to perpetuate itself and provide largesse for those who work in it.

Throw in the COVID pandemic and you have the perfect storm that has enabled public education’s critics to tout the need for school choice in the form of vouchers and/or raising the limit on tax credits for private school tuition, since, after all, those public schools just didn’t do the job in 2020 and therefore parents should have the right to take tax dollars from the general coffers to choose a “better education” (translation: private education) for their kids, one that will meet their needs instead of meeting its own needs.

Add to that the post-pandemic attraction of home-schooling in the form of cyber charter schools among some parents or the attention-getting TV and billboard advertising proclaiming that this or that charter school offers personalized instruction to their kids in contrast to the public school in their backyard.

So, yes, let’s talk about the big increase we’re giving to school districts this year and not talk about our failure to do anything about charter school reform yet again, a failure that perpetuates a direct and growing drain of financial resources from school districts, which means students that remain in those schools – the vast majority of students in Pennsylvania – increasingly get shortchanged and local taxpayers continue to get hit.

Let’s not address the lack of a PlanCon program or the continual increases in the cost of mandated programs and services such as special education.

Let’s not mention the costs involved in transporting not only kids to the district’s schools but also small groups of kids on mostly empty buses to numerous private or charter schools in the area.

And let’s not discuss the high contribution rates to the school employee pension system. After all, you, Mr. and Mrs. School Board Member, approved those outrageous salaries. Maybe you should cut salaries instead.

And by all means, let’s not talk about what the state share of funding public education really is. Let’s just focus on the big give/get, not on equity or adequacy of those funds. Just talk about our giving and your getting, not how much it actually costs to teach and support ALL students or provide them with the infrastructure, materials, programs and services they need.

It’s deliberate. Divert attention from expenses; focus on revenues. It’s hard for the public to understand why education is expensive, so we’re not going to look at it or talk about it either (or we’ll refer to bad management). Instead, we’ll just talk about how generous this budget is. That is the distraction against publicly admitting and confronting the truth about costs and funding.

Any increase in funding for public schools is a plus. As Mark notes in this month’s column, we are grateful for the BEF increase, along with the infusion of federal relief funds (albeit temporary) and Level Up funding for 100 of the lowest-wealth districts.

But the track record on state support for the public schools most Pennsylvania kids attend is not positive. From eliminating the actual-cost funding of special education and instead distributing those funds by a formula pulled out of the air to providing BEF increases that don’t come close to matching rising costs, the myth of public education funding and its millions and billions does not match the reality of what it takes to meet all the state and federal mandates and provide EVERY student with an equitable, supportive, positive and forward-thinking education.

The spin we hear in Harrisburg and on the airwaves is not telling the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

PASA will continue to discuss that truth to offset the give/get spin using direct advocacy and important tools such as the annual PASA/PASBO/PARSS school district budget report. We all need to persevere in our advocacy on both the state and local level, even when it seems we are hitting our heads against the wall.

If we don’t share our story and tell the truth, who will?

SAVE THE DATE

PASA LEADERSHIP FORUM
Keynote: Dr. Michael Fullan

March 28, 2022
Hyatt Place State College

Watch for details!



UNPLUG THIS SUMMER!

BY LYNN FUINI-HETTEN AND TINA KANE, ED.D
WOMEN'S CAUCUS PRESIDENT



The summer sunshine, warm weather, and longer lasting daylight hours bring much needed opportunities for school leaders to rest, recharge, and reemerge ready for the start of school in the fall.

A common misunderstanding is that, when the students and teachers are off from school, so are the school leaders. This misconception is far from true, as the summertime is often a very busy time of year for school leaders as they plan and prepare for the students and staff to return in the fall.

With the completion of a COVID year of school, where everyone else's needs were the priority, and looking ahead at the many tasks to complete for us to regain a typical school year, it is important for school leaders to apply some basic strategies for self-care.

REST

Rest is a necessity for your mind and body and, as school leaders are multi-tasking and juggling many tasks throughout the school year, finding time in the summer to rest is vital to success. School leaders need to physically step away to disconnect and unplug themselves from the daily emails, phone calls, and decisions. Metaphorically, we need to treat ourselves like we handle our electronic devices – by turning ourselves off in order to reboot and work more efficiently.

Unplugging ourselves is the first step for getting much needed rest. How many of us lost sleep this past school year? We owe it to ourselves and those who depend on us to create the conditions to help our minds and bodies relax so we can truly rest. Learn more about why rest is so important through this Psychology Today article.



RECHARGE

School leaders need to reclaim a balanced lifestyle by recharging themselves. Just like our beloved and relied-upon electronic devices need to be recharged, so do school leaders.

How do you best recharge? Perhaps you spend quality time with family and friends. Or find time to be alone and read the latest science fiction or romance novel instead of the PDE and CDC updates. Some people need to be intentional and schedule time to exercise, while others search for mindful ways to unwind such as a new barre or yoga class. Try connecting with colleagues over lunch or an after-hours, getting together to build those personal relationships again. Consider

learning something new or trying a fresh healthy recipe.

How can you repack your toolbox? Finding your personal way to recharge will assist you in reclaiming your internal energy.

REEMERGE

Once your electronic devices have the opportunity to charge, you expect they are ready to handle the many tasks you require in a given day. Much like those devices, school leaders need to be ready. We owe it to ourselves and our constituents to be prepared to give our full strength to our schools and districts.

By resting and recharging, we will reemerge stronger and ready to tackle the latest challenges and opportunities. School leaders are most likely refocusing on their district's vision after a year of COVID management, and planning for ways to fill the learning loss gaps for your learners. As well as supporting learners after experiencing trauma, leaders are setting new goals for themselves and their colleagues.

This coming year will be full of additional demands and needs as a result of the aftermath of COVID. Rest, recharge, and reemerge so you are ready to tackle the 2021-22 school year!

Lynn Fuini-Hetten is superintendent of the Salisbury Township SD and Caucus President. Dr. Tina Kane is superintendent of the Marple Newtown SD and Caucus Secretary.



SAVE THE DATES:

**2021 Southeast Region
Caucus Dinner
November 10**

**2022 Women's Caucus
Spring Conference
May 22 - 24**

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

PA COHORT – NATIONAL SUPERINTENDENT CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Twenty-three participants in the 2020-21 PA Cohort of the AASA/PASA National Superintendent Certification Program formally graduated last month.

The program, designed **by** superintendents **for** superintendents, was open to PASA members who were new and experienced Pennsylvania superintendents who aim to provide world-class leadership within their districts.

Graduates included: Amy Arcurio, Rodney Benedick, Brett Cooper, Scott Davidheiser, Philip Domencic, Robin Felty, David Foley, Brian Griffith, Jeff Groshek, Michele Hartzell, Thomas Lesniewski, Matthew Link, Sue Mariani, Bridget O'Connell, Gregg Paladina, Elizabeth Robison, George Steinhoff, Chris Suppo, Cathy Taschner, Michael Vuckovich, Donald Wheeler, Steven Yanni and David Zerbe.

Serving as mentors were Rhonda Brunner, Jay Burkhart, Nicholas Guarente, Shane Hotchkiss, Emilie Lonardi and Brian Troop.

Congratulations!



REMINDER: NOMINATIONS DUE JULY 23 ONLINE

PASA NOW SEEKING NOMINATIONS FOR 2022 PA SUPERINTENDENT OF THE YEAR

PASA is seeking nominations for 2022 Pennsylvania Superintendent of the Year.

The Pennsylvania award is part of the National Superintendent of the Year program, sponsored by First Student, AIG Retirement Services and AASA® The School Superintendents Association. The program pays tribute to the talent and vision of the men and women who lead the nation's public schools. This is the 35th year for the national award program.

Any Pennsylvania superintendent **who plans to continue as a superintendent** may be nominated. The program is designed to recognize the outstanding leadership of active, front-line superintendents. It is **not** recognition of service at retirement or a program to reward current state or national leaders.

Additional criteria for Pennsylvania nominee eligibility include the following:

- The individual must be both a **PASA and AASA** member.
- The individual must have served as a sitting superintendent with a commission for at least five years and in his/her current district in Pennsylvania for at least two years.
- The individual must intend to continue serving as a superintendent in the year in which he/she will be the PA Superintendent of the Year.

All nominations will be accepted **online only** via the AASA Superintendent of the Year [website](https://www.pasa-net.org/soy) no later than **Friday, July 23**. Those seeking to nominate a Pennsylvania superintendent must first register on the AASA Superintendent of the Year website. (NOTE: Self-nomination is not permitted.) AASA will notify candidates of their nomination.

More information on the program is available on the PASA website, <https://www.pasa-net.org/soy>. Questions about the Superintendent of the Year application process may be directed to PASA at pasa@pasa-net.org.

REGISTRATION IS OPEN!

PASA Summit for Assistant Superintendents & Supervisors

October 15, 2021

8:30 a.m. (continental breakfast) - 2:15 p.m.

PASA office, Harrisburg

Approved for 25 PIL/Act 45 Hours

"Leader Actions for Continuous School Improvement"

Presenter: Dr. Pat Greco

Senior Director for Thought Leadership with Studer EducationSM
and former Wisconsin Superintendent of the Year

Learn to systematize critical routines that will engage your teams and intentionally grow leadership capacity at every level.

Participate to learn how to grow team capacity, hardwire routines to problem-solve together, and frame a district, department and/or school balanced scorecards to stay centered.

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

Sponsored by
Studer EducationSM

RETIRING? STAY CONNECTED TO PASA!

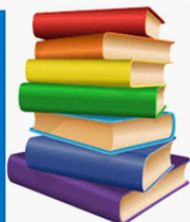
Planning to retire this year or in the near future?

Before you retire, remember to update your contact information and plan to renew your PASA membership **as a Retired Member** beginning October 1 for only \$50! Contact Jolene Zelinski for assistance at jolenez@pasa-net.org. **We want you to stay connected!**

In addition, PASA offers to school districts an **Interim Superintendent Service** in an effort to provide continuity of leadership in school districts due to the departure of the superintendent. We maintain a list of retired superintendents who are available to serve on an interim basis during a district's search for a permanent superintendent replacement. When contacted, we share a list of individuals who are available to serve on an interim basis in the geographical location of the requesting district and help them conduct interviews if requested.

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

Professional Learning



See the PASA website for program updates at

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

(Should it be necessary, in-person programs may be switched to virtual programs.)

July 27

New Superintendents' Virtual Session:

Intro to the Superintendency: First 100 Days

(Contact Deb Banks for information at dbanks@pasa-net.org.)

August 1-3

PA Educational Leadership Summit
Kalahari Poconos

September 23-24

New Superintendents' Academy
Part 1: Strategic & Cultural Leadership
PASA Office

September 27-29

PASA/PSBA School Leadership Conference
Kalahari Poconos

Virtual Fall Forum/Book Study:
"Leading in a Culture of Change"

October 6, November 3, December 1

October 15

PA Summit for Assistant Superintendents & Supervisors
"Leader Actions for Continuous School Improvement"
sponsored by Studer EducationSM
PASA Office

NEW MEMBERSHIP YEAR BEGINS OCT. 1 HAVE YOU RENEWED YOUR PASA MEMBERSHIP?

Stay connected to PASA and your peers across the commonwealth in 2021-22 as we work together to navigate through the "new normal" in our schools.

PASA is working in Harrisburg and throughout the Commonwealth – and AASA is working for you in Washington D.C. – to influence policy, build support for public education, and provide school administrators with both the information and professional development they need, particularly now.

The Zoom briefings, numerous alerts and emails PASA provided to commissioned officers and information provided to all administrators over the past year concerning pandemic-related issues affecting public schools are just one example of how your professional association seeks to support you with the vital information you need to manage your district, whether in a crisis or during a "normal" school year – and will be vital as school districts develop education strategies moving forward into 2021-22.

In addition, legal advice and assistance for commissioned officers, weekly updates, and professional learning programs that meet your needs are all an essential component of PASA's mission: supporting school district administrators, whether you are new to your position or an experienced school system leader.

Membership in both PASA, your professional state organization, and in AASA, the only national organization representing the interests of school district superintendents, is vital for you personally, for the profession and for public education. And never has it been more important – and valuable – for school leaders to be part of their professional associations.

Recognizing that this is a unique time in Pennsylvania, the PASA Board of Governors has **again** frozen membership dues in all categories for 2021-22. This ensures you will receive the same services and support next year at no additional cost. And, for those who also elect AASA membership, there is no fee increase on the national level!

Don't forget to renew your membership today! See the PASA website to download a renewal form or renew online.

The PASA membership year runs from October 1 through September 30.





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.

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

- ♦ Dr. Mark DiRocco, along with staff from PASBO and PARSS, presented to webinars on June 30 a webinar focused on the enacted state budget and School Code bill and implications for public schools in 2021-22 and beyond. PASA also sent to members on June 28 an E-Info outlining the basic content of the budget and Code legislation.
- ♦ PASA sent to members on June 15 an e-alert urging them to share with lawmakers their opposition to SB 1, a bill that would provide limited charter school reform and provide a large increase in the tax credits available through the EITC program. Member advocacy plus PASA advocacy helped to stall the bill, as PASA continued to press for meaningful changes to Pennsylvania’s charter school law, including significant change to the funding system.
- ♦ PASA held virtual meetings with the PASA Legislative Committee on Monday mornings in June to update members on the latest information from the Capitol and encourage them to share that information with their I.U. peers.
- ♦ We worked with our lobbyist and other education associations on many issues in the final push to the state budget, including the need for charter/cyber charter reform and the importance of adequate state funding to comply with ongoing state and federal mandates, as well as pandemic-related issues. In addition, PASA kept in contact with the governor’s office concerning education bills that were being considered in both the House and Senate, and the pros and cons of each.
- ♦ PASBO, PASA and PARSS last month released results of the spring 2021 [school district budget survey](#), which reveals how school districts are using—or expect to use—their federal COVID funds. The survey showed a commonality in the use of federal COVID funds to address learning loss through various strategies, provide for technology expansion and access, engage in facility upgrades and improvements to enhance air quality and safety, and investigate strategies to improve sustainability of programs in preparation for expiration of the funds. In addition, the survey revealed that school districts also are focused on addressing the unique needs of their individual student subgroups by combatting food insecurity, enhancing mental health services and supports, and providing staff training. While the survey showed that school leader optimism and expectations for the outcomes associated with the expenditure of these federal funds are high, the optimism comes with apprehension regarding sustainability of programs, supports, and improvements made with federal funds.
- ♦ 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.

In addition, PASA continues to provide additional education news and information through the weekly Update on Mondays and *The PASA Flyer*.



TOPIC: INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS TO ADDRESS DIGITAL EQUITY

The EmpowerED Superintendent eWebinar Series

If you missed the July 12 EmpowerED Superintendent Webinar, co-hosted by CoSN, AASA and edWeb.net, and sponsored by ClassLink, you still can access the free webinar recording of “**Innovative Technology Solutions to Address Digital Equity: Award-Winning Collaborative Leadership Strategies.**”

Student access to robust digital tools is key to their success as 21st-century citizens. CoSN created the Community Leadership Award for Digital Equity to encourage and recognize those districts that are working to eliminate inequities and narrow the access gap. The winning district team is selected based on its efforts to build community awareness and actions taken to narrow the homework gap and other issues related to digital equity.

The superintendents and district technology Leaders from each of the school districts that were awarded CoSN’s Community Leadership Award for Digital Equity in 2021 (Desert Sands USD, CA) and in 2020 (Santa Fe Public Schools, NM) were the featured guests during the edWebinar broadcast. You are welcome to watch, listen and learn from Superintendent Scott Bailey and Assistant Superintendent for Education Services Dr. Kelly May-Volmer Desert Sands USD, along with Superintendent Dr. Veronica C. Garcia and former Chief Information & Strategy Officer Dr. Tom Ryan from Santa Fe Public Schools as they shared the strategies they used to build community awareness and the actions they have taken to address a wide variety of issues related to digital equity.

[Click here](#) to access the recording.

Other previously broadcast webinars in the EmpowerED Superintendent series are also freely available as recordings and podcasts at <https://home.edweb.net/supers/>.

CoSN Resources

* **CoSN Digital Equity Toolkit:** The CoSN Digital Equity Toolkit provides five strategies schools and districts can implement to address the “Homework Gap” and four steps school leaders can take to collaborate with local governments and other community leaders. [Click here](#) to read the executive summary and access the link to download the complete Digital Equity Toolkit.

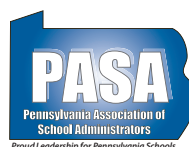
* **CoSN Student Home Internet Connectivity Study:** CoSN recently released the preliminary findings of a breakthrough study on students’ at-home internet connectivity which provides guidelines on bandwidth, devices, and other remote learning needs based on the data. The study was supported by a grant from the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative (CZI). The findings serve as a guide for school district leaders who are working to improve online learning equity. Key findings from the Student Home Connectivity Study as well as a link to access the full report are [available here](#).

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

“I don’t actually subscribe to the idea of balance, but I do believe in the need to determine our individual means of unplugging. Unplugging allows us to rest, refresh and regain perspective to be good teammates, good listeners and good leaders.” – Jill Baker, superintendent of the Long Beach Unified SD in California, from “The Act of Becoming,” as published in the July issue of *School Administrator*. This month’s issue compiles the best articles and columns of the past year of coverage.



Contacting PASA

The PASA Office is open 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. weekdays and will close at 12:00 p.m on Fridays in July and August.

Please call (717) 540-4448 to leave a message for any staff member. You may also call the Executive Director directly at (717) 514-8718 at any time, or email us at pasa@pasa-net.org.

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



SEPTEMBER 27 - 29 Kalahari Resorts & Convention Center (new venue)

Registration Open...

Registration for the annual PASA-PSBA School Leadership Conference is now open. [Click here](#) for links to conference and hotel registration. [Click here](#) for conference details.

Featured Keynotes...

- Kimberly Reed, award-winning international speaker, author, corporate trainer and diversity, equality and inclusion executive
- Donna Beegle, co-founder and president of Communication Across Barriers, which provides resources and trainings that aim to improve communication and relationships across poverty barriers
- Gregg Behr and Ryan Rydzewski, authors of *When You Wonder, You're Learning: Mister Rogers' Enduring Lessons for Raising Creative, Curious, Caring Kids*

Special Note...

Due to the limitations of the new venue and conference schedule, the PASA Recognition Luncheon ordinarily held during the conference will instead be held in Harrisburg on September 9.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW!

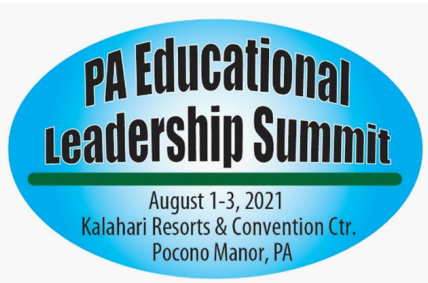


For breaking education news and the latest from the Capitol, follow us on Twitter @PASASupts.

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!



** STILL TIME TO REGISTER **

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

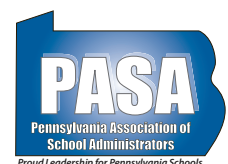
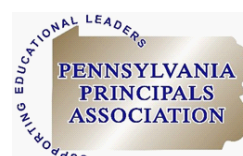


Dr. Adam Drummond

To register, go to:

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

Sponsored by...





NOTEWORTHY QUOTES



On the State Budget...

"While there is much to celebrate in this bill, it is disappointing that we could not come together to fully provide for the needs of schools across the commonwealth. We need all public education funding to go through the fair funding formula to ensure each school district and each student in our commonwealth are getting the support they need. There is more – much more – that needs to be done to fully provide for the needs of our commonwealth's students and the future of our workforce." – Gov. Tom Wolf

"The state budget invests in the places we know resources are needed the most - to help our school communities mitigate learning gaps, break down barriers, build equitable learning environments, and move forward stronger and together. This budget - combined with federal funding - creates opportunities to invite our entire educational ecosystem to the table to collaboratively and inclusively problem solve, address disparities, and develop solutions that will serve our students, our future." – Secretary of Education Noe Ortega

"This \$40.8 billion budget tackles the most immediate challenges facing our schools, nursing homes, infrastructure, and struggling families while saving funds to provide a financial net for the future. It makes historic investments in school choice and provides aid to families struggling to move past the COVID-19 pandemic by offering rental, utility and water assistance, as well as child childcare stabilization. This budget takes the necessary steps to put our Commonwealth on an forward trajectory that is foundational in setting our future path forward by providing us with the flexibility we need to get Pennsylvanians back to work and our economy growing

again." – Sen. Kim Ward (R-Westmoreland), Senate Majority Leader

"Because of our collective advocacy we've got this small win; we've got Level Up going to the 100 most underfunded school districts across the commonwealth. We are determined that when we return to session we will ensure that that money in the bank goes to the property taxpayers that need a property tax break, goes to the homeowners whose school boards are increasing their rates because there is not enough money to fund the schools." – Rep. Joanna McClinton (D-Philadelphia), House Minority Leader

"It [an additional \$1.4 million for the district] will get applied immediately to student programs and to student resources and we are grateful, but my community is loud and clear in reminding me that we have been underfunded by \$11-13 million every year. Parents and community leaders were quick to point out that while everyone wants a Rainy Day fund to fall back on, for students in our districts it's been raining for a long time. Level Up funding is a golden drop of sunshine through that rain, but we must keep going." – Stephen Rodriguez, superintendent of the Pottstown SD during an event at the Capitol

"This budget delivers on promises we made to Pennsylvanians when every member of our caucus was re-elected in 2020. We've denied the governor's tax increases, we've made responsible education funding a top priority, we are making crucial deposits in the Rainy Day Fund to handle future challenges, and rebuilding trust in elections by establishing the state's Bureau of Election audits. This is a budget Pennsylvanians can be proud of knowing their hard-earned dollars are moving the state out of a pandemic and into a brighter future." – Speaker of the House Bryan Cutler (R-Lancaster)

"We are disappointed that despite higher-than-expected state revenues received in 2020-21 and nearly \$7 billion in federal funds given to the state, that a rare window of opportunity to adequately fund our schools was missed." – Dr. Mark DiRocco



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.)

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 11.

Applications for Homework Gap Funding

The FCC has launched the 45-day application window for districts to apply for funding to close the homework gap. The Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) is a \$7.17 billion program which allows schools to purchase laptop and tablet computers, Wi-Fi hot-spots, and broadband connectivity for students and school staff. The application window closes on August 13. For that reason, it is critical that districts looking to purchase ed-tech for the 2021-2022 school year apply ASAP. Read this month's edition of *The Advocate* for details.

American Rescue Plan Committee

Given the critical decisions school districts will be making regarding the implementation of funds received through the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act of 2021, AASA, The School Superintendents Association, has created a national committee to develop recommendations and insights as schools move toward a safe reopening following the impact left by the COVID-19 pandemic.

AASA's [American Rescue Plan Committee](#) includes more than 30 superintendents, as well as representatives from several national organizations including the Association of Education Services Agencies, the Association of School Business Officials International and the Council of Chief State School Officers. AASA's government cooperative procurement partner, Sourcewell, is a key supporter in this initiative.

Dr. Khalid Mumin, superintendent of the Reading SD, is a member of the committee.

Critique of Title IX Rule

On June 11, AASA and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) responded to the U.S. Department of Education's request for [written comments](#) on the implementation of the 2020 Title IX regulation.

AASA and NASSP urged the department to immediately rescind the 2020 amendments to the Title IX regulations and replace them with nonbinding guidance for K-12 schools, technical assistance, and best practices to ensure the fair, prompt, and equitable resolution of reports of sexual harassment and other sex discrimination. Comments focused on three major issues with the 2020 amendments:

- ♦ the length of the process and the ability of administrators to adequately mitigate potential and actual sexual harassment and assault of students in a timely manner, especially when compared to other similar disciplinary infractions;
- ♦ staffing burden; and
- ♦ confidentiality requirements.

In This Month's School Administrator

"If we are to strengthen society and model for our youth the importance of civic-minded thinking in times of stress, we must consider the COVID-19 pandemic and significant social unrest as teachable moments for putting a clear focus on equity, acceptance and civic responsibility. Even more important, our actions must be such that students see and feel a noticeable difference in their education." – Kristi Wilson, AASA President, from "Civics Lessons in Challenging Times"

"We disregard the difference between equity and equality by assuming we must provide all students with the same rather than providing each student with what they need to succeed." – Daniel Domenech, AASA Executive Director, from "The Hidden Prejudice We Harbor"

"One of the founding ideals of our democratic republic is that we are better able to create and sustain that 'more perfect union' through the free exchange of ideas. Genuine civil discourse means that we cannot avoid discussing the tough and important issues – but it does mean that we should strive to meet those issues with a deep and mutual appreciation for each other as human beings." – Jason Glass, Kentucky commissioner of education, from "On Civility: Five Rules of Engagement"

AASA Post-Pandemic Resources

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.**

Mark your calendars!

**2022 AASA
NATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON EDUCATION**

February 17-19 in Nashville

Sometimes naming a phenomenon is all it takes to shift a conversation, to step towards a solution. And sometimes not.

In February 2020, 17 long months before COVID upended everything, the term homework gap existed and was used to address the very unfortunate reality – and worst kept secret in education – that as many as 12-17 million students in the U.S. lacked internet access at home. Naming the homework gap helped us to talk about it, but getting serious response to the homework gap? That took a pandemic.

Even before the pandemic shuttered schools and shifted our students into remote/online learning, students without connectivity were at an educational disadvantage because they could not complete homework assignments that required internet access after class. This inequity was simultaneously exacerbated and shoved to center stage when COVID shut schools.

In response to this crisis, Congress passed Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) as part of the American Rescue Plan (ARP). The ECF is a \$7.17 billion program which allows schools and libraries to purchase laptop and tablet computers, Wi-Fi hotspots, and broadband connectivity for students, school staff, and library patrons in need during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The ECF will be distributed along the lines of the E-rate program. It will be similarly managed by the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) through the E-rate Productivity Center (EPC) portal. Any school or library that has ever applied for funding through the E-rate program will already be familiar with the eligibility requirements and application procedure for the ECF. This funding is only for purchases made beginning July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. Ed tech purchases prior to July 1 can be reimbursed by ARP funding and other COVID-relief packages.

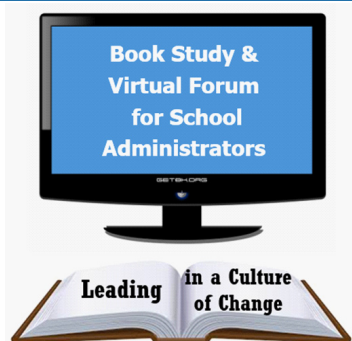
Under the ECF program, eligible equipment for reimbursement includes laptop computers, tablet computers, Wi-Fi hotspots, modems, routers and devices that combine modems and routers. Districts cannot be reimbursed for desktop computers and mobile phones. There are price caps in place for purchases of \$400 per computer and \$250 per hotspot, as well as distribution limits to ensure a student or school employee receives only one fixed broadband connection (or modem) per location or one computer/tablet per person.

Other eligible services for reimbursement include: home internet access delivered via a commercial provider; the activation, installation and initial configuration costs for eligible equipment and services; and school construction of self-provisioned networks to connect students and staff – only where there are no commercially available service options.

The ECF funding cannot be used for purchasing cybersecurity tools, learning management systems, video conferencing equipment, standalone microphones and technology protection measures required by CIPA.

The 45-day application window opened on June 29. Schools and libraries have until August 13 to apply for the funding. This is a very tight turnaround on a new tranche of funding at the exact time that schools are working to plan and invest unprecedented amounts of federal funding. It is a daunting task, but also critically necessary and possible.

For more information and resources, check out the [ECF's web-site](#) or [Funds for Learning's ECF Guide](#). Or [click here](#) to apply on the FCC website.



FALL SESSIONS

October 6, November 3 & December 1

2:00 – 4:30 p.m.

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

APPROVED FOR 40 PIL/ACT 45 HOURS (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 October 1. Virtual information will be sent to paid registrants.*

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

MEMBER NEWS

REGION 3

Dr. Jill Jacoby has been appointed Allegheny Intermediate Unit's assistant executive director for teaching and learning. She has served as superintendent of the Fort Cherry SD since 2014.

Dr. Melissa Friez is now serving as superintendent of the North Allegheny SD. She previously served as the district's deputy superintendent. Friez replaces acting superintendent **Dr. Patrick O'Toole**.

REGION 4

Three superintendents from I.U. 4 have retired. They are: **Dr. Hedley Hoge**, Lakeview; **Michael Calla**, Sharon City; and **John Sibeto**, Reynolds.

REGION 9

Karen Haberberger is now serving as superintendent of the Johnsonburg Area SD. She previously served as the district's director of special education. Haberberger replaces **Dennis Crotzer**, who has retired.

REGION 11

Vance Varner has been appointed superintendent of the Mifflin County SD, effective Sept. 11. He currently serves as the district's chief operations officer. Varner will replace **James Estep**, who is retiring.

REGION 15

Dr. Eric Eshbach, Assistant Executive Director of the PA Principals Association (PPA) and formerly superintendent of the Northern York County SD, has been hired as the PPA's next executive director. **Dr. Michael S. Snell**, who is concluding his term as superintendent of Central York SD, has been hired as the assistant executive director. Both will assume their new roles following the upcoming retirement of Executive Director **Dr. Paul M. Healey**.

Dr. Stacy Winslow is the new superintendent in the Derry Township SD. She previously served as assistant to the superintendent for curriculum & instruction and had served as acting superintendent since May 24. Winslow replaces former superintendent **Joe McFarland**.

REGION 16

Dr. John Kurelja is now serving as executive director of CSIU. He previously served as the assistant executive director with the intermediate unit. Kurelja replaces **Dr. Kevin Singer**, who has retired.

REGION 20

Dr. Charlene Brennan is currently serving as acting superintendent in the Pleasant Valley SD, replacing **Dr. Lee Lesisko**, who has retired.

Please report member news to PASA at pasa@pasa-net.org. Announcements of professional vacancies across Pennsylvania and in neighboring states are posted on the PASA Web site at www.pasa-net.org (Click on the "Leadership Development" button and look for "Career Center.")

PASA CALENDAR

All programs and meetings are virtual.

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

JULY

- 15 PASA Executive Committee meeting
- 21 Leading in a Culture of Change Session 2 (virtual)
- 27 Virtual Program: Intro to the Superintendency – The First 100 Days

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)

SEPTEMBER

- 6 *PASA office closed*
- 9 PASA Awards Luncheon/Annual Meeting of the Association
Board of Governors' meetings
- 23-24 New Superintendents' Academy Part 1 (PASA Office)
- 27-29 PASA/PSBA School Leadership Conference
(Poconos Kalahari)

OCTOBER

- 1 *2021-22 PASA membership year begins*
- 15 PASA Summit for Asst. Superintendents & Supervisors
(PASA office)

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