New PA Energy Consortium

HELPING PENNSYLVANIA SCHOOL DISTRICTS GO GREEN!

PASA is pleased to announce a partnership with the Pennsylvania Association of School Business Officials (PASBO) to make districts aware of the Econergy Company creating a new consortium to provide energy services to school districts in Pennsylvania.

The Pennsylvania Clean Energy Consortium (PCEC) uses clean, renewable energy while providing cost savings to school districts. Several other states, including Illinois, Ohio and New York, have created similar consortiums with Econergy, resulting in lower energy costs for school districts while using clean energy.

Econergy notes that, given the challenges of the recent global pandemic, coupled with the fact that roughly 75 percent of a school district’s budget is dedicated to personnel, superintendents are looking for savings within the other 25 percent. According to Econergy, when a member joins PCEC and switches their electricity service over, they immediately begin to receive anywhere from 5%-15% savings, on the current supply contract. School districts will gain the maximum level of savings possible when Econergy builds the district’s on-site renewable energy system.

On June 2, PASA and PASBO provided an informative web forum announcing the PA Clean Energy Consortium. Additional information sessions will be scheduled later this summer. Click here to learn more about this consortium.

NEW MEMBERSHIP YEAR BEGINS OCT. 1
RENEW YOUR PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP FOR 2021-22!

Your membership renewal notice is on its way!
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!

Renew your membership today either by completing the form sent to you and returning it to PASA OR by renewing online!
The PASA membership year runs from October 1 through September 30.
FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
DR. MARK DIROCCO

BUDGET, BILLS AND NEGOTIATED DEALS

June is the month when there is a great deal of intrigue and drama at the State Capitol as the Governor and General Assembly head toward budget negotiations. Along with the adoption of a budget, there is usually at least one omnibus School Code bill and sometimes a series of bills affecting education that is part of the budget agreement process.

Typically, education bills are presented in each chamber’s respective education committee before going to the House or Senate floor for a vote and sent to the other chamber for consideration. This provides time for all parties to analyze the legislation, provide feedback, and make amendments before final votes are taken. It is common to see several education bills introduced on an education committee agenda in May and June at the bequest of House and Senate majority leadership.

Although dozens of education bills are authored each legislative session, only a few will make it to legislative committee agenda. Even if these select bills are never presented for a full vote on the floor of either chamber, they can often be negotiated in a School Code bill as part of the budget negotiation process.

In recent years, we have witnessed budget negotiators bypassing the committee process altogether and directly negotiating changes to the School Code as part of last-minute budget discussions, leaving no time for public input or comment. As the pressure mounts to cut a budget deal by June 30, strange things can occur at the negotiation table that can lead to bad policy implementation and unintended consequences that have to be corrected with follow-up legislation.

Recently, we have seen the introduction of Senate Bill 1 that nearly doubles EITC and OSTC funds and could see the total cost of the programs soar from $240 million to over $1 billion in five years, leaving fewer funds for public education. The bill also provides for some changes to the charter school law that PASA has requested, but it does not address the funding issue affecting traditional public schools and includes many changes that are favorable to charter schools. We also have seen the introduction and consideration of Senate Bill 733 that creates a new voucher system for special needs and gifted students, a bill that could redirect nearly $600 million public dollars to nonpublic schools.

The General Assembly’s majority leadership wants to increase choice options for students through public dollar “scholarships” and vouchers that parents can use to send their students to nonpublic schools. Additionally, they want to grow the public charter school choice options for students.

Meanwhile, the governor continues to push his charter school reform package, a plan that could potentially save districts millions of dollars in charter school tuition costs. His request for over $1 billion in new basic education and special education subsidies for school districts would help district pay for skyrocketing mandates costs. The governor and the minority leadership want to bolster public school funds to assist the vast majority of Pennsylvania’s students who attend traditional public schools, which have been underfunded for decades. They also want to change the antiquated public charter school law to establish a more equitable funding and accountability system in which the charter schools must operate.

To say the least, the sides are far apart on these issues, and each will be presenting bills, holding press conferences, and submitting press releases over the next few weeks as time ticks down to the final budget negotiations. We don’t know how much each side may be able to achieve from their priority lists or how long the budget negotiations will last. At some point, the leadership of the Senate and House will meet the governor’s team to hammer out an agreement by June 30 or shortly thereafter, unless there is a significant meltdown causing a longer delay.

The game board is set, and the pieces are in motion.

All the advocacy that our members have done, including emails, phone calls, virtual and personal visits, have been helpful and made as much impact as possible in the complicated web
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

State Revenue: Pennsylvania collected $3.9 billion in General Fund revenue in May, which was $1.6 billion, or 85.4 percent, more than anticipated. Fiscal year-to-date General Fund collections total $36.6 billion, which is $2.9 billion, or 8.5 percent, above estimate.

State Share of Education Funding: According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 finance data shows that Pennsylvania dropped from 44th to 45th in the share of district revenue coming from the state. As far as the overall percentage of revenue coming from the state, PA has dropped to 37.9%, compared the U.S. average of 47%.

Proposed Federal Budget: President Biden has proposed a $6 trillion national budget plan that would dramatically increase spending on K-12 education and increase the U.S. Department of Education’s discretionary budget to $102.8 billion, about 41 percent above current levels. Included would be a $2.7 billion increase for special education.

Legislative News

Session Schedule: Activity at the Capitol is ramping up as the state budget deadline is rapidly approaching. Committees will be busy in early June in preparation for approving legislation related to the budget.

Charter “Reform” Bill: As this issue of The PASA Flyer is set for distribution, the Senate is poised to pass a bill (SB 1) that would provide charter school “reform” with various ethics, transparency and accountability provisions but without any reform in charter/cyber charter school funding, a PASA priority. The bill also would greatly increase the EITC program, meaning less state revenue for public schools. PASA opposes the bill. Meanwhile, Gov. Wolf has held numerous press conferences across the Commonwealth with local school officials to seek support for his charter reform plan that would provide significant financial relief to school districts.

Voucher Bill: The Senate also is preparing to consider SB 1, a newly introduced 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 opposes the bill.

Other Legislation: Many education bills are coming up for consideration in committee and/or the full House or Senate in advance of final action on a state budget this month. Check the weekly Update for the latest news on which bills are moving — and could possibly pass by the end of the month.

State News

Science Standards: The State Board of Education is seeking public comments on a proposed update to the state’s academic standards in Science and Technology and Environment and Ecology and make other technical revisions to the Chapter. Comments, due early in July may be submitted to the Board in writing at ra-stateboardofed@pa.gov or State Board of Education, 333 Market Street, 1st Floor, Harrisburg, PA 17126. Additional information related to the proposal can be found on the Department of Education’s website.

Constitutional Amendments: All four Constitutional amendments on the May primary ballot were approved, including one that ends a declared emergency after 21 days unless it is extended by the General Assembly by a simple majority, regardless of the severity of the emergency, and one that gives the General Assembly the ability to end or extend a declare emergency by a simple majority vote without involvement of the governor. Critics have indicated that the changes could have a negative impact on the state’s ability to act quickly on such things as deploying the National Guard or providing for regulatory waivers in disasters and other emergencies.

COMING UP

While election “reform” issues continue to be a hot topic at the Capitol, most of the expected legislative activity this month will be focused on the state budget and policy priorities. With a highly political and polarized atmosphere at the Capitol, expect compromise between Republican leaders and Gov. Wolf on a number of issues to be problematic, although expectations are that a state budget will be finalized by the June 30 deadline. As this issue of The PASA Flyer goes to publication, activity in the Senate was gearing up on a newly introduced School Code bill focused on charter reform but one that does NOT include charter funding reform and also a newly introduced bill that would create a voucher system for students with IEPs, both bills PASA opposes. Still to be determined: 2021-22 state funding for public schools. Stay alert and stay tuned for the latest information by following us on Twitter @PASASupts.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S MESSAGE

continued from page 2

of state education politics. PASA will be sending out alerts as needed in these final weeks to advocate for our priorities to ensure our voices are heard on behalf of the nearly 1.6 million children who attend a traditional public school system each day. Your prompt response to these alerts magnifies our voice in Harrisburg and helps balance the scale of competing forces across the Commonwealth.

Please stay engaged on behalf of your kids!
PASA is now 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.

CRITERIA

Each candidate for Pennsylvania Superintendent of the Year will be judged on the following criteria:
- **Leadership for Learning** – creativity in successfully meeting the needs of students in his or her school system.
- **Communication** – strength in both personal and organizational communication.
- **Professionalism** – constant improvement of administrative knowledge and skills, while providing professional development opportunities and motivation to others on the education team.
- **Community Involvement** – active participation in local community activities and an understanding of regional, national, and international issues.

ELIGIBILITY

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.

NOMINATIONS

All nominations will be accepted online only via the AASA Superintendent of the Year website 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.

APPLICATIONS

Those nominated by July 23 and found eligible according to the established criteria will receive from PASA a state application to be completed and sent to PASA no later than Friday, August 27. (Nominees will not complete the AASA online application.)

SELECTION PROCESS

After August 27 the PASA Elections Committee and the PASA President will review all applications and recommend to the PASA Board of Governors a minimum of two (2) finalists but not more than three (3) for consideration as 2022 Pennsylvania Superintendent of the Year. The finalist who receives the majority vote (at least 51 percent) will be considered the Pennsylvania recipient of the award.

The individual selected will be notified no later than October 1 and then will be asked to complete the formal, online AASA application for National Superintendent of the Year by the November 1 deadline.

STATE AND NATIONAL RECOGNITION

The 2022 Pennsylvania Superintendent of the Year will be recognized and honored during a special luncheon to be planned and coordinated with input from the recipient.

The 2022 National Superintendent of the Year will be chosen from among four finalists selected from the state winners and will be announced at the 2022 AASA National Conference on Education in Nashville (February 17-19) during a ceremony during which all state Superintendents of the Year are recognized and honored. In addition to other awards, a $10,000 scholarship is presented each year in the name of the National Superintendent of the Year to a student in the high school from which the superintendent graduated. The four national finalists receive U.S. Savings Bonds.

Dr. Khalid Mumin, who has been serving as superintendent in the Reading SD, is the 2021 Pennsylvania Superintendent of the Year and was one of four finalists for National Superintendent of the Year.

Questions about the Superintendent of the Year application process may be directed to PASA at pasa@pasa-net.org.

THOUGHT FOR
THE DAY

“I want to offer some helpful tips as we manage the pandemic and transition to the recovery phase. Instead of thinking of this as self-care, I contend we ought to talk about soul care, a concept I learned of from a close friend who first heard it referenced by singer Alicia Keys (who spells it ‘soulcare’). It means taking care of the body, mind and soul. Taking care of our whole self. It is a great way to frame what we all need to do to be in a position to lead effectively and lead with a servant’s heart. Soul care is about taking care of our entire being. It is not an indulgence or a luxury – it’s a basic necessity. … Commit to soul care as we conclude this tumultuous school year. Make a soul-care plan, be accountable, and share your journey. If you see a colleague struggling, do something about it. Reach out and offer a hand. If you are struggling, ask for help. I don’t know a single superintendent who wouldn’t drop everything to help.” – Paul Imhoff, president-elect of AASA and superintendent of Upper Arlington Schools in Ohio,” from “Soul Care for the Superintendent,” as published in the June issue of School Administrator.
Some of us have already concluded the school year while the rest will be doing so in the coming days. We did it!
We were tested like never before. We were forced to operate in a truly unique situation without a playbook to follow. Nevertheless, we did everything in our power to give our students the best education we could under trying circumstances.

From a school leader’s perspective, there were multiple stages of the pandemic. First, March of 2020 started as an effort to “flatten the curve” for two weeks. Next, we were told that all schools were going to stay remote for the rest of the year. The summer of 2020 brought stage three, which was preparing for the 2020-21 school year. In stage four, some districts started this school year with 100% remote learning, others used a hybrid model, and a third group was able to be open for five days per week instruction.

Practically all districts had to monitor and adjust their plans during the school year. What a wild ride it was! It feels so good to use the past tense.

We can now transition into summer mode. Before you jump into the deep end on planning for next year, please go out of your way to schedule down time to relax and recharge your batteries. All of us have been under a tremendous amount of stress over the last 14 months. Please don’t dismiss it. Take that extra day off. Plan a fun event with family and friends. Savor the fireworks on the 4th of July. Put your toes in the sand. Read a good book.

Speaking of books, I always try to provide information about a good leadership book in hopes of helping you grow as a leader. Last month, I wrote about Stuart Levine’s book Cut to the Chase and 99 Other Rules to Liberate Yourself and Gain Back the Gift of Time. This month, I’m sharing an eclectic list of top-notch books for your consideration as you plan your summer reading list:

- *Shoe Dog* by Nike founder Phil Knight
- *The Ride of a Lifetime* by retired Disney CEO Robert Iger
- *Getting to Us* by sports journalist Seth Davis, moving people from me to us thinking
- *It’s Your Ship* by Navy captain Michael Abrashoff
- *The Checklist Manifesto* by surgeon and Harvard professor Atul Gawande
- *Leaders Eat Last* by Simon Sinek
- *The 80/20 Principle* by Richard Koch
- *Staying Grounded* by Long Island, NY superintendent Michael Hynes
- *World Class* by William Haseltine, taking NYU Langone Health from average to great
- *Hot Seat* by Jeff Immelt, how GE went from a Wall Street darling to dog over 20 years
- *The Upswing* by Robert Putnam, how America today resembles the early 20th century
- *Heart and Steel* by former Steelers coach Bill Cowher
- *A Wrestling Life* by Dan Gable for all the wrestling fans out there
- *The Legends Club: Dean Smith, Coach K & Jim Valvano* by John Feinstein
- *God, Country, Notre Dame - Father Ted Hesburgh’s autobiography about leading ND for 35 years*

Happy reading – and have a great summer!

*Dr. Bell is superintendent of the Delaware Valley SD.*

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**APPLY NOW FOR 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.*
ARE YOU THE ‘MISSING LINK’ TO MEANINGFUL CYBER CHARTER REFORM?

BY STEPHEN RODRIGUEZ, CAUCUS PRESIDENT

I’ve written in previous articles about a fact we all recognize: cyber charter funding reform has been needed and is beyond overdue. Urban school districts are adversely affected to a higher degree since most of them are underfunded and therefore considered easy targets by brick-and-mortar charters and cyber school charters alike.

Either way, this issue is a tremendous weight on ALL local school district budgets and unites all of us regardless of region or student demographic differences. Filling out PDE form 363 every year is a reminder for my district that the formula makes absolutely no logical sense: we have seen a slight decrease in charter school students and yet a nearly $1 million increase in tuition.

Advocacy organizations for students throughout the state have spoken up about this issue for many years. They’ve been effectively ignored by the legislators that quite frankly benefit greatly by contributions to campaigns from the very people who also benefit greatly via funding structure that allows for some significant profit-taking.

Governor Wolf recently visited my district and is visiting multiple districts throughout the Commonwealth to bring attention to this serious problem that affects all of us locally. The issue is bipartisan, and proof can be easily found in that 80% of school boards across the Commonwealth have passed resolutions stating their support and desire for serious and immediate cyber school reform.

When I spoke to a local senator about the issue, he mentioned possible hurt feelings over the handling of the pandemic as being a potential reason for not fixing this problem now. That counts for one year... out of 24.

How do we get around two large obstacles: politics and money? This is a subject the PA League of Urban School (PLUS) Caucus discusses pretty often. While we may not have a crystal ball to guide us, we certainly know that the more we personally advocate with our legislators, the better position we are in.

However, I would submit that we also need to reach out to the business community and those active in local politics who support legislators currently in power. There’s nothing like a campaign contribution donor to carry the message of educational reform as a powerful reinforcement of our message. Much of the voice we have is easy to be ignored if those legislators, who make the decisions, are never having tough conversations with their financial and voting supporters.

The time is short as the legislative season is nearly over, but with rumors of a surplus in the budget and with a frenzy of local advocacy, it is quite possible that you, who might not ever attend a press conference but are experts in your local communities, could be the difference between real change and another year of no action and no relief for our communities.

PLUS CAUCUS OF PASA

A MEMBERSHIP BENEFIT!

PASA LEGAL SERVICES

PASA’s legal staff offers a wide range of employment-related legal resources and services to PASA members who are Commissioned Officers. These services include consulting services, employment contract services, non-litigation dispute resolution, and assistance with the negotiation and development of separation agreements.

Go to: www.pasa-net.org/legalservices to read more about it.
THE VALUE OF COLLABORATION

BY DR. CINDY MIERZEJEWSKI
MEMBER, PASA PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

This past year has been the most unique year that most of us in education can remember, filled with challenges and losses. The educational community has felt these challenges in every aspect of the day – from making instructional decisions to accessing the materials to figuring out how lunch is served.

But a lot of good has come from educators and educational leaders stepping up to meet the challenges to ensure that we achieve our number one priority: providing a healthy, nurturing, and productive learning environment. Some of the issues that we have worked on collaboratively are:

- a huge push (drop off a cliff) into virtual learning
- ensuring equity of access to remote learning for all students
- physical restructuring of learning environments
- rethinking calendars and schedules
- providing ancillary services to students and their families, such as meal programs

One adjustment that I think has been a major benefit and taken on a new paradigm is the emphasis on when/how/where/why collaboration takes place. As a superintendent colleague noted early on, “Connection has a whole new definition. Times were particularly stressful, especially during the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, and existing partnerships expanded and adapted. I was serving as a district superintendent and our valuable, supportive monthly county superintendents’ meetings became even more important, necessary, and frequent (at least twice a week). We all needed the support of others in the same situation and the life-line it provided.”

Why is collaboration important? Why talk about or think about collaboration when there are so many other pressing issues?

Because collaboration is the way that we solve these issues and reach our priority goals. Research shows that when we look at what is effective in schools, the educators (teachers and administrators) are working together to develop instructional materials, review assessments and data from assessments, and discuss learning strategies. In almost every case of the demonstration of strong positive student outcomes, there is a backbone of highly collaborative practices.

To achieve our goals, individual districts, regional groups, and statewide collaborations have been built as everyone grapples with similar new issues. Competition took a back seat to getting the job done.

Within districts themselves, collaboration occurred to even a greater extent. Some examples include middle school teams working to adjust schedules and shift content across the building to accommodate both virtual and in-person students, and third grade teachers across a district who perhaps had never had an opportunity for whole district collaboration meeting virtually to brainstorm strategies and to divide and conquer the expanded workload.

I am still a believer that face-to-face interactions are powerful and greatly benefit all participants, but if the use of the virtual formats allows for collaboration when there was none or little before, if it allows for new systems to exist that ensure access for all educators, then let us not lose this when we are able to be “back to normal.”

Nothing should be “normal” again.

Dr. Mierzejewski is a retired superintendent, Consultant/Adjunct at Alvernia University and Neumann University, and a member of the PASA Professional Development Committee.
TELLING THE REST OF THE STORY
BY BARBARA WALVORT JEWETT, ASSISTANT TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The story on the tape couldn’t be real. That’s what state Sen. Kevin Matthews thought as he watched a VHS film, given to him by his great-uncle, depicting a white mob destroying Tulsa’s Greenwood District.

Matthews, 61, was in his 30s at the time. He had grown up in Tulsa and graduated from Tulsa Public Schools. But he had never heard this story before.

“I watched it, and I thought it was a fictional movie,” Matthews said. “I couldn’t stop looking at it. It was shocking to me. I couldn’t understand how I could get to be an adult and not know this story.”

That was the first time Matthews learned of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre. Thirty-five blocks of Black-owned businesses and homes in the affluent Greenwood District were reduced to ash in the two-day rampage. Estimates place the death toll between 100 and 300.

- from “A Conspiracy of Silence: Tulsa Race Massacre Was Absent From Schools for Generations,” Education Week, May 26, 2021

I grew up in a small Midwestern town (pop. 8,000), primarily of Polish/German/Dutch descent, in a very conservative church community (two services on Sunday, catechism on Monday nights), and in Christian schools. Evolution was atheistic. Protestors against the Vietnam War were unpatriotic radicals and hippies and belonged in prison. That kind of community.

There was no Internet, limited access to information beyond three TV networks and the local paper. When TV news showed demonstrations calling for civil rights and equality for Black people, our limited exposure to history and current day realities for those that didn’t look like us led us to believe that civil rights demonstrators were violent communists who wanted to destroy the government – and wanted “free stuff.”

Like Kevin Matthews, my peers and I had an incomplete understanding of history. Our history classes focused on European kings and cultures, brave Europeans coming to civilize the New World, the signing of the Declaration, the Founding Fathers, George Washington and the Revolutionary War, Abraham Lincoln freeing the slaves, Western exploration and discovering gold, massacres of pioneers by Indians and Custer’s Last Stand, American expansion in the world, the great Industrial Age and the achievements of the Carnegies and Rockefellers, America’s triumphs in war, the race to the moon and the U.S. as world leader.

Historical accomplishments of women, minorities? The history of native people in this country? Crickets. And to this day I have too little knowledge of the history and cultures of China and all of Asia, African tribal structure and the impact of colonialism, the historical origins of and conflicts among ethnic groups and nations in the Mideast, or the culturally diverse nations and history of Central and South America.

Not that any of those places are impacting us today or anything.

I wish I had known then what I know now, not just what I wasn’t taught about Charles Darwin and dinosaurs, but also history beyond European history and a wider view of U.S. history, warts and all: not just the Statue of Liberty and European immigration to the U.S. but also the prejudices many of them faced; not just Pilgrims and pioneers but also the impact of colonialism on native people both here and abroad, the Trail of Tears; not just Custer’s fall but the massacre at Wounded Knee, treaties made and treaties always broken; not just George Washington and Thomas Jefferson and building the Southern economy with the cotton gin and freeing the slaves but also about slave ownership itself, slavery’s role in building this country and the terrible impact it had on the enslaved, the failure of Reconstruction, Whites-Only bathrooms and water fountains, lack of voting rights, intimidation and lynching and segregated schools, libraries and communities, the great migration north of those looking for a better life – and Tulsa.

In other words, as the late Paul Harvey used to say – “the rest of the story.”

I’m still learning more about history, and it is that knowledge that is helping me better understand why we all are where we are now, helping me have much more empathy for those who don’t look or talk like me, whose cultural background and experiences are so different from mine. I need that understanding. We all do. If we don’t really know where we’ve been, where “others” have been, and how we all came to be where we are, how can we know which direction we all need to go?

Educators and administrators struggle with curriculum and discussions about diversity, race and equity in a historical context, and the teaching of history has always been controversial. Today many people see those conversations as denigrating the history of “our country” and making white people out to be villains. In several states, policymakers have already banned the teaching of critical race theory, and the teaching of history has become a flashpoint in the wider “cultural wars.”

Given the divisions within this country, that challenge is going to continue. But somehow we need to get to a place in which personal cultural identity does not preclude other voices from being heard or understood or respected. There needs to be a balance. There needs to be “the rest of the story” if we are to understand the full story.

Those conversations and that understanding has never been more important – nor more difficult. Educators need to walk a fine line between ensuring that students are not just exposed to the depth and breadth of history, both the positives and the negatives, but are engaged in important conversations about that history and the need to walk in another’s shoes without anyone feeling lesser-than. And school leaders will continue to face the challenge of engaging parents and communities – and policymakers – about why those discussions are so important for ALL of us.

We no longer can afford to live in little enclaves apart from the real world. We don’t do ourselves any favors doing that – and we certainly will not do either our students or our country any favors either.
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.

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STILL TIME TO REGISTER!

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

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 June 9.

Virtual information will be sent to paid registrants.

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

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RETIRING? STAY CONNECTED TO PASA!

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.)

June 16, July 21, August 18 (virtual)
Summer Forum: Leading in a Culture of Change

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

October 15
PA Summit for Assistant Superintendents & Supervisors
“Leader Actions for Continuous School Improvement”
 sponsored by Studer Education™
PASA Office

SAVE THE DATE
March 28, 2022
PASA Leadership Forum
State College
OUR BIG TAKEAWAYS
BY LYNN FUINI-HETTEN
WOMEN’S CAUCUS PRESIDENT

Whew! The end of the 20-21 school year is on the horizon. It has been a tough year for all of us in education. Challenge after challenge. Disappointment after disappointment. And for many of us – great sorrow. To pile it on (pun intended), we had piles of snow and quite a few 4:30 a.m. mornings. (Shout out to our facilities teams!)

There have also been opportunities. Opportunities for us to grow personally and professionally. Opportunities to connect with our families. (OK, so my husband never wants to work at home with me again.) Opportunities to get creative! Zoom bingo? Yup! Creative outdoor learning spaces? Check. Zoom happy hours with friends and family? Not quite the same! Thanksgiving on the patio? Yes! Christmas in the garage, anyone? With heaters and all!

My big takeaways...

We are learners.

Every one of us had to learn something new. New guidance, new data, how COVID spreads, case investigation, operational changes, how to stream online, zoom, etc... Think about the skills you have developed over the past year.

For our teachers and instructional assistants... when they first thought about teaching online, it probably felt very overwhelming. Now, although it was difficult, they figured out how to provide the best learning experience for our learners. Our building leaders led the way to make this happen. Our technology departments supported each step along the way as we learned new skills!

Our kids are learners too! What did our kids learn within and beyond our classroom walls within this past year? My son Matthew taught himself to short stocks, worked on his real estate license, and created a video game consulting company. While his grades were far from stellar, it is hard to argue with those kinds of learning experiences.

How many of our kids will now consider online courses for future training or college experiences? Or how many of them now know that online learning is not for them, and that knowledge will help them steer in a different direction?

We are agile.

Plans changed again and again… and again. We pivoted, and we moved forward in the best way we could. Changing protocols and different expectations required our flexibility. As leaders of our organizations, we had to model this for other leaders, teachers, and learners as well as our school community.

We are collaborators!

We are a connected group of leaders who rely on each other to gather information and make decisions. Remember all of those PASA Briefings? (Thanks again, Mark!) Sharing health and safety plans and strategies for communicating with stakeholders, this year I really leaned on my colleagues for help and support.

We can get it done!

Sure, we are all exhausted. Sure, this has been tough – really. But I am proud of our work in public education. I have said this before, and it certainly bears repeating: regardless of your role, you have made this happen. Each of us has contributed to the successes we have experienced.

What are your takeaways?

Lynn is superintendent of the Salisbury Township SD.

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!

Contacting PASA

The PASA Office is open with limited in-person staff and full virtual operations. 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.) We monitor all correspondence and respond as quickly as possible. Please do not hesitate to contact us with your questions and concerns!
Join a Delegation of Superintendents and School Business Officials this Summer

AASA’s Legislative Advocacy Conference is the premier opportunity for school superintendents and school business officials to make their voices heard on Capitol Hill and learn about the latest federal policy issues that will impact their districts. This year will allow school leaders to connect with staff on Capitol Hill as well as a variety of policy experts who can advise them on critical financial and policy decisions ahead.

CONFERENCE SESSIONS
- Infrastructure and School Construction: What School Leaders Need to Know
- Feeding Children in School: A Look at Current and Future Funding and Policy Opportunities
- ARP, Procurement and Spending Obstacles
- The Emergency Connectivity Fund, E-Rate and the Funding Ed-Tech in Schools
- Important Updates on Litigation, Regulations and Guidance for School Leaders

INVITED GUESTS
Secretary Cardona, U.S. Secretary of Education
Cindy Long, U.S. Department of Agriculture Acting Administrator
Jessica Rosenworcel, Acting Chairwoman of the FCC

Cost: $149
*Hotel cut-off is June 21 to receive the discount rate.

For information and registration, go to: https://aasa.org/legconf.aspx

REGISTRATION IS OPEN!

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
**Updated Guidance: Instructional Days/Hours in 2021-22**

The PDE last month updated its guidance on [Instructional Days/Hours During the 2021-22 School Year](https://www.pde.pa.gov/). All school districts must submit an updated Health and Safety Plan beginning July 1, 2021. The guidance provides flexibilities in the event of an emergency that prevents a school entity from being able to provide for the attendance of all pupils or usual hours of classes. PDE considers the World Health Organization-declared Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) global pandemic an emergency as contemplated by section 520.1. Accordingly, local governing boards have the authority to enact temporary provisions as set forth in section 520.1 during the period of the pandemic response and should consult their solicitor in this regard. Any school entity that enacts such temporary provisions must submit the following to the Secretary of Education (Secretary) for approval: (1) board meeting minutes demonstrating approval of the temporary provisions, and (2) the temporary provisions adopted, including the school entity’s proposed calendar and academic schedule. Beginning July 1, 2021, such information shall be submitted with or as an amended component of the school entity’s Health and Safety Plan at RA-EDContinuityofED@pa.gov. Upon receipt, the Secretary will review to ensure board approval and that the school entity’s plan accounts for at least 180 days and 990/900 hours of instruction.

**Updated Guidance on Masks**

On May 27, Department of Health Acting Secretary Alison Beam announced that the commonwealth’s mask order will be lifted by June 28. “After reviewing the vaccination data for people 18 and over and discussing it with the COVID-19 Vaccine Legislative Task Force, we have determined that the commonwealth’s mask order can be lifted on June 28 or when 70 percent of adults get their second dose, whichever comes first,” Acting Secretary Beam said. Once the statewide masking order is lifted, Pennsylvania will continue to follow the CDC guidance for wearing a mask where required by law, rule, and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance, she said.

The CDC requires individuals to wear a mask on planes, buses, trains, and other forms of public transportation traveling into, within, or out of the United States, and in U.S. transportation hubs, such as airports and stations. In addition, Beam said, all individuals should still follow guidance at workplaces, local businesses, long-term care facilities, hospitals, prisons, schools and homeless shelters. (from a press release)

**From AASA: Use of ESSER Funding**

The U.S. Department of Education has released its [FAQ on how ESSER funding](https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oca/faq.html) in CARES, CRRSA and most importantly in ARP. Please take time to read the guidance. In particular, the procurement and school construction sections are quite nuanced and require a careful review. A few highlights to be aware of are listed below:

- An SEA or a State legislature may not limit an LEA’s use of ESSER formula funds
- An SEA/State may not require that CARES Act funds need to be obligated prior to obligating CRRSA Act and ARP Act funds.
- ESSER funding can be used for new school construction, but USED cautions districts to be careful with this major investment and to make sure that it is somehow tied to preventing, preparing for and responding to COVID-19.
- Federal funds can be used to pay for student/staff vaccinations.
- ESSER funds can be used for pre-K and early childhood education programs.
- State and local education officials can’t use federal pandemic relief money to shore up their “rainy day” accounts.

**Other Guidance, Research and News Updates…**

- A bill pending consideration in the General Assembly would allow parents the option to have their child repeat a grade level during the 2021-22 school year, including students with IEPs who may have reached 21 years of age on or after the issuance of the proclamation of disaster emergency. SB 664 was passed by the Senate, amended by the House Education Committee, and has yet to be considered by the full House.
- State event and gathering limits were lifted effective May 31, while CDC guidance continues to strongly recommend social distancing for municipalities, school districts, restaurants and other venues. The PDE guidance still calls for keeping students at least three feet apart in schools, regardless of the community transmission level.
Each month, PASA, in coordination with the Technology Committee and CoSN (Consortium for School Networking), will publish a monthly technology-focused news item of interest to members of PASA.

TOPIC: DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION & INNOVATION IN RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS

The EmpowerED Superintendent eWebinar Series

This coming Monday’s June 14th broadcast of the monthly EmpowerED Superintendent Webinar series, co-hosted by CoSN, AASA and edWeb.net, and sponsored by ClassLink, airs at 5:00 pm EST. This Monday’s webinar is titled “Digital Transformation and Innovation in Rural School Districts: Leadership Strategies for Success.”

More than half of the school districts and about one-third of public schools in the United States are situated in rural areas. Rural districts have unique challenges, ranging from poverty and sizeable travel distances to a lack of affordable, reliable and robust internet access. Join the conversation with four rural school district superintendents, including Pennsylvania's own Dr. Peter Aiken, Superintendent, Manheim Central School District, PA; Dr. Amy Carter, Superintendent, Meridian Public Schools, MS; Dr. Matthew Dillon, Superintendent, Petal School District, MS; and Dan Leffingwell, Superintendent, Noble Local Schools, OH. These school leaders will discuss the challenges and opportunities that are unique to rural school districts when leading digital transformations that change how teachers teach and students learn, as well as impact the way school districts operate. Each superintendent also will share the leadership strategies and technology tools they have implemented during the past year and a half in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic to assure that all students in their districts continue learning. Plans for how the schools in these four rural school districts will operate during the 2021-2022 school year will also be discussed.

Click here to register for this free webinar. Webinars in this series are also freely available online at and via podcast at https://home.edweb.net/podcasts/ a day or two after the initial live broadcast.

CoSN Resources

Challenges and Opportunities of Rural Districts in Taking the Digital Leap: In partnership with Team4Tech, CoSN created and published multiple resources with proven strategies and real stories of how rural school systems have established meaningful local partnerships. The CoSN Report provides a review of five location-based challenges that rural school districts face and how technology can help. In addition, the report offers guidance on how rural school district leaders can leverage their communities to make a real difference for their rural school districts. Digital leap recommendations and advice on sustaining a digital leap are also provided. The full CoSN Report, “Challenges and Opportunities of Rural Districts in Taking the Digital Leap” is available online.

Digital Equity Concerns for Rural Schools: This CoSN resource addresses four Digital Equity challenges facing many rural schools or systems: 1) Access to Devices, 2) Access to Broadband, 3) Creative Learning Opportunities, and 4) Digital Equity vs. Digital Equality. Strategies and resources for addressing all four challenges are included in the document which can be accessed online.

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

“If you start a podcast, your audience hears the information straight from you. Other forms of media can be problematic as the message can become convoluted with other interpretations. When you share podcast conversations, you are delivering your message to your audience more effectively in a dialogue format. I don’t know a single superintendent who doesn’t crave that kind of messaging management.”


This month’s issue examines how superintendents can best care for themselves, their staff and students.
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.
"Most school districts can provide as quality a cyber program as charter schools for a lower cost, and this year has proved it. They are one of the biggest drivers of school property tax." – Dr. Frank Gallagher, superintendent of the Souderton SD, during a press conference with Gov. Wolf in Pottstown on May 20

"Navigating politics when we have no say over what happens—that has just been a really horrible position to be in. We’re selected to be leaders in a situation, and in an organization, where we have been stripped of our decision-making powers. And leadership is really all about those strategic decisions.” – Diann Kitamura, retiring superintendent of the Santa Rosa City Schools in California, on the challenges over her five-and-a-half year tenure, especially during the pandemic (from a story in Education Week, 5/21/21)

“The lack of adequate subsidies from the state when it comes to funding for school districts affects urban districts, suburban districts and rural districts alike. While federal relief funds are being used for one-time COVID costs, the state must provide enough funding for ongoing costs to schools that will be with districts long after the federal stimulus dollars are gone – including special education and career and technical education. Our state legislators need to meet their responsibility for ensuring all students have the resources they need to succeed. This latest Census data shows that the state’s responsibility is far from being met.” – Dr. Mark DiRocco, PASA Executive Director, from a PA Schools Work press release that shows Pennsylvania falling further behind in meeting the needs of Pennsylvania’s students, 5/26/21

"At each step of analysis, SB 733 demonstrates its own deficiency. The bill should be seen for what it truly is – the latest attempt by voucher proponents to establish a footprint in state statute for a more expansive tuition voucher program in the future, regardless of the damage it causes to students, schools and taxpayers. SB 733 is simply ideology wrapped in bad policy. There are far more pressing problems within public education that deserve the attention of policymakers, namely helping schools and communities recover from the pandemic. We urge you to focus your time and energy on these very real challenges and reject SB 733.” – letter to members of the Pennsylvania Senate by a coalition of voucher opponents, including PASA, concerning a bill that would give tuition vouchers to parents of children with IEPs

"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 WEBSITE: CAREER CENTER

Have an administrative position you need to fill? Or are you considering moving forward in your professional career?

As a courtesy to school administrators, public school employers, and those seeking positions in school administration, PASA provides on its website the “PASA Career Center,” a listing of school administrator job openings, both in Pennsylvania and in the Mid-Atlantic region. Vacancies and available positions for public schools are posted at no charge upon request and review.

To request a vacancy announcement posting on this website, send a message to the Webmaster. Please include your phone number with your e-mail request. Information needed includes: position, entity, contact name/address, description of the position, application deadline and application process. Additional position information may be included, depending on length.

(PASA reserves the right not to publish an open position or to modify submitted information.)
Pennsylvanian in School Administrator Magazine

This month’s issue of School Administrator includes a guest commentary by Jenna Rufo, who until a few months ago was an assistant superintendent in a Lehigh Valley school district. In her article, Rufo relates a story of a male colleague being addressed as “Doctor,” while she was recognized as “Jenna Rufo,” despite also having a doctorate. “Women long have been expected to be defined by family first and then career,” she writes. “The deleterious effects of this belief are well-documented.” See her article, “Just Call Me ‘Doctor,’” on page 18 in this month’s issue.

Support for School Infrastructure Funding

On May 12 AASA and 16 other allied organizations sent a letter to Congress urging for the inclusion of at least $100 billion in direct grants and $30 billion in bonds for K-12 public school facilities, which is consistent with the Reopen and Rebuild America’s Schools Act, passed by the U.S. House of Representatives in July 2020.

The letter examines how years of state and local government disinvestments in K-12 facilities have caused school buildings to be underequipped by $46 billion annually. Moreover, the letter shows that even if school districts were able to use 15% of ARP funding to meet CDC mitigation guidelines and reduce some of their deferred maintenance, many school buildings would still require significant repairs and upgrades, which is especially the case for high-poverty school districts.

In light of new efforts by GOP congressional leaders to exclude schools from the upcoming American Jobs proposal, AASA was proud to join this allied effort and advocate for schools to be included in any forthcoming infrastructure package. Access the letter by clicking here.

ARP LEA Recovery Plan Timeline

AASA and its Large County Consortium jointly submitted a letter to the U.S. Dept. of Ed regarding two concerns with the ARP LEA recovery plan timeline and approach to continuous improvement.

Following that communication, USDE made both of the clarifications AASA requested. In their response to the letter, department officials shared a link to the slides they presented that day.

- On slide 21, they confirmed that despite their references to a timeline that “should” not be more than 90 days, the ultimate decision is “left to each SEA.”
- On slide 22, they confirmed that LEA recovery plans should be continuously improved over time and that SEAs can establish the amendment process (which presumably they can make not-too-onerous).

AASA Priorities for Child Nutrition

AASA’s Advocacy Team has created two new resources for Congressional stakeholders working to reauthorize the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act. The first document includes an overview of AASA’s policy recommendations for this year’s child nutrition reauthorization (CNR) effort. The second document provides anecdotes from AASA members regarding the harm that increased federal school meal nutritional standards would have on superintendents’ ability to operate NSLP and SBP. Access AASA’s CNR priorities here.

In This Month’s School Administrator

“Supporting the social and emotional well-being of district employees is critical for creating a high-performing team, but it’s not an endeavor the superintendent can take on alone. It takes the efforts of the entire leadership team.” – Kristi Wilson, AASA President, from “Nurturing a School District’s Wellness”

“Along with the changes that the pandemic may bring about as to how we educate our students, there is an opportunity to change how we deal with the social and emotional needs of students and staff. The focus on students suggests a whole-child approach. The report from the AASA-assembled National Commission on Student-Centered, Equity-Focused Education recognizes social, emotional and cognitive growth as essential components of a new vision for our public schools.” – Daniel Domenech, AASA Executive Director, from “Redoubling Attend to Staff and Student Needs”

“When we’re in our highest-functioning team times, we show up in our best way for kids. I can’t do it by myself.” – Christy Perry, superintendent of the Salem-Keizer SD in Oregon and one of four finalists for 2021 National Superintendent of the Year, from “A Connection to Students at Her Core” by Jacqueline Hyman, a senior editorial assistant for School Administrator

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.

Mark your calendars!

2022 AASA
NATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON EDUCATION

February 17-19 in Nashville
FISCAL YEAR 2022 BUDGET REQUEST FOR THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Just before the Memorial Day weekend, the Biden administration released its Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Request for the U.S. Department of Education. We knew to expect a big increase in the overall top-line funding level for USED based on the discretionary budget released by the Administration in April. The proposal includes a record increase for USED of $29.8 billion (41%) over the FY 2022 level, and big increases for education programs in Health and Human Services (HHS).

Some of our top takeaways:

*Lots of New Programs:* Some of the biggest funding increases are for new programs. While we are pleased to see President hold true to his push for increased funding for Title I, we are following this proposal closely because detail in this budget indicates that the $20 billion increase for Title I is for a new Equity Grant, not the existing state grant program. Another new program of note? $1 billion for a School-Based Health Professionals program, an initial down payment on a 10-year campaign to double the number of counselors, nurses, and mental health professionals in schools.

*Other Increases:* Outside of these new programs, the remaining increases are concentrated in a handful of programs. The biggest winners in the discretionary side of the budget? Special education, with IDEA seeing a $3.1 billion increase; Pell Grants, with a $3 billion increase; Community Schools, with a $413 million increase; and career and technical education, with a $128 million increase, among others.

*Lots of Level Funding:* In spite of an unprecedented increase in total funding, funding levels for a number of discretionary USED programs—including Title IV-A and most of the Title I programs—remain frozen, with no proposed increase.

*IDEA:* Of particular importance to AASA, the Administration proposes a $2.7 billion increase for IDEA. This aligns with the increased IDEA funding that was allotted in the American Rescue Plan. We support this increase as it would allow districts to not have to initially worry about IDEA maintenance of effort requirements since the funding would be level for two years.

*Title III Grants:* The proposal is also recommending a major increase in Title III grants for ELLs with a proposed increase of $917 million from $797 million in FY21.

*Rural Schools:* The proposal provides a $5 million increase to the Rural Education Achievement Program.

*DC Vouchers:* The proposal would continue funding the DC voucher program at the same level as the prior Administration.

In terms of the annual appropriations process, the next step lies within Congress, and we wait to see the extent to which House and Senate Democrats use the Biden proposal as the starting point for their FY22 work, or instead move in a different direction.

As a reminder, FY22 starts on October 1, and these federal dollars would be in schools for the 2022-23 school year. FY22 is the first year in over a decade where federal funding is not bound by spending caps in the Budget Control Act.

Call for Presentations…

PASA 2021-22 WEBINAR SERIES -
“Education in a New Era”

Deadline for Submission: June 30, 2021

An Advisory Team comprised of volunteers from PASA’s Innovative Teaching and Learning and Professional Development Committees will review submissions and select presentations that address at least one descriptor for at least one redesign characteristic identified on the rubric. All applicants will be notified of their status by July 30, 2021.

See the PASA website for information about the RFP and the rubric at https://www.pasa-net.org/2021-22webinarsRFP.

The silver lining of the current health and social crises is a long-awaited opportunity to create the culture and models for authentic student-centered, equity-focused, future-driven programs, policies, and/or practices. To support your efforts, we are providing opportunities to learn from and network with colleagues across Pennsylvania through this 2021-22 webinar series “Education in a New Era.”

PASA is now calling for webinar series presentations that feature redesign characteristics identified by the national initiative, “An American Imperative: A New Vision for Public Schools.”

Submit a proposal from your school(s) OR nominate a colleague. Those who submit a presentation proposal will receive a free registration to the Series.
REGION 8

Michael Strasser, superintendent of the Cambria Heights SD, will be retiring after the current school year. He has served in education for 37 years and as superintendent since 2009. The district’s Director of Education Ken Kerchenske will become the district’s new superintendent as of July 1.

REGION 15

Dr. Chelton Hunter has been appointed superintendent of the Middletown Area SD, effective July 1. He currently serves as the district’s assistant superintendent. Hunter will replace Dr. Lori Suski, who is retiring.

REGION 17

Dr. Susan Higley has been appointed superintendent of the Sullivan County SD, effective July 1. She currently serves as an elementary principal in the Towanda SD. Higley will replace acting superintendent Dr. Kathryn Gruber.

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.

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.

JUNE

14 Legislative Committee Zoom meeting
16 Leading in a Culture of Change Session 1 (virtual)
18 Superintendent of the Year Luncheon (Reading)
21 Legislative Committee Zoom meeting
23-24 National Superintendent Certification Program
28 Legislative Committee Zoom meeting

JULY

5 PASA office closed
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)