Exclusive to PASA Members! Join PASAConnect today!
PASA is excited to present a new online networking community, PASAConnect, an exclusive environment only available to our PASA members! In this new community, PASA members will be able to network safely with one another by posting questions, sharing research and innovative practices, and engaging in webinars and online virtual meetings! PASA members received a link in their email this morning to activate their account.

If you did not receive the activation link, please contact PASA’s Communications Director, Adam Kulikowski at pasa@pasa-net.org for assistance.

Stay tuned as we continue to build out new opportunities and content in PASAConnect!

PASA Awards of Achievement:

We need YOUR help in identifying those among us who are deserving of special recognition! There are many of our colleagues deserving of recognition; nominate someone today!

The Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators is seeking nominations for the three special awards recognizing leadership in public education.

Service to the Profession Award
This award is presented to an administrator who demonstrates commitment to excellence as evidenced through notable service to the profession. Examples of this service may include developing an effective professional development program for school district educators, demonstrating leadership in administrator preparation programs, school study councils or other professional development efforts, or promoting the education profession through research, writing or organizational service.

Instructional Leadership
This award is presented to an administrator who demonstrates commitment to excellence in teaching and learning by developing, nurturing and supporting exemplary programs that support the academic achievement of particular student populations, enrich student learning in a particular content area, or implement strategies to enhance student learning across the curriculum.

Leadership in Public Education
This award is presented to an administrator who demonstrates commitment to school administration as a profession, to public education, and to one’s colleagues, including participation in and leadership with the Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators.

Click here to download a nomination form. Deadline for nominations is March 29.

We also need your help in nominating our outstanding female leaders, presented annually by PASA’s Women’s Caucus:
Margaret Smith Leadership Award
This award is given to a female administrator who has demonstrated proven leadership in education. The award is named for Dr. Margaret Smith, first president of the Women's Caucus, a former Pennsylvania superintendent and a former PA Secretary of Education.
Make your nomination now for the 2024 award recipient by April 5.

Wanda McDaniel Award
The Wanda McDaniel Award is granted annually to a professional educator who displays outstanding leadership qualities, while aspiring to higher levels of leadership.
Make your nomination now for the 2024 award recipient by April 5.

Save the Date:

Lunch and Learn: Artificial Intelligence
Free to PASA members; $40 per session or $140 for all sessions for non-members

Stay abreast of the rapid advancements in technology that are reshaping the educational landscape! Attend PASA’s Innovative Teaching and Learning Committee "Lunch and Learn" series on Artificial Intelligence (AI). These sessions provide a unique opportunity for leaders to understand how AI can be integrated into curriculum development, personalized learning, and administrative efficiency, ensuring that their institutions remain at the forefront of educational innovation and avoid legal issues. By engaging with experts and peers over lunch, leaders can learn about practical applications of AI, address ethical considerations, and explore strategies for implementing AI tools in a way that enhances learning outcomes and prepares students for a future where AI plays a central role in various industries. Moreover, these informal gatherings facilitate networking, collaboration, and the sharing of best practices among educational professionals, fostering a community that is well-equipped to navigate the challenges and opportunities presented by AI in education.

All sessions run from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

April 2:
Generative Artificial Intelligence Governance, Access, and Ethical Considerations for School Districts

April 22:
Opportunities, Risks, and Legal Concerns with Generative AI in K-12 Education

May 14:
AI District Panel Discussion: Using AI to Impact Student Learning

Click here for more information on each session and to register.

Construction Project Management Symposium
April 10, 2024 – 8 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.
Berks IU
Course Content:
The PASBO Facilities Committee has developed a Construction Project Management Guide to assist LEA professionals understand the process. This comprehensive symposium will lead you through the construction project cycle and will provide in-depth discussions of the seven project phases: Concept, Schematic Design, Design Development, Contract Documents, Bidding Phase, Construction and Close
This course will teach you about project scalability, which will allow you to apply its concepts from minor renovations to full scale renovation or construction. Participating LEA design team members will understand their roles and responsibilities and those of design professionals, jurisdiction authority, contractors, and testing agencies. The Construction Project Management Guide will be provided as part of the Symposium so you may share these concepts with your LEA that can be used on future projects.

**Intended Audience:**
superintendents, business managers, facility managers, construction coordinators, and board members.

**Topics include:**
- Construction Project Cycle
- LEA Construction Design Team
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Attainment of Project Expectations

**Cost:**
Register by March 4: PASBO Member $125/Non-member $185
After March 4: PASBO Member $130/Non-member $190

For more information, visit: PASBO.org. To register, create a profile on the PASBO website or contact Stephanie Stehman at sstehman@pasbo.org to get help signing up for the workshop.

**Connecting the Dots: School District Funding, Spending, and Budgeting**
When: Berks County I.U. 14 on April 3 | Westmoreland I.U. 7 on April 15 | Central I.U. 10 on April 17
Registration required!

This no-cost workshop is designed to encourage joint attendance by Superintendents and their CFO/Business Manager or other critical leadership staff. Participants will spend a full day discussing how to look at their school district budget to drive more effective multi-fiscal year planning. The program will include diving into the details of the Basic Education Funding and Special Education Funding and examining school district expenditure growth over time. Participants will be provided with tools and resources to map out strategies for making more accurate and thoughtful short and long-term budget decisions.

Additional topics to be discussed include the ESSER era unwind, fund balances and reserves, infrastructure needs, expenditure mandates and educational choice, resource and staff planning, as well as overarching insights on the BEF Commission’s recommendations, the school funding lawsuit, and the Governor’s proposed 2024-25 budget.

Registration is capped at 100 participants at each location. Register now to be sure and get into your closest location!

Learn more and register on PASA’s Website.

**New Superintendent Induction Program: Mentors for New Leaders**
PASA’s New Superintendent Induction Program provides needed support and guidance for beginning Superintendents by providing an experienced superintendent mentor to help with the transition into the Superintendency. This program facilitates a working relationship between the Superintendent and an
experienced Mentor that allows for open and private discussions and provides resources to sustain school system leaders.

For more information and to apply, visit PASA’s website.

2024-25 Teach Plus PA Policy Fellowship
Teach Plus Pennsylvania is currently accepting applications for the 2024-25 Pennsylvania Teaching Policy Fellowship. This highly selective leadership opportunity is a paid fellowship for 30 outstanding Pennsylvania teachers looking to deepen their knowledge of education policy and amplify the voices of teacher leaders in Pennsylvania. With a particular focus on rural districts, which have been underrepresented, we are hoping to build a diverse cohort of teachers from across Pennsylvania, and we'd love your help with spreading the word.

You can nominate teachers and begin your application here.

Learn more by signing up for one of our info sessions.
March 27th, 6-7 p.m.: Register | April 16th, 7-8 p.m.: Register

In Health, Safety, Equity & Learning News…

Special Education Advocates Warn Of ‘Chilling Effects’ From Anti-DEI Efforts — Growing efforts to limit diversity, equity and inclusion programs in elementary and secondary schools may negatively impact special education activities meant to expand inclusive opportunities for students with disabilities, warn some special education and disability rights advocates. Several of these advocates said there’s little evidence so far that anti-DEI efforts are excluding special education students from general education activities or even explicitly proposing this. But they expressed growing concerns about what they say is a misunderstanding about inclusive special education under the politically charged DEI label. Read the rest of the story: “Special Education Advocates Warn Of ‘Chilling Effects’ From Anti-DEI Efforts” (from, K-12 Dive, 3/20/24)

Republican and Democratic Governors Both Are Touting This K-12 Priority — Clear K-12 themes dominated governors’ state of the state addresses this year, with one issue dominating priorities across party lines: workforce readiness. That’s the finding of analysts from the Education Commission of the States, a research group, who worked with the National Governors Association to review addresses made by governors in 41 states and the U.S. Virgin Islands for a report issued March 14. (Some governors only give the speeches biennially, in the years their state legislatures convene.) Thirty-seven of those speeches called for a focus on career and technical education and workforce development, an issue that has won the support of everyone from conservative state lawmakers to Democratic President Joe Biden, who mentioned career preparation in his State of the Union address. Read the rest of the story: “Republican and Democratic Governors Both Are Touting This K-12 Priority” (from Education Week, 3/20/24)

The First Step to Hiring a Diverse School Staff: Believing It’s Possible — Clint Mitchell arrived in the United States from the Caribbean island of St. Lucia at 14 years old, on Nov. 12, 1989. Most of his peers at the New York City school he attended were students of color—but he only had one Black teacher. The rest were white. More than three decades later, he became superintendent of the Colonial Beach district in rural Virginia, where nearly 40 percent of students are Black. But when he stood before his elementary school staff to introduce himself, he realized there wasn’t a single Black educator in the crowd. Now Mitchell is trying to make sure students in his district regularly encounter Black and brown teachers—“because I didn’t have that opportunity,” he shared during a virtual panel discussion at Education Week’s K-12 Essentials Forum on March 14. Read the rest of the story: “The First Step to Hiring a Diverse School Staff: Believing It’s Possible” (from Education Week, 3/18/24)
In State News…

‘It Takes A Village’: U.S. Education Secretary Visits School District of Lancaster Community School— U.S. Education Secretary Miguel Cardona continued his two-day visit to Lancaster County Wednesday afternoon with a tour of George Washington Elementary School, one of the School District of Lancaster’s full service community schools. At the Lancaster city school, Cardona got a first-hand look at how a community school director and enhanced mental health programming can make students and parents of all backgrounds feel welcome and included in the School District of Lancaster community. Read the rest of the story: “‘It Takes A Village’: U.S. Education Secretary Visits School District of Lancaster Community School” (from LancasterOnline, 3/20/24)

Philly Schools Should Get Bigger Cut Of Tax Revenue Than Mayor’s Proposal, Group Says — One of Philadelphia’s leading education advocacy groups wants the City Council to allocate more money to city public schools than the mayor has recommended in her proposed budget. In a lengthy report released Wednesday on the state of the city’s children, Children’s First said Philadelphia should devote 58% of property tax revenue to the district, up from the 55% schools get now. Children First Executive Director Donna Cooper estimated that an increase to 58% would bring in an additional $61 million to the district next year due to the higher percentage, although she said that figure could rise to as much as $98.6 million if expected revenue growth is included. In her budget proposal, Mayor Cherelle Parker says the school district should get 56% of that tax revenue. Read the rest of the story: “Philly Schools Should Get Bigger Cut Of Tax Revenue Than Mayor’s Proposal, Group Says” (from Chalkbeat Philadelphia, 3/20/24)

5 Takeaways From Spotlight PA’s Event on Education Transparency And Holding Public School Officials Accountable — For Sunshine Week, an annual event that highlights the importance of government transparency, Spotlight PA hosted a discussion on openness and accountability in public education. The March 14 virtual panel detailed how to navigate open meetings and records laws, get involved in local education conversations, and how to track the court-mandated overhaul of education funding in Pennsylvania. Here are five key things to know from the discussion, which can be viewed in full online. Read the rest of the story: “5 Takeaways From Spotlight PA’s Event On Education Transparency And Holding Public School Officials Accountable” (from Spotlight PA, 3/21/24)

New Report Gives Pennsylvania A C Grade For Its Support Of Public Schools — According to a recent report, Pennsylvania ranks in the mediocre middle when it comes to how well states support public education. The commonwealth scores a solid C for a grade, tied with Maryland for 19th place in the rankings. The report is “Public School in America: Measuring Each State’s Commitment to Democratically Governed Schools,” published by the Network for Public Education. NPE is an advocacy group the works to preserve, promote, improve and strengthen the nation’s public schools. Read the rest of the story: “New Report Gives Pennsylvania A C Grade For Its Support of Public Schools” (from Bucks County Beacon, 3/21/24)

In National and International News…

What Themes Are Emerging From State AI Guidance?— Ensuring artificial intelligence does not replace humans and addressing workforce needs are just two of the themes emerging across at least seven states that have released guidance on using AI in K-12 settings, according to a recent analysis by nonprofit Digital Promise. According to Digital Promise, seven states — California, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Virginia, Washington and West Virginia — had released guidance to help school district leaders navigate AI in K-12 as of late February. Meanwhile, a separate review of state AI policies — by Arizona State University’s Center on Reinventing Public Education — found conversations shifting away from last year’s focus on plagiarism and bans and moving toward urging teachers to accept AI and use it to enhance learning and their own effectiveness in the classroom. Read the rest of the story: “What Themes Are Emerging From State AI Guidance?” (from K-12 Dive, 3/19/24)
40 Years After ‘A Nation At Risk,’ How Has Standards-Based School Reform Succeeded—And Failed? — “Standards-based reform” in the heyday of the education reform movement was a bit like the title of a recent film: Everything Everywhere All at Once. The strategy of setting statewide standards, measuring student performance against those standards, and then holding schools accountable for the results was at the heart of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and dominated education policy for most of the “long NCLB period” from the 1990s into the 2010s. To many observers, standards-based reform was education reform, and so the question about whether standards-based reform worked is equivalent to asking whether education reform worked. Answering that question is only possible if we define what’s in and what’s out: What counts under the umbrella of standards-based reform? Did it succeed as an overall strategy? Were there individual components that were particularly effective? Read the rest of the story: “40 Years After ‘A Nation At Risk,’ How Has Standards-Based School Reform Succeeded—And Failed?” (from The 74, 3/19/24)

The Finalists for National Teacher of the Year Have Ideas for Boosting Teacher Morale— Part of being the National Teacher of the Year means representing the profession—which is experiencing no small amount of challenges at the moment. Teachers are, on average, feeling more negatively about their jobs than positively, according to new EdWeek Research Center data, and just 1 in 5 would recommend their own children—or those of a loved one—pursue a career in teaching. Teachers say they’re overworked and feel underpaid and generally disrespected. This year’s finalists for the nation’s top teaching award have some ideas about what could turn things around—and they also have a national platform to share those suggestions with policymakers and district leaders. Read the rest of the story. “The Finalists for National Teacher Of The Year Have Ideas For Boosting Teacher Morale” (from Education Week, 3/19/24)

Just 47% Of Public Schools Rate Themselves Highly On College Prep — Less than half (47%) of public schools rated themselves as doing a “very good” or “excellent” job preparing students for college, according to a nationally representative survey released by the National Center for Education Statistics Tuesday. Schools in high-poverty neighborhoods were less likely than more affluent schools to say they did an “excellent” or “very good” job at college preparation. Schools with higher populations of students of color, those in high-poverty neighborhoods, those in rural areas, and those with fewer than 1,000 students reported offering fewer AP courses on average. Read the rest of the story: “Just 47% Of Public Schools Rate Themselves Highly On College Prep” (from K-12 Dive, 3/19/24)

Supreme Court Ruling Could Give School Board Members More Freedom To Block Critics On Social Media— Can a school board member block a parent who criticizes them on Facebook? Does it matter if the parent posts one negative comment or 100? Does it matter if the school board member just sticks to official business or if they mix posts about hiring a superintendent with posts about their kids’ birthdays? In recent years, a number of courts have found that when public officials talk about public business on personal social media accounts, those accounts become public forums — and blocking someone from a public forum because you don’t like their speech violates the First Amendment. The most prominent case involved former President Donald Trump, who was barred from blocking critics from his @realDonaldTrump account on X, then known as Twitter. But a recent U.S. Supreme Court decision lays out a new standard. Read the rest of the story: “Supreme Court Ruling Could Give School Board Members More Freedom To Block Critics On Social Media” (from Chalkbeat, 3/20/24)

Key Legislative Updates:

- Physical Education.—(a) The board of school directors in every school district shall establish a curriculum aligned with Pennsylvania academic standards on health, safety and physical education
• (b) Beginning in the 2025-2026 school year and in each school year thereafter, the board of school directors may permit students to satisfy the physical education curriculum requirements under subsection (a) by participating in interscholastic athletics. A student may utilize participation in an interscholastic sport to satisfy the physical education requirement twice per school year, the utilization of which must be during the interscholastic sport's season.
• "Interscholastic sport" shall mean athletic contests or competitions conducted between or among schools entities situated in a school district.

Amended (in red above) on March 19 by Sen. Argall: Read the amendment here. Passed on first consideration by the Senate Education Committee on March 19, 2024.

HB 663: Students Involved in School District Residency Disputes (McNeil) First consideration in the Senate Education Committee (3-19-24)
If it is found that the parents, guardians, et., do not reside in the district and a determination is made that the child is not otherwise entitled to free school privileges, the child may not be disenrolled from the school until:
1. The parents, etc., are provided an opportunity to appeal the decision through a hearing held pursuant to an appropriate grievance policy of the district and any appeal has been exhausted.
2. After the parents, etc., have been provided notice of such a hearing, the parent, etc., decline to participate in a hearing pursuant to the grievance policy or appeals process
3. After the parents, etc., have been provided information from the district’s liaison for homeless children and youth regarding the educational rights of homeless students.
4. A court enters an order directing the child to be disenrolled and enrolled in a different school.

Passed unanimously on first consideration by the Senate Education Committee on March 19, 2024.

HB 502, PN 471: National Guard and Reserve parent student support: Passed in the House unanimously (Guenst) –
• An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14) providing for National Guard and Reserve parent student support.
• A student who is a child of a member of the National Guard and Reserve shall be afforded the same rights as a student of an active duty military family under the act of February 2, 2012 (P.L.42, No.6), known as the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children Act, if a parent is required to move to perform the parent's responsibilities in the service of the National Guard or Reserve, resulting in the student having to transfer from a public school in one state to a public school in another state.

HB 1875, PN 2418: AP Exam Cost Reduction (Intro. By Malagari) Passed in the House by a 144-57 vote (3-19-24)
• An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14- providing professional development and for access to advanced courses for all students; establishing the Access to Advanced Courses for All Students Grant Program;
• This bill will cover an 80% exam fee reduction to all AP and International Baccalaureate (IB) students. School districts will be responsible to cover the remaining 20% for students with financial need, and may also choose to do so for all students. School districts may use federal funds to cover its portion of the exam fee.
• A) ACCESS.--BEGINNING WITH THE 2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR, EACH SCHOOL ENTITY RECEIVING A GRANT UNDER SECTION 1704-E(B) SHALL PROVIDE SECONDARY STUDENTS WITH EXPANDED OPPORTUNITIES TO ENROLL IN ADVANCED COURSES AS WELL AS EXAM FEE ASSISTANCE, AS APPROPRIATE.
• (B) DUTIES.-- (1) NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 1, 2024, AND EVERY FIVE YEARS THEREAFTER, EACH SCHOOL ENTITY SHALL REPORT TO THE DEPARTMENT, IN A MANNER DETERMINED BY THE DEPARTMENT, ALL ADVANCED COURSE OFFERINGS THAT ARE AVAILABLE TO THE SCHOOL ENTITY’S SECONDARY STUDENTS FOR THE
CURRENT SCHOOL YEAR AS WELL AS THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN ADVANCED COURSES, COMPLETING ADVANCED COURSES AND TAKING AN END-OF-COURSE EXAM.

1) A SCHOOL ENTITY THAT DOES NOT MEET A MINIMUM ADVANCED COURSE BENCHMARK ESTABLISHED BY THE DEPARTMENT UNDER SECTION 1703-E(B)(2)(I) SHALL BE ELIGIBLE FOR ANNUAL GRANTS FOR A MAXIMUM OF FIVE CONSECUTIVE YEARS TO TRAIN EDUCATORS TO TEACH ADVANCED COURSES TO ENABLE THE SCHOOL ENTITY TO MEET THE BENCHMARK AND FURTHER EXPAND ACCESS TO ADVANCED COURSES BEYOND THE BENCHMARK OVER THE FIVE-YEAR GRANT PERIOD.

PASA opposes due to the cumbersomeness of this bill in implementation.

**House Bill 974, PN 2412: Right to Know Exception (Intro. By Hanbidge) Passed in the House unanimously**

- An Act amending the act of February 14, 2008 (P.L.6, No.3), known as the Right-to-Know Law, in procedure, further providing for exceptions for public records.
- This bill exempts reference notes and working papers prepared by or for a public official or public employee that are used to accommodate an individual’s disability.

**House Bill 1434: PN 1613: Dual Credit Innovation and Equity Grant Program (Isaacson) Third consideration**

- Award grants to public IHEs that offer dual credit opportunities to high school students enrolled in a school entity.
- Funds may be used for tuition free dual credit (DC) courses, gain accreditation for DC courses, low/no cost course materials, PD for HS teachers to teach DC courses, provide a system of student supports to be success in DC courses.
- Priority given to IHEs that emphasize coursework aligned with high-priority career paths, service to students from low-income backgrounds, CTE programs, historically underserved student groups; students in rural areas.
- Annual data collection by PDE on specifics of program.

**House Bill 1665: PN 2762: Comprehensive school counseling services. (Steele) Third consideration**

- Our legislation would create the School Counseling Services Act - requires that schools develop a robust and comprehensive school counseling plan. The plan would ensure that academic, career planning, and social and emotional learning concerns are addressed, would include a multilevel school data review to determine student needs, and would align with guidance from the PDE.
- This bill would spell out the way in which counselors spend their time, requiring that they spend at least 80% of their working time engaged in direct and indirect services to students on days that students were in school. These services could involve academic advising, career planning, social and emotional skill building, intervening with students at risk of dropping out, orienting new and transferring students, and contributing to decision-making teams and programs that directly impact students and families. Administrative responsibilities could take up no more than 20% of their time.

**Note:** This bill was amended on March 20 by Rep. Schweyer to remove language defining a public school. An amended proposed by Rep. Scialabba did not pass.

PASA is opposed to this bill both for the plan, as well as the Counselor dictation of time.

**Other Legislative Action Taken Last Week:**
HB 1553: Second consideration with amendments and Re-Committed to the House Appropriations Committee (3-20-24): This bill would require schools to include the suicide prevention hotline telephone number on student identification cards.

Note: This bill was amended by Rep. Delloso to specify that the suicide hotline number provided to students in grades six through 12 must be available 24/7. The amendment also calls for the hotline number to be listed on the district’s website, in any counselor’s office and in the offices of any principal or chief administrator.

Sponsor Update:

Deadline approaching on April 5:

Global Professional Development Program Scholarships Upcoming Application Deadline
Please consider applying for the Fall 2024 PASA/EF Annual Global Professional Development Program Scholarship October 10-14th to Panama. During this experience, you'll get a taste of hands-on learning as you explore cultural sites, analyze new trends in STEM education, and participate in service-learning projects around sustainability. You will also expand your professional network as you work collaboratively with peers exploring the importance of global competency for your district and community, all while discovering the rich history and culture of Panama.

Applications are due Friday, April 5th for this full scholarship opportunity. You can find out all the details and apply at https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/7LFTKRR

Want to hear from others who have participated before? Check out: https://blog.eftours.com/article/ef-professional-learning-community-tours/

Questions? Email Michele Balliet @mballiet@pasa-net.org or Meghan Schafer meghan.schafer@ef.com

Upcoming Legislative Schedule – (Subject to change)

House of Representatives:
Next Session: March 25 at 11 a.m.

Senate:
Next sessions: April 8 at 1 p.m.

Senate Scheduled Session Days:
April: 8, 9, 10, 29, 30
May: 1, 6, 7, 8
June: 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30

House Scheduled Session Days:
March: 26, 27
April: 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 29, 30
May: 1, 6, 7, 8, 20, 21, 22
June: 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28

Note: Tuesday, April 23 is Primary Election Day in Pennsylvania

On the PASA Calendar...
April 2: Artificial Intelligence: Generative Artificial Intelligence Governance, Access, and Ethical Considerations for School Districts (Virtual)
April 3: Connecting the Dots: School District Funding, Spending, and Budgeting (Berks I.U.)
April 15: Connecting the Dots: School District Funding, Spending, and Budgeting (Westmoreland I.U.)
April 17: Connecting the Dots: School District Funding, Spending, and Budgeting (Central I.U.)
April 22: Artificial Intelligence: Opportunities, Risks, and Legal Concerns with Generative AI in K-12 Education (Virtual)
April 30: PASA Advocacy Day
May 14: Artificial Intelligence: Session 4 (More information to come)
May 19-21: Women’s Caucus Annual Spring Conference at the Hershey Hotel

Click here to view the full calendar of events.