

THE PASA Flyer

Vol. 65, NO. 8- May 2023

Proud Leadership for
Pennsylvania Schools

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The Value of



**Spreading the
good news!**

See how public
education is thriving

From PASA's Executive Director:

It's Time for a Reset in How We Do
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Register Now – Only four (4) positions still available!

The Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators is offering a 2024 Cohort of the AASA National Superintendent Certification Program to begin on September 13, 2023. Deadline to register is June 30.

PASA and AASA are excited to offer a new cohort of a premier professional development program for superintendents, developed by superintendents, based upon the AASA National Superintendent Certification Program®.

The AASA's National Superintendent Certification Program® is a dynamic, interactive professional development program held both in-person and virtually, over 18 months. From navigating board relations to legislative advocacy and effectively building your vision for educational leadership in your district, this program will challenge your critical thinking skills and expand your toolbox.

Throughout this program, you will meet with national experts and colleagues at the PASA headquarters in Harrisburg where you will actively participate in sessions and topical discussions. You will be paired with an experienced superintendent who will provide mentorship throughout your journey.

The Program will be implemented over six, two-day sessions over the next two years, starting September 13-14, 2023. Some of the sessions will be in-person at the PASA Office in Harrisburg, and some will be virtual. Sessions will be facilitated by former superintendents who led highly successful school districts and guest speakers, along with experienced mentors for all participants.

What to Know: Participation is limited to 25.

How to apply: Visit [PASA's website](#) to register for this program.

"As a participant of the PASA cohort of the AASA National Superintendent Certification Program® I had the opportunity to learn and grow as a leader which ultimately benefited the students in my district. Through shared reading, discussion, reflection and laughs with my superintendent colleagues, I was able to develop a meaningful action plan to prepare our students to be career ready. I would recommend this program to any superintendent that is interested in improving their leadership skills in an inspiring and collegial environment. "

–Dr. Bridget O'Connell, superintendent of Palisades School District in Bucks County

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

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

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From the Executive Director

It's Time for a Reset in How We Do Education in Pennsylvania!



By Dr. Sherri Smith

Executive Director, PASA

We are all currently focused on crossing the finish line for this school year.

This year was a transformative year that felt more normal than the past three years - a full year of in-person instruction, released COVID health mandates, and a full schedule of in-person student events.

Hopefully, you are ending the year with the feeling that some of the bumps in the road have smoothed out with a renewed promise of trust and appreciation for what public schools do for our students.

Looking forward to the summer weeks ahead, it is now time to remember the initial thoughts we all had as we crawled out from under the heavy weight of COVID mitigation efforts – one to not return to “normal” practices but to remember our lessons learned during the past few years and to improve the educational experiences for our students.

With this past year almost behind us – it is time to reinvest in these conversations to create a vision for what our students need and discuss how we can best structure our schools to meet those needs.

Let's face it – we all know that there are better ways to improve our practices and that the only reasons we hold onto them are because “that is how we always did it” or “we can't – there are barriers and mandates that prevent us”.

Schools are facing staffing shortages, transportation woes, mental wellness concerns, competing virtual learning opportunities, student engagement concerns in classwork, etc. - so why do we continue to structure our schools the same as we always have when the list of concerns with this structure continues to grow and intensify?

It's time for each of us to lead a new vision for our schools - to redefine current school practices to meet our students' current needs.

Below are some key questions to begin a conversation with your leadership team this summer:

- What are your hopes and dreams for your students as provided in K-12 education?
- What barriers (Local, State, Federal), either imposed

upon schools or self-imposed, get in your way to achieve the hopes and dreams of your students?

- What does a new phase of K-12 education look like (curriculum, instruction, assessments, etc.) to meet these hopes and dreams if these barriers are removed?
- How would you choose to structure your staff and school day in your schools? (Consider the use of time, place, space, and pace required in achieving your vision.)

Never has there been a more crucial time for us to lead these conversations and develop a refreshed look for our public schools. Monumental events that support that the time for a refresh is now, are the Commonwealth Court Case ruling that declared that our funding for public education needs to be resolved to meet our constitutional responsibilities in Pennsylvania, as well as a Legislatively established Commission on Education and Economic Competitiveness, created to develop a shared, bipartisan vision for 21st-century education that will prepare all students to compete in a global economy.

The commission will examine and establish policies to give all school districts the support and flexibility they need to build world-class education systems and to recommend a legislative action plan to achieve these shared goals.

It's energizing to see the opportunities in front of us! There is no doubt that our schools have provided so many positive programs and supports for our students over the years even under all the current constraints and mandates that we abide by. Imagine what we can do for students with these constraints removed!

Take this summer and begin the conversations! Think outside the box! Share what mandates get in our way to do what we need for our students! Our students are counting on us!

Congratulations on completing your school year and for all the great opportunities you provided your students this year! A lot to be proud of!

Fondly, Sherri

State News:



Shapiro Administration Announces 2024 Pennsylvania Teacher Of The Year Finalists

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) today announced the names of 12 educators nominated to be the 2024 Pennsylvania Teacher of the Year. Each year, the Pennsylvania Teacher of the Year Program recognizes excellence in teaching by honoring K-12 teachers in public education who have made outstanding academic contributions to Pennsylvania's school-aged children. The 12 finalists are selected from applicants and recognized in Harrisburg each fall.

Read the rest of the story: [“Shapiro Administration Announces 2024 Pennsylvania Teacher Of The Year Finalists”](#) (from PA Department of Education, 5/12/23)

PA Awards \$6.7M To Support Schools’ Dual Credit Programs

Some 100 schools statewide will share in \$6.7 million in state grant money aimed at supporting dual credit programs that prepare students for life after high school, the Shapiro administration said Monday. Such programs allow students to take college-level courses at the same time they’re finishing their high school requirements, allowing them to earn credits for both. The programs also give students an advance taste of the kind of work they’ll be expected to complete while they’re in college.

Read the rest of the story: [“PA Awards \\$6.7M To Support Schools’ Dual Credit Programs”](#) (from Pennsylvania Capital-Star, 5/2/23)

Abington School District Superintendent Earns Regional Education Award

The leader of the Abington School District was bestowed a regional award for his dedication and commitment to improving education in the area. Superintendent Jeffrey Fecher, Ed.D., was named the recipient of the Friend



of Education Award by the Mideastern Region of the Pennsylvania State Education Association.

Read the rest of the story: [“Abington School District Superintendent Earns Regional Education Award”](#) (from Patch, 4/28/23)

Lawsuit Claims PA Education Department Forcing ‘Woke’ Guidelines On Schools, Teachers, Students

Three western Pennsylvania school districts, along with several teachers and families, are suing the state Department of Education over new guidelines they describe as “woke” and thinly disguised political activism. Attorneys with the conservative, Chicago-based Thomas More Society filed the lawsuit on April 17 in state Commonwealth Court on behalf of the Laurel School District in Lawrence County, Mars Area School District in Butler County, Penncrest School District in Crawford County, and teachers and parents in the districts.

Read the rest of the story: [“Lawsuit Claims PA Education Department Forcing ‘Woke’ Guidelines On Schools, Teachers, Students”](#) (from, Pennlive, 4/28/23)

National News:

Parents Are Suing Schools Over Pronoun Policies. Here's What You Need To Know

While the battle over transgender students' rights at school is waged nationwide, a handful of parents continue to argue that by aiding in students' social transitions, districts are violating parental rights. Over the last three years, parents in at least six states have sued school districts over policies the districts say support transgender, gender nonconforming, and nonbinary students.

Read the rest of the story: ["Parents Are Suing Schools Over Pronoun Policies. Here's What You Need To Know"](#) (from, EducationWeek, 5/12/23)

Education Department: Colleges Should Place More Federal Work-Study Students In K-12 Support Roles

A bill advancing through the California State Assembly would raise salaries by 50% for teachers and school staff by FY 2030-31. The legislation, AB-938, aims to reach that goal by establishing a new local control funding formula with yearly salary targets for districts, charter schools and county offices of education.

Read the rest of the story: ["Education Department: Colleges Should Place More Federal Work-Study Students In K-12 Support Roles"](#) (from K-12 Dive, 5/11/23)

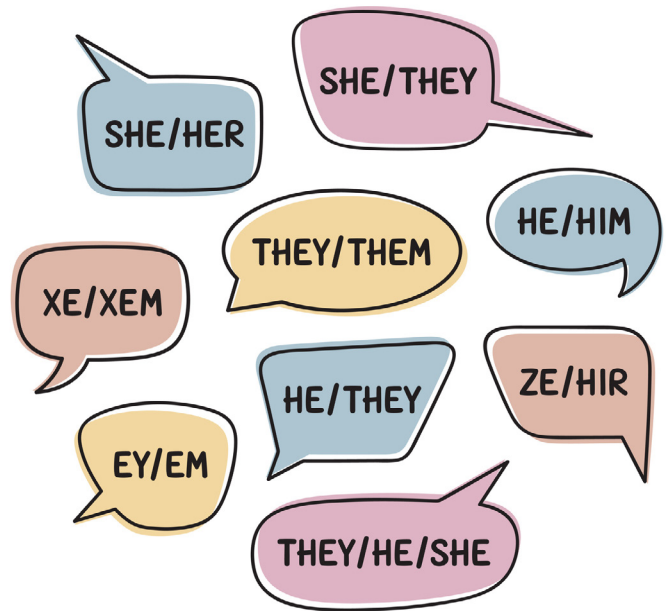
6 Steps For Improving K-12 Student Mental Health

A recent study found nearly 60% of college students received mental health care during their K-12 years. However, another recent study found more than 50% of K-12 schools aren't fully equipped to assist with the mental health-related needs of their students, making it likely many of those college students may not have gotten the support they truly needed to effectively manage their mental health struggles into adulthood.

Read the rest of the story: ["6 Steps For Improving K-12 Student Mental Health"](#) (from Campus Safety, 5/5/23)

3 Takeaways From The Perez Special Education Case

It remains unknown whether school districts will see more litigation after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled last month that families of special education students could move forward with federal civil rights lawsuits before exhausting the less formal administrative process under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Some say the court's unanimous ruling makes it easier for parents to simultaneously seek relief for violations to IDEA and other civil rights laws, thereby making school systems more vulnerable to lawsuits. Still others believe there are no legal concerns as long as districts are following procedural safeguards for students with disabilities.



Read the rest of the story: ["3 Takeaways From The Perez Special Education Case"](#) (from K-12 Dive, 4/26/23)

Average Public School Teacher Salary Rose 2% In 2021-22

The average public school teacher salary reached \$66,745 in the 2021-22 school year — a 2% jump from the year before, according to a report released Monday by the National Education Association. Salaries are expected to grow by another 2.6% in 2022-23, according to NEA.

Read the rest of the story: ["Average Public School Teacher Salary Rose 2% In 2021-22"](#) (from K-12 Dive, 4/25/23)

Staffed Up: How Would An Affirmative Action Repeal Impact Teacher Diversity?

If the U.S. Supreme Court repeals race-conscious admissions — a decision expected to drop in late June — some higher education experts fear a worsening of the already disproportionate representation of teachers of color in K-12 schools. The Supreme Court heard oral arguments in October for the two cases weighing affirmative action's fate, stemming from lawsuits against Harvard University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill over the institutions' race-conscious admissions practices. Should the conservative-majority Supreme Court rule to cease considering race in higher ed admissions, as is expected by legal experts, it will end decades of legal precedent.

Read the rest of the story: ["Staffed Up: How Would An Affirmative Action Repeal Impact Teacher Diversity"](#) (from K-12 Dive, 4/28/23)

May Ushers in Closings and New Beginnings



No matter how hiring is conducted in each district - superintendents play a crucial role. We have set up and approved the processes in place. We have worked with all those involved to ensure that the standards we hold dear are understood



Region News:

Region 10:

Mark Condo was hired recently as Keystone Central School District's new assistant superintendent. Condo holds a master's degree in educational leadership, principal certification, superintendent letter of eligibility, and administration experience including labor relations and bargaining.

Region 15:

West Shore School District's Board of School Directors approved the hire of Mr. Matthew Gay as the district's next Assistant Superintendent. Gay previously served as the principal of Northeastern High School and as an English teacher at Cumberland Valley High School.

He replaces Dr. Jamie Whye who will retire in June after nine years at the district.

Region 28:

The Purchase Line Board of Directors selected Mrs. Patricia Berezansky as its next superintendent. She currently serves as the Director of Education at United School District. Her term will begin on June 14. Berezansky will take over for interim superintendent David London who succeeded Shawn Ford after he left the district in February for a position at Dubois Area.

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 website at www.pasa-net.org (Click on the "Leadership Development" button and look for "Career Center.")

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and that our mission statement is embraced by how business is conducted.

We have made sure that professionalism, courtesy, and respect are present at all levels – including before and following every meeting. It is the hope that with systems and safeguards in place, only the best candidates move through... and most of the time that is what happens. After meetings and post-meeting briefings have been completed the list shortens. This is when our involvement is most critical.

We review, consult, and then meet with the candidate(s) ourselves. Most of the time these meetings are cordial

and confirm that our process worked – and I am talking to our newest staff member. However, that does not always happen! And this is my reminder to you that sometimes even the most scrupulous practices under the optimum conditions do not yield the expected results. I have had to go back to our team and tell them to start over.

Trust your gut feeling as you know – better than anyone – who is best for the position. A lot of times compromise is recommended – but not here. Hold true to what you know and your team, your staff, your community, and your students will be grateful that you did.

So while May is merry... we know that it is also busy, fickle (42 degrees), and hectic.

Take it in stride and let yourself enjoy the enthusiasm, happiness, anticipation, and relief from all corners of your district. Memorial Day and the unofficial/official start of summer are coming so enjoy that.

Remember that while your month is busy and your calendar is full and your phone is ringing and texts are zinging in... you did not have to plan, consider, or attend – anything in London! King Charles III made it through without our help – so devote your energy to the activities and events happening around you.

GOOD NEWS

[View more good news from around the Commonwealth on PASA's website.](#)

CCIU Teacher Advances as Semi-finalist for 2024 PA Teacher of the Year

Heather Kilgore, a Chester County educator, has been selected as a semi-finalist for the 2024 Pennsylvania Teacher of the Year. Each year, public school teachers who support K-12 are recognized by the Teacher of the Year program for excellence in teaching and outstanding academic contributions to Pennsylvania's school-aged children.

Kilgore is a multiple disabilities support teacher (MDS) at the Child and Career Development Center (CCDC). Her teaching career began at CCDC in the fall of 2004, where she served as a student teacher in a high school learning support classroom. Kilgore was officially hired at CCDC for a middle and high school emotional support classroom in January 2005. She continued to teach in that classroom until 2014; that same year, she transitioned to her current role as a teacher in a K-4 MDS classroom. Heather's steadfast commitment to her students has been acknowledged through this nomination and she will now advance to the next stage of the Pennsylvania Teacher of the Year program.

"I am so humbled and honored to have been chosen as a semi-finalist for PA Teacher of the Year. My students mean the world to me and have taught me so much more about life than I ever could have imagined. Their families and the staff I have had the privilege to work with have helped to create a loving, positive environment for everyone who enters my classroom," says Kilgore. "I truly believe dedication and compassion are the foundations for success in the classroom. Teaching is my passion and I feel privileged to get to do something I love every single day!"

The semi-finalists will participate in interviews and



submit a recorded teaching episode that displays their instructional strategies. Twelve finalists will be selected from the semi-finalist pool. The Teacher of the Year will be announced at the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) annual SAS Institute.

Fox Chapel Area Students Win National Community Service Awards

Fox Chapel Area High School junior Alexandra Sroufe and sophomore Avanti Muvvala were selected to receive 2022-2023 National Community Service Awards, presented by the United Nations Association of the USA (UNA-USA) and InnerView Technologies. The awards recognize student commitment and community service impact in support of the UN Global Goals.



Alexandra Sroufe

The program is open to students across the nation and is designed to connect student community service activities, skill development, and commitment to Sustainable Development Goals. In addition to the National Community Service Awards,



both Alexandra and Avanti were awarded Zero Hero Awards which are given by the Kroger Co. to students for taking action to help create communities free of hunger and waste.

Alexandra has more than 108 hours of volunteering and leading activities, and Avanti has more than 99 hours. At Fox Chapel Area High School, Alexandra and Avanti are the co-chairpersons of community outreach.



Avanti Muvvala

They have both have been involved with the Gift of Life Marrow Registry, blood drives, local Earth Day cleanups, World Kindness Day events, Cookies for Kids with Cancer, the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, Fox Chapel Area School District telethon fundraisers, a drive for the Second Avenue Commons shelter, and Fox Chapel Parks Conservancy projects.

Additionally, Alexandra led a collection drive for the people of Ukraine; volunteered at a diversity, equity, and inclusion ceiling tile event; and helped collect hygiene products for the Light of Life Rescue Mission. Avanti has also volunteered for the high school's annual senior citizens luncheon.

According to Fox Chapel Area High School counselor and community outreach sponsor, Rachel Machen, both Alexandra and Avanti are passionate about helping people in their community.

"Alexandra and Avanti have taken great initiative when it comes to community outreach and getting our students involved in helping others," says Mrs. Machen. "They are truly invested in helping our local and high school communities become better places for everyone."

Pottstown High Engineering Team Earns First Place in Competition at Dana Plant

Three students took first place in a competition at the Dana plant in Pottstown, a competition which began there last year, and which Pottstown won, and which the company liked so much that it implemented it at plants in Michigan, Ohio, Indiana and Tennessee.

Andrew Bachman, the engineering teacher at PHS, explained that last year, the African-American Resource Group at Pottstown's Dana Plant decided to sponsor an engineering competition for students to encourage them to take an interest in engineering and the sciences.

"It went so well last year, the Pottstown team made a presentation and the CEO of Dana loved it and they decided to implement it at five other plants across the country," Bachman explained.

Seneca Valley Students Earn Top Honors At Robert Morris University's Annual Digital Media Arts Consortium

Creative Seneca Valley students in Dan McKosky's video production classes won four awards at Robert Morris University's annual Digital Media Arts Consortium (DMAC) student video festival on April 20. The DMAC festival was held on the arena floor of the UPMC Events Center and featured student representatives from dozens of western Pennsylvania schools.

Senior Evelyn Vogel won an award of excellence in the video as an art category for her experimental film "It's Fine" while also winning a Founders' Award for her dedication to SVTV and video production classes over the last three years. Senior Alex Palmieri won in the news package category for his in-depth report on the No Cost to Shop store in the senior high school. Lastly, freshman Phoenix Hale won in the animation category for her impressive frame-by-frame short film called "Frog's Hasty Journey."

Celebrating the Role Models in Our Lives



By Dr. Jill Jacoby

Asst. Executive Director of Teaching & Learning
Allegheny I.U. 3

Mother's Day is a special day when we honor the women who have played an important role in our development. It is a day to reflect on our formative years and recognize the significant impact our earliest experiences had in shaping who we are as individuals.

While this holiday has its roots in honoring mothers specifically, it is also a time to celebrate the importance of role models in general.

Role models can play a crucial part in forming our beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. They can provide us with inspiration and guidance; helping us to navigate challenges and overcome obstacles; and assist in building our adeptness to be the best version of ourselves.

Whether it is a parent, teacher, mentor, or public figure, a positive role model can have a profound impact on our personal and professional growth.

The influence of positive role models in our educational communities cannot be overstated. As educational leaders, we should strive daily to provide opportunities for the growth and development of our leaders, staff, students, as well as ourselves. Positive role models in our educational settings can show what is possible and inspire attainment of set goals.

When we see someone who has achieved something that we aspire to, it can be incredibly motivating. Role models can also help to develop a sense of purpose and direction in our lives, by showing what is important and creating blueprints for success.

It is a time to appreciate those who have made a difference in our lives. Most often mothers are the first role models we encounter, and their influence can have a lasting impact on our development and success. From teaching us life skills to modeling values such as kindness, patience, empathy, and perseverance—mothers can shape our lives in countless ways.



This special day encourages us to cherish the people who have been impactful on our own lives, while motivating us to be positive role models for those we surround.

So during this month of May, let us celebrate the people who have served as role models in our lives, especially our mothers. Let us honor the those who are educators, who have dedicated their lives to nurturing the minds and hearts of young people.

And let us all strive to be positive role models for the next generation by inspiring others to pursue their passions, achieve their dreams, and strive to become the next leaders, thinkers, and creators.

Here is to all MOTHERS, we admire you, we appreciate you, and we thank you!

Make your Nomination today for: 2024 PA Superintendent of the Year

Deadline: June 2, 2023

The nomination period for the 2024 Pennsylvania Superintendent of the Year is now open!

Make your nomination by June 2.

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 individuals who lead the nation's public schools. This is the 37th year for the national award program.

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 their 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 their current district in Pennsylvania for at least two years.
- The individual must intend to continue serving as a superintendent in the year in which they 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, June 2. 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

[Click here to begin your nomination.](#)

nomination.

Applications from Those Nominated

Those nominated by June 2 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, July 7. (Nominees will not complete the AASA online application.)

Selection Process

After July 7 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 2023 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 September 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 2024 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 2024 National Superintendent of the Year will be chosen from among four finalists selected from the state winners and will be announced at the 2024 AASA National Conference on Education in San Diego, California February 15-17) 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. Brian Troop, Superintendent of the Ephrata Area, is the 2023 Pennsylvania Superintendent of the Year.

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

Professional Development

The Value of Mentoring



By Dr. Cindy Mierzejewski
Retired Superintendent

MENTORING



TRAINING



GUIDANCE



MOTIVATION



GOALS



KNOWLEDGE



SUPPORT



SUCCESS



DIRECTION



GROWTH



COACHING

The superintendency is a rewarding and challenging role. It certainly does not lack variety in items, required tasks and activities, which can include negotiating the nuances of board relations, answering the needs of community stakeholders, building a solid administrative team, managing budgets, handling personnel issues, and, of course, devoting time to the cornerstone of why we do the job: ensuring the best education for our students.

Given all of this, it is reasonable to say that no matter how wonderful one's graduate studies in educational leadership have been or how many years one has worked in building or central administration, there is no complete preparation for taking on the role of a superintendent.

There is a need for superintendents to have support in real-time as they navigate all the aspects of the daily work. Mentors (or coaches) and a mentor/mentee relationship can be an important part of the development process for any superintendent, no matter what other experiences they have had.

In the educational environment, we have seen the importance of mentoring as a valuable method for "supporting adult learning and development." The majority of the time, mentoring is prevalent in the realm of teacher development, but over the years, it has become

To view upcoming professional learning opportunities, visit [PASA's website](#) or check out our calendar of events on Page 20.

more common in the realm of administrators, too. It is sometimes a little more difficult to find mentorship relationships to support the superintendent role, perhaps because of the limited number of superintendents and the isolation that comes along with the job. However, this is an even greater reason to strongly encourage mentoring at the superintendent level.

The value of the mentor/mentee relationship is discussed by Dr. Eleanor Drago-Seversen in her book "Leading Adult Learning: Supporting Adult Development in Our Schools."

She states that "The mentoring relationship provides a safe context for broadening perspectives, taking risks, engaging in dialogue and reflective practice, examining assumptions (our own and other people's) and behaviors, and over time, possibly reframing them."

Mentoring and professional coaching is an excellent avenue for individualizing professional development.

When I took on my first role to serve as a school district superintendent, the local intermediate unit (IU) had a mentoring program in place where a "new" (new to the

superintendency or just new to our IU region) individual was given a mentor from the group of experienced superintendents in the region.

Dr. Jill Hackman, executive director of the Berks County IU where I participated in the program, facilitates the program and continues to see the benefits of the superintendent mentorship.

Dr. Hackman reflects that “the professional partnership with an experienced superintendent offers opportunities for collaboration, support, and guidance when dealing with significant issues and challenges.

We have found that this experience, both for the first-year superintendent and the professional partner, has built a strong and trusted relationship that has lasted well beyond their participation in the program.”

My personal experience with a mentor as a new superintendent was extremely positive. I could always count on my mentor, Dr. Robert Pleis, to be there for me when I needed support.

He picked up the phone (sometimes stepped out of meetings) whenever I called.

Dr. Pleis did not hesitate to offer advice, empathy, sympathy, and often the well-needed humor to help me through a challenge or situation.

Often, the best part was that he always let me bend his ear, vent, and just process a situation aloud with him.

I found it extremely helpful and am grateful to have had formal and informal mentors throughout my career.

Mentors can empathize, sympathize, and energize. The role of a mentor is to provide real-time advice for, at times, critical situations, but it goes beyond those specific situations to provide a safe environment for the mentee superintendent.

Most importantly, mentors provide encouraging words and moral support. They develop a trusting relationship by providing “two ears and one mouth” to listen in an impartial, non-judgmental manner.

In a trusting environment, mentors can provide candid perspectives and give the mentee the honest advice that they need and that will be most helpful to them.

In collecting data, PASA reports that since 2019, 240 of the 499 superintendent positions have changed.

With so many new or new-to-the-position superintendents, mentoring is becoming more critical than ever — as both the position itself and the landscape of education changes.

If you are interested in a mentoring/coaching program, please reach out to PASA at pasa@pasa-net.org.



Thank you to our Gold Sponsors:



2023 Advocacy Day

PASA | PA Principals Association | PASBO



Join us June 6 at the Harrisburg Capitol Building in Support of Public Education. RSVP Today!

The Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators along with the Pennsylvania Association of School Business Officials and the Pennsylvania Principals Association, are planning a full day of activities in Harrisburg on June 6, 2023. It is our day to share our stories and advocate for needed funding and policy changes for our schools!

We will start our day at the Capital Building in Harrisburg for breakfast and an opportunity to distribute documents and prepare for the day. We will then break into smaller groups, meet with our legislators, and share our common talking points and stories. In the afternoon, we are planning two other meetings with the PA Department of Education staff members and members of the Governor Shapiro's Office.

We know that it is a busy time of the year for you, however, for those of you who are available, it is a critical day for us to unite in support of our students and schools. There are a number of important pieces of legislation being considered that would affect schools across the Commonwealth and your voice needs to be heard.

If you are able to join us on this important day, [please RSVP to PASA's Director of Communications, Adam Kulikowski](#). When you RSVP, please let us know who your State Senator and House Representative(s) are in your region.

We look forward to you joining us on 2023 Advocacy Day!



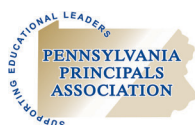
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FEATURING KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:

Hamish Brewer

Monday, August 7th Session



Hamish Brewer is a powerful and positive disruptor who transcends the status quo and typical norms in leadership and education. He is a globally recognized advocate who built his reputation on results and performance, becoming affectionately known as **the Relentless, Tattooed Skateboarding Principal** with his galvanizing message to **"Be Relentless."** Mr. Brewer served as an award-winning principal at both the secondary and elementary school levels. Recognized as the NAESP National Distinguished Principal and Virginia Principal of the Year, he was also honored with the VAESP School Bell Award and ASCD Virginia Impact Award. He was named a Northern Virginian of the year by **Northern Virginia Magazine** and Principal of the Year for the online national publication, **Education Dive**.

Under his leadership, Mr. Brewer's elementary school was recognized as a Nationally Distinguished Title 1 School, and he has since gone on to turn around one of the toughest middle schools in the state of Virginia. He is the best-selling author of **"Relentless – Disrupting the Educational Norm,"** published in 2019.

Dr. Quintin Shepherd

Tuesday, August 8th Session



Dr. Quintin Shepherd, a true visionary for the future of education, is the Superintendent at Victoria Independent School District in Victoria, Texas. When Dr. Shepherd came to Victoria, his first priority was to listen to the voice of the community, parents, staff and students, and he then invited those stakeholders to be a part of shaping the future of the district. He focuses on the practice of compassionate leadership and expressing vulnerability, and he believes that's why

radical transparency works.

Dr. Shepherd brings inspiration, hope and valuable insights about how we can transform the way we lead school districts by modifying our approach to some of the most basic leadership practices, which he shares in his new book: **The Secret to Transformational Leadership**. Within the book, he considers how some leaders are able to connect with their communities, followers and stakeholders while others struggle. This guiding question sets the stage for a discussion on the language of leadership and the need for our language to evolve.

Jennifer Rieger, Upper Merion Area High School teacher and author of *Burning Sage* (a collection of short stories), will speak on Sunday, August 6th, at the Awards Dinner.



Detailing the Debt Ceiling Debate



By Noelle Ellerson Ng

Associate Executive Director,
Advocacy and Governance, AASA



The ticking policy time bomb getting all the attention in Washington D.C. in May is the debt ceiling. As a point of background, the debt ceiling is the cap on the total amount of money the federal government is able to borrow to make its payments to fund its government and meeting its financial commitments (including paying debts).

The U.S. government runs budget deficits; as a result, it relies on its ability to borrow huge amounts of money to pay its bills. Among these debts? Funding for social safety net programs, interest on the national debt and salaries for members of the armed forces.

In terms of politics, neither party wants the debt ceiling to be breached. At one point, I heard the debt ceiling described to me by a hill staffer as ‘a necessary thing that you hopes come due when you’re in the minority so you can score political points off of it’.

Truly breaching the debt ceiling would be economically devastating, with consequences that could plunge the US and broader global economics into financial crisis.

The tension at the center of this current debate is not if the debt ceiling should be raised. Rather, Democrats believe the debt ceiling should be passed as a stand alone issue, and Republicans want to leverage the debt ceiling to accomplish broader policy goals.

This is not the first time Congress has needed to raise the debt ceiling. While the United States has hit the debt limit before, it has never run out of resources and failed to meet its financial obligations.

The debt ceiling was most recently raised in 2021. For this iteration of the debt ceiling debate, the US technically hit the debt limit on January 19, 2023. As is the case with debt ceiling, though, the fed exercised ‘extraordinary measures’ to continue making payments. Most recent estimates indicate these measures will run out by June 8.

In late April, the House passed the GOP bill HR 2811, the “Limit, Save, Grow Act of 2023. This represents a slightly revised Republican leadership bill to increase the debt ceiling, cut discretionary spending for fiscal year (FY) 2024 to FY 22 levels and then cap discretionary growth at 1% per year for the following 9 years (until 2033, and make other changes that cut mandatory spending and end some of the Administration’s key initiatives, including the student debt relief plan. In terms of an education impact, a return to FY22 spending levels would mean a \$850 million reduction in Title I.

What’s Next? The Democratic Senate will not consider the bill and the President issued a veto threat. The bill is a marker for what Republicans want in any upcoming negotiation to increase the debt limit.

Congress needs to increase the debt limit sometime in the next month or two (as mentioned above) or the country will start defaulting on obligations it has already made, which includes paying government benefits like Social Security and Medicaid, and interest payments on the debt.

President Biden is expected to sit down with Speaker McCarthy to formally begin negotiations for a debt ceiling deal. There is some speculation Congress may pass a

shorter-term debt ceiling bill, using an amount that would raise the issue again later this fall, closely aligning with the annual appropriations process.

AASA believes the debt ceiling must be raised as a clean bill, not held hostage for additional policy accomplishments. The time to establish goals around fiscal restraint and responsibility is when budgets are being crafted and adopted, not after debts have been occurred.

Related to this position, AASA joined four national education organizations in a letter address to the House Appropriations Committee.

The letter weighs in on FY24 appropriations process as well as responds to the House GOP proposal for raising the debt ceiling. [Read the full letter here.](#)

In the May Issue of School Administrator Magazine:

This month's issues focuses on how K-12 schools collaborate with higher education.

Articles include: Reimagining School Relationships With Higher Education; The Shifting Role of Gatekeeping; Scaling Up Early College; Productive Partners: Researchers and Education Leaders, and more.



Quotes:

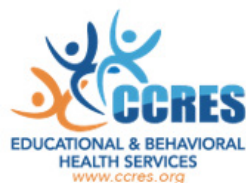
“As school leaders, we must teach students that ‘wanting’ something doesn’t make it happen. If a student ‘wants’ to attend Ohio State or ‘wants’ to become a cyber security expert, the vision is excellent, but more is required to make the wish a reality. We teach students to ‘do the work.’ Making dreams come true doesn’t happen with pixie dust.”

–**John Marschhausen, Superintendent, Dublin Ohio** in “Passive Hope vs. Active Hope”

“If we see our responsibility as providing the on-ramp to life, and I know we do, then developing systems that prepare our students for their future is our obligation and defines the real work of school systems. The road starts with our preK-12 learning systems and culminates with the world of work. We are a means to an end.”

–**Dr. Shari L. Camhi, Superintendent, Baldwin Union-Free School District** in “We Are Interwined”

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By Ann McMullan
Project Director, CoSN



EmpowerED Superintendents edLeader Panel Series

The EmpowerED Superintendents edLeader Panel broadcast series – sponsored by ClassLink - is now in its fifth season. Each monthly broadcast is co-hosted by CoSN, AASA and edWeb.net. Participants may earn continuing education (CE) credits after viewing the live or recorded broadcasts.

To learn more about CE credits please visit <https://home.edweb.net/edweb-tips/>

Succeeding with Digital Equity: CoSN's 2023 Award Winning District's Leadership Strategies

The latest episode of the CoSN EmpowerED Superintendent edLeader Panel series titled, "Succeeding with Digital Equity: CoSN's 2023 Award Winning District's Leadership Strategies" is now available at <https://home.edweb.net/supers>. You can register for the recording or podcast edition as well as access video recordings, podcasts and articles from previous monthly edLeader Panel broadcasts.

Digital equity is a constant and challenging issue of our times. CoSN annually awards a school district with the association's Community Leadership Award for Digital Equity to honor and recognize those districts that are working to eliminate inequities and narrow the gap when it comes to digital access. Corpus Christi ISD in Texas is the recipient of CoSN's 2023 Community Leadership Award for Digital Equity.

On this edLeader Panel broadcast the Superintendent of Corpus Christi ISD, Dr. Roland Hernandez, is joined by

the district's Director of Instructional Technology, Ms. Cary Perales, and the district's Director of Technology Services, Ms. Marilyn Doughty, as featured guest panelists. The district leaders shared the strategies they use to lead their work across their district to assure a safe and effective digital landscape for all their students.

The district's "Tech2Teach" conference and digital magazine, which are used to showcase truly transformative learning, are two of the multiple approaches for leveraging technology innovation that will be shared. Dr. Jill Brown, CoSN Director of Professional Learning, also joins the panel to share CoSN professional learning resources and recommendations for addressing Digital Equity.

CoSN Resources:

1) Defining Digital Equity 2022

Creating a shared understanding of what digital equity is and what district leaders can do to realize digital equity for the students that they serve is more important than ever.

Available at <https://cosn.org/digitalequity>

2) CoSN Student Home Internet Connectivity Study

CoSN has published a study on students' at-home internet connectivity which provides guidelines on bandwidth, devices, and other remote learning needs. Read an overview or download the complete report at <https://cosn.org/digitalequity>

CoSN Membership

If you, your school or district would like more information about joining CoSN please contact membership@cosn.org

PASA Calendar



May:

May 21-23:

Women's Caucus Conference

May 29:

PASA office closed in observance of Memorial Day

July:

July 4:

PASA office closed in observance of Independence Day

August:

August 6-8:

Pennsylvania Summit for Education Leaders

September:

September 4:

PASA office closed in observance of Labor Day

September 7-8:

Board of Governors' meetings

September 13:

First session of PASA's 2024 Cohort of the AASA Superintendent Certification Program

October:

October 16-18:

PASA/PSBA Fall Conference (Poconos)

November:

November 8-9

Board of Governors' meetings

November 23-24

PASA office closed in observance of Thanksgiving

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