

THE PASA Flyer

Vol. 66, NO. 2- November 2023

Proud Leadership for
Pennsylvania Schools

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New Superintendent Induction Program

For educational leaders, by educational leaders

Looking for a mentor?

PASA's New Superintendent Induction Program will provide needed support and guidance for beginning superintendents to help them succeed 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.

This new program will include the following parameters:

- A Mentor will be matched with the leader for twelve consecutive months for the Comprehensive Program or as otherwise determined by the selected Program option.
- Regular contact mentor/superintendent meetings as needed to:
 - Review current progress and identify next steps throughout the year to accomplish the superintendent's desired results.
 - Assist with effective practices for communications with School Boards (e.g., agendas and information for school board meetings).
 - Assist with effective practices for working with the District's Administrative Team.
 - Assist with effective practices for communications to staff, parents, and the community.
 - Address current issues and concerns within District.
 - Review and help prioritize typical monthly tasks for Superintendents to accomplish, including budget development.
- Mentor will attend at least one board meeting (more if requested) to gain perspective of board and community climate (if part of the developed program).
- Mentor will attend at least one administrative team meeting (more if requested) to observe and advise as needed (if part of the developed program).
- Mentor will be available and on call for the leader to discuss any items or issues

Note: The program will be adapted to meet the individualized needs of the superintendent.

The program is open to PASA members who are current or acting superintendents. The superintendent applies to participate via the PASA New Superintendent Induction Program Application that requests information about the superintendent, the superintendent's district, and the superintendent's desired result(s).

For more information and pricing, [visit PASA's website.](#)

The PASA Flyer is published monthly

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Franklin Regional School District

PASA Members:

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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Unionville-Chadds Ford School District

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Dr. Sherri L. Smith

Director of Professional Development:

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TIME TO RENEW

If you have not yet renewed your PASA membership, your benefits will be discontinued on November 30.

Please disregard if you have already submitted your dues for the 2023-24 membership year.

As an educational leader in your school district and community, you encounter a multitude of challenges and opportunities to serve your students. Staying connected with PASA provides you and your team with up-to-date information and support to be successful in your leadership.

PASA is dedicated to supporting Superintendents, Assistant Superintendents, and other key educational leaders with ongoing updates from the state and national political arena; advocacy on issues that directly affect your schools; quality professional development; and support for district leaders and opportunities to network with hundreds of your Pennsylvania colleagues. Your membership gives you direct access to weekly state-level updates and many informational resources.

It is important that you **invest in your own success** by belonging to an organization that will keep you **updated on critical educational issues** and provide you with **professional development** that is targeted to meet the specific needs of school leaders.

PASA also has a **full-time legal department** that provides employment-related legal assistance to commissioned officers, which is critical in relation to negotiating and reviewing Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent contracts. When you join both PASA and our national affiliate, AASA, you also receive \$1 million in professional liability insurance and up to \$20,000 in legal assistance which is critical for your personal protection.

This coming year with the Commonwealth Court's ruling for Public Education Equitable Funding and the Commission on Education and Economic Competitiveness, it has never been more critical that commissioned officers and school leaders join together to support one another and advocate for the support of quality public education in our Commonwealth. PASA is committed to providing you with exemplary service and support to assist you in leading your schools and educating children.

Please join us by renewing your membership online using the link below or by downloading the form below and mailing it back to PASA. Members who renew by October 31 also will be included in the 2023-24 Membership Directory.

DIRECT MEMBERSHIP QUESTIONS TO:

Anna Maria Stankoczi
amstankoczi@pasa-net.org

AASA Membership Renewals:

When you join both ther AASA and PASA, AASA provides **professional liability insurance** AND **funds for legal expenses** to qualifying members. See the [AASA website](#) for a full list of membership benefits.

From the Executive Director

A Tribute to Our Spouses



By Dr. Sherri Smith

Executive Director, PASA

Thanksgiving has always been one of my favorite holidays.

To me, it's a day set aside to appreciate and be thankful for all the good in our lives. On top of enjoying all the family's favorite recipes and spending the day surrounded by family, it's also a day to reflect on all the gifts that I have in my life, both personally and professionally.

It's a day that I will think of all of you and be thankful for your service and dedication to our students, schools, and communities across the Commonwealth.

It takes a special person to be an educational leader, and we truly are fortunate to have each of you working hard every day to ensure our students receive a quality education in a safe and welcoming learning environment.

Thank you for all you do and for who you are personally.

My message this month, however, is focused on the dedication and role our spouses play in the important work that we all do every day.

Filling the responsibilities of a school superintendent or school leader is a full-time commitment – one that encompasses so much of one's time and thoughts seven days a week.

Thinking back on my own 14 years as a Superintendent, it was not just my commitment to the position, but also my husband's.

Don (Smitty) willingly chose to become the primary caretaker for our family as well as the chauffeur for our two busy children. He served as my sounding board after a long difficult day.

He also attended all the school musicals, concerts, sporting events, and foundation affairs with me. (I did spare him the pain of attending school board meetings!)



There is no doubt that I could not have done the job as a Superintendent and have the career opportunities I have enjoyed without his constant love and support.

My success was his success as he was my partner in our important work.

And so, my column calls for a tribute to our spouses and significant others who weather the storms with us.

They deserve our recognition for their sacrifices to ensure our success as school leaders. Please remember to show special gratitude and appreciation to them this holiday season.

I also want to share my congratulations for this year's PASA award winners who were recognized at our PASA Award Luncheon on November 8: Dr. John Zesiger, Service to the Profession; Dr. Jennifer

Murray, Instructional Leadership. and Dr. Andrew Surloff, Leadership in Public Education.

We also recognized our newly named 2024 Superintendent of the Year, Dr. Shane Hotchkiss.

Congratulations to each of you for your stellar leadership and for serving as fine examples of the quality education leaders we have in Pennsylvania.

You can read more about these leaders on Pages 7-8.

Our Women's Caucus also deserves a shout-out for their successful Fall Conference Dinner earlier this month.

We had record attendance, and all who attended had a wonderful time networking and learning together. Kudos to Dr. Tina Kane and the Women's Caucus Committee!

On a personal note, thank you for all the heartfelt messages, cards, flowers and gifts sent my way the past few weeks.

I am truly overwhelmed by your friendship and care- this will carry me forward.

As for my Smitty – thank you for the great 36 years we had together. Rest in peace my love.

With Deep and Heartfelt Gratitude,
Sherri

Region News:

Region 8:

Penn Cambria Superintendent Bill Marshall recently announced his retirement effective July 1. Marshall served the district for 17 years.

Region 10:

Philipsburg-Osceola School Board announced the hiring of Daniel Potutschnig as the new leader of the school district effective Feb. 4, 2024. Potutschnig is an experienced leader in education with more than 20 years of service.

Region 22:

The Central Buck School Board accepted the resignation of Abram Lucabaugh November 14 by a 6-3 vote. Assistant Superintendent Charles Malone will serve as interim superintendent.

The Pennsbury School Board approved the hiring of Kristopher Brown as its new Assistant Superintendent for Administration. Brown previously served at the Abington School District where he held the role of Director of Student Services and Equity.

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.")

PASA EDUCATION UPDATE BRIEFING

Identifying, Mitigating, and Responding to Swatting Incidents

Presenters:

Scott Kuren

Director of the Office of Safe Schools
PA Department of Education

Ashley Bleacher

Intelligence Analyst Supervisor
Pennsylvania Criminal Intelligence Center (PaCIC)

November 21 | 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. | Zoom

PASA Members were emailed a link to join the Zoom.

If you did not receive the link and are interested in joining, email pasa@pasa-net.org



From the President's Pen

Building Relationships with New Board Members



By Dr. George F. Fiore
2023-24 PASA President



I hope this message finds you well, and you are all feeling energized to take on the important work that lies ahead in our educational communities. I wanted to take a moment to emphasize the significance of the board elections and state elections as a means to build relationships, find common ground, and ultimately, serve the best interests of our children.

Elections can sometimes be divisive, with differing opinions and approaches clashing. However, I believe that within these challenges lies an incredible opportunity. By reaching out and connecting with our fellow administrators, educators, and community members, we can bridge gaps and create a more collaborative and productive environment for the benefit of our students across the state.

I'd like to offer a few recommendations as we progress through this election season that can help us achieve our collective goal:

Board Member Orientations: Consider organizing comprehensive orientations for newly elected school board members. These sessions can provide them with essential insights into your district's history, current challenges, and future goals. It's also an excellent platform to discuss the importance of working together for the common good and instilling a sense of purpose in service to our students.

Facility Tours: Invite your newly elected board members to tour your buildings. This will not only familiarize them with the physical aspects of your schools but also allow them to interact with teachers, staff, and students. Building these personal connections can be a powerful way to encourage understanding and empathy as they navigate their new role as





Save the Date

March 13-15, 2024

Hershey Lodge

PASA Leadership Forum

Unleashing Potential: Navigating the Continuum of Creativity & Innovation in Schools

Featured Speakers:



Kent Julian



Gregg Behr

Registration to open in December!

a school board director.

Collaborative Workshops: Organize workshops or meetings where administrators and board members can brainstorm ideas and solutions together. Creating an open, inclusive environment for discussions can help foster better understanding and collaboration.

Community Engagement: Encourage board members to actively engage with the community they represent in a positive way. By attending community events, and school functions and listening to the concerns of parents and local residents, they can better align their decisions with the needs of your community.

Mentorship Programs: Consider establishing mentorship programs where experienced school board members can guide newcomers. Sharing experiences and wisdom can help newly elected board members navigate the complex landscape of educational administration more effectively.

Regular Communication: Maintain open lines of communication between board members, administrators,

and educators. Regular meetings and semi-regular board updates can ensure that everyone is well-informed and working towards common goals.

Let's use the elections as an opportunity to come together, to find common ground, and to focus on the true reason we are all here: the well-being and education of our children.

As leaders in the field of education, we have a unique responsibility to model cooperation and service, and I have every confidence that by working together, we can create a brighter future for our students across Pennsylvania.

Thank you for your dedication to education and your commitment to making a positive difference in the lives of our students.

Let's move forward with unity, empathy, and a shared vision for excellence in education.

As always, PASA is here to support you as you welcome new board members to your team of 10.

PASA Honors Award Recipients at Annual Meeting

2024 PA Superintendent of the year



Dr. Shane Hotchkiss

Superintendent

Bermudian Springs School District



Dr. George F. Fiore



Dr. Sherri Smith



Dr. John Sanville

The Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators recognized four education leaders for their outstanding service November 8 at the Hershey Country Club during its annual meeting and awards luncheon.

The PASA Awards of Achievement were established by the PASA Board of Governors to recognize outstanding leadership among school administrators. Each award sponsor—Horace Mann, PLGIT, and Lincoln Investment contributed \$1,000 toward a scholarship fund of the recipient's choice. Recipients were chosen by the PASA Executive Committee from among those nominated.

Dr. John W. Zesiger (Service to the Profession), Dr. Jennifer Murray (Instructional Leadership) and Dr. Andrew Surloff (Leadership in Public Education Award) received the 2023 honors for their outstanding achievements in their school communities.

As noted in the [October issue](#) of The PASA Flyer, Dr. Shane Hotchkiss recently was selected as the 2024 Pennsylvania Superintendent of the Year. Dr. Hotchkiss was formally recognized for this honor during the Nov. 8 awards event. PASA will also hold a special luncheon in his honor to be scheduled in the Spring of 2024.

He also will be among the state-by-state Superintendent of the Year recipients recognized during the AASA National Conference on Education, scheduled for Feb. 15-17 in San Diego, California, when the National Superintendent of the Year will be announced.




Service to the Profession



Dr. John W. Zesiger

Superintendent

Moshannon Valley School District

Dr. John Zesiger  is a strong advocate not only for the Moshannon Valley School District and its students, but for all the Clearfield County schools and his fellow school leaders throughout the Commonwealth.

Dr. Zesiger has served as the superintendent representative on the Pennsylvania Commission for Crime and Delinquency Safe School Committee and has contributed to the following sub-committee work:

- Development of the Behavioral Health and School Climate Assessment;
- the Model Trauma-Informed Approach Plan and
- the ACT 55 School Safety Training Requirements for Staff,
- In addition to serving on the Policy and Training Team;

His efforts have helped to shape the state level guidelines needed to create a safe and positive environment for our students and school communities across the Commonwealth.

He's also served on PaTTAN's Superintendents Panel for Equity and Inclusion and the Clearfield County's COVID-19 Task Force which developed the criteria for funding provided through the Health Initiative for Rural Pennsylvania.

Instructional Leadership



Dr. Jennifer Murray

Superintendent

Reading School District

Dr. Jennifer Murray, leader of the Reading School District and its 18,000 students, has dedicated her entire career to serving the students and families of Reading.

Dr. Murray fostered a partnership with Albright College to support the Total Experience Learning. She secured funding through the Reading Education Foundation and implemented a pilot program at the district's two largest middle schools in 2022.

Through the Total Experience Learning, students in grades 5-12 engage in high-level scientific research while preparing for college and graduate-level research. The program helps students as they create self-directed research projects in biomedical, genetic, environmental, agricultural, biotechnology and materials sciences.

Dr. Murray has taken a number of steps to help tackle the staffing shortages at Reading including partnering with local colleges to provide housing for teachers moving into the area; investing in the teacher pipeline by creating paid internships for RSD students to tutor elementary students and fuel their passion for instruction; and providing professional development and networking opportunities for student teachers in the district.

Leadership in Public Education Award



Dr. Andrew Surloff

Assistant Superintendent

Quaker Valley School District

Dr. Andrew Surloff, Assistant Superintendent at Quaker



Valley has worn many proverbial hats during his 25-year career in public education—Acting Superintendent, Interim Director of Curriculum and High School Principal.

As the District Pandemic Coordinator, Dr. Surloff devoted countless hours to providing creative educational models for their students in order to ensure their safety and success.

As the Director and lead educator of their New Teacher Induction Program, Dr. Surloff supports the growth of new teachers. He also mentors and supervises all of the District's principals providing them with valuable opportunities to develop as instructional leaders. And Dr. Surloff provides strong leadership to the Quaker Valley School Board of Directors as the liaison to the education services, personnel, policy, and health/safety committees for the District.

He's made an impact outside of Quaker Valley as well, serving as the co-coordinator of Western Pennsylvania Assistant Superintendents Forum, and as a Board member for the University of Pittsburgh's Assistant Superintendents Collaborative.

PASA-PSBA School Leadership Conference



Dr. Brian Troop, 2023 PA
Superintendent of the Year

School leaders from across the Commonwealth gathered at Kalahari Resorts & Convention Center Oct. 15-17 for the PASA-PSBA School Leadership Conference.

More than 400 school board members, superintendents and other school leaders attended the conference to learn about the latest innovative practices in education, explore new products and services to better equip their learning environments and network with other school leaders.

The conference featured more than 35 educational sessions on topics in five learning tracks: Employment and Engagement, The Effective School Board, Efficient District Operations, School Boards 101 and Hot Topics in Education were offered during the conference.

A pair of esteemed keynote speakers, Dr. Christine Porath and Gregory Offner, headlined the messages delivered to attendees through their unique presentation addresses.

Porath, the author of *Mastering Community*, and *Mastering Civility* and a visiting faculty member at

[View a video recap](#) of the 2023 PASA-PSBA School Leadership Conference at Kalahari Resorts & Conventions in the Poconos.

Kenan-Flagler Business School at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, presented on *Mastering Civility*. In her presentation, she showed how people can enhance their influence and effectiveness with civility.

Offner, a renowned workplace experience strategist and entertainer, delivered a high-energy performance utilizing music to reinforce his message of engagement, retention and talent development.

Dr. Terry Madonna, senior fellow in residence for political affairs at Millersville University, also spoke to attendees, sharing his view on Pennsylvania Politics in his session, "Politics in America and Pennsylvania: What Matters and Why," exploring Pennsylvania's role in the 2024 election and the impact of a closely divided state legislature.

Dr. Brian Troop, the 2023 Pennsylvania



G Terry Madonna



Dr. Michele Balliet



Dr. John Sanville



Dr. Sherri Smith

Superintendent of the Year, also was recognized for his achievements at Ephrata Area School District. Dr. Troop's innovative thinking, collaborative leadership and drive to succeed has improved communication in the district, elevated student performance and led to the launch of several community-connected initiatives including the Life Ready Graduate and Cornerstone Projects.

Dr. Randal Lutz, Superintendent of Baldwin-Whitehall School District was honored with the 2023 Innovative School Leader Award. The award is presented annually to a school superintendent, assistant superintendent, curriculum supervisors or building-level administrator who has demonstrated an innovative approach to leading their district, building, or program.



Nathan Mains



Dr. Randal Lutz

Save the Date

The 2024 PASA-PSBA School Leadership Conference will be held on October 6-8, 2024 at the Kalahari Resorts & Conventions in the Poconos.

Students Showcase their talents



Student performers from across the Commonwealth showcased their talents at the 2023 PASA-PSBA School Leadership Conference.

District represented included: Abington Heights Middle School, Emmaus High School, Pennridge High School, Pottstown High School, Plymouth Whitmarsh High School, Pocono Mountain East High School, Spring-Ford Area High School



Innovative Teaching and Learning

Quick Action Needed to Learn How AI Will Affect Our School Environments



By Dr. David Christopher
Superintendent, Cumberland Valley



President Joe Biden signed a sweeping Executive Order designed to begin to regulate the development and use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on October 20.

According to the White House, the Order, “Establishes new standards for AI safety and security, protects Americans’ privacy, advances equity and civil rights, stands up for consumers and workers, promotes innovation and competition, advances American leadership around the world, and more.”

The need for an Executive Order to immediately address this rapidly transforming technology should let all of us know that we must quickly move to learn how AI will affect our school environments.

Educators are facing a multitude of challenges as AI becomes more integrated into other technologies including many that are used in our classrooms. While AI offers numerous benefits, such as personalized learning, writing assistance, and even administrative support, it also introduces new concerns and challenges that educators must navigate.

AI is a double-edged sword for K-12 educators, offering opportunities for improved learning experiences while

presenting numerous challenges. As AI continues to transform education, it is imperative that educators address these challenges proactively.

One of the primary challenges for K-12 educators is adapting to the rapid pace of technological change driven by AI. As AI systems become more prevalent in the classroom, educators must continuously update their skills to effectively utilize these tools. This includes understanding AI’s capabilities and limitations, which can create a steep learning curve for many teachers and administrators regardless of their familiarity with other technology-based innovations.

By fostering a culture of adaptability, ethical use of technology, and a focus on equity, K-12 educators can harness the power of AI to enhance learning while preserving the unique qualities that make human educators irreplaceable.

AI’s rapid public availability marks a new era in disruptive technologies for schools. School leaders must educate themselves to understand the potential educational benefits of this new technology as well as the likely challenges schools will face because of it. Finding the right balance between technology

and the human touch will be key to navigating the evolving landscape of education in the AI era.

For this school year, the main focus of the PASA Innovative Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC) will be to explore the educational innovations AI could help to accelerate while also providing PASA members with guidance about the ethical, instructional, and assessment concerns that AI presents for school leaders.

The TLC will be working to schedule a series of lunch and learn webinar sessions for PASA members in the Spring of 2024. These sessions will each focus on a discreet aspect of AI in K-12 Education, with a primary focus on how AI can be used to increase innovation in schools.

In addition, the TLC Committee along with the PASA Professional Development Committee will be significantly involved in the planning of the PASA Leadership Forum scheduled for March 13 - March 15, 2024. The focus of the Forum will be on Innovation and Creativity in schools.

At this time, the Committee is seeking school districts who have innovative programs or practices that they would like to highlight in a breakout session during the Forum. Please feel free to contact me, or Dr. Jill Jacoby, Assistant Director of the Allegheny Intermediate Unit if you know of a program you believe we should highlight.

Disclaimer – *approximately 40% of this article was written using Chat GPT. Buckle up folks, we are in for a wild ride. Whether we choose to be a driver or a passenger is up to us.*

Professional Development

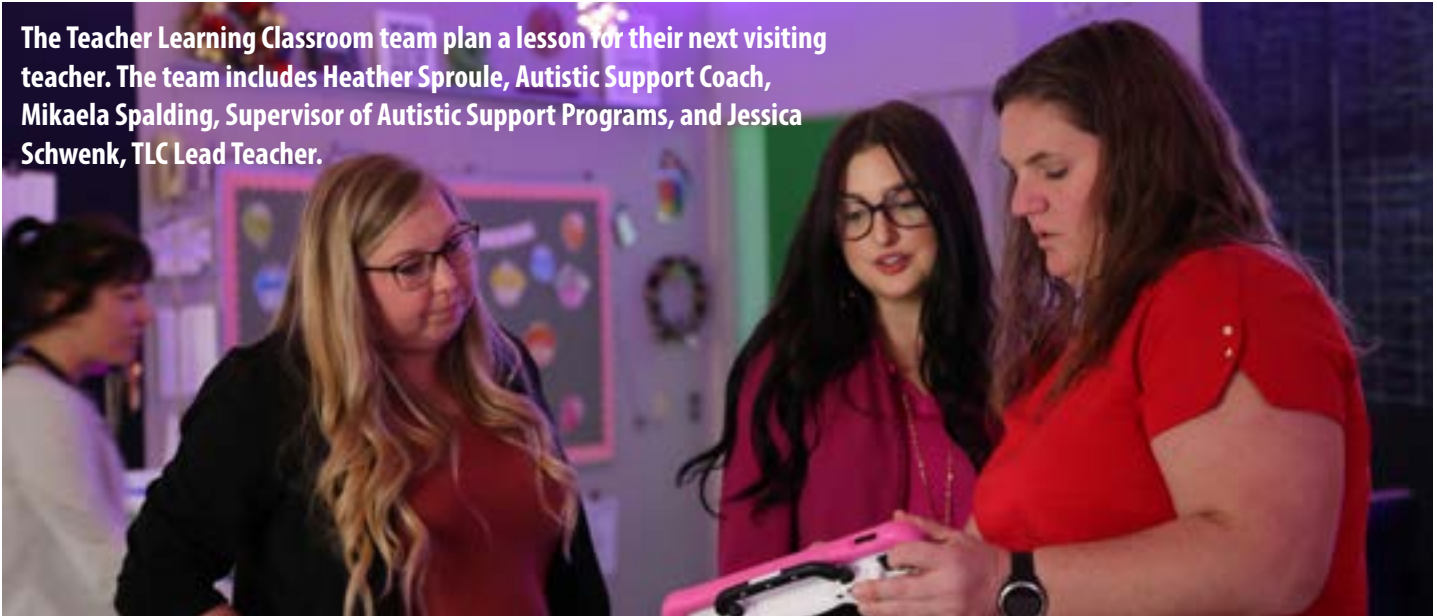
Lab Classrooms: A Hands-On Approach to Teacher Preparation



By Dr. Christina Steinbacher-Reed

Executive Director, BLAST I.U. 17

The Teacher Learning Classroom team plan a lesson for their next visiting teacher. The team includes Heather Sproule, Autistic Support Coach, Mikaela Spalding, Supervisor of Autistic Support Programs, and Jessica Schwenk, TLC Lead Teacher.



At a time when there are more Pennsylvania teachers on emergency permits than newly certified teachers from teacher preparation programs (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2021), providing on-the-job training has become mission-critical for many districts across the Commonwealth.

In response to Pennsylvania's teacher shortage, many schools are relying on teachers with emergency certifications and alternative certifications to fill vacancies. While these alternative pathways to teacher certification are successful in identifying aspiring educators, they also create a new challenge for school districts--the need for teacher preparation. Within this challenge also lies an opportunity for districts to provide on-the-job professional development that is tailored to the unique needs of the students, schools, and the communities we serve.

One of the most effective ways to acquire the knowledge and skills of a profession is through an apprenticeship model - a paid, on-the-job training experience that partners those in training with exemplary mentors from the field. While Pennsylvania does not currently have a Registered Apprenticeship for teaching, schools are creating innovative job-embedded opportunities to support emerging 'earn while you learn' pathways for the next generation of educators.

To view upcoming professional learning opportunities, visit [PASA's website](#) or check out our calendar of events on Page 26.

One example of how schools can create systemic job-embedded professional learning is through a Lab Classroom Model.

What is a Lab Classroom?

A Lab Classroom is "a fully-functioning classroom taught by an exemplary teacher which also doubles as a hands-on professional learning environment." The purpose of a Lab Classroom is to provide multiple opportunities for teachers and aspiring teachers to work side-by-side to learn and improve teaching practices in the context of functional classrooms. To be most effective, Lab Classrooms need to be part of a comprehensive professional learning system that provides educators in all roles with opportunities to bridge theory to practice (Educational Leadership, May 2017).

What are the benefits of a Lab Classroom?

One of the most significant benefits of a lab classroom is that they are built by teachers, with teachers, and for teachers to improve practice through a hands-on

‘laboratory of learning’. Well-designed Lab Classrooms provide the conditions, content, and processes for professional learning that lead to high-quality teaching and learning for teachers and aspiring teachers.

They provide a safe, non-evaluative environment for ‘teachers in training’ to learn the craft of teaching within the context of their school and resources.

Equally important, they provide exceptional mentor teachers with a platform to lead from the classroom while preparing the next generation of educators. In some models, Lab Classroom Lead Teachers receive compensation for their role which can serve as the first step in a career ladder for teacher leaders.

Co-created learning goals are relevant and contextualized to meet first-year teacher needs like classroom management 101 or the evolving needs of veteran teachers who are learning new enhanced practices such as three-dimensional teaching.

How do I set up a Lab Classroom?

While there is no one standard Lab Classroom model, there are earmarks of effective design that should be considered in all models:

- Located in schools where there is an established culture of collaborative inquiry and a commitment to professional learning
- Led by an experienced, exemplary teacher who utilizes evidenced-based pedagogy and is skilled in working with adult learners through an instructional coaching perspective
- Clearly identified roles and responsibilities for the lead teacher, the visiting teacher, and the mentor or instructional coach.
- Follows a very intentional collaborative inquiry-based process that includes before, during, and after visit experiences
- Adheres to visitation protocols and processes that reflect a non-evaluative, coaching approach that supports a culture of collaborative inquiry
- Aligned to Learning Forward’s Standards for Professional Learning (Revised 2022)

When designing Lab Classrooms specifically for aspiring or new teachers, districts may want to consider designing visits where the Lab teacher follows an ‘I do, we do, you do’ approach to professional learning. In this model, the Lab teacher models a specific strategy (‘I do’ phase) while the teacher in training observes.

Once there is an understanding of what the strategy looks like in practice, the Lab teacher and visiting teacher can move toward a ‘co-teaching model’ using the same strategy that was modeled (‘we do’ phase). Once the visiting teacher



Top: Lead Teacher, Ms. Jessica Schwenk, demonstrates how she individualizes instruction to make learning centers meaningful and fun for all students.

Below: Lead Teacher, Ms. Jessica Schwenk, demonstrates how she individualizes instruction to make learning centers meaningful and fun for all students.

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feels comfortable with co-teaching the method, they then use the teaching strategy in the context of the Lab Classrooms while the Lab Teacher observes and provides feedback ('you do' phase).

An Example of a Lab Classroom in Action

I have been fortunate to experience first-hand that Lab Classrooms have the potential for success in all types of school settings - urban, rural, and now in special education programming. In my current role as the Executive Director of BLAST IU 17, our team has recently developed The Teacher Learning Classroom (TLC) - a lab classroom model specific to supporting autistic support teachers.

The TLC was developed by a team of expert practitioners that included: Jessica Schwenk, Autistic Support Teacher and current TLC Lead Teacher; Heather Sproule, Autistic Support Consultant/Coach, and Mikeala Spalding, Supervisor of Autistic Support Programs.

Teachers can initiate their visit by completing an online request form or the visit can be initiated by the teacher's supervisor or mentor. As part of the request form, the teacher selects an area of focus for the visit from a menu. The menu includes a list of areas of expertise offered by the Lead Teacher.

Once the TLC Lead Teacher receives a teacher's request to visit, they reach out to the teacher and coach to schedule a time to begin working through the learning guide.

The learning guide includes a series of inquiry-based questions ([See The Learning Classroom Learning Guide](#)) that assist the team in co-creating the goals for the visit. After meeting with the visiting teacher and coach, the Lead Teacher then creates a lesson or classroom experience that is specifically designed around the visiting teacher's needs and intentions.

During the visit, the autistic support coach or a mentor teacher will join the visiting teacher. The role of the coach is to serve as a 'guide by the side' for the visiting teacher, pointing out specific elements of the teaching and the impact on student learning.

In this role, the coach/mentor makes 'teaching and learning' visible for the visiting teacher, which is often essential for new or aspiring teachers who sometimes simply don't have enough experience to know what effective practices 'look like' and 'sound like'.

For example, while observing the Lead Teacher, the coach might whisper to the visiting teacher, "Watch closely as they..." or "Did you notice how...?"

After the visit, which can take place immediately after or a few weeks later, the team meets to reflect and debrief. During this debrief, the visiting teacher identifies their new learning and develops a plan for how they will incorporate their takeaways into their teaching. The coach/mentor or Lead Teacher might also be available to support the visiting teacher back in their classroom as they try out these new strategies.

Lab Classrooms have many benefits, but it does not replace the need for more systemic teacher preparation across the Commonwealth.

While school leaders continue to advocate for statewide measures to address teacher preparation needs, Lab Classrooms are one-way schools can respond to the need for authentic, job-embedded opportunities for teachers at all levels to learn and refine their craft.

Thank you to our Platinum Sponsors:



PLUS Caucus of PASA

Form, Storm, Norm, and Perform with Your Board



By Dr. Christopher Dormer
PLUS Caucus Chair

If you hadn't noticed all of the lawn signs, mailers, and candidate advertisements filling most commercial blocks on TV and radio, it is general election season! While most Americans are already focusing on next year's election cycle, this November and each election in an odd numbered year has significant impact at the local level. Most directly for school districts, it is a year that we elect members to serve on our school boards.

Depending on your district and your situation, this time of year can be filled with hope, optimism, anxiety, despair, or any and all of the above. By the time you read this article, the election will be over and, as a school leader, you will be trying to figure out the impact to you, your district, and your team of 10.

Chances are your team of 10 will look different after December's reorganization meeting. Whether that is welcoming new members or working with new leadership, things will probably look and feel at least a little different. This presents a great opportunity to align or realign, set or reset, and calibrate or recalibrate how you will all work together in the best interest of students, staff, families, and your community. Time to form, storm, norm and perform with your board!

Bruce Tuckman's group development model is a framework to help teams come together, grow together, face challenges, tackle problems, find solutions, and deliver results. As board members are elected and come from very different backgrounds and experiences, it is important that superintendents and school leaders help board members learn how to function as effective teams. I have found working through the four phases of Tuckman's model helpful in bringing everyone together, even if it means learning how to disagree respectfully so that everyone can maintain some personal dignity.

Forming is when the team meets and learns about the opportunities and challenges, and then agrees on goals and begins to tackle the tasks. This is also the stage where members begin to find and test boundaries, create ground rules, and define organizational standards. To grow from here, each member must be willing to move on from comfortable topics and issues to things that may cause conflict.

Storming is when the group starts to sort itself out and gain



each others' trust. This stage often starts when members start to voice their opinions. Conflict may arise between team members at this stage as people start to work with each other and start to learn about others' working styles and what it is like to work as a team. Ideally, you can assist in creating safe spaces where members will not feel that they are being judged, and will therefore productively share their opinions and views. Tension, struggle, and arguments may occur. Working through this stage requires members to participate with one another more comfortably.

Norming is when the team really becomes the team. Everyone shares and commits to common goals and takes personal responsibility for working together to achieve those goals. They accept others for who they are and focus on the greater good.

Performing is the promised land. With group norms and roles established, the team of 10 is motivated, knowledgeable, competent, and works collaboratively through the decision-making processes. The focus is on achievement and chalking up the wins.

While it is never that easy or that fast, the Tuckman model does reinforce the importance of the team. No one gets there alone. Make the time to invest the time with your board.

Christopher Dormer is the proud Superintendent of Schools of the Norristown Area School District in Montgomery County. He is the President of the Pennsylvania League of Urban Schools (PLUS) Caucus of PASA, and also serves on the PASA Board of Governors and the PASA Professional Development Committee.



Five Reasons to Co-Present at Conferences with Board Members



By Mrs. Lynn Fuini-Hetten
Superintendent, Salisbury Twp.



Have you ever submitted a proposal to present at the PASA/PSBA conference? If not, why not? As leaders of learning organizations, we have so much knowledge and experience to share with each other. It is critical we work together to build our capacity, and conference participants will learn vicariously through both our successes and our failures.

I had a wonderful experience at the PASA/PSBA Conference this year at Kalahari developing and facilitating presentations with my board member colleagues.

This year, I submitted two proposals on different topics and with different co-presenters, both of whom were board members. The topics I focused on were Teamwork Makes the Advocacy Dream Work and Four Steps to Building Stronger Board and Superintendent Relationships.

I have been working diligently to develop stronger relationships with my board members in an effort to be a more successful superintendent. Completing this work together was a positive experience for myself and our two board members. I have identified five benefits to this type of collaboration.

Share a Unified Message: Co-presenting allows the superintendent and board members to deliver a unified message about their district's goals, achievements, and priorities. This consistent message reinforces a shared vision and commitment to the educational community. In



one presentation, we were committing to strengthening our advocacy efforts. In the other presentation, we were candid about the work we are doing to improve our collaborative relationships.

Showcase Shared Expertise: Board members can contribute their specialized expertise to the presentation, which can enhance the credibility and depth of the

PASA Celebrates the Achievements of New Superintendents' Academy Graduates



Through a series of three, two-day, in-person workshops, participants in PASA's New Superintendents' Academy learned and engaged with and from experts in the field regarding various aspects of organizational leadership impacting their new responsibilities. Mr. William August, Mr. Paul Dougherty and Mr. Brian Mulhollan completed the academy on November 17.

content. For example, a board member with a background in finance could speak to budgetary matters, while another with a legal background could address policy issues. In the case of our presentations, both board members had subject matter expertise which enriched the presentation.

Provide Different Perspectives: The superintendent and board members may offer different perspectives on various topics, which can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the district's challenges and successes. This diversity of viewpoints can make the presentation more well-rounded and engaging - meeting the diverse needs of the audience.

Increase Engagement and Networking with Participants:

Having a mix of district leadership and board members at the presentation can increase audience engagement and opportunities for networking. Attendees may be more likely to approach a session with both elected and appointed leaders, leading to more fruitful post-presentation discussions. In both of our presentations, we divided our topic into smaller segments of content. After each segment, we embedded a slide with reflective questions and encouraged audience participants to share their practices and experiences. This portion of the presentation allowed for unique distance networking experience.

Model a Positive Relationship: Co-presenting can strengthen the working relationship between the superintendent and board members. It signifies a

collaborative and cooperative approach to addressing educational issues, fostering a culture of support and teamwork within the district. It was helpful to see how each of these board members work - the scaffolding, communication skills, management skills, etc. I would also anticipate they learned more about me, my knowledge, and my leadership style through this experience.

Co-presenting at the 2023 PASA/PSBA Conference was a rewarding experience. I am proud of the work our team put together. When I asked the board members with whom I co-presented what they most valued, one member shared, "I appreciated the opportunity to work cooperatively with the superintendent to frame out a vision for how to improve the effectiveness of the team of ten. We were able to identify what was working well, what still needs improvement, and how we can incorporate our strengths into a sustainable process that will ensure future success."

Another member shared, "Making my first conference presentation was not something I would have had the confidence to do alone. Lynn's support in designing our presentation and in the day-to-day work that we do in building relationships with our legislators is invaluable. I appreciate her push to expand my boundaries."

In summary, co-presenting with board members at an educational conference can enhance the message's impact, showcase a variety of expertise, provide different perspectives, increase engagement, and promote a culture of collaboration and support within the school district.

Read the rest of the story: ["Pennsylvania Commission Discusses Education Funding Issues"](#) (from WTJ CBS, 11/9/23)

National News:



Ed Dept Calls on Schools to Address ‘Alarming Rise’ in Islamophobic, Antisemitic Incidents

Due to an “alarming rise” in reports of antisemitic and Islamophobic incidents in schools since the Israel-Hamas war began, the U.S. Department of Education is warning schools of their duty to prevent and address discrimination against Jewish, Muslim, Arab, Israeli and Palestinian American students.

Read the rest of the story: [“Ed Dept Calls on Schools to Address ‘Alarming Rise’ in Islamophobic, Antisemitic Incidents”](#) (from K-12Dive, 11/7/23)

3 Ways Educators Can Use Artificial Intelligence

Major evolutions in technology are often hard to pin to a specific time or place, but this is not the case for artificial intelligence. Although AI has been around in various forms for decades — including Microsoft’s Clippy and Google’s autofill feature for online searches — its recent evolution has made it impossible to ignore.

Read the rest of the story: [“3 Ways Educators Can Use Artificial Intelligence”](#) (from, Ed Tech Magazine, 11/10/23)

U.S. Supreme Court Takes Up Major Gun Case With School Safety in Backdrop

The U.S. Supreme Court on Tuesday took up its first major Second Amendment case since it expanded the right to bear arms in a landmark decision last year, and once again the idea of protecting schools was in the backdrop of the debate.

The court appeared sympathetic in *United States v. Rahimi* to arguments by the Biden administration to uphold a 1994 federal statute that prohibits gun possession by individuals subject to domestic violence protective orders.

A federal appeals court had struck down the law, ruling that there was no historical analogue for such a restriction on gun possession for domestic abusers at the time of the nation’s founding.

Read the rest of the story: [“U.S. Supreme Court Takes Up Major Gun Case With School Safety in Backdrop”](#) (from, EducationWeek, 11/7/23)

How Emotionally Intelligent Are School and District Leaders? We Asked Teachers

Although school and district leaders believe they demonstrate emotional intelligence and strong interpersonal skills at work, teachers are less likely to agree that their administrators show those traits.

Those are the findings of a survey of 1,509 educators, including 364 principals and district administrators, conducted by the EdWeek Research Center from Sept. 27 to Oct. 13.

The findings come as schools and districts dig deep to rebuild and maintain staff morale while they continue the hard work of academic recovery.

Read the rest of the story: [“How Emotionally Intelligent Are School and District Leaders? We Asked Teachers”](#) (from, EducationWeek, 11/6/23)



By Ann McMullan
Project Director, CoSN

EmpowerED Superintendent edLeader Panel Broadcast Series

The series is co-hosted by [AASA](#) and [CoSN](#) in partnership with [edWeb.net](#) and is sponsored by [ClassLink](#).

edLeader Panel Broadcast

The CoSN / AASA EmpowerED Superintendent edLeader Panel Series, Leveraging Technology Tools to Provide Equitable Learning for ALL, aired on Monday, November 13. The broadcast featured an interactive discussion around the strategies they lead and implement to “think outside the box” when it comes to ensuring districtwide equity to devices and high-speed internet both inside and outside of school led by Dr. Susan Enfield, Superintendent, Washoe County School District, NV, Glenn Robbins, Superintendent, Brigantine Public School District, NJ, and Dr. Jim Roberts, Superintendent, Bartholomew Consolidated School Corporation, IN.

The three superintendents shared their experiences creating a common vision to engage the broader community as partners in solving digital equity challenges. An overview of the CoSN Digital Equity Dashboard was presented during the broadcast. Ann McMullan, CoSN Project Director for the CoSN / AASA EmpowerED Superintendents Initiative, served as the creator/moderator of the edLeader Panel broadcast series.

You can view the recording at: <https://home.edweb.net/webinar/supers20231113/>

October 9, 2023 edLeader Panel Broadcast Recording on the topic of Artificial Intelligence

If you missed the recent CoSN / AASA EmpowerED Superintendent edLeader Panel broadcast, Artificial Intelligence and Generative AI: Empowering a Deeper Conversation, which aired on Monday, October 9, 2023, you are welcome to access the link to the recording at: <https://home.edweb.net/webinar/supers20231009/>

In this recent broadcast Pennsylvania's own Dr. Matthew Friedman, Superintendent, Quakertown Community

School District, PA, joined in the discussion with Dr. Kelly May-Vollmar, Superintendent, Desert Sands Unified School District, CA, Dr. David Miyashiro, Superintendent, Cajon Valley Union School District, CA and Pete Just, Executive Director Indiana CTO Council and CoSN AI Subject Matter expert, as together they shared the leadership strategies needed today when integrating AI and Generative AI tools in today's teaching and learning environments.

CoSN Resources:

Defining Digital Equity: <https://www.cosn.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/CoSNDefiningDigitalEquity-1-1.pdf>

Digital Equity Toolkit: <https://www.cosn.org/tools-and-resources/resource/digital-equity-toolkit-2/>

CoSN One-Pager on Digital Equity:

<https://www.cosn.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Superintendents-Initiative-Equity.pdf>

CoSN One-Pager on Artificial Intelligence and Generative AI:

<https://www.cosn.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/EmpSupAI.pdf>

Artificial Intelligence in K-12 Primer:

<https://www.cosn.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/CoSN-AI-Report-2023-1.pdf>

CoSN 2024 Annual Conference, “Leading for Innovation: At Warp Speed”

Registration is now open for the CoSN 2024 Annual Conference, scheduled for April 8-10, 2024, in Miami, Florida. For conference and hotel information and registration links, see <https://www.cosn.org/cosn2024/>.

CoSN Membership

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

Writing Out Loud

Each Day is an Opportunity to Make a Difference



By Adam Kulikowski
Director of Communications

“Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.”

-Leo Buscaglia



There are few places more coveted to be on a weekend morning than your local tire center.

Ok, perhaps I can think of a few. Saturdays in the Kulikowski household are often spent running errands, cleaning up our home, and getting ready for the next set of whirlwind days ahead.

Replacing the tires on our SUV quickly rose to the top of our to-do list after letting the task slip for far too long.

So as I awaited the help of our local tire specialist, I joined the crew of others in the waiting room.

A ho-hum experience of phone zombies staring at their screens as they impatiently awaited their number to be called so they could move on with their busy days.

That is until a young woman came in holding an infant. Teary-eyed she told the clerk at the counter that she had a flat tire and needed help.

When she sat down in the waiting area, you could read the worry on her face like a billboard in Times Square.

One by one, the others in the waiting area were served.

When the store manager came out to speak with the young woman, she exasperated how she feared that she would not be able to afford the repair/replacement needed.

With a pat on the shoulder, the store manager told her that would not be a problem today. Her tire was repairable and there would be no charge to her.

You could see the relief on her face—a stressor—instantly melted away. She thanked the man for his kindness and left.

When it came to my turn to check out, I paid our bill and thanked them for their help today.

I shared how nice it was to see how they helped this person in need at no charge.

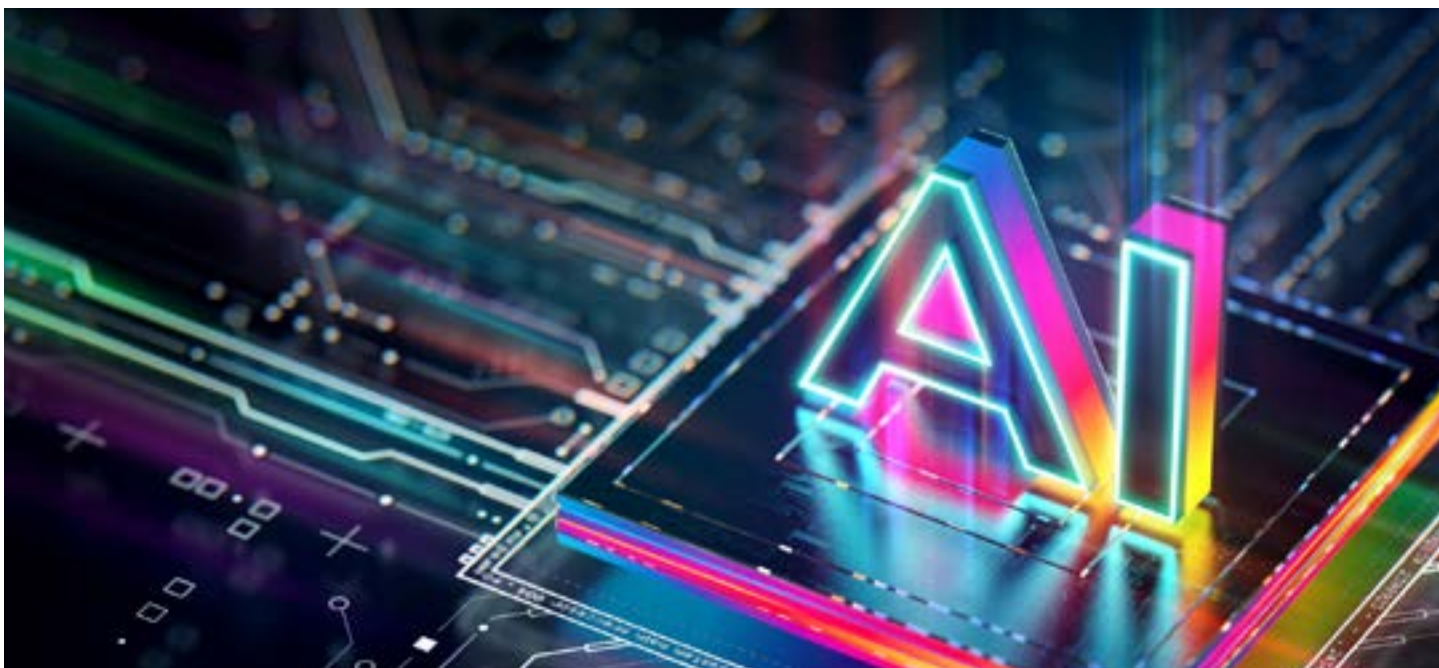
And the store manager replied with a simple lesson that we could use as a reminder during our busy lives every once in a while.

“We all have the ability to show kindness during our daily lives. Gestures that may seem small to us can truly change another’s life.”

I encourage you to find moments to emulate the kindness of the local tire center manager.

We have the opportunity each day to positively affect the lives of those with whom we interact.

Even the smallest token of kindness can make an impact.



AI, and Cyber, and E-Rate, Oh My!



By Noelle Ellerson Ng
Associate Executive Director,
Advocacy and Governance, AASA



Federal policy conversations may seem to be gridlocked—hello, annual appropriations work and the recent three-week endeavor to get a Speaker of the House.

That doesn't mean it's a full ground stop, though, especially as it relates to education technology and connectivity.

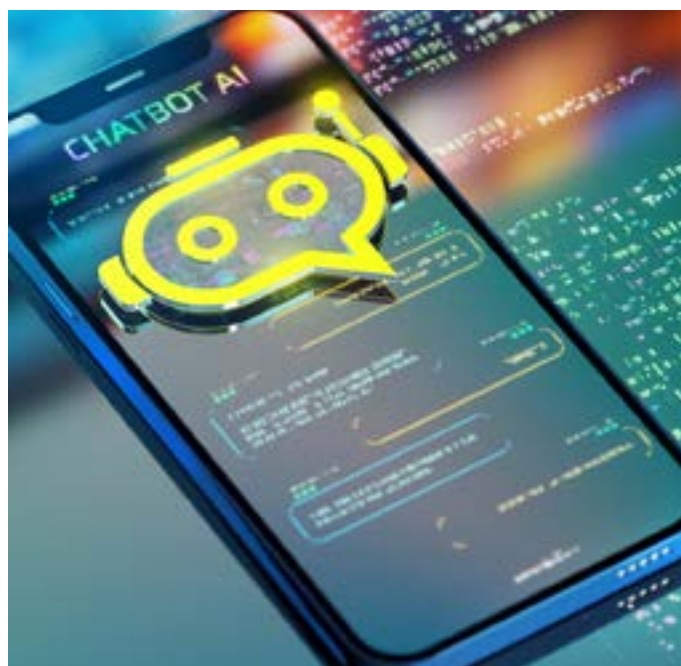
We want to use this month's The Advocate to provide a quick recap and update on all things connectivity, student data and privacy, cybersecurity and artificial intelligence.

Connectivity: The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is the agency with jurisdiction over the E-Rate program. Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel announced her "Learn Without Limits" initiative this summer, a proposal that would allow E-Rate dollars to be used for Wi-Fi on buses and to provide connectivity via the Emergency Connectivity Fund, and a third proposal to use \$200 million in Universal Service Funding to support a 3-year pilot on cybersecurity protections for K12 schools.

AASA supports all three proposals. Movement on anything at the FCC has been locked; the FCC is supposed to have five commissioners but was operating with only four until early October. With the fifth Commissioner—Cmsr Gomez—onboarded, the FCC was able to take action, and one of their first steps forward was to adopt the proposal to use E-Rate dollars for Wi-Fi on buses.

The vote allows the E-Rate funding to be used to fund Wi-Fi on school buses, as well as any E-Rate-eligible equipment needed to enable the service, as part of funding year 2024 eligible services list proceeding.

The FCC has yet to act on the remaining two proposals, but they are expected to move through a traditional rule making



(not just a vote), and we will call on AASA members to support filing comments.

Student Data and Privacy: The conversations on Capitol Hill are largely focused on student mental health and social media, but when push comes to shove about legislative proposals, the two most likely legislative vehicles under consideration are the Senate Kids Online Safety Act (KOSA) and Child Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA).

AASA has historically opposed these bills as drafted, though we are optimistic that negotiations in late summer/early fall have resulted in legislative changes that will allow us to be neutral on the bills, if/when they should come to the floor. At this time, there is not a clear timeline for a next legislative step.

One of the latest episodes of our recently relaunched policy podcast PEP Talk (Public Education Policy Talk) is all about student data and privacy. Give it a listen!

Cybersecurity: AASA is pleased to participate in USED's Education Government Coordinating Council. Announced back in August, the council is intended to coordinate activities, policy, and communications between federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial governments that strengthen the cyber defenses and resilience of K-12 schools and is part of the broader federal response to K12 cyber resilience

Artificial Intelligence: We are excited to have locked in TWO sessions on AI policy as part of the advocacy team content at the National Conference on Education (Register today, we hope to see you there!).

Earlier this week, the White House released an executive order on the Safe, Secure, and Trustworthy Development and Use of Artificial Intelligence.

Specific to education, the order directs the US Education Department (USED) to develop resources, policies and guidance aimed at responsible development and deployment of AI in the education sector.

This includes guidance on how schools can use the AI technology equitably, with a focus on AI's effects on vulnerable and underserved communities.

This is related to an USED AI Toolkit that will address how to implement AI tools to they both comply with privacy rules and enhance trust/safety. USED has 365 days to develop this guidance.

The Justice Department has to coordinate with federal civil rights officials on ways to investigate discrimination driven by algorithms.

Read more on The Leading Edge blog.

In the November Issue of School Administrator Magazine:

This month's issue examines features articles including: Embracing Both/And Thinking and Actions; Proceeding Beyond Polarity; Caught in the Cross-hairs; Watershed Opportunities: Combating Hatred for the Soul of America and more.



Quotes:

“With increasing concerns about the role of social media in our children’s mental health, we must engage in reflective dialogue with parents about personal devices. With cell phones ubiquitous in our middle and high schools, and growing numbers in our elementary buildings, keeping students safe on social media isn’t just a school responsibility--it takes all of us. Best practices aren’t good enough--we must be better. ”

–**John Marschhausen, Superintendent, Dublin, Ohio** in “**Engagement at the Next Level--Better Together**”

“While e-mail remained the primary way of communicating with parents about what they needed to know, social media was perfect for the feel-good stories the community wanted to know about. Photos and videos captured the camaraderie of the moment, while comments and reactions allowed well-wishers near and far to show support for the school community. ”

–**Terry Rombeck, Director of Communications, Andover Public Schools in Andover, Kansas** in “**Using Social Media Tools in Crisis Aftermath**”

“The superintendency requires incredibly thick skin--I have developed armor. It requires resilience--I feel like Tigger. It requires perseverance--I often muse that one of my greatest handicaps is that I don’t run out of steam at night. It requires continually juggling 25 balls--I can handle the moving parts. But I need three of me to keep up. ”

–**Maria Libby, Superintendent of Five Town Community School District and Maine School Administrative District 28 in Camden, Maine** in “**One Life-Changing Step**”

PASA Calendar



November:

November 21:

PASA Education Update Briefing: Identifying, Mitigating, and Responding to Swatting Incidents

November 23-24:

PASA office closed in observance of Thanksgiving

December:

December 6-7:

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

December 13:

Assistant Superintendents/Supervisors Summit follow-up Webinar No. 1

December 14:

Managing the Risks: Instructional Materials Selection and Red Flags

December 25-January 1:

PASA office closed in observance of Christmas holiday

January:

January 9:

Managing the Risks: Navigating Challenging Board Meetings

January 11-12:

New Superintendents' Academy Series (Part 3): Professional & Community Leadership

January 15:

PASA office closed in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day

January 30:

Managing the Risks: Record Retention, Right to Know, Board Conflict of Interest, and Litigation Holds

February:

February 2:

Aspiring to Leadership Workshop (Virtual)

February 15-17:

AASA National Conference on Education

February 17:

PASA State Reception at Rustic Root

February 28:

Managing the Risks: The Pennsylvania Public Official and Employees Ethics Act--Compliance and Potential Unintended Violations

March:

March 13:

PA League of Urban Schools (PLUS) Conference (Hershey Lodge)

March 13-15:

2023 PASA Leadership Forum: Unleashing Potential: Navigating the Continuum of Creativity and Innovation in Schools

May:

May 19-21:

Women's Caucus Annual Spring Conference (Hershey Hotel)

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