

PASA Flyer

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Proud Leadership for
Pennsylvania Schools

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Pictured: Dr. Bridget O'Connell, 2022 PA Superintendent of the Year, was
recognized for her achievements Oct. 31 during the PASA-PSBA School
Leadership Conference.

Photo by Cassandra Benning



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From the Executive Director

Take time to network to regain hope and confidence in the work we do.



By Dr. Sherri Smith

Executive Director, PASA

This past month of work has been so inspiring! Traveling across this great Commonwealth to meet with colleagues has been nothing more than gratifying and inspiring! It just feels right to see our school leaders back together in-person – taking time to learn, grow and share both frustrations and laughter with one another.

These experiences along with hosting the Summit for the Assistant Superintendents and Supervisors, and attending the PASA/PSBA conference, has validated the need for all of us to take the time to network and be there for one another. It is simply healthy for us to do so.

A special recognition to our Superintendents who provided insightful sessions at the PASA/PASBO conference – Christopher Dormer, Charles Prijatelj, David Christopher, Brian Troop, Brian Griffith, Brian White, Joseph Mancuso, Jason Conway (IU Exe.) John Sanville, Mark Madson, Tammy Wolicki, Edward Zelich, Joseph Roy, Stephen Yanni, Lee Ann Wentzel, Ella Musser, Matt Jones, Allyn Roche and Caroline Johns. If you attended any of these sessions, you would see the incredible work our colleagues are accomplishing in their districts. Thanks for sharing your knowledge and accomplishments with others – Well Done!

Ever notice the positive energy that comes from networking?

“There is power and healing that comes with networking with each other. Attending offsite meetings and conferences gives us the mental break we all need to step away from the many difficult situations that surround us in our daily work and find networking paths where we regain hope and confidence in the important work we do.”

Make a commitment to yourself by taking time to connect and network with other educational leaders – you will be glad you did!

By the time you read this article, the elections will be over, or should I say the actual voting will be done. This election is a big deal for public education and sets the stage for how we approach our advocacy moving forward. Over the past few years, our schools have become the battlefield for so much of our society’s social and political wars. Quite simply – it needs to stop. It’s not fair to our school leaders and educators who work so hard to make schools a positive learning place for our students. But mostly, it’s damaging to our students.

Don’t think our students aren’t watching and mimicking how we are acting. We need to change the narrative at our board meetings and in our schools – return to an environment where parents, communities and school officials work collectively for the benefit of our students. There are other places and ways to address our political and social differences than at our board



See NETWORKING, Page 13

PASA honors award recipients at annual meeting



PA Superintendent of the year



Dr. Brian Troop

Superintendent

Ephrata Area



The Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators recognized four education leaders for their outstanding service November 10 at the Sheraton Harrisburg Hershey 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. Noreen O'Neill (Service to the Profession), Dr. Shane Murray (Instructional Leadership) and Mr. Michael Vuckovich (Leadership in Public Education Award) received the 2022 honors for their outstanding achievements in their school communities.

As noted in the [October issue](#) of The PASA Flyer, Dr. Brian Troop recently was selected as the 2023 Pennsylvania Superintendent of the Year. Dr. Troop was formally recognized for this honor during the Nov. 10 awards event. PASA will also hold a special luncheon in his honor to be scheduled in the Spring of 2023.

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. 16-18 in San Antonio, Texas, when the National Superintendent of the Year will be announced.

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Service to the Profession



Dr. Noreen O'Neill

Director of Innovative Educational Services
Chester County I.U. 24

Dr. Noreen O'Neill, Director of Innovative Educational Services at Chester County I.U., leads programs that are vital to the superintendents in Chester, Montgomery, Bucks, and Delaware counties.

She leads the Suburban Study Council's professional learning program for more than 100 current and retired superintendents.

The program focuses on how school leaders can support their district's students, communities, and staff in experiential learning.

Under her guidance she's ensured that their annual retreat fosters new ideas by coordinating nationally recognized speakers and experts in areas relevant to the needs of the superintendents in the program—and works after each event to provide support implementing the lessons learned.

In addition to her leadership within the Suburban Student Council, Dr. O'Neill leads Pennsylvania's Education Resource Center development and supports the Comprehensive School Improvement plan.

Instructional Leadership



Dr. Shane Murray

Superintendent
Iroquois School District

Dr. Shane Murray has served as the Iroquois School District Superintendent for the past eight years. During his tenure, he's risen his district's ranking from the bottom 25 percent of districts to the top 30 percent, according to the School Digger & Pittsburgh Business Times.

Mr. Murray introduced, implemented, and institutionalized numerous improvements, programs, and practices that created significant change in student achievement and culture. Mr. Murray secured grant funding to establish a Pre-K program, launched a community school model, and ignited a Positive Youth Development program. With ESSER Funding he has developed a complete mental health support system that is being used as a model for other districts to follow.

He has partnered with State Universities to provide our students with access to affordable course credits and mentors/experiences. Perhaps most importantly, Mr. Murray has held all stakeholders responsible for using data to make and defend instructional decisions.

Leadership in Public Education Award



Mr. Michael Vuckovich

Superintendent
Indiana Area School District

Mr. Michael Vuckovich serves as the Indiana Area Superintendent. He is dedicated to ensuring that all students receive the very best opportunities available at Indiana Area. He's instituted difficult systemic changes during his tenure and continues to foster a culture in his district to support and lift his colleagues each day.

Under his guidance at Indiana Area, his team developed the infrastructure for a multi-tiered system of support in literacy, social-emotional learning, and positive behavior intervention for students in K-5 and have plans to expand the program into grades 6-8 next year. Similar work on a support plan for mathematics is also underway.

Their plan is a comprehensive one including professional development and learning communities, the adoption of evidence-based curricula and interventions, support for teachers and equity in educational practices.

They've also developed a summer camp to help students catch up after the pandemic.



National News:

Low-Income Families Can Qualify for Free Internet, But Schools Should Explain How

Tens of millions of students still don't have internet access at home. And that is the case even though schools are still asking students to get a good chunk of their homework done online after school. What makes the situation even worse for students is that [fewer school districts are helping pay for students' home internet](#) now that full-time remote and hybrid learning are mostly in the rearview mirror. Education Week spoke with Jack Lynch, the chief operating officer for EducationSuperHighway, a nonprofit internet access advocacy organization, about the vital role schools and districts can still play in keeping families connected to the internet.

Read the rest of the story: [“Low-Income Families Can Qualify for Free Internet, But Schools Should Explain How”](#) (from EducationWeek, 10/19/22)

Five Strategies States Are Using to Fill Teacher Shortages

To make sure schools are fully staffed, states are attempting a variety of strategies to bring more people into the classrooms—including those who haven't gone through any sort of teacher training. The pandemic has exacerbated teacher shortages in many regions and content areas, but the problem is not new: Enrollment in teacher-preparation programs [has declined by more than a third over the past decade](#). Experts say a combination of low pay, poor working conditions, and a lack of public respect has deterred people from pursuing a career in the classroom. Teacher morale [has declined since the pandemic](#), too, worsening the public perception of the job.

Read the rest of the story: [“5 Strategies States Are Using to Fill Teacher Shortages”](#) (from EducationWeek, 10/17/22)

Kids' Mental Health is in Crisis. Schools Can Get Them Help Through a \$1 Billion Fund

Medical experts agree that, after nearly three years of pandemic-induced strain, children are in the midst of a mental health crisis. One signal of just how severe a crisis: The U.S. Department of Education is ready to give schools \$280 million through two grant programs to help young people access mental health care. It's the first wave of a total \$1 billion—funded through the federal Bipartisan Safer Communities Act—that the department will spend on youth mental health programs over the next five years.

Read the rest of the story: [“Kids' Mental Health is in Crisis. Schools Can Get Them Help Through a \\$1 Billion Fund”](#) (from EdSurge, 10/19/22)

Building an Effective SEL Program: Lessons From 3 Districts

Flush with COVID-19 relief aid and scrambling to meet students' soaring emotional needs at the height of the pandemic, many school districts invested heavily in social-emotional learning. And that momentum doesn't appear to be slowing down: 61 percent of school and district leaders said in an EdWeek Research Center survey this fall that they expect funding and resources for SEL to increase.

Read the rest of the story: “Building an Effective SEL Program: Lessons From 3 Districts” (from EducationWeek, 11/7/22)

State News:

Here's What Not-Yet-Released PSSA Data Shows About Test Scores in PA

Student achievement in mathematics improved during the 2021-22 school year, according to the preliminary results of Pennsylvania's main standardized test, while English language and science results showed a decline. Statewide standardized Pennsylvania System of School Assessment - or PSSA - results have not been released by the state Department of Education. Ephrata School District, however, shared the statewide statistics, and student results have been showing up in mailboxes across Pennsylvania. State Department of Education Communications Director Casey Smith initially confirmed Friday that the statewide numbers Ephrata presented are accurate but later said "final PSSA scores will be available in a few weeks."

Read the rest of the story: ["Here's What Note-Yet-Released PSSA Data Shows About Test Scores in PA"](#) (from LPN Lancaster Online, 10/31/22)

Educators, Officials Meet In Philadelphia to Discuss Educator Workforce Shortage Issues

The Committee on Education Talent Recruitment today held a regional convening at the School District of Philadelphia to discuss strategies to bolster and diversify Pennsylvania's educator workforce. During the meeting, the school district provided an overview of its Grow Your Own program to train future teachers, a model which could be replicated across the commonwealth.

Read the rest of the story: ["Educator, Officials Meet In Philadelphia To Discuss Educator Workforce Shortage Issues"](#) (from PA Dept. of Education, 10/31/22)

PA Schools Lack Policies That Protect LGBTQ Students and District Taxpayers, Experts Say

Attitudes on sex and gender identity have graduated; school policies on LGBTQ students, however, are elementary, at best. Most school systems in Pennsylvania lack official guidelines on the education of gay, lesbian, transgender and non-binary students, and the state's reporting system is not being used, records show. Without policies, districts and communities are increasingly clashing across the state as schools weigh the needs of students, and parents, and the rights of both groups.

Read the rest of the story: ["PA Schools Lack Policies That Protect LGBTQ Students and District Taxpayers, Experts Say"](#) (from Courier Times, 10/17/22)



Pennsylvania Rolling Out Online Mental Health Care for K-12

The adoption of the new Kooth digital mental health services by the Wyoming Valley West School Board on Oct. 12 drew questions from two parents, but the board opted to use it, and the state of Pennsylvania is moving forward with plans to continue introducing it to school districts across the state.

Read the rest of the story: ["Pennsylvania Rolling Out Online Mental Health Care for K-12"](#) (from Government Technology, 10/21/22)

Local Educators Say Sliding School Assessment Scores No Shock, Highlight Importance of In-Person Learning

When results of the [National Assessment of Educational Progress](#) were released in late October, the nationwide assessment often called "the nation's report card" pointed to much lower scores than students were recording before the COVID-19 pandemic. Local educators weren't surprised by the results.

Read the rest of the story: ["Local Educators Say Sliding School Assessment Scores No Shock, Highlight Importance of In-Person Learning"](#) (from The Tribune-Democrat, 11/5/22)

From the President's Pen

A time to reflect, relax, and recharge



By Dr. John Sanville

2022-23 PASA President

Greetings to all!

We have come to the part of the year that allows us time to reflect, relax, and recharge. The holiday season is just around the corner - and with that comes a shift in focus, attitude, and approach - at work, at home, in your neighborhood, and certainly at all the stores.

This is a great opportunity for us all to slow down and take inventory of ourselves. We have jobs that make good use of a lot of our skills, stamina, and strength. We get to stretch muscles we did not know we have while leading, listening, and learning. We make decisions that impact the families and friends in our school communities. And just when you think you have got things on track; a wheel, a car, or the whole train wobbles and takes you in a different direction. Such is the life of a superintendent- never dull, always interesting, and sometimes chaotic.

With that in mind, I want to share with you something I share with the UCF community every Thanksgiving; a list of what I am grateful for. We all have families, friends, traditions, menus, and every manner of specific twist that appears on the fourth Thursday of November. Tables are set, ovens are filled, and timers are ticking. The meal is but one part of the celebration. It is a uniquely wonderful reason to spend time with those you love and care about. That is the true beauty of Thanksgiving- it belongs to everyone.



So here are a few things I am thankful for:

Garlic bread- let me explain. On December 31, 2021, I went up to our cabin to take down the Christmas lights. Debbie, my wife, was home. I asked her to pick up garlic bread for dinner. Instead of getting garlic bread, Debbie went to the local animal shelter and adopted Jack, an eight-month-old black lab. Adoption fees were waived for the holiday - so he was free. The garlic bread (which she picked up later after I got home and met Jack) was \$3.49. Best deal ever!

Roadways that are clear...or can be easily cleared and the people who plow them. Both the road crews and bus drivers are crucial- I appreciate the efforts they make to get kids to school safely.

Art - all of it. I am constantly reminded that our schools are filled with talented students and staff - and I see, hear, watch, read, and even taste it. Take a moment to look into classrooms, glance at the hallway walls, watch a live performance, listen to voices lifted in song, and maybe even get a taste of something delicious. There is an infinite supply of artistic expression to enjoy.

The Phillies! As I write this the World Series is 2-1 Philadelphia with two more games at home. There is nothing quite like the crack of a bat making contact- and watching the ball soar over the field and into the stands. "Take me out to the ball game..." [Editor's Note: The Phillies lost the series to the Houston Astros, 4-2.]

Member News:

Region 7:

The Pennsylvania School Board Association named New Kensington-Arnold Superintendent Chris Sefcheck the 2022 Innovative School Leader Award winner. The award recognizes a superintendent, assistant superintendent, curriculum supervisor or building level administrator who has demonstrated an innovative approach to leading their district, building or program. PSBA presented the award to Sefcheck on Oct. 30 at the Excellence in Public Education Leadership dinner at Kalahari Resort and Convention Center in the Poconos.

Region 11:

The Juniata County school board hired Christie L. Holderman as Superintendent in November. Holderman previously served as assistant superintendent as well as interim superintendent during several transitions in recent years. Holderman is the sixth different individual to hold the superintendent position since 2014, according to the Lewistown Sentinel.

Region 12:

Dr. Scott Deisley retired as Superintendent of Red

Lion School District effective Nov. 4. The York Daily Record recently named Deisley one of its influential educators in York County. Eric Wilson, Red Lion's Chief Instructional Officer, will add the role of Acting Superintendent for the remainder of the school year.

Region 21:

The Allentown School District Board of Directors voted unanimously to hire Carol D. Birks as Acting Superintendent. She will succeed John D. Stanford.

Region 27:

Hopewell School District recently named Jeffrey R. Beltz Superintendent. Beltz previously served as the Moon Area School District's Assistant Superintendent.

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.")

Eagles! As a Philadelphia sports fan - this is the best November I can remember! Love watching the Birds win- dare we think Super Bowl???

Faculty and staff who show up and work hard every day. The post - Covid world is gradually returning to normal- but there are challenges and shortages we all face. I am especially grateful for the dedication and consistency shown by so many.

Unlimited inspiration I see and hear from you. Yes, we are all Pennsylvanians- but we come from many different areas that serve different populations- and yet, good practices and great ideas translate and are malleable. Through shared insights, we make meaningful connections that we can adapt and bring back to our own districts. That is what makes Pennsylvania the educational powerhouse it is.

Let's go back to the top- garlic bread, Jack, and Debbie. I am thankful that our house is full of love and laughter, fun and fur, and a vision that Debbie and I share (Jack too).

I am sending good wishes for a happy and healthy Thanksgiving to all corners of the Commonwealth- over mountains, through rivers and forests, across fields, and into cities and towns and boroughs. Enjoy your families, friends, and every bite. Read, run, play, listen....and do any other thing that makes you happy.

See you in December!

Professional Development

New beginning brings renewed perspective, gratitude



By Dr. Michele Balliet

Director of Professional Development, PASA

GratITUDE

"At times, our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us." --Albert Schweitzer

As I wrap up my first few weeks here at PASA, I am truly grateful to serve this amazing organization. As a newly "repurposed" superintendent, I am both humbled and inspired by the ongoing work of our members. On Monday I began my new journey as the Director of Professional Development by attending the PSBA/ PASA Conference at Kalahari Resorts in the Poconos. While I have been attending this conference for well over a decade, this year I came away with a renewed perspective and deeper appreciation for all of the incredible talent and quality leadership we have right here within our own Commonwealth.

What seemed to strike me, even more, this year is that we have so much to be thankful for. This was the first face-to-face PSBA/ PASA conference since the pandemic and it was refreshing to be back in person with educational leaders from across our state. I was able to reconnect with old friends and make new ones as each of us engaged in the plethora of professional learning opportunities available to us throughout this conference. The topics were once again both timely and relevant. The presenters were passionate and well-informed, with a clear focus on making public education even better than it already is.

There was a strong sense of commitment and dedication to students and staff, identifying the practices, programs, and protocols that are working to support their success and well-being. I had plenty of opportunities to observe successful partnerships between educational leaders and school board members, discussing how best to work together to navigate the unique challenges of our time.

As districts and educational entities across our state are addressing complex educational issues, the level of knowledge, expertise, care, and compassion exhibited by the leaders of these organizations is something we can be very proud of. Their willingness to share their insights with others creates a stronger educational system for all. What I



"I believe there is no greater gift than being able to make a positive difference in someone's life; especially if that difference can positively impact the life of a child. We chose this profession to make a positive difference and this is why we continue to serve in public education. "

saw this at the conference and will continue to reflect on in the coming weeks and months are all the ways we can come together as a profession to support and empower each other in our learning for the benefit of students.

Throughout my career, I have been blessed with incredible mentors, role models, and trusted colleagues. These individuals have had a profound impact on my professional and personal life. I am truly grateful for their support, guidance, direction, and insight. When I've had a question or an issue needing additional perspective, these individuals have been there to listen, offer advice, cheer me on and/ or redirect me if they foresaw obstacles where I may have had blind spots.

These individuals have given freely of their time even when they had their own "full plates" because they were willing to invest in me. Their care and concern for my well-being and success were evident through their words and actions. Their efforts have helped me be a better person and leader.

See GRATITUDE, Page 11

Writing Out Loud

Lessons from a 'Wanna Get Away' moment



By Adam Kulikowski
Director of Communications

Southwest Airlines created a wonderful ad campaign in 2020 featuring moments gone wrong—a [science experiment that causes a big mess](#), the [exposing of 'Fenwick'](#) and a [domino-like set up that causes a fire](#) for a neighbor are some of my favorites from this series.

The catch line, 'Wanna Get Away?' captured that white-faced, floor-falling feeling one gets when they make an embarrassing mistake and just want to escape.

We all have these moments in life—hopefully not too often. One for me occurred at our Awards of Achievement luncheon Nov. 10.

I'm a big believer in accountability—and the mistake I made had the potential to be much worse if not for the game-saving catch by fellow Phillies fan and PASA President Dr. John Sanville.

There's a few takeaways beyond the obvious need to prevent that sort of mistake from ever happening again in the future.

In that moment, as we scrambled to make the last-minute changes to ensure our award recipients were honored in the light intended, I learned a lot about the leadership we have at PASA.

And I'm thankful our small team here—and school leaders across the Commonwealth are able to benefit. It would have been easy for John or Sherri to approach the moment with red emotion.

Instead, there was an unwavering calmness—a laser focus to make the situation right and a pat on the back that just might have allowed my heart to restart.



It's easy to see why they have been successful leaders throughout their careers in education. How one leads their teams — especially in moments that don't quite go as drawn up — speaks volumes to their character and values.

If a member of your team makes a mistake, address the issue but consider a pat on the back along with accountability.

That simple gesture in your team member's 'wanna get away' moment goes a long way in supporting your staff. I'm thankful to work in an organization that models that compassionate leadership mentality.

From GRATITUDE, Page 10

Attending the conference this week and engaging in quality professional learning provided me with similar experiences that I have cherished within my network. I believe there is no greater gift than being able to make a positive difference in someone's life;

especially if that difference can positively impact the life of a child. We chose this profession to make a positive difference and this is why we continue to serve in public education. My sincerest gratitude and appreciation goes out to all of our educational leaders across the Commonwealth who continue to put forth incredible efforts in serving their organizations.

Despite leading in a time of uncertainty, divided communities, and continued change, your willingness to share your insights and expertise, ultimately for the benefit of the children we serve in our public schools, is to be commended and valued. Thank you! In my new role, I look forward to walking alongside all of you, serving, leading, and learning together.

PASA-PSBA School Leadership Conference

School leaders from across the Commonwealth gathered at Kalahari Resorts & Convention Center Oct. 31-Nov. 1 for the PASA-PSBA School Leadership Conference.

School board members, superintendents, and other school leaders returned to the in-person conference for the first time since the pandemic to network with other leaders, learn innovative best practices in education, and explore new products and services to better equip the learning experiences of students.

Nearly 50 sessions over the two-day conference provided attendees with a wide array of engaging educational opportunities ranging from strategies to connect with your local legislators to surviving a cyberattack to Right to Know requests and effective communication techniques.

Dr. Bridget O'Connell, the 2022 Pennsylvania Superintendent of the Year, was recognized for her achievements at Palisades School District. Under Dr. O'Connell's leadership, student achievement, academic recognition, and a focus on the whole child have been a hallmark of the district's schools.

A pair of keynote speakers, John McDonald and Jean Becker, also impacted attendees. McDonald, a nationally recognized expert on safety and security spoke about his time at Columbine High School and his work to help schools create emergency management plans and crisis communications.

Becker, the former chief of staff for President George H.W. Bush spoke to the more than 400 attendees, delivering a message of unity, purpose, and civility through stories of her time with the former president and his unlikely fond relationship with President Bill Clinton. The relationship opened the door to countless fundraising efforts to aid hurricane victims and provide support to devastated regions of the U.S.

The things that united them were greater than what divided them—a wonderful lesson in a time when divisive rhetoric is abundant in education and politics.



Above: Former George H.W. Bush Chief of Staff Jean Becker addresses attendees at the PASA/PSBA School Leadership Conference

Below: Cumberland Valley's Sofia Mains performs during the Student Showcase at the PASA-PSBA School Leadership Conference.

Photo by Cassandra Benning



Below: Tunkhannock Area High School Tiger Big Band brought the 1920s-era Big Band music to life at the Student Showcase during the PASA-PSBA School Leadership Conference.

Photo by Cassandra Benning



Below: Dr. Jay Burkhart, 2022 PASA Board of Governors President addresses the audience at the PASA-PSBA School Leadership Conference.

Photo by Cassandra Benning



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meetings and in our schools.

Are you ready to be part of the team to change the perspectives and mindsets of our citizens on public education? It will take all of us to unify and collectively pursue changing the negative rhetoric to positive mindsets and appreciation for what we do. PASA, along with other state education organizations, is preparing to lead this work.

Make sure to stay connected to our work here at PASA, invite other school leaders to become members and join

our team as we set off to brighter, more positive conversations about public education across the Commonwealth. Our students deserve it!

And finally, a wish for all of you for a thankful and enjoyable Thanksgiving! Find time to reflect on all the positive differences you make for our schools, communities and students! It's a great holiday to remember, that no matter how difficult the times are, we all still have a lot to be thankful for in our lives and work.

I know I am thankful for all of you and the work that you do every day. Wishing you peace and joy this Thanksgiving!

PLUS Caucus of PASA

That Which Unites Us



By Dr. Christopher Dormer
PLUS Caucus Chair



I love the month of October. Here in Norristown, our district calendar has very few interruptions, the beginning of the school year is past, and we get to go “full throttle” with teaching and learning.

However, this year I felt that the last week of October was especially draining for me. I had booked two out-of-district conferences and opportunities for professional growth back to back. I would be joining a group of Montgomery County superintendents for a three-day trip to Apple Headquarters in Cupertino, CA, for an executive briefing session where we could dream and plan for the future of education. After recovering from the red eye home on Saturday, I set off for the PASA-PSBA School Leadership Conference being held at the Kalahari Resorts in Mt. Pocono, PA.

With schools running full steam ahead, I was excited for my own growth and development at what seemed like the perfect time. While the learning was outstanding, someone needs to remind me to never try to schedule travel like this ever again. Let's just say I slept well Tuesday night when I got home to my bed.

As I got my energy and legs back under me, I have been reflecting on what I learned and how I can apply it here in practice. Unsurprisingly, the work with the team at Apple had a focus on leveraging technology in education. But it



went deeper than that. My takeaways had me and my colleagues thinking about personalized learning, “frictionless access” to information, resources, and learning, and always keeping the user experience in mind. Though I am sure we all can agree that these are things we can and should be doing in our schools every day, I have spent most of my time thinking about how to overcome barriers to implement such experiences that they become our new normal.

Whether those barriers are time, skill, or will, there is a definite divide toward achieving that ideal future.

But then my thoughts and reflection focused on the keynote address given at the School Leadership Conference by Jean



Photos by Cassandra Benning

Above: Jean Becker was chief of staff for George H.W. Bush from 1994 - 2018. She supervised his office operations, overseeing such events as the opening of the George Bush Presidential Library Center, the commissioning of the USS George H.W. Bush aircraft carrier, and coordinating the Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund.



Becker. She shared some incredible stories of the late former president, President George H. W. Bush, whom she served as Chief of Staff for over 25 years.

I can only imagine the stories that she couldn't share publicly! One story that struck me was how President Bush became, as she described it, "best friends" with President Bill Clinton. Here was the man who defeated him in 1992 and limited him to one term as president. Yet in their post-presidency, they found common ground and worked together for the greater good, particularly with disaster relief to hurricane victims and those affected by other catastrophic natural disasters. The line Jean shared that has stuck with me most, excuse my paraphrasing, is "there is more that unites us than divides us." To hear how two of the most powerful and influential men in our nation's history found that which united them truly resonated with me.

As we navigate the most polarizing of times when we are undoubtedly divided as a country, as a state, and even within some neighborhoods and communities, we as school leaders can lead to that which truly does unite us. I recently read that most people rate the public schools that their children attend as "A+", but those same people rate public education as "C-".

Why is that? For me, the answer is simple. It is the personal connections and relationships we build with students, parents, staff, and members of the community that build an intentional sense of unity. When people feel they are part of something, part of a whole, part of oneness, and part of a community, we can work and achieve together.

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.

Thank you to our Gold Sponsors:





Evolving and Adding Value



By Lynn Fuini-Hetten
Superintendent, Salisbury Township



Somewhere around mid-May, I was walking in my kitchen in bare feet. We have laminate flooring in the kitchen, and I could feel an unevenness in the floorboards beneath my feet. I didn't think anything of it at that moment, but a couple of days later, my husband and I realized there was a problem. The dishwasher had leaked, and the water was under the floor.

At the time, I was thinking this was a minor inconvenience - and mostly for my husband... call the insurance company as he is our agent, schedule a contractor, etc. I wasn't overly concerned.

The floor will dry. I'll order a new white dishwasher to match the other appliances, and this will all be just fine, and will not take too long.

Well, we engaged a mitigation company, and they came in to survey the situation. They added some industrial air blowers in the kitchen and basement, and that is when the true inconvenience began.

After they put the dryers on for a week or so, they started ripping up the floor -- yes ripping up the floor. Not just under the offending dishwasher... our floor runs from one end of the house to the other continuously. We quickly realized this was going to be a major issue - not a minor inconvenience.

I sweated it out while they removed the granite countertops hoping none of them cracked. Then the contractors tore out the bottom cabinets to let the floor dry, and soon I was without a kitchen.

Those of you who know me are probably thinking - no big deal - she doesn't like to cook anyway. And initially, I wasn't all that concerned about it, because I really don't like to cook. (I've gotten pretty good with the air fryer though. Did you know you could make salmon in an air fryer!?!?)

We were going on vacation at the end of June, and I had to

make some decisions quickly. Did you know it's difficult to buy white appliances? They are premium now..., so that lead to the need to purchase all new appliances, select a floor, order new cabinets, and more.

My wish was that all the materials would be ready to install when we returned from vacation at the Outer Banks.

As you are aware, the supply chain issues to get materials have affected many industries. I am not sure why I thought I was immune to that.

So, I set up a makeshift kitchen in our bar, and I used it as a great excuse to not cook or travel more this past summer.

But, we still needed the Keurig and toaster - at the very least. I invited myself to friends' houses for dinner and adapted to this challenge. Heck, sometimes it was cereal for dinner. Oh, and ice cream too.

Around July, the appliances finally arrived, just in time for my brother and his three kids to visit for a week. My house runs like a resort with three meals when they visit.

So luckily, we were back to a working kitchen - complete with dishwasher - but NO SINK! I found every rug I could to cover the subfloor. It didn't look good, but it was functional.

In August, we finally got the floor so that helped. Then, I waited a few more weeks for the cabinets!! Well, they arrived, but they were not measured correctly. Another delay.

Even with the frustrations, there are certainly upsides! This project, while difficult and inconvenient will eventually result in a new kitchen along with beautiful new appliances, ultimately increasing the value of our house.

My refrigerator even has a sensor that allows me to put my

See KITCHEN CHAOS, Page 17

EmpowerED Superintendents edLeader Panel Series Broadcast and CoSN Data Privacy Resources



By Ann McMullan

Project Director, EmpowerED Supt. Initiative



Upcoming December edLeader Panel Broadcast:

The next live broadcast of the CoSN / AASA EmpowerED Superintendent edLeader Panel Series, Planning and Sustaining Technology Innovations: Aligning Priorities, Costs, and Outcomes, airs on Monday, December 12, 2022, at 5:00 pm Eastern Time. Dr. Chris Gaines, Superintendent, Melhlville School District, MO, along with Dr. Kelly May-Vollmar, Superintendent, Desert Sands Unified School District, CA, and Dr. Aaron Spence, Superintendent, Virginia Beach City Public Schools, VA, share the strategies they lead in their school districts to evaluate, rethink, and strengthen district technology decision making. Free registration for the upcoming December 12, 2022 live broadcast is available at: <https://home.edweb.net/webinar/supers20221212/>

November 14 edLeader Panel Broadcast Recording:

If you missed the recent CoSN / AASA EmpowerED Superintendent edLeader Panel broadcast, Leadership Challenges and Solutions Regarding Data Privacy in Technology-Enriched Learning Environments, which aired on Monday, November 14, 2022, you are welcome to access the link to the recording at: <https://home.edweb.net/webinar/supers20221114/>

In this recent broadcast Casey Bertram, Superintendent of Bozeman Public Schools, MT, Dr. Alex Marrero, Superintendent of Denver Public Schools, CO, and Dr. Penelope Martin-Knox, Superintendent of Raytown Quality Schools, MO, shared the leadership strategies they implement to assess their school districts' privacy and compliance policies. All three superintendents represent school districts that have earned the Trusted Learning Environment (TLE) Seal, the nation's only privacy framework designed specifically for school systems. Information about the TLE and how and why other school districts can benefit from earning the TLE

Seal was also covered during the November 14 live broadcast.

CoSN Data Privacy Resources

CoSN Data Privacy Self-Assessment

Assist school leaders in learning where they need to focus to improve data privacy practices in their school systems.

<https://www.cosn.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/CoSN-TLE-Practices-Self-Evaluation.pdf>

Infographic: School System Jobs and Their Impact on Student Data Privacy

A snapshot of the many different roles across a school system that have an impact on student data privacy.

<https://www.cosn.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Infographic-Roles-In-Protecting-Student-Data-Privacy-FINAL.pdf>

Building A Trusted Learning Environment: Understanding The Leadership Practice

Take a deeper dive into the role of leadership in protecting student data privacy.

<https://www.cosn.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Understanding-Leadership-Practice.pdf>

Trusted Learning From the Ground Up: Fundamental Data Governance Policies and Procedures

Learn fundamental data governance policies and procedures and check to see how many your district has in place.

<https://www.cosn.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Fundamental-Data-Governance-Policies-and-Procedures-TLE-CHECKLIST.pdf>

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

From KITCHEN CHAOS, Page 16

Yeti under the dispenser, walk away, and return to a full cup of water. That is a feature I never knew I needed!

Unlike a kitchen renovation which has a clear end date, as an educational organization and us as leaders, we

will continue to evolve and require updating.

With every evolution, there will be challenges and inconveniences. We will struggle and seek solutions, and we will rely on each other and outside experts to support our work along the way. But, in the end, we

hope there is a value-added for our community and our students. How do you want to evolve as leader?

How will you adapt and overcome challenges, many of which are out of your control? How will you add value to your organization?



School Transportation Resources

In the last year, AASA has stepped in to provide federal policy support to the National Association for Pupil Transportation. Our advocacy included a successful coalition letter focused on policy relief for the bus driver shortage. More recently, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has shared a suite of resources that can be helpful to school districts, and we are happy to highlight them here.



NHTSA has a National Roadway Safety Strategy, which is the U.S. Department of Transportation's comprehensive approach to significantly reduce serious injuries and deaths on the nation's highways, roads, and streets.

NHTSA's 2020 [School-Transportation-Related Crashes Traffic Safety Facts](#) provides additional statistics on school bus safety.

NHTSA has a general [School Bus Safety](#) website.

NHTSA has a handful of current/ongoing projects related to pupil transportation:

[Illegal Passing of School Buses](#)

This was officially featured in October, but the resources are relevant and timeless. In particular, [check out the factsheet and talking points!](#)

NHTSA Pupil Transportation Safety Reports

[Education on Proper Use of Seat Belts on School Buses \(DOT HS 812 999\)](#)

[Indirect Effects of School Bus Seat Installation \(DOT HS 813 049\)](#)

[Examination of Three Districts Implementing Stop Arm Camera Programs to Enforce Laws Against Illegal Passing of Stopped School Buses \(DOT HS 813 113\)](#)

[Safe School Bus Stops & Routes](#)

[Safe Routes to School](#)

[Development of Pupil Transportation Education Materials for Schools](#)

[Toolkit: Reducing Illegal Passing of Buses](#)

[School Bus Driver In-Service Curriculum](#)

[And related, NCSL recently updated their state-by-state look at school transportation laws.](#)

In the November Issues of School Administrator magazine:

The November edition of AASA's monthly publication helps school leaders prepare for controversy; delves into the strategic reshaping of culture to advance equity and explores the pros and cons of social media for a school district.



Quotes:

"One superintendent suggested the state's open records laws had become 'weaponized' in light of recent requests submitted by a small group of community members."

-from "When Public Records Requests Become 'Weaponized'"

Skilled leadership becomes a behavior, not a job title. When teams and students are under stress, their leaders lean in to provide the right support at the right time.

-from *Growing a Great Culture for Work and Learning*

PASA Calendar



November:

November 17-18

New Superintendents Academy Part 2

November 21

Understanding the Basic Education Formula (BEF), Full-day at I.U. 4

November 24-25:

PASA office closed

November 28, 29 & Dec. 6

Federal Programs and Special Education Funding (Regional one-day sessions)

December:

December 13:

Managing the Risks: The Pennsylvania Public Official & Employees Ethics Act—
Compliance & Potential Unintended Violations

December 26-30

PASA office closed

January:

January 9-10:

New Superintendents Academy Part 3

January 16:

PASA office closed

January 17:

Understanding the Basic Education Formula (BEF), Full-day at I.U. 17

January 18:

Managing the Risks: Red-Flags and Salvaging Your Career when Board Relationships
Go South

January 18:

Understanding the Basic Education Formula (BEF), Full-day at the Pennsylvania College of
Technology in Williamsport, PA: Thompson Professional Development Center.

January 24, 25, 31

Developing & Maintaining a Balanced Budget

January 26:

Joint Boards Dinner

January 27:

Board of Governor's meeting

February:

February 3:

Aspiring to Leadership Workshop

February 16-18:

AASA National Conference (San Antonio)

February 20:

PASA office closed

March:

March 30-21:

PASA Leadership Forum