

MUMIN NAMED FINALIST FOR NATIONAL SUPERINTENDENT OF THE YEAR®

PASA is excited to announce that Dr. Khalid Mumin, superintendent of the Reading SD and the 2021 Pennsylvania Superintendent of the Year, has been selected as one of four finalists for the 2021 National Superintendent of the Year®.

This distinction honors school system leaders throughout the country who are making a positive difference in the lives of the students they serve, in addition to ensuring the safety and wellness of their school communities.

Co-sponsored by AASA®, The School Superintendents Association, AIG Retirement Services and First Student, the 2021 National Superintendent of the Year® will be announced during AASA's virtual National Conference on Education, Feb. 18-19.

The three other finalists include: Bryan Johnson, Hamilton County Schools, Chattanooga, Tenn.; Christy Perry, Salem-Keizer Public Schools, Salem, Ore.; and Michelle Reid, Northshore School District, Bothell, Wash.

The finalists had an opportunity to meet the national education community during a virtual press conference on Jan. 8.

The National Superintendent of the Year® program, now in its 34th year, is open

to all U.S. superintendents who plan to continue in the profession. The program also honors international school superintendents. The applicants were measured against the following criteria:

- *Leadership for learning* – creativity in successfully meeting the needs of students in the school system
- *Communication* – strength in both personal and organizational communication
- *Professionalism* – constant improvement of administrative knowledge and skills, while providing professional development opportunities and motivation to others on the education team
- *Community involvement* – active participation in local community activities and an understanding of regional, national and international issues

A \$10,000 college scholarship will be presented in the name of the 2021 National Superintendent of the Year® to a student in the high school from which the superintendent graduated, or the school now serving the same area.

Congratulations, Khalid!



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NOMINEES SOUGHT FOR PASA OFFICERS, AASA REPRESENTATIVES

PASA is seeking nominations for the 2021-22 PASA President-Elect/Secretary and Treasurer. In addition, PASA is seeking nominations for two Pennsylvania representatives to the AASA Governing Board.

PASA OFFICERS

Candidates for **PASA President-Elect/Secretary** must make a three-year commitment to the association by serving one year each as President-Elect/Secretary and chairman of the Advocacy Committee beginning October 1, 2021, as President beginning October 1, 2022, and as Past-President and chairman of the Membership Committee

beginning October 1, 2023.

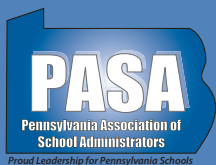
Candidates for **PASA Treasurer** serve a one-year term. The elected Treasurer's term begins on October 1, 2021.

See the PASA [website](#) for the list of duties for each office.

Eligibility

Each eligible candidate must have been an active member of the Association for at least three years prior to October 1, 2020 and a PASA member in one of two membership categories: Commissioned Officer and Small District Leader.

See Nominees Sought, page 4



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

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PASA Members:

Please report your appointments, renewals, awards or special achievements, or that of others in your region to **Barbara Jewett** 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.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DR. MARK DIROCCO

DEMOCRACY IS FRAGILE. PUBLIC EDUCATION IS CRITICAL.



The storming of the United States Capitol Building on Wednesday, January 6 was as shocking as it was historic. It is difficult to believe that an angry group of people could so easily breach the security of the capitol and disrupt Congress with the intent to stop the democratic process of counting electoral votes in a blatant and seditious attempt to subvert our democracy. Five people died because of this seditious act, and the entire nation was shaken to its core.

We learned that many of the participants were armed with weapons and bombs, which could have resulted in a much greater loss of life, including those of our political leaders. It has also been revealed that this was not just a crowd of well-meaning people who were whipped to frenzy by speeches and then got out of hand. It was a deliberate and planned attack by some members of the crowd on our elected leaders and democratic process.

Amazingly, interviews with some of the participants indicated they believed that they were defending democracy by storming the Capitol. These people believed they had to use violent force to coerce Congress into overturning the results of the election.

It was a sad, shocking, and embarrassing day for America. How could this happen in the greatest and longest running democratic republic in the world?

As the next few days unfolded, I began to reflect on how fragile our democracy has become and how important it will be for public education to step forward to help our republic prevail in the future.

I have often stated that public education is the backbone of our democracy. One of its major purposes is to ensure that we have an educated populace to preserve our democracy. We need to focus on this purpose with greater emphasis moving forward. Our future as a republic may depend on it.

Today, very few citizens seem to understand the basic tenets of how our government was formed and how democracy in the United States form is designed to work. Our founders studied republics from ancient Greece and Rome during the Constitutional Convention of 1787. These ancient republics all crumbled due to the lack of restraint of those in power who failed to act for the common good, and the unrelenting competition by partisan factions to achieve power at any cost.

Our Constitution was designed with a purposeful set of checks and balances to prevent this from happening. When George Washington declined a third term as president and peacefully transferred power to John Adams, many world leaders were astonished. Washington understood that the failure of previous republics was due to leaders refusing to give up power. That is what made America different!

My guess is that very few of our current political leaders and citizens are well versed in the literature on ancient republics and the foundational design of our democracy that was engineered to improve upon former democratic governments so it could endure for centuries. Obviously, those who stormed the Capitol had no conception of how our democracy works and sullied the very Constitution they should have respected as citizens.

Once again, our educators will be asked to process an unsettling national event with their students. It will be a challenge due to the political tension and sharp divide that exists in our nation. However, the event needs to be addressed, and our students need some reassurance about the stability of our government.

I believe this is a clarion call for public education.

We need to assess how we can better educate our students about our democratic system without entering a partisan battle in our local communities as to how or if that should be done.

We need to be confident that our students graduate from our schools fully understanding how the United States system of government works and how it can peacefully be changed or reformed.

See Executive Director's Message, page 3



NEWS RECAP

Don't forget to check the PASA website for the weekly **Education Update** that provides a summary of up-to-date legislative, state and national education news. For more information on the following news briefs, see the PASA Web site at www.pasa-net.org. (Click on "News and Advocacy" to access the current and archived updates.) And follow us

on **Twitter** for the latest updates @PASASupts.

In Budget & Finance News

State Revenue: Pennsylvania collected \$3.7 billion in General Fund revenue in December, which was 14.5 percent more than anticipated. Fiscal year-to-date General Fund collections total \$18.5 billion, which is 2.6 percent above estimate.

Legislative News

Session Schedule: The House and Senate completed their work by Nov. 30 and closed the 2019-20 legislative session. The new two-year session began on January 5.

Committee Leadership: Rep. Curt Sonney (R-Erie) has been reappointed Majority Chair of the House Education Committee. New Minority Chair for the committee is Rep. Mark Longietti (D-Mercer). Longietti replaces longtime chair Jim Roebuck (D-Philadelphia), who was defeated in the spring primary.

State News

Chapter 49 Amendments: The State Board of Education has published revisions to Chapter 49 regulations concerning teacher preparation, induction and professional development. The [proposal](#) would add requirements for instruction and training in CR-SE, structured literacy and professional ethics.



COMMONWEALTH BUDGET SEMINARS

Virtual in 2021

The governor presents his state budget on February 2, 2021. The Commonwealth Budget Seminar will decipher the budget numbers and help you to determine how the budget will impact your district. The Department of Education budget will be examined, with a discussion on new PDE initiatives and related issues.

Register for either the **February 4** (1:00-3:45 p.m.) or **February 5** (9:00-11:45 a.m.) webcast.
[PASBO is handling all registrations.]

Direct all registration questions to Kimberly Pierich at kpierich@pasbo.org.

National News

Secretary Nomination: President-Elect Joe Biden has selected Miguel Cardona for Secretary of Education. Cardona currently serves as Chief of Connecticut Schools and is a former teacher and principal.

Secretary Resignation: Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos resigned from her position on January 7 following the riots at the U.S. Capitol on January 6. In her resignation letter, DeVos cited the impact "[Pres. Trump's] rhetoric had on the situation."

Federal Budget: Congress passed and Pres. Trump signed into law the \$1.4 trillion fiscal 2021 spending bill before the holidays. Funding for education increases about 1% (\$785 million) from FY2020.

Education Committee Chair: Sen. Patty Murray (D-Washington) likely will move up to chairman of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions. She will replace Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-Tennessee), who did not seek re-election.

School Transgender Case: The U.S. Supreme Court last month declined to consider a case brought by students and parents in an Oregon school district concerning a policy allowing transgender students to use facilities matching their gender identify.

COMING UP

The PA General Assembly begins the 2021-22 legislative session and the new Biden Administration begins its term this month – amid rocky waters. The refusal of PA Senate Republicans to swear-in the state-certified Democratic victor in a tight race, a first-day-of-session event that was preceded by temporary removal of the Lt. Gov. as presiding officer, does not set a positive tone for legislative work going forward. The attack on the U.S. Capitol this month amid continuing unsubstantiated claims of voter fraud and threats of more violence, along with Democratic victories in Georgia that mean a Democratic hold on Congress and the White House, will overshadow the work of Congress and the new Biden Administration. The vaccine is rolling out very slowly, COVID cases continue – and next month Gov. Wolf will unveil his proposed 2021-22 state budget. 2021 looks challenging. Stay tuned for the latest information by following us on **Twitter** @PASASupts.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

continued from page 2

We need to teach students to critically analyze the silos created by social media and 24-hour news programs that push a specific view or political philosophy, so they do not end up down a rabbit hole following a fictitious set of information devoid of reality.

We will never be able to prevent hate groups, misinformation campaigns and conspiracy theories from occurring, but we can teach our students how to recognize them and think for themselves.

We must ensure that our students know that our democracy will only survive if they are knowledgeable and engaged.

If public education is going to continue to be the backbone of this great democracy, we need to nurture it in our schools so our democracy can thrive in the future.

NOMINEES SOUGHT

continued from page 1

Nominations & Deadlines

Due to COVID concerns, interested candidates are not asked to collect physical signatures to support their candidacy via nomination petitions. Rather, those interested in one of the officer positions should send their statement of interest directly to Dr. Mark DiRocco, PASA Executive Director, via email at mdirocco@pasa-net.org.

Once PASA confirms the candidate's eligibility to run for the position, PASA will develop an online survey/petition for that candidate via SurveyMonkey and provide the candidate with the link to that survey. Candidates then will be able to share that link electronically to secure the online endorsement of at least twenty (20) voting members of PASA from a combination of no less than two (2) PASA regions, including the candidate's own region (I.U.). "Voting members of PASA" are Commissioned Officer and Small District Leader members. The online "survey" petition will close by **6 p.m. on March 12, 2021**.

In advance of the election, candidates who have obtained at least 20 signatures from voting members of PASA will be asked to submit to the PASA office a letter (with digital picture) outlining their reasons for seeking the position.

PENNSYLVANIA REPRESENTATIVES TO THE AASA GOVERNING BOARD

PASA is seeking nominations for two (2) Pennsylvania representatives to the Board, each with three-year terms beginning July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2024.

Current PA representatives on the Board include Dr. Nicholas Guarente (Greenwood), Dr. Bridget O'Connell (Palisades), Dr. G. Brian Toth (St. Marys Area), Dr. Brian Troop (Ephrata Area) and Lee Ann Wentzel (Ridley). Dr. Shane Hotchkiss (Bermudian Springs) currently serves on the AASA Executive Committee, having been elected in 2018 by Governing Board members representing the Mid-Atlantic region.

About the Governing Board

The AASA Governing Board consists of representatives elected from each state. See the [PASA website](#) for a list of responsibilities of the Governing Board.

Eligibility/Requirements

1. Each eligible candidate must have been an eligible voting member of **both** AASA and PASA for **at least** three years. ("Voting members of PASA" include those who are current members as *Commissioned Officer* and *Small District Leader* members. "Voting members of AASA" are those who are current members as *Active*, *Institutional Active*, *Life* or *College Professor*.)

2. Nominees must be committed to attending **two** AASA meetings per year, in July and February (beginning July 2021). Travel expenses are provided for the July meeting. Governing Board members are responsible for their own expenses to the February meeting, which coincides with the AASA National Conference on Education.

Nominations

Candidates may self-nominate or be nominated by current PASA members who are Commissioned Officer or Small District Leader members. No signatures or petitions are required. As part

of the election process, candidates must submit electronically to the PASA office by March 12 a short biographical statement/letter (including involvement with AASA and PASA), goals for AASA, and reason(s) for seeking the position, along with a digital photograph.

Application information (listed above) is due to PASA no later than **March 12**.

The election for PASA officers and the AASA Governing Board representative will be scheduled for early spring (TBA).

Questions?

Contact Jolene Zelinski
at jolenez@pasa-net.org.

REGISTRATION IS OPEN



Keynote Presenter: Dr. Bill Daggett FOCUS: Preparing Students for Their Future, NOT Our Past

A one-day **virtual** leadership conference for superintendents, assistant superintendents, cabinet-level leaders and principals

40 PIL/Act 48 (Act 45) hours
pending approval

Dr. Daggett will share emerging solutions to **the challenge of preparing students for THEIR future, not OUR past**. Equity, social justice, social-emotional learning, mental health, and a rigorous and relevant instructional program for all students are critical issues that schools today are required to address, even though the demands of the past have not gone away (i.e. high-stakes tests, rules, certification). Meanwhile, the pandemic and its challenges have created a tipping point for many educators, policy makers, business leaders, and parents around the immediate need to transform our education system. But the pandemic also has taught us that change is possible in the ways we had not imagined even one year ago. Now we must utilize our leadership skills to provide opportunities for change.

See the PASA website at:

<https://www.pasa-net.org/leadforum>

2021: LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

BY DR. JOHN BELL, 2020-21 PASA PRESIDENT

Happy New Year! Turning the calendar to a new year brings new resolutions, hopes and dreams. My biggest hope is for a speedy process for rolling out the coronavirus vaccines to the general public. Educators are in group 1B, which means many of us will have the opportunity to get vaccinated this month. This will give peace of mind to educators all across the Commonwealth.

There seems to be a growing movement to loosen up on the "group" requirements and start vaccinating the general public with the first shot and hope that the pharmaceutical companies can keep up with production so the second shot isn't delayed. President-elect Biden is advocating for this large scale process with the first shot. The vaccine is a light at the end of the tunnel.

U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos resigned last week after the rioting at the U.S. Capitol. I can't recall any prior Secretary that was more against public education than she was. Her four years were simply a train wreck. Connecticut schools chief Miguel Cardona has been tapped by President-elect Biden to be the next Secretary of Education pending Senate approval. Cardona is a former teacher, principal and assistant superintendent. Having a practitioner in this position is another light at the end of the tunnel.

The second round of stimulus funding was approved in the last week of December. This process took many months and was

in doubt right up until the end. The CARES Act passed last March provided \$13.2 billion to K-12 schools, while this stimulus package included \$54 billion for K-12. With many districts running deficits this year due to the pandemic, this was a third light at the end of the tunnel.

They say that things happen in threes. I'm starting 2021 with an optimistic viewpoint based on these three lights at the end of the tunnel. We aren't on Easy Street just yet, but I'm confident that wide-scale vaccinations and spring weather will help us get out of this mess in just a few months.

Last month, I talked about Liz Wiseman's *Multipliers*. This month, I want to explore Jon Gordon's *The Power of Positive Leadership*. The subtitle is: "How and Why Positive Leaders Transform Teams & Organizations and Change the World." You might also be familiar with another one of his best-selling books, *The Energy Bus*.

The chapter titles help provide a look into Gordon's thinking. Each chapter title starts off with "Positive Leaders..." and ends with "Drive Positive Cultures," "Create and Share a Positive Vision," "Lead with Optimism, Positivity and Belief," "Confront, Transform and Remove Negativity," "Create United and Connected Teams," "Build Great Relationships and Teams," "Pursue Excellence," "Lead with Purpose," "Have Grit" and "Lead the Way Forward."

Based on the chapter titles, you can see why this is a great book to read with your leadership teams. Gordon has taken his message of positive leadership to college and pro sports teams, Fortune 500 companies, school districts, hospitals and nonprofits.

We all know that 2020 was a tough year, and January 2021 has started out pretty rocky. However, I am very optimistic about the new year for the reasons listed above. If you aren't feeling optimistic, I encourage you to read Gordon's book to boost your spirits.

Dr. Bell is superintendent of the Delaware Valley SD and 2020-21 PASA President.



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN

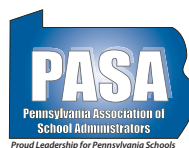
PROCESS TO IDENTIFY ADVOCACY PRIORITIES BEGINS THIS MONTH

Later this month PASA members will begin the process to identify "issues of high concern" as the first step in updating and revising the PASA Advocacy Priorities (*formerly the PASA Resolutions*), which guide the association's response to education issues and provides direction for PASA positions.

The PASA Advocacy Priorities document is divided into three sections, each identifying issues, policies and principles that PASA supports, opposes or believes need to change. The three sections are: Success for All Students, Resources to Achieve Student Success, and Assuring Opportunities for Equitable Public Education. (See the current document on the PASA website at <https://www.pasa-net.org/priorities>.)

Following regional discussions led by members of the PASA Advocacy Committee (*formerly PASA Resolutions Committee*), PASA will gather recommendations for changes to the list of priority statements. Those recommendations then will be compiled for committee discussion and review on April 15, when the committee will recommend revisions to the document. Following review by the Board of Governors, the 2021-22 draft will be presented to the membership in the fall.

PASA members are encouraged to participate in regional discussions concerning the Advocacy Priorities and issues of high concern.



Contacting PASA

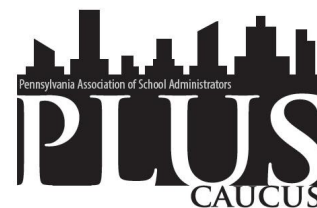
PASA staff continues to work remotely. However, we are available for you as we always have been. For urgent questions and concerns, call our alternative phone number: 717-514-8718. For general questions, contact PASA via the general email (pasa@pasa-net.org) and your question will be directed appropriately and promptly.

In addition, you may send an email directly to specific PASA staff members. ([Click here](#) for the staff list.) We monitor all correspondence and respond as quickly as possible. Please do not hesitate to contact us with your questions and concerns!



AMAZON OFFERS A FREE PACKAGE FOR EDUCATIONAL LEADERS

BY STEPHEN RODRIGUEZ, CAUCUS PRESIDENT



Like many Americans, this holiday season I enjoyed receiving or buying a gift delivered in the mail from that innovative company called Amazon.

My daughter, a senior in high school, came upon a freely available article about Amazon as she researched employers in her chosen career path. As a multibillion-dollar company, Amazon offers us more than just packages at our doorstep. They also offer a free and clear package for successful leadership.

Re-printed and slightly modified for educators, here are their



posted leadership principles for all to see:

1. **Customer Obsession.** Successful leaders stay focused on what and who matters most. For us, that's our students!
2. **Ownership.** Leaders think long-term and don't sacrifice long-term value for short-term results. They act on behalf of the entire organization. Words never spoken: "That's not my job."
3. **Invent and Simplify.** Leaders expect and require innovation and invention from their teams and always find ways to simplify. They are externally aware, look for new ideas from everywhere, and are not limited by "not invented here."
4. **Are Right, A Lot.** Leaders are right a lot. They have strong judgment and good ethics. (I say it this way, "don't get a big head, but trust your gut!")
5. **Learn and Be Curious.** Leaders are never done learning and always seek to improve themselves. They are curious about new possibilities and act to explore them.
6. **Hire and Develop the Best.** Leaders raise the performance bar with every hire and promotion. They recognize exceptional talent and willingly move them throughout the organization. Leaders develop leaders and take seriously their role in coaching others.



7. **Insist on the Highest Standards.** Leaders have relentlessly high standards many people may think these standards are unreasonably high. Leaders are continually raising the bar and drive their teams to deliver high-quality products, services, and/or processes.
8. **Think Big.** Thinking small is a self-fulfilling prophecy. Leaders create and communicate a bold direction that inspires results. They think differently and look around corners for ways to serve customers (or students).
9. **Bias for Action.** Speed matters. Many decisions and actions are reversible and do not need extensive study. Leaders value calculated risk-taking.
10. **Frugality.** Accomplish more with less. Constraints breed resourcefulness, self-sufficiency, and invention. There are no extra points for growing headcounts, budget size, or fixed expenses. As educational leaders, we are accountable to our school board and community to use every tax dollar wisely.
11. **Earn Trust.** Leaders listen attentively, speak candidly, and treat others respectfully. They are vocally self-critical even when doing so is awkward and embarrassing.
12. **Dive Deep.** Leaders operate at all levels, stay connected to the details, audit frequently, and are skeptical when metrics and anecdotes differ. No task is beneath them.
13. **Have Backbone; Disagree and Commit.** Leaders are obligated to respectfully challenge decisions when they disagree, even when doing so is uncomfortable or exhausting. Leaders have conviction and are tenacious. They do not compromise for the sake of social cohesion, but once a decision is determined, they commit wholly.
14. **Deliver Results.** Leaders focus on the key inputs for their business (or in our case schools), and deliver them with the right quality and in a timely fashion. Despite setbacks, they rise to the occasion and never settle.

A MEMBERSHIP BENEFIT! PASA LEGAL SERVICES

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



Go to:

**[www.pasa-net.org/
legalservices](http://www.pasa-net.org/legalservices)**
to read more about it.



HOPE IS A GOOD THING

DR. JODI FRANKELLI

MEMBER, PASA PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE



a welcomed thought. There was hope...hope that a new calendar year would mean the opportunity to start fresh.

But, with the riots at our nation's Capitol during the first week of January, I felt myself feeling dejected once again. I was wondering if fear, public divide, and uncertainty were going to be at the forefront for yet another year. Was 2021 going to be a repeat of 2020?

It was during this time, I remembered one of my favorite quotes. No, it is not a quote from a researcher, educator, school leader, etc. but rather a quote from my favorite novella, *Rita Hayworth and Shawshank Redemption* by Stephen King. In that short story, the main character states, "Remember that hope is a good thing, maybe the best of things, and no good thing ever dies."

More than ever before, school leaders are charged with the unenviable task of finding ways to keep hope alive so that the good things in our district continue to thrive and prosper.

As district leaders, on a daily basis we are diligently working to move our districts forward. All of us are working with our employees so that we can continue being future focused with students as our top priority. We must continue to put plans in place for student growth, even during these times of uncertainty. It is our responsibility to ensure that rigorous and relevant instructional

practices are occurring in our schools so that students can apply their skills and knowledge in our rapidly changing and unpredictable world.

While all of that sounds wonderful, it is easy for some of our students and staff to become overwhelmed during these challenging times. We need to recognize that it is also our responsibility to make sure that our students and staff do not lose hope.

Like you, PASA realizes the importance of social emotional learning, mental health resources, and addressing traumatic experiences. You are encouraged to take advantage of the numerous professional development opportunities that PASA has planned during its [Winter Webinar Series](#). In addition to this current professional development series, please also consider attending PASA's upcoming [Leadership Forum](#), where Dr. Bill Daggett will discuss many of these same topics.

And remember, hope is a good thing! Here's to hoping that all of you have an amazing 2021, full of personal and professional growth and learning.

Dr. Frankelli is superintendent of the Palmerton Area SD and a member of the PASA Professional Development Committee.

STILL TIME TO REGISTER!

Programs for aspiring and new Commissioned Officers this month!



Friday, January 15 - Virtual Workshop HELP US GROW THE PIPELINE OF PENNSYLVANIA'S SCHOOL LEADERS!

This workshop is a **MUST** for those considering a move to the superintendency or assistant superintendency. It addresses topics essential to a deep understanding of the importance of high-performing superintendent and assistant superintendent leadership. Attendees will acquire the knowledge necessary to prepare for, obtain and be successful as they move toward and into a new district leadership role.

<https://www.pasa-net.org/aspiring>



Thursday, January 21 – Friday, January 22 Virtual Program

Focus: Professional & Community Leadership
Approved for 25 PIL/Act 45 hours

Inherent in professional and community leadership are effective and ongoing communication, collaboration and empowerment of others inside and outside of the organization in the pursuit of excellence in student learning. New superintendents will learn strategies that engage all stakeholders.

<https://www.pasa-net.org/workshopnsa>



ADDRESSING OUR DIVISIONS

BY BARBARA WALVORT JEWETT, ASSISTANT TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I've seen many crises in our nation: the Kennedy assassination, Vietnam, civil rights riots, Watergate, hostages in Iran, 9/11, the Iraq War, the Great Recession, Hurricane Katrina, to name a few. But the actual, physical assault on the Capitol this month was a shock.

We've seen growing division in this country and attacks on our public institutions for many years, but particularly over the past 12 years. Call it cultural toxicity on steroids. Those divisions are not only reflected in last week's events, but also in political debate across the country, including Pennsylvania.

The right to free expression is a constitutional guarantee. But in 2020 "free expression" became an endless series of angry debates and a citizenry (and many policymakers) uninterested in consensus. The result was further polarization.

Then came the election. The proliferation of unsubstantiated allegations and conspiracy theories that fed anger about an electoral loss culminating in last week's events went beyond the pandemic debate. It doesn't matter what your political affiliation is, who you voted for in November, what you think about mitigation orders or who you follow on Facebook or Twitter. What we should all be able to agree on is that a fundamental tenet of our democracy – the peaceful transfer of power – has been turned on its head. The terroristic acts we witnessed at the U.S. Capitol, the culmination of weeks of debunked allegations, rejected lawsuits and bizarre conspiracy theories about the election, coupled with political pandering for political gain, should chill all of us to the bone.

For too many, "freedom of expression" morphed into violence.

The growing divisions we have experienced over the last 40 years have engendered and inspired those who have no problem with "tearing it all down." Whether it's calling for an end to subsidizing "government schools" in favor of a private, free-for-all system of education or calling for a revolution to overturn the results of a certified election, our conversations have devolved into a toxic political swamp that tears families, communities and the nation apart, continuously erodes the very norms and traditions and institutions that have defined us for 240 years, and empowers the anarchist fringes that focus on hate, prejudice and destruction to take center stage.

President-Elect Biden, who will be inaugurated this month, has stated that his aim is to heal America's political wounds, to "staunch the flow of division in this country." That will be a tall order, particularly when so many are working to strengthen it. The divisions we are seeing are not just eroding confidence in our institutions but also poisoning our very soul. They will not go away quietly. And that is not good for the country.

What does that mean for education? More impor-

tantly, what does it mean for our future – our children? What are the essential conversations we need to start having? How do we have them? How do we influence a political environment that is so polarized? How do we reach consensus in a social media environment that declares that what you "believe," no matter how far-fetched, is more true and authentic than fact, data or science?

My hope for 2021 is not that we will "put this whole national nightmare behind us," but that we will face it boldly, face where we are as a state and as a nation, and recommit to our democracy by identifying, acknowledging and addressing our divisions without the toxic goal of political gain so that we can take the power away from those who seek anarchy in the name of patriotism.

In a statement following the D.C. riot, Daniel Domenech, executive director of AASA, The School Administrators Association, said "The herculean efforts being done by school district administrators, building leaders, teachers and parents to educate our young learners regarding what's right and what's wrong was indirectly challenged following the senseless act of vandalism at the Capitol building.... Despite the ugliness we saw in Washington, D.C., I am confident our members will continue to stand tall as they redesign and redefine quality public education in their respective communities and as they work to mold the lives of the more than 50 million students they serve."

He is right. We need to move forward into a better future. We all need to exercise positive leadership on the local, state and national level and stand tall, tackling our challenges head on without the toxicity of the national discourse we've endured in recent years. And we must demand the same from our political leaders. We stand to lose too much if we do not. Our nation, our communities and our future – the children of our nation – are too important for us to fail. They are watching.

PA LICENSURE EXAM PREP. SESSION

The Center for Educational Leadership at Shippensburg University, in partnership with PASA, is again offering a low-cost, half-day study session to help interested educators prepare for the Superintendent's Letter exam.

Saturday, January 30, 2021

9:00 - 10:30 a.m.

VIRTUAL VIA ZOOM

\$35 pp for Shippensburg University students and alumni

\$45 pp for all others

(Checks payable to "Shippensburg University")

To Register: [CLICK HERE](#)

Zoom link will be sent upon registration submission and receipt of payment.

NAVIGATING THE SCHOOL YEAR: UPDATES & RESOURCES

Update on the Pandemic...

According to the PA Department of Health, the number of COVID-19 cases over the course of the pandemic has topped 713,000. That total was at 425,000 just four weeks ago.

The vaccine rollout is continuing, although the DOH reports that supplies are limited and distribution issues are being complicated by a lack of effective communication from the federal level, particularly concerning availability and supply schedules.

While the increase in cases eased somewhat over the holidays after Gov. Wolf implemented temporary mitigation orders for public gatherings, Dr. Rachel Levine, Secretary of Health, said that a return to previous mitigation orders could lead to another uptick unless Pennsylvanians continue using masks, maintaining social distancing and limiting time in public places whenever possible, as the statewide availability of vaccinations will be limited for some time until and unless supplies increase.

Guidance and Orders Updates...

- Gov. Wolf issued temporary mitigation orders on Dec. 11 through Jan. 3 aimed at restricting public gatherings over the holidays. The orders ended at 8 a.m. on Jan. 4.
- The Wolf Administration, PDE and the DOH on Jan. 8 issued an [update to instructional model recommendations](#) for districts to consider using based on the changing levels of community transmission of COVID-19 in their counties. The departments also offered an updated [FAQ](#). Beginning on January 25, the departments are providing a blended/hybrid learning model recommendation for elementary schools in "substantial level" counties and also allows for districts to consider bringing back targeted student populations for in-person instruction, regardless of what general instructional model they are utilizing. In announcing the change, both the PDE and DOH noted that the recommendation is based on educational concerns and transmission research, and that utilizing blended or in-person models would require masks and social distancing. As has been true for all instructional model recommendations, district decisions are based on local officials and circumstances.
- On December 11, prior to Gov. Wolf issuing temporary mitigation orders, PASA had sent a letter to the PIAA requesting that the winter sports season be delayed based on responses to a PASA survey of superintendents about whether they wanted to postpone. Of the 333 that responded, 83% indicated they wanted a delay.

Federal COVID Aid...

(from AASA) After confusion and Pres. Trump's initial reluctance to sign a Congress-approved COVID relief bill, it was finally signed into law. The \$900 billion plan includes \$54.3 billion to states/districts for education-related expenses, roughly four times what districts received under the CARES Act.

States can waive Maintenance of Effort if they are experiencing a decline in financial resources, but the intention is that they maintain funding for schools in 2022 at a level that is proportional to the states' expenditures for the past three years.

Private schools do not receive any funding via equitable services. Separate from the funds that public K-12 schools will receive, private schools will also be eligible for \$2.75 billion that will be distributed through the Governors Emergency Education

Relief (GEER) program. This money, limited to private schools who are not receiving PPP, cannot be used for voucher programs unless the state had already been sending money to voucher programs under CARES. In that case, they can continue to support the students who received vouchers, but they can't extend it to new students.

The plan also includes funding for a new program to reimburse school meal providers for costs incurred between Sept. 21, 2020 and Dec. 31, 2020.

What was **not** included in the final relief package was liability protection for employers, funds for state and local governments, and funding to address the "homework gap" related to Internet access. It is likely that Congress and the Biden Administration will develop a bill to provide some assistance to state/local governments and funds to address Internet access, although whether Congress will consider liability protection is unknown.

Cost for COVID Strategies

According to a [report](#) released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, strategies to help schools minimize the risk of coronavirus transmission would, on average, cost between \$55 and \$442 per student, depending on what measures are used.

Vaccine Rollout

Rollout of available COVID vaccines is slow throughout the commonwealth. Teachers currently have been placed in the 1-B category for access to vaccines, although distribution to those in the 1-A category (nursing homes, health care workers, etc.) is in the early stages.

PASA Resources...

We are providing on the PASA website links to updates, resources, information and strategies from both the state and federal level to help in planning and management. Find the resources here: <https://www.pasa-net.org/coronavirus>. PASA updates the list as information and resources continue to develop. If you know of a website that provides useful ideas and guidance for school leaders, please let us know at pasa@pasa-net.org.

SPONSORS AND SPONSOR RESOURCES

We are grateful for the ongoing support of our PASA Sponsors at all levels. Although PASA does not promote or endorse any product or service offered by our sponsors, we are pleased to share information that may be helpful to school leaders.

The PASA website includes a page listing COVID-related resources and information offered by several PASA sponsors. Check it out [here](#).

See more information about our [PASA Sponsors](#) and [PASA Business-Level Sponsors](#).



THE BEAUTY OF BUILDING UP FELLOW FEMALES

BY DR. TINA KANE AND LYNN FUINI-HETTEN



Each New Year brings resolutions to change something in our lives. Some common resolutions are to take better care of ourselves by eating healthier, losing weight and exercising more. This year, as female leaders, please consider adding one more commitment - to build up other women in your life.

The importance of human social connection is powerful. Science has told us that social connections provide emotional support that can increase self-esteem and contribute to better overall health.

Mentorship is an important emphasis for the Women's Caucus, although not all women truly comprehend how to be an effective mentor. The simplest form of mentoring is providing guidance to others as they make decisions. But being a true mentor is more complex than simply checking in from time to time.

Mentorship can include numerous components. However, the focus of this article is on the three key roles of being a **tenacious, collaborative** and **supportive leader**.

The commitment to build up other women in your life needs to start with yourself. Effective leaders are **tenacious** and lead by example. As educators we are trained to reflect on our individual and collective practice, whether it be our students' work, teachers' lesson planning and instructional practices, or staffs interactions with children. Those around us think they are always being evaluated by their leader, but in truth they are observing and evaluating every action, communication and reaction of their leader.

With this in mind, building up others begins with your own commitment to act with high standards and integrity for yourself. Your personal work ethic and behaviors will provide and give others the opportunity for observational learning.

Psychology 101 taught us how small children learn by doing and imitating their parents and experiences in their lives through dramatic play, whether it be preparing a meal in their pretend kitchen or taking your order at a restaurant or caring for a baby doll. The same experience applies for professional growth. Through watching and observing, the process of imitation happens, thus allowing others to learn how to manage themselves in the workplace.

Second, we as female leaders need to seek ways to turn competition into collaboration. A competitive mindset results in ranking as the outcome, with someone winning and someone losing. In education, the outcome should be growth; therefore, everyone wins. Being **collaborative** is accomplished by working together. It requires open-mindedness of others' ideas as well as opportunities to practice the art of listening and hearing the input of others. The process of collaboration also provides spaces for others to brainstorm through conversation, show their strengths, and accomplish

goals together.

The third role is being a supportive leader. A **supportive** relationship begins with the commitment to support the other person. Once the commitment is made, the relationship needs to be one that is trustworthy, open and honest. Providing worthwhile feedback is valuable to growth and advancement. The supportive leader also provides assistance, inspiration, and comfort, believing in the person and challenging them to set realistic and meaningful goals that she is capable of achieving. And we must remember to celebrate successes together. Celebrating gains, even those that may be small, boosts confidence and builds momentum to further accomplishments.

As we cheer on the year 2021, I end with a well-known quote from an unknown author: "Here's to strong women. May we know them. May we be them. May we raise them."

Dr. Tina Kane is superintendent of the Marple Newtown SD and secretary of the PASA Women's Caucus.

SAVE THE DATE:

**2021 Southeast Region Caucus Dinner
November 10**

CONFERENCE UPDATE:

Due to ongoing COVID and district travel concerns, the scheduled 2021 spring conference in Hershey has been postponed to spring 2022. **Watch for details on other events to be scheduled between now and the next conference!**

NOMINATIONS SOUGHT FOR PASA WOMEN'S CAUCUS AWARDS

The PASA Women's Caucus is seeking nominations for two annual awards honoring individuals annually for special awards of recognition. Both awards are based on four criteria: leadership, significant contributions in inspiring women and/or their peers, significant accomplishments, and evidence of continuing professional and/or personal growth.

The two awards are:

WANDA MCDANIEL AWARD: given to an aspiring female school administrator who shows evidence of great leadership potential.

MARGARET SMITH LEADERSHIP AWARD: given to a female administrator who has demonstrated proven leadership in education.

Nominations are due **Friday, February 19.**

Go to <https://www.pasa-net.org/wcawards> for the nomination forms.

PASA 'AWARDS OF ACHIEVEMENT' RECOGNIZE PUBLIC SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

PASA is seeking nominations for the three special awards recognizing leadership in public education – and we need YOUR help in identifying those among us who are deserving of special recognition for their work in 2020.

Since the pandemic struck, school administrators have had to utilize creative and inspiring leadership and out-of-the-box thinking to lead school systems forward. A major lesson learned through these challenges is that strong, positive leadership in education is essential to the success of public education, no matter how instruction is delivered and no matter the educational environment.

That is why it is important to recognize the good work that school administrators have been doing to lead school systems in a positive direction, meet the needs of students and staff, and advocate for public education.

The PASA Awards of Achievement were developed for just this purpose. Although PASA postponed soliciting nominations to date due to pandemic disruptions, it may be more important than ever to recognize that leadership.

ADVOCACY UPDATE

PASA continues to both provide information to members and advocate on their behalf. Some of these activities since the December issue of *The PASA Flyer* was published included the following:

Advocacy

- PASA has communicated with the PDE and Department of Health to get clarification on updated recommendations and orders concerning schools and the pandemic as they are issued.
- We are continuing to work with our lobbyist and other education associations on issues of mutual concern as the 2021-22 legislative session gets underway this month.
- PASA continues to keep the liability issue before lawmakers and is urging the governor to sign an executive order providing such liability to public school officials.
- Dr. DiRocco continues to meet via Zoom with AASA legislative advocacy staff and executives from other state superintendent associations to share information and updates related to school operations and state education policy.

Information

Dr. DiRocco provided two Zoom briefings for superintendents since early December. The Dec. 11 briefing focused on temporary mitigation orders concerning indoor and outdoor events, and the Jan. 8 briefing focused on updated recommendations for PreK-12 schools in determining instructional models, along with a summary of recently passed federal COVID relief and the federal budget. In addition, PASA continues to update the [coronavirus web page](#) and provide additional education news and information through the weekly Update on Mondays and *The PASA Flyer*.

The awards fall into three categories:

SERVICE TO THE PROFESSION - Demonstrating commitment to excellence as evidenced through notable service to the profession. Examples of this service may include developing an effective professional development program for school district educators, demonstrating leadership in administrator preparation programs, school study councils or other professional development efforts, or promoting the education profession through research, writing or organizational service.

Sponsored by: Horace Mann

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP - Demonstrating commitment to excellence in teaching and learning by developing, nurturing and supporting exemplary programs that support the academic achievement of particular student populations, enrich student learning in a particular content area, or implement strategies to enhance student learning across the curriculum.

Sponsored by: Lincoln Investment Planning, Inc.

LEADERSHIP IN PUBLIC EDUCATION - Demonstrating commitment to school administration as a profession, to public education, and to one's colleagues, including participation in and leadership with the Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators.

Sponsored by: PLGIT/PFM

All PASA members are eligible for these awards. Individuals may self-nominate or be nominated by their peers, staff or board. Those nominating/self-nominating should complete the PASA Awards nomination form and include and/or attach further information that will provide a judging panel with sufficient evidence to support the nomination.

The PASA Awards of Achievement will be presented virtually during the PASA Leadership Forum scheduled for March 29. A monetary award of \$1,000 will be donated in each recipient's name to a scholarship fund of his/her choice or to the Pennsylvania administrator preparation program of his/her choice.

Deadline for nominations is **February 12**.

For more information on the Awards of Achievement, see the PASA web site at

www.pasa-net.org/pasaawards.

PASA thanks our Awards of Achievement sponsors for their continuing support in recognizing outstanding public school administrators in Pennsylvania.

****SAVE THE DATE****

PA EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

**rescheduled for August 1-3
at Kalahari Resorts & Convention Center**

for school leaders and district leadership teams
to learn, network and plan

Earn up to 80 PIL Hours – more details to come!

Keynote speakers, high quality breakout sessions, table talks on hot topics, Ed Camp and district team planning and job-alike sessions will provide practical ideas that can be immediately reviewed and discussed at the summit and utilized at the district level.

KEYNOTES



Scarlett Lewis



Dr. Adam Drummond

Sponsored by...



PASA VIRTUAL LEARNING PROGRAMS

See the PASA website for program updates at
<https://www.pasa-net.org/programs>.

Aspiring to Leadership Workshop

January 15

**Registrants will receive a link to the recording
of this program.**

Informational Webinars for Superintendents on Pandemic- Related Issues

Noon to 1 p.m.

January 20: Liability Issues

January 25: Human Resources Issues

**A link to each webinar has been provided via email to
superintendents who are PASA members.**

Winter Webinar Series

**"Leading Cultures that Prioritize the Well-Being of all
Students, Staff and Leaders"**

Noon to 1:00 p.m.

February 10, March 10 and April 14

**All webinars are recorded. Registrants will receive a
link to the recording.**

Superintendent Forum: Leading in a Culture of Change

Approved for 40 PIL/Act 45 hours

2:00 – 3:30 p.m.

February 4, March 11 and April 8

New Superintendents' Academy Part 3: Professional & Community Leadership

Focus: strategies that engage all stakeholders.

Approved for 25 PIL/Act 45 hours

January 21-22

Superintendent Licensure Exam Prep Session

January 30

PASA Leadership Forum: Leadership in a New Era with Dr. Bill Daggett

**Focus: Preparing Students for THEIR Future, Not OUR Past
40 PIL/Act 45 hours (pending approval)**

March 29



PASA WEBSITE: CAREER CENTER

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

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

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

(PASA reserves the right not to publish an open position or to modify submitted information.)

Each month, PASA, in coordination with the Technology Committee and CoSN (Consortium for School Networking), will publish a monthly technology-focused news item of interest to members of PASA.



TOPIC: DATA PRIVACY

The EmpowerED Superintendent Monthly Webinar

January Webinar

The free recording of the January 11 EmpowerED Superintendent Webinar, co-hosted by CoSN, AASA and edWeb.net, and sponsored by ClassLink, is now available. Data Privacy in Our Connected Learning World: Earning the Trusted Learning Environment Seal features guest panelists Dr. Bruce Gearing, Superintendent, Leander Independent School District, TX, and Dr. Allan Markley, Superintendent, Raytown Quality Schools, MO, who are joined by Linnette Attai, Project Director for CoSN's Privacy Initiative.

The panelists share five critical guidelines for ensuring data privacy in any school system's use of technology. They also discuss how leadership teams can succeed in making data privacy a priority across entire school systems. Effective strategies for communicating a school district's commitment to assuring student data privacy through the Trusted Learning Environment privacy framework are reviewed.

Free registration for the recording of this webinar is [available here](#).

February Webinar

Next month's webinar, which airs on **Monday, February 8, at 5:00 pm ET**, is titled ***Strategic Technology Planning and Investment: Priorities, Cost and Impacts in Today's Learning Environments***. [Click here](#) to learn more and register for the live broadcast and later access to the webinar recording. at.

Additional Webinars

Multiple other webinars in this series are also freely available as recordings [online](#) and via [podcast](#).

Data Privacy Resources for School Leaders

As school leaders continue to grow in their knowledge and expertise in using data to drive instruction and other multiple facets of school operations, the issue of leading and managing student data privacy can sometimes seem confusing and even overwhelming.

CoSN is pleased to share a [one-page critical issues document](#) that describes five key guidelines for protecting student data privacy.

To assist school leaders in building a robust student data privacy program and creating a system and culture of trust and transparency with their community around student data protections, CoSN developed a comprehensive privacy framework for school districts to earn the [Trusted Learning Environment \(TLE\) Seal](#). In today's COVID-19 world, it is more essential than ever that school leaders build a trusted learning environment together with their students' parents. [Click here](#) for guidance on how best to build that trust.

Learn more about the role of leadership in building a student data privacy program and measuring your efforts against the Trusted Learning Environment privacy framework with [CoSN's guide](#) to "Building a Trusted Learning Environment: Understanding the Leadership Practice."

The Consortium for School Networking ([CoSN](#)) and its state affiliate chapter, Pennsylvania Association for Educational Communications and Technology ([PAECT](#)) are honored to support the work of current and aspiring superintendents and district leadership teams in leading all aspects of digital learning transformations. If your school or district would like more information about joining CoSN or getting more involved with CoSN, please contact Brian Calvary, CAE, CoSN Director of Membership and Chapters, at bcalvary@cosn.org.



COMMUNICATIONS TIP OF THE MONTH

"Anything that can be done must be done to help young people understand something about leadership. It's not just standing up and giving orders. It's not just something that is associated with big, important jobs that they don't see themselves going into. It is, instead, a set of actions that mobilize people to produce innovative, better results, which always involve some change. We need to help students see that they actually can find more meaning in life by engaging, in trying and sticking their necks out in some appropriately informed way, playing some leadership role in their organization, community, schools."

– John Kotter, one of the world's preeminent scholars on organizational change and the author of multiple books, in an interview with Larry Nyland, a retired superintendent from Washington state, from "Leading Transformative Change: A Conversation with John Kotter," as published in the January issue of *School Administrator*. This month's issue examines aspects of learning by young students in the midst of a public health crisis.



NOTEWORTHY QUOTES



On January 6 Events in Washington, D.C....

"It's that fine line whenever we're in these situations of teachable moments—we always want to be informative and not just reactionary. Not giving it any recognition is dismissive of the magnitude of what we're seeing right now. This is an emotional event—more than anything I've been a part of since probably 9/11." - Adam Dyche, social studies department chair at Waubonsie Valley High School in Aurora, Ill, on the riots and break-ins at the U.S. Capitol on January 6, from a story in *Education Week*, 1/6/21

"With the holiday season in our rearview mirrors and the new year just a week old, the question before our school system leaders is 'How do we move forward [from these events] while at the same time, grapple with the ongoing public health crisis?'" - Dan Domenech, AASA Executive Director

"Children look to the adults in their lives at moments such as this for guidance and direction. Our role as a public school district is to ensure those in our charge embrace the norms of a democratic society and are equipped with the tools necessary for respectful discourse and problem solving. We believe free and peaceful expression is an unequivocal bedrock principle of democracy. We condemn all acts of violence and hate." - from a statement by the administration and school board of the Derry Township SD, as published on the district's website

On COVID Issues...

"Over the past several weeks it has become clear we need to take further mitigation actions to protect Pennsylvanians and stop the spread of COVID-19. We all hoped it would not come to this. The current state of the surge in Pennsylvania though will not allow us to wait. We need to stop the spread right now in order to save lives; if we don't, we will be in big trouble." - Gov. Tom Wolf in a press conference on Dec. 10 announcing new mitigation orders on indoor and outdoor events through the holidays amid a surge in COVID cases statewide

"We have learned many things throughout this past year and now we all know our role in the fight against COVID-19. We know that we must answer the call when a public health professional calls, we know to wear a mask, social distance and wash our hands frequently. As we go into the new year, we need to continue using the tools we have built throughout 2020 like the COVID Alert PA app and the Connect & Protect Form, so we can help stop the spread of COVID-19 right in its tracks." - PA Secretary of Health Rachel Levin, in a Jan. 4 press release

On State Leadership...

"We are not only focused on what we hope to get done in 2021 but obviously try to re-stimulate the economy, get Pennsylvanians back to work, get kids in school, and get as much normalcy as we can." - House Republican Majority Leader Kerry Benninghoff (R-Centre), House Majority Leader, in a press conference on January 5

"The importance of the top priorities that House Democrats have consistently promoted -- good jobs with fair pay, quality schools, affordable housing, accessible health care, a safe environment and protection of democracy -- are being highlighted and tested in many ways during this devastating pandemic. We see the beginning of this new legislative session as a chance to elevate people over partisanship and make gains toward these common goals in all of Pennsylvania's unique communities -- east and west, large and small, urban, suburban and rural." - from a House Democratic Caucus press release, 1/5/21

"The bitterness and rancor on display were a departure from the normally staid and sedate workings of the chamber. And it potentially sets the stage for a tumultuous two-year session, which will include debate over key legislative priorities such as redistricting." - from a story in *The Philadelphia Inquirer* (1/5/21) about a contentious first session day in the PA Senate, when Senate President Pro Tempore Jake Corman (R-Centre) ousted Lt. Gov. Fetterman as presiding officer in that chamber and refused to swear-in a Democratic senator over allegations from his Republican opponent that ballots were improperly counted in an election whose results had been state-certified

Concerning the U.S. Secretary of Education...

"For the past quarter century, there has been no meaningful change in test scores, yet as taxpayers, we spend more and more for education each year. And by too many measures, these gaps are even widening. Perhaps the largest gap is between American students and their international peers. We're not in the top 10—in anything. That's not because our students aren't capable; it's because 'the system' is culpable for failing them.... As for my successor, I'd emphasize that parents today are more aware of what their children are—or are not—learning. And they're more aware of who's standing in the way. More than ever before, they are raising their voices for more options, for more choices, for freedom. The need for education freedom is especially acute for kids whose government-assigned schools are refusing to open—and those families should be able to take their education dollars to schools that will." - Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos, in an exit interview with *Education Week*, 12/15/20

"For too many students, public education in America has been a *flor pálida*: a wilted rose, neglected, in need of care. We must be the master gardeners who cultivate it, who work every day to preserve its beauty and its purpose." - Miguel Cardona, President-Elect Biden's nominee for U.S. Secretary of Education, in a statement following his nomination on Jan. 4

"[Cardona] is not just a proud product of public schools -- he's made strengthening public education and fighting for equity his life's work. With his experience as a student, fourth-grade teacher, principal, assistant superintendent and commissioner in Connecticut, Dr. Cardona -- a former AFT member -- will transform the Education Department to help students thrive, a reversal of the DeVos disaster of the last four years." - Randi Weingarten, president of the American Federation of Teachers, on Cardona's nomination

"Leadership is paramount, and AASA will always work collaboratively with the heads of federal agencies to ensure that federal education policy supports and strengthens public education. The work of teaching in a classroom and running a school system is a distinct and critical skillset, and AASA welcomes the chance to work with a U.S. Education Secretary who is a career educator with experience in the classroom and at district and state levels. We congratulate Miguel Cardona on this nomination, and we look forward to supporting him in the major task of getting our students and staff back to school safely. Our mantra at AASA is that leadership matters, and we have a high regard for the leadership skills that Miguel Cardona will bring to the U.S. Department of Education from his time as an educator in Connecticut public schools and as an AASA member." - Daniel Domenech, AASA Executive Director, on President-Elect Biden's nomination of Miguel Cardona as U.S. Secretary of Education, 12/22/20

The new year may bring us a continued pandemic, but it also brings us a new Congress, a new administration, and a fifth COVID emergency supplemental, complete with more than \$50 billion in funding for K-12 education.

Before adjourning for the holiday season, Congress was able to pass—and the president ultimately signed—a fifth COVID emergency supplemental. The final package was a combination of the COVID emergency funding and the final funding for federal fiscal year 2021 (FY21) and, collectively, the package totaled nearly \$2.3 trillion.

As a reminder, since April, AASA has advocated for at least \$175 billion in the next relief package, and we are very disappointed that only a third of our funding request was granted in this round. That said, because both liability protection and funding for state and local governments was not on the table for this negotiation, there is momentum for passing another deal in 2021. The hope is that we can get another round of funding for schools, including support for the homework gap, in the next package.

This article focuses on what we know about the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Funds (ESSERF). It is structured much like the similarly-named pot of funding afforded to schools in the CARES act. It is \$54.3 billion in funding that will be allocated to states in the same proportion as Title I dollars. Our friends at Learning Policy Institute have provided an estimated [state by state allocation](#) as part of a [broader blog post](#).

States have to spend at least 90% of their share on emergency relief funds to schools, though they can pursue a waiver on this requirement. (We will be watching to see the extent to which states use these federal dollars to backfill cuts to state education budgets.) The dollars will be allocated to the local level via Title I population, and the equitable services provision does NOT apply to private schools. The funding is intentionally broad and flexible, to be used for almost any expense.

The package also includes flexibility and funding for child nutrition programs. Allowable uses for the K-12 funding include technology, site-based needs, cleaning supplies, mental health services, summer and supplemental learning, and school facility repairs and improvements to reduce virus transmission and to improve indoor air quality, among others.

In other elements of interest, the bill extends the timeline by which states have to spend their COVID Relief Funds (CRF) from December 31, 2020 through December 2021. We were also paying attention to the paid leave provision and are pleased with the commonsense approach to the extension: paid leave as established under FFCRA is extended through March 2021. This bill does not extend the tax credits to public entities, but it does eliminate the mandate to provide paid leave, so public sector employees who were previously covered are no longer guaranteed that leave. It allows LEAs to provide leave, but no longer burdens them with the unfunded mandate to do so. You can read AASA's memo to members (detailing this package and the FY21 details) [on the blog](#).

As we look to this new year, new Congress and new administration, AASA's top priorities related to COVID will be to secure funding for the homework gap to help ensure all students have access to internet to support remote learning, liability protection for schools as employers, and state and local stabilization as a critical element to help ensure that federal funding intended to support local schools is in addition to—and not in place of—state funding.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW!



For breaking education news and the latest from the Capitol, follow us on Twitter [@PASASupts](#).

Find what you need to know in the weekly "Education Update." Watch your email on **Mondays** for the E-Update and link to this weekly report, a source for the latest in education and budget news from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania and the nation.



Check the PASA website at www.pasa-net.org for reports, testimony, the program and meeting schedule, archived Updates, the PASA Career Center (job postings)...and more!



PASA GOLD SPONSOR



COVID has changed the way educators teach, interact with families, and measure academics.

Here are [7 tips for reporting on student achievement to your board this January](#) brought to you by NWEA.

In This Month's School Administrator

This month's issue of *School Administrator* includes a quote from Dr. Khalid Mumin, superintendent of the Reading SD and the 2021 PA Superintendent of the Year, concerning why he wrote his book *Problem Child: Leading Students Living in Poverty Towards Infinite Possibilities of Success* (WGW Publishing, 2020). "I wrote this book because, wholeheartedly, I believe defeating poverty is a form of social justice and those who motivate children to defeat the odds in beating poverty are in fact reframing the way students view their chances at success," he states.

Support for Meal Flexibility

In late December, AASA, the Association of School Business Officials International, the Association of Education Service Agencies, the National Rural Education Association, and the National Rural Education Advocacy Consortium submitted [a letter](#) in support of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) on the restoration of milk, whole-grains, and sodium flexibilities under the National School Lunch and Breakfast Act.

For background, the NPRM finalizes the Department's 2012 interim rulemaking process concerning provisions in the Healthy Hunger Free-Kids Act (HHFKA) that ensure all school districts, regardless of socioeconomic status or size, can reasonably meet the nutritional requirements under the law.

If passed, the regulation will allow schools to continue offering flavored, low-fat milk (1% fat) at lunch and breakfast and as a beverage for sale à la carte and require that unflavored milk (fat-free or low-fat) be available at each school meal service; mandate that only half of the weekly grains served in school meals be whole grain-rich; and postpone initial sodium reduction requirements until the 2023-2024 school year and eliminate final sodium target levels established in HHFKA.

In layman's terms, USDA's policy means targeted long-term regulatory flexibility for school districts, which is practical and necessary to serve appealing meals that decrease food waste and increase student participation in NSLP and SBP.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"Over the past 10 years, my perspective about educational leadership has changed. Where previously I focused my attention on the K-12 system, now I devote time to connect with community agencies that support children before they enter our school system. I've moved from school leadership to educational leadership. I have learned to value collaboration with my community's early learning providers to maximize the potential of each child who enters the West Valley Schools." – Peter Finch, assistant superintendent of West Valley SD in Yakima, Washington and co-chair of the AASA Early Learning Cohort, from "My Learning Curve for Early Learning," as published in the January issue of *School Administrator*

From AASA President Kristi Wilson

"I am incredibly excited about the future. We owe it to the children to remain optimistic, hopeful and clear-eyed about our charge. To build a better world, we need each other. Cynicism is not a friend to innovation." (from "Creating Spaces for Collaboration," as published in the January issue of *School Administrator*)

AASA Coronavirus Resources

AASA continues to work with federal officials and members of Congress to influence legislation and policy concerning the coronavirus pandemic and its effect on schools. The AASA website offers school leaders updated information and resources from the federal levels, including Congress, the CDC, the Department of Education and the Department of Agriculture. [Click here](#) to see a list of resources and information provided by AASA.

Join AASA today and become part of a supported community of school leaders nationwide who advocate for public education. AASA, The School Superintendents Association, is the only national organization that represents and promotes the concerns of chief school administrators across the nation! **See the AASA website, <http://www.aasa.org>, for details or contact the PASA office.**



ARE YOU REGISTERED?

Registration remains open for the first ever virtual AASA National Conference on Education, which will be held over two days, **February 18-19**.

The virtual format will provide convenience and safety for participants while still providing access to data, research and best practices shared among other superintendents and school districts across the nation.

This year's conference will focus on **"Social Emotional Learning: Focusing on the Whole Child"** and include keynote presenters **George Couros**, a worldwide leader in the area of innovation and innovation as a human endeavor, and **Priscilla Chan**, co-founder and co-CEO of the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative.

While the format of the event has changed, you can expect world-class content focused on three main tracks: **social emotional learning, equity and school reopening/digital learning**. Sessions will focus on actionable takeaways from inspiring, experienced speakers, and many will have optional chat boxes and live Q&A.

In addition to keynotes and sessions, the conference will include Ed Chats, a social media lounge, a virtual exhibit hall, School of the Future presentations, and networking features built into the virtual platform that help you build your network, private message other attendees – and more.

See the AASA website, <https://nce.aasa.org>, for registration information and program details.

MEMBER NEWS

REGION 3

Dr. James Walsh has been appointed superintendent of the Bethel Park SD. He has been serving as superintendent of the Burgettstown Area SD for the past five years. Walsh will replace **Dr. Joseph Dimperio**, who had been interim superintendent since last spring after former superintendent **Joseph Pasquerilla** resigned to take the position of superintendent in the Ambridge Area SD (I.U. 27).

REGION 7

Jon Banko is currently serving as acting superintendent in the New Kensington-Arnold SD. He had been assistant superintendent in the district. Banko replaced **Dr. John Pallone**, who resigned in July.

REGION 14

Dr. Heidi Rochlin has been appointed the next superintendent of the Antietam SD, effective July 1. She currently serves as curriculum supervisor in the Spring-Ford SD.

Dr. Tracy Detwiler, Antietam's director of business services, is currently serving as interim superintendent following the resignation of **Dr. Jeffrey Boyer**, who is now serving as superintendent of the Ferndale SD (I.U. 8).

REGION 15

Dr. Richard W. Fry, superintendent of the Big Spring SD, has announced he will retire at the end of the current school year. He has served in the position since 2005. Fry has served on the Board of Governors and on numerous PASA committees for many years, has served as chair of the Legislative Committee and been active in advocacy both with PASA and AASA, and is both a PASA Past President and former PASA Treasurer.

Daniel Serfass has been appointed superintendent of the Camp Hill SD, effective in April. He has been serving as assistant superintendent in the Elizabethtown Area SD. Serfass will replace **Patti Sanker**, who has been serving as the district's interim superintendent.

REGION 17

Dr. Kathryn Gruber is now serving as interim superintendent in the Sullivan County SD. She replaces **Patricia Cross**.

REGION 19

Marc Wyandt is now serving as superintendent of the Lakeland SD. He previously served as assistant superintendent in the Abington Heights SD. Wyandt replaces **William King**, who has retired.

REGION 21

Lynn Fuini-Hetten is now serving as superintendent of the Salisbury Township SD. She previously served as associate superintendent in the district and is the current president of the PASA Women's Caucus. Fuini-Hetten replaces **Dr. Randy Ziegenfuss**, who retired from the position as of January 1, after 15 years with the district, six as superintendent.

REGION 23

Dr. David Goodin has retired from his position as superintendent in the Spring Ford SD to accept a position as superintendent for the Sampson County Schools in North Carolina. Goodin has served Spring Ford for ten years.

REGION 28

Phillip Martell has been appointed superintendent of the Blairsville-Saltsburg SD, effective immediate. He has served as a superintendent, chief executive office, chief financial officer, director of human resources and assistant business manager at various districts and had served as the Blairsville-Saltsburg's acting 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 Web site at www.pasa-net.org (Click on the "Leadership Development" button and look for "Career Center.")

PASA CALENDAR

All programs and meetings through March are virtual.
See the PASA web site at www.pasa-net.org.

JANUARY

- 15 Aspiring to Leadership Workshop
- 18 PASA office closed
- 21-22 New Superintendents' Academy Part 3
- 28 Board of Governors' meeting
- 30 Superintendent Licensure Exam Prep Session (virtual)

FEBRUARY

- 3 Professional Development Committee meeting
- 4 Superintendent Forum: Leading Change (Session 2)
- 10 Winter Webinar Series #2
- 15 PASA office closed
- 18-19 AASA National Conference on Education (virtual)

MARCH

- 3-5 National Superintendent Certification Program
- 10 Winter Webinar Series #3
- 11 Superintendent Forum: Leading Change
- 29 PASA Leadership Forum with Bill Daggett