

Winter
2014

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Elementary Administrator

Vol. 63, No. 3



President's Report



Debora Nelson
Oxford Elementary
Oxford City

Hello AAESA Members,

Recently I attended the NAESP Nationals Leaders Conference in Washington D. C. The room was filled with principals from all over the United States. It was exciting to see familiar faces from other states and share stories of the school year. The theme for the conference was Principals Make It Happen.

Think of your day. Do you make it happen everyday? Do you handle discipline, parents, drills, answer questions and visits classrooms? As the instructional leader in your school do you make it happen? We set priorities to visit classrooms and observe what the students are doing in response to what the teacher is doing. Principals Make It Happen.

As I reflected on the challenges we had with winter weather, I thought for the first time in twenty-five years I was going to spend the night at school. After riding with the Oxford Fire Department to deliver my last students, I could not seem to stop watching the news. I was especially interested in the schools that had faculty and students spending the night. I was observing how they prepared. It made me very proud to be a principal. I personally spoke to one of those principals. He said, "It was nothing. The faculty was great." Principals Make It Happen.

Everyone on Capital Hill talked about how principals were admired and respected. I met a man who wanted to talk to me about how he remembered his principal. The man called his principal's name and with laughter

talked fondly of the visits to see the principal. I was honored as he spoke of the importance of educators. "We cannot build the world without our educators" he said. I enjoyed my short time with him but felt very humbled as he thanked me again for what I do. Principals Make It Happen.

As we move into the last months of school let us remember to "Make It Happen." Principals set the culture of the school. Culture can beat any strategy everyday of the week. Deb Delisle, Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education, said there are three things Principals must do.

1. Have a vision in your school
2. Develop culture around that vision
3. Strategize for success

As you embrace each day, think, "Did I Make It Happen Today?"

Some information on our membership

- 21.7% of our members have been a member for 2-5 years
- 28.3% of our members have been a member for 6-10 years
- 21.7% of our members have been a member for 11-15 years



Executive Director's Report



***L. Earl Franks, CAE,
Executive Director***

Acts of Leadership

What person or persons have impacted your philosophy of leadership? My philosophy of leadership has been shaped

throughout my life by individuals who I have admired and aspired to emulate. My knowledge has been, and continues to be, expanded from a very diverse group of people. It is my sincere belief that you can learn from people in every walk of life. For example, I have learned leadership skills from university presidents, custodians, politicians, businessmen, principals, teachers, leadership researchers, military leaders, etc.

Without question, the foundation of my leadership philosophy was laid by my parents, specifically my father. He was the quiet servant leader type who always led by example, not as much by what he said but what he did. My father was a man of character, honor, and integrity in all areas of his life. Without these intangibles, there is nothing else and therefore there can be no leadership. These attributes of leadership lead to trust which is crucial when leading an organization.

Other leadership skills I have learned from various mentors include the importance of team work, loyalty, and recognition. Additionally, I believe to be a great leader one must lead by example. Albert Schweitzer, the great humanitarian, was asked if he thought leading by example was the most important quality of leadership. Mr. Schweitzer thought for a second and then replied, "No, it's not the most important one. It's the only one." Furthermore, I wholeheartedly believe in the 3 C's of leadership, promoted by Colonel Art Athens, Director of the U.S. Naval Academy's Vice Admiral James B. Stockdale Center for Ethical Leadership. They include:

- **Competence** - Do you know your job, or are you striving hard to learn it?
- **Courage** - Will you make the hard but correct decision even if it costs you personally?
- **Compassion** - Do you care as much about us as

you care about yourself?

Also, Kouzes and Posner (2002) in *Leadership the Challenge* lists five practices of exemplary leadership:

- **Model the Way** – "Titles are granted, but it's your behavior that wins you respect."
- **Inspire a Shared Vision** – "The dream or vision is the force that invents the future."
- **Challenge the Process** – "...those that lead others to greatness seek and accept challenge."
- **Enable Others to Act** – "Grand dreams don't become significant realities through the actions of a single person."
- **Encourage the Heart** – "Leaders encourage the heart of their constituents to carry on."

Ultimately, "The quality of leadership, more than any other single factor, determines the success or failure of an organization," wrote Fiedler and Chemers in their 1976 publication titled *Improving Leadership Effectiveness*. Although many books, articles, and scholarly journals have been written since, in my opinion, this statement is as pertinent today as it was over thirty-five years ago. Jim Collins wrote in *Good to Great and the Social Sectors*, "Great leaders differ from good leaders in that they are ambitious first and foremost for the benefit of the organization, cause, or mission and not for themselves."

All these ideas and concepts have contributed to my philosophy of leadership. However, I feel it is vitally important to continually learn and research best and next practices for leading an organization. As leaders, although our core leadership philosophy may not change, we must always be aware of the many factors influencing our organizations and forecast future trends which will allow us to identify what is visible but not yet seen.

I recently learned an important lesson after reading Sean Covey's comments restating his dad, the late Stephen Covey's beliefs. This profound concept states, "Begin with the End in Mind, which is about creating a

Executive Director's Report Continued

blueprint for your life and truly defining what matters most. Achieving your personal goals is fundamental to achieving goals that involve teams and organizations. It is inside out, not outside in. If you clearly define your wildly important goals in life and then execute on them with a passion, you will achieve that which is truly extraordinary." In applying Stephen Covey's concept to my professional life, I never considered my personal goals being paramount to achieving organizational goals. In fact, some would characterize that thought process as selfish. This idea will aid me in my

endeavors as I strive to be a great leader.

In conclusion, I encourage you to contemplate the blueprint for your life which guides your philosophy of leadership. Through these blueprints, we can constantly strive to perform "acts of leadership" in pursuit of achieving our personal goals thereby improving the organization we lead.

NAESP Booth



Abby Hamilton
Bay Minette
Intermediate
Baldwin County

Where: Gaylord Opryland, Nashville, Tennessee

When: July 10-12, 2014

Please consider three things:

1. ATTENDING and building new & stronger relationships.
2. Volunteering at least 1 hour of your conference time to work in the Alabama/Zone 4 Booth.
3. Donating items or gift baskets for our booth drawings. (We request that you consider donating books written by Alabama Authors, Alabama/Auburn sports items, beach things, Mardi Gras objects, Huntsville Space Center items, and/or other things that are specific to our great state.)



Preliminary Schedule:

Tuesday, July 8

8:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Registration Open (if you are attending any Pre-Conference activities)

Thursday, July 10

7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Registration Open

10-11:30 a.m. Opening General Session Robert Fulghum

11:45 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Exhibit Hall Open

4:30-5:30 p.m. Exhibit Hall Reception

Friday, July 11

9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Exhibit Hall Open

Saturday, July 12

9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Exhibit Hall Open

Membership Report



*Amy Copeland
DeArmanville
Elementary
Oxford City*

Three Reasons Membership in AAESA is Important

Don't you love working with kids? The best part of my day is greeting students as they arrive at school. They often make me laugh. This week we are celebrating Read Across America. One of my teachers painted her face to look like the Grinch. This morning I was standing in the hall as students were unloading from the bus and saw one of my first graders look at her with his mouth hanging open. He walked down the hall with his mouth like that until he approached her and then he started smiling. What a great way to start the day! I know that we are all committed to doing what is best for our students. That commitment can often be challenging as a principal. Being a member of AAESA is beneficial in helping us to meet these challenges. Having the support of AAESA provides benefits that make our jobs a little less stressful. AAESA provides opportunities for forming connections, keeping us informed and providing us with the comfort that someone has our back when we deal with difficult situations.

Connections

Being connected to other principals is important. We do not have peers to network with in our building everyday so having opportunities to connect are beneficial. Membership in AAESA offers principals many opportunities to network. By attending district meetings, AAESA conferences or NAESP's Annual Conference, there are many ways to form a strong network with other principals. I always say that my best ideas are stolen. Hearing great things that other principals are doing to improve their schools motivates me to try new things in my building. It is also comforting to discuss issues with other principals and understand that we are all dealing with similar difficult situations.

AAESA Keeps You Informed

As a principal, we need to stay informed. AAESA

members are provided information through this newsletter, professional development, and legislative updates that we receive through CLAS. I have started many initiatives at my school from ideas that I have learned at the Fall Instructional Leadership Conference or CLAS conferences. As we all know, we need to stay informed about what is going on in the legislature. There are times when our voices need to be heard. Jim Chesnutt keeps us informed on what is happening in Alabama and David Fancher provides us with national information. CLAS also provides state board of education updates.

We've Got Your Back

It is comforting to know that we have someone to rely on if we become involved in difficult issues. No one wants to deal with legal situations but that is often a reality with our position. Knowing that when the going gets tough, we have strong support. AAESA members have \$2 million of individual professional liability coverage through NAESP and we also have great legal defense benefits through CLAS. Another benefit to AAESA members is that we have people who are our advocates in Montgomery and Washington. There are people making sure that principals are being represented in legislative issues.

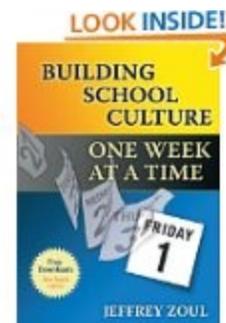
I am proud to be a member of AAESA. We need to strengthen our membership in order to keep our organization strong. I hope that you will join me in celebrating our current members and recruiting new members in the upcoming year.

HAVE YOU READ THIS BOOK?

Building School Culture One Week at a Time

by Jeffrey Zoul

Use "Friday Focus" teaching and learning memos to motivate and engage your staff every week, and help create a school culture focused on the growth of students and teachers.



Item# BSCOW | **Members \$34.95 Nonmembers \$39.95**

CLAS Board Meeting



*Catherine Rogers
Dixon Elementary
Mobile County*

The CLAS Board of Directors met on December 11, 2014, at the Marriott Legends in Prattville, Alabama. The meeting began with a call to order by

President Dr. May Bolden, followed by the approval of the agenda and minutes from the CLAS Board of Directors Retreat held on September 22nd and 23rd.

Dr. Tommy Bice was scheduled to speak to the CLAS Board, but was unable to attend. Dr. Craig Pouncey, Chief of Staff, addressed the board on the current and future budgetary projections. He began by thanking CLAS for their leadership and support of Alabama children and our public schools. Dr. Pouncey advised that next year will be a “stay hunkered down and do the best we can status.” He discussed hope for putting back over 400 middle school teachers, and reinstating operational dollars that have been lost. Another priority will be for additional transportation and an increase in the textbook allocation. Career technology, AM-STI and developing a true, on-line high school were mentioned for funding priorities.

A financial study is being done and a possible new template will be developed on equitable distribution of funds. The reality of a substantial raise is slight, noting that a small raise would be a possibility. Dr. Pouncey addressed the CLAS board with frank and realistic information and spent time answering questions from the board. He is always willing to give clear and realistic information and an overall outlook of the state’s financial status. We appreciate Dr. Pouncey for his time and perspective.

Earl Franks shared reports on the Professional Development Update, CIL – Certified Instructional Leader Program, CLAS Banner Schools timeline and the CLAS App status (not yet approved but hopes to be soon).

Jim Chesnutt gave a legislative update sharing that this was an election year and many seats were up for re-election, including the Secretary of State. Earl Franks followed with the CLAS Conference Update, noting that there will be no change in registration fees. The summer conference will be held in Montgomery on June 22nd -25th and will include Dr. Freeman Hrabowski, Todd Whitaker and Dr. Bice. What a great line-up!

Earl Franks reported that the CLAS building renovations have been completed. He shared a report on the legal defense fund and reminded us that the CLAS Award nominations are due by April 2nd. Dr. May Bolden made closing comments and adjourned the meeting. The Board dismissed and enjoyed lunch and a wonderful networking opportunity with each other.



Federal Relations



David Fancher
Bluff Park Elementary
Hoover City

At the end of February, your elected officers, Executive Director and Assistant Director braved the snow to visit Capitol Hill. The visit to Alabama's Congressional Representatives

is a big part of the State Leaders Conference. They met with our state Senators and the staff of all of our Congressmen. Their visit was to make sure that the concerns of Alabama Administrators were shared in person.

The forecast on the passage of education based bills is not strong. The mid-term elections will shorten the number of actual working days of Congress. This year all of Congress and 1/3 of the Senators are up for re-election. Both parties are guarding their positions very well and the possibility of both parties agreeing on legislation is limited. The ESEA is an example of this. Its passage this year is doubtful. The Republican Congress has already passed a version of ESEA. The Democratic Senate has not and with the retirement of the senior senator of the education committee announced, there

won't be much of a push to pass one. The administration is happy with the current waiver process which 42 states have received and will not be pushing for the bill either.

The following are some of the talking points that were shared with our representatives.

The Mental Health in Schools Act H.R. 628 /S. 195. This act would expand access to mental health services in schools. This bill is also viewed as a school safety issue.

A School Principal Recruitment and Training Act H.R. 1736 / S. 840. This act would amend Title II of ESEA to recruit, prepare and support principals, through capacity building measures that will improve student academic performance. Mentoring would be a major part of the bill with a focus on early career principals. Another recommendation for Title II is to increase the funding of professional development for principals from 4% to 10%.

The NAESP web site is a great resource for principals. Please go to the advocacy tab and see what you can do to make education better for all. Your level of involvement can range from just keeping current on legislature to sharing the stories of your school and the needs of your students with those that make the laws that regulate us.



Differentiated Professional Learning



Laurie King
Crestline Elementary
Mountain Brook City

One School's Journey to Empower Learners and Leaders.

**Laurie King, Catherine Waters,
Josh Watkins**

Introduction

It was late April and everyone in the room wanted to get out and enjoy the spring afternoon. Instead we were all gathered around a large dark oak conference table in a room with no windows and uncomfortable wooden chairs. It must have been 3:10 P.M. before the meeting started and you could literally feel the energy of those in attendance trying to will a short meeting. The subject quickly turned to the topic of school improvement goals. Principal Laurie King spoke up: "Let's make these goals something that we can really use. We don't want to just fill the paper. What would really make a difference to our students?" Members of the team began to converse about the latest successful strategies they were using with their students. Suddenly, the answer came into focus. Students need differentiated instruction. They need teachers who will use their time, energy, and expertise to identify individual's unique strengths and weaknesses and devise lessons and activities to meet them where they are. In that room, the Planning Team had unexpectedly discovered a simple but revolutionary concept. If customization, or differentiation, is what is best for students, then why is it not the right strategy for teachers? Isn't it the responsibility of the local school to facilitate growth in all professionals regardless of their position, career stage, or current level of expertise? Administrators and educational leaders continually call on teachers to meet students where they are, while at the same time, they are imple-

menting large-scale initiatives with little personalization. What we discovered was that the large-scale, broad-brush approach to professional learning had to change.

Why?

At the heart of any organization are the underlying principles by which the institution operates. This April moment was a defining one for Crestline Elementary School. It was when we realized that it was time to act on our beliefs about leadership. According to Robert Greenleaf (1977), one of the twentieth century's greatest theorists on leadership, the leader first seeks to serve then lead. This is why we use "we" and "Planning Team" synonymously. Leadership is shared. Leadership is service. The idea of servant leadership is one of our guiding principles, and in our school setting, this was the perfect opportunity to demonstrate that belief. Rarely are the occasions transformational in nature: this chance is different. The effects of advocating for this new paradigm in professional development could be the greatest demonstration of true servanthood that one could imagine.

For years, teachers have asked for real-life, job-embedded professional development that meets their needs as practitioners. It seems, however, that instead of increasing the level of customization in learning for educators, we have actively chosen to maintain the status quo. So, instead of continuing to provide whole-group experiences targeted at one particular area of growth, the planning team at Crestline chose a new, different, and exciting direction: a menu-driven approach to facilitate learning. It is simple, yet innovative, and it differentiates and models the goal we have for classroom instruction. We analyzed data to determine the areas of growth, asked teachers to reflect, and then planned targeted professional learning to address both weaknesses evidenced by the data and needs identified by teachers.

The innovation of the design is two-fold. Teachers are empowered to be a part of their own learning and professional development is designed based on needs assessments of the teachers. This ownership allows teachers true choice in their growth. This model of self-selection and personalization also supports the current body of research in relation to effective practice. Effective professional development has a sufficient amount of time, focuses on content knowledge, includes active learning, and enhances the knowledge and skills of teachers (Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman & Yoon, 2001). Through this model, teachers have the time to

Alabama Elementary Administrator

Differentiated Professional Learning Continued

learn and develop new procedures and skills that focus on increasing their content knowledge.

What?

The first challenge was to accurately gauge the professional learning needs of the Crestline faculty. The team met in September to develop a Professional Learning Needs Assessment. The assessment was designed by analyzing exemplar needs assessments and expanding these tools to meet Crestline's unique needs. The needs assessment was administered to the faculty using the Google Docs tool, and the data was then compiled and analyzed by the team. As they poured over the data, an intimidating and humbling reality came into focus. The data clearly demonstrated the need for professional development in a multitude of diverse areas of practice. These ranged from specific technology tools like iPads, Promethean Boards, blogs, and Prezis to strategies to use for both intervention and enrichment of students in language arts and mathematics. It was at this moment we realized that differentiation of professional development was a Herculean undertaking. Several questions immediately arose: How do we find experts for all these topics? How do we schedule these times? How do we measure success? How are we going to meet all of these felt professional needs?

The response was to fall back upon our beliefs about leadership and collaboration. We realized we needed to use the resources that were already in our building to lead this transformation. We started asking our local experts about their willingness to facilitate sessions; to our surprise, they were excited and honored. This opportunity gave our emerging leaders a way to use and further develop their skills in a safe, authentic setting. The team also determined that we should use our professional development time to conduct these sessions and designed a tool to evaluate them. The Planning Team knew capturing this feedback was a key to continuous improvement, so, the team designed an evaluation to be completed by participants at the end of each session. As we began to put the schedule together, the planning team started to fully engage in the process. missing. Teachers still did not have true choice. They had chosen the topics, the time, and the direction, but there was still some piece of autonomy missing. What if none of the sessions offered in February met a teacher's needs?

So, there we were back around the big dark conference room table. Once again, our planning team demonstrated that we are all smarter than any one of us. Using the feedback from the needs assessment, the concept of a

menu began to take shape. We came up with a schedule for eighteen sessions to be offered over the course of the year, with teachers selecting three to attend, plus an additional mandatory session on bullying prevention. If teachers did not have an interest in three of these areas for development, they were allowed to submit, for consideration, their own form of professional development they would attend outside of the school setting. The goal was to give teachers complete autonomy over their professional development. With the framework and sessions set, it was time to start the work. We were really going to differentiate professional learning to meet the needs of the faculty. The next real question was whether this bold plan would work.

Results

Throughout the fall and winter the sessions were conducted on campus. We used a short survey to evaluate effectiveness. After eighteen sessions and a total of one hundred and thirty-two attendees, only three surveys indicated that a teacher felt a session was not worthwhile. Feedback from this survey has also overwhelmingly indicated that teachers will apply what they have learned. The results even indicated participants would return to the local experts for additional support in the future. This ability to follow up so easily and extend professional growth has become an unintended benefit of using our own wealth of knowledge, contributing to even greater success for this endeavor. Additionally, it has led us to look at ways to further improve the implementation of this form of professional development next year.

Works Cited

- Garet, M. S., Porter, A. C., Desimone, L, Birman, B. F., & Yoon, K. Y. (2001). What makes professional development effective? Results from a national sample of teachers. *American Educational Research Journal*, 38 (4), 9151-945.
- Greenleaf, R.K. (1977). *Servant leadership: A journey into the nature of legitimate power & greatness*. New York: Paulist Press.

AAESA Welcomes Our New Members

District I

Kim Brown	Cullman County Schools
Shane Bryan	Morgan County Schools
Rebecca Burt	Morgan County Schools
Thomas Casteel	Colbert County Schools
Shireen Coleman	Cullman County Schools
Susan Hayes	Hartselle City Schools
Burt Helton	Lauderdale County
Keith Hood	Winston County Schools
Cherie Humphries	Morgan County Schools
David Isbell	Colbert County Schools
Phillip Jarmon	Athens City Schools
Tony Johnson	Cullman County Schools
Randy Lee	Winston County Schools
Tanya McCain	Morgan County Schools
Cleo Miller	Limestone County Schools
Jay Page	Cullman City Schools
Denise Schuman	Cullman County Schools
Ann Scott	Franklin County Schools
Hank Summerford	Morgan County Schools
Scott Sutton	Athens City Schools
Joshua Swindall	Cullman City Schools
Angie Yarbrough	Cullman County Schools

District II

Joyce Andrews-Mark	Mobile County Schools
Kimba Drakeford	Mobile County Schools
Joy Gould	Mobile County Schools
Karen Hilsee	Mobile County Schools
Nancy Lowell	Mobile County Schools
Dianne Reynolds	Mobile County Schools
Luann Rice	
Ashtiny Roberts	Mobile County Schools
June Stanford	Mobile County Schools

District III

Jeanne Burkhalter	Tuscaloosa City Schools
Tommy Chism	Lamar County Schools
Vanessa Clay	Tuscaloosa County
Antonio Cooper	Tuscaloosa County
Debbie Crawford	Tuscaloosa County
Keri Criss	Tuscaloosa County
Gracie Franks	
Rosemary Hataway	
Ann Jackson	Jasper City Schools
Gary McCarley	Marion County Schools
Donna Palmer	Marion County Schools
Tiffany Spencer	Tuscaloosa County
Josh Weatherly	Marion County Schools
Sally Wells	Tuscaloosa County

Veronica White

Tuscaloosa City Schools

District IV

Maurine Black	Vestavia Hills City
Jason Bostic	Shelby County Schools
Linda Campanotta	Vestavia Hills City
Kay Cooper	Shelby County Schools
Celita Deem	Hoover City Schools
Dana DePew	
Kimberly Evans-Lowe	
Elvirita Finley	Birmingham City
Tara Foster	U of A Birmingham
Abbie Freeman	Homewood City Schools
Kim Hauser	Vestavia Hills City
SchoolsKe'Andrea Jones	Alabaster City Schools
Crystal Littlejohn	Hoover City Schools
Ashley McCombs	Mt. Brook City Schools
Donna Mitchell, Ed.D.	
Sandy Ritchey	Mt. Brook City Schools
Stephanie Sealy	Alabaster City Schools
Linda Searby	U of A Birmingham
Lisa Shaddix	Leeds City Schools
Sherita Williams	Hoover City Schools
Carol Williamson	Alabaster City Schools

District V

Monte Abner	Sylacauga City Schools
Chris Andrews	Dekalb County Schools
Philip Bryan	Dekalb County Schools
Jeanna Chandler	Calhoun County Schools
Julie Green	Sylacauga City Schools
Jennifer Hannah	Pell City Schools
Hope Harris	Etowah County Schools
Houston Henderson	Fort Payne City Schools
Amanda Hollawa	Marshall County Schools
Amy Johnson	Oxford City Schools
Susan Maxwell	Calhoun County Schools
Clay Mitcham	Oxford City Schools
Lori Moss	Etowah County Schools
Dianne Patterson	Boaz City Schools
Laura Phillips	The Donoho School
Amber Ray	Calhoun County Schools
Beth Rigsby	Guntersville City Schools
Shareka Shephard	Talladega County Schools
Ashley Walls	Boaz City Schools
Stacy Watts	Boaz City Schools

District VI

Leon Clark	Demopolis City Schools
Donna Finch	Autauga County Schools

AAESA Welcomes New Members

Aubrey Larkin
Marshae Madison-Pelt
Susan Morgan
Angelina Turner

District VII

Shelia Baker
Martha Burdette
Allison Burton
Jacqueline Campbell
Calandra Crenshaw
DeNitta Easterling
Sharon Elder
Cheryl Fountain
Chris Holley
Tonya Keene
Marceda Lewis
Jason Lowe
Nino Mason
Larry McQuiston
Jeanie Miller
Mary Patton
Joe Ross
Randy Shaw
Bonnie Sullivan
Jaelyn Taylor
Tiffany Williams

District VIII

Becky Alexander
Donnashele Bruister
Rebecca Ducote
Dawn Gillis
Tiffany Irby
Anne Lambert
Patricia Malisham
Taraethia R. Sullivan
Dyeatra Todd
Sandra Williams

District IX

Linda Boykin
Sean Clark
Joy Colvin
SCMisty Freeman
Reeivice Girtman
Barbara Greathouse
B. T. Hinson
Tracey Horn
Marcus Howell

Selma City Schools
Perry County Schools
Dallas County Schools
Choctaw County Schools

Russell County Schools
Chambers County
Chambers County
Montgomery County
Elmore County Schools
Montgomery County
Phenix City Schools
Montgomery County
Elmore County Schools
Lee County Schools
Phenix City Schools
Auburn City Schools
Opelika City Schools

Opelika City Schools
Opelika City Schools
Opelika City Schools
Montgomery County
Elmore County Schools
Elmore County Schools
Macon County Schools

Clarke County Schools
Baldwin County Schools
Baldwin County Schools
Thomasville City
Baldwin County Schools
Brewton City Schools
Baldwin County Schools
Clarke County Schools
Baldwin County Schools
Thomasville City

Enterprise City
Ozark City Schools
Covington County
Houston County
Eufaula City Schools
Geneva County Schools
Geneva County Schools
Henry County Schools
Daleville City

Randy McGlaun
Holly Mitchell
Vivian Palmer
Seth Richards
Ann Stafford
Joanna Taylor
Tracey Thomas
Chris Thomasson
Willie Turner
Greg Yance

District X

Becky Balentine
Kristy Bell
Stacy Blair
Autumn Bray
Andy Caves
Brett Chapman
Lydia Davenport
Jeanne Dunaway
Paula Edwards
Daphne Jah
Michael Livingston
Britt Lovelace
Jeff Malone
Kathleen McKay
Mark Minskey
Georgina Nelson
Nichole Phillips
Julie Pool
Helen Scott
Lora Snell

Covington County Schools
Dothan City Schools
Pike County Schools
Covington County Schools
Geneva County Schools
Troy City Schools
Pike County Schools
Covington County Schools
Troy City Schools
Houston County Schools

Huntsville City Schools
Madison County Schools
Madison City Schools
Huntsville City Schools
Madison County Schools
Madison City Schools
Alabama A&M University
Madison County Schools
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Huntsville City Schools
Madison County Schools



Meet your District VIII President



Julie Pierce
Gulf Shores
Baldwin County

Greetings, from Gulf Shores Elementary School! I am Julie Pierce and have served as Principal for six years. Prior to coming to Gulf Shores, I was the Assistant Principal at J. Larry Newton School, Reading

Coach at Summerdale School, and a second grade teacher in North Alabama in Guntersville and Albertville, and a fifth grade teacher in Orlando, Florida. This is my twenty-sixth year in education!

I grew up in Oneonta, Alabama and am a proud graduate of Oneonta High School. I graduated from the University of Alabama and began my career as an accountant. Later, I returned to UAB to earn a Master's degree in Elementary Education and a certificate in Educational Leadership from the University of South Alabama.

My husband, David, and I live in Fairhope, Alabama. I have two children and three stepchildren. My son, Travis Warlick, is a software engineer, and my daughter, Margaret Warlick, is attending nursing school at South University in Tampa, Florida. John, my oldest stepson, is a welder at Austal; Stephen is an engineering major at the University of Alabama; and Katie attends Fairhope High School. I am a cat lover, and Malibu rules the house.

I love spending time with my family around the dinner table and the pool, putting together puzzles, and talking. My daddy and I can talk the ears off Billy goats! David and I love to tailgate in Tuscaloosa and go to Alabama football games, but my favorite hobby is sitting on the beach reading!

Most of my waking hours are spent at work, and I am so proud to be associated with Baldwin County Schools. Gulf Shores Elementary is proud to be a part of the Digital Renaissance in Baldwin County. We have hosted four Digital Renaissance Showcases to share project-based learning with educators across the state and nation. Each intermediate student has a MacBook Air, and our primary students have iPads. This 21st century learning opportunity has increased the depth, richness, and authenticity of learning! I am a teacher at heart and know that education is one of the most rewarding careers a person can pursue. After serving in the business field for several years, I know what it's like on the "other side," and I treasure my days in education!

UPCOMING EVENTS



NAESP Convention

July 10-12, 2014

Opryland Hotel

Nashville, Tennessee



AAESA/AASCD

Fall Instructional Leadership Conference

November 2-5, 2014

Perdido Beach Resort

Orange Beach, Alabama

Marketing Lessons from the Grateful Dead



Jim Chesnutt
AAESA Assistant
Executive Director

***The Grateful Dead – AAESA
– Building Community***

While attending the National Leaders Conference with your

AAESA officers February 23 – 25, we heard David Meerman Scott speak at the opening session. This was a very intriguing talk entitled “Marketing Lessons from the Grateful Dead”.

What I brought away from this speaker is this. AAESA needs to build community to connect with our members and potential members. How would this work and why the Grateful Dead marketing lessons?

First the Grateful Dead, as many of you may know were very unique in that they allowed anyone to film (yes, back then it was film) or record (probably on tape recorders) their concerts. No problem if someone wanted to put their music out to anyone that wanted it. They weren’t concerned about recording rights and all that stuff.

What happened was, again as you already know, the band developed a very large following. Their music and concerts were everywhere. Being a Dead Head was beyond popular.

How does this relate to AAESA and building community? Here’s what Mr. Meerman Scott told us. To be relevant for your members you have to be seen, heard and show members you have something to offer. Just as the Grateful Dead built a community of followers using the means they had at hand and way ahead of the times, we must do the same for AAESA.

We must begin to grow a community just as you do with Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and other social media you may be a part of in today’s world of technology. There is much we can offer through the expertise of our members and the involvement of our association with CLAS and NAESP.

Think of the possibilities....an AAESA Facebook page with up to date post of happenings within our association, someone contributing a resource for professional

development for your staff or to use as a forum for solving problems by communicating with others dealing with the same issues as you. As someone who works with the legislature, I can see it being another tool for advocacy.

Matter of fact at our board meeting on March 6, AAESA President Debbie Nelson brought this up as new business and board member Autumn Jeter volunteered to look into the development of a Facebook page for AAESA. This is exciting to think we can show our community of members and potential members what we’re all about. If we build a following we can build AAESA.

I would love to hear your ideas on this and any other way to promote or to put AAESA out there to elementary principals everywhere. Let’s do this the Grateful Dead way!

Also, I would like to thank the officers who attended the NAESP National Leaders Conference. President Debbie Nelson, President Elect Debbie Deavours, Vice President Laurie King, NAESP State Representative Christie Mitten, State editor Jill Eaton and David Fancher, our Federal Relations Coordinator. They did a great job going to visit our congressional delegation and discussing issues concerning education on the national level. It is a pleasure to watch them represent you.

Hope all of you are making plans to go to Nashville for the NAESP Convention July 12 – 14, 2014. It’s not very often that we have one this close. Look for more information on the convention in this magazine or go to the NAESP website to register.

And last, as the school year winds down, I hope you will keep AAESA in your minds. We need any and everyone to become active and enjoy the benefits of membership. Networking is still the number one advantage of membership. Sharing with principals that deal with the same day to day decision making as you do and being able to just talk is so important even with all the other ways of sharing. We need you and your face to be a part of AAESA.

If there is anything I can do for you or your school as your AAESA Assistant Executive Director don’t hesitate to contact me.

Thanks for all you do.

Ten Tips for Effective Classroom Management

Keeping a classroom under control is often a teacher’s biggest challenge—but a new report suggests that teacher preparation programs aren’t doing enough to help aspiring teachers learn classroom management.

The National Council on Teacher Quality’s (NCTQ) December 2013 report, [“Training our future teachers: Classroom Management”](#) argues that many of the nation’s teacher preparation programs provide inadequate training in proper classroom management techniques. The report cites research that states over 40 percent of new teachers felt either “not at all prepared,” or “only somewhat prepared” to handle classroom management and discipline.

Part of the problem stems from the assumption that instructional virtuosity will erase the need for defined classroom management strategies. However, this way of thinking ignores how classroom management strategies can enhance teaching at every level. NCTQ makes five research-based recommendations on what strategies should be taught in teacher preparation programs. These strategies should be considered equally by principals who want to encourage better classroom management among their own teachers:

1. **Rules.** Teachers need to be explicit about what their expectations are for student behavior in the classroom. The rules should be taught and applied in a fair and consistent manner.
2. **Routines.** Routines and procedures let students know how to act during class activities, such as group work or handing in homework. Momentum for instruction is also key in managing class time and materials, especially during transition between activities.
3. **Praise.** Positive behavior should be reinforced with praise or other rewards. Praise itself should be specific and sincere, and should focus on congratulating behaviors, rather than the individual.
4. **Misbehavior.** Noncompliance with class rules and expectations should have consequences. It’s essential, however, that these consequences not only have varying levels of severity, but that they are applied consistently.
5. **Engagement.** High-quality instruction should engage students, and the more engaged the student, the less likely they are to act out. Opportunities for student participation will ensure that students spend more time learning and less time misbehaving.

In addition to these “Big Five” recommendations, the report also identifies a number of strategies that principals and teachers should consider.

- **Manage the physical environment.** Teachers should be able to see every student, manage traffic flow during transitions, and strategically group desks.
- **Motivate students.** Different from engagement, motivation focuses on whether or not students want to learn or follow rules.
- **Use the least intrusive means.** Subtle techniques for misbehavior include proximity, rule reminders, giving a “teacher look,” or redirecting student’s attention back to the lesson with a substantive question.
- **Parent and community involvement.** Making phone calls home, meeting with parents, or other forms of stakeholder engagement can help with a student’s behavior
- **Social/emotional/cultural sensitivity.** Teachers who understand students’ social, emotional, and cultural backgrounds are better classroom managers.

Combined with the “Big Five,” these classroom management strategies can help teachers stay in control and spend more time teaching. By encouraging these skills in new teachers, principals can help fill the gap between preparation and practice.

—Dateline NAESP

NAESP Dedicates Dawn Hochsprung Tree of Life Memorial



To honor the life and service of longtime NAESP member and late Sandy Hook Elementary School principal, [Dawn Hochsprung](#), the NAESP Board of Directors has established the [Dawn Hochsprung Tree of Life Memorial](#). The memorial, which is displayed at the NAESP Headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia, was created to honor elementary and middle-level principals who have made an extraordinary sacrifice during their career as an educator.

NAESP President Nancy Flatt Meador officially dedicated the memorial to Hochsprung on Friday, February 21, to an audience of NAESP Board Members, NAESP staff, and invited guests. NAESP Board Director Jillayne Flanders reflected on Hochsprung's memorial service, which she attended representing the NAESP Board of Directors and NAESP members. "There's not a principal I know who would have not done the same thing [as Dawn Hochsprung]," she said. "To be able to do this in her honor and in the honor of all principals who will protect their children and their staffs is a bit overwhelming."

The memorial "tree" features a trunk comprised of the interwoven bodies of children, or "angels," that leads to a large blossom of leaves. Each leaf is designed to bear the name of an individual to be honored.

Details for the nomination process, which will be administered through NAESP state affiliates, will be announced this spring.

—*Dateline NAESP*

NAESP Representative 's Report



Christie Mitten
Holly Hill Elementary
Enterprise City

National Leadership Conference

The last week of February, you were well represented at the NAESP National Leaders Conference in Washington D.C.! The delegation from Alabama was Debbie Deavors, Laurie King, Debbie Nelson, David Fancher, Jill Eaton, Jim Chesnutt and Earl Franks. After two days of non-stop meetings and policy discussions with NAESP leadership and representatives from all over the country, your delegation ventured to Capitol Hill and conferred with representatives from all of the elected officials from the state of Alabama.

The platforms discussed with your elected officials revolved around current and pending legislation that could directly impact us as administrators in Alabama. First, we requested that our elected officials seriously examine the need to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Since the law has been expired for several years, it was discussed that the best policy pertaining to education be a comprehensive bill, not a collection of the 50 different waivers that are currently being sought by the various state departments of education. This is long overdue and needs to be addressed by our elected leaders. Secondly, we pressed the need for federal support for professional development and mentoring for administrators.

Though Title II funds traditionally are utilized for professional development it is necessary for administrators and their professional development needs to be met. Since administrators' professional development needs are not specifically addressed in the current legislation, there is a need for administrators to be added as the beneficiaries of such federal funding. Another piece of legislation that is currently in committee that is vital for schools pertains to the need for funding of mental health training and initiatives in schools. As we all know, there is a deficit in the knowledge and training for schools and administrators who are charged with educating students who often have mental health issues that are poorly addressed if addressed at all. Finally, we implored our elected officials to allow states to be in charge of devel-

oping evaluation systems for school administrators. If the Department of Education were to get involved in the development of such evaluation systems, we recommended that they follow the NAESP Guidelines for successful school administrators. In the midst of driving snow, we felt as though our suggestions were well received. Please be sure to contact your legislators in Washington to make sure that they know that we all stand together!



Alabama Elementary Administrator

Meet Your District II President



Deborah Fletcher *St. Elmo Elementary* *Mobile County*

Deborah has been the principal of St. Elmo Elementary for the past seven years. The school is located in south Mobile County nestled among cotton fields. She considers it an extreme honor to serve the students, parents, and community of the St. Elmo and Irvington area. The school serves 423 students of diverse demographic backgrounds. The faculty and staff work tirelessly to provide an exemplary academic program that focuses on the individual needs of children.

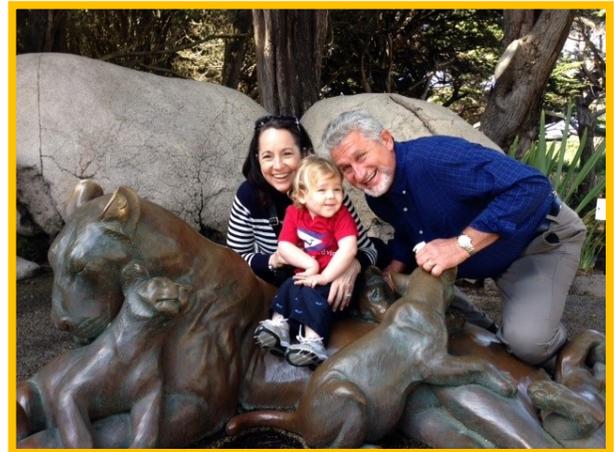
Deborah has been married for 33 years to David Edward Fletcher. The couple was actually introduced on a blind date, and were married one year later. Deborah's husband holds a bachelor's degree from the University of New Orleans Theological Seminary and is an ordained Southern Baptist pastor. Deborah and David are the proud parents of Laura Rebecca and Elizabeth Anne. Once the girls entered elementary school, Deborah enrolled in the University of South Alabama and received her bachelor's degree in elementary education in 1992. After teaching fifth grade for eleven years at Dixon Elementary and serving as Mobile County's science resource teacher in a partnership with the Gulf Coast Exploreum Science Center, she received her master's degree in educational leadership from the University of South Alabama.

Laura, Deborah's oldest daughter, is 31 and has been married to Jacob Ansley for five years. Laura holds a bachelor's and master's degree from the University of South Alabama in occupational therapy, and Jacob holds a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from Auburn University. Until the birth of her first child, Halleck Ansley, she served as a pediatric occupational therapist at USA Children's and Women's Hospital. Jacob presently serves as Operations Assistant at the Chevron Refinery in Pascagoula, Mississippi. Elizabeth, Deborah's youngest daughter, is 30 and has been married to Joshua Taylor for two and half years. Elizabeth holds two bachelor's degrees and a master's degree in interior design from Auburn University. Her husband Joshua also holds a bachelor's degree from Auburn University. She is presently the interior designer for the San Francisco VA Medical Center, and her husband is a program assistant with HR. Since Deborah's father graduated from Auburn in 1957, the family bleeds orange and blue. War Eagle!

Halleck is the first grandchild and an absolute joy in the life of his proud "Nonna" and "Pop Pop". Halleck was born March 14, 2012. He loves trains "choo-choos", riding on Pop Pop's "Mow-Mow", fire trucks, puppies and kitties, especial-

ly Loki. Deborah's newest and favorite hobby is playing and traveling with Halleck as much as she can. When she is not playing with Halleck, she loves riding bikes, taking walks with her husband, riding horses on the beach, and traveling to sunny places. Her favorite long distance trip was to Italy. Although, she did love snorkeling with stingrays in Grand Cayman. Her philosophy of life can be summed up in a quote from Andy Andrews. ***"Every single thing you do matters. You have been created as one of a kind. You have been created in order to make a difference. You have within you the power to change the world."***

Andy Andrews



District News

District II News

Mary B. Austin Elementary School

Mary B. Austin School celebrated the Olympic Games by holding their very own Academic Olympics. Students strived to achieve reading and math goals and were awarded gold, silver and bronze medals for their achievements. Students throughout the school also participated in various Talents Unlimited Olympic activities and research projects. The festivities began with a school-wide torch relay and opening

math, science, and technology products. QR codes dotted the walls, just waiting for parents to scan and view their children's digital projects. Special speakers from Baker High School and Clark-Shaw Magnet school spoke to students about their robotics programs and the applications of math and science in the real world. They even brought some of their own robots to display and demonstrate for the families. A special slideshow and movie trailer created by one of Dixon's talented fifth grade students was shown to parents, giving them an actual visual of how science, math, and technology is integrated and used every day at Dixon! Parents participated in meaningful math and science activities with their chil-



Dixon Elementary School

Dixon Super Thinkers Unite!

On Tuesday, February 18, Dixon Elementary held a very special AMSTI family night. The theme was "Super Thinkers". Evidence of super thinking and super work was abounding. The walls were covered in scholarly

dren to really get a feel for the kind of learning that takes place in their classrooms. It truly was a "super" night!

Marcelete Stewart
Robbins Elementary
Mobile County

District News Continued

District IV News

Members of District IV have been very busy emailing and calling our state legislators regarding the bill that some legislators are trying to introduce that would repeal our state-adopted College and Career Ready Standards. After hearing our guest speaker, Dr. Julie Hannah, speak at our January meeting, our members have been rallying our teachers and fellow administrators to contact those legislators that support the repeal of the CCRS to let them know all the good things the CCRS has brought about. We have also been contacted those legislators who support the CCRS to thank them for their continued support.



On February 20, District IV met again at the Jefferson County Board of Education building. Guest speakers Jeannie Pate and Kristy Watkins from the Alabama Reading Initiative talked to our group regarding College and Career Ready Standards and specific administrative "look fors" during learning. Frances Finney, District IV's NDP nominee, announced that she had been selected as one of three finalists to represent Alabama for National Distinguished Principal. The Selection Committee for NDP visited Gresham Elementary on Feb. 26 to see firsthand the wonderful job Frances Finney has been doing at Gresham Elementary. District IV is very proud of Frances and wish her the best in her nomination.

Jeanette Campisi-Snider
Chelsea Park Elementary
Shelby County

District V News

Most of the time when I watch or listen to the news, it usually reflects negatively on some aspect of society especially concerning public education. Fortunately, those of us in public schools know all too well what we do each day to meet the needs of our students. We have seen this most recently when Alabama was hit with severe winter weather and educators made sacrifices to ensure that our children were well cared for, even if it meant spending the night at school. You didn't hear educators complaining because taking care of the children has and always will be a priority.

Here is an example of something else our educators are doing to help children. Several schools in District V and across Alabama participate in a program called, "Backpack Blessings". Some schools may have other names for it but it has one goal and that is to provide food for our children at home and on the weekends. Civic groups and churches as well as individuals have all teamed up with schools to assist them with this project. This is basically how it works. Canned food items and other non-perishable goods are donated to the school. Staff volunteers take these items and coordinate them into bags that will be sent home with the students. These bags of food items are sealed and then placed in the backpacks or book bags of students who have been previously selected who may need this help. This is always done in private and students are never singled out or embarrassed. The backpacks are zipped or fastened so that no one knows students are carrying these items home. Of-course the parents/guardians have been informed and must give their permission for the school to provide this service. Thousands of students are receiving help from this program or similar programs. One of the children at my school said, "This came from people who cared about me."

District News Continued

Whatever community outreach program your school is doing, please know that it is very much appreciated. It may not be “in the news” but it is something that is making a difference in children’s lives and is just one more example of educators going above and beyond the responsibilities of their position. I’m sure all of our schools



across the state have some program that they are doing to assist our children whether it be at school or at home.

Thank you for what you do each day to meet the needs of our children!

Charlie Gardner
Hokes Bluff Elementary
Etowah County

District VII News

Greetings from District VII!! Our district is growing. We had 17 members present at our Spring meeting. This is a record attendance for us. The meeting was hosted by Cynthia Meals, our district president, at Beauregard Elementary, a K-4 school of 725 students. Our meal was sponsored by Meals Chiropractic Clinic in Opelika.

Christy Blythe, Curriculum and Technology Coordinator for Lee County Schools was our presenter. Before moving to her current position, she taught fifth grade for 8 years and was a media specialist for 2 years. She presented technology information regarding the ASPIRE, various



sites to use for test practice, and some sites for keyboarding practice. The group discussed the ASPIRE and challenges they were facing at their schools.

Officers for 2014-2015 were elected. Shawanna Boyd, president; Dr. Pam Fourtenbury, vice



president; Joe Ross, secretary/treasurer; and Cynthia Meals, district representative.

District News Continued

District VIII News

District VIII met February 5th at Ivey's Fine Dining in Robertsdale and Bill Miller Photography and Tem Blalock Fundraising so graciously paid for the meal. Gail Morgan from CLAS was our guest speaker and gave us much needed information on the PLU process. Julie Pierce, District VIII President, called the meeting to order. Jonathan Ellis, who serves on the Awards Committee, read the qualifications for the CLAS Leadership Award and asked for nominations from the group. Julie Pierce was selected by the group to receive the District VIII Nomination for this award. Jonathan reminded principals that Julie's District nomination would be submitted in writing at the Spring Planning Meeting in March. The Executive Board Committee will select the Principal to receive the State AAESA CLAS Leadership March 6th. Keri Shofner read the minutes for approval; Mark Doherty gave the financial report; Abby Hamilton urged attendees both principals and assistant principals to join CLAS and NAESP; and Robbie Owen worked with Jonathan Ellis to nominate and select the District VIII CLAS Leadership Award. Julie



Pierce, Abby Hamilton, and Charlotte Beasley joined the Executive Board in meeting with Senators and Representatives to discuss educational issues. Julie found her grandfather's photo on the 6th floor of the State House.



Charlotte Beasley
Stapleton Elementary
Baldwin County

District News Continued

District IX News

On Wednesday, January 22nd, District IX held their second meeting of the year. More than 20 members of AAESA District IX met at The Mossy Grove Restaurant in Troy where we enjoyed great food and fellowship.

Thank you to Bill Miller Photography and Billy Jones for sponsoring our meeting. Our guest speaker was Leslie Dennis from the CLAS office. She shared with us all of the great professional development opportunities that are offered by our parent organization, CLAS.

All members were encouraged to be active and contact our legislators regarding education needs and concerns in advance of the upcoming legislative session.

Our next meeting will be held this spring at The Old Mill in Dothan and we hope to have an incredible turnout as we work to continue to strengthen District IX throughout southeast Alabama.

Christie Mitten
Holly Hill Elementary
Enterprise City





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