Waller Martin
Alabama’s
2018 National Distinguished Principal
I just reviewed our membership numbers as of November 1st. We are up 21 active members from our December, 31, 2017 for a total of 611! We doubled our Aspiring Administrators from 18 to 36! AAESA Emeritus - up 1! Over the past several years, we have been down in membership at this point! I am thrilled! Let’s continue to encourage our peer administrators and especially our Assistant Principals AND teacher leaders to join AAESA and CLAS!

As expected, our NAESP numbers have dropped by 296 members for all three categories. It saddens me as I am a huge supporter of NAESP, yet finances, family priorities, and possibly not truly understanding what NAESP can do for you are all reasons that I have heard why our members have chosen to drop our National membership. It is what it is. Yet I, as the board, truly feel that we have to build and strengthen our state organization (AAESA), before we can be a strong force nationally.

I’ve been fortunate to meet so many strong administrators across Alabama, and we must build our local district associations and tell our stories locally in order to continue growing. My challenge to you is to take time to attend your local district meetings. Most districts only meet three times a year, yet this time is worth it to meet and grow with your local administrators. Always, always invite and include your assistant principals because it is you who builds the importance of collaboration and networking more than outside your school or district. You will be amazed how much fun it is! Be involved, it takes less time than you think!

Lastly, I would like to reflect on students, those we are entrusted to serve. We have all said that times have changed, our students are not like the students we served when we first began teaching. Yet, research says that we have to adjust to meet the needs of all. Did you get that? The adults have to adjust. The real challenge is how do we do that without feeling like we are giving up on our core beliefs? My answer is through understanding, empathy, relationships, and high standards.

Shout-out to my ELL teachers, Angela Adams & Kimberly Cunningham send out “Did You Know?” emails at least once a week. Each one refers to all of my answers above in one way or another. Yet, this week should make our teachers think before reacting, and hopefully “adjust” what they do...(this one is easy!)

**DID YOU KNOW...**
**Cultural differences sometimes lead to misunderstandings in the classroom?**

For example, Americans are much more possessive than people from some other cultures. We are possessive of our things, as well as our knowledge. This attitude is not held by many people from other cultures. Many cultures value collaboration over independence. There is more sharing and communal property. Children from these cultures may not understand why, for example, if you have four pencils and I need one I can’t just take it. If you have plenty, why wouldn’t you share? This applies to answers as well. If you have the answer and I need it, I’m gonna look. To these children, this is not inappropriate behavior.

First, teach the student to ask.
Next, teach the student to listen for a response.

We need to teach them the hidden rules of our culture before punishing them.

Follow the links below to learn more about culturally responsive teaching:


http://www.colorincolorado.org/article/culturally-relevant-books-ell-classroom

http://www.colorincolorado.org/article/honoring-family-classroom

Enjoy your upcoming holiday!
In Whose Shade Are You Sitting?

Rickey Darby
AAESA Assistant Executive Director

Recently in a Hallmark movie, the lead actor said, “We all sit in the shade provided by trees planted by others long ago.” All of us have many things for which to be thankful as we enter the holiday season. I’m not sure who provided your personnel or professional shade, but this is the season to tell them how grateful you are to them for making a difference in your life. This is true in our schools, as well. We need to thank our faculty and staff who make a difference each day in the lives of our children, their parents and our communities.

Although the weather was not ideal, I am thankful for all the administrators who attended the AAESA Fall Instructional Leadership Conference and made it a success this year. I am thankful for the opportunity to work with the leadership of our organization throughout the year. One hundred thirty-two administrators registered for the three-day professional learning opportunity. We had the opportunity to collaborate while listening to a variety of speakers on topics including leadership, school culture, public relations, advocacy, and dealing with families. One of the highlights was the Tuesday afternoon share tables where sixteen administrators led discussions on a variety of topics. Administrators were able to engage in meaningful conversations and gain ideas to implement in their local school. Vice-President Michael Wilson challenged the members at the closing to make a difference in the lives of the children in our school.

Lauria Merritt is thankful for attending the conference and staying through the last general session. She was the big winner in the door prize drawings at the conference. In addition to the two nights at the Perdido Beach Resort, she was also a cash winner.

I am thankful for the administrators that are members of our professional organization. Any organization is only as strong as its membership. This has been a year of change within our professional organization. After many years as a joint membership state with NAESP, the members voted this summer to make it optional. Our state has a long-term relationship with the national organization.

It has been brought to our attention by several members that they thought they had maintained their NAESP membership when they renewed their CLAS membership. If you did intend to drop your NAESP membership, we want to make sure you are aware you will no longer have the following NAESP membership benefits:

- Membership in the National Association of Elementary School Principals retains your $2 million legal protection.
- Continue receiving the award-winning Principal magazine
- Receive significant discounts for NAESP members

If you want to maintain your NAESP membership, you need to call Starr at CLAS (1-800-239-3616) and ask her to make this addition.

Two points to ponder as this semester comes to an end:

- In Michael Bonner’s closing session at the conference, he shared the following quote: “You can’t demand a withdrawal from someone you have never invested in.”
- Remember to let your faculty and staffs know how much you appreciate the job they do. I recently received an email that included in the signature the following quote from Charles Schwab. “I have yet to find the man, however exalted his station, who did not do better work and put forth greater effort under a spirit of approval than under a spirit of criticism.”

As 2018 closes and 2019 begins, I encourage you to think about whose shade you are sitting in and where you are planting trees along your journey.
The National Distinguished Principal’s (NDP) experience in Washington was one I will remember for the rest of my life. I want to take this opportunity to personally thank the National Association for Elementary School Principal’s (NAESP) organization for hosting this event. My family and I were treated like “royalty” from the time we landed at Reagan International Airport. A special thanks to the NAESP staff including Kara Boyer and NAESP Director Earl Franks for organizing this event that recognized and paid tribute to our profession. I was so glad that AAESA Executive Director Ricky Darby and wife Jeanette accompanied us on the trip. They were so helpful and supportive and made the experience even more meaningful. I’m especially grateful for the enjoyable photo album that they presented me complete with memorable pictures from the entire NDP experience.

There were many highlights, including an opportunity to visit and tour our nation’s capital city. I also had the opportunity to meet with our U.S. Senator Doug Jones, who was very generous with his time. Senator Richard Shelby’s Chief of Staff, Katie Britt, also spent time with us. I especially enjoyed visiting with Katie, since she is one of my former students! I am so proud of her!

The event started on Thursday with each NDP speaking about themselves and their schools. I enjoyed learning so much about each NDP, where they came from, and their schools. I didn’t think I could sit through 60 speeches, but I enjoyed each one of them! I think this helped us all to be able to connect.

Thursday night we were treated to a welcome reception at the National Postal Museum, an event co-hosted by the U.S. Department of State. The museum was a beautiful venue for the affair, and we had an opportunity to meet, greet, network, and collaborate. I enjoyed meeting new people and sharing great conversations. We didn’t feel rushed, and we discussed everything from small group reading instruction to SEC football!

We had the opportunity to connect with Zone 4 NDP’s back at the hotel. We enjoyed fellowship and fun until late in the night! We shared a lot of great ideas.

I had been looking forward to Friday morning since this marked our trip to the White House. I had never been to the White House, and I always wanted to see inside this enormous building. The tour was not disappointing, and the rooms were everything we expected and more. I equally enjoyed the walk to the White House and the picture shoots.

As we returned from the White House, we each shared a memento from our state with one another. I shared Alabama peanuts, and they were a big hit! The Friday afternoon event was very monumental for our program and our profession. NAESP arranged a visit to the Department of Education. We had an opportunity to meet staff members and discussed topics such as school safety. I think this was monumental for principals to have an opportunity to have their voices heard and express concerns. I am forever grateful to NAESP for arranging this meeting and hope this is a beginning to build an even stronger bridge of communication between NAESP and the Department of Education. I would like to also express appreciation to the Department of Education for their hospitality and the welcome we received.

I had heard from everyone that the Friday Night Awards Banquet was indescribable and an event like no other. Let me assure you I was not disappointed!! I could not remember the last time that I had worn a tuxedo, and I needed help with some buttons!! We made pictures just like on Prom Night. The Awards Reception gave all the NDP’s an opportunity to bond even more. We all made pictures and exchanged cell phone numbers. None of us had any idea what lay ahead.

As the curtains opened to the banquet room, the

Alabama Elementary Administrator
The tables were immaculately decorated, and we all found our spots. The program was informative, but not lengthy. Then came the Awards Presentation. We were called in alphabetical order, so I was first.

As I walked across the stage to receive my certificate and bell, two things crossed my mind. Number one, don’t fall! Number two, I quickly reflected on so many of the people who have helped me over the years. I thought about my faculty/staff, students, and parents. I thought about mentors and fellow administrators who have had such an impact both professionally and personally. My family is my greatest support system, and I draw so much strength from them. I have been blessed in many ways by people who gave me an opportunity and took a chance on me. I am forever grateful to all these people who have helped me along the way. As I exited the stage I realized I would not be where I am today, were it not for so many people.

The first person to greet me as I returned to my table was NAESP Executive Director Earl Franks. Earl shook my hand, told me he was proud of me, and encouraged me to “keep up the good work.” It meant a lot to me for Earl to personally take the time to congratulate me. I remember Earl as a building Principal at Luverne High School in Luverne, AL. Earl encouraged me to join CLAS and become active in professional organizations like NAESP.

I truly didn’t want to go to bed Friday night, because I did not want the experience to end!! I found myself wandering around the hotel Saturday morning looking for fellow NDP’s. There are already plans for an NDP reunion!! I will cherish these life-long friendships, and I brought back many great memories to Alabama.

I have been in education for a long time, and I love this profession. It is indeed a privilege to be a school Principal. I have the opportunity to spend each day with excited children who love learning and are happy to be at school. I am surrounded by good people who make a difference in children’s lives every day. I am fortunate to work with a supportive School Board and Superintendent. I am blessed to live in a community with parents that care deeply about and support our school system.

I will forever be grateful for this NDP experience, and everything it has meant to me. I am humbled by the honor to represent Alabama as the National Distinguished Principal. Finally, I encourage all of you to become active in CLAS and NAESP. There are numerous benefits and opportunities. We are all stronger as we stand together to accomplish a common goal, and that is to what’s right for our children.
An Incredible Experience Cont’d
An Incredible Experience Cont’d
Call to Order (Frances Finney); called at 3:51pm, November 12, 2018.

Agenda Adopted by Charlie Gardner and seconded by Michael Wilson; unanimously adopted.

Minutes Approved by Laurie King and seconded by Lauria Merritt; unanimously approved.

NAESP Representative (Matt Kiser): As per Ann Henley from NAESP- Al had 50-70% of membership; if you get letter from them that you did not sign up for NAESP membership, please do so to ensure that you do not lose your $2 million legal coverage. The next conference will be July 10-12 in Spokane, Washington. If 3 or more people from your district sign up together before Dec.14, each person can save $85. Also look at Glenys Mason Scholarship that will enable you to attend this national conference for free ($800) if this is your first time.

Fall Conference 2018 (Michael Wilson): He thanked Rickey Darby and the CLAS staff for a great conference so far. He encouraged us to stay through the whole conference. The final speaker, Michael Bonner, is very motivational and inspiring. Remember tomorrow (Tuesday), please visit with vendors and thank them for being there. They are helping us to cut costs by over half. They may help you with your job. Don’t forget to put your tickets in the drawing basket.

Fall Conference 2019 (Charlie Gardner): Next conference will be Nov.18-20, in Perdido. If you have suggestions, please speak with Rickey Darby.

Awards (Matt Scott): Give an application for the Glynis Mason Scholarship to someone who has not been to the national conference (deadline is Feb.1 and you must be CLAS member.) Your odds to receive this scholarship could be very good considering only 4 people applied last year. The conference will be a great way to network and meet exceptional national speakers. The other award is the Marie Taylor/Michael Carr Scholarship that is $1000 and given to an educator pursuing his/her initial administration degree; application is also due Feb.1 with more information available on the CLAS website.

Budget/Finance and Bylaws (Rickey Darby): We ended the year with a positive balance of $2-3, 000. We have approx. $150,000 liquid assets; we are looking at ways to invest this money to earn more money. Please see him if you have questions about the budget.

We are suggesting cleaning up the language in Article V, Section D, Qualifications for Serving as an Elected Officer bylaws:

Current:

Except for Past President, be a currently practicing elementary-middle school building administrator.
Have previously been elected President or District Representative in a district.
Continuous active membership while serving in office.

Proposed:

Except for Past President, each officer must be a currently practicing elementary-middle school building administrator.
Officers must have previously been elected President or District Representative in a district.
Officers must be a current member of NAESP, AAESA, and CLAS.
Officers should maintain continuous active membership while serving in office.

Kathy Paiml suggested we should change “should” to “must” for #4. A motion to accept this suggestion and the adjusted bylaw was made by Michael Wilson and seconded by Matt Scott; unanimously passes.

Federal Relations (David Fancher): all AL representatives were re-elected in midterm. The Federal government is still pushing school choice. We need to continue to speak to our legislators. The budget has passed. Danny
Carlson will speak tomorrow re. policy - we need to listen carefully and note difference between “you will” and “you may” statements.

**National Distinguished Principal (Julie Pierce):** She congratulated all those selected to be an NDP nominee:
- District I: Mr. Matt Scott, Creekside Primary
- District II: Mr. Stan Stokley, Saraland Elementary
- District IV: Dr. Michael Wilson, Glen Iris Elementary
- District V: Mrs. Carrie Yancey, Southside Elementary
- District VII: Dr. Pam Fourtenbary, West Forest Intermediate
- District VIII: Mr. Mark Doherty, Daphne East Elementary
- District IX: Mrs. Teresa Sims, Troy Elementary
- District X: Dr. Shelta Jones, Hazel Green Elementary

Please congratulate them and remind application is due Jan.4th. We will celebrate Waller Martin, our current NDP, tomorrow.

**AAESA Magazine (Jill Eaton):** She wants to makes sure we are getting our magazine via email that can be downloaded. If you did not get it on Sept.18th, please call CLAS to make sure they have your correct address and email. Also check your SPAM. She encouraged us to print it off and read it. There is lots of valuable information (Ex: conference info, awards info, scholarships). If you have suggestions on how to make the magazine more appealing and interesting, please let her know. She would also like more articles about our schools so that we can share ideas with each other. This magazine is a key part of our history.

**Nominating (Laurie King):** We have 3 CLAS board meetings open. We have 6 nominees: Charlie Gardner, Waller Martin, David Carpenter, Tricia Culpepper, Michael Wilson, and Dil Uswatte. The two VP nominees are Judith Ross and Pam Fourtenbary. Please check your SPAM for the ballot in January. CLAS will also send an email about the release of the ballot. The question was asked by Marshae Pelt regarding how people were chosen for the ballot. Laurie mentioned that a rep from each district was invited to the meeting on Sunday, Nov. 11 to select the nominees.

**Executive Director’s Report (Vic Wilson):** The State Department is going to change our SIS System (Student Information System.) PowerSchool (also owns i-Now) and Infinite Campus are currently being considered. Thanks to Tricia Cullpepper who on Nov.27/28 will be on committee to preview these two vendor options as our elementary principal representative. The 2020 Census coming up is a real concern. There are 7 congressman and 2 senators that is proportionate to our growth. We are expecting a .02 % growth. How they will redistrict/redraw the lines is not clear but not the real concern. The real concern is that we now only have 6 members of congress who are able to fight for the state. Converse with your legislators in your home district. Dr. Thacker talked about assessment. DRC is new assessment piece and they are beginning to write questions now. He praised Rickey Darby and our leadership for this wonderful conference. Please make sure you fill our surveys so that we deliver relevant content and continue to improve.

**Assistant Executive Director’s Report (Rickey Darby):** Look at our Leadership series. There will be 3 Assistant Principal Workshops in January/February (Prattville, Huntsville, and Orange Beach). This is part of a grant and the first 80 attendees at each site will be free. We had 100 participants at each site last year. Sessions will be the same at all 3 locations. It is a great 2 days for our APs; that is one of the hardest jobs and a way to reward them….and the registration is free! Also look at info re. summer CLAS conference. We want to encourage people to take advantages of all the available PD. It is important that we all grow together. Vic and I want to continue to attend district meetings and form relationships.

**No unfinished business**

**New business:** Jill Eaton talked about Dr. Earl Franks being inducted into the Alabama Educational Leadership Hall of Fame at Troy University on Nov.15th.

Frances Finney thanked everyone for attending this meeting and thanked the board for their leadership.

**Motion to adjourn** was made by Waller Martin at 4:30pm and seconded by Michael Wilson.
The AAESA Fall Leadership conference this year was packed with great speakers with powerful messages for leaders to utilize in their practice daily. In spite of the rain we were motivated and informed in every session. I want to give a huge thank you to Vic Wilson, Rickey Darby, Demica Sanders and the entire CLAS staff for all of their hard work to make this year’s conference a huge success.

We started off our conference with a session that focused on mental health with a session presentation by Bobby Hudson from Glenwood in Birmingham. His session was extremely engaging and eye-opening discussing how we deal with students who are having behavioral problems in our schools.

Our luncheon speaker was Dr. Lisa Herring, Superintendent for Birmingham City Schools and she lit up the room with her presentation on “Leadership in the I-Zone. She discussed Innovation, Inherited and Isolated Leadership. Dr. Herring was extremely motivational as she shared her thoughts with an extremely engaged audience of school leaders.

Our closing speaker was Michael Bonner, a classroom teacher from North Carolina. He watched poverty wreak havoc throughout his classroom and nearly break him as a teacher too. He says something had to change so he changed himself and his teaching practice. Mr. Bonner’s journey to success in teaching began with a video he did with his students and posted on social media. Someone sent the video to the Ellen DeGeneres show and thus began his journey teaching others the methods that he utilizes in his own classroom.

The theme of the conference this year was Engaging our Voices. This is extremely important, especially in the coming months as the legislature convenes and begins to make budget decisions. We must take our collective voices to the table. It is also important that we make our voices heard by the policy makers, from the ALSDE, to the SBOE, to our local boards. If we, as school leader, add our voices to the conversation from local to state to national issues, we can make a difference.
2018 Fall Instructional Leadership Conference
Bill Miller, Sr. Friend of Education Award

Charlie Gardner
Hokes Bluff Elementary
Etowah County

The Bill Miller Friend of Education Award is presented to someone who has shown considerable contributions to education over the years but is not an educator. Formerly known as the Southeastern Award this honor was re-named a few years ago for the late Mr. Bill Miller, Sr., in appreciation for his many years of selfless contributions to AAESA, CLAS and other educational organizations. Mr. Miller was the owner and president of Bill Miller Photography which has been in the business of making school pictures for over forty years.

This year’s recipient is Senator Rodger Smitherman, who is currently serving his sixth term as Senator for District 18. He was nominated by AAESA District IV. Senator Smitherman is one busy individual who gives back to the education community. Besides being a practicing attorney, he is assistant girls varsity basketball coach for the four-time state champions Ramsey High School. He was elected treasurer of the National Caucus of Black State Legislators and is a Constitutional Law Professor for Miles Law School, a semi-pro golfer, husband, and a father.

Senator Smitherman was educated in the Shelby County Public Schools where his mother was the first black principal in that system. His father was self-employed and taught his son never to be a stranger to hard work. Rodger’s parents became invalids before he turned thirteen (13) and not only did he care for both of them until their death but the courts gave him custody of a younger sibling. He went on to earn a Bachelors degree in Business Administration from the University of Montevallo and graduated from Miles Law School with honors.

His life experiences have taken him from his first job working on the grass farm, to personnel director at Stockham, Dean of Students at Southern Junior College to establishing the Smitherman Law Firm. He is of Council with Waldrep, Stewart & Kindred Law Firm.

The Governor of Alabama appointed Senator Smitherman to the Board of Trustees at the University of Montevallo and the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame. He has served on the Metro YMCA Board of Directors, Executive Committee of Southern Legislative Conference and National Energy Council. He currently serves a Board Member for the National Black Caucus of State Legislators.

In 2008 Senator Smitherman was elected President Pro Tem of the Alabama State Senate. As Pro Tem he served as the third ranking public official for the State of Alabama. In the Alabama Senate he is a member of the Judiciary Committee, Legislative Council and is a member of the Education Budget and Rules Committees. Also, he serves as Minority Whip and Chairman of the Alabama Legislative Black Caucus. Senator Smitherman is the recipient of many Awards and Honors. Among them, he received the Birmingham Board of Education Partner of the Year Award and Council for Leaders in Alabama Schools (CLAS) Legislative Leadership Award.

Despite his extensive professional, political and volunteer endeavors, the senator puts family first. Each morning before starting his own day he has traditionally driven each of his grandchildren to school. Rodger serves as Elder at More Than Conquerors Faith Church where his family worships.

Senator Smitherman is a person of marked individuality and strong character, who takes a selfless approach to many things he does. He is an advocate of civil and human rights, knowing the value of reaching back to help others so that all may enter with him. Rodger believes you can’t let the fear of striking out keep you from playing the game. As he often says you must do the things you think you cannot do for failure is not an option.

Senator Smitherman is married to Judge Carole Smitherman and they have five children; Rodger II, Tonya, Mary, Crystal and Rodrick who is with God.

Congratulations Senator Rodger Smitherman and thank you for your tireless efforts and contribution to improving the education of our children in the State of Alabama.

(Thank you to Senator Smitherman’s office for providing the bio for this article)
The Truman Pierce Award is given to an educator who has made outstanding contributions beyond expectations which advance the direction of education in Alabama. The Truman Pierce Award recipient goes through a nomination process by district principals and is then voted on by our AAESA board.

The 2018 Truman Pierce Award recipient is Mrs. Martha Lyon Peek. Mrs. Peek is the former Superintendent Mobile County Public School System. Martha Lyon Peek served as Superintendent of the Mobile County Public Schools from July 2012 until her retirement in June of 2018. This made her the CEO of Mobile County’s largest employer and the third-largest employer in the state.

During her career, which spanned over forty years in the Mobile County Public School System, she has been a teacher, principal, assistant superintendent and deputy superintendent. She was the first female superintendent in the 180-year history of the Mobile County Public School System, which is the largest in Alabama. As a note of interest, Mrs. Peek’s family members have been educators in the Mobile County Public Schools for three generations, with continuous service since 1908. She counts the years working with students as a teacher and principal as the most rewarding in her career and is honored to have served in her leadership position as superintendent.

Mrs. Peek is a graduate of the University of Alabama and the University of South Alabama. She is a member of a number of professional and civic organizations including the School Superintendents of Alabama, the Alabama Association of School Boards, the Council for Leaders in Alabama Schools and the American Association of School Administrators.

She has served on the boards of the United Way of Southwest Alabama, Junior Achievement of Mobile, Mobile Area Education Foundation, as a representative on the American Heart Association’s National Superintendent Roundtable and a member of the Leadership Alabama Class XXVI.

Mrs. Peek was recognized in 2015 by AL.com as one of the Women Who Shape the State of Alabama. Additionally, she has established a Leadership Roundtable and Signature Academy Councils that have linked business, industry and higher education in robust partnerships with the Mobile County Public Schools to inform curriculum design and support the development of student career pathways.

Mrs. Peek is a proud native of Bayou La Batre, Alabama where she and her husband Tyler reside.
The midterm elections are complete and a Congress divided will have to work together to move legislation forward. All of Alabama’s representatives were re-elected. Committee assignments are being made and our Alabama representatives based on their seniority should be assigned to some of the most important committees in Congress. This will make communicating with them even more important.

The education budget that was passed this year was one of the best for education in many years. So far, the President and Secretary of Education attempts to expand voucher programs and reduce funding for education has not been very successful. This is due to Congress knowing how important public education is to the success of our nation. The main area of impact the President and Secretary have had is in the rewriting of policy. On November 17th, the Secretary released the rewrite of rules governing campus sexual harassment and assault allegations, narrowing the cases schools must investigate and giving the accused more rights. Opponents of these changes say the rules would allow assailants and schools to escape responsibility for harassment and assault, thus making college campuses less safe. Supporters of the changes say it restores balance in a system that had been skewed too far in favor of the accusers. Schools may also choose to use a higher legal standard for evidence than has been used in the past.

Danny Carlson of NAESP spoke at the Fall Conference about the impact principals can have on policy. The points he made not only apply at a federal level, but would be effective at the state, city and school board level. His suggestions are:

Tell your own story. Our representatives want to hear how what they do impacts the children in your school. For many years one Congressman would always ask about one specific student. This was because a principal had shared with him the student’s story and it had a great effect on the Congressman.

Don’t tell me what you value, show me the budget. Isn’t it true that even our own school budgets reflect what we value?

Aggressive advocates prevail. Aggressive means persistent, not hateful. Keep communicating the needs of your students, even if turned down. Use a variety of approaches and strategies in connecting with your representative.

Relationships matter more than talking points. Work to establish a relationship. Invite them to come to your school. Send them congratulations on being elected and build the way you will communicate with them in the future. (Hand written notes still work.) If they turn you down or don’t respond, see the suggestion above.

If you’re not at the table you’re on the menu. If you don’t represent your children, your school, your profession who will. It seems like there is always someone out there trying to reduce the resources available to you. But there are many more that want to support you and help your students. They just need to hear your story. (NAESP provides many resources to help you tell your story. Just go to their web site and click the advocacy tab.)
Happy Fall, y’all! It is hard to believe that we have already turned back the clocks and the leaves are already changing. It has been a great semester so far and we are looking forward to what 2019 has in store.

The NAESP has been busy in the past few weeks. In mid-October, National Distinguished Principals were recognized in Washington, D.C. Alabama’s NDP, Mr. Waller Martin, is the principal of the Enterprise Early Education Center in Enterprise, Alabama. He is a great representative for the great state of Alabama and serves as an example for all instructional leaders.

As we look to the future, the NAESP is proud to announce that the National Leaders Conference (NLC) will take place March 17-20, 2019. Participants from across the state and country will collaborate to discuss critical legislative action and develop plans to work with legislators to ensure that education is made a top priority across the country. For three years in a row, the NAESP and NASSP will combine their organizations to maximize their efforts. While in Washington, D.C. members of the NAESP and NASSP will take part in a one-day joint advocacy training session followed by a day at Capitol Hill. As we prepare for this advocacy endeavor, please let me know if there are specific topics or concerns you have that I can present to our state representatives in Washington, D.C. Remember, your voice matters!

Finally, I would like to remind everyone about the upcoming NAESP Pre-K-8 Principal Conference that will be held in Spokane, Washington July 10-12, 2019. This conference is always top notch and is jam packed with dynamic keynote speakers, professional development sessions, and opportunities to network with school leaders from across the country. We look forward to seeing Alabama well-represented in Spokane, Washington.

In closing, on behalf of the NAESP, I would like to thank you for what you do each day. The work of school administrators is never done but each of you provide loving, safe, and nurturing environments that work to provide students with an opportunity to maximize their unique potential. The NAESP thanks you for your service, your talents, and standard of care for students.

Candidates for 2019-2020 AAESA Officers

**Vice President**

Pam Fourtenbary  
West Forest Intermediate  
Opelika City

Judith Ross  
Busch Hills Academy  
Birmingham City

**CLAS Board of Directors**

David Carpenter  
Jeter Primary  
Opelika City

Tricia Culpepper  
Cullman Primary  
Cullman City

Charlie Gardner  
Hokes Bluff Elementary  
Etowah County

Waller Martin  
Enterprise Early Education Center  
Enterprise City

Michael Wilson  
Glen Iris Elementary  
Birmingham City

Dil Uswatte  
Rocky Ridge Elementary  
Hoover City
The start of the school year is exciting and energizing as we reflect over the past school year and look forward with anticipation the new opportunities we have before us. Many across our State have stepped up to new administrative roles or have become administrators for the first time. Either way, they need to find a strong network of colleagues to provide the support needed to stay informed and learn best practices as elementary administrators. AAESA’s mission is to serve as an advocate for children while striving to enhance effectiveness in the supervision and administration of elementary and middle schools. The Alabama Association of Elementary Administrators (AAESA) is the perfect fit for all elementary administrators. Membership in AAESA provides much needed benefits and learning opportunities for all. Additionally, administrators now have the choice of solely joining AAESA or choose to have joint membership with the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) as well. Have you shared this great opportunity with other administrators in your district or other administrators you network with on a daily basis?

Membership in AAESA for active administrators is only $106 for a year as a member of CLAS. Administrators may also choose to become a member of NAESP for is $235 a year which includes $2 million of professional liability coverage. Though one is not required to join both, there are advantages to having the joint membership.

AAESA provides a variety of professional learning opportunities throughout the year. One of which we encourage all members to attend is the Fall Instructional Leadership Conference in November each year. Members enjoy time learning and networking for the purpose of improving their individual leadership and student learning. Webinars are also provided to allow you to learn from your office since it is often difficult to be off campus.

Your AAESA board works tirelessly to keep members abreast of current State and National education issues. They also serve as our advocates to make sure educational leaders and legislators hear our voices as we seek to serve students. We appreciate their intentionality to impact education in a positive way and keep us united.

If you are not a member of AAESA or NAESP, contact your district membership representative for the purpose of attending an AAESA meeting in your designated district. This will give you the opportunity to engage with fellow administrators and learn how to become a member. At these meetings, you will see that AAESA seeks to improve education and recognize administrators who are making a positive impact on learning through their leadership. There are many of other benefits of becoming an active member in AAESA and NAESP. Let us seek to spread the great work of the AAESA and NAESP to other administrators who may not know. Contact someone today!
The CLAS Board of Directors Fall Retreat was held on Sunday, September 23 and Monday, September 24, 2018 in downtown Birmingham. The Sunday afternoon portion of the retreat began in the Diamonds Direct Conference Room at Regions Field, home of the Birmingham Barons Baseball Team. Dr. Wilson addressed the group and made introductions to begin the meeting. He was followed by Dr. Jeffery Langham from the AL State Department of Education who shared several updates from the state. After a financial update and a partnership review from Dr. Vic Wilson, everyone was released to prepare for dinner at Top Golf.

A delicious dinner and a few rounds of golf were just what was needed to turn a busy day into a relaxing evening. Everyone enjoyed a fun evening of dinner, conversation and golf, even the non-golfers.

The Monday morning portion of the retreat was held at the Hilton Garden Inn. President Dr. Tamela Maddox presided over the meeting. The CLAS staff and Forty-Two board members representing eleven affiliates were present to carry on the work of the board. Executive Director Dr. Vic Wilson gave the 2017-2018 Year-End Membership Report noting this was a record membership year. Total CLAS membership as of June 30, 2018 was 3709.

Dr. Wilson reported the 2018 CLAS Convention net income was $171,892.01. He noted that Birmingham will be considered for future conventions. The theme for the 2019 convention is Power of the Past, Leadership of the Future.

Demica Sanders provided a Professional Development programs update. She reviewed the Professional Development brochure and its offerings. Mrs. Sanders reported there were 1241 attendees registered for the 2018 CLAS Convention and 1,107 attended. She reminded the board of the new CIL cohort and timeline for the upcoming year. For the first time this year, CLAS will recognize a Secretary of the Year at the Secretaries Conference, December 4-5, at the Wynfrey in Birmingham.

Ms. Sanders also reported on the Banner Schools Program. She noted that nominations have increased this year and encouraged board members to refer to the Banner Schools Timeline for information regarding school or program nominations.

Dr. Wilson provided a legislative update and referred to the CLAS Legislative flyer provided to the board. He discussed RSA Tier 2 issues and budget priorities.

June 30, 2018 financials reflect approximately $100,000 increase on the bottom line from 2017. The projected net income for 2018-19 is $133,000. Dr. Wilson pointed out that money used for lobbying cannot come from membership dues. Due to the amount of money on deposit with ServisFirst Bank, CLAS will diversify funds for maximum FDIC protection. Susan Patterson, Patrick Chappell, Donald Turner, Rhinnie Scott and Bobby Jackson were chosen to serve on the
Clas Board of Directors’ Meeting Cont’d

Investment Revision Committee.

During the Executive Director’s Report Dr. Wilson reminded the board of the meeting space available to affiliates at the CLAS office. The State Board of Education’s retreat is scheduled to be held at the CLAS office on December 12. He also noted that CLAS technology requires ongoing upgrades and that he is working on a 5-year plan for technology upgrades. Dr. Wilson stated that he will continue working to determine that CLAS personnel are properly utilized.

Dr. Maddox concluded the meeting with the President’s Report in which she discussed future recommendations for committees. After a busy morning, board members were adjourned to return to their schools. The CLAS Board of Directors Fall Retreat just goes to prove that you can have fun and be productive.

Upcoming Events

Clas Convention
June 9–12, 2019
Renaissance Montgomery Hotel at the Convention Center
Montgomery, Alabama

Naesp Pre-K-8 Conference
July 10–12, 2019
Spokane Convention Center
Spokane, Washington

AAESA Fall Instructional Leadership Conference
November 2019
Perdido Beach Resort
Orange Beach, Alabama
Meet Your District IV President

Kimberly White
Gwin Elementary
Hoover City

My name is Kimberly Nash White the District IV president of AAESA and the principal at Gwin Elementary School. I have worked in the Hoover City Schools since 2002 and have enjoyed each day that I have worked with students whose goals and hopes for the future inspire me.

Although I was not always certain that I wanted to be a teacher, I always knew that I wanted to positively influence the lives of children. So with that goal in mind, I attended Spelman College where I studied psychology in hopes of becoming a child psychologist. While attending Spelman I began volunteering each week as a tutor for underprivileged children in the inner city of Atlanta, Georgia. It soon became evident that I, like my mother and father before me, would one day become an educator.

After my sophomore year of college, my family moved to Tuscaloosa, Alabama and I transferred to The University of Alabama where I studied Elementary Education. I later began my teaching career as a first grade teacher at Eastvalley Elementary School in Marietta, Georgia. I gleaned lots of knowledge from working with the administrators, teachers, students, and parents the two years I worked at this National School of Excellence. I left Georgia to go back to The University of Alabama where I earned a Master's Degree in School Administration while teaching at Rock Quarry Elementary School.

I soon began to realize that working with students and teachers was my calling. I decided to further my education by pursuing a Doctoral Degree and was accepted and enrolled in the Educational Leadership and Policy Program at Peabody College of Vanderbilt Universi-

ty. In Nashville, I delved into the community by volunteering and began teaching at Wright Middle School. At Wright, I began to study more and more about the middle school concept and developed a love for middle school-aged students. I often served as substitute administrator to gain experience as an assistant principal. Then, in 2002, I married my husband Kevin and moved to Hoover, Alabama where I became the Seventh Grade Unit Principal at Simmons Middle School.

In July of 2011, I embarked on another journey in my quest to serve students by becoming the assistant principal at Gwin Elementary School. Then, in the spring of 2012, I was named principal at Gwin. It is a pleasure working with my colleagues at Gwin and in the district, together we are committed to the education of our students and who enjoy the many and varied aspects of teaching and learning.

Still, as I continue to learn and grow as a school leader, I take great pride in how the experiences in my life have made me into the educator that I am today. As mother of my own two precious children, Sidney Elizabeth, 12 and Joseph, 9, I value education in such a special and different way.

I have gained real insight into working with students in my more than 20 years as a teacher, assistant principal, and principal and hope to continue to grow both professionally and personally. I look forward to serving the children of Alabama as I work alongside other administrators, teachers, and families to guide students toward growth, achievement, and becoming adults of strong character and accomplishment.
Meet Your District VII President

**Mary Salmon**  
*Southview Primary*  
*Opelika City*

Dr. Mary Salmon serves as the principal of Southview Primary School. All nineteen years of Mary’s career in education have been in the Opelika City Schools.

Mary grew up in Opelika, Alabama and is a proud graduate of Opelika High School. She received her bachelor’s degree from Huntingdon College and began her teaching career at Southview Primary School. She spent 2 years as a Title I teacher, 3 years as a first grade teacher, and 8 years as a second grade teacher. While teaching, she received a master’s degree in Elementary Education from Troy University, earned National Board Certification, and received an additional master’s degree in Instructional Leadership from Auburn University.

Mary moved from the classroom to her administrative role six years ago. She completed her doctorate in Administration of Supervision and Curriculum at Auburn University. Her dissertation focus was driven by the use of the Gary Chapman’s *Five Love Languages* in the classroom.

Mary attends Church of the Highlands. She also serves as the treasurer of the Lee County Mountain Bike Boosters, an organization that promotes middle school and high school mountain bike teams in the Opelika, Auburn, and Lee County area. Mountain biking is one of Mary’s favorite pastimes and is how she met her husband, Cody. They were recently married in Brevard, North Carolina and spent their honeymoon in British Columbia where they completed their first Half Ironman together. Her husband, Cody, is an engineer at Integrated Solutions for Systems. He is an avid mountain biker and the president of C.A.M.P., the local mountain biking organization. In addition to bik-
District I

The 2018-19 school year is off to a great start in District One! District One members met after the Principally Speaking Conference in September. Our next meeting will be January 16 at Cullman City Primary School at 8:30 AM.

Students in grades Pre-K through 6 at Brooks Elementary School in Lauderdale County participated in an end of the 9 weeks reading pep rally to celebrate student success. "S-C-O-R-E, Score: Read More" was the theme of the Accelerated Reader celebration. Top Class was recognized, along with the Top Readers in each grade level. During the faculty pep rally, teacher participation was phenomenal, and students were able to see their teachers in an entirely new light! School and community leaders described the event as "a terrific way to celebrate the success of our students, while showing the students that learning can be lots of fun for adults and students alike!" Following the pep rally, students were dismissed to grade level "tailgate parties" where parent involvement was encouraged and students participated in games, food, and fun! It was definitely a day to remember!

District one nominated the following people for Assistant Principal of the year: Nona Adams, Creekside Primary/Elementary and Greg Gray, Blue Spring Elementary. Matt Scott of Creekside Elementary was nominated as the National Distinguished Principal.

Tricia Culpepper
Cullman Primary
Cullman City

District II

Happy Birthday Mr. Threadgill

On October 12, 2018 McDavid-Jones Elementary located in District 2 held a surprise birthday celebration for Mr. Chresal Threadgill, Mobile County’s New Superintendent. This was no small feat as the entire school was in attendance. They were able to get his wife in on the surprise as well. They wanted Mr. Threadgill to know just how much he is appreciated.

Veronica Coleman
Chastang-Fournier K-8
Mobile County
District V

District V members had a great fall meeting! Carrie Yancey, from Southside Elementary School, was selected as our district’s Distinguished Elementary Principal. Jenny Clough from Hokes Bluff Elementary was chosen as the Assistant Principal of the Year. Additionally, Brigett Stewart from Piedmont Elementary School will serve as our new District V treasurer.

Dr. Tommy Turner, Dean of the College of Education at Jacksonville State University, was our guest speaker. He shared advice on how we, as administrators, might preclude a predicted teacher shortage in our state. Dr. Turner explained that teacher preparation enrollment has declined by 35% over the past 5 years! Also, further evidence supporting an impending shortage is evident in the 30% of current teachers currently teaching out of field. This number includes ⅓ of all math, ¼ of all English, ½ of all physical science, and ⅔ of history positions that are filled by those with no major or minor in the content area in which they are teaching.

Dr. Turner presented several possible reasons for this shift including the recent change in years of service required for retirement. Additionally, surveys of those leaving the profession indicate the most frequently occurring reason given is dissatisfaction with the profession stemming from feelings of a lack of administrative support, low salaries compared with those of other professionals, and a lack of influence in decision making. In light of these obstacles, Dr. Turner also encouraged us to be agents of change, recommending several issues we can support as administrators to improve the current trend. As school leaders we should work to shift the current cultural mindset by recognizing and promoting professionalism, passion, communication, and confidence in our faculties. In addition, Dr. Turner advised that we continue to advocate for salaries that are “worthy of the profession.”

It was an inspiring morning of learning with Dr. Turner and administrators from District V. We will continue to strive for the best organization possible!

Kristy Towns
Whitesboro Elementary
Etowah County

Membership

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District News Cont’d

District VIII

The AAESA District VIII met on October 25, 2018 at the Half Shell Restaurant. Susan Miller, Bill Miller Photography, graciously hosted the event.

Mr. Rickey Darby, Asst. Executive Director, was our guest speaker. He encouraged us to join CLAS. He explained how the structure has changed, and NSAEP membership is optional. Mr. Darby shared information about the upcoming AAESA Fall Instructional Leadership Conference at the Perdido Beach Resort November 11-14 and encouraged everyone to attend.

District VIII is honored to announce our nominations for NDP and NOAP:

Mark Doherty for National Distinguished Principal. Mr. Doherty is the principal at Daphne East Elementary in Daphne, Alabama.

Benita Battle for National Outstanding Assistant Principal of the Year. Mrs. Battle is the Assistant Principal at Daphne Elementary and W.J. Carroll in Daphne, Alabama.

Julie Pierce
Fairhope Elementary
Baldwin County

Executive Director’s Report

Happy Holidays to everyone,

I hope you all have had a wonderful 1st semester! It has been a great year so far at AAESA and CLAS, and we are looking forward to an even better 2nd half of the year. We will have great professional learning opportunities, network opportunities, and recognitions coming soon. In fact, look for the NDP updates to come in the first Friday Update of January. We will announce the district winners in January, and the overall winner in March. Stay tuned!

I hope that you take the time off to reflect, recharge, and reinvigorate yourself. I also hope you encourage those under your care to do the same. If every adult in public education can take time to reflect, recharge and reinvigorate, think of the difference that can make in the lives of the students under your care.

I hope that you enjoy your time with family, and I look forward to seeing you in the near future. Don’t hesitate to call, email, text, or come by the office if I can be of assistance in any way.

Sincerely,
Vic
# AAESA Officers

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<th>Position</th>
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<th>Office</th>
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<td><strong>Executive Director</strong></td>
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<td><strong>CLAS Board of Directors</strong></td>
<td>Tim Dollar</td>
<td>Wilmer Elementary</td>
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<td>Charles Gardner</td>
<td>Hokes Bluff Elementary</td>
<td>(256) 492-5571</td>
<td>(256) 492-2513</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Charles_Gardner@ecboe.org">Charles_Gardner@ecboe.org</a></td>
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<td>Chris Mitten</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:mitten@daleville.k12.al.us">mitten@daleville.k12.al.us</a></td>
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<td>Judith Ross</td>
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<td>Frances Finney</td>
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<td>(205) 3793745</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ffinney@jefcoed.com">ffinney@jefcoed.com</a></td>
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