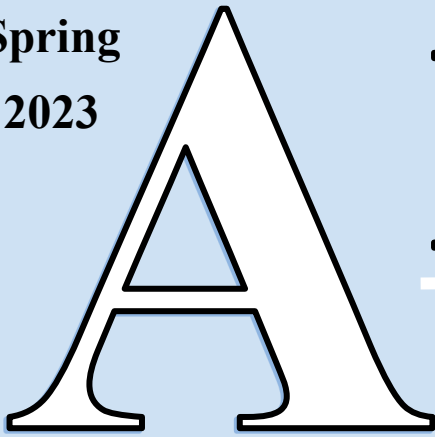


Spring  
2023



Vol. 71 No. 3

# Alabama

Elementary Administrator

## *Alabama's 2023 NAESP National Distinguished Principal*



**Karissa Lang**  
**Crestline Elementary**  
**Hartselle City**



# AAESA President's Report



*Waller Martin*  
*Brookwood Elementary*  
*Enterprise City*

It is hard to believe that I am completing my year as AAESA President. It seems like only yesterday that Judy Ross “passed the torch” to me. Where has the year gone?! I would like to thank all of you who supported me during my tenure. I would also like to ask that you give incoming president Karissa Lang your continued support this upcoming year.

I am looking forward to representing AAESA at the NAESP National Leader’s Conference in Washington DC. Along with other representatives from Alabama, we plan to meet with Alabama congressional leaders to discuss issues in K-12 education. We look forward to meeting with our congressional delegation to discuss topics such as teacher recruitment, school safety, infrastructure, and mental health assistance for students as well as teachers.

I encourage you to reach out to your state and national leaders. They need to hear from us and be aware of our needs and concerns. Please feel free to invite them to your schools whenever you have a program or activity. This way they can see firsthand what takes place in our schools. We have great things going on in Alabama schools, and we need to take every opportunity we have to “toot” our own horns!! Toot-toot!!

I’m sure right now you are thinking about and preparing for ACAP and all the other spring activities at school. Field Trips, ACCESS, Kindergarten Registration, PTO Meetings, RTI, Data Meetings, End of the Year Awards Programs, ATOP, and Field Day are just a few of the activities that lie ahead. I encourage you to take ad-

vantage of all these events and activities when you can. Your students, parents, and teachers will appreciate your interest and support. You will also enjoy it!!

As we wind down the school year, please take some time to meet with your staff on an individual basis, even if it’s just for five minutes. Your secretary can help you with the scheduling, please include your support staff. You certainly want to discuss professional growth and development, but take some time to learn more about your staff on a personal basis. Ask them about their families, interests, etc. This will take some time, but it will be time well spent!! Go ahead and put this on your calendar, before your calendar fills up.

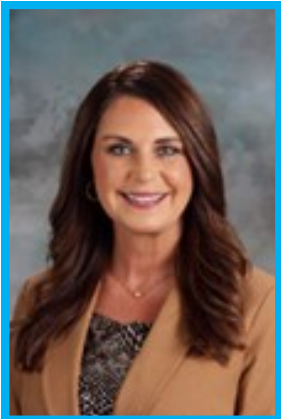
Also it is never too soon to begin thinking about Personnel for the upcoming year. I encourage you to exhaust every resource and explore every lead when making Personnel decisions. You will find it is well worth it in the end. It is always good to have an “ace in the hole.” You know as well as I do there will be personnel surprise over the summer!!

Please continue to remain active in your AAESA districts and take advantage of all professional development opportunities offered from AAESA and CLAS. The CLAS Annual Convention will be held in June in Mobile. This will be a professional development opportunity filled with dynamic speakers and you will receive a plethora of information. I invite all of you to connect, inspire, and thrive in Mobile this summer.

As I reflect on serving as President this year, I think about how fortunate I am to have meet so many new people and made so many new friends.

This has been a wonderful opportunity for me, and I am humbled to have served as your President. I have learned so much, and I’m convinced now more than ever that great days lie ahead in Alabama schools. Please continue to lead the daily charge in your schools. We are all much stronger when we hang together rather than separately.

# 2022 National Blue Ribbon School



***Brigett Stewart***  
***Piedmont Elementary***  
***Piedmont City***

**Piedmont Elementary Named 2022 National Blue Ribbon School**

The National Blue Ribbon Award is the highest national honor given to schools by the United States Department of Education. Each year, states nominate up to five schools for the award. Last spring, we were notified by the Alabama State Department of Education that we had been nominated in the Exemplary High Performing Category. This means our school was among the highest performing schools on state assessments.

As part of the nomination process, schools must complete an extensive application that provides a comprehensive look at the school's climate and culture, strategies for academic success, and curriculum and instruction. We quickly formed a writing team composed of teachers from all grade levels to complete the application. Our superintendent came and met with the team and described the award as the "Superbowl" of education. This really lit a fire under us and motivated the team! We were given eight weeks to complete and submit the application.

In September, our school was officially notified that we would be named a 2022 National Blue Ribbon School at an awards ceremony in Washington, D.C in November. The excitement and pride felt around our campus was palpable! Our PTO bought every student, teacher, and staff member a blue shirt with the National Blue Ribbon emblem on the back and our school name on the front. We planned a huge celebration and invited members of the community, state department, and various educational partners. On the day of the celebration program, a sea of blue shirts could be seen throughout the gymnasium while ALSDE Chief of Staff, Chuck Marcum, and Piedmont City School District's Superintendent, Mike Hayes, joined me in sharing words of support and affirmation to everyone. It was a day to be remembered!

The 2022 National Blue Ribbon Awards Ceremony was an amazing experience. The beautiful fall weather and gorgeous fall leaves set a colorful backdrop for an unforgettable D.C. trip! Each year, a special award is given out to a select few principals. I was honored to be one of nine recipients of the Terrel H Bell Award for Outstanding leadership. I had the opportunity to participate in a panel, along with the other Bell awardees, to discuss pressing

educational issues we are facing today. I was presented with a golden bell at a special awards ceremony in honor of this achievement. We attended an elaborate awards ceremony and luncheon that was being live streamed to all 297 schools receiving the award. Our school was cheering us on from Alabama! My assistant principal, Revonda Pruitt, and guidance counselor, Debra Ledbetter, joined me on stage to be recognized and to receive our beautiful plaque. It was a special moment that I will never forget. We are proud to be among the 120 Alabama schools who have been recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School.



# 2023 Alabama District Distinguished Principals



**District I**  
**Karissa Lang**  
**Crestline Elementary**  
**Hartselle City**  
**2023 Alabama NDP**



**District II**  
**Timothy Dollar**  
**Wilmer Elementary**  
**Mobile County**



**District III**  
**Dr. Lucile Prewitt**  
**Oakdale Elementary**  
**Tuscaloosa City**



**District IV**  
**Alice Turney**  
**Riverchase Elementary**  
**Hoover City**  
**Finalist**



**District V**  
**Allison Alexander**  
**Corley Elementary**  
**Albertville City**



**District VI**  
**Margaret Jones**  
**Edgewood Elementary**  
**Selma City**  
**Finalist**



**District VII**  
**Karen Snyder**  
**Cary Woods Elementary**  
**Auburn City**



**District VIII**  
**Jenny Breazeale**  
**Elberta Elementary**  
**Baldwin County**



**District IX**  
**Tamika Fleming**  
**Heard Elementary**  
**Dothan City**

# Alabama's 2023 NAESP NDP Reveal



# Executive Director's Report



*Vic Wilson*  
*AAESA Executive*  
*Director*

By the time you get this missive, the 2023 Alabama Legislative Session will be upon us.

Hopefully, the session will be quick and easy. Hopefully, I will win the lottery. The latter is more likely than the former, and I only buy lottery tickets when the amount goes north of 800 million. Regardless, we will be watching the session closely, and keeping you informed.

On February 24, we travelled to Hartselle to surprise Karissa Lang, principal of Crestline Elementary School in Hartselle City Schools. She was selected as [Alabama's 2023 National Distinguished Principal](#).



Also, the AAESA officers will be traveling to Washington, DC to advocate on your behalf for the continued funding of Title II, and the three percent set aside for administrator professional learning. This funding is critical in our ability to provide specific professional

learning for administrators in Alabama, and your leaders in AAESA continue to do a great job advocating on your behalf.

So, what else is going on in the lives of elementary administrators? It would be great to say, "Absolutely nothing." However, that is not the truth. Elementary administrators are swamped from daylight to dark in their effort to care for those under their care, and I applaud you all for that. Every gain made in Alabama elementary schools can be attributed to the great work being done by all stakeholders, and that work would not be possible without great leadership on your part.

So, what can we expect to see in the 2023 legislative session? We have a record budget in the ETF and the General Fund. What does that mean? It means we could fully fund the ETF for the first time in many years. It means educators could get a raise. It means others will vie for the ETF money. It also means we must be vigilant in our efforts to protect the ETF. We must ensure that any money coming from the ETF carries with it the same financial and academic accountability as money going to public schools.

We hope to see many of you in Montgomery during the session as we advocate for our students and members. If you would like more information on advocacy and our CLAS Hill Days, visit [clasleaders.org/advocacy](https://clasleaders.org/advocacy).

Thank you all for the job you do for those under your care. You are all rock stars in my book.

# Future Events

## **FUTURE EVENTS**

### **CLAS Convention**

June 12-14, 2023

Riverview Hotel and Mobile

Convention Center

Mobile, Alabama

### **NAESP Pre-K-8 Conference**

July 10-12, 2023

Gaylord National Resort and

Convention Center


National Harbor, Maryland

### **AAESA Fall Instructional Leadership Conference**

November 12-15, 2023

Perdido Beach Resort

Orange Beach, Alabama



The logo for NAESP 23 features a circular emblem with the text "naesp 23" in the center. The emblem also includes the text "PRE-K-8 PRINCIPALS CONFERENCE - NATIONAL HARBOR, MD - JULY 10-12" around the top and "Level of Your Leadership" at the bottom. The background of the logo shows a stylized building and a Ferris wheel.

**NAESP  
Principals  
Conference  
2023 Provides**

**the Strongest  
Unified Voice  
for Pre-K-8  
Administrators**

**LEARN MORE**

July 10-12, 2023  
National Harbor, Maryland

# Assistant Executive Director's Report



*Rickey Darby*  
*AAESA Assistant*  
*Executive Director*

I hope each of you enjoyed a great Christmas holiday and time with your family. As you approach this busy time of year, it is a great time to utilize the value of the net-

works you have created with your involvement in your professional organization. Our organization is as strong as the membership. AAESA recognizes members throughout the year, gives scholarships, and provides meaningful professional learning.

## Membership

AAESA had another great year of growth in membership. We have grown 64 new members for a total of 830 active members as of January 31, 2023. We are now the largest affiliate in CLAS. We are 21 members short of gaining another CLAS board member. We need to continue to tell other elementary administrators the value of joining our professional organization.

This is a good time to encourage new administrators to join CLAS and AAESA. On the CLAS website under membership there is a prorated membership application. The CLAS and AAESA dues are cut in half from now to July. Encourage new elementary administrators to consider joining AAESA, their professional organization.

## Awards

Karissa Lang, from Hartselle City Schools, has been selected as **Alabama's NAESP National Distinguished Principal**. The NDP judges conducted school visits with the three finalists the second week of February. The winner will be recognized at various events in Alabama throughout the year and at the National Distinguished Principal ceremony in Washington D.C. in Oc-

tober.

The judges are completing their decision for the **Alabama Elementary Assistant Principal of the Year**. The winner will also be notified in the next few weeks. The winner will be recognized at events and will be invited to the NAESP Conference in July in National Harbor, Maryland.

The two scholarships that AAESA gives each year have been awarded. Meghan Denson from Hoover City, is **The Glenys Mason Scholarship** winner. This scholarship is given to a member who has never attended the national NAESP Conference. She will receive \$1,500 to help cover the cost of attending the NAESP Conference in July. The **Marie Taylor/Michael Carr Scholarship** is given to an elementary/middle school teacher, who is working on their initial administrative certification. Angela Morrison from Tuscaloosa City Schools is this year's winner. She will receive \$1,000 to help cover her tuition.

## Conferences

**CLAS Convention** will be held June 12-14, 2023, at the Mobile Convention Center. There will be over 1,000 K-12 administrators from across the state. In addition to great keynote speakers, there will be breakout sessions that meet the needs of all school administrators. There will be over 60 vendors with exhibit booths to visit. This is always a great time to network with other administrators from across the state.

**NAESP Conference** will be July 10-12, 2023, at the Gaylord Convention Center in National Harbor, Maryland. This is a great time to network with 1,500 elementary administrators from across the country. It is also a great time to consider adding to your trip a family vacation in nearby Washington, D.C.

**AAESA Fall Instructional Leadership Conference** will be November 13-15, 2023, at the Perdido Beach Resort in Orange Beach, Alabama. Mark your calendars and plan to attend.

As an elementary school administrator in the state of Alabama, you are experiencing the need to bring about needed changes with guidelines from the state.



# Assistant Executive Director's Report Cont'd

The challenge is to motivate and educate the staff to meet the needs of the students in your building.

A poster that was provided by NAESP on innovative leadership stated, "GREAT SCHOOLS EMPOWER CHANGE. Most changes fail due to a lack of buy-in, but people don't resist changes they help create. Only when leaders empower their teachers to take risks, will they see true transformational and lasting innovation in their schools."

As we prepare for the next few months, we need to remember a quote from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., "A genuine leader is not a searcher for consensus but a molder of consensus."



## 2022-2023 AAESA Election Results

### *Vice President*



#### **Dil Uswatte**

Rocky Ridge Elementary  
Hoover City

### *NAESP Representative*



#### **Bonnie Sullivan**

Pike Road Intermediate  
Pike Road City

### *CLAS Board of Directors*



#### **Sheneta Smith**

Howell Graves PreSchool  
Muscle Shoals City

### *CLAS Board of Directors*



#### **Stan Stokley**

Saraland Elementary  
Saraland City

# Meet Your District V President



*Amanda Martinez*  
*John Jones Elementary*  
*Etowah County*

Hello everyone! My name is Amanda Martinez, newly elected AAESA District V president.

My current role is the assistant principal at John Jones Elementary School in Rainbow City, Alabama. I have been an educator for twenty years, having taught kindergarten for twelve years, second grade for two years, and fifth grade for one year before becoming an administrator. I graduated from the University of Alabama with a Bachelor of Science in elementary education and continued to receive my master's in elementary education, a master's in education administration, and my education specialist in educational leadership. I am currently attending Samford University to acquire my doctorate in educational leadership.

I am originally from Columbus, Georgia, moved multiple times up the east coast due to family working in federal law enforcement, and moved to Gadsden Alabama in 1992. I graduated from Southside High School, and upon attending the University of Alabama was drum major for the Million Dollar Band. I also spent many years as a fitness instructor and trainer. I have a passion for fitness and helping others reach their fitness goals.

I met my husband, Camilo, who is from Colombia, South America, in 2000, and we married in 2005. We are both bilingual, speaking English and Spanish. We have two children, Sophie, fourteen, and Maddox, eleven. They are a lingual work in progress. My children keep me busy with their sports and other activities. When we are not occupied with work, school, and our business, El Tapatio, we enjoy spending time by the pool, eating, and traveling domestically and internationally.

I enjoy working with the community and am currently serving as a LE for The United Way. I believe in supporting the many agencies that help our families and children. I am looking forward to meeting many new faces and building relationships with new and potential AAESA members.



# Meet Your District VIII President



***Benita Battle***  
***Daphne Elementary***  
***Baldwin County***

Benita Battle is the Principal of Daphne Elementary School in the Jubilee City on the Eastern Shore of Daphne, Alabama. She has been an educator for the past 33 years and counting. She has served as an Elementary Classroom Teacher (Grades 1<sup>st</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup>), Lead Teacher, Assistant Principal, and is currently the administrator of a Pre-K through Third Grade campus with 710 students in the Baldwin County Public School System. She leads a staff of 89 personnel of which 54 are certified. Mrs. Battle has earned her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Elementary Education as well as her Educational Leadership Certification from the University of South Alabama. She is currently the 2022-2023 President of District VIII.

This is her third year as principal at Daphne Elementary School, where she has led her faculty and staff to obtain National Blue-Ribbon recognition for closing achievement gaps among student subgroups. She has continued to lead her school through the Leader in Me process obtaining Lighthouse Certification as well as Academic Honor Roll status. Mrs. Battle has a fierce passion for creating a positive climate and school culture. She advocates for her students as a merchant of hope by building an environment that supports her teachers and staff.

Mrs. Battle consistently creates opportunities for students and teachers to celebrate their success. She inspires all by implementing fun and engaging staff morale boosters and student incentives. For a few examples: Honor Roll Parades, Synergy Rallies, Staff BINGO, Positive Shout Outs, Trojan Triumph Awards (PBIS), DES Morning Show Announcements, and Leaders of the Month

Mrs. Battle believes in the importance of never forgetting to remain a life-long learner while teaching and leading others. She empowers those around her by allowing them opportunities to showcase their talents through transformational leadership. This approach creates a valuable and positive change in the followers with the end goal of developing leaders. This is evident through her daily practices and personal mission statement, "I'm a valued member of a winning team doing meaningful work in an environment of trust." (S. Covey)

On a personal note, Benita and her husband Allen have been married for 30 years and have two grown sons. Their oldest son, Talis is a graduate of the University of Alabama and currently is working as a Civil Engineer. His brother Trent is a sophomore student-athlete attending Texas Christian University where he is a running back on the Horned Frogs football team. On the weekends, you will find her attending TCU football games cheering on her son. She also enjoys spending time with her family, baking confectionary treats, and reading. Mrs. Battle is honored to serve District 8 as President and looks forward to networking with her fellow colleagues.



# Federal Relations



*David Carpenter*  
*Jeter Primary*  
*Opelika City*

## 2023 Advocacy Issues

In a recent zoom call between Associate Executive Director David Griffith (Policy and Advocacy for NAESP) and Federal Relations Coordinators from across the country, FRCs expressed legislative efforts in their state that are similar to those here in Alabama. For instance, Alaska, Colorado, Connecticut, and Mississippi all have seen literacy legislation that require reading proficiency (typically at 3rd grade) and certain funding tied to benchmarks of literacy achievement. In some states, superintendent and principal groups are pushing back on some of the legislative initiatives since it removes curriculum and educational decisions from the hands of local boards and school educators. The science of reading is a part of many states' efforts to address literacy including training for teachers and administrators.

David Griffith said he noticed a theme that state legislatures are proposing more mandates on local districts. He asked what the FRCs thought was the impetus for state legislators to become more involved in this way. Examples from several states suggested that in these instances it was a declining trust with other decision-makers, to flex their authority among stakeholders, and to be seen as being responsive to parent needs.

A question was asked whether the emphasis/focus on literacy in the early grades occurring in many states currently is a cyclical phenomenon or if there were other factors at play. Post-Covid, schools must look closely at whether student difficulties are due to interrupted learning or some other unidentified need.

David Griffith was asked if he sees how states are addressing the teacher shortage as effective. He answered that "there is a huge tension right now. Schools have experienced shortages for years based on location, subject area, etc. but the current situation is of a magnitude larger." We need to be making the case for enhanced teacher recruitment and retention, of which increased compensation is a large part, because some states are taking the easier route of just lowering teacher standards which is not an effective long-term strategy to entice qualified individuals into the profession. All states are struggling with how to address this and while Covid funding has helped a bit in districts that have used it for hiring and retention bonuses, that funding will be exhausted in the next couple of years.

## NAESP Covid Funding Data Collection Project

Please provide examples of ways in which schools have used their Covid funding (CARES, ESSER, American Rescue Plan) through our [Covid Funding survey](https://forms.gle/ymPQAYGPKZaWaj7S7). (<https://forms.gle/ymPQAYGPKZaWaj7S7>)

## FY23 Education Funding

This past year was favorable for education funding as the administration asked for multi-billion-dollar increases, and Congress was supportive of them. The coming year may be more challenging for K-12 funding. There is a perception that schools are flush with cash with emergency Covid funding from the American Rescue Plan. As we look ahead, it will be important to document how those funds were spent and to help build the case for continued investments.

The total funding for the Department of Education is the biggest increase in years at \$79.2 billion but remains below FY2011 levels, adjusted for inflation. See the chart below for more funding information about key K-12 programs:

## From NAESP:

NAESP is endorsing and asks for your support of the *Mental Health of Educators and Staff Act*. Rep. Suzanne Bonamici of Oregon is taking the lead on this

# Federal Relations Cont'd

Federal K-12 Program	Total FY23 Funding	Increase in Dollars	Percentage Increase
<b>Title I</b>	\$18.39 billion	+\$850 million	4.8%
<b>IDEA State Grants</b>	\$14.2 billion	+\$850 million	6.4%
<b>Title IV – Student Support &amp; Academic Enrichment state grants</b>	\$1.38 billion	+\$100 million	7.8%
<b>21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers</b>	\$1.33 billion	+\$40 million	3.1%
<b>Title II – professional development</b>	\$2.19 billion	+\$20 million	0.9%
<b>IDEA Preschool grants</b>	\$420 million	+\$10 million	2.6%

urgent challenge and NAESP looks forward to working with her and other congressional supporters to pass this legislation.

Specifically, the Supporting the Mental Health of Educators and Staff Act will:

- Require coordination between federal agencies to develop best practices by directing the Secretary of Health and Human Services and Secretary of Education to identify and disseminate evidence-based or evidence-informed practices for
  - (1) preventing suicide and improving mental health and resiliency among education professionals; and
  - (2) training education professionals in appropriate strategies to promote their mental health;
- Destigmatize mental health care among the education workforce by designing and disseminating an education and awareness initiative encouraging education professionals to use mental health and substance use disorder services;
- Provide direct support to educators and school staff members by establishing programs to promote mental health among the education professional workforce; and
- Promote accountability for federal resources for new programs by requiring a report on the extent

to which federal substance use disorder and mental health grant programs address the prevalence and severity of mental health conditions and substance use disorders among education professionals. The report will include an analysis of available evidence and data related to such conditions and programs and assess whether there are duplicative goals and objectives among such grant programs.

## Advocacy Conference

The advocacy conference is being renamed the National Leaders Conference/ National School Leaders Advocacy Conference (NSLAC) to reflect the more joint nature of the event with NASSP and is being held on March 26-29, 2023 in Arlington, VA.



# 2023 Alabama Elementary Assistant Principal of the Year



## District I

Melanie Harris  
Hibbett Intermediate  
Florence City



## District VI

Beth Fleming  
U. S. Jones Elementary  
Demopolis



## District II

Stephanie Dial  
Saraland Elementary  
Saraland City



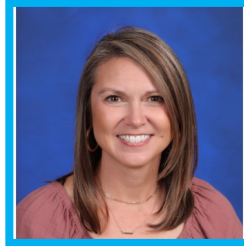
## District VII

Shay Baugh  
Yarbrough Elementary  
Auburn City



## District III

Tracy Jemison  
Greensboro Elementary  
Hale County



## District VIII

Allison Guy  
Spanish Fort Elementary  
Baldwin County



## District IV

Meghan Denson  
Brock's Gap Elementary  
Hoover City



## District IX

Michael Stevens  
Rehobeth Elementary  
Houston County



## District V

Amanda Martinez  
John S. Jones Elementary  
Etowah County



## District X

Patsey Thomas  
Highlands Elementary  
Huntsville City

# AAESA Scholarships



*Bonnie Sullivan*  
*Pike Road Intermediate*  
*Pike Road City*

Meghan looks forward to attending the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) Pre-K-8 Conference to learn and grow professionally with other instructional leaders across the country. AAESA would like to recognize Meghan for her accomplishments, honors, and dedication in educational leadership that have significantly impacted educators and students.

## **Glenys Mason Convention Scholarship**

*Meghan Denson*

*Brock's Gap Intermediate School*

*Hoover City*



The Alabama Association of Elementary School Administrators (AAESA) has selected Meghan Denson for the Glenys Mason Convention Scholarship award. This scholarship award is available to AAESA members who have never attended a National Association of Elementary School Principals Convention.

Meghan is the Assistant Principal and STEAM Facilitator at Brock's Gap Intermediate School in Hoover, Alabama. She is highly motivated to grow professionally and has shown significant success through serving on district committees, school wide initiatives, and leading the STEAM initiative for Hoover City Schools. She has obtained several grants that focus on implementing computer science in schools.

## **Marie Taylor/Michael Carr Scholarship**

*Angela Morrison*

*Tuscaloosa City Schools*

The Alabama Association of Elementary School Administrators (AAESA) has selected Angela Morrison for the Marie Taylor and Michael Carr Scholarship. This scholarship offers a \$1,000 award to enable a current Alabama educator to pursue a degree or certification in elementary/middle school administration.

Angela is the K-8 ESL Specialist for Tuscaloosa City Schools. She has 26 years of experience serving as school nurse, school counselor, and ESL specialist. She is excited to take her next step in becoming an administrator and wants to continue making a positive impact in education.

AAESA would like to congratulate Angela for her accomplishments, honors, and dedication in education that have significantly impacted educators and students.

# NAESP Update



*Charlie Gardner*

*Hokes Bluff*

*Elementary*

*Etowah County*

I hope everyone has settled into the new year and new semester well and all is going great for you in your respective

schools! I am not a “winter” person so I am very much looking for spring weather! I know you are all doing wonderful things for your students and staff members to highlight the positive things going on within your schools during these cold and rainy days.

As far as NAESP, be assured our NAESP leaders are working hard on the national level to support our efforts at the state level. Below are some of the most recent updates from NAESP Policy and Advocacy Associate Executive Director, David Griffith.

Just before the holidays, Congress gave bipartisan approval to an omnibus FY23 spending plan. We have more details below about the good news it means for K-12 education funding. Just after the holidays, Rep. Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) was, ultimately, elected the new Speaker of the House. The process was a contentious and drawn out affair, which might be (though hopefully not) a harbinger for what is in store for the rest of the 118th Congress. Regardless of the divisions, NAESP will continue to advocate for the interests of its members in a bipartisan manner to all elected officials.

President Joe Biden signed the \$1.7 trillion FY23 omnibus appropriations bill, which includes funding for key federal K-12 education programs, including Title I, Title II, and Title IV; Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); and 21st Century Community Learning Centers. Congress approved significant increases to Title I and IDEA—the pillars of federal K-12 funding. Both Title I and IDEA state grants saw \$850 million increases. Full-service Community Schools also saw a dramatic expansion in support in the FY23 budget, doubling to \$150 million. Head Start, including early

Head Start, is funded at \$12 billion (+\$930 million, 8.4 percent), and IDEA preschool grants will get \$420 million (+\$10 million, 2.6 percent). The total funding for the Department of Education is the biggest increase in years at \$79.2 billion but remains below FY2011 levels, adjusted for inflation.

**Upcoming Vice President Election** Eligible voters will vote for NAESP vice president from March 28 – April 7, 2023. Read about the 2023 vice president [candidates](#).

NAESP and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) are planning a joint **2023 National Leaders Conference** on **March 26 – 29, 2023**, at the DoubleTree Hotel in Crystal City, Virginia. Preliminary plans include: a General Assembly (NAESP only) the evening of Sunday March 26; joint advocacy programming on Monday, March 27; focus on advocacy and Capitol Hill prep on Tuesday, March 28, to include sessions for both joint and individual NAESP and NASSP advocacy priorities; and Hill visits on Wednesday, March 29.

Also, registration is now open for the **2023 NAESP Pre-K-8 Principals Conference** in National Harbor, Maryland, just outside Washington, D.C. You are invited for pre-conference sessions on July 9, followed by the 3-day conference on **July 10-12, 2023**, for another celebration of leadership through both education and networking.

NAESP members should always check communications from NAESP. They will contain valuable resources, webinars, articles, reviews and surveys of what is working and what is not, as well as vendor discounts on products and services. Take full advantage of your NAESP membership! You will be amazed at the availability of information and resources to aid you in being a better school leader.

I wish you all the best for a safe and successful remainder of the school year.



## District V News

### Great Things Happening in District V!

Eura Brown Elementary is in its third year of gardening classes with the Windy Van Hooten Teaching Garden. WVH is a local non-profit, run by actual master gardeners, Jonathan and Rebecca, who teach a math and science aligned garden curriculum in several elementary schools in Gadsden City. Students in the classes enjoy hands-on learning (literally- hands in the soil!), from seed to harvest. If you have never seen a kindergarten student pull a carrot out of the ground, it is truly magical! Some of the garden classes even have cooking components- students have learned how to make a vegetable slaw, maize cakes, and healthy green juice, all from vegetables and herbs they have grown themselves. Eura Brown students enjoy their garden classes weekly in the Bob Echols Outdoor STEM Classroom on the campus at EBES. This outdoor classroom has six raised garden beds, bench and table seating for about three classes, and will eventually have additional installments as funding continues. The Windy Van Hooten Teaching Garden now partners with a local cafe, Beautiful Rainbow, that is completely run by students with special needs in Gadsden City Schools, providing fresh and locally harvested veggies to be used in their cafe menu. They also have a community garden that allows the public to come harvest fresh veggies once a week to take home. If you would like to see more about WVH, or support their nonprofit, find them on facebook and instagram: @WindyVanHootenTeachingGarden

At Hokes Bluff Elementary School, they have a renewed focus on classroom management and behavior. They decided to focus on positive behavior and set up a system which rewards students when they are observed practicing good behavior. Since their mascot is the "Eagles" they use the acronym "SOAR"

S---Strive for Success

O---Own your behavior

A---Accept others

R---Respect yourself, others, and our school.

Students say the SOAR Pledge each morning, and students are able to come to the office and lead everyone in the SOAR pledge via the intercom. They have posters throughout the school, lunchroom, and the playground reminding students of what good behavior looks like.

Also, when students are observed doing positive things around the school, staff members present them with "Eagle Bucks" which they may use to purchase items from the school store. They also have a rewards party at the end of the grading period to reward students for their good behavior. Since implementing the program,

they have seen a dramatic decrease in the amount of office referrals and disciplinary issues.

Brigett Stewart  
Piedmont Elem.  
Piedmont City



# District News

## District IX News

In September 2022, Newton Elementary School in Dale County, was one of five schools in the state and 297 nationally named a 2022 National Blue Ribbon School. In November, a delegation from Dale County traveled to the nation's capital to accept the award. On January 30, 2023, this great honor was capped off with a visit from Governor Kay Ivey and State Superintendent Dr. Eric Mackey. NES is also a 2023 National Elementary and Secondary Education Association Distinguished School, one of only two in the state to achieve the honor this year. Congratulations to Superintendent Ben Baker, former principal Patrick Reed, Principal Eric Andrews, the wonderful staff, and most importantly, the awesome students at Newton Elementary on these tremendous accomplishments! AAESA District IX is proud of you!

The next meeting for District IX is scheduled for March 8, 2023 at 4:30. This meeting will be virtual. The final meeting for this academic year will be held on April 20, 2023, 5:30 at The Cellar in Dothan. Please watch your email for more detailed information regarding these meetings. Let's all "phone a friend" to remind our colleagues about these meetings.

THANK YOU for your commitment to the future of Alabama's children!

Teresa Sims  
Troy Elem.  
Troy City



# AAESA New Members

## District I

Rosa Allen-Cooper .....Decatur City Schools  
Bradley Alsup..... Winston County Schools  
Brandon Archer ..... Colbert County Schools  
Ashley Benham..... Hartselle City Schools  
David Berryman..... Franklin County Schools  
Kesha Bowens..... Lauderdale County Schools  
Elizabeth Cantrell..... Limestone County Schools  
Ashley Carter ..... Limestone County Schools  
Lorian Charles..... Athens City Schools  
Jacob Fowler..... Lauderdale County Schools  
Shanda Garner..... Cullman County Schools  
Suzanne Glass.....Russellville City Schools  
Tammy Hatton.....Haleyville City Schools  
David Hill ..... Lauderdale County Schools  
Laura Lamb ..... Hartselle City Schools  
Chris Lewis..... Lawrence County Schools  
Luke Mansell..... Lauderdale County Schools  
Dena Mayfield ..... Hartselle City Schools  
Scott McCormick ..... Athens City Schools  
Beth McKinney ..... Athens City Schools  
Jared Miner ..... Morgan County Schools  
Jessica Norwood..... Tusculumbia City Schools  
Vickie Osborn ..... Colbert County Schools  
Brandy Quattlebaum ..... Morgan County Schools  
Autumn Rowe..... Limestone County Schools  
Sarah Savas.....Decatur City Schools  
Elizabeth Shaddix..... Cullman City Schools  
Brandace Sims ..... Cullman City Schools  
Robert Strane ..... Cullman County Schools  
Casey Tate ..... Lauderdale County Schools  
Matt Taylor..... Limestone County Schools  
Ashley Uhrig ..... Cullman County Schools  
Amy Williams..... Athens City Schools

## District II

Paul Agnew .....Mobile County Schools  
Keshia Barnett .....Mobile County Schools  
Aimee Burkett.....Mobile County Schools  
Linda Byrd.....Mobile County Schools  
Deanna Coulter.....Mobile County Schools  
Joseph Davis .....Mobile County Schools  
Kristy Davis .....Mobile County Schools  
Stephanie Dial ..... Saraland City Schools  
Kirsten Glover .....Mobile County Schools  
Kerryn Hollins .....Mobile County Schools

Lynn Huey  
Talia Johnson .....Mobile County Schools  
Katryna Kinn  
Amy Lassiter .....Mobile County Schools  
Patricia McKinney.....Mobile County Schools  
Beanner Powe .....Mobile County Schools  
Kimberly Rice.....Mobile County Schools  
Aimee Steele .....Mobile County Schools  
Allison Streeter .....Mobile County Schools  
Stephanie Tashbin .....Mobile County Schools

## District III

Vonda Beaty  
Robin Claborn.....Walker County Schools  
Anthony Gardner..... Sumter County Schools  
Thomas Kyzer .....Walker County Schools  
Heather Lawley..... Tuscaloosa County Schools  
Fayette Little..... Tuscaloosa County Schools  
Amy Lockhart.....Walker County Schools  
Bart Lockhart .....Walker County Schools  
Jami Patrick ..... Tuscaloosa County Schools  
Rita Pilling..... Jasper City Schools  
Glynis Rhodes ..... Tuscaloosa County Schools  
Corey Shubert.....Walker County Schools  
Candice Sparks .....Tuscaloosa City Schools  
LaTanya Williams-Collins .....Tuscaloosa City Schools  
Jodi Wilson ..... Tuscaloosa County Schools

## District IV

Brannon Aaron ..... Mountain Brook City Schools  
Tyson Arendall..... Vestavia Hills City Schools  
Enjuli Bullock ..... Jefferson County Schools  
Christy Christian ..... Mountain Brook City Schools  
Suhai Douglas ..... Tarrant City Schools  
Lauren Dressback ..... Vestavia Hills City Schools  
Shelby Elmore.....Hoover City Schools  
Brittany Ervin ..... Midfield City Schools  
Tara Foster  
Lori Franks ..... Jefferson County Schools  
Taylor Greene.....Birmingham City Schools  
Racheal Haley ..... Leeds City Schools  
Shonta Harrell ..... Jefferson County Schools  
Jamelia Hayes ..... Alabaster City Schools  
Cindy Jones.....Birmingham City Schools  
Donna King  
TaShara King

# AAESA New Members

Patricia LeQuier  
Melvin Love ..... Birmingham City Schools  
Anthony Marsh ..... Blount County Schools  
Lindsay Morgan ..... Hoover City Schools  
Lisa Murphy ..... Jefferson County Schools  
Yulanda O'Neal ..... Jefferson County Schools  
Ashley Paulk ..... Homewood City Schools  
Steven Porter ..... Leeds City Schools  
Sakema Porterfield ..... Birmingham City Schools  
Erica Tanks ..... Birmingham City Schools  
Joy Tyner ..... Trussville City Schools

## District V

Michelle Ballentine ..... Albertville City Schools  
Charles Barron ..... Sylacauga City Schools  
Miranda Battles ..... Albertville City Schools  
Haley Bearden ..... Albertville City Schools  
David Beegle ..... St. Clair County Schools  
Nicki Bryant ..... Talladega County Schools  
Aimee Bunn ..... Calhoun County Schools  
Candace Burns ..... Calhoun County Schools  
Jodi Buttram ..... Dekalb County Schools  
Julie Cordell ..... Marshall County Schools  
Shari Dye  
John Mark Ford ..... St. Clair County Schools  
Leta Freeman ..... Coosa Christian School  
Valerie Hamilton ..... Talladega City Schools  
Shannon Hampton ..... Guntersville City Schools  
Shasta Helms ..... Gadsden City Schools  
Kelly Hopper ..... Cherokee County Schools  
Theresa Huff ..... Anniston City Schools  
Cordell Hunt ..... Jacksonville City Schools  
Anna Jones ..... Talladega County Schools  
Shauntae Lewis ..... Talladega City Schools  
Jennifer List ..... Fort Payne City Schools  
Dwight McDonald ..... Calhoun County Schools  
Brian McRae ..... Oxford City Schools  
Julie Opdycke ..... Calhoun County Schools  
Lorrie Owens ..... Oxford City Schools  
Lydia Peek ..... Dekalb County Schools  
Jodi Shaw ..... Sylacauga City Schools  
Leah Smallwood ..... Marshall County Schools  
Cindy Smith ..... Dekalb County Schools  
Debby Smith ..... Talladega County Schools  
Alex Spencer-Johnson ..... Talladega County Schools  
Mario Sullivan ..... Oxford City Schools  
Rhonda Tinker

Whitney Whiteside ..... Dekalb County Schools  
Kristen Woods ..... Gadsden City Schools

## District VI

TaKecia Barlow ..... Lowndes County Schools  
Wendy Baxley ..... Autauga County Schools  
Katie Lindsey ..... Autauga County Schools  
Holly McNider ..... Autauga County Schools  
Katrina Saulsberry ..... Autauga County Schools  
Alphus Shipman ..... Demopolis City Schools  
Alison Turner ..... Dallas County Schools  
Scarlett Turner ..... Autauga County Schools  
Dalton Watson ..... Autauga County Schools

## District VII

Crystal Adams ..... Tallapoosa County Schools  
Tana Cannon ..... Chambers County Schools  
Margaret Collins ..... Lee County Schools  
Pam Fourtenbary ..... Opelika City Schools  
Michaeline Fuller ..... Elmore County Schools  
Sherlita Gilchrist ..... Phenix City Schools  
Rebecca Good ..... Lee County Schools  
Paul Kohler ..... Lee County Schools  
Yentl Lee ..... Phenix City Schools  
LaShawn Peterson ..... Phenix City Schools  
Theresa Phillips ..... Lee County Schools  
Madison Powell ..... Opelika City Schools  
Jacquelyn Roberson ..... Macon County Schools  
Danielle Rosener ..... Opelika City Schools  
Steven Sanders ..... Lee County Schools  
Quantina Sides ..... Montgomery County Schools  
LaSean Spencer ..... Lee County Schools  
Janis Stewart  
Josh Taylor ..... Alexander City Schools  
Michele Thomason ..... Lee County Schools  
Spencer Wade ..... Elmore County Schools  
Heather Weston ..... Phenix City Schools  
Cyndal Whiten ..... Pike Road City Schools  
John Wilcox  
Kimberly Teel Winchester ..... Tallassee City Schools

# AAESA New Members

## District VIII

- Lisa Becton .....Washington County Schools
- Angelica Crenshaw ..... Butler County Schools
- Nikki Crum ..... Conecuh County Schools
- Jacquelyn Deese .....Washington County Schools
- Chelsea Doggett..... Thomasville City Schools
- Gina Gipson ..... Baldwin County Schools
- Emily Harvell..... Baldwin County Schools
- Rachel Horton..... Baldwin County Schools
- Shannan Jackson ..... Baldwin County Schools
- Courtney McBride ..... Escambia County Schools
- Niquitha Merida ..... Clarke County Schools
- Alicia Morrison ..... Baldwin County Schools
- Sandra Reid..... Escambia County Schools
- Jacqueline Richardson ..... Baldwin County Schools
- Sarah Sadlis..... Baldwin County Schools
- Leslie Sellers ..... Escambia County Schools
- Stephanie Smith ..... Baldwin County Schools
- Sydney Smith ..... Baldwin County Schools
- Vicki Smith ..... Monroe County Schools
- Bradley Stephens..... Conecuh County Schools
- Nicholas Sullivan..... Washington County Schools
- Jarrod Thomas ..... Conecuh County Schools
- Tania Thompson ..... Brewton City Schools
- Dyetra Todd..... Baldwin County Schools
- Melisa Washington..... Thomasville City Schools

## District IX

- Lindsey Andrews..... Houston County Schools
- Amory Atwell..... Ozark City Schools
- Dionne Blair ..... Dothan City Schools
- James Blissett ..... Houston County Schools
- Roberta Bronson ..... Daleville City Schools
- Johnny Bryant..... Coffee County Schools
- Jason Hadden ..... Enterprise City Schools
- Crystal Hawthorne..... Coffee County Schools
- Lisa Hendrix ..... Dale County Schools
- Emily Herbert ..... Coffee County Schools
- James Ingram..... Covington County Schools
- Linda Lawrence..... Henry County Schools
- Jennifer Lee ..... Pike County Schools
- Frances Martin ..... Dothan City Schools
- Darius McKay..... Dothan City Schools
- Rochelle McKenney ..... Pike County Schools
- Natalie Mims ..... Pike County Schools
- Jeaneva Mitchell..... Dothan City Schools

- Sarah Osborne..... Crenshaw County Schools
- Tina Richards ..... Eufaula City Schools
- Tara Sneed..... Ozark City Schools
- Michael Stevens ..... Houston County Schools
- Deltonya Warren ..... Eufaula City Schools

## District X

- Cody Brown ..... Jackson County Schools
- Heather Burnette ..... Jackson County Schools
- Robert Cheyne..... Madison County Schools
- Evelyn Coffey ..... Huntsville City Schools
- Tenisha Cummings ..... Huntsville City Schools
- Savannah Demeester ..... Madison City Schools
- Amelia Evans ..... Madison County Schools
- Karen Fischer ..... Madison County Schools
- Barry Haynes ..... Madison County Schools
- Emily Hembree ..... Madison County Schools
- Virginia Henshaw..... Madison County Schools
- Selena Hughes ..... Huntsville City Schools
- Tammy Jones..... Madison City Schools
- LaKeeta Perkins ..... Huntsville City Schools
- Wendy Pharo..... Madison City Schools
- Nedjra Russell..... Madison City Schools
- Patsey Thomas ..... Huntsville City Schools
- Nicole Thompson ..... Huntsville City Schools
- Quentin Turner ..... Madison City Schools
- Rico Williams ..... Madison County Schools

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2023 CLAS CONVENTION

JUNE 11-14, 2023

MOBILE, ALABAMA



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