

Winter/
Spring
2022

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Alabama

Elementary Administrator



Amy Mason

Alabama's NAESP

2021 National

Distinguished Principal

AAESA President's Report



Judith Ross
L.M. Smith Middle
Birmingham City

I am coming to the end of my year as president. 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, Waller Martin your continued support this upcoming year.

It's a great day to be a member of AAESA. Leaders in our ten districts, put boots on the grounds this year with an amazing recruitment drive. Because of their efforts, AAESA gained another seat on the CLAS Board of Directors. This provides us with another opportunity to raise our voice to advocate for PK-8 students in the state of Alabama. Speaking of advocacy, I recently had the opportunity, along with several AAESA leaders, to represent our organization at NAESP National Leaders Conference in Washington, DC. There, along with state leaders for NASSP, we

met with Alabama congressional leaders to discuss issues in K-12 education. Our congressional delegation was very receptive to our thoughts and ideas on teacher recruitment, infrastructure, mental health assistance for students as well as teachers. I encourage you to continue this conversation with your congressional representative.

As we begin planning for statewide testing and end of the year activities, reflect on all that you have experienced this school year. Reflect on its success and the failures. Be thankful for both. They only made you a better person and better at your craft. I continue to encourage all of you to become 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 my hometown of Birmingham, Alabama. I guarantee, it is going to 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 the Magic City this summer. I look forward to seeing you there.

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Membership



Dana Bottoms
W. Carroll Intermediate
Baldwin County

I have personally benefited from CLAS, AAESA, and NAESP memberships since 2004. Membership benefits include professional learning, networking, and opportunities to

serve your fellow colleagues in leadership positions within all three organizations. Also, you have access to legal defense and support, legislative advocacy, and awards/recognition programs.

Professional learning has been the most beneficial and important aspect of being a member. CLAS, AAESA and NAESP provide many wonderful opportunities for expanding our knowledge and skills. I have truly appreciated and enjoyed the ease at attaining PLUs at the summer and fall conferences. Additionally, the Leadership Institute Series and webinars that are available free of charge to systems that are institutional members and include current topics are so beneficial in our everchanging school environments. They help fill our tool belts with the best strategies and resources to hopefully lessen the stress. CLAS keeps you up to date with regular reminders of PLU opportunities and their website has many benefits like the means of allowing you to check on your progress towards meeting your PLU requirements to stay current with professional certification requirements.

Networking and publications are additional benefits of these quality professional organizations. AAESA, NAESP and CLAS all deliver in these areas. All three organizations publish and provide online exceptional magazines that report and provide information on events and opportunities in our profession across the state of Alabama and the nation. Each magazine features unique information and articles on topics such as ethics, legal matters, schools of distinction, state department happenings, special education, school climate, student discipline, data use and so much more. Another opportunity for timely information is through the Weekly Update. This provides you the most current and important aspects in our profession. It is like you are on Capitol Hill.

I encourage you to join all three to maximize your professional development and opportunities for you and your staff.

FUTURE EVENTS

CLAS Convention

June 13-15, 2022

Birmingham-Jefferson
Convention Complex (BJCC)
Birmingham, Alabama

NAESP Pre-K-8 Conference

July 15-17, 2022

Kentucky International
Convention Center
Louisville, Kentucky

AAESA Fall Instructional Leadership Conference

November 13-16, 2022

Perdido Beach Resort
Orange Beach, Alabama

Thankful



Rickey Darby
AAESA Assistant
Executive Director

Throughout the year, we need to stop to consider all the things we should be thankful for in our lives. I am thankful for my family and

friends. As the assistant executive director, I am thankful for the opportunity to work with the elementary administrators across the state.

This year we are thankful for a successful fall conference with 160+ administrators attending at the Perdido Beach Resort for meaningful professional learning. We had 41 booths in the exhibit hall for our partners to showcase their companies. I am thankful for our gold, silver, and bronze sponsors who helped sponsor meals, and breaks. We had members present breakout sessions, facilitate share tables, facilitate breakout sessions, and take part in the general session program. I am thankful for the entire CLAS staff that helped throughout the year with the planning, organizing and implementation of the conference. Mark your calendar for Nov. 14-16, 2022, at the Perdido Beach Resort for next year's fall conference.

Any organization is only as strong as its members. Thanks to all the members who attended their local district meetings virtually or in-person and the Fall Conference. Please encourage elementary administrators in your local school system to join CLAS and AAESA. Although NAESP is now optional, this national professional organization provides meaningful opportunities for professional growth. AAESA had a membership growth to over 750 members and gained a new position on the CLAS Board of Directors.

Our association has several opportunities for elected leadership positions each year. The nomination committee presents a slate of members who have been nominated for the election. If you would like to be considered for a state office, you need to get involved at the district level and serve as the president or district representative for your district. We are thankful for the members who are willing to serve in leadership roles in our organization. We are also thankful for the members who are willing to have their names placed on the ballot in January each year.

I am thankful for the publications offered by AAESA, NAESP, and CLAS. You are reading this article in the current issue of the AAESA magazine. Thanks to Jill Eaton and all the administrators who have contributed to this issue. The weekly CLAS Friday Update provides members with valuable information. NAESP has various publications that keep members informed, including Principal magazine.

The NAESP National Conference will be in Louisville, KY on July 15-17, 2022. Registration information is available on the NAESP website. If you have never attended the national conference, AAESA has the Glenys Mason Scholarship, an \$1,500 scholarship that can help with the costs of the conference. The deadline for the application is February 1st each year. The application can be found on the CLAS/AAESA website.

Our association has several opportunities to recognize members for their accomplishments at their local school. Congratulations to the nine principals who were nominated for Alabama's NAESP National Distinguished Principal. Also, eight assistant principals were nominated for Elementary Assistant Principal of the Year.

If you have an interest in being involved with the state legislature, CLAS has opportunities to get involved. In addition to the Friday Update each week, during the legislative session there are opportunities to get involved by contacting your legislator or coming to Montgomery for Hill Days. Watch for information from the CLAS office on how to get involved.

As we enter the Spring Break season, take time to en-

Thankful Cont'd

joy your family and friends. They give our lives balance, and we need time away from work to rejuvenate ourselves to do the important work we do for the students each day.

Now, we celebrate our lives beginning to return to normalcy. The past two years have represented challenges none of us ever imagined. We have preserved as a family and as friends and are finding ourselves recovering from and putting our daily lives back to newly discovered routines.

My family and I recently completed our first Disney-Princess 5K race/walk in person. During the pandemic we were able to complete two 5K virtually. Getting

up at 3 am and being at Epcot at 4 am didn't seem appealing at first. At the end of the race, they placed the medal in our hands, and we forgot about the shin splints and aching feet. Each of you deserve to be handed a medal for completing your own personal, pandemic race/walk.

I close with the quote I found on a t-shirt, "Forget the Miles, Remember the Magic."



Congratulations to Our Newly Elected Officers

Vice President

Stan Stokley

Saraland Elementary

Saraland City

CLAS Board of Directors

Dana Bottoms

W.J. Carroll Intermediate

Baldwin County

Margaret Jones

Edgewood Elementary

Selma City

Waller Martin

Enterprise Early Education Center

Enterprise City

Dil Uswatte

Rocky Ridge Elementary

Hoover City

Once in a Lifetime Festivity



Amy Mason
Madison County Elem.
Madison County

The NDP selection process and award have been a once in a lifetime experience for me. It started with a nomination from my District X AAESA colleagues and the completion of the NDP application packet. Since the NDP selection process was conducted virtually, I was able to pull together stakeholder groups such as students, teachers, parents, colleagues, and community members to speak to the selection panel via Zoom, then began the process of waiting for the state NDP results. I received a phone call from my superintendent stating that he wanted to come to the school to speak with me. When he arrived at the school and talked with me, we entered the library where he was swiftly followed by Vic Wilson from CLAS, Tim Hall, Madison County Schools Public Relations, Brian Brooks, Madison County Schools board member, and Dan Chappell from Interior Elements. This group had gathered together to inform me that I had been named the Alabama National Distinguished Principal.

As COVID-19 numbers spiked in the fall of 2021, it was unclear whether NAESP would be able to put on the National Distinguished Principal event in October. Fortunately, the numbers decreased in September and NAESP moved forward with a face to face award event at the beginning of October. Due to the sudden loss of my husband at the end of 2020, I was able to invite Tracey Braye, my instructional coach, to join me as my plus one for the festivities in DC.

When we arrived in DC on Wednesday, we

crossed paths with Vic Wilson in the airport and hopped on the Metro to the Capital Hilton just two blocks away from the White House. As we entered the lobby of the hotel, we were greeted by a light up medallion on the floor signifying the NDP guests. Our first event of the day was a nighttime trolley tour through the monuments. The weather was beautiful and the streets were calm, so we were able to take many photos as we wound through the streets of DC. One of my favorite photos was taken from Arlington Cemetery where the Lincoln Memorial, Washington Monument, and the Capitol Building could all be seen lit up in a perfect line.

On Thursday, the first official morning of the NDP event, I was able to meet the Zone 3 NAESP representative, Ann-Marie Gleason, from Nashville, TN. Ann-Marie represents Alabama, Tennessee, Georgia, and Florida. We enjoyed talking shop and comparing notes about how our school year has been going so far. Since Nashville is only 2 hours away, I look forward to inviting Ann-Marie to an upcoming District X meeting in North Alabama.

During the afternoon, all of the NDPs came prepared to give a 2 minute speech about themselves and their schools. It was heartwarming to hear the common threads of a shared love for students and the importance of building relationships with students. Each NDP was given a traditional lei from Hawaii as they entered the conference room. After all of the public speaking nerves had dissipated, the NDPs truly felt a camaraderie that had been established during this exercise. I personally connected with Cindy Webster from Springfield, Missouri who spoke about her leadership in a Title I school and the successful use of Conscious Discipline with her students.

Thursday evening brought about a cocktail hour at the Hay-Adams Hotel. This was a highlight of

Once in a Lifetime Festivity Cont'd

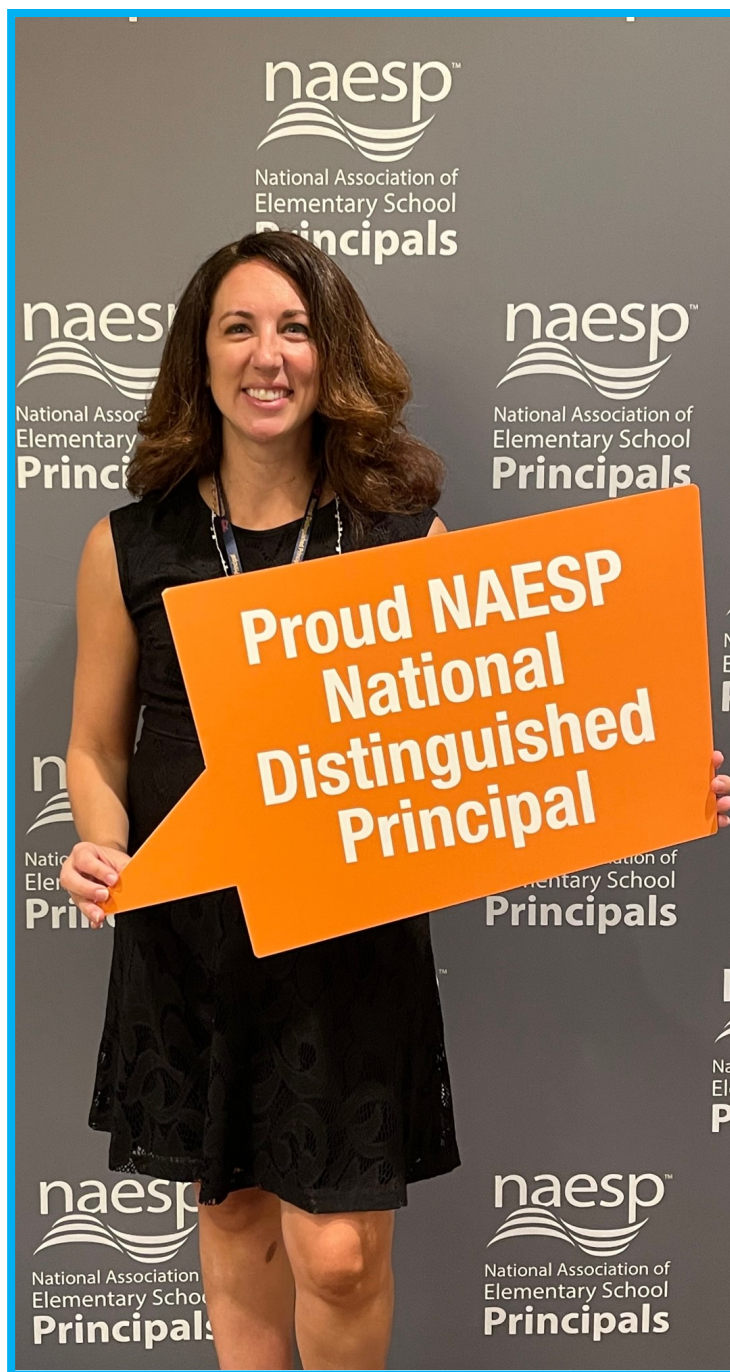
career as an educator. We finished our evening with a stroll across the street to view the White House at night and even had the opportunity to speak with some of the secret service agents that were posted outside. It was an evening that I will never forget.

On Friday morning, I had the opportunity to participate in focus groups with representatives from the U.S. Department of Education, learn about some of the educational lobbying that NAESP has been working on, and participate in a team building exercise lead by Andy Jacks. The NDP class of 2021 became a family through the shared concerns about teacher recruitment, substitute shortages, and other concerns that are a direct result of leading a school in the middle of a pandemic. On Friday afternoon, we had the opportunity to pick up mementos from each of the states and 2 countries that were represented at the event. The Alabama table donned a space themed bag with a NASA pin and Artemis patch, as well as a rocket themed t-shirt with the moon in the background. Other states provided sports themed paraphernalia, food, trinkets, cookbooks, and handmade gifts.

On Friday evening, I prepared for the NDP gala. We started with photos sponsored by Lifetouch followed by finger foods and drinks. The room was complete with an NDP ice sculpture that became a popular photo opportunity for the evening. When the banquet room opened, it was a beautiful sight with the NDP signage and formal table settings. A representative from the US Department of Education addressed the group during the meal. The meal was exquisite and included the signature white chocolate White House dessert. The awards ceremony followed the meal and Alabama was first in line to receive the award. I received a framed NDP certificate and an engraved bell. After all of the awards had been distributed, the NDPs followed the tradition of ringing their

bells in unison for students. This was a harmonious exercise to bring our focus back to why each of the participants were represented....our hearts were full.

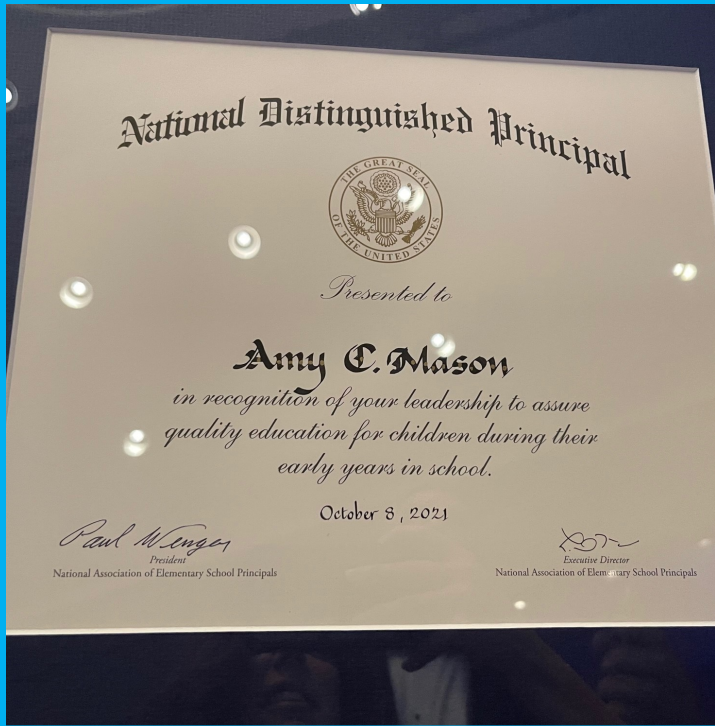
I am grateful for the opportunity to have represented Alabama as the 2021 NDP. The experiences gained from my trip to DC, as well as opportunities to meet other administrators from across the state and country have furthered my professional growth more than ever. Thank you fellow AAESA principals!



Once in a Lifetime Festivity Cont'd



Once in a Lifetime Festivity Cont'd



Once in a Lifetime Festivity Cont'd



Bill Miller, Sr. Friend of Education Award



Karissa Lang
Crestline Elementary
Hartselle City Schools

Dr. Steve Bell was awarded the Bill Miller Sr. Friend of Education Award at the AAESA Fall Conference. This award is given to a non-educator who has

made considerable contributions to education over the years.

Dr. Bell is the pastor of Flint River Baptist Church in Meridianville, AL. He has been a strong supporter of education for many years and consistently reaches out to school systems for ways to support teachers and students. Dr. Bell is the founder and primary sponsor of the Shop with a Hero program in Madison County. Students are given the opportunity to shop with a local “hero” for the holidays. During summer breaks, Dr. Bell frequently assists families with monetary assistance up to \$1000 so students can attend Summer Daycare Programs at Local Schools. At the start of every school year, Dr. Bell assists schools in feeding their

teachers as a way to motivate them for the upcoming school year and to thank them for all of their hard work. During the year, STAR students and teachers are chosen, picked up in a limousine and provided with lunch by Dr. Bell’s church. Teacher of the Year receptions are hosted at Dr. Bell’s church to honor the nominees, winners, administrators, district staff, and board members. Camp in the City scholarships are given each summer to students in need. Dr. Bell’s proudest achievement is his creation of the Kids Hope Student Mentorship Program. Mentors are trained and sent into schools to mentor students who have been identified by the school counselors and administrators.

Dr. Bell is a champion for education who has and continues to go above and beyond for the students of Madison County. Congratulations Dr. Bell on your award!



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Congratulations to Our Winners



Bonnie Sullivan
Pike Road Intermediate
Pike Road City

AAESA is pleased to announce the following award winners for the 2019-2020 school year:

Glenys Mason Convention Scholarship Winner

Michael South, W.C. Handy School

Florence City



The Alabama Association of Elementary School Administrators (AAESA) has selected Dr. Michael South for the Glenys Mason Scholarship award. This scholarship award is available to AAESA members who have never attended a National Association of Elementary School Principals Convention. Michael is the principal at W.C. Handy School in Florence, Alabama. He has experience as Principal, Federal Programs Coordinator, Assistant Principal, and fifth grade teacher. He has also completed the requirements for the Superintendent's Academy. Michael looks forward to attending the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) Convention to learn and grow professionally with other instructional leaders across the country.

AAESA would like to recognize Michael for his accomplishments, honors, and dedication in educational leadership that have significantly impacted educators and students.

Michael Carr/Marie Taylor Scholarship Winner

Brandi Evans, W.S. Harlan Elementary

Covington County



The Alabama Association of Elementary School Administrators (AAESA) has selected Brandi Evans 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. Brandi has 18 years of experience in education teaching students from second grade to twelfth grade and currently serves as a reading specialist at W.S. Harlan Elementary in Covington County.. 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 Brandi for her accomplishments, honors, and dedication in education that have significantly impacted educators and students.

Congratulations to Our Winners cont'd

Truman M. Pierce Award

Paula Reese

Community Programs Manager, Mobile County



Paula Reese has been selected as the recipient for the Truman M Pierce award. This award is intended for an educator with outstanding contributions significantly beyond expectations which advance the direction of education in Alabama. Paula served as the Community Programs manager for the Mobile County Public School System. Her leadership moved the Pre-K program from 200 students being served to more than 4000 students, now being served. She worked in the Pre-K, Parent and Family Engagement departments and served as a School Improvement Specialist. As a leader in her field, she formed collaborative partnerships with Head Start, Franklin Primary Healthcare facility, Goodwill Easter Seals, Foster Grandparents, Bishop State Community College, and the PNC bank. AAESA would like to recognize Paula for her accomplishments, honors, and dedication in educational leadership that have significantly impacted educators and students.

2021 Alabama's Elementary Assistant Principal of the Year Nominees

- District I** Jonathan Bailey
McBride Elementary, Muscle Shoals City
- District II** Michele Hewlett
Chickasaw Elementary, Chickasaw City
- District IV** Tracy Gregg
Center Point Elementary, Jefferson County
- District V** Amanda Martinez
John S. Jones Elementary, Etowah County
- District VII** Rachel Martin
Reeltown Elementary, Tallapoosa County
- District VIII** Brooke Waters
Magnolia Elementary, Baldwin County
- District IX** DeAnna Miller
Holly Hill Elementary, Enterprise City
- District X** Andrea Datson
Riverton Elementary, Madison County

Winner will be recognized in our next magazine.



If Rocks Could Talk



Gail Morgan
Retired Educator

Rocks are a common object most of us take for granted—until we abruptly hit them with the garden hoe, step on them while walking bare footed in the warm spring grass or use them to drive a peg in the ground of a tailgating tent during SEC football season. American Astronaut Neil Armstrong once said, “Geologists have a saying – rocks remember.”

[National Geographic](#) detail that to geologists, a rock is a natural substance composed of solid crystals of different minerals that have been fused together into a solid lump. The minerals may or may not have been formed at the same time. What matters is that natural processes glued them all together.

Take a quick step into science class and be reminded of three basic rock types: igneous, sedimentary, and metamorphic. Igneous is molten magma-the hot stuff found in volcanos that is quite explosive; sedimentary rock is common and formed of layers from things such as sand, mud and small stones; and metamorphic rock has been put under a lot of pressure and heat made by the ever changing earth’s movements. Principals daily encounter different types of “rocks” with students, staff and stakeholders all in different physical,



psychological, and emotional developmental “rock” levels, each having their own unique story.

The mind of a person is similar to a pile of millions of little rocks rather than a single big boulder. For a mind to be changed it is often a process. Thousands of little rocks need to be carried from one pile to another, one at a time. Scientists tell us new neuron paths aren’t typically created quickly and repetition is needed for a skill to become habit. One might be able to get a tiny percent of a person’s mind to re-wire to a new belief in a given conversation, but most often minds change slowly and in unpredictable ways.

Stephen Covey’s book *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* speaks of the correlation between leaders and rocks. Specifically, the third of his seven habits, Put First Things First, explain the simple yet powerful concept of prioritization as the example of trying to fit big rocks, pebbles, and sand into an empty jar. If one starts filling the jar by first adding sand, then pebbles, they will not have room for big rocks-the things that are the most important in a person’s life.

Principals have a lot on their plate now more than ever. A large number of people demand attention and unanticipated concerns pop up more often than needed. Consistently leaders seek ways to add value and model going the extra mile to meet student needs. Environments today require longer hours, and the wonders of technology bring work more and more into personal time to keep up with the ever-changing demands. Sadly, the concept of “work-life balance” sometimes becomes background noise.

It may serve us well to make a deliberate effort to identify “Big Rocks” among the tons of sand and pebbles that beckon attention. The rocks and sand can be quite challenging, but there are lessons to learn to make a stronger leader in the sorting process. Carl Perkins once said, “If it weren’t for the rocks in its bed, the stream would have no song.” Often the greatest lessons are learned, not from the common simple situ-

If Rocks Could Talk Cont'd

ations, but in those that challenge us most.

Perhaps we can commit to evaluate current priorities, whether strengthening stakeholder relationships, building a stronger team, being more innovative, focusing on personal health and growth, or maybe just spending more time with family and friends to recharge and reset our hearts and minds. It is easy to get caught up with the sand and gravel, but if one doesn't prioritize the big rocks they may not reach the intended goal.

An old American Proverb says, "The difference be-

tween a stumbling block and stepping stone is how you use them." Stepping stones epitomize elementary and middle school principals. Often half of the rock is submerged in ever changing atmospheric conditions, yet the stone continues to provide a firm foundation for others to step across to a more secure foundation and future. The next time you see a rock, take time to stop and notice its distinct features. Consider how your leadership provides a firm foundation for many lives. Every rock has a story to tell. If your rocks could talk, what interesting conversation might unveil?

New Research Highlights Increased Demands of the Principalship Due to Crises of 2020-2021

The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and NAESP Foundation has released the second brief in the Leaders We Need Now (LWNN) research series titled *Evolution of the Principalship: Leaders Explain How the Profession Is Changing Through a Most Difficult Year*. The brief reveals that in 2020–2021, principals' work priorities shifted in response to the new challenges caused by the pandemic, and principals took on new responsibilities such as community-wide crisis management and social media communications. The research findings highlight principal burnout and concerns about an increasing number of principals considering leaving the profession. The research has implications for the profession and the support school leaders will need going forward, including potentially reconfiguring the role and more specialization.

Utilizing the Professional Standards for Education Leaders (PSEL), researchers learned that certain priorities, such as engaging in frontline services (e.g., contact tracing, COVID-19 mitigation strategies, etc.) and providing social-emotional learning demanded more of principals' time during this period, while other priorities, such as equity, cultural responsiveness, and school improvement, were put on the "backburner." The research also illuminates how the pandemic and national reckoning with racial and social injustice issues layered new responsibilities and demands on principals that fundamentally changed their role.

"The last few years—marked by the COVID-19 pandemic and a national reckoning with racial and social injustice—have left an indelible imprint on schools and the principals who lead them," says NAESP Executive Director L. Earl Franks, Ed.D., CAE. "This important research echoes what we've been hearing from our members from across the country for months: Principals don't have the necessary training, capacity, nor support to handle these new priorities. This should be a wakeup call that more must be done to support principals to meet the day-to-day challenges in schools. Principal burnout is the culmination of years of increased demands and responsibilities on principals, asking them to do more with less. Principals have hit a breaking point. Without a change in course, this has the makings of a profession that could face severe shortages due to principals calling it quits. The warning signs are clear; we must address this crisis."

The study, funded by The Joyce Foundation and conducted by the American Institutes for Research, consisted of 36 focus groups that met between April and June 2021. The groups were a geographically representative sample of NAESP membership, including 188 principals from 43 states.

The third and final brief in the series will detail the policy actions principals say are needed to address these new realities, help schools reset after the 2021–2022 school year, support students, and build better schools for the future.

To download the second brief in the series, *Evolution of the Principalship*, visit www.naesp.org/LWNN. You can also access the Leaders We Need Now executive summary and the first brief in the series, *Leaders in the Tumult*.

—Dateline NAESP

Character Counts



Laurie Fowler
Forest Hills Elementary
Florence City

Character Counts
An Elementary School's Journey
to Becoming a School of Char-
acter

A few years ago, as an Assistant Principal, I received a text from my Superintendent with a link to an article discussing Schools of Character. His text read something to the effect of, "I bet you could do this." Those words motivated me to read about what a School of Character was. As I began reading, I realized my school, Forest Hills Elementary, wasn't quite there, but that we weren't too far off either. Around that same time, my Principal introduced me to an organization called The Hope Institute. I was instantly hooked because in a world where students are facing so many challenges socially, emotionally, and with life in general, I saw being a school of character and The Hope Institute as an opportunity for providing my students with a strong foundation of character that would take them far in life.

So what is a School of Character, and why would you ever want to pursue this for your school and students? I'd first encourage you to visit <https://www.character.org/> to learn that this is a "comprehensive approach that inspires students to understand, care about and consistently practice a set of core values that will enable them to flourish in school, in relationships, in the workplace, and as citizens." There is an actual School of Character Certification that is awarded each year by this organization. This is where The Hope Institute comes into the picture. This Alabama-based 501(c)(3) helps school leaders to cultivate character in their schools by educating leaders on best practices regarding character education. The Hope Institute offers professional development, Hope Leadership Academy, educational expertise, and forums/summits. Three years ago, as the newly selected Principal of Forest Hills Elementary, I signed my school up for The Hope Institute. It was and still is, the best decision I've made as a school leader so far. So let me walk you through what our journey to becoming a school of character has looked like thus far.

The Hope Institute is divided into yearly cohorts, so three years ago, I took a team of 4 to attend Hope Institute Year 1. During those professional development sessions, we heard from amazing speakers including Liz Huntley, a powerhouse attorney in the state of Alabama, and Drayton Nabers

Jr., the former CEO of Protective Life Corporation and Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Alabama. My team learned about the 11 Principles Framework to use as a guide for cultivating a culture of character in my school. After evaluating our school with the framework, we self-reflect, collaborated, and took our learning back to our school. The first task I led my school in was identifying what our school's core values were. This was a school-wide effort that took place during faculty meetings (and is reviewed each year following). Over the course of a few weeks, core values were determined and formulated into a statement that you can now find in our classrooms, Facebook page, and school handbook. Our team also learned that being a school of character does not just fall in the hands of guidance counselors--it falls in the hands of everyone. I wrote a grant to the Daniel Foundation for each member of my faculty to receive a copy of Liz Huntley's book, More Than A Bird. I wanted my faculty to read this book because it showed how educators and school employees throughout Elizabeth Huntley's life changed her future and paved the way for her to survive unthinkable circumstances. Everyone, top to bottom, plays a part in teaching and instilling character in students. During Year 1 of Hope Institute, our team also recognized some practices at our school that needed to be eliminated or tweaked. For example, we stopped using a system of paying our students with "bucks" for good behavior. Instead, we started practicing ways to build intrinsic motivation. We wanted our students to do the right thing because it was the right thing to do. We also realized that we were doing a lot of service learning projects, but oftentimes awarded students for participating by awarding pizza parties to those who did the most fundraising. That was an easy fix--we just stopped giving pizza parties, and instead, focused more on the "why" behind why we were doing service learning projects. One of the most impactful decisions we made during Year 1 was to focus on a virtue each month. We used the professional literature provided to our team during our sessions at Hope to identify the 10 virtues we would focus on each school year. We also chose to focus on the same 10 virtues each school year going forward, so that by the time a student has completed kindergarten through fourth grade at Forest Hills, he or she will have internalized the virtues that have been ingrained in them for the last 5 years.

During Year 2 of Hope Institute, I took the same team of 4 educators to attend more professional development sessions focusing on continuing to turn our school into a school of character. Keep in mind that during Year 1, Covid hit and forced us to participate in Year 2 virtually. Covid also slowed down some of our plans, so our team had to re-think and punt. We began our 2nd year by doing a Culture Survey that was sent to stakeholders. We wanted to know how they thought we were doing in our quest to become a school of character. During Year 2, we also fine-tuned our Praise Refer-

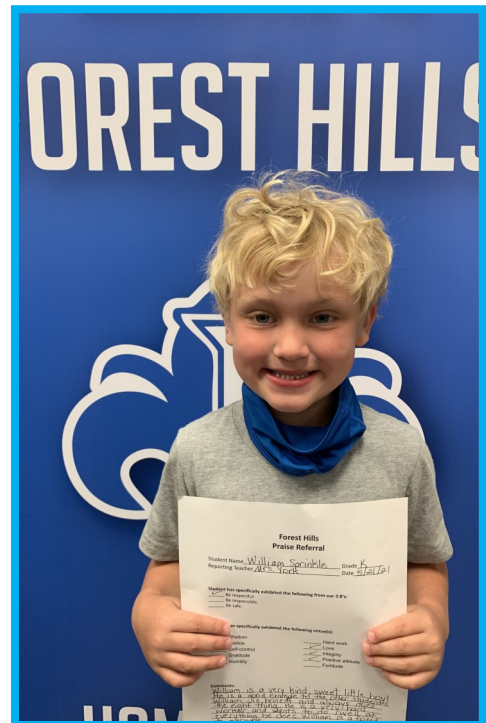
Character Counts Cont'd

Referral form. This was a form we had been using for years at Forest Hills to recognize students for making good choices and being school leaders. We modified our Praise Referral form to match those 10 virtues we had identified as core values we wanted our students to embody. During Year 2, we had planned on having a school-wide assembly at the beginning of each month to introduce each virtue, but due to Covid, we could no longer have assemblies since our student body was so large (850 students). To solve that problem, we utilized our school district's Communication Director to shoot videos of community leaders discussing each virtue. The videos have been a huge hit, and will be re-used each year ahead. The most impactful decision our team made during Year 2 was shortening the core value statement that had been developed during Year 1 into a student friendly version. Each morning, during my morning announcements, I get to lead all 850 students in saying our Forest Hills Commitment, "I will be respectful, responsible, and safe to make the world a better place." I guarantee you that if you asked any student at Forest Hills what our Forest Hills Commitment is, they could tell you!

Fast forward to fall of 2021. Covid had taken its toll on my teachers and staff. There was still so much unknown with the school year ahead, plus we had to put on hold several character initiatives from the year before (due to Covid). That is when I decided to wait out Year 3 of The Hope Institute for a year, and re-focus on fine-tuning what we had established thus far. I realized the year ahead would be challenging, so our Hope Team (now double the size because I sent another team of 4 to begin Year 1 the previous year) printed, framed, and hung (with the help of our amazing PTO) positive quotes around our school. Whether you are a student or employee, you literally can't wash your hands or get a water refill at Forest Hills without reading an inspirational quote! I had written another grant the previous year for a book titled, Eight Habits of the Heart for Educators. With the pandemic being so stressful that year, I held the books in my office and waited for the opportune time to introduce it to my faculty. I waited until August of 2021 to tell my faculty (again, not just teachers, but ALL employees) that this book would be our guide for the year. As a school, we've read one chapter a month, and it's been a great tool for keeping our minds and hearts focused on our students. Perhaps the most impactful strategy our school has utilized thus far is our school-wide morning community meetings. I designed our master schedule for this year around the first 15 minutes of each morning being a class's community meeting from 7:30-7:45. My teachers will tell you that it is the most important 15 minutes of their day. During summer PD, my Hope Team modeled various ways to conduct a morning community meeting. The main focus of these meetings is to build community and char-

acter among our students. If you were to pop into a classroom during this time, you're likely to hear conversations about virtues, our 3 B's, goals, and conflict resolution. Those 15 minutes have become special moments at Forest Hills.

So what's next for Forest Hills? We will continue our quest to instill character in our students. We truly believe that if students have a strong sense of core values, they will be ready to learn, achieve, and become good citizens who will carry on the quest into their futures. If you're interested in bringing a focus to character education at your school, I'd love for you to come and visit Forest Hills! I would also encourage you to research The Hope Institute at <https://www.hopeinstitute.org/> and consider joining. As mentioned above, <https://www.character.org/> provides educators with the framework and support needed when focusing on character education. As we say at Forest Hills, "character counts," and I'd challenge you to commit to this awesome endeavor--it's one you will not regret!



Congratulations Alabama District Distinguished Principals



District I
Dr. Michael South
W.C. Handy Early Childhood
Florence City



District II
Christy Amick
Chickasaw Elementary
Chickasaw City



District III
Dr. Lucile Prewitt
Oakdale Elementary
Tuscaloosa City



District IV
Dr. Alice Turney
Riverchase Elementary
Hoover City
Finalist



District V
Bridgett Stewart
Piedmont Elementary
Piedmont City
2022 Alabama NAESP NDP



District VII
Dr. Mary Salmon
Southview Primary
Opelika City



District VIII
Dr. Michelle Moore
Foley Elementary
Baldwin County



District IX
Christie Mitten
Holly Hill Elementary
Enterprise City



District X
Dr. Bradley Scott
Blossomwood Elementary
Huntsville City
Finalist

Announcing Alabama's NAESP 2022 NDP



Bonnie Sullivan
Pike Road Intermediate
Pike Road City

Congratulations to Bridgett Stewart, who was selected as the recipient for Alabama's NAESP 2022 National Distinguished

Principal award. This award honors an outstanding elementary or middle-level principal who ensures that America's children acquire a solid foundation for lifelong learning and achievement. Bridgett has earned a Bachelors, Masters and Leadership Certification from Jacksonville State University. She is the principal of Piedmont Elementary School with Piedmont City Schools. Under her leadership, it is clear that her school brings success in multiple areas with the motto, "One Team One Mission". One mission that was developed was having a male mentor program that allows community members to work with students at school. This program has received a lot of positive attention from students, parents, and stakeholders that they are starting a young girl's program. It is evident that these efforts have also led to helping increase student achievement. Piedmont Elementary School earned an A on their school report card.



Piedmont Elementary and Piedmont City Schools have the highest percentage of National Board Certified Teachers in the nation. Forty-nine percent of the staff, including Ms. Stewart holds this prestigious certification. Congratulations to the staff of Piedmont City Schools for this accomplishment.

AAESA would like to recognize Bridgett Stewart for her accomplishments, honors, and dedication in educational leadership that have significantly impacted educators and students. It is with great pleasure that she has been selected as the recipient for the 2022 NAESP National Distinguished Principal award from Alabama.



2021 Fall Instructional Leadership Conference



Waller Martin
Enterprise Early
Education Center
Enterprise City

Our AAESA Fall Conference for 2021 was certainly one to remember!! We had over 175 administrators attend this year,

this was a record number. Our Exhibit Hall was one of the best ever, we also had a record number of vendors. We greatly appreciate our vendors and sponsors. Our Conference would not be possible without their support. Be sure and take the time to thank them if you have an opportunity. It was great to be able to collaborate and network with everyone. So many administrators all over the state from Mobile to Moultrie.

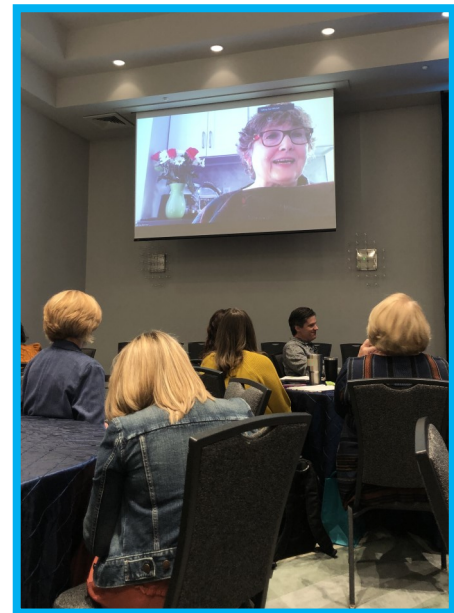


The Professional Development this year was nothing short of outstanding!! A special thanks to AAESA Executive Director Rickey Darby for all this hard work and preparation. We are fortunate to have Rickey in our organization. Our Conference would not have been possible without our CLAS staff. Our CLAS Executive Director Dr. Vic Wilson and his staff do a great job!! We appreciate everything they do not only for our conference, but for our organization on a daily ba-

sis

Many administrators arrived early on Sunday to attend the Pre-Conference Session on the Literacy Act. A special thanks to Dr. Elisabeth Davis from the State Department, as well as Ms. Bonnie Short and Ms. Karen Rutledge-Bell with ARI for presenting this valuable information. Our Key Note speakers were very interesting as well. Dr. Edgar Finn shared some very interesting information pertaining to mental health insight and enabling more effective engagement for professionals working with children and youths. We were also honored to have in attendance our National Association of Elementary School Principals' President, Mr. Paul Wenger. Paul came all the way from Iowa to attend our Conference!!

One of the Conference highlights for most was Sue Mitchell on Tuesday morning, better known as "Miss Sue" from the movie, *The Blindside*. Miss Sue shared several lessons and stories not only from the movie but also from her own teaching experiences and dealing with children. This session was both informative and entertaining.



Several AAESA members were recognized at the Awards Luncheon on Tuesday. The 2020-2021 NAESP

2021 Fall Instructional Leadership Conference

National Distinguished Principal of the Year, Mrs. Amy Mason from Madison County Elementary School was recognized. We also recognized the 2021-2022 Principal of the Year Nominees: Dr. Michael Smith, Mrs. Christy Amick, Dr. Lucile Prewitt, Dr. Alice Turney, Mrs. Bridgett Stewart, Dr. Mary Salmon, Dr. Michelle Moore, Mrs. Christie Mitten, and Dr. Bradley A. Scott. The Assistant Principal of the Year Award was presented to Mrs. Aqila Malpass of Rocky Ridge Elementary in Hoover City Schools. The Truman M. Pierce Leadership Award was presented to Paula Reese, and the Bill Miller, Sr. Friend of Education Award was presented to Dr. Steve Bell.



Shelby County School Board President Mr. Aubrey Miller closed out the Conference on Wednesday. He spoke on the “C’s” of Recovery: Collaboration, Confidence, Competence, and Caring.” A special thanks to all those who volunteered to do Breakout Sessions and Share Tables. These were informative and provided helpful information.



If you were not able to attend our 2021 AAESA Fall Conference, I hope you will be able to attend the 2022 AAESA Fall Conference. Go ahead and mark your calendar for November 13th November 16th. I promise you will not be disappointed!! Looking forward to seeing everyone in November 2022!!



Meet Your District X President



Brad Scott
Blossomwood
Elementary
Huntsville City

Brad Scott began his educational career as an elementary classroom teacher at University Place Elementary in the fall of 1996 after completing his bachelor's degree in elementary education from Auburn University. Following eight years in the classroom accompanied by a master's degree from Alabama A&M University and an admin. certification from the University of Alabama, Dr. Scott decided to begin his journey into the world of educational administration. Over the course of the next eighteen years, Dr. Scott has become known for his skill of building positive school cultures and academic success at multiple schools in the Huntsville City Schools while providing hope for all stakeholders. He currently serves as the principal and instructional leader at Blossomwood Elementary School.

“Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm” is the quote that Dr. Scott continues to use as a cornerstone of his educational philosophy. Regardless of the academic level, socioeconomic level, etc., all children and all families deserve the gift of hope. Whether it is a student sharing that they have achieved their lifelong dream of being accepted to Harvard, accepting a job at the post office, or choosing to start their own business, his team takes pride in the fact they believe their encouragement and efforts help put student(s) on the road to success.

Another passion for Dr. Scott is encouraging and building leadership capacity in others through the professional development of faculties. Over his eighteen years as a principal, he has led faculties that were less than twenty classroom teachers, faculties with greater than 70 teachers, faculties of all tenured/veteran teachers, and faculties with greater than 70% non-tenured teachers. In each situation, the instructional practices and student achievement experienced significant improvements that were sustained through leadership and his core belief of valuing the experience and expertise that each educator brings to the classroom. In fact, while earning a doctorate degree from the University of Alabama, Dr. Scott's dissertation study focused on the value and use of peer coaching as structured by the Instructional Partnership Network (IPN). More specifically, he embraces peer coaching in the form of Jim Knight's instructional coaching model.

Over the years, Dr. Scott has continued to learn, including professional development through AAESA/CLAS/NAESP. He has been a member of all three organizations since 2004, and he has enjoyed the quality professional development offered such as: the new principal workshops, the annual conferences, and the NAESP/CLAS PreK-3 Leadership Academy. In 2017, Dr. Scott won a grant that made his school 1 of 50 schools in the nation to be recognized as part of the *Dynamic Learning Project*. Since the grant was funded by Digital Promise and Google, he had the opportunity to be trained at Google headquarters in Santa Clara, California with a focus on integrating technology in the classroom to enhance both instruction and student engagement. Most recently, Dr. Scott was chosen and completed the *Alabama Superintendent's Academy* provided by The University of Alabama and the Alabama State Department of Education.

Personally, Dr. Scott has been happily married to Amy for 23 years, and they are blessed with two wonderful sons; Aubrey and Landon. In his spare time, Dr. Scott loves spending time with family, fishing, working in the yard, and playing sports. In addition, Dr. Scott also enjoys reading and watching Auburn sports and the World Champion Atlanta Braves. He is thankful and humbled to serve as president of District X.

Personally, Dr. Scott has been happily married to Amy for 23 years, and they are blessed with two wonderful sons; Aubrey and Landon. In his spare time, Dr. Scott loves spending time with family, fishing, working in the yard, and playing sports. In addition, Dr. Scott also enjoys reading and watching Auburn sports and the World Champion Atlanta Braves. He is thankful and humbled to serve as president of District X.



Meet Your District IV President



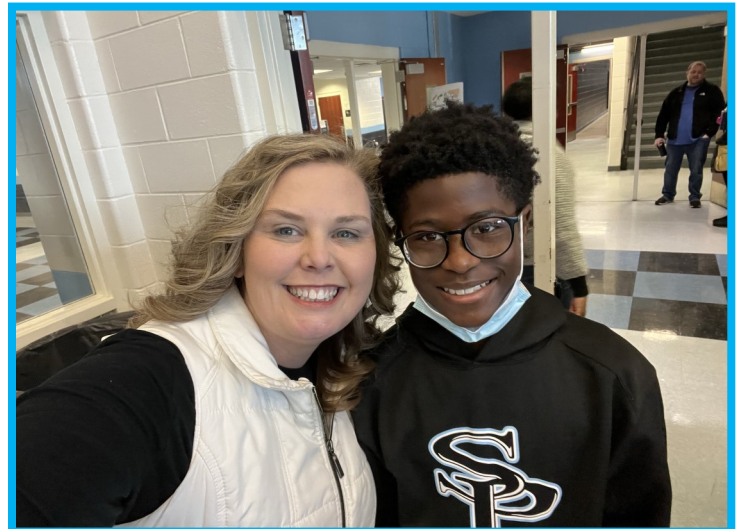
Alice Turney
Riverchase Elementary
Hoover City

My name is Alice Turney. I am originally from a small town outside of Chattanooga, TN. I married my high school sweetheart, Pete, and we have been married almost 30 years. We made our way to the Birmingham area via Atlanta. We have four wonderful children. Our oldest daughter is a junior in college, our oldest son is a junior in high school, and the twins are in eighth grade. We spend much of our time as a family attending football, wrestling, choir, band events, and watching Auburn football.

In my free time, I enjoy riding my motorcycle. It is a peaceful time of wind therapy that reminds me of the days when I rode dirt bikes and ATVs as a kid. Those days of racing are long gone, but I still enjoy riding on my Sportster.

I started my career just outside of Atlanta in Douglasville, GA, after graduating from the University of West Georgia. I taught pre-k, kindergarten, advanced and remedial math, and then moved into the role of Student Support Specialist at Eastside Elementary School. I then moved to open New Manchester Elementary as the assistant principal. My husband's job moved us to Hoover where I became an assistant principal and then named principal at Riverchase. I am blessed to work with amazing families and staff!

Finding the organization of CLAS and AAESA has allowed me to meet many throughout the state, given me strong professional development, and strategies for school improvement. I am excited to be District IV President this year and to continue to grow professionally. If I you ever need anything, you can reach me at aturney@hoover.K12.al.us



National Association of Elementary School Principals



Matt Scott
Creekside Primary
Limestone County

NAESP National Conference

2022 - July 15-17, Louisville, KY

Have you registered for the NAESP National Conference?

We are fortunate this year to have it in the south in Louisville, KY!

Register @ www.naesp.org

Conference Strands highlighted this year include:

- Equitable Outcomes, Diversity, Inclusion, and Cultural Responsiveness
- Family and Community Partnerships
- Share Leadership, Build Capacity, and Promote a Culture of Continuous Improvement
- Evidence-Based Social-Emotional Learning and Wellness
- Transform Learning Through Technology
- Career Building and Professional Leadership Skills
- High-Quality Instruction and Interactions for Pre-K –3rd Grade Leaders
- Best Strategies and Practices for Middle-Level Leaders

Keynote Speakers:

Simon Sinek

Simon Sinek will join us for a live, virtual conversation at the NAESP Pre-K-8 Principals Conference. A globally respected thought leader and best-selling author, Sinek's unconventional and innovative views on lead-

ership will inspire you to live your "why."

Inky Johnson

Inky Johnson, the former collegiate football player permanently injured on the field, shares his dramatic story of overcoming hardship and life-threatening injury. His motivational words inspire others to embrace adversity, face their own daily challenges, and live life with a greater purpose.

Other speakers:

Jennifer Abrams

Todd Whitaker

Pam Allyn

Howard Fields

Caitlin Mehra

Amber Peterson

Zone 4 Director named:

The Zone 4 Director Election Results have been tabulated. Two-hundred and ninety-three members voted in this election.

The NAESP Zone 4 Director to begin on August 1, 2022 is **Dr. Ashley Aldridge-Wilson!** She is Principal at Nolan Elementary in Signal Mountain, TN.



NAESP Online Webinars (Free 1 hour Webinars)

Ever participated in NAESP Webinars? They are free

National Association of Elementary School Principals

with your NAESP membership!

Webinars are informative and provide members a great way to connect with each other from across the country!

<https://www.naesp.org/resources/webinars>

NAESP Member Profile

Please update your NAESP member profile

- (1) Log in to [naesp.org](https://www.naesp.org); (2) Click on Edit Profile; and
- (3) Click on ♥ Edit Demographics.

Member Benefits

Members of NAESP enjoy access to:

- Professional liability
- Federal advocacy
- Professional learning
- Principal magazine
- Best practices resource hub
- Valuable discounts

<https://www.naesp.org/membership> for more detailed information

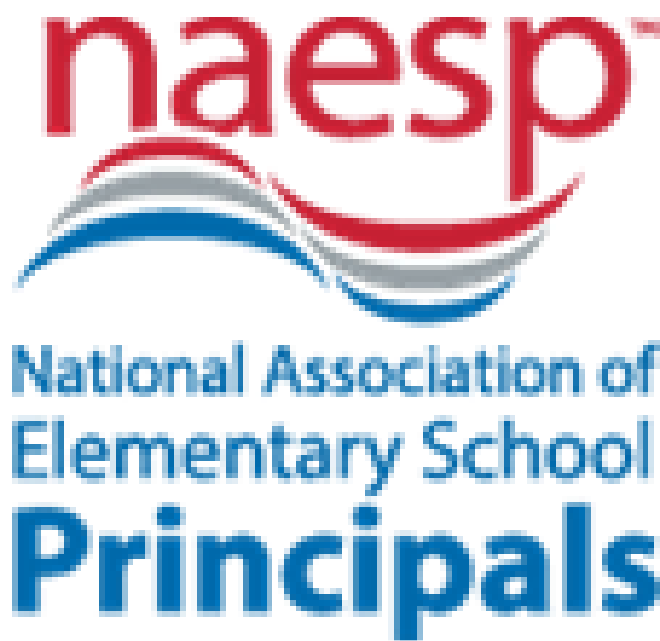
The NAESP APP is here!

Principals come to NAESP for much-needed support in leading learning communities. Now NAESP members can access that support on-the-go through the NAESP App. Thousands of resources are available, including webinars, podcasts, publications, advocacy updates, and more. The app also offers push notifications on NAESP events and updates, as well as exclusive early access to the digital version of *Principal* magazine. Search for NAESP in the APP Store. Once installed, **use**

your NAESP website credentials* to log in, and you're good to go!

NAESP Advocacy Alerts

The laws that Congress passes, and the funding decisions they make, have an enormous impact on you, your school, and your students. But in order to ensure robust funding for federal education programs like Title II and IDEA, and to advance education policies that rightly recognize the important role of principals, it's critical to make your voice heard. NAESP is pleased to offer members text message alerts on key legislation and votes impacting principals. To sign up for text alerts, use the button below, or text "NAESP" to 52886.



Federal Relations



David Fancher
Past Federal Relations
Chair
Retired

Editor's Note: I would personally like to thank David Fancher for his 15 years serving as Federal Relations chair on the

AAESA Board. David took his role seriously and supplied members with much needed information concerning national education legislation. He visited with our national legislators once a year and is well respected on Capitol Hill. He loved his professional organizations and worked tirelessly for them throughout the years. Thank you for your outstanding service, David. You will be greatly missed!

After months of legislative haggling and delays, the U.S. Congress passed an FY22 omnibus funding bill (omnibus) on March 10. The legislation will be signed into law and take effect immediately. The FY22 fiscal year began on Oct. 1, 2021, but until now, Congress had been unable to reach agreement on new funding levels. As a result, federal programs, including K-12 programs at the U.S. Department of Education (USED), had been operating at FY21 funding levels.

The FY22 omnibus provides \$76.4 billion for the USED—an increase of \$2.9 billion above current funding levels. Of the funding allotment for USED, K-12 education comprises \$42.6 billion, which represents a \$2 billion increase over FY21 levels. The new funding for these core K-12 federal programs will now be in effect until Sept. 30, 2022 (see details below on funding levels).

Though K-12 programs received funding increases, the omnibus falls short of the funding levels approved in previous versions of the legislation, which included a doubling of Title I funding and a 20-percent increase to IDEA. In addition, school meal waivers that had been in effect since the pandemic began were not ex-

tended and will now sunset in June 2022. Still, the strong funding levels in the FY22 omnibus, coupled with the federal COVID-19 relief funding schools are already receiving, means principals will be well-positioned to confront this recovery period head on.

The passage of the FY22 omnibus legislation follows NAESP members, as part of the [2022 National Leaders Conference](#), advocating last week on Capitol Hill for increases in K-12 funding in the FY22 bill. Below are details of funding for K-12 programs included in the bill:

- **Title I** — \$17.5 billion, an increase of \$1 billion over FY21. This is the largest increase in the program in more than a decade
- **IDEA Grants to States** — \$13.3 billion, an increase of \$406 million over FY21 levels
- **Title II, Part A** — \$2.2 billion, an increase of \$27 million over FY21 levels
- **Mental Health Professionals** — \$111 million for mental health professionals in schools, includes:
 - ◇ \$55 million for Mental Health Services Professional Demonstration Grants, a \$45 million increase over FY21 levels
 - ◇ \$56 million for School-Based Mental Health Services Grants, a \$45 million increase over FY21 levels
- **Title IV, Part A (Student Support and Enrichment)** — \$1.3 billion, an increase of \$60 million over FY21 levels
- **Title IV, Part B (21st Century Community Learning Centers)** — \$1.3 billion, an increase of \$30 million over FY21 levels
- **SEL Programs** — \$82 million, an increase of \$15 million over FY21 levels
- **Community Schools** — \$75 million, an increase of \$45 million over FY21 levels

In the coming weeks, the FY23 budget will be released and NAESP will be engaging with congressional leaders to ensure robust investments in federal K-12 programs continue.

District News

District VIII News

District VIII met on Feb. 22nd with a total of 24 members present. Rickey Darby and Vic Wilson joined the meeting and updated members on the Parent's Choice Act, Literacy Law, and Numeracy Act. Members were given the opportunity to ask questions or express concerns about all three topics. Discussions also took place concerning the teacher shortage, change in the retirement yearly allowable earnings, and if/when retired teachers and administrators may return to the classroom while maintaining their retirement pensions.

Benita Battle, Vice President, led the meeting by opening the floor for nominations for the CLAS Leadership Award. Three qualified candidates were nominated. After a vote by all present, Dana Bottoms was honored to receive the award. Benita Battle will serve as President of District VIII for the upcoming year. She will take the place of the current president, Donnashelle Bruister. Jenny Breazeale was elected to take the place of Benita Battle as vice president. Lynn Smith will remain secretary, and Cindy Riley will remain as treasurer. Michelle Moore agreed to another term as District VIII Rep. Before adjourning, members agreed that the next meeting will take place face-to-face on June 9th. Members expressed much happiness to start meeting face-to-face at local restaurants. Members were also encouraged to register for the summer.

Foley Elementary School, Baldwin County Schools, has a plethora of resources for parents and teachers alike in their Parent-Teacher Resource Room. Parents and teachers are given the opportunity to checkout materials in all skill and grade levels in order to support students. The resource includes reading, math, language, and social skills games and materials. We all know that children learn best when they are engaged and active. The resources in this room are made to keep students' interest while mastering grade level standards. Teachers rave about the resource room as it gives them ready-made high-interest games and materials on various levels. Parents enjoy using items from the resource room as a way to help their child learn skills that they may have failed to master. Students use the items during independent learning times, small group instruction, and whole group learning. Principal, Dr. Michelle Moore, states the items were purchased by using Title I funds and various grants. Ten of thousands of dollars have been used to build the resource room over a period of four years. Recently, an additional room was added to house the math materials as the current room was

overflowing with resources. Students love the hands-on learning! Foley Elementary School is a fun place to learn and grow!



Michelle Moore
Foley Elementary
Baldwin County

Welcome New AAESA Members

District I

- Bradley AlsupWinston County Schools
- Dawn Batts Decatur City Schools
- Ashley Benham Hartselle City Schools
- Ryan BowermanLawrence County Schools
- April BurgessMorgan County Schools
- Michael Cole Lauderdale County Schools
- Nicholas Cottrell Colbert County Schools
- Jacqueline GoodwinLimestone County Schools
- Nicholas Looney Athens City Schools
- Morgan MahanMorgan County Schools
- Anna Thigpen Tuscumbia City Schools
- Leann Trapp Franklin County Schools
- Jake Ward Franklin County Schools
- Elizabeth WilsonLawrence County Schools
- Channing Wright Franklin County Schools

District II

- Brittney Fillingim Mobile County Schools
- Felicia Gilmore Mobile County Schools
- Leslie Howard Mobile County Schools
- Tracey Hunter Mobile County Schools
- Michelle McNew Mobile County Schools

District III

- Tammy Anderson Pickens County Schools
- Amy Atkins Walker County Schools
- John Campbell Pickens County Schools
- Leah ColleyTuscaloosa County Schools
- Brandi Davis Fayette County Schools

- Angelyn Jones Marion County Schools
- Clarissa RiedelTuscaloosa County Schools

District IV

- Brannon Aaron Mountain Brook City Schools
- Michael BissellJefferson County Schools
- Keith BrownJefferson County Schools
- Chakema Jackson Hoover City Schools
- Chad KennedyJefferson County Schools
- Tiffany Marron Vestavia Hills City Schools
- Ashley McCullarsHomewood City Schools
- Miranda Mitchell Leeds City Schools
- Monisha SeayJefferson County Schools
- Tonika Stewart Birmingham City Schools

District V

- Kathryn Brown Marshall County Schools
- Melody BrownAlabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind
- Cynthia Cain Calhoun County Schools
- Shannon Carter St. Clair County Schools
- Julie Cordell Marshall County Schools
- Molly Gann Etowah County Schools
- Cordell Hunt Jacksonville City Schools
- Jessica Lumpkin St. Clair County Schools
- Susan Ogle Talladega County Schools
- Jonathan Skinner Jacksonville City Schools
- Cindy Smith Dekalb County Schools
- Rachel Spates Pell City Schools
- Whitney Whiteside Dekalb County Schools
- Cari Wilson Talladega City Schools

Welcome New AAESA Members cont'd

Wendy Wilson Talladega City Schools

District VI

Angelica Davis Selma City Schools

Brad Elam Marengo County Schools

Tracy Johns Chilton County Schools

Barbara Ntse Choctaw County Schools

Senovia Wilson Choctaw County Schools

District VII

Carmen Anderson Lee County Schools

Myeshia Brooks Elmore County Schools

Cory Eckstein Elmore County Schools

Michaeline Fuller Elmore County Schools

Coretta Hunter Macon County Schools

Yentl Lee Phenix City Schools

Sarah Maddux Opelika City Schools

Julie Mask Tallapoosa County Schools

Ryan McDonald Opelika City Schools

Lekishia Richardson Alexander City Schools

Laura Sellers Opelika City Schools

District VIII

Elizabeth Andrews Escambia County Schools

Dionne Dunton-Armstrong Baldwin County Schools

Melanie Kent Escambia County Schools

Allyson Maxwell Baldwin County Schools

Michelle Monk Baldwin County Schools

Robert Murphy Baldwin County Schools

Terra Simmons Conecuh County Schools

Michal Stallworth Conecuh County Schools

Sophia Yarber Monroe County Schools

Joanie Younge Clarke County Schools

District IX

James Blissett Houston County Schools

Lauren Buchanan Dothan City Schools

Heather Bulger Andalusia City Schools

John Cammack Ozark City Schools

Heather Hatton Geneva County Schools

Crystal Hawthorne Coffee County Schools

Lindsey Hicks Dothan City Schools

James Holcomb Barbour County Schools

Rochelle McKenney Pike County Schools

Natalie Mims Pike County Schools

Tina Richards Eufaula City Schools

Jon Sanders Pike County Schools

Blair Till Crenshaw County Schools

Yolanda Vincent Dothan City Schools

District X

Rhonda Booth Madison County Schools

Kelly Reasner Madison County Schools

Nicole Shoulders Huntsville City Schools

December 2021 CLAS Board Meeting



Veronica Coleman
Chastang-Fournier K-8
Mobile County

On December 2, many CLAS Board members and CLAS Staff attended the December CLAS Board meeting at the scenic Marriott Legends in Prattville. President Donald Turner was not in attendance, but President Elect Dr. Bob Lawry served as moderator.

Highlights from the CLAS staff reports include:

SDE Report– Dr. Wilson gave a very detailed update of upcoming plans to address teacher shortages in our state. He informed us that when the legislators convene several bills may be introduced and that CLAS would be monitoring them all. The CLAS legislative Platform was shared. A handout on Teaching and Learning Policy Positions along with Funding Positions was provided.

Professional Development- Dr. Sanders encouraged board members to speak with their local members on keeping up to date with their PLU's. She informed us that many administrators are waiting and trying to rush to obtain PLU credit. Dr. Sanders gave an update for the CLAS Summer Convention. The theme this year is Leadership-Connect, Inspire, and Thrive. She encouraged everyone to register early as a record number of participants are expected. The Certified Instructional Leader Cohort started with 17 participants with 3 returning and 1 having to withdraw.

Membership Report- Everyone was encouraged to review the DNR report for their district and encourage those former members to renew their membership. Several affiliates are on the verge of gaining another board seat if they can get a few more members.

Financial Report- We learned that CLAS is doing very well financially. Due to outsourcing at CLAS event venues we will see an increase in expenditures. Board members were encouraged to patronize CLAS sponsors when possible and reach out to them for local district meetings as well. CLAS newest partnership with LeanStream was announced as well.

The next CLAS Board Meeting will be in March.

March 2022 CLAS Board Meeting



Stan Stokley
Saraland Elementary
Saraland City

The CLAS Board of Directors met March 10, 2022 at the Marriott Legends in Prattville, Alabama. Minutes were approved and staff members provided detail reports. Dr. Demica Sanders reported CLAS received 166 nominations from 58

school systems for the Banner School program. A committee of educators from around the state will score the applications and select the Schools of Distinction. Banner Schools and Schools of Distinction will be recognized at the Banner School luncheon May 9th. CLAS has secured funding for the Pre-K Leadership Academy to continue with the sixth cohort and the Certified Instructional Leader Program will open applications in April.

The CLAS Summer Convention we be at the BJCC in Birmingham June 12th – 15th and all keynote and clinic speakers have been secured. The board will meet and have dinner Sunday, June 12th. The convention will be in Mobile for 2023 and 2024. The legislative update is a

work in progress. There are many proposed education bills being considered in the House and Senate. One of the most debated bills now is the Alabama Numeracy Act. There are several bills dealing with Tier II issues and no changes to PEEHIP currently. The CLAS website and Dr. Wilson's Friday Update emails provide regular legislative updates. The good news is the ETF budget that passed the House does contain a 4% raise for educators.

A CLAS financial investment review was presented by David Gallahar. CLAS investments have averaged around 4.5% as the market continues to fluctuate. David is watching the market and will recommend any changes CLAS should make with our investments. CLAS ended the year with an extra \$16,000 over budget. CLAS membership is trending upward.

It is time for affiliates to begin making nominations for the Little Red School House Award, Dr. James A. Street Award, CLAS Legislative Award, and the CLAS Leadership Award. Stacy Royster from the SDE provided an update on PowerSchool. She pointed out things PowerSchool can do to customize programs for local school systems. It was pointed out that PowerSchool is a 3-year learning process. PowerSchool is currently addressing problems being experienced by school systems across the state. The board adjourned and enjoyed a nice meal together before returning to their school district. The next board meeting will occur June 12th in Birmingham.

Proposed By-Laws Revisions

Proposed By-Laws Revisions

ARTICLE V - OFFICERS

Section A Officers

The officers of the Association shall be President, President-Elect, Vice President, Immediate Past President, the NAESP Representative, and **CLAS Board Members**.

Rationale: CLAS Board Members are elected by the membership and serve on the AAESA Board.

ARTICLE V - OFFICERS

Section B Steering Committee

1. Composition

The voting members of the Steering Committee shall be the President, President-Elect, Vice President, Immediate Past President, and NAESP Representative. The Executive Director, **the Assistant Executive Director**, and other staff members as determined by the Executive Board, serve as ex-officio members.

Rationale: The Assistant Executive, in fact, handles the work of the association as assigned by the Executive Director.

ARTICLE V - OFFICERS

Section C Term of Office

1. The term of office of the President, NAESP Representative, President Elect, Vice President, Immediate Past President, and **CLAS Board Members** shall begin on July 1st.

Rationale: Newly-elected CLAS Board Members' terms begin concurrently with other newly-elected officers.

ARTICLE V - OFFICERS

Section D Qualifications for Serving as an Elected Officer

1. Except for Immediate Past President, be a currently practicing elementary/middle school building administrator **throughout the term of office**.
2. **Previous election as a District** President or District Representative.
- ~~3. Continuous~~ Active membership **in AAESA** for at least two years prior to nomination and while serving in office.

Rationale: Representation of elementary/middle school administrators is validated by currently practicing building level administrators. Editorial changes

ARTICLE VI - EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section B Organization

The Executive Board consists of the following voting members: President, President-Elect, Vice President, Immediate Past President, NAESP Representative, the Association's CLAS Board Members, and District Representatives who have been elected by the members of each AAESA District. The Executive Board consists of the following non-voting members: Executive Director, **Assistant Executive Director**, Committee Chairpersons, NAESP Board Members/**Officers**, and ex-officio non-voting members as designated by the President.

Rationale: The Assistant Executive has responsibility for and within the meeting.

NAESP Officers should be included alongside NAESP Board members

ARTICLE VI - EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section E CLAS Board Members

Current: Board members on the Council for Leaders in Alabama Schools shall be elected at large. The number of CLAS Board Members elected annually is determined by the number of active members. The CLAS Executive Director will notify the AAESA President as to the number of Board members earned each year.

Proposed By-Laws Revisions Cont'd

Qualifications for a CLAS Board Member include previous service as an elected officer [President or District Representative] in a district and active membership in the Association for at least 2 years.

Change:

1. Election

- a. CLAS Board Members shall be elected at large.
- b. The number of CLAS Board Members earned by the Association is determined by the number of active members.
- c. The CLAS Executive Director will notify the AAESA President and Assistant Executive Director as to the number of Board Members earned each year.
- d. The CLAS Executive Director will notify the AAESA president and Assistant Executive Director when it is AAESA's rotation to nominate members for the ballot for CLAS President-Elect.

2. Qualifications

- a. Previous service as an elected District Officer [District President or District Representative]
- b. Active AAESA membership for at least 2 years prior to nomination and while serving in office.
- c. Ongoing service as an elementary/middle school building level administrator throughout the elected term.

Rationale: Editorial changes for consistency. Clarification of elected District Officer should always elect and be represented by currently practicing building level elementary/middle school administrators

ARTICLE VIII - NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Section E Vacancies

6. If an elected officer moves to a non-building level administrative position, the elected position shall be declared vacant, and a replacement identified using the guidelines herein.

Rationale: AAESA should always be represented by currently practicing building level elementary/middle school administrators

ARTICLE X - DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

Section B District Presidents

1. District Presidents shall be elected by the districts.
2. The District President shall be a member of the local district organization and AAESA/~~NAESP~~/CLAS.
3. The District President shall assist the Association President in the formation of committees and provide oral and/or written reports as needed.

Rationale: Joint membership in NAESP is no longer required.

ARTICLE X - DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

Section C District Representatives

1. A District Representative shall be elected by each District Association to serve on the Executive Board.
2. The District Representative shall be a member of his/her own district organization and of AAESA/~~NAESP~~/CLAS.
- ~~(3.) District Representatives shall serve a 3-year term.~~
3. In the event that If a District Representative cannot attend a meeting of the Executive Board, the President of the District may assume the Representative's position for that meeting and shall have the right to vote.

Rationale: Joint membership in NAESP is no longer required.

Several districts have made the request to elect District Representatives annually.

Editorial changes

These changes will be voted on at the AAESA business meeting at the CLAS Summer Convention.

Respectfully submitted, Susan McRae, By-Laws Co-chair



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