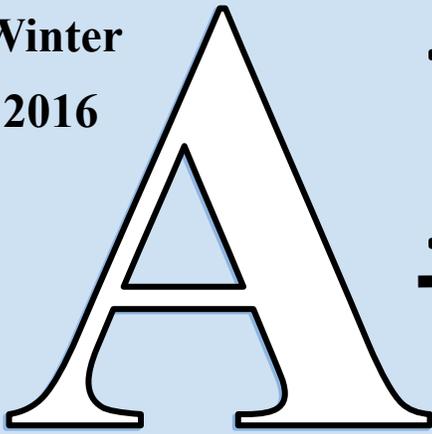


Winter
2016



Alabama

Elementary Administrator

Vol. 64 No. 2



Laurie King

2015

Alabama's National Distinguished Principal

National Distinguished Principal Celebration



Laurie King *Crestline Elementary* *Mountain Brook City*

Since being named National Distinguished Principal (NDP) in March, so many incredible events and special moments have occurred. When I re-

turned home following the announcement, I was greeted with a huge banner in front of the school. Upon entering, I found students (all 750) and staff lining the halls cheering and clapping.

The following week I was called to the office to meet a surprise guest. Dr. Tommy Bice was there! We had lunch and then were led to the auditorium where the students greeted us with cheers. I looked around in dismay and my husband and three daughters were there too! Several people, including Dr. Bice spoke. It was very humbling and meant a lot to me.

As the months passed, there were many social moments with students, parent, and staff members. I grew more and more excited about attending the NDP Ceremony in Washington DC. October finally arrived and my husband and I boarded the plane for this much anticipated event!

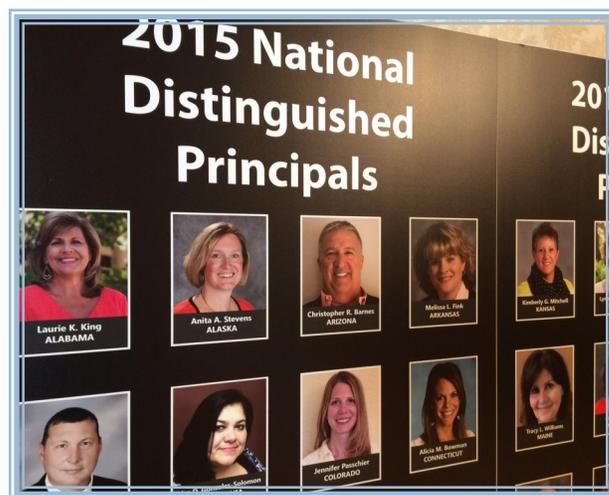
The experience began with an Orientation Session on Thursday. It was so nice to enter the Congressional Room in the Capital Hilton and see Earl Franks and Jim Chesnutt. Each NDP spoke for two minutes about their school. It was a chance to meet each recipient and to learn about their elementary school.

That evening we boarded buses to attend a reception at the U.S. Department of Education in the Diplomatic Reception Suite. There are a series of rooms (42) that contain museum-caliber American fine and decorative art from 1750-1825. The terrace was open and the views of the Washington Monument, Lincoln Memorial, and the Capital were spectacular!

Friday, all of the NDP's had a photo taken in front of the White House and then began a day of leadership sessions. We were able to network and discuss relevant national issues in education. The day ended with "Memento Sharing". Each principal brought a memento to share from their state. Scholastic donated copies of "To Kill a Mockingbird" by Harper Lee (from Monroeville, AL) for Alabama's memento.

Then it was time to get dressed-up for the Awards Ceremony, Dinner, and Dance (the NDP Prom)! The evening was magical and felt like I imagine the Oscars. Each principal was introduced on stage and received an engraved brass bell and a framed certificate. Following the ceremony, the dancing began and lasted into the night!

Each district has now nominated the 2016 candidates and soon it will be narrowed to three principals that will receive school visits. In March, the lucky and deserving winner will be announced. The year of recognition and fun will begin for them!



NDP Celebration Continued



NDP Celebration Continued



Truman M. Pierce Leadership Award



Chris Mitten
Windham Elementary
Daleville City

The Truman M. Pierce award is presented by the Alabama As-

sociation of Elementary School Administrators each year to an educator with outstanding contributions significantly beyond expectations which advance the direction of education in Alabama. The award is named after Dr. Truman M. Pierce, one of our states great leaders for many years in the area of Administrative Leadership. AAESA has presented this award since 1986 with some of its recipients being Dr. James Kimbrough, Dr. Harold Bishop and Dr. Katherine Mitchell.

This year's recipient is Dr. Diane Murphy.

Among her many listed accomplishments are a diverse career in education serving in every capacity there is from teacher of special education students, Assistant Principal, Special Education Coordinator, and Professor at Troy University, Assistant Superintendent and the very successful Education Leadership Center for the Wiregrass.

The Education Leadership Center for the Wiregrass Fellows Program began its first of 3 two year cohorts in which 11 administrators were trained on effective leadership. The program utilized the Rigor Relevance and administrators and their building leadership teams were trained in the process. By the beginning of the third cohort Dr. Murphy had developed her own leadership model dubbed the Transformation Leadership Model. When the ELCW formally ended in 2012, Dr. Murphy took her leadership model called "The

Leading Edge" which was adopted and piloted by the Alabama State Department of Education. As this program continued she wrote modules that the state called the Alabama Fellows Program.

Currently Dr. Murphy continues her work as the Executive Director of the Professional Education Group LLC for Auburn University. She has also single handedly brought a doctoral cohort from Auburn University to the Wiregrass. This has opened up the possibility for students from the southwest corner of the state to obtain a Ph. D.

Everything Dr. Murphy has done since being diagnosed with cancer in 2003 and surviving that life threatening disease, has been to further the leadership capacity for administrators throughout the wiregrass and now the entire state. She has profoundly impacted the leadership training for administrators all over the state of Alabama. Her passion for developing leadership in order to make schools better throughout Alabama has been second to none.



Because of her passion and selfless dedication to advancing leadership in Alabama we are proud to award Dr. Diane Murphy the Truman M Pierce Leadership award for 2015.

Bill Miller Sr. Friend of Education Award



Frances Finney Gresham Elementary Jefferson County

The Bill Miller Sr. Friend of Education Award is presented to

someone who has shown considerable contributions to education over the years that is not an educator. Formerly known as the Southeastern Award this honor has been re-named for Mr. Bill Miller, Sr. in appreciation for his many years of selfless contributions to AAESA, CLAS and other educational organizations. Sarah Verser is a morning anchor for FOX6 News Good Day Alabama in Birmingham. Good Day airs each weekday morning from 4:30 a.m. to 9 a.m.

Sarah Verser began her career reporting for WKBW-TV, Channel 7 Eyewitness News in Buffalo, New York. While there, she also reported for the weekly Public Affairs show "Buffalo Beat." She moved south and began working with FOX6 WBRC-TV as a general assignment reporter in 1989.

Sarah is deeply committed to area schools. She believes that parents want to hear the good that is going on in our schools, and has fought to keep her positive programs alive on the air. She is an active participant in what was formerly the FOX6 School Cleanup project, and FOX6 Helping Schools. She has always loved inspiring young people.

In addition to her morning duties, Sarah is an award winning education reporter. Her segments What's Right With our Schools and At Your School (air Tuesdays and Thursdays during the 5 p.m. newscast) have been recognized by the Birmingham City Council, The Literacy Council of Alabama and the State Board of Education. She was awarded a spot on the Alabama Association of School Boards' Statewide Education Media Honor Roll and awarded as Best Specialized Re-

porter by the Associated Press.

"What's Right With Our Schools" highlights the numerous accomplishments of students and teachers that seldom get the spotlight otherwise. As one principal put it "her segment on "What's Right With Our Schools" touches the hearts of schools allowing the communities she serves to know that children are being served well by caring educators". Another principal stated "she recently did two stories at my school and her regard for public education was so evident. She spent a long time talking to all stakeholders-especially the students!"

Sarah is active in her church, loves a good workout, and loves gospel music.

It was a pleasure to present the 2015 Bill Miller Friend of Education Award to Ms. Sarah Verser.



Glenys Mason Scholarship Winner



Marshae Madison Pelt
Midfield Elementary
Midfield City

Attending the National Association of Elementary Schools

Conference: A Principal's Reflection's

As I traveled back to the lovely state of Alabama, I could not help but reflect on the lasting impression of how this trip impacted and motivated my future. First and far most, I am thankful for being selected to receive the Glenys Mason's scholarship. It's sad to think that I missed the chance to meet Ms. Glenys Mason in person; however, her gentle and caring spirit will live forever through CLAS and her dear friend Jill Eaton.

The Glenys Mason's Scholarship was provided to me through CLAS. The award afforded me the opportunity to travel to Long Beach, California to attend the 2015 National Association of Elementary Schools Principal's conference of *Best Practices for Better Schools*. I applied for the award in hopes of receiving a chance to broaden my career through various networking opportunities. That decision turned out to be more than a notion. In fact, after I arrived, I met with several members of CLAS, Jim Chestnut and Earl Franks, and others, who encouraged me to meet other principals and to "get involved". I can still hear their words encouraging me to "form a network with other principals". This was the perfect occasion to build collaborative relationships with other administrators across the country.

Throughout the conference, I attended countless sessions compelled by excellent speakers and well attended by individuals committed to making a difference in education. Each of us, eager to learn and gain

an understanding of *What's Next in Education*, sat attentively through sessions that were embedded with inspiration and ideas connected with improving instructional practices, transforming schools, and empowering educational relationships. Moreover, each session was strategically fine-tuned to meet the needs of administrators; from the host of the *Principal's Blog* to Dr. Todd Whitaker's "Ten-Minute In-service", in conjunction with *Leading Learning Communities* to Principal Kafele's inspiring words and Erik Wahl's *Fostering Creativity within Schools*, offered opportunities to build and ensure success as a principal. Furthermore, I enjoyed meeting new friends and rekindling professional friendships as well as participating in the various activities that the vendors shared/hosted throughout the conference. Even though the Harlem Globetrotters and the Chic-Filet events were amazing, there were many vendors with quality information and products designed to promote leadership within the schools.



I must admit, that although the sessions were superb, the most outstanding part of the trip was meeting re-

Glenys Mason Scholarship Winner Continued

tired distinguished principal Jill Eaton.

Throughout the conference, I sat, listened and admired Ms. Eaton’s kind words of wisdom. Her



knowledge of being an effective leader inspired me to become more than “just” a member of an organization. I could not help but smile each time she contacted me, inviting me to dinner or reminding me to check

out an event. It is my belief that the “Powers” above connected our affiliation and due to that connection, I met Ms. Glenys Mason’s best friend. I can only hope that one day; my presence on earth will have a lasting impression on someone that I meet during a conference!

If you are offered the chance or find time in your schedule to attend NAESP conference, DO SO! In addition to the knowledge presented and the networking opportunities, the “Powers” above might just “hook you up” with a divine connection that you wouldn’t want to miss!

Membership

District	Active	Institutional	Aspiring	Emeritus	Retired	Total
District I	61	19	2	2	1	85
District II	26	15	2	1	1	45
District III	42	11	2	0	3	58
District IV	94	6	1	2	1	104
District V	74	10	0	2	0	86
District VI	22	1	0	0	1	24
District VII	47	11	3	2	4	67
District VIII	38	1	1	1	0	41
District IX	40	16	2	0	0	58
District X	37	10	1	2	0	50
Non-District	0	1	0	1	0	2
TOTAL	481	101	14	13	11	620

CLAS Board Meeting



Debbie Deavours
Berry Elementary
Fayette County

CLAS Board of Directors fall retreat was held on Sunday, September 13 and Monday, September 14, 2015 at the beautiful Legends in Prattville. President John Jones, Jr.

presided over the meeting. Fifty board members and CLAS staff were present to carry on the work of the board representing eleven affiliates.

Executive Director Earl Franks gave the 2014-2015 Year-End Membership Report noting that several membership categories were at a record high for the year. Dr. Franks reported that the CLAS Summer Convention income was higher in 2015 due to increased registration fees and reduction of convention expenses. Mobile and Montgomery are both locations being considered for 2017 and 2018 conventions.

Gail Morgan provided a Professional Development programs update. She reviewed the Professional Development brochure and its offerings. Leslie Dennis reported on the Banner Schools Program. She encouraged board members to refer to the Banner Schools Timeline for information regarding school or program nominations.

Jim Chesnutt provided a legislative update. He informed the board about issues that are being addressed at the second special session this year. A main concern for educators is taking funds from the Education Trust Fund for the General Fund

President Jones reported that CLAS auditor, Julia Stevenson, discussed the Year-End Financials with the Executive Committee and provided a favorable report. CLAS is following recommended internal controls and

is financially sound. The financial reports were judged to be true.

The amendments to CLAS Legal Defense Agreement as passed by the board is as follows: In the CLAS Legal Defense Fund Agreement section and in the Exclusions section, item 2: "*Alabama Risk Management for Schools*" should be replaced with "*Alabama Trust for Boards of Education.*" Also, in Coverage Agreements – Coverage A, item 1 "*charge, to include criminal*" should be "*claim of misconduct, including a criminal charge.*"

President Jones made the following committee appointments: Awards and Recognition Committee – Rickey Darby, Autumm Jeter, Larry Haynes and Jerry Snow.

Elections Committee – Van Phillips, Mary Veal, Dorann Tanner and Brenda Rickett.

Membership Committee Chairperson – Carlos Nelson.



Federal Relations



David Fancher
Retired Principal

There is a new law in the land. After years and years and years of living with No Child Left Behind, Congress has passed a reauthorization of the

Elementary Secondary Education Act. **The Every Student Succeeds Act** makes some significant changes over NCLB. It gives more control to the states and is seen as loosening the grip of the Department of Education over states. Dr. Bice has already spoken about how pleased he is with this. It was not a perfect bill, but it did have the support of the major education groups, including NAESP. Some of the key points are; the inclusion of The School Principal Recruiting and Training Act, States may reserve up to 3% of Title II funds for principal professional development, and the term school leader means a principal in the school building. This clarification of a school leader may sound like a no brainer, but was a key lobbying point to keeping the position of principal, not a school leader that could be interpreted in many ways. Title I also had some changes. One is that states may now reserve up to 7% of the funds to be used in activities “that are not rigidly prescribed at the federal level. This Department of Education link will provide you with more information <http://www.ed.gov/essa> .

Secretary of Education Duncan has announced his resignation. Both parties agree that he was one of the better cabinet appointments the President has made. He has been a long term supporter of elementary administrators and worked closely with NAESP. His resignation became effective in December.

The President has called for a reduction in testing. He feels that testing should be limited to 2% of classroom instructional time. The Department of Education has released the Testing Action Plan (TAP). The reduction in testing is seen as a reversal in the President's previous position. A report from the Council of Great City Schools (representing the nation's largest districts) finds that, on average, students take over 110 federal, state, or locally mandated assessments between kindergarten and 12th grade.

The resignation of House Speaker Boehner and election of Representative Paul Ryan to the position shows the conflicts in the Republican Party. Ryan in his acceptance speech said, "The House is broken. We are not solving problems. We are adding to the. It is hoped that he can move the House forward.

A two-year bipartisan budget and debt ceiling agreement has been reached and has passed both Houses. It would keep everything funded till after the presidential election. This is a positive step in removing the budget as a weapon to be used by either side. It passed in the Senate despite objections and procedural delays by conservative members. The bill lifts the sequestration caps and will increase discretionary spending by 80 billion over the two years to be split equally between defense and social programs. It includes plans on how to fund this increase. House Speaker Boehner wanted this passed before he left office to help “Clean the barn out” before his departure.

Executive Board Summary



Frances Finney
Gresham Elementary

AAESA Executive Board Summary

Meeting was called to order by President

-Elect Chris Mitten. President, Laurie King was not in attendance due to the death of a former student and needed to be present at her school. We adopted the agenda and approved minutes of the last meeting.

NAESP Representative's Report given by Christie Mitten as she gave a Southern welcome to NAESP President Elect Steven Geist and NAESP Zone 4 Director Sharon McNary. They both shared greetings from NAESP and were happy to share our conference with us.

- 2016 NAESP National Conference will be held July 6-8 at Gaylord Harbor Maryland; great opportunity to make connections; NAESP website needs new principals to participate once a month on a national panel for new principals, NAESP works on the hill to voice our concerns - website offers many PD opportunities for administrators.

Committee Reports given:

-Fall Conference '15 by Chris Mitten: Thanked sponsors, Jim Chesnutt and the CLAS office for assisting in preparations. Looking forward to a great three days.

-Fall Conference '16 by Autumn Jeter: Will begin to plan soon. Discussed possible dates for next year's conference. Voted unanimously to adjust dates as necessary due to 2016 election and the way Halloween falls on the calendar next year.

-Awards by Frances Finney: NDP nominee names are due to Jim Chesnutt at the conference. Reviewed scholarships and other awards AAESA gives throughout the year. See CLAS website for details.

-Budget and Finance by Jim Chesnutt: Reviewed to date, new fiscal year began in October

-Federal Relations by David Fancher: Discussed the 3 a.m. bipartisan budget vote recently, passed 218-213, need to pay attention to who voted for it. Not much more will happen in this election year, keep watch, trying to pass another ESEA (NCLB). President called for reduction in testing in schools, which is opposite of past positions. U. S. Secretary of Education Duncan announced his resignation, someone who has worked well with NAESP.

-Membership by Laura Ware: CLAS numbers are up but AAESA are down by 12.

-NAESP Convention Booth by Charlotte Beasley and Abby Hamilton: Thanks to all who sent door prizes, and signed up to work at the 2015

national conference. Next year, we learned that vendor booths will be set up differently and that states will not have free booths as in the past. We may have the option to rent one.

-National Distinguished Principal - Laurie King represented District IV and AAESA for Alabama in Washington DC in October.

--Executive Director's Report by Earl Franks: Thanked Jim and Chris, especially his students who stuffed bags, for Fall Conference we are down 26, we have 42 booths and 39 vendors Thanks to NAESP for being here. *CLAS membership # up 21 individual members Overall up 36 members

Earl shared Board of Education news with Educator Effectiveness, Instructor Leader piece, Virtual school; Nutrition - exempt food fundraisers guidelines, and the new assessment reporting information our new A-F Report card where all schools are getting a grade based on ASPIRE testing. Alabama requires public reporting of state tests disaggregated results AMO in each district on November 12th. A-F report card - recommended to board...Martha Peak chaired committee. Still fighting to not be scored with a letter grade but that is what is planned. *Certification issues - certification through exception 1997-1998 superintendents could be hired without education degree. Can be renewed up to 3 times, wondering if it is being tracked?! *In Montgomery - retirement system, task force appointed--several fact sheets that have been given out by RSA that Earl will be sending out. He asks that we review facts sheets, so that you can correct the law makers about RSA - very solvent - we have to be an active voice for RSA and for Bronner. *Lastly, Earl attended a meeting called Education for Excellence - Jeb Bush - Condoleezza Rice - Ideas for what they are going to do in Alabama - voucher - highest cost and lowest output for education.

Unfinished Business: Membership Task Force reported that they had been negotiating with NAESP to increase membership. Proposal to lower NAESP dues by \$51 but lose rebate was rejected in March, 2015. Recommendation - NAESP's new offer results in full retention of the NAESP rebate while allowing for a trial year at a reduced membership rate \$51 has drastically altered the decision making process.

In essence we will have the opportunity to try a year at a reduced membership rate without incurring any liability or cost to AAESA. Motion made, seconded, and passed unanimously.

There was no new business. Meeting was adjourned. Next meeting will be in March, 2016.

Executive Director's Report



*L. Earl Franks, CAE,
Executive Director*

Building Relationships with Students for Success

Building relationships with students for success has long been the basis for student learning. The frequently quoted adage, “Students don't care how much you know until they know how much you care,” has always been, based on my 30 year career as an educator, an appropriate assertion.

In recalling my time as a student, I respected and worked more diligently for those teachers who strived to create a positive relationship with me. These relationships were built on respect, encouragement, and a desire to make a difference in my life. For example, two music teachers saw potential in me through my musical talents and encouraged me beginning in the sixth grade. Consequently, this encouragement resulted in my choosing a career as a music teacher. Their support continued through-

out my career as a music teacher and eventually as a school administrator. In fact, we still maintain our friendship and communicate on a regular basis. I will always be grateful to these two teachers who fostered and nurtured a supportive relationship with me. As a result, I modeled these characteristics in my teaching career and worked to establish similar relationships with my students.

Research has supported that all individuals, regardless of age, desire to be regarded and appreciated. Even employees long to have positive relationships with their coworkers and supervisors. The foundation of most successful professionals, regardless of their occupation, is the establishment and creation of positive and lasting relationships.

The establishment of relationships with students can be fashioned and enhanced in several ways. For example, H. Richard Milner IV, associate professor of education in the Department of Teaching and Learning at Peabody College, Vanderbilt University, recommends: “Interview your students, give assignments that allow students to share their experiences and interests, encourage classroom discussions that let students be the center of attention, attend extracurricular activities featuring your students, and visit a site in your students’ community.” ([Milner IV, 2011](#))

Executive Director's Report Continued

As a school administrator, I always attended events, curricular or extracurricular, when my students were participating. By supporting students in these activities, you demonstrate a caring manner about them personally. Additionally, you have fewer discipline problems when you support students in their activities. They are aware and appreciate your attendance thereby communicating more easily with you. The students also strive to adhere to expectations more when they are supported by teachers and administrators. Most students simply do not want to disappoint those role model types. Parents also recognize your attendance and support of their children at extracurricular events. This support helps to improve communication when difficult situations occur with their children. The parents trust you more when they sense that you sincerely care about their child.

Dr. Vickie Zakrzewski's identifies tips for teachers to help them build caring relationships with students. These tips include: "Get to know your students and the lives they live, actively listen to students, ask students for feedback, and reflect on your own experience with care." ([Zakrzewski, 2012](#))

Moreover, the extensive research supporting the theory that students are academically and socially more successful if they have a positive relationship with their

teacher is compelling.

Having served as a teacher for 13 years and a school principal for 9 years, I am convinced that building positive relationships with students, academically, socially, and emotionally, is the foundation for student success.

Based on past students' comments, a consistently low dropout rate during my teaching and administrative career, and a joint willingness to stay connected through social media, etc. following graduation, one would conclude that developing and maintaining positive student relationships is a definite personality strength and an area in which I excelled as a teacher and administrator. I could not have accomplished any goals nor had the recognition, at a school or individual level, had it not been for my students. This success is greatly attributed to the positive relationships I had with my students.

Based on the research and my personal experience, regardless of the school location, rural, suburban, or inner city, positive relationships are an essential ingredient to a successful teaching and learning program.

Until next time, continue to build positive relationships with students for success during this school year and for years to come.

Wahl Foundation Grants

Through a recent collaboration with the [Wahl Foundation](#), the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) has launched a school grant program called "[UNThink My School](#)" that will award a total of \$40,000 to schools that champion themes of innovation and creativity.

The Wahl Foundation, which is a component fund of the [San Diego Foundation](#), will award one \$20,000 grant and 10 \$2,000 "UNthink My School" grants to schools that use artistic concepts and creative expression to solve school problems and spur innovation. Applications will be accepted and reviewed from Oct. 6, 2015 until Feb. 15, 2016. Winners will be announced in March 2016.

"Principals are proudly committed to providing a well-rounded and complete education that enables each child to reach his or her fullest potential in every way—socially, emotionally, physically, and academically," said NAESP Executive Director Gail Connelly. "We also know that most schools struggle with resources. We hope that even the act of applying for these grants will spark some innovative ideas that will not only help schools, but the communities they serve," she added.

Possible grant projects could reinforce an anti-bullying campaign, focus on campus safety, overcome learning inequalities, decrease truancy, or address resource challenges. The grant was created as a way to reinforce themes in Erik Wahl's book, [UNThink: Rediscover Your Creative Genius](#). There are two criteria for applying: Schools must be in the United States serving students in grades K-8; and the school's principal must be a member of NAESP.

"We are committed to innovation in education, and that's why we wanted to offer meaningful grants to schools that creatively fix a problem and make a significant impact," said Tasha Wahl, the Wahl Foundation executive director. "We also wanted to reward teachers, principals, and other staff who are bold in their thinking, and who are not afraid to do things a little differently."

NAESP helps principals navigate the intrinsic 21st century challenges that come with the transformation of the nation's school systems. The Association advocates for principals' professional development that will ultimately benefit the children in the communities served. The "UNthink My School" grant dovetails with NAESP's commitment to arts-enhanced school experiences and creative approaches to provide modern, innovative support to principals.

Applicants can visit the [Wahl Foundation website](#) to learn more and apply. Follow #UNthinkMySchool on Twitter and Facebook for updates, tips, and strategies.

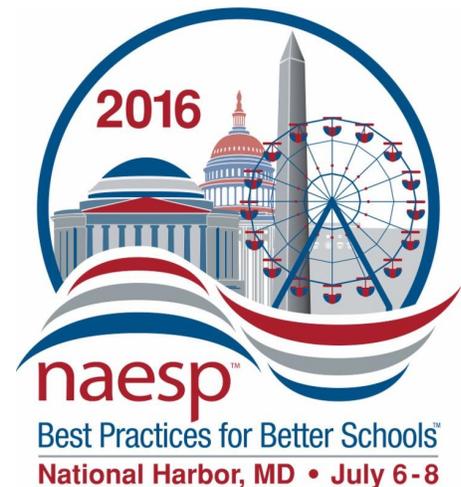
UPCOMING EVENTS

NAESP Convention



July 6-8, 2016

Gaylord National Resort
National Harbor, Maryland



AAESA/AASCD

Fall Instructional Leadership Conference

October 23-26, 2016

Hyatt Regency -The Wynfrey Hotel
Birmingham, Alabama

Fall Instructional Leadership Conference



Chris Mitten
Windham Elementary
Daleville City

The Fall Instructional Leadership Conference took place November 1 – 4, at the Perdido Beach Resort in Orange Beach Alabama.

With approximately 235 attendees

and 40 vendors it was a resounding success. The conference kicked off with our AAESA Board meeting on Sunday, November 1st. Notable actions at the board meeting included discussions of candidates for the upcoming elections during this spring as well as a continued effort to recruit new members. Our membership continues its slight annual decline and this must be a rallying cry for our members. We received an incentive offer from NAESP to help boost our membership by decreasing dues for next year. Your board voted to accept the \$51 dues incentive from NAESP. This will not cost AAESA at all and will be absorbed by NAESP. Help get the word out so that we can get as many new members as possible!

We were very excited to have two special guests from NAESP in attendance at this year's FILC. Our Zone IV director, Sharon McNary from Memphis Tennessee made the trip with her husband to attend the conference as did NAESP President Elect, Dr. Stephen Geiss. Dr. Geiss traveled with his lovely mother all the way from the twin cities area of Minnesota. They both thoroughly enjoyed the conference and loved to meet many of you will soaking up the southern hospitality.

The heavy rains finally broke just in time for our opening session on Monday morning. Dr. Tommy Bice kicked off the conference with his rousing report on the progress and continued efforts to implement Plan 20-20. Following Dr. Bice, attendees had the opportunity to attend several breakout sessions ranging from The Leader in Me, with Chad Smith from Franklin Covey Education to Best Practices for Implementing Technology with Dr. Buddy Weldon. The first day of the conference then wrapped up with the Banner Schools Round Table and a CCRS Assessment Update Mini Clinic. Monday evening was closed out with the Annual Seafood Fest sponsored by Bill Miller Photography down at The Wharf Convention Hall.

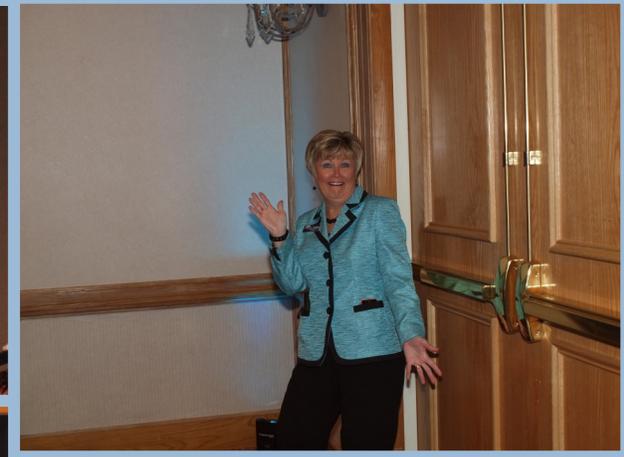
Tuesday began with a fabulous session on "Building Teachers' Capacity for Success" with presenter Pete Hall from ASCD. His high energy continued throughout the afternoon with two follow-up breakout sessions. The AAESA Awards Luncheon

was well attended as we were treated to a reading from Dr. Stephen Geiss as well as a moving tribute to Glenys Mason. Sarah Verser was presented the Bill Miller Friend of Education award while Dr. Diane Murphy received the Truman Pierce award. These awards highlight their dedication to furthering the cause of public education. Following the awards lunch, breakout sessions continued with speakers such as Dr. Allison Grizzle and Jeff Langham from the Alabama State Department of Education. Topics included Educator Effectiveness and Habits of Highly Effective Administrators. Early comments were positive about both of these speakers and sessions.



AAESA Past Presidents

Wednesday, November 4th's closing session got everyone excited and energized before departing to head back to their home schools. Jenny Nolen presented a very humorous yet serious talk entitled "I Would Like Some Cheese with the Whine." We could not have ended the Fall Instructional Leadership Conference on a better note. Jenny Nolen had the audience in stitches and in tears as her anecdotes hit so close to home. We hope that all attendees were able to leave with a new resolve and passion for the work that we do. If you were unable to attend we hope that next year you will be able to join us for the Fall Instructional Leadership Conference. The dates and location are yet to be determined but you should see an announcement coming out sometime very soon. Many thanks to all of our sponsors and to the CLAS staff. We could not offer such quality without their support and hard work.



Leadership Conference



Great Blogs and Podcasts for Educational Leaders

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

The National Council on Teacher Quality's (NCTQ) December 2013 report, "[Training our future teachers: Classroom Management](#)" argues that many of the nation's teacher preparation programs provide inadequate training in proper classroom management.

With busy schedules, even from the start of the school year, school leaders are hard-pressed to find time for their own professional development and to network with other administrators. Luckily, our digitally connected culture has provided numerous avenues for people to connect without having to upend their routines. Here are some blogs and podcasts developed just for education leaders to improve their practice and think more deeply about the work they are doing.

Blogs

Use an RSS reader like [Feedly](#) to organize your blogs so that you can read updates all at one time. If you don't mind consistent emails, sign up for email newsletters from chosen bloggers so you have access to their latest work. Here is a roundup of blogs to improve your practice:

Blogs about education leadership:

[Team Kid](#): Inspirational posts about schools and leadership from mentor and California principal Adam Welcome.

[Reflections](#): Personal reflections on leadership from a middle school principal and NY Ed fellow Lisa Meade.

[Learning Leadership](#): Reflections, scenarios, and tips from New York principal Dennis Schug.

[The Principal of Change](#): Commentary on connected leadership from Canadian principal George Couros.

[Finding Common Ground](#): *Education Week* commentary blog by national commentator and former principal Peter DeWitt.

Blogs on innovative instruction/technology

[A Principal's Reflections](#): Educational leadership and best practices on effective technology integration and creating a student-centered learning culture from thought leader and former high school principal Eric Sheninger.

[Jose Vilson](#): New York middle school teacher's reflections on teaching in an inner city environment. Essays on race, class, and education reform.

[Rafranz Davis](#): Digital teaching and learning strategies from the author of *The Missing Voices in EdTech*

Podcasts

Most phone operating systems have a native podcast app that allows you to subscribe to podcasts and download episodes for listening on the go. If you don't like your native app or just want something with a few more features, Stitcher is a great platform. Add these podcasts to your list:

Podcasts on innovative instruction/technology:

[#BACKCHANNEdu](#): Scenario-based and participant-driven podcast from Penn's Mid-Career Doctoral Program, posing real educational leadership challenges from voices working directly in the field.

[Talks with Teachers](#): Interviews and views about teaching from the education community; also incorporates a blog format.

[#Edchat Radio](#): Podcast continuing the discussion from the popular Twitter chat series. Topics range from faculty meetings to homework to digital literacy.

[BrandED](#): Commentary and best practices from a revolving stable of education leadership guests on telling school stories.

Great Blogs and Podcasts Continued

Podcasts on educational leadership:

Principally Speaking: Focuses on education leadership and the transition from assistant principal to building leader.

The School Leadership Show: Wide range of topics on education administration, including productivity hacks and lifestyle

NAESP Radio: Covering the hot topics in elementary education—from the principal’s perspective.

Rock Star Principals: Humor and “real talk” from two principals’ perspective

PrincipalPLN: A weekly podcast focused on providing current and aspiring school leaders with advice, support, and ideas.

Administrators are so busy that they can start to feel isolated from their peers. These blogs and podcasts are a great way to feel connected, all while keeping up with the best practices and current trends in education leadership.

—Dateline NAESP



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NAESP Representative 's Report



Christie Mitten
Holly Hill Elementary
Enterprise City

This is an exciting time to be an NAESP member in Alabama.

NAESP is currently focused on the area of membership. This is not only a national priority but also a state priority as well. They have developed a Membership Task Force that is currently meeting and discussing ways to boost membership for the national association. As members of Zone IV we are represented by Chris Mitten on the NAESP Membership task force. As a joint member, our AAESA members are automatically members of NAESP. NAESP extended an offer to our board to help boost membership. At the November 1 board meeting your board voted to accept this incentive offer which will cut \$51 off of the AAESA dues for next year. This price cut will hopefully help us boost membership. Please spread the word to all members and especially non-members so that they will know about this exciting opportunity!

The Fall Instructional Leadership Conference was a huge success at the Perdido Beach Resort the first week of November. We were thrilled to have some special guests from NAESP. Our Zone IX director, Sharon McNary was gracious enough to attend the conference and was impressed by our organization. Mrs. McNary and her husband reside in Memphis Tennessee where she is an acting principal.

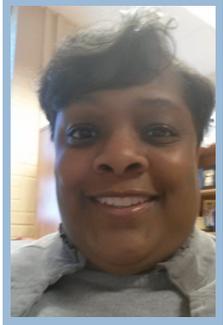
Additionally, Dr. Stephen Geiss, the President Elect for NAESP was present at the FILC. He and his mother Dorothy came all the way from Minnesota to be with us. It was a joy to host these special guests and to have them sacrifice their time to be a part of our organization here in Alabama.

Upcoming on the radar are several items that will be attended by your officers. The NAESP Membership Task Force will be meeting in Washington DC in the beginning of February. Your officers will then make the trip to Washington DC for the National Leaders Conference at the beginning of March. They will meet with leaders from around the country and will then travel to Capitol Hill to meet with our elected Congressmen and women as well as Senators. Please contact them with any messages you might want to be delivered to your elected officials.



From Left to Right: Dr. Tommy Bice, Christie Mitten, Sharon McNary, Dr. Stephen Geiss

Meet Your District I President



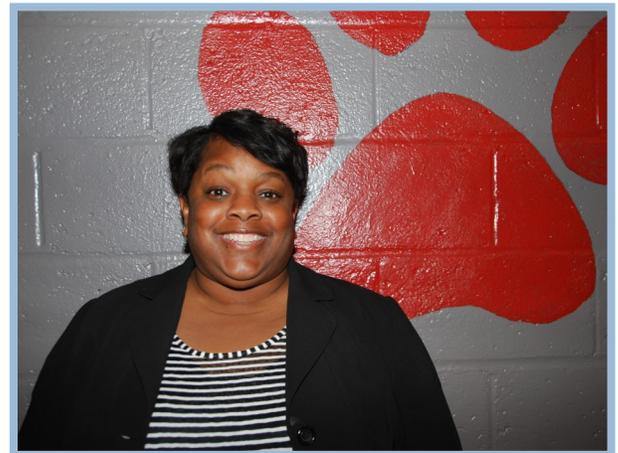
Datie Priest
West Decatur Elem.
Decatur City

My name is Datie Priest, and I am a lifelong resident of Decatur, Alabama and a product of Decatur City Schools where I, currently, serve as principal of West Decatur Elementary School. This is my 11th year as a principal and 16th in education. Previously, I taught kindergarten three years and second grade for two years. I earned my BS (2000) in elementary education with a dual certification in early childhood education, a M.Ed. (2002), and my admin certification (2004) from Alabama A&M University and an Ed.S (2009) in educational leadership and Ed.D (2015) in Education Administration from the University of Alabama.

I am the youngest of six, have never been married...yet, and have no children (not counting the 300+ at my school). In my downtime, I enjoy reading, traveling, cooking, and spending time with family and friends. I'm known for hosting events in my home that create memorable experiences for friends and family, so they look forward to my invitations. I am a child of poverty and know, first-hand, what the dynamics of being poor looks and feel like in real time. On the flip side, I gained exposure to the world beyond the projects where I grew up and learned to view life through a different set of lenses because of access granted by family members. Near and dear to my heart is making sure children and families experience equity and access and learn how to navigate situations for themselves...not just inside the school walls but outside them. Part of what makes me unique is the fact that I am resilient in the face of adversity, take on tough situations with ease, and can connect with anyone in any setting, especially the disenfranchised because I lived the life they currently have. I want those who experience difficult times (families I serve, teachers, peers, or friends) to know that having a sense of grit coupled with a willingness to work hard builds character that will supersede the current status quos.

In my spare time, I can be found relaxing at home catching up on the 100+ hours of TV shows stored in my dvr..., traveling, or volunteering with my sorority. I am an active member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.,

Epsilon Gamma Omega Chapter in Huntsville, Al. and have served in leadership positions within the chapter. There is no better way to give back and serve others than to do it with friends who share the same sense of mission and purpose as I. My personal mission is *"Fostering Resilience through Purposeful Engagement."* I believe that whatever I do should be purposeful and yield an outcome where someone can benefit and/or grow from an interaction with me. My early years were spent learning about what it means to serve, as I was the recipient of countless hours of time from my extended family exposing me to whatever they could to pique my interests. I want the rest of my life to reflect that I have gained an understanding of service to others and will pay it forward through high quality purposeful engagements...to those I serve at West Decatur Elementary School!



District I News

On Thursday, October 8, 2015, AAESA District I held their 4th Annual Student Leadership Conference in Decatur, Alabama. There were 29 schools and 214 students in attendance at the conference, an increase of 64 students from last year. Principals collaborated during their spring meeting, a summer meeting, and a back to school meeting to help make the day a success. All Student Councils, Student Leadership Teams, School Ambassadors, etc. from District I elementary schools were invited to participate. This year's features included opening keynote speaker MaCary Humphrey, Attorney General of Girl's State, breakout sessions with superintendents, Mr. Bill Hopkins (Morgan County Schools), Dr. Ed Nichols (Decatur City Schools), and Dr. Vic Wilson (Hartselle City Schools), ambassadors from local city and county high schools, American flag etiquette, Social Media Trends with School Resource Officers, and information about volunteer opportunities from the Volunteer Center of Morgan County.



While the students were in session, principals were treated to a session on accountability. Julie Turner, Education Specialist, Education Accountability Office, Alabama State Department of Education spent time with leaders providing an overview of the new accountability measures and what they mean for us. All principals were grateful they were privy to the information and appreciated Julie Turner providing the overview.

Door prizes (posters, shakers, pins) for students were donated by the athletic departments from the University of Alabama and Auburn University. Principals and

sponsors who attended with their schools were eligible to submit their names for a free pair of tickets to the Alabama-Charleston game. Tonya McCain, principal at Priceville Elementary in Morgan County School system, won the drawing. In exchange for a door prize, students were asked to share a take-away regarding their experiences. Reasons sessions were loved by students ranged from wanting to be a police officer in the future



and learning about how to volunteer to understanding the essentials of ambassadorship and flag etiquette. Victor Hernandez, a fifth grader and student council president at West Decatur Elementary School said his favorite session was "the music class with Superintendents Mr. Bill Hopkins, Dr. Ed Nichols, and Dr. Vic Wilson." Victor said, "It was educational that they showed great leadership in a fun way."

Perhaps one of the most poignant moments was during the opening keynote address provided by MaCary Humphrey, a senior at Austin High School who was elected by her peers to be attorney general for Girls State. As MaCary shared details of a traumatic situation she experienced a few years ago, she cautioned the students to understand who they are as leaders and learn to become resilient and not let life dictate how they respond when things happen that are beyond their control. MaCary said we should all "learn from and grow with not go with situations."

District News Continued

District II News

The Mobile District II Chapter of AAESA began the new school year with a Welcome Back Luncheon on July 22nd, 2015. After a warm welcome by Chapter President, Stephanie Benson, the current members and invited guests were treated to an inspirational reading. All in attendance were reminded of the benefits available through membership in AAESA, as well as the advantages of becoming a member of CLAS. A delectable lunch was enjoyed by everyone.

Read for the Record at E. R. Dickson Elementary School

The students, teachers, and faculty at E. R. Dickson Elementary School participated in the annual *Jumpstart Read for the Record* event on Thursday, October 22, 2015. The school celebrated literacy in a big way by coming together with millions of other students across the country to break the record for reading the same book on the same day.

This extraordinary day began with a spirited assembly including a special read aloud of the book, *Not Norman* by Maire Nakada, the 2015 Distinguished Young Women of America. Next, Ms. Carole Hegwood led the E. R. Dickson Choir in a lively song about reading and engaged the entire school in a sing along. The atmosphere was enhanced because each teacher and staff member dressed as their favorite story book character. The school's principal, Mrs. Kinn, charged all students and teachers to have a fabulous day filled with reading and interactive reading activities. Students were then surprised by a video that Mrs. LiCalsi made using the blue screen taking students and teachers around the world and even into space reading. Visitors from all around the community and our Partners in Education came to classrooms for read alouds and literacy activities. This was a day of literacy celebration that we will all remember!



From left to right: Dr. Lynda Carroll, Mrs. Mai -Davis principal, Mrs. Martha Peek, Dr. William Foster

Marcelete Stewart
Robbins Elementary
MobileCounty

District V News

District V conducted their Fall Meeting at the University of Alabama Gadsden Center (CLAS sponsor) on Thursday, October 15th. Piedmont Elementary School Principal and District V President Chris Hanson presided over the meeting. He asked each administrator in attendance to talk about something positive happening at their respective schools. We learned about different programs and strategies which were all about improving instruction. Although the discussion about our success stories was enlightening, it soon focused on the challenges we face. We discussed the importance of principals to collaborate and communicate with each other. This is one of the best ways to find solutions for the issues we face daily. An excellent way to collaborate is to attend district AAESA meetings and CLAS events. You will likely find someone who, at some point in their career, has been through the same challenge. Some of us "old" or

Alabama Elementary Administrator

District News Continued

“seasoned” administrators never thought when we began our careers that we would be dealing with some of the issues which children face today. By working together and listening to our colleagues, we will have a better plan of action to address those obstacles which



arise. We had a great meeting and time of sharing and we hope that all of our colleagues across the state are having a great school year.

Charlie Gardner
Hokes Bluff Elementary
Etowah County

District VII News

District VII had a wonderful start to the school year by gathering at West Forest Intermediate School in Opelika, Alabama. We had over 20 members in attendance. Pam Fortenbary, District VII’s President, opened the meeting and thanked Chuck’s BBQ of Opelika for providing a delicious meal to everyone. Our present officers were introduced as the following: Pam Fortenbary- District VII President; Laura Harley- Vice President; Joe Ross- Secretary/Treasurer; Cynthia Meals-

District Representative.

We are excited to announce that Nino Mason, principal of Morris Avenue Intermediate School, was nominated as District VII’s nominee for the National Distinguished



Principal Program. He will represent us very well. The guest speaker was Stacy Royster. She is the technology coordinator for Opelika City Schools. Everyone present had an interactive learning opportunity as Ms. Royster



shared websites and programs that would assist with administrative responsibility and supporting teachers.

Please plan to join us on March 1, 2016 at Jeter Primary for another great opportunity for professional collaboration and growth.

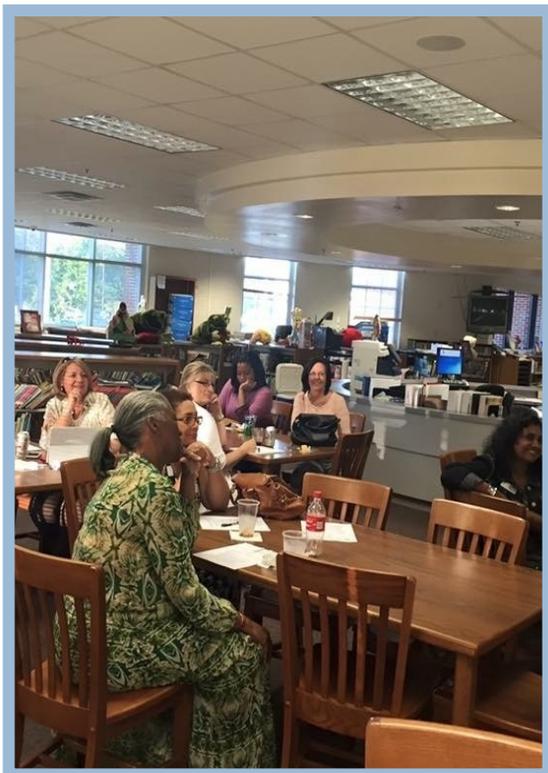
Cynthia Meals
Beauregard Elementary
Lee County

District News Continued

District IV News

District IV is proud to have Mrs. Laurie King represent us as Alabama's 2015 National Distinguished Principal. She is the Principal at Crestline Elementary in Mountain Brook City Schools. We know she represented us well in Washington DC in October!

Other District IV News: This year our officers: President Michael Wilson; Vice-President Autumn Jeter; Secretary, Kimberly White; Treasurer, Judith Ross; District IV Representative, Frances Finney; and Past President Laura Ware decided that we should meet at area schools for two of our meetings. Our September meeting was hosted by Glen Iris Elementary in Birmingham City. Principal Michael Wilson and new Superintendent Dr. Kelley Catlin-Gacutan welcomed over twenty members. Dr. Alison Grizzle, spoke on Educator Effectiveness. We then toured the school and enjoyed seeing the outside gardens.



Our next meeting will be at Rocky Ridge Elementary in Hoover City on January 14th where Dr. Tommy Bice will be our guest speaker. Please join us! Our final meeting



will be at an area restaurant on April 14th. Be looking for invites to the last two meetings. We hope to have record attendance at this year's meetings!

Frances Finney
Gresham Elementary
Jefferson County

District News Continued

District IX News

Greetings from District IX!! We hope your year is going well and things are going well in your school. We held our first District Meeting on Thursday, October 8th at McLin's Restaurant in Daleville. We enjoyed great food and fellowship. Our District president, Wanda Corley organized and planned the meeting. A special thanks to Bill Miller Photography for sponsoring the meal!! Our Legislative Coordinator Jim Chesnutt spoke to our group and brought us all up to date on all the events in Montgomery as they pertain to educators. Thanks to all of those who were able to attend.

Several of us were able to attend the Fall Conference at Perdido Bay. This was an awesome Conference jam-packed with great Professional Development for everyone. A special thanks to our CLAS staff for all their hard work and time in preparing for this Conference. Several of District Nine's members were recognized including Christie Mitten for serving as District Representative for NAESP and being nominated as a candidate for National Distinguished Principal. We appreciate Christie for serving in this capacity. Chris Mitten did a great job of stepping in for Laurie King and presiding over our meetings. Chris will serve as our State President for next year. Waller Martin was nominated to run for CLAS Board. Please be sure to look for your email ballot after the first of the year.

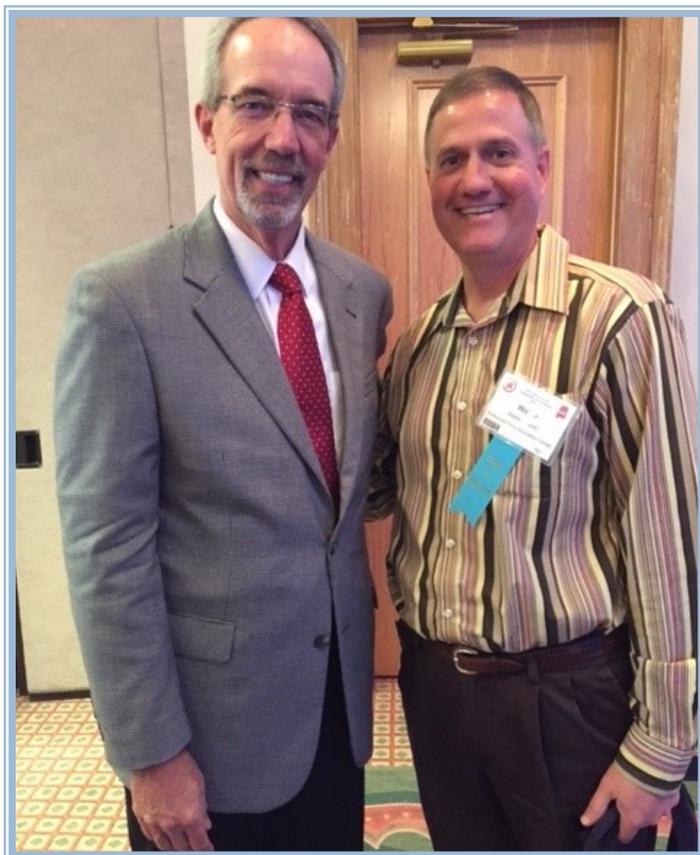
Please be on the lookout for information concerning our next District Meeting. We hope to have a good crowd. Please pass the word to fellow administrators and encourage them to attend our meetings. This is a great chance for us to get together and share ideas as well as fellowship. Best wishes to you as we all continue to grow as Principals and leaders in our schools.

Waller Martin

Enterprise Early Education Center

Enterprise City

Winter Issue 2016



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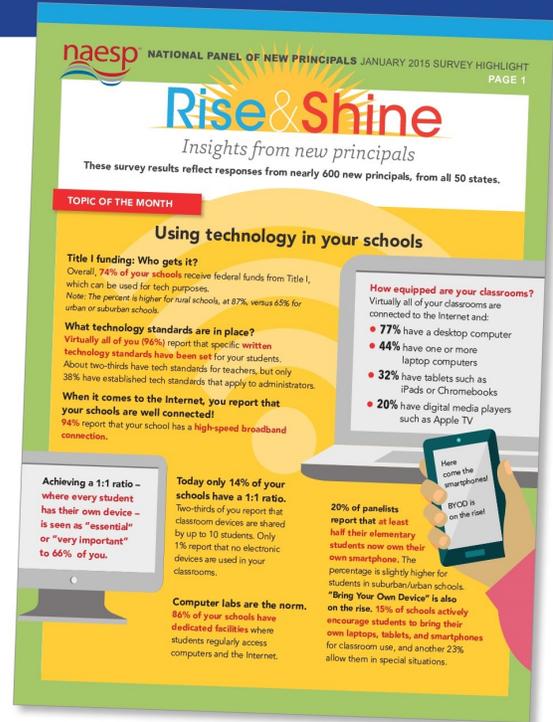
Six times during the school year, panelists are invited via email to answer a few brief online questions. **The total time commitment for the entire school year is under one hour! (Less than 10 minutes per survey.)**

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"I loved being able to give my feedback, and to see the feedback of others. It let me know that I was on the right track as a new principal, as well as giving me new ideas."

SHERRY WATTS
MINEOLA ELEMENTARY, MINNEOLA, FL

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