

PASCD Newsletter



“Educators impacting teaching and learning through leadership”



APRIL 13, 2015

President’s Message

On behalf of PASCD, it was my pleasure to accept the 2015 ASCD Area of



Excellence Award for Programs, Products, and Services. The award was presented during the ASCD Appreciation Luncheon at the 70th Annual Conference held in Houston, TX. The award recognized the exemplary program, products, and services provided by PASCD including member benefits—the ASCD virtual library, the new Weekly Policy Update, and monthly newsletter; the Emerging Leader Program; and significant professional development opportunities such as our Annual Conference and Act 45 approved Leadership Academies. Accepting the award with me was Krista Rundell (left), educational consultant and ASCD faculty and Allison Rodman (right), Assistant Principal and

Director of Professional Development at Maria Bracetti Academy. Both ladies are ASCD Emerging Leaders who helped to establish the PASCD Emerging Leader Program.

ASCD’s Annual Conference proved to be an amazing professional learning experience. Sarah Lewis, author of *The Rise: Creativity, the Gift of Failure, and the Search for Mastery* shared stories of successful artists, musicians, educators, and entrepreneurs who had in common grit and perseverance on their way to success. Mastery is not in the arriving, she stated, but in the reaching. As educators, we must create safe environments for our students to fail, environments which value grit and perseverance as part of the journey to mastery. Nicholas Negroponte, founder of the MIT Media Lab and One Laptop per Child, shared insights regarding learning and technology that span 40 years. Often criticized for providing laptops to people who need food and water, Negroponte suggested swapping the word ‘education’ for ‘laptop’ and people respond differently.

IN THIS ISSUE

2015 PASCD Conference	Page 2
Regional Update	Page 2
Strategic Planning Committee Update	Page 3
Emerging Leader Corner	Page 4
Member Spotlight	Page 5

“Education is part of the solution” to global issues such as poverty and starvation. Andy Hargreaves packed the auditorium as he spoke about his book, *Uplifting Leadership*, the product of seven years of research. While I am only halfway through the book, I will share with you one statement Hargreaves made that struck me, “We uplift the people we serve by serving the people we uplift.”

Learning not only happened in general sessions and small group

sessions, but in the conversation and interactions with educators from across our country and the globe. It was energizing to be with thousands of educators sharing best practices. It was comforting to hear others experience similar challenges in their districts. And it was invigorating to hear how schools were educating the Whole Child. Mostly, it was rejuvenating to take time and reflect on this job that we do each and every day and know that we make a difference!

Lori

Dr. Lori J. Stollar
PASCD President



PASCD 65th Annual Conference

Leading and Achieving in an Interconnected World

Engage, Motivate and Connect

November 15-17, 2015

By: Laurie Heinricher
Conference Chair



PASCD has a powerful mission; *“Educators impacting teaching and learning through leadership.”*

As a community of classroom teachers, school administrators,

superintendents and university professors, we work to provide the highest quality conference to meet the needs of our Pennsylvania colleagues. We believe we are well on our way!

Leading and Achieving in an Interconnected World, Powered by Blended Schools Network, will be in Monroeville, PA at the Pittsburgh Monroeville Convention Center and the Doubletree Hotel by Hilton Pittsburgh.

As conference chair, it causes me great excitement to share the docket of national speakers who will come to provide their expertise. Sunday evening, we will start the conference with **Meenoo Rami**. She will bring her youthful perspectives and provide professional development on the topic: *Teacher Practice in a Connected World*.

On Monday, we are honored to bring **Heidi Hayes-Jacobs** to our conference. Heidi’s effervescent personality and vast experiences will bring energy and excitement to the conference. Heidi will share her expertise on curriculum mapping, but more importantly her thoughts on mapping curriculum for the future.

Our Tuesday morning breakfast will include **David Griffith**, the ASCD director of public policy. During his Tuesday morning keynote, David will share his experience in developing and implementing ASCD’s legislative agenda as well as ASCD’s efforts to influence educational decision-making at the local, state and federal levels.

In the midst of this array of professional speakers, we will offer motivating and engaging workshops lead by teaching and leadership experts from across the Commonwealth. The Request for

Proposals (RFP) was electronically distributed on Wednesday, March 18th. In keeping with the theme of “interconnectedness” we challenged our colleagues from across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to propose topics that will improve the motivation, engagement and connectedness in our schools. Those interested in completing the RFP process can visit the PASCD website, click on Conference and get the full complement of information as well as the link. The RFP process closes May 15.

The new venue brings new excitement for our 65th annual conference. Both Monroeville and Pittsburgh are excited about having our conference come to their area. Membership is not a requirement for attendance at the conference. Share information about the conference with your colleagues. The conference provides opportunities for professional development as well as networking.

I look forward to seeing you at the conference!

Regional Update Mid-Western Region

David P. McCommons, Ed.D.

With spring right around the corner, I hope your year is going well. In the Mid-Western region we have several important updates. First, we welcomed five new members to our executive board:

- Richard Britten, Middle School Principal, Punxsutawney Area SD
- Shelly Buckholtz, Director of Federal Programs/Instruction, Cranberry Area SD

- Matt Lafko, Elementary Principal, Slippery Rock Area SD
- Joe Mancini, Superintendent, Ellwood City Area SD
- Brendan Smith, Assistant Principal, Grove City Area SD
- Whitney Wesley, Department of Middle & Secondary Education and Educational Leadership, Edinboro University

Our new members are representatives of PASCD's wide-reaching influence in education. No matter if you are a classroom teacher, administrator, or in higher education, the Midwestern Region provides opportunities to enhance your professional background. The goal of our organization is to improve teaching and learning through leadership. MWPASCD provides several avenues of professional enhancement plus collaborates with many organizations with the same goals.

This spring, MWPASCD will partner with Slippery Rock University to present "Technology as a Communication Tool of Legislative Policy and Events." The emphasis of the program will be to show educators how to effectively utilize technology to communicate with all stakeholders coupled with the opportunity to interact with local legislators from the Mid-Western Region. Participants will engage in a discussion on the issues facing teachers, administrators, and students in Pennsylvania today. Topics include: the Governor's proposed budget; the new "Education Block Grant" and how it might further exacerbate funding inequities between rich and poor schools; teacher and administrator evaluation; the school and school

district report card proposal; plus other important topics.

We are always looking to expand our membership. If you have a colleague, friend, or mentee who would like to join, membership information is available at pacsd.org or you may contact me directly at david_mccommons@fcasd.edu.

Our goal as a region is to meet your local needs.

Strategic Planning Committee Update

By Elaine M. Sautner, PASCD Strategic Plan Chair

The Pennsylvania Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development is beginning a strategic planning period and input from all members throughout our ten regions is vitally important for us to remain a leader in Pennsylvania's educational landscape as well as nationally through our parent organization, ASCD. As Strategic Planning Chair, I would like to refresh members on the foundational beliefs of the organization, some of the positions we have taken in recent years, and the strengths for which we have been recognized. Upon reflection of this synopsis of our organization, I challenge you to reach out to your local region's PASCD leadership and become an active participant at the local and state levels as well as share your ideas for our future.

Beliefs and Positions

PASCD is an organization committed to the improvement of curriculum development, supervision, instruction, promotion of professional growth, and education

of children. We believe educators impact teaching and learning through leadership. We put our belief into action by providing State educational leaders with a voice that supports the education of all children. Our members and PASCD leadership team regularly meet with key decision-makers to share our position on educational legislation, policies and procedures. We have taken a position on three key issues facing Pennsylvania's educators: the Learning Gap, High-Stakes Testing and focusing on the Whole Child.

Learning Gaps: PASCD believes that in order to eliminate learning gaps in student achievement, all student populations, regardless of their economic status, ability, or geographic location, must have access to:

- Innovative, engaging, and challenging curricula that build on the strengths of each learner
- High-quality educators supported by ongoing professional development
- Necessary resources for strengthening schools, families, and communities.

High-Stakes Testing: We believe using a single test to measure success or to sanction students, educators, schools or districts is an inappropriate use of a single instrument. Only when students, educators, and policy makers have timely access to information from multiple assessments can they make informed judgments about student learning, student placement, graduation eligibility, and education program success.

Whole Child Education: PASCD believes academic achievement is but one element of student learning

and development and only a part of any complete system of educational accountability. A comprehensive approach to learning recognizes that successful young people are knowledgeable, emotionally and physically healthy, motivated, civically inspired, engaged in the arts, prepared for work and economic self-sufficiency, and ready for the world beyond their own borders. The education of the "whole child" is can best be accomplished through the shared efforts of teachers, schools, families and communities.

Organizational Strengths

The strength of PASCD is in its members. Our membership is composed of superintendents, assistant superintendents, curriculum directors, college professors, principals, teachers and retirees. They represent small rural schools, large urban schools, charter schools and colleges and universities. Through the efforts of regional members and the PASCD leadership team, we continue to offer high-quality professional development opportunities including an annual state conference, curriculum academy, supervision academy and evaluation academy. Pennsylvania Educational Leadership (PEL) is the professional peer-reviewed journal of the Pennsylvania Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (PASCD).

PASCD has received the ASCD *Excellence Award in the Area of Programs, Products and Services* (February 2015) as well as the *Area of Excellence Award in Influence and Policy* in March of 2014 for improving influence efforts across the state. The affiliate has increased visibility through the development of an influence/policy team, communicated legislative/policy issues with members, and increased advocacy partnerships with state

level groups. This was achieved specifically through active participation with the following activities/committees/groups, led by Dr. Richard Nilsen, Executive Director and Dr. Dean Maynard, Influence Chairperson.

- Education Policy and Leadership Center
- PA Department of Education's Strategic Leadership Council
- PA State Board and State Senate Education Committee Meetings
- "Capital Steps" press conferences
- PA Arts Education Network Steering Committee
- PA Public TV (PCN), "Focus on Education"
- Middle Level Education (PAMLE) and Principal's Association (PAESSP)
- Keystone Consortium of Educational Organization

These numerous statewide partnerships have positioned PASCD to be a well-known advocate for all students. Our work was honored with the EPLC Partnership Award last September in the capital of Harrisburg.

What's Next?

Now that you are renewed in our mission, beliefs and position regarding the education of students in Pennsylvania are you ready to lead? Do you have goals or strategies you believe our organization should pursue to carry on its leadership role for the improvement of curriculum development, supervision, instruction, promotion of professional growth and education of children? If so, we would like to hear from you. Please contact your regional leadership team by viewing their contact information under the

Regions tab at www.pascd.org. We would love to hear from you.

Emerging Leader Corner

Over the next several months we will be introducing our Emerging Leaders through a series of questions they have been asked to answer.



Nicole Avon

Provide a brief intro of yourself (no more than 3 sentences) including your location in PA.

My name is Nicole Avon and I am in my 12th year as an educator for Mars Area School District. I have three children ages 7, 5, and 3 and a husband, who is also a teacher. Spending time together, especially outdoors with our two puppies, is how we love to spend all of our free time.

Tell us about your role in education? What does your typical day look like?

Six periods per school day, I teach a Flipped Physics class where the students watch the lectures asynchronously at home and work actively on problems, labs, and activities in class. During class time, I am constantly moving around the classroom answering questions,

clearing up misconceptions, checking progress, monitoring labs, administering assessments to individual students; the list seems endless on any given day. I can honestly say that I have never been so busy or had so much fun in the classroom as a resource for students rather than their primary source of information.

What is your educational philosophy summed up in one sentence?

In my opinion, the purpose of education is to develop students that are passionate and active critical-thinkers, problem solvers, and lifelong learners, regardless of their area(s) of interest.

What professional development (books, webinars, courses, articles) has made a difference in your career?

Flip Your Classroom: Reach Every Student in Every Class Every Day- by Jonathan Bergmann and Aaron Sams. This book completely changed the way I viewed teaching and learning in my classroom, helped me create a PLN that began with flipped

learning and continues to grow every day, and eventually led me to apply for the Emerging Leader Program in PASCD.

If you could make one major change in education, what would it be?

High stakes testing, particularly in specific subject areas, is in direct contrast to my educational philosophy. Student are not likely to become passionate and active learners in all topics, especially those that are not meaningful to or do not interest them. Education in general, although it should have some structure and consistency, does not consider students inherent interests and skills enough and is often too compartmentalized. A more holistic approach to education where students use the skills taught in all classes to solve real problems, perhaps through the engineering design process that would utilize the different skill sets of individual students should be a larger part of all

K-12 curriculums. I would like to see education move in that direction throughout my career.

What is the most impactful statement a student has ever said to you?

I overheard one student say to another (not directly to me) as I had tried to model for them throughout the year: "No, don't do it for me- TEACH me how!" I wrote that on a piece of construction paper and hung it on my wall for all students to read every day. A student who is willing to learn and actively seeks understanding will be an asset to society no matter the path they decide to take after high school.



PASCD Spotlight

Several members of the Penn State Harrisburg ASCD Student Chapter attended the 70th ASCD Annual Conference in Houston, TX. Wearing cowboy hats and bandanas the students posed with Lori Stollar, PASCD President and Paige Weiland, PSU Student Chapter President, at the Mid-States Reception.

