

PASCD Newsletter



“Educators impacting teaching and learning through leadership”



MAY 2015

President's Message

It is hard to believe that May is here. It seems like just a few weeks ago we



were in the midst of the semester change and longingly looking toward summer vacation. And

now, school campuses are abuzz with spring concerts, award ceremonies, field trips, prom, and graduation. The school year will soon be at an end. And I find myself thinking more and more about the next school year.

This spring I picked up a copy of *#EdJourney: A Roadmap to the Future of Education* by Grant Lichtman. In 2012, Lichtman traveled the United States over a 3-month period, visiting 64 public and private schools, and interviewing over 600 teachers, administrators, students, and parents. He was seeking answers to questions such as:

- What new learning strategies are the top schools implementing to prepare students for their future rather than for our past?
- How do teacher and administrators manage transitions to new types of teaching and learning?
- What are the key obstacles to shifting away from the assembly line model of education?
- How can we all leverage the lessons of success from the most innovative schools?

We read and hear so often that we must prepare our students for their future, a future that is unknown....That today's education must be rooted in 21st century skills such as creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, and communication. But what does that really mean? How does one accomplish 'preparing for the unknown'? Lichtman's research into successful American schools points out that school

leaders are not only those who bear the title of principal or school superintendent. Rather, schools are filled with many adults who are natural leaders. A successful administrator cultivates and supports leaders, providing opportunities for *all* adults in a school community to lead the process of change.

What does that look like? It is a school willing to break from tradition. It is a school where people are encouraged to take a risk, think outside the box, and try something new. It is a school where people are rewarded for their perseverance and teachers are the "first learners" in the classroom. It begins by asking, "How can we be better?"

So, as this school year comes to a close, I wish you all the best and ask, "How will you be better next year?"

Lori

Dr. Lori J. Stollar, PASCD President

"...if we teach today as we taught yesterday, we rob our children of tomorrow..." –John Dewey

Regional Update Southern Region Update

Jay Burkhart, D.Ed.

On Thursday, February 26, 2015, the Southern Region of PASCD held their annual spring event for all pre-service and student teachers in our region. The event titled: "Landing Your First Teaching Job: What You Need to Know" was held at the Capital Area Intermediate Unit. The event was a great success with over 40 student teachers from local colleges and universities attending. The evening was kicked off by Brianna Crowley, a member of ASCD's Class of 2014 Emerging Leaders. Brianna did a fantastic job of speaking with the attendees and answering all of their questions.

After Brianna's presentation was completed the attendees rotated through three sessions that were led by our region's executive board and invited guests. The sessions included first year survival skills, maintaining your certification and the all-important interviewing skills. Following the sessions, all attendees were invited back to the main room for closing remarks and questions. Our region is always excited to host this annual event. We have an opportunity to speak with the future stars of our profession, provide mentorship, and have even had teachers hired by some of the administrators who attend this event.



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.



Christian Ehrhart

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

Father, husband, brother, son, and friend describes who I am, as far as what I do: I am an educator and reflective practitioner located in York PA.

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

I am a high school Biology teacher. My typical day has some structure to it as, any teacher would. But within that structure any number of surprises can occur, always keeping me on my toes.

What is your educational philosophy summed up in one sentence?

I love what I do and try to be the best version of myself every moment of

the day and hope that I can encourage others to do the same. If we are all trying to be the best versions of ourselves – that sounds like a pretty good place to be.

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

Education was not my first career choice and I have read and participated in a number of professional development opportunities that are related to education as well as many in areas of business and science. Each had its own value and each has contributed to my successes in some manner. Personally, the biggest career difference makers for me are from listening: listening to those who have come before me, listening to parents, kids, and community members. People's stories are fascinating and powerful.

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

For me it is an old acronym – K.I.S.S. (Keep It Simple Stupid). I would like to see a focus on learning techniques that do not create conversation on what a student does, completes, didn't do, etc. Instead we spend time talking about the why's and how's to create learning. Students will achieve growth, regardless of where they start only if they truly learn. It is scary because it is abstract – but if we focus on learning, achievement will follow.

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

Thank you

Save the date: November 15-17, 2015

PASCD 65th Annual Conference

Leading and Achieving in an Interconnected World

Engage, Motivate and Connect

