



THE
GEORGIA
COMMUNICATOR

Conducting Georgia's Education

Winter 2011



In This Issue...



- 3** GAESP Exec. Director
- 4** GAESP President
- 5-7** News Briefs
- 8-9** GAESP Snapshots
- 10** Educational Insight
- 12** District Map

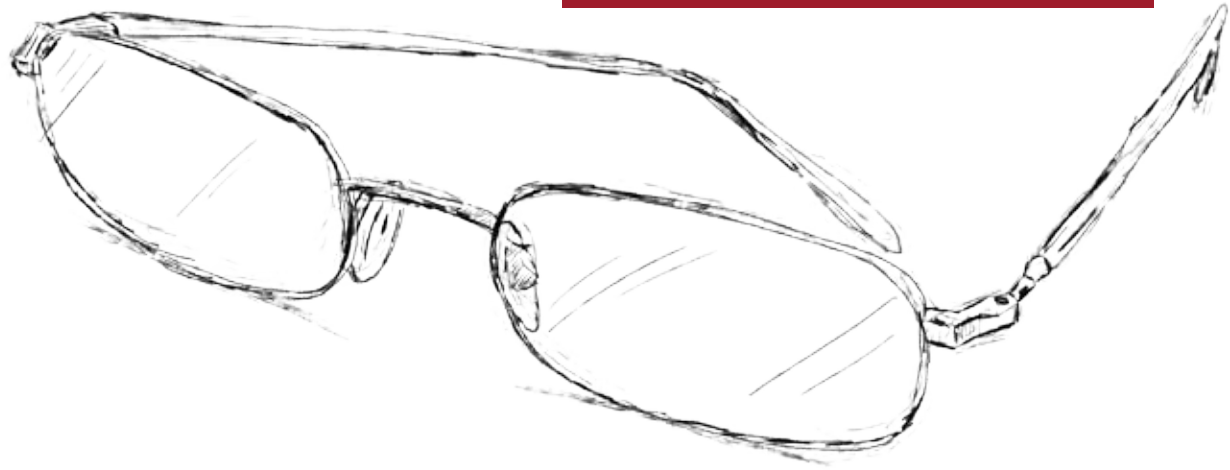
The Georgia Communicator

Published four times a year by the Georgia Association of Elementary School Principals.

Contact

GAESP 5634 Atlanta Highway, Suite 300
Flowery Branch, GA 30542
770.967.2050 Fax: 770.967.2021

www.gael.org



Georgia Association of Elementary School Principals

As I sit in my office on this cold December day writing this article, the publication date for the February newsletter seems to be an eternity from now!

I do not think public education caused this recession but OH how we have been affected by it – furlough days, pay cuts, shortened calendars, teacher layoffs, staff cuts, reduction in services, and larger classes. All have had, and continue to have negative impacts on students and teachers. I have heard of school systems that have taken as many as 12 furlough days and or reduced the calendar by 10 days just so they can keep their doors open. Now our Governor wants us to tighten our belts. What, again?? State financial support for local school systems has been cut for the past 10 years. We cannot tighten-up any more!! (A line from an Archie Bell and the Drells song for you ‘old’ school folks.)

Nevertheless, reformers and lawmakers contend that if schools were doing a better job of educating our children, Georgia would be in far better shape to compete in the global economy. This is a LIE! Again, public school educators are again the scapegoat. However, when a lie is repeated often enough and loudly enough, many individuals who don’t ‘think for themselves’ begin to believe what they have heard.

Lawmakers need to take a serious look at our social and economic policies and start supporting public schools. The recent high unemployment rate has resulted in an increased percentage of low income and socially disadvantaged students. We know these two factors are the best indicators for poor student performance. Yes, school personnel will adjust to this reality, but when will the lawmakers? When parents are not working, children get neglected and the schools become surrogate parents. And yes we are seeing more and more of this in our schools. We feed them breakfast, lunch, and our afterschool programs give them a nutritional snack. In many schools, students are there from 6am to 6pm. School personnel also provide school supplies and clothing. Schools frequently are the only source of peace, sanity and order in many students’ lives.

And, one more thing, how do you teach Math I to a child that is hungry and spent the night in a car? All politicians do is muddy the waters, they try to make simple solutions to complex problems. O yea, in a society that spends 40 thousand a year on a criminal and 7 thousand on a student—Go Figure!!

COME ON lawmakers open your eyes and tighten “your belts” and support Georgia’s public schools. Make the decisions necessary to make Georgia’s schools attractive to the type of businesses and people who will help Georgia’s economy become more dynamic. Help Save the Children!

Hal Beaver

GAESP Executive Director

Dear Georgia Principals,

I find it hard to believe that the second half of our school year has arrived. This time of year brings a renewed focus in our personal lives as well as our professional lives. It allows us to continue our focus on educating the whole child while observing all that

will be going on under the “gold dome” – especially with a new governor. If ever there has been a time for us, as principals, to be involved – it is NOW!

All of you work diligently each and every day to make a difference in the lives you come in contact with! As we heard at the Fall Conference – there are SO many good things that go on daily inside of our schools. We just need to tell the stories more often!! Our legislators and community members need to hear those stories!

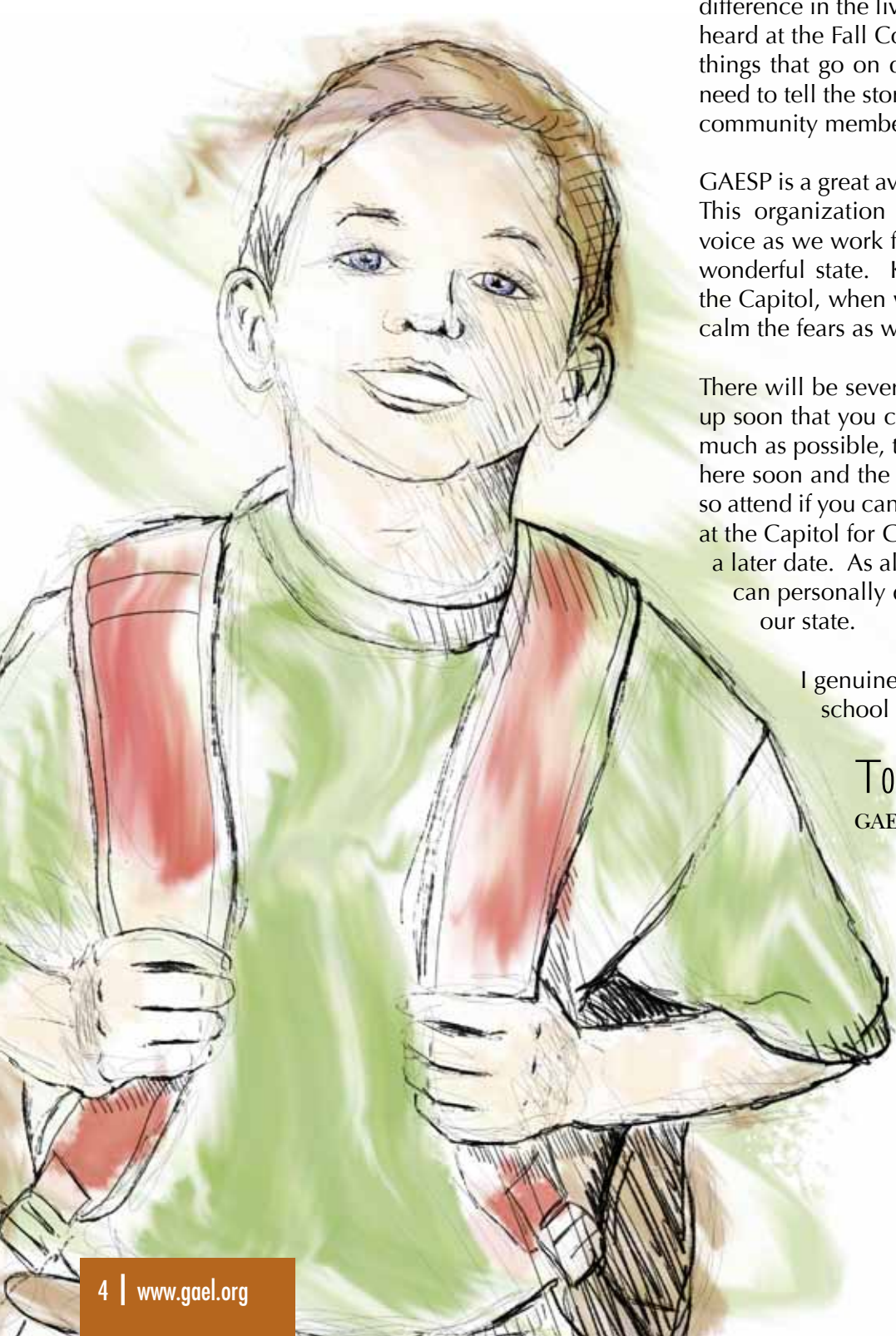
GAESP is a great avenue for us to get this accomplished. This organization helps to bring us together as one voice as we work for the boys and girls throughout our wonderful state. Knowing that we are represented at the Capitol, when we cannot physically be there, helps calm the fears as we move into this legislative season.

There will be several opportunities that will be coming up soon that you can be a part of. I encourage you, as much as possible, to be involved. Winter GAEL will be here soon and the new governor is slated to be there – so attend if you can. We are hoping to have another day at the Capitol for GAESP – more information on that at a later date. As always, there are those things that you can personally do to help the cause of education in our state.

I genuinely hope that the second half of your school year runs smoothly.

Todd Williford

GAESP President



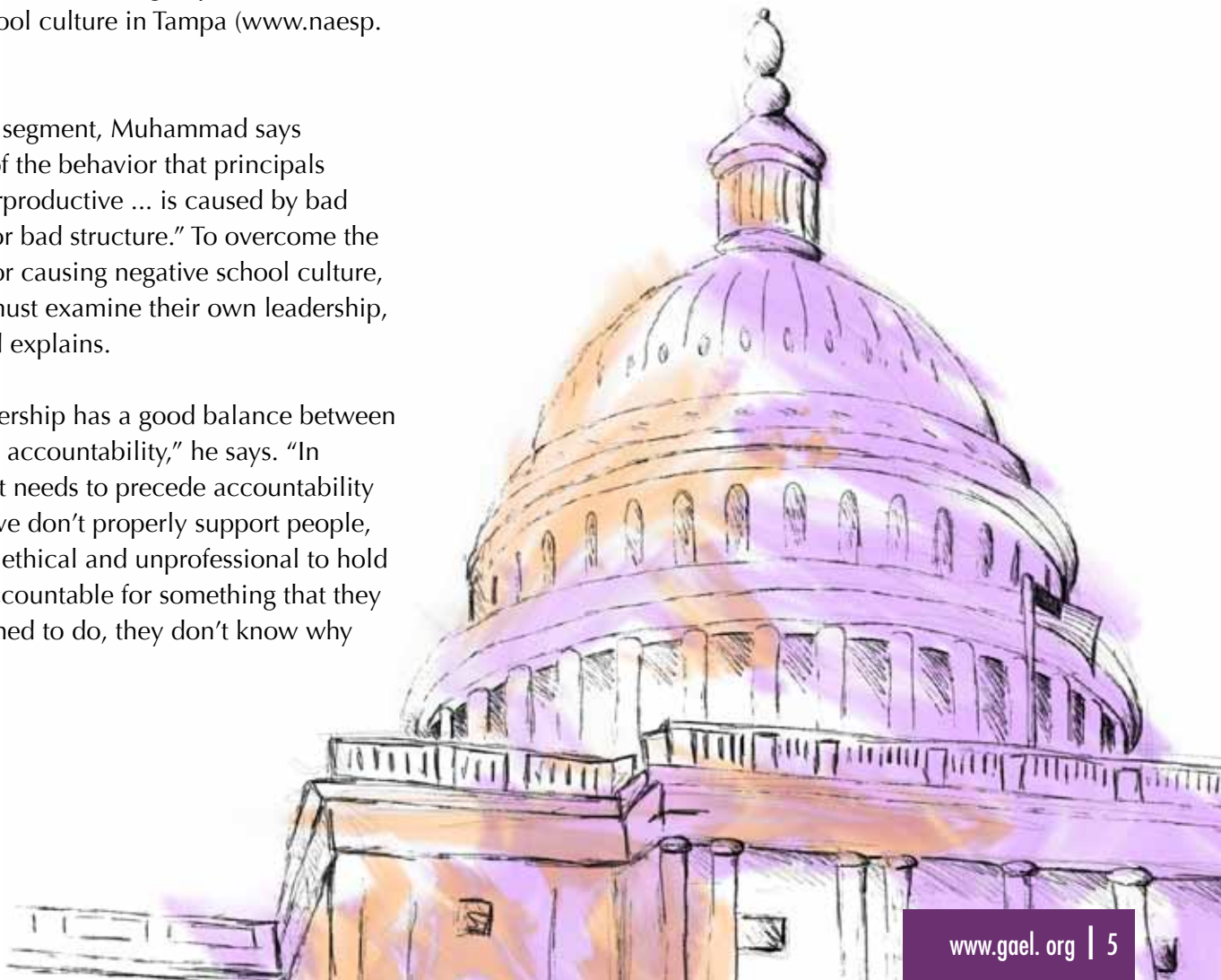
Transforming Toxic School Culture

Without a healthy school culture, no amount of structural change will produce positive results. Listen to a recent segment of NAESP Radio as Anthony Muhammad, author of *Transforming School Culture: How to End Staff Division*, talks about how principals can transform a toxic school culture. A former teacher and principal, Muhammad will be a featured plenary session speaker at NAESP's Annual Convention & Exposition in Tampa, Florida, April 7-10. Listen to him on NAESP Radio and then sign up to hear him address school culture in Tampa (www.naesp.org/2011).

In the radio segment, Muhammad says that "A lot of the behavior that principals find counterproductive ... is caused by bad leadership or bad structure." To overcome the bad behavior causing negative school culture, principals must examine their own leadership, Muhammad explains.

"Good leadership has a good balance between support and accountability," he says. "In fact, support needs to precede accountability because if we don't properly support people, it's really unethical and unprofessional to hold someone accountable for something that they weren't trained to do, they don't know why

**"Good Leadership
has good balance
between support and
accountability..."**



they need to do it, and they don't have the resources to do it."

NAESP Radio is produced in partnership with BAM Radio Network. Executive Director Gail Connelly hosts the program, which focuses on the topics you really care about. Each brief segment of NAESP Radio helps keep school principals and administrators abreast of the latest developments in the field. Listen to the full interview online www.naesp.org/naesp-radio-1.

—Dateline NAESP

Register for NAESP's Convention and Bring Your Family to Tampa

There's a lot for your family to do in and around Tampa, Florida, while you're soaking in new knowledge and networking with colleagues from around the nation at NAESP's Annual Convention & Exposition, April 7-10. April is a beautiful month to be in the Tampa Bay area—moderate temperatures and plenty of sun. And nearby your family or guest will find many ways to fill their days with fun and wonder.

Right in the Tampa Bay area, there's Busch Gardens, the Florida Aquarium, and Lowry Park Zoo—great for kids and adults alike. They can also explore the Museum of Science and Industry and the Tampa Bay History Center. If shopping is on the agenda, they will enjoy Hyde Park Village with its eclectic shops, great restaurants with outdoor seating, and evening concerts.

Of course, there are also beautiful beaches, nature centers, and golf courses galore in the Tampa Bay area.

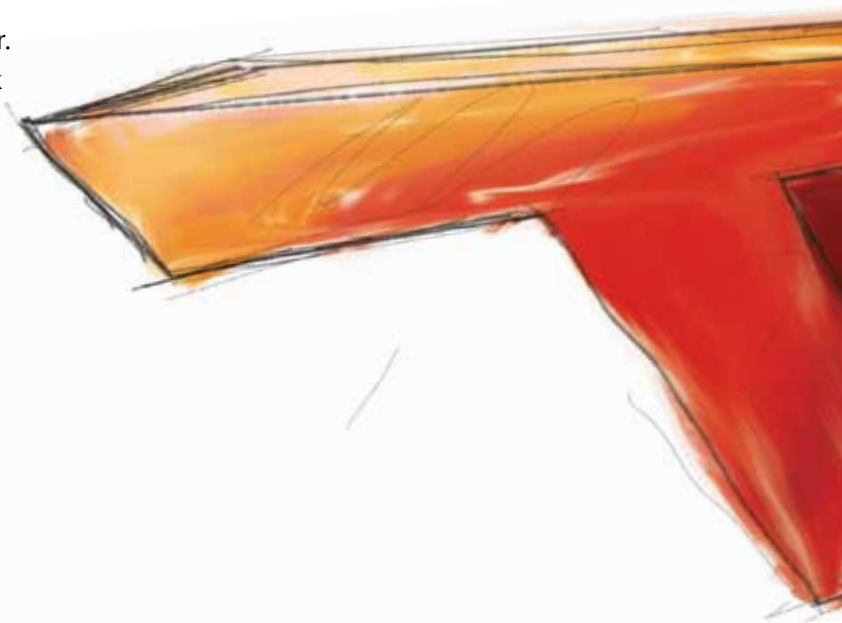
And, it's a short drive to all the famous theme parks in Orlando for fun-filled days, including Sea World, Discovery Cove, and Disney World. Special discounts on many Tampa Bay attractions are being made available to NAESP convention attendees, so make your plans now! www.naesp.org/2011

—Dateline NAESP

NAESP President Talks Parent Engagement on National TV

Engaging parents in their children's education is a surefire way to improve student achievement. To help parents better meet their children's educational needs, the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) has joined forces with Lifetime TV's *The Balancing Act*, providing information on *The Parent Teacher Corner*, which is a new segment that provides information for parents about how to help their children succeed in school.

NAESP President Barbara Chester recently appeared on the show, discussing how principals, teachers, and parents can help students improve their reading skills. Chester has also weighed in on combating bullying and strengthening parent engagement.



“Elementary principals work in partnership with parents and families to ensure that they have the information and tools they need to help their children thrive in school and in life,” said Chester. “Because of this essential connection, I’m pleased to represent schools—and principals—on The Balancing Act, furthering the conversation about how to help students succeed.”

To view the segments, visit www.naesp.org/barbara-chester-balancing-act.
—Dateline NAESP

Mentor Training in the New Year

Novice school principals face the same issues as seasoned administrators—budget cuts, staff accountability, increased class size, and diverse learning communities, to name a few—but who can they count on for support and guidance? Perhaps it’s you.

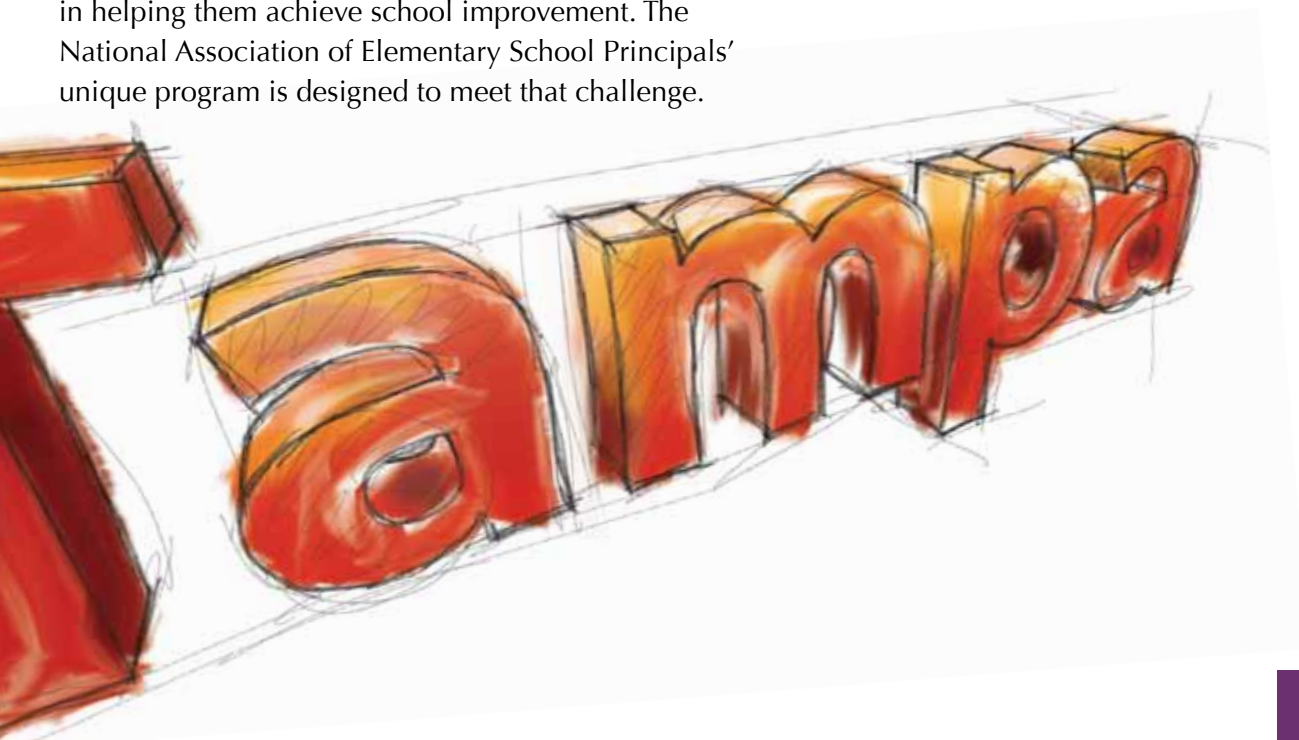
Effective mentoring and coaching of new administrators is critical for school districts, and well-trained and highly skilled mentors are essential in helping them achieve school improvement. The National Association of Elementary School Principals’ unique program is designed to meet that challenge.

The National Mentor Program prepares and certifies highly skilled principals in a 2.5-day training session at its Leadership Immersion Institute, followed by a nine-month internship. Participants learn how to integrate adult development and learning while using practical techniques and mentoring strategies. The certification program is led by a highly trained coach for monthly online chats and reflections while trainees mentor a protégé.

Training sessions remaining are scheduled in January and April:

Georgia’s training is/was in November
Jan. 27-29, 2011, in Phoenix
April 5-7, 2011, in Tampa, Florida

As an NAESP certified mentor, you will be instrumental in creating a model for instructional mentor leadership, addressing leadership needs of newly assigned principals, and responding to a growing national school leadership shortage. Sign up for one of the upcoming trainings and get started. www.naesp.org/national-mentor-program
—Dateline NAESP



GAESP Awards Banquet 2010



GAESP Snapshots



Common Core Standards... no worries!

by Sandra Love, Ed.D.

Use the Change to Inspire Achievement!

Being a campus administrator can be a daunting task, yet a rewarding one. When the return from winter break begins with enthusiasm and an accurate vision, half the task is completed. While no one can truly predict the twists and turns during a school year, there is one thing that remains constant in education: high standards for performance. Inspiration in an opening message to faculty can be the key to achieving such expectations. Teaching and learning have no limits when inspiration is an integral part of these processes. The most difficult task is knowing how to inspire others and maintain the momentum throughout the year.

Beginning 2011 with the right words to rally a faculty is essential. Sharing a simple message that guides and inspires teachers and staff in the implementation of the Common Core Standards is a powerful contributing element to a successful year. How is this achieved? One strategy that has shown evidence of success for "rallying the troops" is using carefully chosen quotations. Quotations can provide a focus and a motivation for staff. These simple, yet powerful words can help teachers understand they are not alone, shared responsibility is key, and their daily instruction will change the future of students.

In a message to staff, quotations convey 2011 is going to be exciting! Use your words to build and sustain morale among faculty, to create momentum for future tasks, and to set a positive tone for the remainder of the year. Explain this new year is yet another opportunity to focus our collaborative efforts on improving student performance. With the Standards as the guiding force in daily instruction, student achievement will result. Instill the belief that we will succeed. Share, "Our world is changing, and so shall we. If one strategy does not work, we can try others. We must be willing to seek alternatives to improve teaching and learning to enable us to grow as resourceful educators."

A few quotations to focus, motivate, and encourage staff at the onset of the year might be:

- We can't wait for the storm to pass. We must learn to work in the rain. -Peter Silas
- Learning from a teacher who has stopped learning is like drinking from a stagnant pond. -Indonesian Proverb
- Teachers are the architects of the future. When they teach one child, they touch future generations forever. -Unknown
- Dare to help every child excel, for it is only then when you have dared to be the very best educator you can be. -Sylvia Hooker

These quotations may be used for small group discussions, faculty meetings, or professional development sessions. Questions to involve teachers in group conversations might include: What does this mean to me? What can I do to make this happen? What additional resources or training do I need?

Extend the rallying message throughout the remaining year. Use quotations in weekly memos, newsletters, meetings, school displays, and assemblies. Categorize topics that relate to overall student achievement of the Standards (e.g., success, teamwork, confidence), and search for quotations that have connections. Remember, quotations can stimulate discussions, provide recognition, lift energy levels, promote team-building, engage conversation, or make a point. In conclusion, quotations ignite staff and students, promote a positive culture, and encourage school spirit. When teachers and students are inspired, great things happen!

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

As you welcome back your staff for the 2011 year, build time into your professional development plan for relationship-building activities. These activities allow staff to know their colleagues and to make connections that facilitate teamwork and support. Activities that build relationships promote camaraderie. In addition, the activities provide a foundation upon which staff work as they plan, instruct, and collaborate toward the common purpose: student achievement of the Common Core Standards.

Activities might include:

- Human sorts by characteristics, such as years in education, family members, pets, favorite pastimes, vacation destinations, etc.
- Non-skill games or small group competitions
- Surveys or interview activities where participants gather information about colleagues
- Instructional strategy sharing sessions

When possible, include food, music, and time for relaxation. These staff development activities will establish a culture of involvement, community, and success.

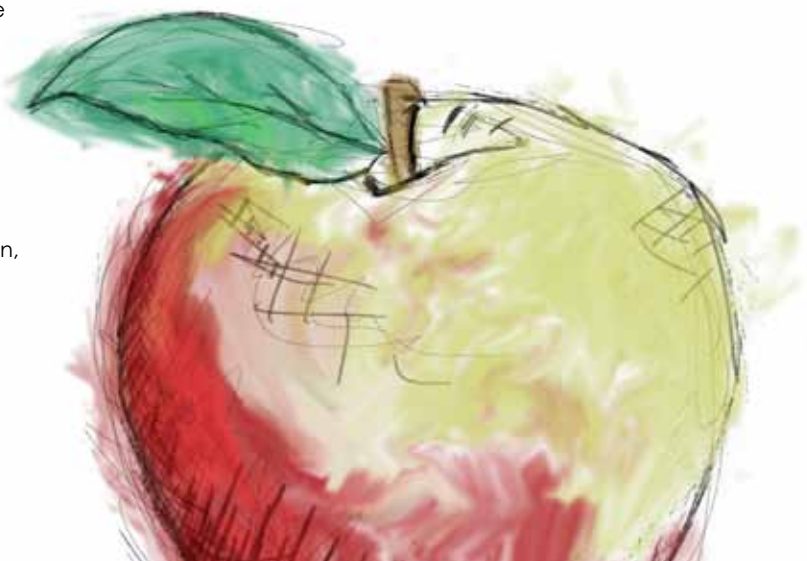
TIPS FOR PRINCIPALS

Research shows a strong link between parent involvement and student achievement. First impressions are very important in building positive working relationships with parents. As you plan for the remaining months of the year, try implementing one of these tips to sustain favorable relationships with parents.

- Mail a principal's message to parents and students with important information regarding student achievement of the Common Core Standards.
- Encourage teachers to contact every parent regarding academic goals for the spring semester.
- Update your school's website with information regarding the Common Core Standards.
- Host a "Parent Chat with the Principal" to provide information regarding the academic expectations of the Common Core Standards.
- Use a school newsletter to convey the importance of partnership between parents and school.
- Provide parent communication in the home language to the greatest extent possible. Remove educational jargon from such communication.
- Maintain an environment throughout the campus that welcomes parent involvement and input.

Turn to Page 11 for tools to implement the Common Core Standards on your campus!

With a wealth of knowledge and experience in the field of education, Sandra is a product developer at Mentoring Minds. As a proud partner of GAESP, Mentoring Minds has a plethora of educational resources. To learn more, visit mentoringminds.com or call 800-585-5258.



Standards & Strategies at your fingertips...

The Common Core Standards define the rigorous skills and knowledge in English Language Arts and Mathematics for K-12 students. Mentoring Minds' Common Core Standards and Strategies Flip Charts are the perfect resources to help educators implement these standards and prepare students for academic success in the 21st Century.

Funding Opportunities:

Title I

Title III

Title V

IDEA



Elementary Flip Charts

Do you need a flip chart for a specific grade? These charts provide you with strategies for the delivery of effective instruction pertaining to the new Math and ELA Standards. We also include clarifying activities so you know how best to utilize the content in your classroom.

Available Charts:

- Grade K
- Grade 1
- Grade 2
- Grade 3
- Grade 4
- Grade 5



Secondary Flip Charts

Do you teach content specific to Mathematics or ELA? With a middle and high school version available, these charts offer effective teaching strategies for implementing the Common Core Standards.

Available Charts:

- Grades 6-8 Math (All grades on one chart)
- Grades 6-8 ELA (All grades on one chart)
- Grades 9-12 Math (All grades on one chart)
- Grades 9-12 ELA (All grades on one chart)



Comprehensive Standards Flip Charts

Looking for a resource with all the standards in one place? These charts give you quick access to ELA or Math Common Core Standards for grades Kindergarten through 12. Strategies for the implementation of the Common Core Standards are included.

Available Charts:

- Grades K-12 Math (All grades on one chart)
- Grades K-12 ELA (All grades on one chart)
- Grades K-5 Math and ELA (Both on one chart)

Critical Thinking for Life!
Mentoring Minds

Visit mentoringminds.com/ccss
or call 800.585.5258 for more information!

At Mentoring Minds, we understand that education budgets are tight these days. And as your partner in helping children succeed in the classroom, we are here to help you find creative ways to finance the materials and projects your campus needs to achieve and excel.

Title I Improving Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged

Title III Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students

Title V Part D

IDEA Special Education 3 - 21



GAESP Districts

Georgia Association of Elementary School Principals

Board of Directors

- Todd Williford President, Principal, Bulloch County
- Cindy Flesher Past-President, Ex. Dir., Houston County
- Julia Mashburn Pres.-Elect, Principal
- Angelea Garrett Sect., Principal
- Rick Little Treasurer, Ex. Dir. Tea
- Cecil Patterson NAESP Rep., Principal
- Richard Bazemore GAEL Rep., Principal
- Debbie Rodriguez Awards, Principal
- Eddie Pollard Federal Relations, Principal
- Julie Raschen Leg. Chair, Principal
- Terri Johnson District 6 President, Principal
- Tony Childers District 13 President, Principal
- Andrea Mcgee District 11 President, Principal
- Rachel Ziegler District 14 President, Principal
- Margaret Pupillo District 14 President, Principal
- Bonita Fluker District 12 President, Principal
- Nicole Holmes District 16 President, Principal
- Marie Hooks District 5 President, Principal
- Jamie Spinks District 1 President, Principal
- Nancy Strawbridge District 2 President, Principal
- Mark Crowe District 15 President, Principal
- Patsy Clark District 9 President, Principal
- Pam Smith St. Dept., Principal
- Joanna Culbreth District 10 President, Principal
- Michele Sherman District 3 President, Principal
- Beth Lind District 8 President, Principal

