

Alaska Association
 of Elementary
 School Principals

Alaska Association
 of Secondary
 School Principals

Alaska Association
 of School
 Administrators

Alaska Association
 of School Business
 Officials

Alaska Staff
 Development
 Network

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ACSA President's Message

Lest We Forget, Our Focus Remains Our Students

By Steve Bradshaw, Superintendent, Sitka School District

Let me first welcome everyone back to what I hope will be a great school year for every student, teacher and administrator in Alaska and around the country. I truly hope that each and every one finds passion for their roles and happiness in helping educate our children.

In my opening to our entire staff I spoke about my belief that as educators our job is to help our students build their goals and dreams. Our goals should not only be to teach children to read, write and understand math; our goal should be to help each child understand the greatness of the human mind and the potential of every human being.

We've had a lot of discussion in the past few years about building partnerships: partnerships between schools and districts, districts and other districts, districts and the state, and my favorite, states and the federal government. Building these partnerships can lead to, hopefully, better education and the ever important better test scores. It can also lead to the better use of our shrinking resources in the special needs areas such as speech pathology, occupational therapy and physical therapy. I believe that as a school administrator it is one of my responsibilities to seek out positive partnerships that will enhance our ability to improve the lives of our children.

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Time to Educate: November Bond Ballot Initiative

During the upcoming November Election, Alaskans will be asked to approve a statewide general obligation bond package designed to enhance and improve public facilities across Alaska. The \$397 million bond package requires voters to affirm the bond for construction to begin. It is vitally important for our membership to understand the bond purpose and help carry the message to every Alaska community.

The bond package includes much needed education and community facilities:

- **K-12 Schools:** Renovation and/or replacement projects for schools in Alakanuk, Kipnuk and Kwigillingok.
- **Prince of Whales Island:** A Klawock vocational center to provide an Island-wide comprehensive vocation education program serving students and adults.
- **Mt. Edgecumbe High School:** An aquatic facility on the Mt. Edgecumbe High School campus to serve the school, Alaska Public Safety Academy, U.S. Coast Guard, SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC) and other Sitka entities.
- **University of Alaska:** Projects include UAF Life Sciences Classroom and Lab Facility, UAA sports arena, Mat-Su Valley Center for Arts and Learning as well as a paramedic/nursing lab addition, Kenai River Campus housing and Career and Technical Center, and Prince William Sound Community College campus renovation/renewal.

■ **Library, Archives and Museum:** Expansion of the Alaska State Museum in downtown Juneau to consolidate the Alaska State Museum, Alaska State Library and Alaska State Archives.

■ **Alaska Department of Fish and Game:** A research and administrative facility to be built on Kodiak Island.

When signing the general obligation bond bill crafted by the 26th Legislature, Governor Parnell commented that the bond package, coupled with the approved 70/30 reimbursement rate for locally approved school facilities and the enactment of the rural school construction fund, provides a more level playing field for school construction.

Please join your colleagues in educating the public on this important bond issue.



Homer's "Singing Mayor," James Hornaday serenades attendees at the AASA Fall Conference.

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ACSA President's Message - Continued from page 1

However all the research still reinforces, and all great educators still know, that the most important partnership that can be built is between the student and the teacher. Our number one priority should be to help provide highly effective teachers in every classroom and highly effective administrators in every building. My definition of highly effective still has as its cornerstone, the ability to love every child for whom they are and for the great potential they have.

Our schools should remain a place where all children discover the incredible gifts they have and a passion to learn more about who they are and what they can become.

Have a great year and let's all work together to improve the lives of Alaska's children.



AASA President Elect, Jim Nygaard, addresses attendees at the AASA Fall Conference



Bruce Johnson, Newly Appointed ACSA/AASA Executive Director

It is a pleasure for me to have this opportunity to introduce myself to all public school administrators across our state. I am fortunate to know many of you through my work in Alaska over the past 27 years in a variety of capacities. For those of you who are unfamiliar with me, I trust that after our series of fall conferences - AASA in early October, AASSP/AAESP in mid - October and ALASBO in early December that you will be more familiar with me as I attend and participate in these important professional development opportunities.

As a starting point in building a relationship with all members, allow me to give a brief overview of who I am and my background. I was reared on a family farm in northern Minnesota, taught elementary school in Fargo, North Dakota and following completion of a doctorate at Northern Illinois University, I served as an elementary school principal and assistant superintendent for personnel and instruction in the Chicago area. Along with my wife Catherine, we migrated to Alaska in 1983

where I served initially as the assistant superintendent in Juneau, followed by five years as the superintendent. We elected to move to Kodiak Island in 1991 where I became an area village principal serving three small remote schools prior to becoming Kodiak's superintendent. Two appointments with the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) as Director at Mt. Edgecumbe High School and Deputy Commissioner of Education eventually lead me to the Association of Alaska School Boards where over a nine year period I served in a variety of capacities.

Catherine and I are proud parents of a twenty year old daughter who is currently involved in a University of Alaska international exchange program in Ghana, Africa.

It is my great honor to serve the ACSA members which I promised to do with passion and integrity. I am energized to pursue our mission and support all members in their effort to make a difference in the lives of students.



Alaska Principal Associations Honor Members



Craig Walker

2010 Assistant Principal of the Year

West High Assistant Principal, Craig Walker, is the Alaska 2010 Assistant Principal of the Year. With 20 years of service to the students of Anchorage School District, Mr. Walker is credited with being a collaborator and has shown outstanding leadership with the International Baccalaureate Program, the Individual Remediation Plan (IRP) and the West High School Alternative Vocational Education Program. Colleagues shared that Mr. Walker views each student as a unique learner resulting in reduced school failure and students dropping out. Additionally he is innovative and leads with integrity and consistency while focusing on educating each student to their fullest potential.



Rod Morrison

2010 Middle School Principal of the Year

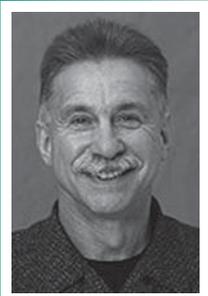
Valdez Gilson Junior High Principal, Rod Morrison, is Alaska 2010 Middle School Principal of the Year. Mr. Morrison is credited with the creation of a shared vision that places students first, a collaborative school culture and involved parents, community members, staff and students. Under his leadership a school-wide wellness plan has been adopted that has reduced staff absenteeism and improved staff morale. Innovative programming in the areas of gender block classes, personal education plans, after school programming and caring relationships have all been formulated by Mr. Morrison and his staff, contributing to the success of many students. Everyone would agree that the culture and climate of Gilson Junior High School has made many positive changes that are having a profound impact on student achievement.



Lou Pondolino

2010 High School Principal of the Year

Service High School Principal, Lou Pondolino, is Alaska 2010 High School Principal of the Year. Becoming principal at Service High School in 2004, Mr. Pondolino is credited with transforming the school following the opening of neighboring South High School. He has created "smaller learning communities" including a groundbreaking Freshman Academy that has helped reduce ninth grade failures and dropouts. Other noteworthy start-ups under his leadership include academies for Junior Officer Reserve Training Corps (JROTC) Leadership and Medical/Health as well as Career Guides who assist students with post-graduation planning. His endeavors have resulted in a strong academic climate targeting personalized education conducted in a safe and vibrant atmosphere.



Rick Toymil

2010 Elementary School Principal of the Year

Alpenglow Elementary School Principal, Rick Toymil, is Alaska 2010 National Distinguished Elementary School Principal of the Year. Since 1984, Mr. Toymil has been serving Alaska students in the Bering Straits, Kenai Peninsula and Anchorage School Districts. In his nomination, it was noted that he has created a "Quality Schools" environment in four schools, involving shared leadership supported by a positive and proactive school climate. While serving Alpenglow School families, he has pioneered the Alpenglow Military Outreach Network involving military families that is helping build and maintain an inclusive school community despite a challenging 25-40% annual student transition rate.

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AAESP President's Message Collaboration Sparks Improvement

By Ann Salzer, Principal, Chugach Optional School

When I was studying to obtain my Type B certificate, a professor commented in a seminar class, "No one will know what you do as a principal, except another principal." The words caused me to puzzle: Surely I knew what a principal did; after all, I was studying to become a principal! As a principal I would ensure that my students had rich, engaging learning opportunities. I would be a bridge between the students, teachers, parents, district leaders and the broader community as we all worked together to provide a safe place for children to learn. I would ensure that the school was safe and well managed. I would talk with teachers and parents about making learning a joyful, child-centered endeavor with results that last a lifetime.

Years later my professor's words have come to mind. This September a parent seemed surprised that I knew what her child was studying. Another seemed surprised that I knew her child struggled with finishing his work. I'm not sure what they thought I did all day long, but they didn't know that I work to be connected to the children's learning. In order to prevent professional isolation, I have learned to maximize the second portion of the professor's observation, "except another principal". By building partnerships with my colleagues my own practice is not only less lonely, but fresher and sharper.

Continued on page 5



Building Partnerships for Children Is a Good Thing

By John Pile, Executive Director, AAESP

Alaskans tend to be independent folks who take pride in being self-sufficient. As a result, forming partnerships with your school's communities may be difficult for some principals. I understand the demands of the day-to-day activities in a public school. With these factors in mind, I would like to suggest that forming school partnerships should be viewed as expanding the "professional learning communities."

In the aisles of Safeway and Fred Meyer I have conversations with people who do not have school as a central focus in their lives. Surprisingly, not all people even view being a principal as a grand professional goal. When some people think of "school" they remember an event in third grade or a homecoming game, not fancy program titles like No Child Left Behind or Race to the Top.

I have retired from the hectic day-to-day schedule of a school principal and I am now available to witness what happens in my community between the hours of 8:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M. The experience has been very enlightening and I have discovered that there are a great number of people who are not directly involved in our schools. I thought all that I did as principal was very important to everyone!

In my conversations with these non-school types we always agree that families and children want a good education and what we do in school is important. This shared vision is an excellent opportunity to form partnerships and include community members in your expanded learning community.

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AAESP President's Message - Continued from page 4

For example, last spring I had the opportunity to attend the Alaska Arts Education Consortium Administrator Retreat. Throughout that weekend of conversation and professional development, I met administrators from around the state and administrators from the Anchorage School District, who shared an interest in integrating the arts within the core literacy curriculum.

Following the retreat we have shared articles and stories about events in our buildings celebrating the power of the arts in the curriculum. As I stroll through our school, I have a deeper appreciation of how carefully the teachers have brought the arts to the children across disciplines. I reflect what I've read regarding arts integration back to the teachers, providing affirmation that we are doing more for children. I have colleagues with whom I can share these experiences. My professional reading is drawn

to material regarding arts integration and I pass articles along to peers who share my interest. The connections begun at the Institute continue to develop. In thinking about writing this article I found myself making a distinction between collaboration and collegial support. I saw collaboration as shared work toward a common end, whereas just collegial support fell into a different basket that is not as impactful. I realized that, for me, it is collaboration that sparks improvement.

By the time this newsletter is received principals across the state will have met at the annual AAESP/AASSP Principal Conference. I am confident that friendships were rekindled and professional collaborations renewed. I am grateful for the strength and support I receive from my colleagues. The conversations we have help me hone my practice and be a better principal in my school.

Building Partnerships for Children is a Good Thing - Continued from page 4

Partnerships happen when principals and staff reach out to individuals and groups to address issues that affect children and families. Partnerships build credibility and trust. Partnerships are opportunities to involve those who may be disenfranchised from the system, but still feel strongly about the needs of their children. A school's success is built on many fronts, including:

- Building strong rapport and relationships with the entire school community
- Ensuring opportunities for students to grow socially, emotionally and behaviorally
- Cultivating the relationships that principals have established with parents and teachers
- Creating an inclusive school culture

Embracing partners for school improvement will help more children succeed. A partnership is an opportunity for a team approach, an opportunity to think creatively about traditional strategies and a license to imagine innovative changes. As we strive to educate the whole child, results will be enhanced if we embrace the entire community.

On a final note, I have discovered during my non-school adventures that your community thinks what principals do each day is amazing and they hold you in great respect. The more people know about what you do, the more children will benefit. The local school is viewed as a treasure in the community. When children give you a hug, know the adults in your school community would do the same...if it didn't look weird!

Resolution/Position Statement Update

ACSA's effort to provide a unified voice for all school and district administrators continues with the creation of joint position statements, now in the second year of development. These position statements are crafted in a manner to help guide the executive directors and members of all four leadership organizations to advocate effectively on issues critical to our members and Alaska children.

The ACSA Position Statement Committee—Anne Salzer, Chair - Anchorage, Timothy Doran - Fairbanks, Robin Taylor - Denali, Chris Reitan - Galena, Adam Mokolke - Lake and Penn, Cyd Duffin - Mat-Su,

Amy Lujan - ALASBO, Kerry Boyd - Yukon Koyukuk and Michael Byer - Haines—worked diligently last spring and into the fall to provide “draft position statements” that express the will of all ACSA member groups. These position statements will be presented to each organization for approval this fall and ultimately placed into a useable document to guide our advocacy efforts in Juneau and Washington D.C.

A special thanks to our Chair, Anne Salzer, and all committee members who worked tirelessly to complete the draft position statements in a timely manner.

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AASSP President's Message Partnerships with Other Schools Can Have a Significant Impact on Improving Your Own

by Alan Fields, Principal, Kenai Central High School

Collaboration continues to be a current focus of school improvement. It is a movement that the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District continues to look at as a means of improvement as well. However, with our smaller school sites we have looked for other models of collaboration.

Last year Kenai Central High School began an organized collaboration effort with Kenai Middle School. The two schools are physically separated only by a football field and track. The middle school is the main feeder school for the high school, yet the staff did not know many of the teachers in the other building. They certainly did not know many of them well. Collaboration between feeder schools improves both student performance and school culture.

By working together the two schools were able to place staff in larger, more meaningful "department" subject groupings. One of these schools would have a language or math department with four or five teachers, but a foreign language or art department might only be one or two teachers.

The departments were given a list of suggested areas of focus including curriculum, assessment data, instructional strategies, technology integration, intervention, transition, and student placement decisions. The departmental groups established and worked on goals that were based on curriculum and pedagogy as well as personal and social issues. Necessary protocols were developed for goal setting, meetings, reporting, and other collaboration activities.

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Welcome – A Year Focused on Building Partnerships

By Andre' Layral, Executive Director, AASSP

I would like to welcome all new and returning AASSP members to the 2010-11 membership year. I am excited for the opportunity to serve our members this year. Your AASSP membership supports you in your important leadership role as principal, assistant principal or aspiring principal.

The broad theme this year for the ACSA Bulletin is Building Partnerships. Google defines a partnership as "an arrangement where entities and/or individuals agree to cooperate to advance their interests". Partnerships can provide new opportunities for schools and school districts to support learning for children and youth, but can also have widely varying results and present partners with special challenges. With careful attention to defining partnership goals and responsibilities, the

results can be dramatic. School district and school partnerships that connect, coordinate, and leverage resources from a variety of sources are more likely to be sustainable.

Across Alaska many schools, school districts and communities are currently working together to create and support partnerships that bring together diverse individuals and groups, including principals, teachers, school superintendents, school boards, community-based organizations, youth development organizations, health and human service agencies, parents and other community leaders to expand opportunities for children, families, and communities. These partnerships take on many different forms unique to each school district, school and community.

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AASSP President's Message - Continued from page 6

A variety of meeting formats were offered for groups to use during the year – joint in-service activities, after school meetings, release time to visit classrooms at the other school, etc. These formats, coupled with the protocols, were invaluable to a successful process. We learned that it is important to have enough guidance to help groups facilitate the process, but not so much rigidity that groups feel they cannot accomplish what they feel is important.

Even more valuable than the formal process of collaborating were the professional relationships that were established. Often it is the conversations or discussions that take place during informal time that the best ideas are shared.

This year the Kenai Central High School staff intends to continue the collaboration effort as a means of improving performance. They not only want to work with the middle school but have extended an invitation to the other surrounding high schools and middle schools.

Welcome - A Year Focused on Building Partnerships - Continued from page 6

Whether these partnerships support school day learning or after school programs, when effective they enable all children and youth to learn and succeed and help families and communities to thrive.

One characteristic of any successful school or district partnership is to have a component for engaging parents and other caring adults in meaningful ways that support academic learning as well as other desired developmental outcomes for youth success. We know that when parents and others commit themselves to the same positive outcomes for children and youth, achievement and personal growth is more likely. The leadership of the principal is key in helping staff value the importance of working with parents. Principals are in a unique leadership role to shape a collaborative vision for the school that values family and community involvement. Principals must model these values in their interactions with students, staff, families and communities.

Staff is excited about working with other teachers who teach the same courses that they do. Expanded topics for collaboration will include many of those from last year but also add common assessments and curricular pacing for teachers who are teaching the same courses at different schools.

Teachers often work out of sight and sound of one another, plan and prepare their lessons and materials alone, and struggle on their own to solve their instructional, curricular, and management problems. Schools often work in a similar manner. Collaboration efforts or partnerships between schools can be a way to break from that norm and move to a more collegial relationship that benefits students, teachers, and the school.

Geography has made us neighbors. History has made us friends. Economics has made us partners, and necessity has made us allies. - John F. Kennedy (1917-1963)

Schools with a shared vision that reflect the values of families and community are more likely to succeed in developing strong partnerships than schools that do not. Partnerships that contribute to achieving a school's shared vision are more likely to succeed than those that do not. Where there is a shared vision and a collaborative culture among staff, there is often a more welcoming climate for students, staff and community.

AASSP will be working with the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED), Alaska Staff Development Network (ASDN), other educational leadership groups in Alaska, and school districts this year to explore possible options for providing new professional development opportunities to our members that support their important leadership role. I invite AASSP members to share their ideas on this topic with the AASSP board of directors or myself, by e-mailing me at aassp@alaskaprincipal.org or calling me at 907-458-8880.



The Homer High School Choir performs flawlessly at the AASA Fall Conference Awards Banquet.

ALASBO Alaska Association of School Business Officials

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ALASBO President's Message

Partnerships through Professional Associations

By Laura Hylton, Business Director, Lake & Peninsula School District

When I reflected on the newsletter topic of "partnerships with schools and districts", I realized that our associations exist primarily to foster those partnerships. In a state as large as Alaska, it is easy to feel as though we are isolated and facing issues alone. Whether or not you are just starting out your career in schools or have been at it for years, the value of a network of colleagues is priceless.

The focus of education is the students we all serve, and as such we tend to spend a great deal of time and effort ensuring that instructional staff are supported, trained and working collaboratively. Similar activities for ourselves and other administrative and support staff are more likely to be overlooked. I don't believe this happens intentionally; the sheer volume of tasks required to keep a district operating just gets in the way. We have all looked at the projects awaiting attention on our desks and opted not to attend a professional development opportunity. However, the collaboration, support and ideas generated and exchanged are always useful; often the contacts we make prove to be invaluable.

The President's focus on education innovations to improve the quality of education for all our students challenges states and districts to develop and implement ground breaking educational programs and strategies. In this environment, staying abreast of developments and trends is critical. Our professional associations strive to provide an avenue to disseminate the information we need to be fully informed and generate ideas. Accountability for how state and federal dollars are spent, coupled with increased reporting and audit requirements are continually changing the demands on our operations. Taken as a whole, the national focus on education and accountability is raising the bar on state and district operations. In order to remain competitive for federal dollars, staff in all areas must share our collective knowledge and expertise to improve our operations.

Working alone, these issues are too overwhelming to contemplate or begin to solve. Fortunately, our professional associations at the state and national level provide excellent opportunities to share and learn, as well as myriad perspectives on issues. The resources and contacts available on-line at www.alasbo.org or www.asbointl.org provide a quick look at what the associations for school business officials provide. No matter what your issue, there is a good chance someone has encountered it before and has ideas and information that can save countless hours of work and frustration. Utilize the networks, partnerships and resources available through the professional associations, and you will be glad you did.

As our associations continue to work together into the future on educational issues, I am excited for the future of education in Alaska. While there will be difficult challenges, it is comforting to know I don't have to face them alone or figure it all out. The will to work together to find solutions that benefit the children of our state is inspiring.



ALASBO members and guests at the July 2010 Leadership Conference held in Wrangell.



ASDN Director's Message

Partnership to Support Practicing and Aspiring School Leaders

By Kelly Tonsmeire, Director

The Alaska Staff Development Network (ASDN) is the lead partner in the Rural Alaska Principal Preparation and Support (RAPPS) Project, which is supported by a five-year U.S. Department of Education Grant. RAPPS is a partnership that includes 17 high need rural districts, the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED), the University of Alaska, Anchorage (UAA), the Alaska Administrator Coaching Program, Measured Progress, Inc. and Mid Continent Research in Education and Learning (McREL). I serve as Project Director for RAPPS.

The RAPPS grant provides training and technical assistance to school leaders in our 17 partner districts along with intensive services, in partnership with DEED, to leaders whose schools are in intervention status. In addition, through a partnership with UAA's Education Leadership program, RAPPS will provide scholarships to provide Type B certification for 55 new leaders for high need schools. RAPPS partner districts include Alaska Gateway, Bering Strait, Chatham Region, Iditarod Area, Kake City, Kashunamiut, Klawock City, Kuspuq, Lake & Peninsula, Lower Kuskokwim, Lower Yukon, Northwest Arctic, South-west Region, St. Mary's City, Yukon Flats, Yukon Koyukuk and Yupiit.

Two of RAPPS major activities are the Annual Alaska School Leadership Institute held in early June each year and a series of follow-up webinars for school leaders and their staffs held throughout the school year. These webinars are free to all staff from RAPPS partner districts. They are also available to all other districts statewide for a modest fee. Please join us and encourage your staff to participate in these outstanding statewide professional learning programs.



Alaska School Leadership Institute, Anchorage



Alaska School Leadership Institute, Anchorage

Current and Upcoming Webinars

Introduction to Pyramid Response to Intervention (PRTI)

with Mike Mattos

September 27, October 11 & 25, November 8 & 29, December 6

Growing Your Professional Learning Community

with Al Bertani

October 7, 14 & 21, November 11 & 18

Using Performance Data to Increase Student Learning

with Lexie Domarodski

October 28, November 4, December 2 & 9

Motion Leadership: The Skinny on Being Change Savvy

with Michael Fullan

Dates: November 30, December 7 & 14

New Media Pathways

with Jason Ohler

December 1, January 12 & 26, February 9

Register online at www.asdn.org - click on "New Webinars."
There is no charge for RAPPS district staff.

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AASA President's Message Avoid Taking Partnerships for Granted

By Jim Nygaard, Superintendent, Cordova City School District

Welcome back to School! I hope your 2010-2011 school start up has been successful. This year's Education Bulletin theme is partnerships, and the timing is great to reference the need for critical partnerships, locally as well as nationwide. As we seem to be continually easing from one season to another (football/basketball, summer/fall, fiscal abundance/scarcity) it will become increasingly critical to better understand the need for partnerships and relationships built on trust.

The summer of 2010 will long be remembered as a busy construction summer – one of the busiest. The development of necessary partnerships for a successful project starts well in advance of groundbreaking as we begin working towards support from the voting public, city or borough council approval, as well as the varying funding entities.

Building successful partnerships across Alaska frequently catches us focusing on political campaigns. With the fall primaries behind us, it is interesting to critique which candidate had successful partnerships going into the primary race as opposed to those that had partnerships still in their infancy stages. With the elections fully upon us, watch for the many political candidate efforts to reach out for "last minute" partnerships. The point being that partnerships at all levels are critical for success, however they need to be continually nurtured and maintained to be consistently successful.

Notification by the state regarding Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) gets our attention with little effort. Although working through challenging issues with the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) can often times find us on "pins and needles," the development and maintenance of an ongoing strong healthy relationship can not only reduce your stress,

but equally importantly it can actually extend your career while improving your success. Successful school districts value partnerships throughout their system ranging from strong school boards working together to routine assistance of parent volunteers, or teachers working closely with the administration to ensure clear communication and expectations.

Adequate school funding rests at the top of the list for most school administrators when planning for a school year. Many of us have become more dependent than we'd like to admit on securing competitive grants to make ends meet. When grant awards are announced please take a moment to examine successful applications. You guessed it! Grant writing success is guaranteed to score more points when successful partnerships are clearly evident.

I will avoid giving suggestions as to how to maintain your political support, but many beneficial partnerships can be maintained through supportive letters to the editor, a brief article in the local newspaper and/or acknowledgement on the board agenda by formally recognizing the person/group for their support.

When pursuing support for your district's initiative, remember to recognize that you are only one community entity, and your support for other entities is critically important. **By offering your support and being available to those "non-school entities," you will experience a "cycle of support" that will be easily maintained and help you be successful. Such networks have never been more vital for the success of our schools as they are today.**



Steve Bradshaw Awarded Superintendent of the Year

Steve Bradshaw, Sitka School District Superintendent over the past decade, is Alaska 2011 Superintendent of the Year. Mr. Bradshaw was nominated by the Sitka Board of Education and several of his superintendent colleagues who commented that he was a leader, dedicated to education with a passion for students. His Board outlined that...“their association with Steve over the years has been fruitful and comfortable...he brings exceptional talent and great energy to the job and has assembled an outstanding administrative and teacher team to guide the development of Sitka’s young people.” From his fellow superintendents, Steve is championed as a colleague who is highly respected by his peers and someone willing to express his opinion and take a stand on controversial issues.



Steve Bradshaw receives his award from Steve Atwater, AASA Past President at the Fall Conference Awards Banquet.

Building Partnerships One Constituent at a Time

By Bruce Johnson, Executive Director ACSA/AASA

Earlier this fall, the ACSA editorial board identified “Building Partnerships” as our 2010-2011 Education Bulletin annual theme. Given the economic times being experienced in America creating vibrant partnerships for improving education is clearly an enterprise worth pursuing. It is interesting that some of the economists now predict that our economy may once again be on the upswing, but will likely not improve to the levels experienced in the last decade, but rather reach only the levels experienced in the late 1990’s. A potentially sobering prediction, but if we must do more with less, what better plan to maintain a quality educational program than developing partnerships to help create efficiencies and opportunities for our staffs and students.

As we undertake the development of meaningful partnerships, we must be cognizant of our current social and political climate. A recent poll undertaken by Lake Research Partners revealed that when likely voters were asked about their most serious concerns as mid-term elections approach, 72% believe that our economy is getting worse and many fear for their jobs. This same poll found only 6% of these same voters identifying education as the most important issue facing America. Yet when asked specifically about education, 73% indicated that it was urgent to improve our high schools with 69% saying that a high school diploma was no longer enough for a graduate to get a good job! We need to pay

attention to such findings and frame our message to constituents clearly stating that we recognize the need for improvement and outline what we are doing or intend to do. These poll results also found Americans feeling that the President and the United States Congress are not doing enough for education, especially funding. This desire for more federal involvement stems, in part, from projections that our Nation’s high dropout rate is becoming an increasing drag on our economy. While it may be beneficial that Americans are seeing this connection, given the ballooning federal debt, more federal funding seems less than optimistic. So our role is to communicate precisely and foster knowledgeable partners so that Americans are seeing the connection between our economy and students dropping out of school, and that an investment today will pay future dividends.

As identified at the outset, the time may be ripe for serious partnership development among our staffs as well as our broader constituent base. As Gary Marks outlined in his book *Sixteen Trends*, effective leaders understand the need to bring others into the equation. Leaders connect people and ideas by bringing them together with a common purpose and a sense of ownership. As leaders at every level of our educational system, we can step up and facilitate these crucial partnerships that over time will engage our constituent base and create more robust authentic educational opportunities for students.



Education Bulletin

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Juneau, Alaska 99801

Alaska Association of
Elementary School Principals

Alaska Association of
Secondary School Principals

Alaska Association of School
Administrators

Alaska Association of School
Business Officials

Alaska Staff Development
Network

Calendar of Educational Association Events 2010/2011

ASBO International's 2010 Annual Meeting Orlando, FL September 24-27	AASB Annual Conference Anchorage November 11-14	ALASBO Conference Anchorage December 5-8	NSBA 71st Annual Conference San Francisco, CA April 9-11
AASA Fall Conference Homer September 30 and October 1-2	Alaska Legislature Convenes January 18	NASSP National Conference San Francisco, CA February 25-28	Alaska Legislature Adjourns April 17
44th Annual Principal Conference Anchorage October 17-19	AASB Legislative Fly-In Juneau January 29 - February 1	AASA Fly-In Juneau March 6-8	NAESP National Convention Tampa Bay, FL April 7-11
	AASA National Conference Denver, CO February 17-19	AASB Legislative Fly-In Juneau March 26-29	



Education Research Service Executive Director, John Draper,
presents "Crucial Conversations" at AASA Fall Conference.