

Preparing for Tomorrow ... Today

During the past few years, a whirlwind of change has occurred in our schools. New technology continues to inspire new ways of teaching and learning. The diversity of our classrooms has exploded, making schools truly a melting pot of learning. NAESP has worked hard to keep up with this paradigm shift of modern American education and, in doing so, is paving the way for the future.

In particular, we have embraced the concept of teaching to the whole child. For principals, this means students are the driving force behind what we do. But given that the children who walk through our doors come from significantly more diverse backgrounds, we must be more attuned to their cultural, social, emotional, physical, and academic needs. We must go way beyond testing and accountability to reach the heart of the matter. Our children are the youngest learners—from pre-K to grade 8. Thus, our mission is critical. It is up to us to develop programs to ensure that each child has strong footing toward reaching his or her highest potential for learning—and we are prepared to do so.

NAESP has a plan in place to deal with our power in a way that will most benefit our students. Our strategic framework is based on the premise that all principals must—and can—become outstanding leaders of learning communities. Thus, we are committed to achieving four new vision goals.

Leading Vision Goal

Nurture and support all principals to demonstrate the vision, courage, and expertise to lead and advocate for effective learning communities in which all children reach their highest potential.

NAESP will accomplish this goal with a series of intermediate steps. We plan to lead and vigorously promote excellence in the principalship by working with state affiliates to educate and train members to be effective advocates for principals at the state and federal levels. We also intend to work with our state leaders to develop model legislation designed to enhance the principal's authority, autonomy, and responsibility to lead schools. Finally, we will strive to offer equity in education to all children by providing assistance for our members to advocate for equity in public education at the local, state, and federal levels.



Learning Vision Goal

Develop and support all principals by providing on-demand learning opportunities that ensure access to the knowledge, skills, networks, and tools necessary to equip all students for the 21st century.

The six standards outlined in the second edition of *Leading Learning Communities* (and noted on page 20) form the basis for this goal. Using these standards as the foundation, NAESP will focus on bridging the gap between preparation and practice for principals. One way to accomplish this goal is for NAESP and state affiliates to become the hub for on-demand and online professional development for principals and other education leaders.

Communities Vision Goal

Develop and sustain local, state, national, and global networks that create powerful relationships for effective leadership and learning.

Working to increase membership remains a high priority for NAESP. And, through this goal, NAESP plans to create networks of principals organized around similar areas of interests, including, but not limited to, middle-level, minority, rural, and urban principals. We also intend to reach out to the broader community by forming partnerships within local communities, as well as national and international alliances, all with the purpose of advancing learning for principals and students.

Organizational Vision Goal

Develop dynamic leaders, efficient systems, and creative resources that build capacity for long-term sustainability and adaptability in a rapidly changing world.

NAESP is determined to recruit and retain high-quality staff and identify and cultivate high-quality principals to serve in leadership positions. We also plan to expand the NAESP Foundation, with the goal of building an endowment for the future of NAESP. Most important, NAESP intends to broaden member benefits by exploring a differentiated dues structure, create a more dynamic Web site that facilitates collaboration among principals, upgrade financial systems to ensure ongoing fiduciary accountability, and maximize new technology infrastructures to drive organizational performance and member services.

At NAESP, we are confident that with our new vision goals and *Leading Learning Communities* we are working collaboratively to ensure a successful transition to the future of education and, thereby, invigorating the dreams of all our children. ■

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