

By Gail Connelly, NAESP Executive Director



Now is the time of year when schools are examining their budgets to close out the school year and to plan ahead for the next one. While principals everywhere are busy budgeting forward, we are engaged in developing NAESP's budget for next year. We are committed to implementing a comprehensive strategic plan toward better meeting the needs of principals in successfully leading their schools. NAESP's efforts are similar to yours in that we are dependent on securing sufficient funds to achieve our goals. However, while you rely primarily on one major source of funding, our association relies on a multitude of sources—all of which are susceptible to changing economic conditions. Despite the unprecedented economic challenges currently facing our association, we remain committed to providing you with outstanding benefits that serve you well now and into the future. More than ever, in these uncertain times, we are depending on your continued membership and support to be certain we have the

resources we need to achieve our goals on behalf of our nation's school leaders.

Action Is Eloquence

Looking forward to our 100th anniversary in 2021, NAESP's Board of Directors could not have imagined the severity of the economic downturn that has since gripped our country when they set ambitious new Vision Goals for our association last year. (Access the Vision Goals at www.naesp.org/Where_We_Are_Going.aspx.) We could not have foreseen the negative impact on the educational community and professional membership organizations such as NAESP. Simply put, in order to achieve our goals on your behalf, we need your help. We are counting on your continued membership and involvement just as you are counting on us to lead in advocacy, support, and services for you in your commitment to all children.

During these tough economic times, it is not enough to just make promises. You deserve to know how your membership dues will be used this coming year and beyond in raising awareness of the critical role of principals and helping all principals lead successful learning communities.

The **Power of the Principal Campaign** is being developed to raise the profile of principals and their vital leadership role, including a "Turn-around Schools" letter to the editor series; "What I Love About My Principal" student essay contest; and lobbying for a Principal-in-Residence program at the U.S.

Department of Education and a National Principals' Month.

We will **promote and widely disseminate Leading Learning Communities: Standards for What Principals Should Know and Be Able To Do, Second**

Edition (LLC). The LLC publication is being marketed to become a required text in principal preparation programs. Also, NAESP is actively involved with the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards in the creation of the advanced certification for educational leaders (ACEL), with LLC serving as a basis for the principals' certificate.

We are also **cultivating networks within the NAESP membership** so that you can conveniently connect with thousands of your colleagues to explore and resolve issues of like concern and share practices that work. A Middle-Level and a Minority School Network blog series are already available, and plans are under way to offer more advanced social networking opportunities around areas of special interest and practice.

Developing the NAESP Foundation involves creating an endowment for the Association and advancing principal and student leadership and learning. Efforts include charitable giving, like the Friend of the Foundation campaign, and a partnership with the Hazelden Foundation that addresses bullying prevention in Florida schools. Also, we plan to launch a research agenda focused on hot topics in education and a report card on the status of federally mandated education initiatives.

The NAESP Board of Directors and headquarters staff are energized about executing the driving strategies that will assure your continuing success. The collective voice of 28,000 elementary and middle-level principals who are members of NAESP lends untold strength to our efforts—we need you as a member more than ever as we advocate on your behalf to impact educational policies that affect you and your school community. By working together, we can ensure the continued success of our nation's schools not only now, but long past NAESP's 100th anniversary. ■

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