**NAESP 100th Anniversary Article**

**Short Sample Article for Digital Newsletters**

Advocating for principals. Fostering school leadership. Supporting children. These are the core principles the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) was founded on 100 years ago, when it was formally established as the then-Department of Elementary School Principals under the National Education Association (NEA). Our mission hasn’t changed since 1921, but the profession certainly has.

The role of principal has expanded greatly from managerial to instructional leadership. Since March 2020, adaptive school leadership has become even more important to contend with the COVID-19 pandemic and its unprecedented school closings.

Priorities in schools have changed, too. Topping the list are a focus on social-emotional learning and mental health, a renewed effort to support equity in the classroom, and navigating rapidly advancing technology—now more than ever because of the pandemic, which has shifted the landscape of learning in ways that will affect education for years to come.

These priorities aren’t just for students. Ensuring that everyone in the pipeline—teachers, assistant principals, and new and seasoned principals—is set up for success is key to enhancing education for all students for years to come. Professional learning for principals is fundamental in achieving this goal—and as it has for 100 years, NAESP will continue to grow with its members as the profession changes and offer the support they need to thrive as leaders in education no matter their career stage.

Moments in History

Since 1921, NAESP has a rich history led by passionate leaders. Here are some fast facts about NAESP’s history.

* In 1921, 51 elementary school principals established the Department of Elementary School Principals under the NEA.
* In its 100 years as an association, NAESP has only had seven executive directors—Eva Pinkston (1931), Robert Eaves (1950), William Pharis (1969), Samuel Sava (1981), Vincent Ferrandino (1999), Gail Connelly (2007), and current NAESP Executive Director L. Earl Franks (2017).
* Before becoming the executive secretary (now called executive director), Eva Pinkston served as the association’s first female president in 1924.
* Winston Turner became the association’s first Black president in 1974.
* In 1955, NAESP hosted its first independent annual meeting in Chicago. (NAESP is back where it all started for the [NAESP Pre-K-8 Principals Conference](https://web.cvent.com/event/b091f4a9-a618-4e45-8532-7427c8c22651/) in Chicago July 8-10, 2021.)
* In 1969, the Department of Elementary School Principals became the National Association of Elementary School Principals, NEA. Just four years later, in 1973, NAESP formalized its separation from the NEA, becoming an independent organization.

Celebrating Together

Tweet your favorite moments as members of NAESP with the hashtag #ACenturyOfNAESP, and share where you hope to see NAESP go as it moves forward to support educators, schools, and students.

Learn more about [NAESP’s history and take a trip down memory lane](https://www.naesp.org/about/history/) with videos highlighting key moments in its history and the association leaders.