



**Keynote—Ruby Payne—  
Emotional Poverty**



**Ruby Payne: Understanding the “Why”  
Behind Behaviors**

Ruby Payne, a former principal in Barrington, Illinois, kicked off her keynote address at the NAESP Pre-K-8 Principals Conference with humor: She joked about naming her company Aha! Process because no one knew how to answer the phone. “Hello, Aha!” they’d say, confused. But beyond the humor was insight into social-emotional learning that left attendees with a better understanding of the “why” behind behaviors—and tools they could implement to be more compassionate leaders to children from all demographics.

**The “Why” Behind Behaviors**

Payne didn’t just learn these tools overnight. In preparation for her most recent book, *Emotional Poverty in All Demographics*, Ruby read roughly 500 books to review the research and learn how to establish the emotional structures in your brain and what happens when your environment does not allow you to get them all. The research allowed her to take a deep dive into neurobiology so that she could learn the “why” behind behaviors.

She asked attendees to consider how many adults bring into the school additional emotional noise before and after holiday breaks. People go through emotional stages to either stagnate or grow, she said, noting that people who exhibit bitterness or anger often have a wound—a trauma—that was never addressed. This goes for children, too.

Payne addressed the connection between nature and nurture. “Genetics cocks the gun; the environment pulls the trigger,” she said. “There are more connections in a child’s brain by the time a child is 3 years old than there are stars in the sky.”

Environmental factors and experiences reinforce those connections, especially between an infant and a caregiver. During the address, Payne showed a video clip modeling serve and return: This is when a parent smiles at a child when they babble, which reinforces their development. It’s a

use-it-or-lose-it phenomenon. A baby uses all of their abilities to get their mother’s attention. When the mother ignores the baby, this triggers a stress response in the child. It’s the basis of the fight or flight response, and this repeated response has a wear-or-tear effect on the body.

**Reactivity and Response**

She then posed a reflection question to attendees: How many minutes does it take to calm down after becoming angry? The answer: 25 to 30 minutes. This statistic brought about a surprising response from the NAESP audience, full of leaders in education who found themselves suddenly reflecting on how quickly they all expect students to rebound from an anger-inducing situation at school.

Emotional responses happen so much faster than thought, she said. Your emotional self is highly structured by the time you are 3 years old and becomes restructured in adolescence after puberty. The average female brain cries and feels ready to talk within 2 minutes of when an emotional event occurs. With boys, it takes 3 to 5 hours—yes, *hours*—for an emotional event to make it to their brains and for them to start to understand what caused it.

So what does it look like for principals and assistant principals to take this information and put it into practice in their schools?

When speaking to a male student following an emotional event, go shoulder to shoulder and not eye-to-eye, said Payne. They’ll feel more comfortable processing what happened and be open to giving you more—often better—information. Boys will also talk more if they can do something with their hands.

One important strategy that she shared was the fastest way to calm an angry child is by having them look at the ceiling. She recommended putting things—pictures or sayings—on the ceiling to get them to look up. She also mentioned that drinking water is a great way to reset the brain. Water metabolizes cortisol. Shoulders will relax when this has happened, and that means the student has started to come down from the emotional event and become more open to talking about it.

Administrators can share these practical strategies with classroom teachers and easily implement them in classrooms of all ages.

—*Amy Mason is principal of Madison County Elementary School in Gurley, Alabama.*

**Leading with an Equity Lens**

The past year and half has been a difficult time for school leaders across the country. COVID-19 safety protocols, social distancing, remote and hybrid learning, masks, quarantining, and contact tracing meant principals had to learn a completely new skill set. Before the pandemic, school districts struggled with inequities; post-pandemic the opportunity gaps have widened tremendously and educational equity is on everyone’s minds.

Now is the time to make changes, think differently, and work to create equitable learning environments instead of reverting to “normal.” We just made it through a very dangerous time, and sadly, not everyone survived. It will be extremely dangerous if we as leaders “go back to normal” as we reopen our schools and start the 2021-2022 school year.

When thinking about creating a more equitable system in our schools and districts, we should think about the words of education professor Pedro Noguera: “That’s at the core of equity: understanding who your kids are and how to meet their needs. You are still focused on outcomes, but the path to get there may not be the same for each one.” This theme resonated throughout many sessions and keynote speakers; connecting with kids and figuring out what their individual needs are should be our top priority this year.

Principal Kafele stressed the importance of equity mindset teaching. But what exactly is it? An “equity mindset teacher” is a teacher who uses a variety of developmentally appropriate instructional strategies that consider the differing academic, social, and emotional needs of *each* of the learners in a student-centered, culturally relevant, barrier-free equity mindset classroom, where student individuality, cultural identity, and voice matter *exponentially*.

*Liz Garden is principal of Dr. Leroy E Mayo Elementary School in Holden, Massachusetts.*



**First Year Principals and Assistant Principals:** you receive a free KAESP membership for your first year. Complete a membership application form and send it to the KAESP indicating your first year principalship status.

### Kentucky Association of School Administrators (KASA) will no longer collect KAESP dues!!

KASA has made the decision was made that it was not economically feasible for KASA to collect dues for their affiliates. So, to join, you will need to join KAESP directly. We hope that you will make the choice to become a member of your association.

Now there are three ways to join KAESP:

Personal Check  
Purchase Order  
PayPal

For items one and two above, mail these to Rosie Young, 1801 Echo Trail, Louisville, KY 40245

For item three above, please visit the KAESP website ([www.kaespkv.org](http://www.kaespkv.org)) and use the PayPal option on the Join Us screen.

The membership application is available on the website: [www.kaespkv.org](http://www.kaespkv.org)



### Grant Opportunities

The **Kentucky Arts Council** offers a number of grants through its various programs. To check out the various grant and program opportunities, please visit: <http://artscouncil.ky.gov/KAC/Applications.htm>

Additional Grant Opportunities:

**Snapdragon Book Foundation:** For school libraries in need, the Snapdragon Book Foundation provides annual grants for books and literary resources to enrich school reading programs.

**Walmart Local Community Grants:** This grant provides schools in need with the funding to complete educational projects or purchase classroom resources.

**American Association of Educators Classroom Grant:** This educational grant provides up to \$500 for teachers to purchase classroom resources such as books, curriculum, or audio-

### KAESP is Looking for Board Members!

Do you have an interest in serving on the KAESP Board of Directors? We are looking for principals and assistant principals to serve on the board by representing the principals in their region. The full board only meets about two times a year with most business conducted via email. Regional representatives are asked to recruit members from their region, attend KAESP functions, and provide leadership in KAESP. We are looking to grow the board and involvement of our members in KAESP. We need you!

If you are interested in being a more active member, please contact Rosie Young at [ryoung@bellarmine.edu](mailto:ryoung@bellarmine.edu).



### KAESP Website

The new KAESP website is up and running—check it out at : [kaespkv.org](http://kaespkv.org)

[www.kaespkv.org](http://www.kaespkv.org)



More information about KAESP can be found at <https://kaespkv.org/>

### News from KDE:

#### Have You Heard of the Principal Partnership Project (P3)?

The vision of the Principal Partnership Project (P3) and Assistant Principal Partnership Project (AP3) is to support and develop KY public school principals and assistant principals in order to better equip KY schools with effective school leaders. Personalized support is provided, as well as quality professional learning and networking opportunities across the state. If you are searching for engaging and inspiring professional learning that enables you to connect with colleagues, P3 and AP3 is for you.

#### Learning and Networking Opportunities through P3:

Initial Certified Evaluation Training  
Update Evaluation Training  
KY PSEL Guidance & Resources  
Remote Learning for Leaders  
EdCamp For Principals - by Principals  
Coach Approach for Principals

If you are interested in receiving informational emails about upcoming learning opportunities offered, please visit this site: <https://bit.ly/3mOmaaJ>

#### Need Resources?

KDE has a wealth of resources available on its website. One great resource is instructional resources from the IRIS Center. These include Mathematics resources, MTSS/RTI Mathematics, Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR), Improving Writing Strategies, and Culturally Responsive Classroom Management Strategies.

Check out these resources and a number of others at this KDE website: <https://bit.ly/3jo9d54>



### Kentucky National Distinguished Principal/ National Outstanding Assistant Principal

Shortly, KAESP will put out a call for nominations for the annual NAESP National Distinguished Principal recognition. Each state has the opportunity to select one principal to attend the National Distinguished Principal recognition in Washington, DC. We hope we receive many nominations as there are many outstanding principals in Kentucky.

In order to be considered for the recognition you must be a member of KAESP and have been a member of NAESP for THREE years. Last year, we did not send anyone as there weren't any nominees with the required three years of membership. If you ever want to be considered for this outstanding recognition, please join NAESP and if you have been a NAESP member for at least three years, let us know so we can send you the application.

Assistant Principal nominees will be solicited for this award in March. Please consider nomination a deserving Assistant Principal! Again, no nominees last year!



From the Executive Director, Dr. Rosie Young

## Gear Up School Leaders!

I am so proud to announce that the National Association of Elementary School Principals will have its annual conference in Louisville, KY, July 15-17, 2022. This is the first time this conference has been held in Kentucky. Please put this on your calendar and plan to attend. We need a large showing of Kentucky school leaders.

Right now, NAESP is accepting proposals to present at the conference. The deadline to submit is Oct. 22, 2021 and the proposal must fall under one of the themes of the conference.

We know there are many outstanding KY school leaders doing outstanding work. If you are interested in submitting a proposal, please visit: <https://bit.ly/3DrLhpu>

**JOIN US**

Take care, *Rosie*



**KAESP has joined with a number of other state associations to launch the Ed Leaders Network.**

The Ed Leaders Network (ELN) is grounded in the belief that educational leaders impact student performance. With this foundational belief at the ELN's core, multiple state principal associations have partnered together to provide you high quality, on-demand professional development webinars to enhance your leadership growth.

A dynamic professional networking community has also been created to allow you to interact with your peers and leadership experts from across the country. In short, the ELN's mission is to provide you the professional development content and capacity building professional network you need to do what's best for your students and learning community.

Regular ELN pricing will be \$199 annually for Members of State Affiliates/\$399 for non-members once the early bird rate ends.

**Please visit the website at [www.edleadersnetwork.org](http://www.edleadersnetwork.org) to take a tour of the site.**

## Join NAESP!

If you are not familiar with the many benefits of NAESP membership, please visit the website at [www.naesp.org](http://www.naesp.org) to see what our National Association has to offer. Your membership could help us become a Goal Buster Plus award winner again! School funds can be used for the Institutional Active membership category and you will receive a second set of publications for your school as well as an active membership. Please join!!!

## Become a Member of KAESP Today!

The drive is on! The KAESP is conducting its membership drive and we need you as a member! Current members will receive an email to notify them of the need to renew their membership. If you do not receive this membership email, you are not a member and we want YOU! Your Regional Representative is listed on page 4 of this newsletter. You may contact your regional representative for information on membership, contact KAESP at [kaesp@kaesp.org](mailto:kaesp@kaesp.org) or visit the website ([www.kaesp.org](http://www.kaesp.org)) for the membership application. We hope you become a member of your professional association. The KAESP is the only association dedicated to the needs of elementary and middle level principals. If you are not a member, please consider joining so that we may do even more for our members! Membership dues are only \$90.00 a year. Please join us as we advocate, serve and lead!



## Edutopia Must-Watch TEDx Talks to Kick Off the School Year : by Paige Tuitt

### TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

The Real Reason Why We Are Tired and What to Do About It (9:34)  
In less than 10 minutes, Saundra Dalton-Smith, a board-certified internal medicine physician, shares some quick strategies so that you can stop feeling perpetually tired and restore your energy levels.

### GOOD BOUNDRIES FREE YOU (15:54)

Beyond food, sleep, and exercise, are there other factors to consider that can improve your self-care? In this TEDx Talk, therapist and author Sarri Gilman talks about ways to set boundaries that help create more balance in your life while improving your relationships.

### ADDRESSING BIASES AND INEQUITY

Cultural Humility—Humbling Myself to Better Understand Others (16:49)

Certified diversity trainer and educator Juliana Mosley, PhD, tasks educators with looking at who they are, what they believe, and why—as well as how that can impact their relationships with students of different cultures.

### EDUCATING THE NEXT GENERATION

Teaching Methods for Inspiring the Students of the Future (17:41)  
Joe Ruhl's almost 40 years of teaching biology, he discovered that the most authentic learning and engagement in a classroom takes place only when students have access to the Five Cs: collaboration, communication, critical thinking, creativity, and choice—essential skills that children must learn to be successful.

Visit: <https://edut.to/3mJMWkc>

## Edutopia Educator Approved Podcasts to Listen to This Year

**Leading Equity:** Trying to make your classroom and school culture more equitable, but unsure of where or how to start? The *Leading Equity* podcast -

hosted by K-12 educator and administrator Sheldon L. Eakins—provides tips, tools, and actionable strategies that will help ensure that equity has a place at your school.

**The Modern Principal:** Whether you're an aspiring, new, or seasoned school leader, get ready to laugh and learn while listening to the podcast *The Modern Principal*, hosted by Karen and Christy, two elementary school principals. [Through their website](#), podcast listeners can submit questions or scenarios they're facing, which Karen and Christy then discuss in episodes, candidly sharing their anecdotes, past mistakes, and lessons learned.

**Self-Care for Educators:** Calling all teachers, administrators, and counselors who feel like they're burning the candle at both ends. On *Self-Care for Educators*, host Dr. Tina H. Boogren welcomes you to join her "self-care squad" on the road toward creating and sustaining happier and healthier lives.

**The Mindful Kind:** Wellness guru and host Rachael Kable breaks mindfulness down so that listeners understand how the practices can transform their lives.

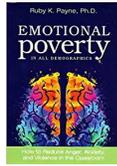


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### **Emotional Poverty in All Demographics How to Reduce Anger, Anxiety, and Violence in the Classroom by Ruby Payne**



In this book, Payne turns to brain and developmental science to help change the conversation. To do that, she shares her understanding of what motivates good behavior and of the underlying emotional causes of unsafe and disruptive behavior. Now schools can prepare students to address emotional issues just as they do for academic issues. Working to increase emotional resources in students is the first and biggest step toward motivating healthy behaviors.

### **Celebrating Heritage and History**



History is marred with hate, intolerance, violence, and exclusionary practices that have alienated and suppressed groups of people based on their race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation. In recent years, our country has crossed the threshold of social reckoning to address and confront these historical inequities and injustices. So what role do schools play in helping society heal and move forward from generations of hardship and struggle?

Schools, especially elementary schools, must play a central and pivotal role in helping to correct society's failure to uphold equitable practices for all. Elementary schools have an obligation and a responsibility to influence the perspectives of children in their formative years.

### **Equitable Access and Diverse Staff**

Ensuring equitable access to meaningful content is well within our control as school administrators. Using concrete data to inform instruction, principals have the ability to ensure students have meaningful academic opportunities. Ask yourself:

- Are your classrooms diverse?
- Do students see faculty and staff that look like them?
- Are you providing acceleration opportunities for all students?
- Is there a process of constant evaluation of student achievement?
- 

In my school, we regularly look at our performance data. We ensure there are mixed abilities in our classrooms and that our classrooms are as diverse as our school. Furthermore, I work hard each year in the summer to focus on hiring the most talented and qualified teachers while focus-

ing on ensuring that our staff reflects the same diversity of our student population and community.

### **Spotlight on Heritage and History**

As a launching point to leading a more culturally responsive school, plan and celebrate monthly heritage recognitions such as Black History Month in February, Women's History Month in March, and Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month in May, Pride Month in June, and Hispanic Heritage Month from September to October. Look for ways to weave in these lessons year-round, too. (Pro tips: This is a great opportunity to engage with families, too. Plus, students are proud to share about their culture, so give them a platform to share their stories with the student peers.)

Provide opportunities to evaluate the content taught and the resources available in your library and school. Ask yourself:

- Do you have a wide variety of literature that represents all of your students? You, as the principal, can provide funding to purchase diverse literature for classroom teachers and for the library.
- Are teachers in your school choosing content and books that reflect your students? If your school is not diverse, are the teachers in your school choosing content and books that reflect the makeup of our country?
- Think about how powerful it is when your students see examples of themselves in the stories and content that they read in class. It's a simple thing that will have a large impact on your students, their view of the classroom and school, and the bigger to society. And it gives all students the exposure to stories that might be a differ-

*The mission of the KAESP, the collective voice of Kentucky's elementary and middle level principals, in partnership with other education leaders, is to **develop citizens that can succeed in a global society**, by delivering to our members a network for support, professional development, visionary leadership, and by pro-active involvement in shaping education policy.*

### **KAESP Officers**

Dr. John Ansman, Treasurer, JCPS, Retired, Louisville, KY  
Jason McGlone, NAESP State Representative

Principal of Prichard Elementary, Grayson, KY

David Naylor, NAESP Zone 5 Director, Model Laboratory School,  
Richmond, KY

BobbiSue Holmes, Principal of South Green Elementary, Glasgow Ind.  
Stephanie Smith, Principal of Bloomfield Elementary, Nelson County

Want to join us? —Send an email to Rosie Young  
at [kaespky@gmail.com](mailto:kaespky@gmail.com)



ent picture of our society. And it gives all students the exposure to stories that might be different from their own backgrounds, allowing them to learn more about and respect differing cultures.

### **Leading By Example**

As a principal, leading by example is important. Are you confronting and addressing systemic racism and bias in your school? During this past school year, our school system provided all teachers with self-paced training on topics that focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Topics included culturally responsive teaching, confronting biases, and racial equity. The quest for racial justice, more opportunities for equity, and chances to uplift the contributions of a diverse society is a journey not a destination.

—*Ed Cosentino* is principal of *Clemens Crossing Elementary School in Columbia, MD*

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