



In New Study, Principals Highlight Pandemic Innovations and How They Will Change Schools in the Future

The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and NAESP Foundation recently launched Leaders We Need Now (LWNN), a series of three research briefs on how the unprecedented crises and turmoil in 2020–2021 have affected the work of principals and the impact these changes will have on the profession going forward.

The research series is the first of its kind to look at how responding to the pandemic, social injustice, and increased demands to address inequity has affected school leaders and the profession.

“For a century, NAESP has been a leader in advocating for and supporting elementary and middle-level school leaders,” says NAESP Executive Director L. Earl Franks, Ed.D., CAE. “Principals are the second-most influential school-based factor when it comes to student achievement, so to help students and schools recover we need to listen to principals and understand their needs. We saw the impact the pandemic was having on schools, but we wanted to know how it was affecting principals’ day-to-day lives and what it meant for the profession going forward. The findings of this research will be a driving force in how NAESP supports its members and for the policy changes we’ll seek to reflect a changed profession.”

The study, funded by The Joyce Foundation and conducted by the American Institutes for Research, consisted of 36 focus groups that met between April and June 2021. The groups were a geographically representative sample of NAESP membership, including 188 principals from 43 states.

The first brief of the series, *Leaders in the Tumult: Schooling Innovations and New Perspectives From a Year Interrupted*, was released today. In this report principals recount how their schools changed in 2020

–2021 and reflect on which changes might endure. They anticipate that they will continue to use flexible staffing practices to hire and retain staff, including school nurses and school counselors; build partnerships with community and government agencies to help schools recover and strengthen mental health supports; and scale the use of remote instructional technology to supplement and extend learning. But principals also point to some ongoing challenges, such as future educator shortages due to low morale and early retirements, diversifying the teacher and principal pipeline, and healing fractured communities. [Download the brief and executive summary.](#)

The second brief in the LWNN series will examine the shifting priorities that confronted principals in 2020–2021, including addressing the mental health needs of students and staff, managing multiple crises simultaneously, and communicating with increasingly politicized communities during a time of ambiguity and uncertainty. It will further discuss how principals expect the ongoing impact of the pandemic and social justice efforts to change their work in the future as they refocus on curriculum, instruction, and assessment; equity and cultural responsiveness; school improvement; and professional capacity.

The third brief in the series will detail the policy actions that principals say are needed to address these new realities, help schools reset after the 2021–2022 school year, support students, and build better schools for the years to come. These actions include more funding for school mental health supports; investing in the educator workforce to address potential shortages; reformulating accountability metrics to assess how well schools are supporting the whole child; ensuring that long-term school funding streams are in place to address ongoing social justice efforts and pandemic recovery; and updating principal preparation and professional learning so leaders are better prepared to manage change and uncertainty in the future.

[To download the first brief in the series, *Leaders in the Tumult*, go to \[www.naesp.org/LWNN\]\(http://www.naesp.org/LWNN\).](#)

Majority of Parents Plan to Vaccinate Kids

Getting students vaccination is a key component in keeping schools open safely and keeping children healthy during the pandemic. On Oct. 19, the Biden administration announced updates to its [operational planning for COVID-19 vaccinations for children ages 5-11](#). Steps include:

- Securing enough vaccine to support vaccination for the country’s 28 million children ages 5-11 years old;
- Standing up vaccinations sites in settings—including schools and community-based clinics—that children and their parents know and trust; Supporting education and engagement efforts to build public trust so parents can have all the information they need to make informed choices for their children.

Back in May, 61 percent of parents planned to vaccinate all of their children as soon as vaccines are approved for use, according to a COVID Collaborative survey. However, 27 percent said they would not vaccinate any of their children, and 12 percent were undecided. Vaccines have been approved for use in children age 12 and up since mid-May.

- Intent varied among parents across racial and ethnic lines, with Asian American and Pacific Islander parents being the most likely to vaccinate their children (77 percent) and Black parents being the least likely (55 percent).
- Some 65 percent of parents of children ages 6 to 17 planned to vaccinate, but only 56 percent of parents of children under 6 did.
- Parents least likely to say they will get their children vaccinated were those who live in small towns and rural areas (42 percent). For more, visit whitehouse.gov, www.covidcollaborative.us, and www.getvaxfacts.org.

- Dateline NAESP



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.kaespky.org) and use the PayPal option on the Join Us screen.

The membership application is available on the website: www.kaespky.org



News from the Kentucky Department of Education

The Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) is accepting nominations for the 2022 Robinson Award for Diversity and Equity in Public Education.

Created in 2004, the award has been given to an individual or group in Kentucky for outstanding leadership, commitment and service in promoting equity and opportunities to learn at high levels for all Kentucky students.

The award is named for Samuel Robinson, a former member of the KBE from 1991 to 2004, who made diversity and equity in public education his life's work.

Each year, the KBE grants this award to a Kentuckian or a Kentucky organization demonstrating extraordinary efforts and contributions in the area of educational diversity and equity.

Nominations will be accepted through Jan. 13. To nominate a person or business, go to the Kentucky Department of Education website for the link.

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.



KAESP Website

The KAESP website is up and running—check it out at : kaespky.org

www.kaespky.org



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

Helping Western Kentucky

We are all aware of the devastation of the recent tornados in Western Kentucky. There are a number of agencies setting up financial opportunities to support the efforts. These include the Governor's Team Kentucky Western Kentucky Tornado Relief Fund, the Red Cross and the United Way of Kentucky Kentucky's first lady has announced a toy drive and the response has been terrific.

For the governor's fund, go to team-wkyrelieffund.ky.gov to donate. To mail in a donation, send check to Public Protection Cabinet, 500 Mero Street, 218 NC, Frankfort, KY 40601, with a note "Team Western Kentucky Tornado Relief Fund."

One great need is for blood donations. If you are a blood donor, please consider donating soon.

If you find out specific ways Kentucky Educators can support fellow educators,

please let us know and we will get the word out. We know this is going to be a long term endeavor and Kentuckians are united in supporting one another.

100 Years and Going Strong!

NAESP has celebrated throughout 2021 as it marks 100 years of service by the association.

In 1921, fifty-one elementary school principals met in Atlantic City to formally establish the Department of Elementary School Principals (DESP) of the National Education Association. During this centennial year we celebrate all that has resulted over the past 100 years.

Tweet your favorite moments as members of NAESP with the hashtag [#ACenturyOfNAESP](https://twitter.com/ACenturyOfNAESP), and let us know where you hope to see NAESP go as we move forward—together—to support educators, their schools, and their students.



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!

JOIN US



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

I wanted to remind you of the National Association of Elementary School Principals 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.

Pre-conference sessions will be conducted by Todd Whitaker, Howard Fields, Jennifer Abrams, Amber Peterson, Pam Allyn, and Caitlin Mehra. You must be registered for the conference to attend their sessions prior to the start of the conference. Information can be found at:

The early bird discount ends on February 17, 2022, Visit the NAESP website for details on the conference.

Take care, *Rosie*

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 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 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 or visit the website (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!



Thinking Upstream

A concept made popular by bestselling author and 2021 NAESP Pre-K-8 Principals Conference keynote Dan Heath—thinking upstream—can help you adjust your thinking and identify and solve problems in your school before they happen. NAESP asked members to share their upstream problems—what crises are percolating just beneath the surface—and how they hope to get ahead of them as they school year continues. Here's what they had to say:

Fixing COVID-Related Challenges

"There are no crises unless you look at your challenges that way. Moving forward, schools need to hold onto the effective practices learned over the past year and re-establish teaching norms and relationship expectations at the beginning of the year."—[Christopher Wooleyhand](#), Maryland

"The lingering effects of COVID-19 are yet to be felt in our school systems. The future of learning will require additional

efforts on social-emotional learning and supports for staff and students."—[Mandy Ellis](#), Illinois

Improving School Culture

"I'm merging two staffs this year following the repurposing of my previous school. I have to be very purposeful about building one team and fostering a positive culture."—[Justin Swope](#), Arkansas

"At my school, the problem is more of an opportunity. When we open this school year, 50 percent of our school will be new to the school due to redistricting and the closure last year. We need to reboot and almost start our school as a new school. Hopefully, with proper planning and intentionality, we will be successful."—[Ed Cosentino](#), Maryland

Focusing on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

"So much is just below the surface at all times! The one that I anticipate being closest is how we need to consciously lean into being mindful of addressing cultural and racial inequities within our district and stereotypes that are a part of the larger system

community. That learning begins with much introspection and recognizing inequity, bias, stereotypes that are a part of the larger system. The 'bootstraps narrative' is a powerful narrative to combat and pushback can be as strong as the *need* to address it on behalf of our students, underrepresented community members, and society as a whole. This is hard *heart* work as a leader!"—[Jessica Hutchison](#), Illinois

Overcoming Inadequate Funding

"I feel that we are in a position with flexibility and funding to prevent most problems, but I am concerned about the new funding ending after two school years. We can deal without the programs, but losing newly hired staff that we grow accustomed to utilizing will be difficult."—[Marla Turpin](#), Georgia

"Long-term funding is an upstream problem. Also, staff perception around what their roles and responsibilities are."—[Garrett Dukette](#), Connecticut



—Dateline NAESP

1801 Echo Trail
Louisville KY 40245



Phone: 502-272-8447

Street Data: A Next-Generation Model for Equity, Pedagogy, and School Transformation by Shane Safir and Jalila Dugan



Education can be transformed if we eradicate our fixation on big data like standardized test scores as the supreme measure of equity and learning. Instead of the focus being on "fixing" and "filling" academic gaps, we must envision and rebuild the system from the *student* up—with classrooms, schools and systems built around students' brilliance, cultural wealth, and intellectual potential

*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

Want to join the board? —Send an email to Rosie Young
at kaespsy@gmail.com



Educational Equity: Minimizing the CRT Backlash



Making sure students are educated in an equitable matter is a critical duty of schools and the principals that lead them. In a recent NAESP Principal Podcast episode, hosts Adam Welcome and Dr. Rachael George talked with Oregon assistant principal and school board member (in a different district) David Jaimes to discuss the importance of equity and what it should mean for principals.

"I think one of the main reasons we're seeing all of those tumultuous board meetings is because the board members don't understand the fact that we're not teaching critical race theory in our classrooms," said Jaimes in the episode. "We are for equity. Equity means not giving everybody the same thing but instead giving them the tools they need to have equitable outcomes."

How to Minimize the CRT Backlash

What Jaimes is seeing in his school district and as a school board member in another district has become a common occurrence in schools across the country. The primary falsehood being spread is that schools are teaching Critical Race Theory (CRT), an advanced academic concept taught in some law schools and colleges to explain persistent, stark racial inequities. The term CRT is being distorted and misused. Inaccurate claims about what is being taught are causing parents to pack school board meetings and, armed with talking points shared on social media, push for resolutions to restrict teaching, curricula, or professional development. Several states have even passed laws banning classroom discussion of "divisive concepts" such as racism and levying steep penalties on districts or educators that do not comply.

A [new brief](#) from the Learn From History Coalition, of which NAESP is a founding member, provides effective immediate steps school leaders can take to minimize distraction and disruption and keep the focus on your students and what they need.

Release a statement to the community as soon as possible and convene stakeholders and draft a joint statement.

Include in the statement why you are communicating, state that your school doesn't teach CRT, emphasize that student wellbeing and belonging is essential to academic achievement, and explain what *is* being taught. Then widely disseminate the statement, including via email, on your website and social media, and during school board meetings.

Be prepared by establishing a response team and plan.

Principals should communicate with school staff about the possibility of harassment or complaints and how to respond, maintain open systems of communication with staff and parents, and establish procedures for responding to inquiries about curriculum and instruction. Be sure to review relevant curricula, equity initiatives, and professional learning that might be the target of misinformation and make publicly available short summaries of each, and closely monitor social media and intervene quickly to correct misinformation

Reinforce the district's mission, goals, values, and efforts to equip students to succeed in diverse workplaces, thrive in a diverse society, and create a better future.

Make sure your mission statement and values are prominent on the school website and social media, post them at the entrance of your school building, and put them in every system-wide communication. Highlights efforts to educate students, either by educators or by students themselves, to oppose racism and recognize and respect the humanity of every person.

This NAESP Principal Podcast episode covers explaining the "why" of equity, tips for fostering educational equity, stakeholder engagement and building trust, how to have difficult conversations. [Listen now!](#)

—Dateline NAESP



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Kentucky Association of
Elementary School Principals



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