

NAPSA NEWS



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Informing Pupil Services

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CLEVELAND CONFERENCE CAPTIVATES CROWD

The 2013 NAPSA Conference, held in Cleveland Ohio this past October, was an overwhelming success. The elements combined in the right proportion and order to serve up the perfect plate of interesting, meaningful, and entertaining information in an informal atmosphere which saw presenters interacting with each other as well as with the registered attendees. Everyone left with a feeling of having participated rather than of simply observing like an audience. This is the effect desired by all conference sponsors for professionals seeking to enhance their knowledge and skills. NAPSA President, Dr. Douglas Arnold, working with Executive Director Wayne Fausnaught, quickly adjusted the schedule, implementing changes necessitated by the government shut-down which prohibited one of our most popular keynote speakers from attending. Once underway, the conference generated an energy of its own. Nationally known keynote speaker Dr. Stephen Sroka opened with his concepts of ensuring mental health within the whole child. He was followed by Shane McCarty, researcher for Virginia Tech, on the development of AC4P (Actively Caring For People), who rendered assistance in the aftermath of the Chardon Schools Shootings. The concept of a "themed" conference provided cohesion to the program. It began with safety



Bellaruth Naparstek took everyone on a "health journey" guided visualization.

issues and moved through legal issues, health and wellness for victims, students and community and closed with health and wellness for staff. Among the legal issues presented, Dr. Kathleen Conn described rights of speech in electronic media, while Cristina Henagen Peer explained recent court rulings. Administrators from Chardon Schools de-



Dr. Douglas Arnold



Dr. Steve Sroka and Shane McCarty exchange wrist bands.

scribed their nightmare of dealing with a wide-scale school shooting even one year after the act. Special Education related issues were reviewed by Susan Hastings and Dr. Daniel Nelson, MD shared his studies of Crisis Adaptation.

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Special points of interest:

- > Interactive Conference
- > Small enough to be personal
- > Powerful enough to be meaningful
- > Enjoyable enough not to miss

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Executive Director's Report – Wayne Fausnaught



Wayne Fausnaught
Executive Director

The 2013 NAPSA Conference was a "hit" providing cutting edge initiatives for all those who attended. Evaluations ranged from very good to excel-

lent. On behalf of the executive board, I want to express appreciation to April Siegel-Green, NAPSA's secretary, and the Ohio Department of Education's Office for Exceptional Children for their assistance and support in making this year's conference a success. On January 1, 2014, two new trustees begin their term of office. It is a pleasure to welcome Debora Dennis (Ohio) and V. Keith Wilks (South Carolina) to the executive board. Although not new to the executive board,

April Siegel-Green (Ohio) has been re-elected to serve another term as secretary. Dr. Douglas Arnold is serving in his second year as president. With his vision and knowledge, our organization continues to move forward. Dr. Frank Bruno continues to provide our quarterly publication entitled "NAPSA NEWS". The organization is fortunate to have Dr. Bruno volunteer to serve in this role. NAPSA has begun planning for the 2014 Conference to be held in Myrtle Beach, SC. I am

looking forward to working with the conference planning committee, V. Keith Wilks and South Carolina's pupil services directors in planning for the 2014 conference. It promises to be an outstanding event, so save the dates, October 19-22, 2014. The website will soon begin to post specific information about the conference. The National Association of Pupil Services Administrators is committed to assisting its membership meet the challenges of today and the future. I encourage you to get actively involved in NAPSA today!

President's Message – Dr. Douglas Arnold

On behalf of NAPSA, please allow me to wish you a Happy New Year! I am astonished to think that we are now in the year 2014, and already in the middle of the second decade of the 21st century! It seems that not long ago we were weighing the possibility – or *not* – of issues linked to Y 2K. However, it seems that as school administrators we have been grappling with some of the same problems (e.g., budgets, standardized testing, violence, etc.) for a very, very long time, even if that is not necessarily the case. Sometimes we all tend to get a bit weary as we advocate for those children who are in our charge. Nonetheless, looking ahead I'm sure we will all continue in our endeavors in this regard, since we know in our hearts that to do so is so very important. As pupil services administrators, on a daily basis we run head-on into the problems that our children face as

they strive to obtain a public education that will help lay the foundation for a productive future in a global society. In effectively addressing such problems, we must aid the student and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) in successfully overcoming barriers to learning that we identify as we endeavor to provide our services—barriers that include, but are limited to, such things as poverty, nutrition and health, classroom environment, parental involvement, and standardized testing. The American Psychiatric Association reports that, on average, the dropout rate for teenagers living in poverty is about 10 times higher than it is for their more affluent peers. Certainly, stressors inherent to living in a household that is struggling to make ends meet, as well as going to school hungry, tired and/or not feeling well, are significant barriers to learning that we must collaboratively address. Sadly, as our economy

continues to struggle to regain its footing, the poverty rate in the US is now the highest it's been since the 1960s, and those living in poverty include millions

... the dropout rate for teenagers living in poverty is about 10 times higher than it is for their more affluent peers.

of children. Helping to identify students who are homeless and/or living in poverty is an important consideration, since student health and well-being is intrinsically linked with learning, and hunger and certain nutritional or health-related deficiencies can lead to poor performance in the classroom, while proper nutrition and good health can move children closer to achieving their intellectual potential.



Dr. Douglas Arnold
President

Subsequently, as pupil services administrators we must work hard to forge a strong partnerships between our schools, communities, and social services in order to help our children in need. A classroom environment that fosters learning is, of course, vital to student success. Certainly, budgetary issues strongly influence a school's

(Continued on page 3—See President)

LEGISLATIVE LINGO - Legal likelihoods and liabilities

Education Secretary Arne Duncan and Attorney General Eric Holder released statistics that cannot be ignored, compelling a shift of school discipline policies away from “zero tolerance” to stop the disproportionate impact of suspensions on African-American and Latino children, the American Federation of Teachers said, but any new policies will only be successful if the resources and support are there to help at-risk children thrive. At a long-scheduled symposium, the AFT outlined its own recommendations to change school climates where everyone feels safe and respected and every child has the opportunity to succeed. And in March, the AFT will hold a practitioner summit that will bring together educators, support personnel, school-based mental health professionals, superintendents and administrators to help develop practical strategies involving restorative justice practices and alternatives to

suspensions to help change school climates. “What No Child Left Behind did, as zero-tolerance policies did, was shine a light on a problem but solve it with sanctions instead of supports. That cannot continue. The federal government made many positive suggestions, but policies in a vacuum without actual resources and support will not succeed,” said AFT President Randi Weingarten. “Instead of fixating on testing, we should be fixating on making schools safe, welcoming and respectful with meaningful professional development, community schools, real alternatives to suspension and restorative justice programs to empower students to resolve conflicts, and restored budget cuts that have left schools without resources to support students and families.” African-American and Latino students are more likely than white students to receive suspensions, expulsions or

school-based arrests, or to be transferred to alternative settings for school behavior infractions, including nonviolent, noncriminal behavior that could have been addressed within the school community. Research also shows that African-American and Latino students, particularly males, are more likely to be suspended for subjective violations such as disrespect, insubordination or willful defiance. The AFT discipline statement

“What No Child Left Behind did, as zero-tolerance policies did, was shine a light on a problem but solve it with sanctions instead of supports.”



Article from an
AFT news release

http://www.aft.org/pdfs/promise/RTP_discipline_statement.pdf

says the following changes are necessary and would have a positive impact on school discipline 1. All school staff should receive ongoing professional development and training, aligned with school and district reform goals, with a focus on evidence-based positive school discipline, conflict resolution, cultural relevancy and responsiveness, behavior management, social justice and equity.

(Cont'd on page 4—See Discipline)

President (Continued)

ability to provide an environment in which students can bloom, and we must continue to staunchly advocate for adequate funding on the state and federal levels. Additionally, as pupil services administrators we must also work hard to identify students who are struggling academically and/or emotionally. These efforts can positively impact the classroom environment in many ways, including safety, which has become a major area of concern to all. Issues affecting students, including those related to poverty, as well as other factors, can lead to bullying and other behaviors detrimental to the emotional well-being of a child, negatively affecting the learning environment for everyone. Dealing with conflict is part of

every child's maturation process, but limiting the physical consequences of conflict, and channeling tensions towards positive ends, are essential to promoting a healthy school environment. Exposure to violence and bullying not only leads to poor performance in school, but can cause anxiety and anti-social behaviors as children mature. Thus, as pupil services administrators, we play a key role in helping to create and preserve a positive school and classroom environment. We also help forge and/or help maintain a level of parental involvement that enhances student achievement. Truly, parental involvement and the quality of a child's home life are strong predictors of student success in school, since active parental

involvement can help facilitate encouragement at home, which in turn helps facilitate improved learning outcomes at school. An emphasis on standardized testing continues to persist as the primary tool for measuring a student's educational success. However, such test scores should not be an end goal, but merely a tool for measuring and improving learning. To this end, as pupil services administrators we must do our best to help ensure that student success is being properly measured, advocating for fair and varied means for such measurement. Looking to 2014 and beyond, we undoubtedly have our work cut out for us. In some cases the challenges are daunting, but not insurmountable, and to overcome them will require dedicated professionals to work to-

gether, on both the state and national levels, to overcome barriers to learning that affect our children. We at NAPSA salute you, as pupil services administrators, for recognizing the importance of meaningful collaboration among educational professionals, which includes a robust national network and a strong, unified national voice. Thank you for supporting *our* profession through supporting *our* organization, and all the best for a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year!

Discipline — Continued from Legislative Lingo page 3

2. Earmark funding for states to collect data and to support a comprehensive and aligned system of mental health and intervention services for children and youth. 3. Increase school district and statewide investments in social-emotional learning and student-support teams, focusing on academic engagement, equitable access to rigorous coursework and developmentally appropriate behavioral instruction. 4. Include time to collaboratively analyze and address school discipline data. 5. Review and

monitor existing discipline codes to ensure they are developmentally appropriate, effective and equitable. 6. Restore critical school personnel, such as counselors, psychologists, nurses and school social workers, who have the knowledge and expertise to appropriately address student behavior. 7. Restore and provide training to essential paraprofessional and school-related support personnel, such as instructional aides, bus drivers, security and school resource officers, cafeteria staff and custodial staff. 8. Include students, families,

educators and support personnel, juvenile justice professionals, law enforcement officers, child welfare workers and other community members in developing and implementing school improvement/reform plans that will affect school climate. 9. Implement alternatives to suspension and expulsion to manage student behavior. Establish criteria for high-quality alternative education settings and develop transition protocols for students returning to their community's schools.

Cleveland Rocks — continued from page 1

Of course, no trip to Cleveland is complete without a visit to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. This was no exception and you can even say it added substance to our final area, mental health and well-being for staff. The more therapeutic approach to this was handled by Bellaruth Naparstek, psychotherapist, and Andrea Purnell from the Missouri Department of Mental Health.



Andrea Purnell—Youth Mental Health First Aid



Make plans to join us in beautiful Myrtle Beach, SC for next year's conference.



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