Here we go . . . into one of the busiest seasons of the year. Christmas is one of my favorite times. That being said, I have to remind myself to take a break, take some time to focus on what is important, and invest in making fun family memories.

The school year is moving along quickly and when the rare opportunity to pause emerges, I am deeply thankful for the collective talent and energy of my school staff and fellow administrators.

New Year’s resolutions . . . do you make them?

As I have shared, I am serving as the principal of the new John Hoeven Elementary School in Minot. Our focus this year has been on creating a positive culture and climate that is conducive to learning. In addition, we are working to have an environment where staff members are energized and excited about the many opportunities and possibilities for themselves and for our students.

Like all schools, we have a desire to be great! Earning the right to call ourselves a great school will require determination and a commitment to see that all students, regardless of how they come to us, leave us better prepared to meet the next set of life’s challenges.

Our commitment to students must also include the development of their curiosity and character that will ready them not only for personal success, but for productive and contributing citizenship as well. That is our resolution. I can safely say that we are on our way!

Here is hoping you have a restful and safe holiday season. I hope to see you at the Midwinter Conference. You won’t want to miss this one!

Merry Christmas.

Joy Walker
NDAESP president
My name is Matt Strinden and I am running for the office of NDAESP Vice President.

Currently, I am the principal at Cathedral Elementary School in Bismarck. I began my teaching career in 2000 with Grand Forks Public Schools and taught Technology and Engineering Education in grades 9-12. I received my Master’s Degree in Educational Leadership in 2005 from the University of North Dakota and plan to complete my Doctorate in May of 2017. In 2005, I was hired as the 7-12 principal at Northwood Public School and served in that capacity until leaving Northwood in 2008.

From 2008-2014, I served as the state supervisor of Technology Education with NDCTE, Director of Teacher and School Effectiveness with NDDPI, and Assistant State Superintendent with NDDPI.

In the spring of 2014, I was hired as the principal at Cathedral Elementary School and am currently in my third year in that position.

I have been a member of NDAESP since 2014 and a member of NDCEL since 2005. I have always been involved in the conferences and professional development provided by NDCEL and its membership and have grown a great deal professionally from those experiences.

I believe that the office of Vice President will provide me with an opportunity to give back and become more involved in my state and national organizations. It would be my great privilege to serve the elementary principals of North Dakota in this position.
Greetings! My name is Brenda Nilson and I’m excited to have the opportunity to run for the office of NDAESP Vice President.

Through my many years as a principal I’ve been fortunate to meet many wonderful, innovative, passionate educational leaders and have learned a great deal from them. I’m proud of this state and our association and would be honored to serve the principals of North Dakota through this office.

After graduating from Concordia College, my journey as an educator for the past thirty years has taken me from Pleasanton, TX, to Adams, ND, where for 10 years I was a part time teacher/part time principal. I am currently serving my 16th year as PreK - 6 principal at Park River Area Elementary. How times flies!

I finished my Master’s of Educational Leadership degree from UND in 2003. I have been a NDAESP member for twenty six years and have served two terms as Region 4 representative. This position gave me the opportunity to gain a better understanding of our association and the important role it plays to support principals across the state. I am currently serving my second term as a council member on the AdvancED board.

I would appreciate the opportunity to serve you by drawing on my past twenty six years as an administrator and knowledge gained by networking with accomplished peers. I would be committed to sustaining the strong support NDAESP provides principals. It would be an honor and a privilege to serve the principals from the great state of North Dakota through this organization.
Jeremy Mehlhoff
Wilkinson Elementary School
Williston, ND

My name is Jeremy Mehlhoff and I would appreciate your support for Vice President of NDAESP.

I am in my 9th year as principal at Wilkinson Elementary School in Williston. I am currently serving on the NDAESP Board as the Region 1 Representative.

I started my teaching career in the fall of 2001 working as a 4th grade teacher for Bowman Public School District. I spent 4 years teaching in Bowman before moving to Williston. I taught 5th-6th grade science at Lewis and Clark Elementary for 3 years before moving into my current position. I have absolutely loved my time as principal! Over the past 9 years, I have learned so much about what it means to be a great leader, and what it takes to be successful.

For the past 3 years, I have served our association as the Region 1 Representative. In my time as the regional representative, I have worked hard to provide opportunities for our members to network. I have held monthly meetings for our group. I have organized book studies, as well as set meetings at area schools so that we would be able to see firsthand what our members are working with and going through.

I have been honored by my fellow principals with the 2014 Bell Ringer Award, and was named the 2016 Region 1 & 2 Principal of the Year.

My wife Brandi, who is an educator as well, and I have three children, Madison (17), Kiara (14), and Jeron (8).

I have enjoyed serving our association on the board for the past 3 years, and I look forward to the opportunity to continue to serve our association in the years to come.
Voting will begin **March 29th through April 11th, 2017**. Eligible NAESP members may vote for Vice President during this voting window.

Vice President Candidates:

https://www.naesp.org/dave-n-wick-vice-president-2017

![Dave N. Wick](image)

Dave N. Wick  
Columbia Falls Junior High, Columbia Falls, Montana (Zone 7)


![Dwight C. Cooper](image)

Dwight C. Cooper,  
Reardan Elementary School, Reardan, Washington (Zone 9)

Who’s Eligible to Vote?  
NAESP MEMBERS!  

When Will Voting Take Place?  
March 29 to April 11. A  

How will Eligible NAESP Members Vote?  
Eligible voters will receive a link via email on the day voting opens on March 29th to cast their ballot.
Membership Update:

ND currently has: 172 NAESP members
282 NDAESP members

Did you renew your memberships to the professional organizations who represent you at the state and national level? Falls get busy! Take a few minutes to renew your membership or join for the first time.

Do you know aspiring administrators?? They can join our state and national organizations for pennies on the dollar and start receiving their benefits now!!

NDCEL, NDAESP, and NAESP work in concert for you, but they are all stronger with you!

- NAESP: [https://www.services-naesp.org/naespmembership/](https://www.services-naesp.org/naespmembership/)
- New users: Create an account @ [http://www.ndcel.us/](http://www.ndcel.us/) and go to “Join”. a

OR

- Contact Mavis Christianson for help @ mavis.christianson@ndcel.org

The National Panel of New Principals

Principals in their first or second year are invited to be part of a unique professional development opportunity, which gathers and shares insights from hundreds of their peers across the country.

Now in its fourth year, the Panel is growing in prestige and influence, and has become a trusted, one-of-a-kind information source that connects new principals with each other, and also informs the thinking of key legislators and education policy makers. Panelists participate in 3-5 online surveys of 10 minutes or less. In return, they receive the results and best ideas from their peers, along with special opportunities throughout the year such as virtual book talks with national experts. [This year’s first survey has just been completed (see results in the latest Rise & Shine).](http://www.newprincipal.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/RiseShine_November-2016_FINALs.pdf)

There’s still time for new elementary and middle-level principals to join in this year’s cohort. Remember, it’s totally free, has a very small time commitment, and NAESP membership is not required. We want to make sure your state is well-represented so please reach out to your district and local educational leadership with this invitation, and send your new principals to [http://www.newprincipal.org/](http://www.newprincipal.org/)
Greetings to our North Dakota principals. I would like to take this time to wish all of you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

From a national perspective, NAESP continues to deconstruct ESSA to help principals and state agencies understand provisions and implications in the law.

NAESP continues to build the curriculum and training program to launch the NAESP Pre-K-3 Leadership Academy early next year. NAESP is working with 3-4 pilot sites to launch the blending learning program to provide a personalized, rigorous experience to address problems of practice in a Pre-K-3 setting.

NAESP has approximately 675 panelists for the 2016-2017 National Panel for New Principals. NAESP has a goal of 850 panelists and is continuing to recruit more members.

The 2017 National Leaders Conference will be held at the Grand Hyatt in Washington, D.C. March 26-29, 2017. The plan includes: A General Assembly on Sunday evening, March 26; programming on leadership/professional/membership development on Monday, March 27; advocacy and Hill prep on Tuesday, March 28; and Hill visits on Wednesday, March 29.

The 2017 Joint NAESP/NASSP Annual Conference will be held in Philadelphia, PA July 9-11, 2017. Registration is open and I encourage you to consider attending this first ever joint conference.

The NAESP Board conducted a special meeting on November 22, 2016 for the purpose of discussing the site for the NAESP 2019 Annual Conference. The NAESP Board agreed that Boston cannot meet the requirements for NAESP to conduct its annual conference in accordance with our past practice. Therefore, the Board instructed the NAESP staff to seek a western United States location for a 2019 NAESP annual conference.

NAESP is offering a National Principal Mentoring Training and Certification Program. Below are the scheduled locations and dates:

- Savannah, GA – January 8-10, 2017
- Phoenix, AZ – February 204, 2017
- Orlando, FL – April 27-28, 2017

I would like to commend Mr. John Alstad for his dedication to serve as your NAESP North Dakota State Representative. John has done an outstanding job of maintaining and recruiting NAESP membership. Most recently, John was selected to take part in the 2017 Lifetouch Memory Mission trip in Constanza, Dominican Republic. This will be an awesome experience for John and I encourage other NAESP members to consider this opportunity for next year. I will be looking forward to this opportunity next year as I will represent the NAESP Board on this trip.

NAESP is currently creating a Diversity Task Force. The Zone 7 State Representatives and I have been working on nominations from our states for this task force. The task force members will:

* Serve, in a volunteer capacity, as a member school administrator (principal/assistant principal) and thought leader on diversity in effective educational leadership

* Frame the diversity task force work of cultivating diversity leadership across NAESP respective zone(s), increasing representation of ethnic minority and gender leadership amongst the members and officers of the Association and serve as a lead call to action voice to address critical issues surrounding diversity on educational leadership and meeting needs of diverse students.
*Create an actionable report/publication of collective thinking on how to support principals in leading strategic diversity efforts through policy and practice recommendations and to influence a national diversity agenda for quality educational leadership and positive student outcomes.

I am enjoying my opportunity to serve as the NAESP Zone 7 Director. This opportunity has been a learning experience, and most importantly, it has allowed me to learn and develop national relationships. I would like to share that this spring my wife and I are taking part in an International Education Conference in Barcelona, Spain. We are very excited to take part in this experience and learn about their educational system.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions, concerns or ideas pertaining to NAESP. I have been thankful for this opportunity!
Season’s Greetings!

I would like to thank our three candidates for running for NDAESP Vice President. Your willingness to serve is greatly appreciated! Please be sure to read through the candidate biography information included in this publication and of course VOTE when the on-line voting opens on the Friday of the NDAESP Mid-Winter conference.

Congratulations to our own John Alstad for winning the Lifetouch Memory Mission Trip to the Dominican Republic on January 16-24! Be sure to take a lot of pictures!

It’s not too late to nominate someone for an award! Be sure to check out the award categories located at: http://www.ndcel.org/domain/96

Be sure to reserve February 1-3 on your calendars! These are the dates for the 2017 Mid-Winter Conference! The conference will be held in Bismarck at the Best Western-Ramkota Hotel. Registration is now open! www.ndcel.us/2017-ndaesp-conf-regis This conference is always a lot of fun and a great way to network with your peers!

NDAESP Mid-Winter Conference 2017- Bismarck (Feb. 1-3, 2017)
Best Western Ramkota Bismarck
(Block of Rooms-NDAESP Conference)
1-701-258-7000

Conference Agenda Sneak Peek…
- The keynote presenters will be Dave Burgess… Teach Like a Pirate! http://daveburgess.com

Have a great Christmas!

Creators of Inclusive Learning Environments to engage every learner, enabling them to reach their full potential and reduce demands on teachers.

Curt Seed, Sales
T: 701-825-5713    F: 701-825-6308    E: curt.seed@accentenvironments.com
W: www.accentenvironments.com
Mrs. Kelly Pollitt is the NAESP Chief Strategist for Policy and Alliances. She is an amazing individual who advocates for all Elementary Principals and our entire organization in Washington DC. I bring up her name so that you know we have a strong voice at NAESP and at the Federal Legislative level. While she advocates for a principals across this country in so many ways, the last month has been an interesting time in Washington as President-Elect Trump chooses Betsy DeVos for his Secretary of Education.

Each of us will make our own decisions about how Mrs. DeVos will attempt to shape education policy at the national and state levels, what she has and has not done for education in her home state of Michigan. So my hope for all of you is that you inform yourself about Mrs. DeVos and her past practice that may well inform her future decisions.

I will keep you all posted as Mrs. Kelly Pollitt wades the federal waters of a new administration and what that means for each state and local control.
Why Join NAESP?
Our members say it best...

We joined to get:

• **Principal** Magazine, latest research, materials for teachers and parents.
• Career and professional growth via webinars, workshops, conferences and mentors.
• Professional liability coverage of $2 million, and up to $10,000 in job protection legal counsel.

We stay because NAESP has helped us become:

• Stronger instructional and school leaders.
• Deeply connected with colleagues and peers.
• More powerful advocates for children and families.

“Joining NAESP has allowed me to grow professionally beyond any measure I could have anticipated.”
CHRISTOPHER BARNES, PRINCIPAL, ARIZONA

“They make me, a principal at a small rural school, feel like I have a voice in this great big system.”
STEPHANIE KLINGSHIRN, PRINCIPAL, OHIO

“I meet principals from across the country and learn how they are dealing with issues similar to mine.”
STACY FICK, PRINCIPAL, MISSOURI

“Educators must be vigilant and visible in providing input into education decisions – NAESP provides that opportunity.”
FIDELIA STURDIVANT, PRINCIPAL, NEW JERSEY

Join us today! naesp.org
Or call 1-800-386-2377

National Association of Elementary School Principals
Serving all elementary and middle-level principals
Happenings Across ND...

It’s about the kids!

Sunnyside Elementary in Minot, ND

1. Crazy Christmas
2. Thankful for the Thanksgiving Feast
3. Super Suzuki Students ready to go!
4. Sparky Visits
Scavenger Hunt Fun at Bel Air Elementary in Minot

The Collaborative Race
You've developed a team to share in this mission. To reach your goals, share your knowledge and vision. Assess your values and focus on your actions. Your best practices will get you results and attention.

A digital camera is what we require to show you follow the rules and are not a liar. So locate a camera and get in the car. The clues may be tricky but they won't take you far.

1. His ND cabin wasn't all that large and he was the first US consumer to use the word charge!
2. Don't juggle the melons or put a banana in your ear. Just each hold a fruit, take a pic, hope it's clear.
3. I used to catch football, I'm famous around here. Come to my location, sing the school song and cheer!
4. I used to be attached, but now I'm on the floor. If you don't like how I look, just wait and I'll grow more.
5. I'm hard as a rock but I'm more than just that. I cover heads of your loved ones but I am not a hat.
6. In order to reach me, you have to work hard. You can achieve me at work, on the ice or the yard.
7. Take a picture with something Norwegian, short or tall. I'll give you a clue, there's some across from the mall.
8. Talk sweetly to your driver while you iron out this clue. If you putt putt, other pictures will be taken before you do.
9. I'm made of bricks and mortar but there's so much more within. Just follow my 4 letters to build muscles and get thin.
10. If you feed me your coins I've got your back, never fear. You're fine while I'm full, when I'm not, drive out a here.

Head off to the home, where the buffalo roam. And the chickens just get in their way. They've trampled them down, fried them up 'til they're brown. Now they're served on a deluxe buffet.

Team Members ________________________________________________________
(4-5 members per team)
You've developed a team to share in the mission. To reach your goals, share your knowledge and vision. Assess your values and focus on your actions. Your best practices will get you results and attention.

A flip camera is what we require to show you follow the rules and are not a liar. So locate a camera and get in the car. The clues may be tricky but they won't take you far.

All team members must unite. Think and act like thespians so your video will delight. At each stop a shot must be taken. All team members starring in the film you are a makin'.
A look back in history from the Oakes Times...

August 18, 2015 was not an ordinary back-to-school in-service day for area educators; in fact, it was a day that sparked a fire spurring over twenty Oakes Public School teachers and administrators to begin a fundraising effort that will culminate in two days of professional development, in November 2016, at the Ron Clark Academy in Atlanta, Georgia.

Fast-forward to November 8, 2016, 2:00 a.m.

Only two vehicles were seen on the streets of Oakes. One was heading south to Aberdeen and the other was heading east to Fargo in preparation for landing at their final destination of Atlanta, Georgia and the Ron Clark Academy (RCA). Sixteen anxious teachers from Oakes Public School (OPS) were ready to have the educational experience of a lifetime at the RCA, a private, non-profit school that is far from ordinary. The Academy is not only unique in its way of educating middle school students, but also in allowing educators from around the world into their classrooms to experience this one-of-a-kind instruction.

On Friday, November 9, the main event of the trip took place. The teachers arrived at the Ron Clark Academy with their eyes twinkling and ears open to soak up every ounce of learning. After entering the school gates, teachers were greeted by enthusiastic students who engaged in meaningful conversations with phenomenal eye contact and vocabulary.

Over 200 educators gathered at the RCA on November 9, to witness inspiring academic excellence and collaboration, promotion of creativity and innovation, high expectations, and cultivating students who will go on to be leaders in our world. After completion of the eighth grade, sixty percent of RCA graduates attend prestigious boarding schools, 20 percent attend local private schools, and 20 percent attend public magnet schools in specialized interest areas.
Teachers from OPS have implemented extremely engaging teaching practices since being home in Oakes for a week. Teachers are standing on desks to grab attention, creating educational chants, demanding student-student eye contact and meaningful conversations. Many new phrases and songs can be heard while wandering the halls of OPS and the trip has brought a rejuvenating feeling to all staff as the knowledge is shared throughout the entire school.

The 16 members of the trip offer their sincere thanks and gratitude to the community for all the support offered during our fundraising drives to cover the cost of spending a day at the Ron Clark Academy. The teachers were able to not only experience the RCA, but also dined on Georgia cuisine and experienced Atlanta culture through touring local attractions like the Coca-Cola Museum and the Georgia Aquarium. The children and teachers of the Oakes community are benefiting immensely from the trip to the Ron Clark Academy and will forever be changed!