SERVICE TO CHILDREN AWARD

For our last publication of the year we are again paying tribute to those that are retiring or leaving the elementary principalship. NDAESP will miss their leadership and expertise. We wish you all the very best as you move on to a different chapter of your lives. Please know that there is always a place for you with NDAESP!
Richard Ray is retiring from Manvel Public School, where he has been an administrator for 41 years. Mr. Ray loves to travel, and he and his wife, Roxanne, look forward to having the freedom to do just that!

Terry Kuester has spent 31 years as a professional educator in North Dakota; 29 of them humbly serving children in the Bismarck Public School District. Her future plans include advocating for the sanctity of life, at every age, under the guidance of God Almighty. Her passion for literacy, as the doorkeeper to formal learning, will keep her actively involved in volunteer efforts in the Bismarck area.

Lyn Hendry has spent 26 years as an elementary principal; 23 of those years in North Dakota. Lyn is looking forward to traveling and plans to winter down south. She enjoys quilting, traveling, camping and is planning to do some writing. Stay tuned!

Ione Sautner has been in education for over 40 years. For the last five years, she has been head principal at Ramstad Middle School. She has survived the flood of 2011 and is now ready to sail on calmer seas! Ione plans to spend more time with her children and grandchildren and do some traveling.
As I sat down to write my final article for “The Voice,” I couldn’t help but feel a bit of disappointment after reading all the media buzz regarding Superintendent Baesler’s announcement that ND will move away from the Common Core and rewrite our standards. I had an email from one of my top-notch math teachers that simply said, “Help me!!!!!! This can’t be true!” She included a link to a news article with the big announcement. After all the blood, sweat and tears that teachers across the state have poured into learning the new standards, rewriting curriculum and preparing our students for the new state assessment to hear our state superintendent say we are starting over was very defeating. I assume my teacher is not the only one who feels this way. It is my firm belief that politics has no place in education and that educational leaders must do what is good for kids regardless of whether or not it fits in with the beliefs of any political party.

And now I sit here rewriting my article with renewed confidence after speaking directly to Superintendent Baesler. The rewriting process is necessary as it always has been every 5 years, but with all of the kickback from the Common Core it is even more necessary this time around. We need to make sure our best teachers are involved in the review process. I am confident that the standards will not change a whole lot, but it is vital that educators are involved in the process. As we educators always do, we will take whatever is handed down to us and do the absolute best job we can for the benefit of the children of North Dakota. My job now turns to motivating my staff to keep doing the amazing things that I see happening in our classrooms!

I want to take a moment to thank each and every principal in this state for the work that you do. This year as president of NDAESP has given me a wonderful opportunity to visit with principals, not only in North Dakota, but also across the country and I have realized more than ever the value of the work that you do. Principals have a huge job and it seems like more and more keeps getting added to our plate. Take a moment to pat yourself on the back, because you deserve it!

The school year is quickly coming to a close along with my term as your president. What an amazing experience this has been! The professional growth I have made through our organization is invaluable and the friendships I have made will be with me for a lifetime. I encourage each of you to consider becoming a part of the executive board. You will never regret it! I am excited to turn over the reigns to Joy Walker as she becomes your next president. You all are in good hands!

In closing, thank you all again for such a wonderful experience. I hope that you all have a summer filled with sunshine, relaxation and a whole lot of family fun!
To Vote or NOT to Vote?

We are in the middle of an exhausting election season. “Who is in?”, “Who is out?”, and “Who will say what next?!”. Our NAESP elections are not nearly as drama filled or exciting, but are still an important part of what we do.

This year 32 of our 153 members, or about 21%, voted in the election for Vice President of NAESP. That isn’t great, but it was actually a better turn-out than past years and one of the higher percentages nationally. Your state board has been discussing ideas to increase voter participation, and I would love to hear from you!

IF you have suggestions for improving the voting process or participation, please send your thoughts my way in an email at john_alstad@bismarckschools.org.

Don’t forget to register for the NAESP National Conference! It is a great professional development experience!

http://www.naespconference.org
In mid-February, several of the executive board members from the association went to Washington for the National Leaders Conference. During this conference, we had the opportunity to visit with Senator Heitkamp and Senator Hoeven. Representative Cramer was not available, but we did meet with one of his staffers. In our conversation with the congressional delegation, we stressed our concerns with the changing climate of education in North Dakota. We shared our concerns of the number of children that have experienced trauma in their lives that are having a difficult time learning. Each of us were able to share examples of how our schools have changed in the past few years. We also thanked the senators and representative for their support of the reauthorization of the ESEA (formerly known as No Child Left Behind and now known as ESSA-Every Student Succeeds Act). It seems that the folks in Washington have the same desire to have acronyms as those of us in education!

In my article last month, I spoke of the collection of NDAESP materials that I received from the NDCEL office just before they moved to their new location. There a couple of NDAESP banners we should display at the Mid-Winter conference that were in the collection. Also in the boxes were copies of The North Dakota Principal. This was the name of our newsletter before it was changed to The Voice, Meeting agendas/minutes from a few years as well as financial reports for several years had been saved over the years by some of the executive teams. In visiting with Dave Hanson, we decided it would be important to digitize the newsletters and put them on our web page. Our plans are to digitize these materials this summer.

This will be my last article as Federal Relations representative for NDAESP. It has been an honor and a privilege to be able to serve in this capacity over the past several years. I would continue encourage you to become involved and follow happenings in Washington – especially with issues that affect our work with children. It is imperative that we “share our stories” about the children of our state. Contact information for our senators and representative are easy to find – Google their name and you’ll get a web page with contact information – their local offices as well as their Washington office.

Congratulations to Jason Hornbacher as he begins his journey as the new Federal Relations representative for NDAESP.
Dear NAESP Members,

By now you may have heard that the Obama Administration released new Guidance on Title IX that will impact your school related to protections for transgender students and allowing use of facilities that match a particular individual's chosen identity. Given the safety and social-emotional well-being of every student that must be at the forefront of discussions in your learning community on this issue, NAESP would like to draw your immediate attention to an accompanying document, Examples of Emerging Policies and Practices to Support Transgender Students.

Given the importance of this issue and protections for transgender students, as well as age-appropriate considerations that every Pre-K-8 principal must take into account, NAESP would like to underscore that this federal guidance jointly signed by the U.S. Department of Justice (USDOJ) and U.S. Department of Education (USED) does not add requirements to current law, but provides information to states, districts, and schools through examples on how to evaluate policy and practices when considering compliance with any legal obligations.

NAESP encourages all principals to be acquainted with state and district policies regarding transgender students, and to consult your school or district attorney should you have any questions or concerns. Any school district policies that include protections for transgender students should include the perspective of principals in the school building where policies are not currently in place, and we encourage you to weigh in as state and local determinations are made. Finally, it is critically important to maintain a positive school culture where all students feel included and respected, regardless of their gender identity or gender expression, and we encourage you to work with your school support personnel, such as counselors and psychologists, to ensure that younger students have clear and age-appropriate communication.

Let me take this opportunity to thank you for your unwavering leadership and stalwart commitment to ensuring the best for all children.

Sincerely,

Gail Connelly
NAESP
Executive Director
Career Cafe at Sunrise Elementary School

Sunrise Elementary is serving up something new for lunch this year – Career Café! Weekly, Career Café introduces students to careers. During the lunch hour, fourth and fifth grade students have the opportunity to meet individuals from the community and learn about their careers.

Speakers share their career journey with students, including how they became interested in their current field, what education/training they needed, what they do in a typical day at their job, and advice they have for students considering a job in their field.

The Bismarck Rotary has partnered with Sunrise in this project. This year 29 community members have presented to the students. The student response has been very positive and plans have begun to provide the program again next year!
NAESP Newsroom

April 6, 2016—The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) welcomes Eric S. Cardwell, principal of Besser Elementary School in Alpena, Michigan, as the recently elected Vice President of NAESP’s Board of Directors.

Cardwell, a member of NAESP since 2000, has served on its Board of Directors since 2013. Cardwell has also held memberships with the Michigan Elementary and Middle School Principals Association and the Les Cheneaux Education Foundation.

“My entire educational career has revolved around collaboration, empowerment, and engagement,” Cardwell said. “My personal and professional goal has been to be an actively engaged participant representing all educational stakeholders in order to collaboratively address and move educational issues forward.”

In NAESP Zone elections, the following individuals were elected to the Board of Directors:

- Deborah H. Frazier, principal of Harrison Road Elementary School in Fredericksburg, Virginia, will represent Zone 3 principals in Washington, D.C., Maryland, Ohio, Virginia, and West Virginia.
- Sharon K. McNary, principal of Richland Elementary School in Memphis, Tennessee, will represent Zone 4 principals in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.
- Paul Wenger, principal of Jordan Creek Elementary School in West Des Moines, Iowa, will represent Zone 6 principals in Iowa, Michigan, and Wisconsin.

The Board of Directors also appointed Schwanda Jackson, principal of East Coweta Middle School, as the new Director At Large, Middle-Level, Minority.

“On behalf of NAESP, I congratulate and welcome this highly talented group of newly-elected members of the Board of Directors,” said NAESP Executive Director Gail Connelly. “Their expertise on the front lines of education will help guide the Association as it continues to lead in the advocacy and support for elementary and middle-level principals and other educators in their commitment to all children.”

Note: New Board Members will begin three-year terms on August 1. Also starting new terms on August 1 are Steven D. Geis, of Farmington, Minnesota, who will begin his tenure as NAESP President, and Brian K. Partin, of Kingsport, Tennessee, who will begin his tenure as President-Elect.