



An Affiliate of NAESP

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President's Message by Barbara Nagengast

Welcome to a new school year! It is my pleasure to once again offer you a greeting as I return to the office of president of AAESP due to the retirement of Ruth Michalscheck. I will serve our membership in this capacity until our October elections.

I have been hearing greetings of "welcome" a lot this past month as I moved to a new school. As I thought about a topic for this article, I truly believe that the theme of *welcome* offers a wonderful opportunity to begin a new school year.

Welcome the children! Bright shiny faces eager to learn walk through our doors this time of year. Even the older ones who sometimes try so hard to hide their enthusiasm for the start of school year are glad to be back in school. As public school principals, we welcome students with diverse needs, languages, and abilities. The power of public education is embodied in the diversity of our communities and our schools. It is through our efforts to build a sense of belonging and a commitment to democracy that we continue to strengthen the very fabric of our country. **Welcome** the diversity!

Welcome the teachers and support staff. Their caring attitudes and commitment to excellence are critical to student success. I firmly believe in the professionalism of our teaching staff. We have many experienced and dedicated teachers who make a difference everyday for kids. Most of adults come to school everyday wanting to do their best for children. Tap into their energy and focus on the positive. Link the staff together with mentoring, peer coaching, and meaningful staff development activities...and welcome the excitement and positive expectations for students that a connected staff brings to your school.

Welcome the opportunity to look closely at data. Analyze it with a focus on what individual student needs. Equally important, lead your teaching staff in reflecting on their instructional practices. Together, identify needed refinements in their attention to standards, GLE's, and pedagogy. Such reflective practice is critical to improved student achievement.

Welcome your role as the instructional leader in your school. Research is clearly showing that strong principal leadership has a strong positive correlation to improved student achievement. We truly have the opportunity to make the difference. Welcome the challenges and make the choices that positively effects children's education.

Welcome to Sandy Stephens in her new role as our Executive Director. Sandy brings years of prior AAESP board experience, school-based experience, and statewide principal mentoring experience to our organization. Having worked in various communities throughout the state is an added benefit that Sandy brings to AAESP. We are very fortunate to have her working for all of us!

I hope I haven't worn out my "welcomes" or belabored the importance of approaching the beginning of each new school year with a renewed sense of purpose. Whether you are returning to your same school or like me, moving to a new one, I challenge you to look at how you can welcome the year in a special way that makes a difference for kids!

Thank you for everything you do for Alaskan children!

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AAESP Membership

It is the start of a new school year and time to join AAESP/NAESP/ACSA. Membership forms may be found on-line at the AAESP website: www.ak-principals.org.

Membership is important for you and the profession. The national organization currently is working hard on the reauthorization of NCLB with input from principals; there is a great new E-Knowledge Portal on the website that gives you access to articles, reports, tools, experts and educational research; liability insurance for you; on-line

bookstore, monthly magazine and much more. In Alaska AAESP provides a fall principal's conference; opportunities to have conference calls with other principals on topics of interest; lobbying for education issues in Alaska, website and newsletter.

The cost is \$580 per year by check, payroll deduction, purchase order or VISA/MASTERCARD and the application is on the website or can be faxed or mailed to you. We look forward to your membership!

CSI Fall Principal's Conference, October 14-16, 2007

The fall principal's conference will be held in Anchorage at the Sheraton Anchorage Hotel, October 14-16, 2007. The theme of the conference is Comprehensive School Improvement (CSI:Alaska). Conference registration forms are online at www.ak-principals.org. The cost of registration is \$225 if you are an AAESP member and register before October 8, 2007. The highlights of the conference John Dyer, *Your Head Can't Work if Your Funny Bone is Broken*; Dr. Ruth Johnson, *Using Evidence to Inform Educational Practice*, the Larry Graham Aspiring Principal Scholarship Auction, Dr. Alan Blankstein, *Failure is Not an Option*, Dr. Stacy Scott, *Making Equity Work*, a General Session on Court Decision Impacting Schools, and an Advocacy for Education Panel.

Conference registration is Sunday, October 14 starting at 8 a.m. with Exhibits opening at 9 a.m. with the first general session at 10 a.m. The Auction is at 5:30 p.m. on October 14 and after that your evening is free. The conference begins with a 7 a.m. breakfast on Monday, October 15 and ends the day with a presidential reception starting at 6 p.m. Tuesday, October 16 begins with a continental breakfast a 7 a.m. and ends with door prizes at 2 p.m.

There are also a variety of sectionals from across the presenters from across the state and DEED.

Hope to see you at the Sheraton!

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Elementary
Principals

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[www.ak-
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Helping at the Principal Conference

- Need door prizes for the AAESP general membership meeting October 16 at 8 a.m.
- Need auction items for the Larry Graham Aspiring Principal

About AAESP

The Alaska Association of Elementary School Principals (AAESP) believes that the Elementary and Middle School years are the foundation of all educational efforts on behalf of the child. The primary responsibility for the development of effective programs at each level is vested in the Principal. AAESP seeks to:

- Facilitate positive educational leadership;
- Serve as a voice for elementary and middle school principals;
- Collect and disseminate information pertinent to the principalship;
- Provide services to members; and
- Enhance the relationship among elementary/middle school principals,

Scholarship Auction, October 14, 5:30 p.m.

- Need door prizes for the final session of the conference, October 16 at 1:30 p.m.

teachers, students, parents and the community.

The AAESP board has set three important goals for 2007-08:

- Improve communication with DEED, the commission and the state board;
- Provide support for new and aspiring principals
- Provide additional opportunities for member connection.

**INVITE A NEW PRINCIPAL TO
BECOME A MEMBER!**