



NASS

News

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A Word from the Executive Director



Dear NASS Members: I hope your holidays with friends and family were great. Happy New Year!

We are excited to further highlight the power of peer-to-peer

learning by showcasing a three-school district partnership together with a non profit intermediary. I believe there is no greater opportunity for professional learning to occur than from peers when facilitated by a committed intermediary organization. Check out this dynamic partnership!

Also, you will notice a new feature in the [NASS website](#) under Member Services. Check out these resources from partners who do great work for students, families, educators, and communities throughout the US.

We again highlight professional learning opportunities for superintendents and

their teams through our partner DA Leadership Institute. Sign up today and take advantage of learning with other NASS members.

Finally, I urge you to take a look at our new Members Mentoring Members (MMM) program. There is no greater sign of a leader than one who offers to help another, and one willing to ask for help.

In service,

Jonathan Raymond

Thoughts From the Executive Director

When We Start with Empathy and Compassion, We Do What's Right for Kids

I love the baseball movie “Field of Dreams.” Who could forget the scene when Annie (played by Amy Madigan) attends a PTA meeting where they’re considering banning books by provocative author Terence Mann? “Who thinks the Bill of Rights is a good thing?” She asks. “Who thinks we have to stand up to the kind of censorship they had under Stalin?” It’s a powerful and poignant...

[Read the full article](#)

Featured NASS Partner

The Power and Potential of District Peer-to-Peer Learning



[Monica Ng, Vice President of Education Programs, Pivot Learning](#)

In many cases, school districts look to outside providers to offer support for the implementation of new initiatives. Through a generous grant from the Stuart Foundation, Pivot Learning was able to work with two California districts, Monterey Peninsula Unified School District (Monterey) and Lancaster School District (Lancaster), to pilot an innovative peer-to-peer learning model.

Monterey and Lancaster are high-poverty, high-need school districts with large numbers of foster and homeless youth. These students often “fell through the cracks” academically and behaviorally. Nationally, many school districts have sought to address the needs of at-risk student populations with multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) models that provide timely academic and behavior supports.

Sanger Unified School District (Sanger), in California’s Central Valley, has garnered national acclaim for their MTSS system. Sanger was an early adopter of Response to Intervention (Rtl), which it...

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Members Spotlight

It is an honor to be an “educator”



Dr. Sarah Koligian, Superintendent, Folsom Cordova Unified School District

Dr. Sarah Koligian has spent over 32 years in public education. She is currently Superintendent of Folsom Cordova Unified School District. Folsom Cordova USD is a district of approximately 21,000 students, 33 schools, and growing. It is located east of California’s state capital, Sacramento, and encompasses the cities of Rancho Cordova and Folsom.

Education has always played a major role in my life. From the time I was a child, I loved school and learning. I had wonderful teachers who I remember to this day. Their impact left such a lasting impression that I desired to become an educator in my adult life. I loved teaching elementary school, and later in my career I also had the opportunity to teach college students and adults. However, as a young adult, I thought my trajectory would be working in the business world, as my undergraduate degree was in Business Administration. But the yearning to teach children and the desire to give back to others the way that role-models had given to me were the life-changing catalysts that redirected my career path. I was living my dream as a resource teacher at Madison Elementary School and enjoying teaching second-language learners and struggling readers. It...

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Advocacy at the Core of NASS Values

Congress Actually Worked Together



By Adonai Mack,
Sr. Director of
Federal Relations

Just before Congress' holiday break and sandwiched between impeachment votes and trade agreements, Congress actually worked together

to pass a \$1.4 trillion spending plan. The spending plan was signed by President Trump just before Christmas Day.

Congress spent months attempting to finalize the fiscal 2020 bills in the middle of a contentious political climate. The House Democrats' impeachment inquiry into President Trump and the ongoing funding disagreement for a wall along the Mexican-US border created conditions that many believed would stall the budget negotiations. However, the deal came together quickly as the December deadline approached. While the key appropriators agreed in late November on how to divvy the funding, the timeline to accomplish passing the entire federal appropriations bill package was challenging. The spending plan boosts federal budgets by a total of \$49 billion.

The education budget received significant increases in funding, highlighted by the following:

- Title I: \$16.31 billion, \$450 million increase over FY 2019...

[Read the full article](#)

“MMM”

Members Mentoring Members

Webster's dictionary defines “Mentor” as: “A trusted counselor or guide — a mentor who, because he/she is detached and disinterested, can hold up a mirror to us.” Who better to mentor and “hold the mirror up” than a NASS peer and colleague?

We know the superintendent job can be lonely and isolating. We are often surrounded by folks who tell us what we want to hear versus what we need and hear. It is difficult to get feedback from our direct reports and also from school board members. To maintain that delicate work/life balance, there are certain things we shouldn't bring home to share with family and friends. But without feedback, how do we continue to grow and learn? Renowned Canadian educator Michael Fullan declared: “The best learning is when the group teaches the group.” Peer-to-peer learning and support is powerful.

Members Mentoring Members (MMM) allows NASS members to contribute and give back in a time-bound capacity, using their expertise and experience to support colleagues. This is a chance for members to gain insight, get objective feedback, and seek valuable support to learn and...

[Read the full article](#)

Professional Learning

Check out these upcoming [Superintendents Academies and Summits.](#)

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