President’s Message

AASCD is growing – and that is due to the good work of our members, district representatives, board of directors, and our executive committee. One example of this good work is AASCD treasurer Ashley Catrett and the AASCD web presence committee. Many thanks to Ashley’s committee members: Suzanne Lacey, Mitchie Neel, Vivian Brown, Karen Culver, Patricia Powell, and Shannon Stanley. The committee reported out the following goals for AASCD:

1. Establish and utilize an AASCD blog, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and/or expanded website.
2. Solidify a presence through ASCD Edge.
3. Continue to publish the online newsletter and increase means of distribution.
4. Add an officer position or volunteer to the AASCD board for someone who can facilitate an AASCD web presence.

This recommendation will help us communicate more actively with our membership. AASCD is in need of a volunteer or two with experience, passion, and comfort with these forms of technology to help us get our web presence off the ground. If you are interested to serve in that way, please

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The SDE recently conducted regional update sessions on implementation of the College and Career Readiness standards. The face-to-face interaction was very helpful and provided important information! Key details about the implementation process and timeline were shared. Dr. Julie Hannah facilitated the meetings that also included representatives of Career Tech, Assessment, Curriculum, and College/Career Ready departments.

The new Assessment System Timeline was distributed that was effective on April 11th. The cycle for grade clusters K-2, 3-8, and 8-12 were detailed in the handout. Also shared during the sessions was the COS and Textbook Adoption Cycle, which was revised in March. The science textbook adoption for local textbook adoption has been moved to the 2015-2016 school year to match the Course of Study cycle. Getting the textbook and COS cycles coordinated to the new standards has been a high priority of the preparation for implementation.

The new diploma that begins next year requires a Career Preparedness class. In this class students will develop a four year high school plan. Also including in course content will be financial literacy, academic planning, career development planning, and application of technology skills. This part of the program will ensure students are doing short term and long range thinking and planning.

Alabama educators have worked diligently to prepare for the implementation of the new standards! Their hard work is securing a path to a successful implementation process which will, ultimately, benefit Alabama students!
The purpose of the Alabama ASCD shall be the improvement of supervision, curriculum development, and instruction. AASCD provides support for curriculum and instruction implementation at the highest levels of engagement for students and teachers. Its focus on in-depth professional development on timely topics has distinguished it among educators with curriculum and instruction responsibilities. One major issue that AASCD has supported this entire school year has been the College and Career Readiness Initiative. A position paper was written and distributed that described the benefits for residents of Alabama. That document tells the story from the classroom/instruction level. Please read and share this with your friends and colleagues. (refer to page 3)

At the annual ASCD Conference in Chicago, several of us had the privilege of sitting in the audience and listening to Maya Angelou talk about life and education. She sang, quoted poetry, and gave an emotional and inspirational message. There were hundreds of sessions at the conference and the great thing is that all the sessions with all the presenters had a total focus on “Teach, Lead, Learn”. The annual report was presented and I was included in a two minute clip about my use of ASCD products and services. Annual conference always seems to provide appropriate and timely professional growth opportunities for educators. I would encourage you to attend either in person or by virtual means the next annual conference held in Los Angeles March 2014. Click Here to View the Video.

Plans are taking shape for the Fall Instructional Leadership Conference (November), L2L (July), the AASCD board and business meetings (June), and a review of the AASCD district reps roles on the SDE Planning Teams (June). With the continued push for more rigorous standards, AASCD leadership expects to be fully involved and committed to projects that are beneficial in the classrooms across the state. We want to grow as an affiliate in numbers and in advocacy. A membership drive will begin in late summer, so be on the alert for that information. Join us as we help Alabama’s students.
AASCD is the state’s leading advocate for excellence in curriculum and instruction in Alabama and is an organization representing over 450 educational leaders from every congressional district in the state of Alabama. AASCD is a state affiliate of ASCD, an international educational leadership organization with over 145,000 members. AASCD members invest themselves in ongoing research of best practices as well as quality professional learning in order to benefit the students in Alabama. The primary focus of AASCD is promoting the highest of quality curriculum and instruction delivery for Alabama students.

The organization has followed the development and ongoing implementation of the Alabama College and Career Readiness Standards and the Common Core State Standards. AASCD fully supports the standards as a set of clear and concise language arts and math expectations which challenge Alabama’s students and better prepare them for college and the jobs of tomorrow. Tremendous work has been accomplished by our members and all the thousands of Alabama educators in this process. It has taken great dedication and commitment to reach this stage of the process. It is clear, when considering this work of Alabama educators, that the standards are viewed as a much needed step forward in rigor for Alabama students.

The Alabama College and Career Readiness Standards (ACCRS) promote rigorous thinking by asking students to apply knowledge and skills to real-world situations, not just memorize facts for a standardized test. AASCD is proud to be a partner in helping Alabama teachers process these standards and collaborate with each other on how to best instruct and assess students.

AASCD enthusiastically supports the leadership of AASCD member Dr. Tommy Bice, the State Superintendent of Education, as well as the authority of the State of Alabama Board of Education to develop quality, rigorous standards for Alabama students with the involvement of Alabama teachers. AASCD thanks Dr. Bice and the Alabama State Board of Education for their integrity, their attention to evidenced-based research on curriculum and instruction, and their bold leadership to confront inequity and demand excellence for all Alabama students.

Fall Leadership Conference

This year’s AASCD conference is scheduled for November 4-7, 2013 at the Perdido Beach Resort in Orange Beach. There are lots of interesting ‘Relevant’ Break-out Sessions planned that will be presented by school teams from across the state. Our very own State Superintendent, Dr. Tommy Bice will be presenting to the group in one of the general sessions. You will not want to miss this informational opportunity during this critical time for education in our state. Remember this conference is open to all school leaders including aspiring leaders!! Be checking the CLAS website (www.clasleaders.org) for more details! We hope to see you there!
ASCD Emerging Leader Program

Last year, I had the honor of being selected for the 2012 ASCD Emerging Leader Program. I initially applied for this program because I wanted to become more involved in ASCD. When I began my career as an educator 14 years ago, I joined ASCD at the suggestion of a colleague. During my time as a classroom chemistry teacher, I let my membership lapse in favor of other organizations more focused on improving instruction for science teachers. In 2009, I started working towards my doctorate, and I became a chemistry education specialist with the Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative. Both of these events, along with my growing interest in educational leadership and curriculum development, spurred me to rejoin ASCD. When I saw the application process for the 2012 ASCD Emerging Leader program open, I decided to apply.

Once I was selected for the 2012 class of Emerging Leaders, I was invited to attend ASCD’s Leader to Leader (L2L) Conference held in July 2012, where I was able to connect with other Emerging Leaders, along with members of the Alabama Affiliate of ASCD. During this conference I was also able to learn about new ideas, resources, and best practices from ASCD leaders, presenters, and staff. I also learned more about ASCD’s Whole Child Initiative, which was launched in 2007. To learn more about the Whole Child Initiative, please visit http://www.ascd.org/whole-child.aspx.

In addition to learning more about ASCD and becoming more involved in the organization, I have learned much about myself as an educational leader during my first year in the program through studying ASCD’s eight components of leadership. During the L2L conference, I was asked to rate myself on each of the eight components and note my highest and lowest scores. I learned that my greatest leadership strength was my ability to “apply learning”, which ASCD states is “how we get better. Leaders who apply learning are attentive and curious. They learn from experience, share that learning, and bring others with diverse experience on board. They read the terrain, see the oncoming challenge, and remove obstacles. They seek learning from many sources in service of a quicker, better decision.” I also learned that I needed to work on my ability to “create value”, which ASCD states is “why we exist. Leaders who create value constantly examine the needs of our organization and the people we serve. They are enterprising, persistent, and willing to be bold. They know that risk is often more important than routine. In all undertakings, they insist on relevance.”

Applying for the ASCD Emerging Leader program is a simple process. While the application process is closed for the 2013 class of Emerging Leaders, you can nominate yourself or a colleague for the 2014 class beginning February 1, 2014. For more information on the ASCD Emerging Leaders program, please visit http://www.ascd.org/programs/Emerging-Leaders.aspx.

Volunteers Needed!

Volunteer to help AASCD get our web presence off the ground.

Interested? Contact Jane Cobia: cobiajan@gmail.com
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Upcoming Events

CLAS Annual Convention  
June 23-26, 2013  
Riverview Plaza Hotel  
and  
Mobile Convention Center  
Mobile, Alabama

AASCD Affiliate Meeting  
June 24, 2013  
4:30-5:15pm  
Mobile Convention Center

AASCD/AAESA Fall Instructional Leadership Conference  
November 3-6, 2013  
Orange Beach, AL