The last couple of months have been full of amazing professional growth opportunities. EMPOWER18, held in Boston, MA in March, provided premier professional development for attendees, recognition for affiliates, and networking opportunities galore. EMPOWER18 focused on transformational leadership, global engagement, poverty and equity, redefining student success, and teaching and learning to advance student achievement by supporting them holistically. ASCD empowered attendees to better help students develop essential skills by engaging them to navigate careers, contribute to their communities, and identify interests. Closer to home, the Fifth Annual Standards Summit was held in Hoover, AL in April. The agenda was designed to take a deep dive into generation-specific issues and help identify ways to bridge the generation gap to achieve success. This one-day conference focused on successful standards implementation and provided the opportunity for leaders to hear about practical solutions for overcoming barriers to student success. If you missed these powerful events, never fear. The annual CLAS Convention is just around the corner. Join us there for even more amazing professional learning and member recognition.

Do you know someone worthy of recognition? There are so many outstanding educators in our great state. Let me encourage you to nominate your local experts for Alabama ASCD’s Outstanding Curriculum Leader or Emerging Leader Awards. Winners will be recognized during the CLAS Convention in June. You have until May 25, 2018 to nominate. More information can be found on our website at www.alabamascd.org. Get those nominations in and make plans to attend CLAS Convention. See you soon!
Executive Director’s Report

Education is Complicated
What are the issues that face us today and how do we make adjustments for the common goal of teaching and learning?

- Multiple generations (faculty, staff, parents and guardians)
- English Language Learners
- Gender-Inclusive
- Ethnic origin
- Socio-economic status
- Physical challenges
- Mental challenge
- Departmentalized or Self-contained
- Hidden bias
- Social media

The list could go on and on; but, just what can a leader do to support this teaching and learning concept? First, know the laws that impact schools and follow board policy. Next be sure to provide professional learning opportunities for those whom you support using cost effective means. And, watch for changing patterns of societal norms and trend analysis of issues.

I have browsed through many articles and have found interesting distinctions and correlations between education and business. The face of public education DOES continue to change and these are several of the education trends for 2018:

- Enrollment management for students
- Personalized professional development for teachers
- Seamless technology for classrooms
- Fighting chronic absenteeism with student support initiatives
- Use of cloud-based technology for high stakes assessment
- Social and emotional learning will become integral piece in school day

And, here are a few trends in 2018 from the world of work:

- Increased focus on sexual harassment
- Increase in remote workers and flex jobs
- Prioritization of employee mental wellness
- An aging workforce
- Evolution of technology

When one takes a look at these 2 lists, there is an emphasis on the individual, the differentiation and personalization of work and learning, and the use of technology. It appears that both groups have realized through pattern analyses that it IS important to support the individual. That is at the heart of what Alabama ASCD does with the annual conference, 1 day learning sessions, and an upcoming Principal’s Leadership Academy that will roll out in Fall 2018.

As leaders in education, we must stay abreast of the latest trends and issues and try to be proactive in our approaches.

As the school year closes, it is a good time to reflect on what has been, what could be, and imagine great possibilities and opportunities for our next work. Even though education is very different and much more complicated from the 1950’s - 1980’s when my mother was teaching third grade, the heart and soul remains in this profession. In order to remain viable, we must stay current on topics, issues and legislation; become advocates; and support each other. We are builders of hope, we provide the vehicle for class mobility, and we facilitate learning!
Are You A Leader?

Are you a leader? If you are reading this, the chances are good that you are a leader. One can find countless articles, books, blogs, posts, and many other writings on the subject of leadership. So many exist that it is difficult to keep up. Are you a servant leader, transactional leader, bureaucratic leader, charismatic leader, transformational leader, or some other adjective-laced leader? What is your style? How do you lead? Who is following? These questions and many more can certainly muddy the waters and make one wonder as you wander through the daily interactions of your job.

Let me submit the following: You are a leader, and the adjective in front of the title is not as important as the characteristics you need to possess to be an effective leader. A quick google search on leadership gives us 4.6 million results in .38 seconds. The analysis of a cache this size is daunting at best. However, regardless of the link on which you click, the literature will lead to a list of characteristics that followers want to see in leaders they follow.

Every list will include “Honest and integrity” at or near the top. Accountability, confidence, communication skills, inspirational abilities, commitment, passion, decision-making skills, and empathy are but a few of the qualities on the list that leaders must possess to be effective.

Let us not worry too much about the type of leader we are or the adjective in front of our title. Let’s focus on the qualities that our followers want to see in leaders. If we do this, we will be able to have a positive impact on those under our care and the organizations we serve. Additionally, we will see changes in the perception of public education in Alabama.

Lead well on your daily journey.

Abrams Bridges the Generational Gap

Jennifer Abrams, international educator and communications consultant, inspired attendees at the fifth annual Alabama Standards Implementation Summit hosted by Embassy Suites on April 20, 2018. Speaking to over 60 administrators and instructional leaders, Abrams identified several generational challenges facing school leaders. Decreased productivity, lower morale, inability to work in teams, increased turnover, and questions regarding issues of fairness are just a few challenges addressed by the Abrams. With humor and candor, Abrams provided guidance on understanding, supporting, and working with colleagues of all generations.

Abrams began by describing Traditionalists, Boomers, Gen Xers, and Millennials. She highlighted generational differences including nicknames, key characteristics, primary needs, job prospects, family life, heroes, and defining events. Next, Abrams coached leaders in appropriate and effective use of language with each generation. She provided an orientation checklist so leaders can start the year “right,” and, finally, she encouraged leaders to reflect upon their professional practices to ensure professionalism and workplace harmony.

The summit was sponsored by Classworks, Triumph Learning, and School Specialty-EPS Literacy and Intervention and provided by AASCD
Chances are you have never heard of Dogtown, Alabama. If you have, it is probably because you have visited the very prominent furniture store that sits in the community, which contains a four-way stop. Some of you may have made the pilgrimage up Lookout Mountain to purchase a new mattress or kitchen table, but did you notice the school that sits across the road? That little school has a lot to offer, too.

Ruhama Junior High School, located in DeKalb County, serves students in kindergarten through eighth-grade, many of whom come from low-income families. Eighty to ninety percent of students qualify for free and reduced lunches leading the school to apply for community eligibility a few years ago. Today, all students receive breakfast and lunch at no cost. And, although the school is small, with a little less than 200 students, the faculty has continuously committed themselves to providing students with experiences that may not be traditionally found in a K-8 low-income, rural setting.

Jordan Phillips, the current principal of Ruhama School, is quick to give all credit to the teachers for exploring ways to provide unique learning experiences for students. Things that are so commonplace for many students throughout Alabama classrooms are harder for rural schools to provide for children, but RJHS teachers do not use that as an excuse. Students have an opportunity to participate in a debate club, various STEM activities, and even a top-notch school play production.

The Debate Club was established last year after an invite was received from Jacksonville State University to consider joining a debate league that targeted middle grades in northeast Alabama. Mr. Phillips shared the information with Ms. Jessica Hayes, middle school language arts teacher, and she immediately began planning. Soon, students found themselves researching topics such as farm subsidies and capital punishment. These young men and young women outlined arguments for and against each topic, which was challenging for the students, at first. But, over time, they came to value the need to listen to opposing arguments, a skill that is vital in our world. The academic benefits have been tremendous as students have sharpened reading and research skills, speaking skills, and listening skills. Most importantly, students have gained confidence by participating in this activity. As Mr. Phillips said, “These students may be goofing off and acting silly, but when it is debate time, they focus and become little experts. It is amazing to see the confidence they bring.” This is even more impressive considering that they have been competing with schools much, much larger than RJHS, including Oxford and Pell City. All of this would not have been possible if a teacher had not seen a need to provide this to students.

Every educator is aware of the need to increase STEM instruction in our schools. The costs of STEM activities often leads administrators and teachers to say, “We can’t do that!” However, students at Ruhama participate in a wide variety of science labs, not because there is necessarily funds to meet this need, but because the teachers have committed to providing these experiences for students. Students participate in on-going projects,
Broadway plays to Off-Broadway and are considered a community event. Community members play roles, former students return to assist the school, and the Northeast Alabama Community College Fine Arts Department serves as a partner. NACC supports them through props, costumes, and coaching. More importantly, they often follow the students’ experiences in arts throughout high school and offer them scholarships upon graduation, something that can serve as life-changing for many students in the community. Students do not have to act. They can learn to control the lighting, the sound, serve as stagehands, or take a role in the play. One teacher put it best, “They realize that they have skills that they didn’t even know they had.” Again, they have confidence. They also learn the value of working on a team within the community that consists of all ages. Stacy Mason, math teacher and guidance counselor, leads the charge but is supported by the staff.

It has been said that “you can’t change what’s in your students’ bank account, but you can change what’s in their emotional account.” The staff of Ruhama have taken that a step further; they have committed to increasing students’ knowledge account by ensuring that, even though these students live in a very small, rural, mountain community, they participate in academic activities that are often reserved for much larger schools. So, no, you won’t find lots of initiatives (although, the school does participate in Literacy Design Collaborative and will add Math Design Collaborative) or fancy technology tools, if you visit the little, rock school. You will, however, find children who are getting a range of experiences that they might miss if not for the leadership of their teachers. A testament to the power of teachers.

Upcoming Professional Growth Opportunities

**JUNE 2018**

- **CLAS Summer Convention**
  - June 10-13
  - Mobile, AL

- **ASCD Conference on Teaching Excellence**
  - Pathways to Equity
  - June 29-July 1
  - Grapevine, TX

**JANUARY 2019**

- **Alabama ASCD Winter Conference**
  - January 28-29, 2019
  - Birmingham, AL

**NOVEMBER 2018**

- **ASCD Leadership Conference**
  - November 2-4
  - Nashville, TN
The North Carolina Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (NCASCD) is a professional learning organization consisting of over 5000 members in North Carolina. The organization provides opportunities for professional development and collaboration for all educators across the state and serves as the state affiliate of the national organization, ASCD. The Board of Directors of NCASCD wanted to provide a free opportunity to college students to help them find success in their new career. In an effort to assist with the recruitment and retention of teachers, NCASCD has started conversations across the state with various institutions of higher education.

NCASCD welcomed over 100 pre-service teachers to the North Carolina A&T State University Campus Alumni Event Center in Greensboro, NC on Thursday March 15, 2018. This inaugural event was to share tips and insights into a new career as an educator. This collaboration is a result of Students attended from NC A&T State University, UNC-Greensboro, NC State, High Point University, St. Andrews University, Lenoir-Rhyne University, Appalachian University, UNC-Charlotte, Shaw University, Bennett College, and Western Carolina University. In addition to pre-service teachers, the audience included human resource representatives from over 15 school districts across the state who met and built relationships with these prospective teachers with the hopes of hiring them in the future.

The day began with opening remarks from Dr. Rodney Shotwell, superintendent of Rockingham County Schools and Dr. Anthony Graham as they both shared their educational journey and how their lives as a student impacted their current lives as professional educators. The themes of the day included building relationships, strong instruction, interviewing tips, and legal issues for teachers and professionalism. Specific topics included a “Framework for Teaching and Learning”, presented by Dr. Dutche Maye, a teacher educator; “Personalized Learning”, presented by Winston-Salem Forsyth County Schools, and “Awareness of Legal Issues for New Teachers” presented by a school board attorney. The teachers learned about the importance of building relationships by the North Carolina Teacher of the Year, Mrs. Lisa Godwin of Onslow County. A panel of new teachers and principals answered questions from the audience about expectations of new teachers, how to interview effectively, how to build relationships with parents, and the ideal principal and first year teacher. The day ended in small group sessions facilitated by the NC A&T Career Services staff providing tips for interviewing and resume writing.

Both NC A&T State University and NCASCD hope that this day provided insight into the profession and gave these students an opportunity to hear from a variety of professionals across the state as they begin their new journey as teachers. NCASCD gave the participants a free one year membership.

The NCASCD Board is interested in expanding this event over the next year to two other college campuses, one in the east and one in the west, so they can reach more pre-service teachers. Dr. Lillie Cox, Executive Director, of NCASCD will be coordinating with other universities to gain their insight and interest to set the dates for next spring.

If you are interested in learning more about NCASCD, we encourage you to visit our website at www.ncascd.com
Choosing Postsecondary Education – How do we help our students?

The National Postsecondary Strategy Institute recently led a session in Chicago which brought together school districts from around the country to discuss strategies for helping our students pursue college – and not just a college, but pursuing many college options. Many of the strategies shared have been instrumental in the Chicago Public Schools improving the percentage of students who pursue postsecondary education after high school graduation.

At a time when Alabama is pushing the importance of ACT scores, the research shared comparing ACT scores and GPA provided much food for thought. “While ACT/SAT scores matter for college access, grades (GPAs) are much more predictive of college success. In fact, strong grades – earning As and Bs in high school – are the strongest indicator of college readiness and are much more predictive of college graduation than any test score.”* (Healey, 2014). This would seem to show that students who come to class, turn in assignments, put in study time and work hard have a good chance for college success even when their ACT score may be below the ACT college readiness benchmark score.

Other information shared from the research shows that “course attendance is eight times more predictive of course failure in the freshman year than eighth-grade test scores.” Also included was that “spending class time on test prep does not make students more prepared for the ACT and SAT…. the most effective way to improve ACT scores is to work hard in academic classes.” This and other myths are addressed in the paper “Busting Myths about What Matters for High School and College Success” found at https://toandthrough.uchicago.edu/mythbusters.

The Chicago Public Schools continue to be leaders in the area of encouraging students to attend college and in the area of transitioning students from high school to college. CPS has increased the number of students completing the FAFSA, increased the number of college visits, and increased the number of college applications being completed. They have also created ways to connect with students after high school to help them transition from 2-year institutions to 4-year institutions and to help students when their plans may go awry. For more information visit the To & Through project website at https://toandthrough.uchicago.edu.

Dr. Brenda Rickett
President-Elect
AASCD

Yes, You Can Teach Conference A Huge Success

The School of Education Diversity committee and the student leadership teams from ASCD and KDP sponsored a day-long event on May 3 for high school juniors and seniors who had expressed an interest in becoming a teacher. The breakout sessions led by Samford education students were: Special Education and Gifted Education, Let’s Engage in the Arts!, Do You Want to be an Elementary School Teacher?, What is Effective Classroom Design and Management?, It’s Lit!, What does STEAM Mean?, and Do You Want to be a Secondary Teacher? Highlights included fabulous speakers with years of experience in the teaching profession, lunch in the Caf, and leaving with a neat backpack filled with supplies!

A Samford University alumnus, and Ramsay High School FTA chaperone, Tineka Peoples, expressed her gratitude to Samford University and AASCD saying “As a Samford alumnus, I am proud of the progress of the OBB School of Education. Your students were absolutely cordial and positive. Please let them know how much our students enjoyed the event and their leadership. A job well done!”
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Preferred First Name for Badge: ________________
Twitter Handle: @ ________________________
Position: ______________________________________
School System: ______________________________________
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1. CONVENTION REGISTRATION
(Includes meals, breaks, door prizes, sessions, and president’s reception)

Circle the appropriate registration fee

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<th>EARLY REGISTRATION BY MAY 4</th>
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TOTAL Section 1 ................................................................ $ _____________

2. MEALS (No charge for paid registrants, but reservations are required)

Awards Luncheon ........................................... Tuesday, June 12
☐ I will attend (No charge if paid convention registration)
☐ I need _____ extra ticket(s) at $40 each

Closing Breakfast Session ......................... Wednesday, June 13
☐ I will attend (No charge if paid convention registration)
☐ I need _____ extra ticket(s) at $30 each

TOTAL Section 2 ................................................................ $ _____________

GRAND TOTAL (Sections 1 & 2) ......................... $ _____________

3. SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS
☐ I have special health/dietary needs (list below):

4. EMERGENCY CONTACT

Name: ______________________________________
Relationship: ______________________________________
Daytime Phone: ______________________________________
Other Phone: ______________________________________

5. PAYMENT
(Refunds granted only upon written request. No refunds granted after June 3, 2017)

☐ Check (enclosed) # ______________________________________
☐ Purchase Order # ______________________________________
☐ Credit Card (Visa/MC/Discover)
  ☐ Visa ☐ Master Card ☐ Discover

Card Number: ________________________________
Expiration Date: ________/_________ CVV:  _______________
Cardholder Name: ____________________________________
Cardholder Address:  __________________________________
Cardholder Phone:  ___________________________________
Cardholder Signature: __________________________________

Register online at www.clasleaders.org/conv, email your form to registrations@clasleaders.org, fax registration form to (334) 265-3611, or mail the completed form to:

CLAS
P.O. Box 428
Montgomery, AL  36101-0428

Room Reservations: Hotel reservations may be made by calling the Riverview Plaza Hotel at (800) 922-3298 and asking for the 2018 CLAS Summer Convention room rate of $125 per night for single/double rooms. Reservations are subject to availability and must be made by May 11, 2018, to receive this rate. Online room reservations - https://goo.gl/B9Mzx5

Questions? Call (800) 239-3616 or visit us online at www.clasleaders.org

Online Registration available at www.clasleaders.org/conv
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