



**2022-23 Annual Report**  
**ELEMENTARY LEVEL BOARD OF CONTROL**  
*Submitted by Dr. Alicia Bowman, CAS Associate Executive Director*  
*Tiffany Caouette, Assistant Executive Director*

Elementary-Level Board Meetings

The Elementary Level Board of Control, chaired by Joseph Macrino, principal of Oswegatchie Elementary School in Waterford, met both in-person and virtually this year for general discussion of topics of interest and concern to members, including mental health and wellness, social-emotional learning needs, and personal wellbeing. However, the primary Board goal for the year was to move forward a bill on play-based learning. The play-based learning work became a focal point of all elementary meetings throughout the year. NAESP State Representative Mike Litke and NAESP Federal Relations Representative Scott Nozik also provided the Board with updates at each meeting during the year.

Early Childhood Committee

The committee was composed of representatives from CAS, the Office of Early Childhood, the State Department of Education and the RESC Alliance. The committee met six times during the year to discuss play-based learning and create plans for legislative action. Several members of the committee decided to collectively write an informational paper on best practices in early childhood to share with all stakeholders including state legislators during the 2022-2023 legislative session. That paper was written but remained in draft form as the collaboration with CEA on a bill moved quickly through the legislative process. The paper will be revised and used next year to further the early childhood agenda.

NAESP and NASSP National Leadership Conference and Virtual Capitol Hill Day

This year, the NAESP and NASSP National Leadership Conference took place in person in Washington, DC, and an advocacy team of principals from Connecticut attended the meetings with Congressional leaders and their staffers. The Connecticut delegation included five school leaders - Mike Litke, Scott Nozik, Andre Hauser, Donna Hayward, and Jim Wygonik – and three CAS staff members - Glenn Lungarini, Alicia Bowman, and Tiffany Caouette.

The 2022 Elementary Celebration of the Arts

Over 100 elementary schools across Connecticut participated in the Elementary Celebration of the Arts which honored more than 200 students for their achievements in the visual and performing arts. The celebration was emceed by CAS Assistant Executive Director, Tiffany Caouette, and included remarks from 2023 Kid Governor Elisavet “Ellie” Mendez and a presentation from Flock Theater in New London.

### Professional Development

This past year, a significant focus for CAS has been conversations about wellness issues, including social-emotional learning and positive school climate/culture. Professional development specific to early childhood was also a focus, with CAS offering three workshops on play-based learning and six different opportunities for administrators to attend a site visit with teachers to observe play-based learning at schools where the work is in progress.

### LEGO Grant

CAS was fortunate to receive a grant from the LEGO Foundation to further the Elementary Board's goal of supporting schools as they incorporate play-based learning in the early childhood grades. The grant funded the opportunity for schools in eight districts to work with consultants to design units around play-based learning and build capacity in more classrooms.

### Student Activities

The Connecticut Elementary Student Leadership Conferences were held on January 9th and 11th. Over 600 students from 53 schools attended the conferences this year. For more details, see the [CT Student Activities Conference Annual Report](#).

### 2022-2023 Awards

Connecticut Association of Schools was excited to present the following awards and recognitions once again:

- CAS 2023 William Cieslukowski First Year Principal Award: Lisa Romano, Maple Hill Elementary School, Naugatuck, CT
- CAS 2023 Elementary School of the Year: West Vine Elementary School, Stonington, CT / Kathryn Irvine, Principal