

CAS PRESIDENT'S REPORT
65th Annual Membership Reception
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I want to begin by saying that I have been honored to serve as your CAS-CIAC President this past year. It has been a wonderful experience. I have met many Connecticut administrators from around the state at various events. I have had the opportunity to attend a variety of activities and events at all levels. Through the appeals process I have learned about the CIAC. And, working with the CAS-CIAC Board and office staff I have gotten to see CAS from the inside out. A tremendous opportunity and I can't thank you all enough for allowing me to serve CAS in this capacity.

So, when I was asked to take a few minutes to share my thoughts with you today, I knew I wanted to talk about how proud I am to be a part of this great organization and why CAS-CIAC is so important to all of us – our schools, our students and teachers, and us as professionals.

As I started to prepare my speech, I realized that there is a lot about CAS that I really don't know – meaning here I am President, and I wasn't sure when CAS got started, some of the defining moments and major milestones, and most importantly, what CAS means to all of us. So I asked myself, what would inquiring minds, like mine, really want to know about CAS?

And yes Ev, this too, will date me! Just an aside, almost every time I speak, Ev gives me a hard time about dating myself. But, there are some major milestones, Kodak moments and other precious moments that inquiring minds like mine, and yours, may find interesting and want to know. So, I went digging in the CAS archives and presto... a copy of the CAS Enquirer. Here is what I discovered!

[Displays cover of CAS Enquirer.]

Just briefly, here are a few of the major defining moments for the organization:
[Displays Timeline page 2-3]

- 1921 – The Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) is established. That year 31 Schools were members of CIAC

- Class A: 2; Class B: 13; Class C: 11; and Class D: 5
- The dues for the 1921-1922 school year were \$2 for Class D and increased by \$1 with Class A dues set at \$5.
- 1935 - The Connecticut Association of Secondary School Principals (CASSP) is founded
- 1953 – CASSP merges with CIAC to become the Connecticut Association of Secondary Schools (CASS)
 - 74 members of CASSP were at the final meeting of the association of high school principals as it was transformed into an association of secondary schools to be known as the Connecticut Association of Secondary Schools (CASS). This was an important and significant change from being a high school principal’s association to an association of secondary schools.
- 1990 – Elementary schools are admitted into membership - CASS becomes CAS
- 1991 – Introduction of Unified Sports.
- 2000 – CAS merges with the Elementary and Middle School Principals Association of Connecticut (EMSPAC) and the Connecticut Principals Center is created
- 2005 – CAS formally has an agreement with UCONN for UCAPP program to take over leadership, management, and administration.
- 2008 CAS Board approves partnership with Connecticut State Department of Education for the Executive Coaching Program.
- 2010 – After 30 years in the CAS Central Office, Mike Savage retires and Dr. Karissa Niehoff becomes Executive Director.

So, what else did I discover while I was digging around in the CAS archives? Well, here are five things you will want to know (or not).

- 1) From the October 1997 CAS Bulletin (which is the oldest CAS Bulletin archived on the website) the headlines read :

CAS POISED FOR 21st CENTURY WITH NEW SITE ON WWW
[Displays page 4-5]

Anyone remember, what is WWW?

So, “CAS-CIAC went ‘on-line’ during the summer of 1997 with the introduction of its new site on the World Wide Web. The CAS-CIAC home page allows member schools instant access to information about Association-related events and activities as well as general information about education in Connecticut and nationwide.”

Executive Director Mike Savage commented, “This is an important step forward for the Association, one which we believe will not only better serve our member schools, but will facilitate the operations of the Central Office. While our web page is not intended to replace traditional paper communication -- at least not at this stage! -- we hope that, in certain areas of operation, communication with the Central Office will be faster, easier, and less expensive. We expect that our new website will be a powerful public relations tool which will open up lines of communication not only with member schools, but with the media and the general public as well.”

An October 1998 CAS Bulletin headline shouts-out that the “**CAS-CIAC WEBSITE HAS NEW LOOK!** [*Displays page 6-7*] CAS-CIAC is pleased to unveil its newly updated and upgraded website. . . The site is very user-friendly, allowing visitors to easily navigate between CAS and CIAC-related pages and links.” Do you think?

By December 1998 the CAS Bulletin declared, “**ATHLETIC DIRECTORS: ACCESS THE INTERNET**” [*Displays page 8-9*] by asking the question, “What is the Internet?” And, explaining how to subscribe to USENET groups (remember them)? And, described how “using E-mail—with one message, you can communicate with your peers across town or across the world about issues like game scheduling, common problems, happenings, and events.”

Nothing changes faster than technology – so it is a lot of fun to look back at where we were and wonder, “What would we really think, if we knew then what we know now?” Interesting thought. And of course, as we know, the CAS-CIAC website continues to get better and better. [*CAS website picture on page 9*].

For a good walk down memory lane.... Or, if you can’t go to sleep some night, you may want to delve back into the history of CAS and peruse the CAS-CIAC bulletins from October 1997 – January 2014. Also check out the CAS NewsBlasts that are posted from 2014 until now. The link is listed in this issue of the CAS Enquirer.

- 2) Next is an article called “**Proverbs for the Millennium**” [*Displays page 10*] from the November 1999 CAS Bulletin that I found to be very insightful. You can see them all here – but a couple of my favorites are:

#1. Home is where to hang your @.

#2. The email of the species is more deadly than the mail. (I would add this is probably one of the most demanding strains on a principal’s time – just sucks the energy right out of us.... Who would have guessed?)

#10. The modem is the message. What’s a modem? Just kidding.

#12. The geek shall inherit the earth. So that’s why I wear so much technology. ☺

#13. A chat has nine lives – Kind of like “going viral,” right?

#16. What boots up must come down. And don’t we hate it when it does?
And my favorite,

#25. Give a man (or for that matter anyone) a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach him to use the NET and he won’t bother you for weeks!

- 3) And then there is the article from the December 1997 Bulletin, “**ALL PRINCIPALS NEED A TOM MOONEY IN THEIR LIVES!**” [*Displays pages 12-13*] Isn’t that the truth! This is followed-up by an article from the November 1999 Bulletin, “**MOONEY ADVISES PRINCIPALS HOW NOT TO ‘MESS UP.’**” [*Displays pages 14-15*] I think he is still trying to help us with that one! On October 13th, Attorney Thomas Mooney of Shipman and Goodwin outlined a list of 18 ways the high school principal can "mess up." Of course, elementary principals never mess up! Just kidding – this was a session specific for high school principals, as elementary and middle school principals were just starting to join CAS in the 1990’s. All I can say, is thank goodness for Tom Mooney! He is still one of the most popular sessions for the CAS New Leaders, and truth be told, all of us! His book is currently in its eighth edition!
- 4) So, this next one is one of my favorite articles. From the February 1998 Bulletin, comes the story that “**TIROZZI URGES EDUCATORS TO ‘DISMOUNT THE DEAD HORSE.’**” [*Displays pages 16-17*] As I was reading, I went “whoa, horsey – what is this all about?”

Nearly two hundred administrators and teachers attended the 1998 CAS High School Principals Winter Conference held at the Cromwell Radisson on January

13th. The theme of this year's event, was "Breaking Ranks," the celebrated school reform report published by NASSP in 1996.

Luncheon speaker, Dr. Gerald Tirozzi, U.S. Assistant Secretary of Education and former Connecticut Commissioner of Education, delivered an inspirational address on topics ranging from school reform to the president's educational agenda. With words of insight and experience, Dr. Tirozzi urged educators to "dismount the dead horse" -- that is, to challenge the status quo, to abandon the traditional educational practices that have failed to bring about success for all students. "Never underestimate the power of the forces that are working to preserve the status quo," he cautioned. He called upon educators to make dramatic changes in educational philosophy and practice, suggesting sweeping reforms such as expanding the 180-day school year, beginning the school day at 9 or 10 o'clock, and introducing all children to formal educational instruction at age 3 or 4. He acknowledged the difficulties of promoting change and reminded principals that leadership is all about "vision, persistence, and courage."

And the best part, the pull quote from Dr. Tirozzi's speech is,

*Have a funeral service for the status quo in your building.
But pick your pall bearers carefully.*

5) Of course everyone's greatest fear is waking up to your alarm clock radio and hearing a report about your school. Or, that channel 3, Courtney Zieller is knocking at your door waiting for an interview, right Beth? Well, here are the **Ten Commandments of Making Television News** [*Displays pages 18-19*] from the February 1999 Bulletin which includes advice such as:

- Thou shall not lie to the press.
- Thou shall not flee the television camera.
- Thou shall not put thy hand up in front of the television camera, angrily demand the reporter turn off the camera, or otherwise look guilty as sin.
- Thou shall not wear sunglasses while on camera.
- Thou shall not guess about an answer.
- Thou shall not let the reporter put words in your mouth.
- Thou shall not talk past thy prepared statement.
- Thou shall not assume anything is off the record.

- Thou shall not be seen smiling and laughing at sad or troubling moments.
- Thou shall always remember, they can't report it if you don't say it.

I could go on and on with articles from the past... but I won't. As you can see, it is a lot of fun to dig back into the archives of CAS-CIAC and take a walk down memory lane.

But there is one more two-part article from the January and February 1999 bulletin that was based on a survey of CAS principal comments that I would like to share with you. It was called "**Fewer Crises: A Simple Prescription for the Ailing Principals**ship" [Displays pages 20-21] Part I was about "How Principals View Their Positions and the Dwindling Pool of Candidates" and Part II was about "The Mandate Crunch and Some Steps to Ease the Burden of Principals" Sound familiar?

The article starts by stating:

A generation ago the typical principal probably walked to work every morning, ventured out at night for an occasional dance, meeting, or game and attended the monthly Board meeting if needed. Parents and staff were much less likely to question the principal's authority in that gentler age.

Today, the principal's lot is far more hectic, holding responsibility for a much broader and more diverse program of studies and activities. Federal mandates, unheard of fifty years ago, and increasing state demands add to the burden. Continual nighttime supervisory activities and meetings are part of the picture.

The world wasn't perfect in 1948, but it most certainly was easier being a school administrator. Calls from principals to "reduce the number of hats we wear," and to cut the "social agency" roles the school now plays – are falling on deaf ears. The complaints from elementary school administrators are essentially the same as those from principals in upper grade levels.

One veteran principal, asked how to improve the job, said poignantly "fewer crises."

The series continues in part II [*Displays pages 22-23*] by saying “School mandates of the past few decades have tended to cast the principal in a kind of Superman/Wonder Woman role, and expectations of a superhuman performance will continue as long as the structure of school leadership remains in its traditional form.”

I won’t read you all the structures, but suffice it to say, we are living them! [*Displays pages 24-25*] The article continues by saying, “If the principal must be Superman/Wonder Woman, the least we can do is to provide adequate phone booths.”

And part of me wants to say, “right on!” And the other part of me wants to say, “what’s a phone booth?”

By the way, the cartoon is difficult to read, [*Go back to pages 22-23*] but the text says, “Thank you for calling Hank Williams, Jr. Senior High School. If you’d like to speak to a faculty member, press one... If you’d like to speak to the school nurse, press two... If you’d like to apply for the position of principal, press the star sign...”

You can read the rest of this article in the CAS bulletin or in this issue of the CAS Enquirer. But, I wanted to end with this article because it speaks to why CAS-CIAC is so important to all of us administrators.

I sent out an email request to some of our CAS Board members asking them two questions:

- 1) *What is a favorite memory, story, or special moment/activity that you will always remember/cherish when you think about the years you have been involved with CAS?*
- 2) *What makes CAS the go-to place or special organization it is? What is it about CAS that keeps you coming back year after year?*

The responses I got speak volumes to how important CAS is in helping, supporting, and guiding us through all the good times and bad. You can read the responses I received in this issue of the CAS Enquirer.

[*Displays pages 26-27*] To summarize, people mentioned favorite moments such as recognitions, ceremonies, holiday parties, student activities, the UCAPP program, mentoring for new administrators, executive coaching experiences, the end of the year summer CAS conference, professional development, and continued support for aspiring, new and veteran administrators.

[*Displays pages 28-29*] All those special moments and many more define CAS-CIAC as an organization. But what got many of us started was serving on various committees and then boards, attending celebrations like the Arts Banquets, Scholar Athletes, Volunteer Appreciation, Exemplary Programs and of course all of the CIAC activities and events. What keeps us coming back to CAS-CIAC are the awesome and amazing CAS leaders and office staff who are always willing to go that extra mile, the CAS programs and opportunities that advance the state of education in Connecticut, and the networking, the collegiality, and the friendships that develop from being together as a member of CAS-CIAC.

[*Displays pages 30-31*] Richard Dillinger said, “I frequently say that I get much more from CAS than what I give to CAS.... so that is why I keep active!” I think many of us feel that way.

Scott Leslie said, “It’s all about the CAS staff and members. As a young administrator, I was always inspired by the "elder statesmen and stateswomen". Now that I've entered the realm of one of the elders, I am consistently inspired by the new, and younger members at CAS. I always drive away from a CAS meeting humbled and inspired.”

And, I couldn’t agree more. Everyone sitting here is what makes CAS-CIAC the great organization it has evolved into since CIAC began in 1921. I hope you have enjoyed looking back at just a few of the archived stories from the past. I encourage you to peruse the CAS-CIAC website for other gems – there are many.

I want to leave you with one last thought that I had as I was digging through the archived bulletins. The more things change – the more they remain the same... What goes around comes around.... And somethings never change.... But can they? Should they?

We are four years away from CAS-CIAC celebrating 100 years of existence. Think about it – almost 100 years! So, given that, what will transcend the end of time? What should we transform? How will we morph? What is our legacy? And even more important, what do we want it to be?

That is our challenge for the future!

As your president, I am excited to think about where we have been and look forward to serving you, as we continue the journey to advocate for what is important, engage in quality learning opportunities to improve our practice, and most importantly continue to network, collaborate, and continue to grow as the premier collegial community in Connecticut for administrators, their students, teachers and schools.

[Displays last page] I would like to thank Karissa, Karen and Judy for helping me with the history of CAS-CIAC. I would also like to thank my husband, Bob, for staying up late and helping me put together the CAS Enquirer!

By the way, you can read this issue of the CAS Enquirer at www.issuu.com/edovation. We also plan to post it on the CAS website.

Again, thank you everyone, for all you do to make CAS-CIAC the premier Connecticut Association. I look forward to continuing to work with you next year as your president.

Download your copy of the CAS Enquirer at https://issuu.com/edovation/docs/cas_enquirer_pub.