

THE CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS

The Sixty-Fifth Annual Meeting

June 2017

2016-2017 Annual Report

CT PRINCIPALS' CENTER BOARD OF CONTROL

Submitted by Dr. Angela Rossbach, Chair

The Connecticut Association of Schools established the Principals' Center to address the professional development and related needs of practicing principals. The Connecticut State Department of Education has been an important partner with CAS in promoting the Principals' Center by providing both technical and financial assistance. CAS Associate Executive Director, Everett Lyons, is the director of the Center. The Center is served by an advisory committee of experienced principals, as well as representatives of graduate and undergraduate educational leadership and education programs.

Change in Identification

This year a significant change is being proposed by the Center Board which has been approved by the CAS Board of Directors. This change involves a new designation of this aspect of the Association's work from the Principal's Center to the Center for Leadership and Innovation. We believe that the new designation reflects that CAS is now involved in supporting and building the capacity of all leadership levels within the educational community, including teacher leaders. Removing "Principal" from the title reflects that evolving change and reflects the breadth of our mission. As we are attempting to bring the most current content and skills to our members, we hope to encourage the sharing of "cutting edge" practices which are reflective of the innovative approaches utilized by our Connecticut educational leaders.

Activities 2016-2017

In order to provide professional support for school leaders and advance the professional development of aspiring leaders, the work of the Center has been organized into four strands of action:

- Strand #1 - **Future School Leaders:** Development of future educational leaders
- Strand #2 - **Career Principals:** Providing quality leadership development for beginning and veteran school leaders
- Strand #3 - **Critical Issues:** Advancing the understanding and advocacy of issues relevant to educational leaders
- Strand #4 - **Recognition:** Recognizing, celebrating and sharing examples of achievements and best practices

This report will share with you the primary activities within each strand.

■ **Strand #1: Future School Leaders**

Leadership Academies (Teacher Leadership)

Our Meriden Leadership Academy was conducted for the sixth year in the Meriden Public Schools. Over twenty teacher leaders recently completed a five session sequence related to teacher leadership skill development, and demand within the district for this experience remains high. A seventh cohort has already been scheduled for next year.

This current school year also saw the expansion of the academy offering with a district-based program in the Waterford Public Schools and the continuation of two additional cohorts: the Bloomfield Leadership Academy and an inter-district group housed at CAS for small districts that might not be able to support a district-specific program. East Hartford has already committed to a cohort for the 2017-18 school while Waterford has agreed to a continuation of their cohort. All academy sessions this year were co-led by Ev Lyons and Mike Galluzzo with specialized support by Pat Howley. With Mike Galluzzo's retirement at the conclusion of this academic year, Roxanne Augelli will join the presentation staff.

Administrator Certification Program (UCAPP)

The Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS) and the Department of Educational Leadership at the University of Connecticut's NEAG School of Education (NSOE) have continued a partnership which aims to provide a quality preparation, enabling qualified administrators to fill positions of leadership within Connecticut's schools. The Principals' Center has specific responsibilities for conducting the clinical component of the University of Connecticut Administrator Preparation Program (UCAPP), a nationally recognized series of courses and internships that prepares candidates for the 092 intermediate administrator certification and leadership positions primarily at the school building and central office levels. As an active partner in this program, the Principals' Center brings its resources which includes a statewide network of seasoned mentors, and well-established relationships with schools throughout the state. CAS and NSOE, with their combined resources, believe that they have the capacity to build the premier school leader preparation program in the nation.

As we complete our eleventh year of experience with UCAPP, the Center successfully managed five cohorts with a total enrollment of 65 students. Activities included linking leadership students to experienced mentors, helping students develop personal theories

of action for successfully leading change, connecting leadership plans tied to program objectives, meeting regularly with students and their mentors, helping to develop authentic experiences linked to courses, translating these experiences into products and artifacts for inclusion in an electronic portfolio, becoming familiar with course content, and participating in the department-wide curriculum revision process to accommodate the CAS conditions for partnership and the demands of CAEP accreditation. This program is directed by Dr. Dale Bernardoni.

New Leaders Academy

The New Leaders Academy is designed to support building administrators in years 1-3 of their leadership roles. Six sessions were held on such topics as an update on critical legal issues, conducting effective PPT meetings, closing the achievement gap, restorative practices, developing successful hiring practices, and conducting difficult conversations with staff. Following each large-group presentation, participants met in facilitated discussions around the session theme. Twenty new administrators participated in this year's series. For the past seven years, the Principals' Center has opened up its New Leaders Academy workshops to aspiring administrators participating in Southern Connecticut State University's Educational Leadership Program. Over 100 SCSU interns attended at least one of these workshops this year. John Seiler, principal of Memorial Middle School in Middlebury, served as the Steering Committee Chair for this program.

■ Strand #2: Career Principals

Summer Leadership Institute

The Principals' Center will again offer the popular Summer Leadership Institute. Supported by funding from the Connecticut State Department of Education, and the Clifford Beers Foundation, the Summer Leadership Institute will take place on June 22 and 23 at the Heritage in Southbury. This year's institute will expand upon the theme of personalized learning that was the focus of previous institutes with attention paid to the social-emotional supports for children. Similar to last year's institute, participants will have the opportunity in breakout sessions to learn about exemplary Connecticut practices. Resource providers also have been added to the program to provide ongoing assistance and support to practitioners.

Executive Coaching Program

The CAS **Executive Coaching Program** has executive coaches in eight schools. CAS Coaches are also serving as Mastery Based Learning Project coaches in the five schools who are participating in the League of Innovative Schools. In a partnership with the Center for School Change, 18 CAS executive coaches are working in 20 schools within eight Alliance districts with year one principals and seven coaches are working with year two principals in nine schools within five Alliance districts. In a partnership with the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), Bureau of Special Education, seven CAS Coaches with special education expertise are working with special education administrators and with the Turnaround Office, four Leadership Advisor CAS Coaches are working with four school teams on specific indicators identified by the CSDE. Marie Salazar Glowski serves as the CAS Director of the Executive Coaching programs.

Principals Leadership Series

The Principal Leadership Series is geared to the needs of more experienced school leaders and is funded by the CSDE. This six workshop series focused on practical approaches in providing high quality feedback during the teacher observation process, key aspects of adult learning for professional learning, engaging community partners and closing the achievement gap. Presentations and facilitated discussions were the components of the sessions.

Elementary Level

CAS elementary and middle level directors are collaborating to create rubrics and benchmarks for all recognition awards, to insure alignment to standards and best practices. Work is also ongoing to align timelines for middle and elementary recognition applications/awards. Elementary Assistant Director, Roxanne Augelli, attended a three-day training at the internationally-known Center for Creative Leadership with the intent of enhancing CAS's leadership trainings. Two "Trending Now" workshops were held: Using Interim Assessment to Drive Instructional Changes in which participants brought real time school data to learn how to interface with the information. CAS presented a three-day Visible Learning Series to support the work of John Hattie in Connecticut Schools. School climate recognitions have been presented to two schools to date: Alcott School in Wolcott and Irving School in Derby. Roxanne and three Elementary Board members attended the NAESP National Leaders Conference in Washington DC, advocating for public schools.

Middle Level

Schools aligned by standards share many of the same benchmarks of excellence. Work has been done to rewrite rubrics for elementary and middle level awards programs including climate and Schools of the Year to show the alignment across levels. We are presently working on an innovative practices rubric which may take the place of 21st century skills certification. All will be vetted by our Board prior to use. Al Sackey, Principal of Nathan Hale Middle School in Norwalk, and CAS Assistant Director-Middle Level, Donna Schilke, represented CAS at the NASSP Advocacy Conference the last week of April. Advocacy meetings for educational issues were scheduled with leaders at the Capitol. Donna also attended NELMS in Providence RI in March. The Connecticut Core Leadership Community of Practice was offered for the 4th consecutive year. School Climate awards were given to David Wooster Middle School of Stratford and Torrington Middle School. Scofield Magnet Middle School of Stamford and Mabel B Avery School of Somers earned recognition for teaming. Middle Level Arts Program will take place on May 23, 2017 at the University of Hartford Art School

■ Strand #3: Critical Issues

Legislative Issues

Members of the Principals' Center and High School Boards met in January to identify the key legislative issues for member schools to advocate before our state representatives. The primary issue proposed was to have the legislature provide guidance on the status of the proposed high school graduation standards. This issue has been in limbo for a number of years and yet, school leaders must attempt to plan and implement what currently is "on the books", knowing that some doubt exists regarding the exact nature of the standards as modification have been proposed. CAS continues to address the legislature on a number of bills proposed by legislators beyond the scope of our boards, Karissa Niehoff is actively providing testimony before committees and meeting with legislators in addition to the work of our lobbyist.

■ Strand #4: Recognition

Recognition ceremonies were held for various grade levels under the auspices of the Principals' Center. Among these celebrations were the following:

- High School Arts Banquet
- Governor's Scholars Luncheon
- Principal/Assistant Principal of the Year
- Middle Level Scholar Leader Recognition
- Middle School of the Year Recognition
- Elementary Arts Festival
- School Volunteer Recognition
- Elementary Program Recognition

Other Activities of Note:

The Center was charged by the Connecticut State Department of Education with the continued training of school and district leaders on the **administrative evaluation and support** model as well as the **New Leader Rubric 2015**. CAS entered into a contractual arrangement this year with ReVision Learning to support **district calibration** work sponsored by the CSDE. Workshops were held periodically throughout the school year and district-based calibration activities took place in several districts.

CAS is engaged as one of the partners in **LEADCT**, a state leadership initiative. This partnership included work in the following areas:

- Development of a Policy Fellows Program
- Implementation of a Residency Program to develop future school leaders
- The implementation of a Turnaround Principals' PLC
- Creation of additional tools for the administrator evaluation model
- CAS executive coaches are serving in 11 the schools in six of the Alliance districts.

Funded by the Connecticut Department of Education, **the CCSS Leadership Community of Practice** was a five session series offered by CAS for the fourth consecutive year and devoted to leadership issues related to the implementation of the Common Core State Standards (in Connecticut referred to as Connecticut Core Standards). Each session featured a keynote speaker on the selected topic, followed by an implementers' panel which was comprised of Connecticut practitioners who shared their experiences in successfully developing/implementing some aspect of the topic under discussion. These activities were followed by facilitated breakout sessions in which the participants discussed the presentations, shared their own experiences, sought support and assistance from other members, and expressed their needs for further discussion topics. Topics were: Fine Arts and Common Core, Social Emotional Learning, Common Core and Executive Functioning and the Commissioner's Network Schools, "What Can Be Learned from their Successes?"

The Center staff is involved in a variety of **district trainings**. This year, Bloomfield Public Schools requested a series of workshops for their administrative team which focused on calibration of observation of practice. Bridgeport Public Schools contracted with the PC to present several workshops on the New Leader Rubric 2015.

I am proud to share with you the accomplishments of the Center for this year. Particular thanks are in order for all the practitioners who have supported the Center's work for their dedication and voluntary efforts. Special thanks go also to the 65 administrators who volunteered as mentors in the UCAPP program who are supporting the next generation of school leaders.

Special recognition for their contributions is extended to CAS administrative assistants Erin Guarino, Anna Simeonidis, Noreen Liberopoulos, and Roberta O'Connor, and to our administrative team: CAS Executive Director Karissa Niehoff, CAS UCAPP Clinical Director Dale Bernardoni; Assistant Directors Roxanne Augelli, Earle Bidwell (Retired), Donna Schilke, Marie Salazar Glowski; Consultants Mike Galluzzo and Pat Howley, and Principals' Center Director Everett Lyons.