

CAS PRESIDENT'S REPORT
53rd Annual Meeting - May 12, 2005

Ladies and gentlemen—good afternoon and welcome to the 53rd Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Association of Schools.

Would you believe I prepared today's remarks while riding a Dattco bus, chaperoning our senior class trip last weekend? It dawned on me when we departed for Williamsburg/Virginia Beach last Friday that by the time I returned to school yesterday, I would be in no state of mind to share my remarks for today's gathering.

First and foremost, I want to express my gratitude to each of you for bestowing upon me the honor and privilege of serving as President of the Connecticut Association of Schools. This coming June, I will complete my 40th year in secondary education. Even though I've been around a few years, and continue to learn, it is amazing what I have learned through my association with CAS and the exemplary staff members who makes things happen under the leadership of Mike Savage.

I began my presidency last summer with a “sit down” dialogue with the CAS executive staff. Our discussion focused not only on what we saw as the strengths of our association, but on areas where we felt we could, working collectively as a team, move our association forward and expand the services provided to our member schools, the administrators who lead them, and the more than six hundred forty thousand school children enrolled in public and parochial schools throughout Connecticut.

My agenda for last summer's meeting was to become better informed about all CAS services; to heighten my sensitivity to the actual role each CAS employee plays delivering such services; and to brainstorm how to better promote what we are all about

and how we can continue to work as a team through sharing responsibilities and responding to the needs of our member schools.

I saw our summer '04 meeting as a challenge and since that time, I believe we have made significant forward movement to enhance the needs of member schools. Boards of Directors' meetings have been restructured to facilitate good discussion and feedback from all board members. We have defined goals which have become working strategies for improvement of services to our membership. Members of our executive board have, at my invitation, been invited to extend best wishes on behalf of CAS during annual traditional events sponsored by the association, such as the scholars-leader, scholar-athlete, and elementary arts banquets.

With each new school year come professional and/or CAS board decisions that we categorize as "highlights" for that particular year. This school year is no exception and some of our accomplishments may be viewed as short-term while others will definitely have a long-term, lasting impact on our association.

As a result of Bob Carrolls' initiatives and leadership, the CAS-sponsored Tsunami relief effort engaged our member schools and raised more than \$250,000 as of today. That money will be matched by Brothers Brother Foundation of Pittsburgh, PA to construct an entire school for the village of Sri Lanka located off the Southern tip of India. Over 300 members schools participated in this outstanding fundraising effort—what an accomplishment thanks to Bob's efforts, our member schools, and the students who made it happen!

Our first ever “Congressional Roundtable” brought congressional leaders home, together, to hear member school principals’ reactions to federal legislation and regulations that will either make us or break us as we pursue educating today’s youth--- who are the decision-makers of tomorrow.

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of Dennis Carethers, in conjunction with the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, CAS offered seminars to over 80 professionals representing 18 school districts on school accreditation.

If I had to pick one decision made this year by our board that will have a lasting impact on our association, it would be the collaboration with UCONN on the UCAPP program. CAS will take on, under the leadership of Mike Buckley and the Principal’s Center, the responsibility to administer the internship component of the UCAPP program. I expect that this model administration certification program will put CAS in the national limelight in the not too distant future.

My vision for CAS regarding what’s coming down the pike, in my opinion, relates to the need for us to identify exemplary teachers who possess the necessary leadership/people skills to become effective school leaders in the very near future. It is projected that with anticipated retirements, we will not have the manpower necessary to effectively lead our schools. Today, we now have a golden opportunity to identify resources right before our eyes. Who are in a better position than we are to identify the cream of the crop, the best of the best, to become the future leaders for our elementary and secondary school member schools.

As administrators, step up to the plate, identify talent from within and do all in your power to develop leadership. CAS as an organization must also step up to the plate

and focus on ways to attract and engage new members as volunteers for our organization. Our success always directly relates to our membership. Without each of you we would not be where we are today—one of the most credible state associations in our country. We need to now take the necessary steps to expand our pool of volunteers and I appeal to each of you today to set a goal to invite and engage a new administrator from within your school district to recognize the professional obligation to become active in our association.

In closing, I would like, on behalf of the CAS Board and I am sure all of our member schools, to take this opportunity to express our thanks and deep appreciation to Mike Savage our executive director, all of our associate directors, all of our office staff, and other CAS employees for their ongoing commitment to our association, display of work ethic, and willingness to always go above and beyond to insure that all CAS services and/or functions are delivered in exemplary fashion. Unless we are here to regularly observe the behind the scenes action, we do not have a clue what it takes to get the job done.

Mike, with Mrs. Savage's illness this year, the year has been very trying for you. I am sure you know everyone here today extends their best wishes and prayers for Margaret and that we all wish her a speedy recovery.

I hope you leave today's conference, after experiencing some changes to past traditions, feeling good about your association. I would welcome your thoughts for growth and improvement of our services to member schools. Thank you for your services to CAS and thank you in advance for making a sincere effort to engage a fellow

administrator who, up until now, has not extended him or herself beyond the school walls to support our organization's continued growth and development.

Enjoy the rest of the day. I am sure you will leave feeling very good about the stability of our association