

# TENNESSEE PRINCIPAL

JOURNAL OF THE  
TENNESSEE PRINCIPALS ASSOCIATION

*Inside Fall 2012 Issue:*

- *National Distinguished Principal*
- *Extended Learning Time*
- *Evaluation Updates*







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Articles printed may be quite divergent in point of view and controversial as TPA feels that our members can best be served through discussions which challenge and stimulate their thinking. Therefore, the articles published in the journal represent the ideas and/or beliefs of the authors and do not necessarily express the view of TPA unless so stated.

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**Volume XXIII – Fall 2012**



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## Fall 2012

**Volume XXIII**  
**Fall 2012**

### On the Cover



Our cover shows just a few of the important initiatives that principals are facing. This edition focuses on how you can find some of the information you need to continue to be productive. Staying involved in your professional organizations will help you stay informed.

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# Editor's Page



## **Catherine Prentis**

Principal, Retired

Email: [c1prentis@gmail.com](mailto:c1prentis@gmail.com)

Dear Friends:

These are exciting and confusing times, did you get that idea from the cover? If you attended the fall TPA conference in Murfreesboro you have a good preview of what this journal contains. It was all about our direction for this year that will surely shape our profession for the next decade. This edition of your Tennessee Principal has important information about how to access the help you need

TPA and NAESP are committed to supporting today's principals and their need to provide leadership in a changing environment. Everyone has an opinion about what is wrong with education, but our professional associations are actually trying to provide us with guidance on how to increase school effectiveness. Both organizations are committed to doing whatever it takes to make our profession thrive. They are not about preserving the status quo, but about continuing to grow a profession that can deliver an educated population ready for the future. If you are not a member of TPA/NAESP, please join us. There is strength in numbers and we must be strong in order to survive and thrive. You'll find a membership form on page 19, but you can also get one on the website. Check out page 18 for information on the NAESP convention next summer. Note the timing is a change from the normal spring schedule.

Before I retired (Oh, yes, I did!) I was always on the hunt for positive articles that I could share with my teaching staff. Beginning on page 26 is a great find for your teachers and yourself from Dr. Robert Brooks. "Gathering Strength" is about being an inspiration to others, a timely topic for educators today.

Having lead an "extended day" school, I have been searching for definitive research on the effectiveness of the practice of adding time to the school day. I've heard many educators speak on the pros and cons, but I've seen little actual data. Starting on page 10 is the first exhaustive compilation of what we know to date on the topic. You'll see that extended learning time is a very complex topic. I hope you enjoy it.

A big "THANK YOU" goes out to Amy Downey, Constance Hayes and their committees for a very successful Fall Leadership conference. Read about the major speakers starting on page 14. I want to send my appreciation to all the speakers for being a part of the conference, but especially to Emily Barton and Sharon Roberts for taking the time to speak to me on the topics of CCSS and Teacher Evaluation. Their remarks are included in that article.

I really am enjoying my retirement and continued participation with TPA. It was great to see so many of my friends and former colleagues at the conference. I hope that when it is your time to make this transition, you look around for those great opportunities to continue to be involved. Everyday I see areas where I can be productive and advance education. I'd love to hear your stories of where you are helping. I also hope you continue to participate in TPA/NAESP as a retiree.

**Find Us On The Web At [www.tnprinassoc.org](http://www.tnprinassoc.org)**

# Message from the President



**Kim R. Headrick**  
**2012-13 TPA President**

Principal  
Whitwell Middle School  
Email: [kheadrick@mctns.net](mailto:kheadrick@mctns.net)

Puff, puff, chug, chug, went the Little Blue Engine. "I think I can. I think I can. I think I can. I think I can..."

Certainly we can all identify the book associated with the previous passage, *The Little Engine That Could* by Watty Piper. As you recall details from the beginning of the story, there was a happy train with a jolly load of toys and goodies to deliver to the children. Isn't this a similar mission that we have as principals? We are the trains on a wonderful, happy journey to deliver an education to our children. Education is a good thing, much like the load of the train.

Just as we do each day, the train was puffing along merrily when it suddenly stopped with a jerk. Suddenly her wheels would not turn. With all of the recent changes in Tennessee's education, I am sure that you have felt that you have suddenly stopped and that your wheels would not turn. Every day demands have caused principals to sometimes feel as if we could not go another inch.

However, as the story continues, help finally arrives in the form of the Little Blue Engine. The engine hitched to the broken train and began to tug and pull in an effort to help,

all the time saying, "I think I can. I think I can. I think I can." Without support and collaboration, the broken train would never have made it over the mountain.

Principals also need help. We too need support in getting our wheels to turn so that we can make it over the mountain with our delivery. This support and collaboration has been provided to us from many partners, including, but not limited to: the state department, SCORE, NAESP, and the Tennessee Principals Association.

TPA's mission is to be the advocate and collaborative support that principals need, both professionally and personally. The association provides a network of professionals who are willing to support. Information is readily available, current, and research based. Professional development opportunities are meaningful and pertinent.

Working collaboratively with our partners, especially TPA, principals can make it over the mountain and deliver the best education to our children and say, along with the Little Engine That Could, "I thought I could. I thought I could. I thought I could."



TPA Members Attending the 2011 Annual Conference in Memphis Last Year

# In The Zone



**Teresa Dennis**  
**NAESP Zone 4 Director**

**Principal**  
Ruby Major Elementary  
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The NAESP Board of Directors met in Washington, D.C. at the Capitol Hilton October 15-19 in preparation for the National Distinguished Principal Awards. This year marked the 29th anniversary for the NDP program. The principals chosen exemplify educational leadership of the highest quality.

As Zone 4 Director I had the honor of hosting the eight honorees from the Southeastern states of Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida and Tennessee. The honorees were treated to two days of activities which included a tour of the White House gardens, a reception at the National Archives and an Awards dinner with Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, as the speaker.

Susan Espiritu, principal of Pond Gap Elementary in Knoxville was the NDP from Tennessee. She was joined by Catherine Rogers from Alabama, Bonnie Cangelosi from Florida, Debbie Rodriguez and Kerry Coursey from Georgia, Richard Burge from Mississippi, Patrice Faison from North Carolina and Christina Melton from South Carolina.

## **Zone 4 National Distinguished Principals pictured above:**

Bonnie Cangelosi (top left),  
Catherine B. Rogers, (top right),  
Christina Melton (middle left),  
Kerry Coursey (middle right)  
Patrice Faison (lower left)  
George Burge (lower right).

Editors note: Teresa Dennis was appointed to complete the unexpired term of Nancy Meador, new president-elect of NAESP.  
Welcome Teresa!



### **Tennessee's NDP**

**Susan D. Espiritu**  
See her story on Page 8



# National Distinguished Principal

## In her own words

"I am most proud of the staff that I have at Pond Gap. I attribute this individual recognition as being a direct collective reflection of their willingness to try anything and everything to help students to succeed by removing the barriers to learning. To that end, they have overwhelmingly voted for and embraced pilot programs that improve teaching practice in the school (the TAP program), provide more equality for students by requiring uniforms for students, and assisting for the additional needs for our students with the after school Community School program. Without exception, my staff is collaborative, professional, dedicated and supportive of not only each other, but of every student that walks in our door. They truly believe they are on a mission to make a difference. So, I am blessed to be able to do what I do every day and have labeled as "my work" because it truly blesses me daily." - SE



## My Family:

I married at 16, finished UT at 20 and have been married to the same man for 38 years. I have 3 children, ages 34, 31, 28. My oldest girl and her husband have 3 girls (5, 2, 10 months). My middle daughter and her husband have 3 boys (5, 4, 2), and my youngest son and his wife have a 3 year old daughter.

I taught for 20+ years, was a curriculum coach for 1 year and asst. principal for 1 year and principal for 8 years.



Here is Julie Thompson, last year's NDP from Tennessee, surprising me during our end of the year awards ceremony with the banner and flowers with the announcement. My supervisors were there but I thought they had come to finish my year end observation and just had impeccable timing.!



**I love working directly with my students.**



# Susan Espiritu - Pond Gap Elementary School

## Mrs. Espiritu's students believe she is a distinguished principal

Skylie 3rd Grade "A good principal for her school, and possibly a good example."

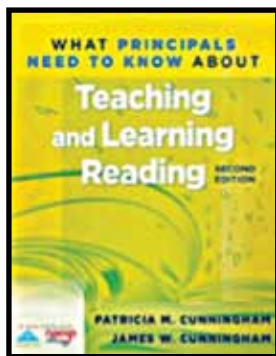
Stephen 5th Grade "She is different from other principals in a good way. She doesn't fit into the normal principal standard. She is not boring. She is fun!"

Nadia 4th Grade "It means to be a good principal like for a whole year. They go to meetings and help teachers teach us."

Mekiah Grade 5 "I think being a distinguished principal is a principal who runs a school really good and cares about the students and does a lot for them."

Barrett Grade 3 "I think it is a national principal who keeps the school running and helps other principals keep their schools running. Principals keep the school running and if someone is in trouble they talk to them and maybe get them a counselor, like if they're being bullied."

Kenia Grade 4 "A distinguished principal is a really good person who helps a lot of people. Principals help teachers, students, and other people understand and learn."



## Phonics, Fluency, Focus: Tactics for Teaching Reading

One of the most fundamental skills a child must learn in school is how to read, but Patricia M. Cunningham and James W. Cunningham argue that sometimes we take for granted how complex it truly is. Their new book, *What Principals Need to Know About Teaching and Learning Reading*, points out that "Adults—who have been reading for so long—often do not realize the many complicated actions that happen in the brain as we read."

Using the latest research on reading comprehension and instruction makes for a well-informed and comprehensive overview of the field. But their book offers even more, and can be used as "a tool that helps you elevate the teaching of reading in your school, not just a book about reading."

*What Principals Need to Know* contains a wealth of information on the best practices for areas such as phonics and fluency instruction, teaching literacy in content areas, and reading motivation. In each chapter, the authors provide extensive resources for school leaders and educators hoping to learn more about reading instruction. They also offer advice on strategically implementing successful reading programs at schools. Practical, research-based ideas are suggested to improve reading instruction:

To make the most of literacy instruction, we recommend that the master schedule give priority to blocks of uninterrupted time for literacy instruction—at least 120 minutes in the primary grades and 90 minutes in the upper grades (Allington & Cunningham, 2007). For primary students, it is important that this uninterrupted time be before lunch because many young children are much more able to engage in academic work in the morning. Older students need uninterrupted time as well, but that time can, if necessary, be scheduled in the afternoon. The time must be truly uninterrupted—students should not be pulled out for special instruction, parents should not be allowed to drop in on the classrooms, and only in true emergencies should the intercom or telephone interrupt instruction.

*What Principals Need to Know About Teaching and Learning Reading* is an invaluable asset to anyone who wants to improve their school's reading instruction in an effective and meaningful way.

—Dateline NAESP

# Off the Clock

## A closer look at Extended Learning Time

**In a back-to-school visit to his hometown of Chicago last fall, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan applauded his successors for accomplishing something he had always wanted to: adding time to the school day.** We were unable to do this before, but [we] should have, Duncan said of his efforts as school superintendent to give Chicago students more time on task. In the years since, promotion of extended learning time (ELT) has been embraced not just by Chicago leaders but by policy leaders and advocates nationwide who say that today students, particularly impoverished ones, cannot possibly get everything they need to succeed within the traditional 6.5 hour school day and the 180 day school year.

Their arguments have been persuasive. Despite unprecedented cuts to public education budgets, support and funding for ELT have grown considerably in the past several years. Advocates cite studies showing that, compared to wealthier peers whose afternoons are filled with enriching and educational activities, poor children have limited access to quality learning outside of school. It is a pattern that begins in their earliest years and accumulates through high school. ELT, they say, can close that opportunity gap. Now, with the support of policy makers like Secretary Duncan, ELT is becoming one of the most widely used strategies for the nation's worst public schools. Billions of federal stimulus dollars are currently being spent to expand learning time on behalf of disadvantaged children.

**Congressional leaders working to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) have proposed making ELT a core strategy for school turnaround. The U.S. Department of Education's parallel effort to give** states waivers from the current version of ESEA also includes a major bet on ELT. But the hard truth is that there is far more research showing the ill effects of unequal time than research showing that ELT policies can make up the difference. Less time may be a cause of poor performance, but that doesn't mean that more time is necessarily the cure. Indeed, despite the fact that ELT was recommended almost 20 years ago by a federally commissioned task force, it has never been systematically tracked or widely studied. And what research does exist shows that it has had only small positive effects on student achievement.

There are strong reasons to fear that the current wave of federal ELT policy making will show similarly meager results. In 2011, Education Sector conducted a comprehensive analysis of applications for funding from the stimulus-based School Improvement Grant (SIG) program,

which was designed to improve the nation's worst schools.

More than 90 percent of all SIG grantees chose a school improvement strategy that incorporates ELT. Some of the applicants described comprehensive, well-designed strategies to substantially increase student learning time and use that time well. But others included strategies like, absurdly, shaving a few minutes off recess and lunch and redirecting them to instruction. Far too many SIG grantees showed a lack of capacity, the staff, the structures, the funds, to gain enough time to make a difference or to use that time well. None of this is to say that ELT cannot work. But schools that have succeeded with extended time have done so largely because they include time as part of a more comprehensive reform.

In Massachusetts, a leader in ELT, schools must commit to redesigning their entire educational program, including staffing, labor agreements, compensation, and scheduling, to receive state ELT funds. These schools are not just adding time to compensate for what they lack; they are integrating time into an overall model for successful teaching and learning. Most of the schools that are pursuing ELT under new federal programs, however, are not using this approach. They are choosing technical compliance with federal rules instead of the hard work of comprehensive reform. And federal policy makers are not insisting that they do otherwise. The result could be worse than merely ineffective. These schools are by definition among the nation's worst performing, characterized by struggling students, chronic absenteeism, and inexperienced staffs. Demanding that teachers work more hours in such an environment threatens to repel rather than attract the very educators these schools need.

**The best ELT plans have real potential to improve student learning. But many of today's ELT adopters, constrained by limited and temporary funds, are effectively favoring quantity over quality.** And they have no plans for sustaining even their modest ambitions. The inevitable result of these shortcomings will be failure: a promising movement fades, improvement strategies falter, teachers get fed up and leave. New designs for extended time should be a part of the nation's school improvement plans. But policy makers and school leaders must recognize that successful schools use time not just to extend hours and days but to creatively improve how and by whom students are taught.

It is widely believed that today's school calendar is based on agrarian time, when children needed to be out of school

# by Elena Silva of Education Sector

long enough to help with seasonal planting. That is only partly true. Urban school calendars have shortened over time, reduced from almost year-round schedules in the

19th century. And rural schools typically operated for six months, split seasonally. But it was not farming that led to the roughly 180 day school year. Our current calendar was mostly a result of well intentioned efforts to create common schedules, a blend of urban and rural, that would align with the compulsory attendance laws that states were quickly adopting in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Today, school time is still defined by states, which require a minimum number of days to make up a school year and a minimum amount of instructional minutes or hours to count as a school day. Some states leave it up to districts to define minimum daily time, but most require between three and six and a half hours. The states also usually decide what counts as instructional hours and what doesn't, and those determinations vary widely. Some states, for instance, count passing periods, lunch, assemblies, and assessments as instructional time, while others discount one or all of these. But requirements don't always equate to student success.

**A simple correlation analysis of state time policies and achievement scores finds that states that require more time don't perform any better or worse than those that require less or don't set requirements.** This is not surprising, given what we know about the relationship between time and learning. There is an enormous difference between time that is technically allocated for instruction and time spent authentically engaging students in learning. Studies have found no significant positive relationship between the amount of mere allocated time and student achievement. Put simply, not all time in school has the same impact on learning. While this may be obvious to educators who struggle to balance time spent directing and disciplining students with time spent actually teaching them, it is a significant practical consideration for education leaders and policy makers.

**In effect, there is no clear measure for how any time, much less additional time, is being used in schools. But it is safe to say that many schools are using time inefficiently and that adding time would not change this.** That is not to say that schools don't need more time. Research is clear on another point that there is a wide gap in access to learning opportunities between poor children and their more affluent peers. In large part, the gap is created in the hours outside of school, time during which well resourced students are enrolled in or exposed to a range of activities from dance and swimming lessons to

karate and robotics classes, while low-income students are watching television, caring for siblings, and working. More time in school, then, means less time for these differences to add up and matter. But the opportunity gap isn't restricted to out-of-school time. Poor children are more likely to attend schools with less experienced teachers, more leader and staff turnover, cultures of low expectation, and overall records of failure. Given these handicaps, it makes sense for the nation to focus on improving the lowest-performing schools, the priority that is codified in current and proposed federal law as well as in the Obama administration's waiver plan. It also makes sense to emphasize extending time as a component of school designs that serve poor children equitably. But more time in itself is not enough to counter the sobering reality that these lowest-performing schools just don't have the people they need. A look at schools currently using ELT bears this out. Roughly 1,000 public schools in the nation are now operating with extended schedules, according to the National Center on Time and Learning (NCTL), meaning that they have added at least 30 minutes to their schedules each day. Although they include a number of traditional public schools, more than 60 percent of them are charter schools. Most serve high percentages of poor and minority students and English-language learners.

In Massachusetts, the ELT initiative led by the state advocacy group Mass 2020 received its sixth round of state funding in 2011 despite deep cuts to the state education budget. The money supports 19 public schools in nine districts, each receiving \$1,300 a year per student for 300 hours of additional time and a redesign of the school's academic program. To win the state funds, as well as technical assistance from Mass 2020, schools must prove that they are capable of adding time in thoughtful and strategic ways. The NCTL database also includes schools that belong to successful charter networks, including KIPP, Uncommon Schools, Achievement First, and YES Prep. All are organizations that are premised on the belief that more time is essential for delivering high quality education to low-income children. But there is a whole other world of schools planning to extend time, schools that are adding time because they are being pushed by federal policy makers.

The U.S. Department of Education is investing \$3.5 billion over three years through the SIG program to improve the country's lowest-performing 5 percent of schools, and more than 90 percent of them are selecting one of the two models, turnaround and transformation, that mandate more time. That translates into 4,000 schools and roughly 2 million students. According to the Education Commission



# Off the Clock...

of the States and NCTL, the SIG program represents the largest public funding stream available to support more time. And it is not likely to be the only one. In the Senate bill reauthorizing ESEA, extended time shows up as an alternative to Supplemental Education Services (SES), the federal program that offers free out-of-school tutoring to low-income students through community providers. (Most studies of SES find few, if any, positive effects on student achievement, but strong support from parents, many of whom rely on SES to keep their children busy while they work.)

**Extended time is also an option in the federal government's 21st Century Community Learning Center program, another out-of-school initiative.** Under proposed changes, district leaders could use 21CCLC funds to extend learning time in school rather than, or in addition to, starting out-of-school programs. Support for ELT as a key school turnaround principle, also figures into the administration's waiver plan to excuse states from the accountability requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act in exchange for acceptable state-led reforms.

**The Department of Education defines increased learning time as the use of a longer school day, week, or year to significantly boost the number of school hours for core academic subjects as well for other subjects and enrichment activities that contribute to well-rounded education.** According to this definition, extended time must be available to all students, not just to a targeted group, and schools must provide teachers with additional time to collaborate, plan, and engage in professional development within and across grades and subjects. Borrowing from Mass 2020 guidelines, the federal government also asserts that an ELT schedule should increase a school schedule by at least 300 hours and require more time for teacher planning and development.

**Adding time, more than revising curriculum, or altering staff recruitment and hiring, or putting a new evaluation system in place, seems simple. But like money, time is only a resource; whether it will help children learn depends on how it is used.** Nationwide, these schools are more likely to be in urban neighborhoods and to have high-minority, high-poverty student populations. Their teachers are more apt to be new and teaching a subject or grade outside their area of expertise. Despite the difficulty of the job, they have little support, and they work in a pervasive culture among staff and students alike of low expectations. In the vernacular of education policy, these schools are hard to staff. In the words of teachers, they are toxic. Imagine, then, that you teach in one of these schools,

and you are informed of a new set of reforms that includes longer days and a longer year. You are not convinced that this reform plan, which isn't the first and isn't likely to be the last, will transform the school. You are certain, however, that it will make your hard job even harder. Meanwhile, just a few miles down the road, a nice suburban school faces only a fraction of your problems, it pays more and, more important, it doesn't need to extend its hours. Unlike most of your students, you have the choice to leave. As with half of teachers at the difficult schools, you do.

This typical reaction explains why, although the significance of teachers for student learning is now well-documented and accepted, adding time to the nation's worst schools is not drawing good teachers in and may even be pushing them away. Indeed, with some notable exceptions, the move to extend time in low-performing schools doesn't include much attention to how it will staff this extra time, now and in years to come, or how it will ensure that more time is any better than existing time. A school's plans to add time, then, can have little or nothing to do with the long list of other turnaround requirements, like assessing and replacing teachers, improving staff evaluation and professional development, using student data to inform instruction, and adopting whole new governance structures. For these schools, supported by an infusion of new funds but not much else, the most practical approach is the easiest one. Adding time, more than revising curriculum, or altering staff recruitment and hiring, or putting a new evaluation system in place, seems simple. But like money, time is only a resource; whether it will help children learn depends on how it is used.

**So what are schools, tasked with extending learning, doing with more time?** Education Sector has analyzed the available data on schools that have extended time, including a sample of SIG grantees and the database from the NCTL. We find that schools are taking a wide range of approaches to extending learning time, and that the efforts are organized loosely within three main designs: adding time to the formal school schedule, expanding learning outside of the regular school schedule, and changing the way time is used within the school day. What follows is a look at each of these designs. Some show clear potential, while others face considerable limits to implementation.

## Adding Time to the School Day

Adding minutes or hours to the school day, while it is perhaps the most straightforward and familiar way of extending time, is actually the least common approach among SIG grantees, largely because it is expensive and

## .... continued

typically means changing teacher work schedules. On average, schools that pursued this option added roughly 70 minutes to each day, or 210 hours to their year, well short of those 300-plus hours recommended by the federal government.

Two notable exceptions are Burke Alternative School West in Morgantown, N.C., which merged with an alternative high school and added 180 minutes a day four days a week, primarily for students to make up lost credits, and Grandview Middle School, in the lower Yakima Valley of Washington, which extended its day by 90 minutes four days a week in an effort to double the time that nearly every student spends on math. Students at Grandview Middle are glad for the extra time. It just feels like we're getting more, said 13-year-old Melissa Ramos. And they are. Like the other dozen SIG schools in the Yakima Valley, each receiving between \$50,000 and \$2 million for up to three years, Grandview is spending huge amounts of its SIG funds to supplement teacher salaries, the most expensive item in any school budget, as well as on additional staff, outside consultants, and student transportation.

One of the biggest success stories of ELT is, not surprisingly, in Massachusetts. Matthew J. Kuss Middle School in Fall River has transformed itself from the first in the state to be declared chronically underperforming in 2004 to a school that is not even eligible for SIG funds today. Since adopting an added-time schedule in 2006, Kuss gives all its students 30 percent more time in school (including on Saturdays) and provides additional development time for teachers, almost all of whom have increased their work hours: instructors now have nine individual planning periods, a grade-level meeting, and at least one curriculum meeting each week.

While the regular day's curriculum is dictated by the district, Kuss Principal Nancy Mullen explains, the ELT curriculum is decided by the teachers so it's aligned with standards but also meets the real needs of our students and gets delivered in a much more engaging and project-based way. Mullen says more time isn't the only reason for the school's success, but it's a big one. Significantly, this kind of time carries a big price: teacher salaries at Kuss increased by 25 percent. Without state funding for ELT, Mullen isn't sure how she would fund those increases; the budget is now about \$800,000 annually for teachers and other staff costs alone. But she says she would try.

While these expenses are covered for SIG schools in the short term, financially strapped districts are unsure of how they will pay for more time three years from now,

when the SIG money runs out. Indeed, the personnel costs alone of extending time are estimated to be at least \$1,300 more per student per year. And temporary bonuses for teachers to work extra hours are not the answer; districts that pay teachers more to teach in high-poverty, low-performing schools have found limited success with bonuses, even up to \$25,000 and even within the regular school schedule. Paying teachers for extra time usually also means revising contracts, a process often marked by arduous union negotiations. In Chicago, the recent push for ELT was initially rejected outright by the teachers union, which balked at a 2 percent raise in exchange for teaching 20 percent more time. Thanks but no thanks, said union president Karen Lewis. Negotiations between district and union were so tense that they led to intervention by the state labor relations board and the state attorney's office.

Houston is also trying a districtwide approach to adding time, hoping it will help turn around its lowest-performing schools. These so-called Apollo 20 schools are adding an hour to each day and a week to each year. Although they are district schools, they are openly borrowing from successful charter groups like KIPP, listing more time as one of five tenets of success. (The other four are an effective staffing plan, data-driven instruction, intensive tutoring, and a culture of high expectations.) The district's plan was initiated by Harvard economist Roland Fryer, who says his aim is to boil down charter school successes into translatable, scalable practices for public schools. The Apollo 20 plan also enjoys substantial outside support; the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, for example, is paying for two-year bonuses for teachers, and other private and government grants provide the schools with an extra \$2,000 per student.

**A less expensive, and less controversial, staffing option is to stagger teacher schedules so the total number of hours worked by each teacher is the same but the schedule for students is lengthened.** The Generation Schools foundation has successfully taken this approach in its flagship school in Brooklyn, N.Y., which it opened in 2007 through a partnership between the New York City Department of Education and the union. Last year, the foundation took its all hands on deck model, where teachers all serve multiple roles in staggered shifts, to Denver. In January, the Denver Board of Education voted to allow Generation Schools to implement its design at two academy schools at the former Denver West High School.

As they do in Brooklyn, the schools will have tremendous autonomy over scheduling, budget, and professional

# TPA Annual Conference



## **Dr. Sharon Roberts, Chief Operating Officer, SCORE**

Dr. Sharon Roberts leads SCORE's outreach program, targeting and engaging stakeholders across the state. Prior to joining SCORE, She served as Director of the Lebanon (TN) Special School District. She began her career in education as a special education teacher in the Grainger County School System. Sharon worked for more than 21 years in the Knox County School System where she served as a special education teacher, middle school science and reading teacher, instructional coach, principal, Assistant Superintendent for Supplementary Student Services, and Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services. She currently serves on several boards

that further the cause of professional learning and advocacy for children, including the Learning Forward Foundation, and the 15th Judicial District Child Advocacy Center. Sharon is a native of Knoxville, and received her Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral degrees from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville.

In a recent conversation with Dr. Sharon Roberts, who headed up the efforts of SCORE to obtain feedback on the new teacher evaluation process, I asked her what she saw as the most critical issue in the educator evaluation process. She emphasized that the most important issue is the need for fidelity of implementation, regardless the model being used. When asked how fidelity can best be achieved, she pointed to high quality and ongoing training for both evaluators and teachers. How then can effective training be achieved in large group settings that this sort of statewide effort requires? Dr. Roberts suggested that districts might institute a system of professional learning communities that provides opportunities to discuss what effective teaching looks like. For example, smaller groups of administrative practitioners could be given opportunities to view videos or live classroom instruction, score the lessons, and then discuss their results. In this way the evaluators are able to learn the system in more depth, with an emphasis on the underlying meaning of the vocabulary within the rubric and the decision making process when applying the rubric to a wide range of classroom situations. She cited the regional model that Memphis has incorporated into their principal training as an example of this kind of "best practice." Teachers also could benefit from their principal or instructional coach leading them in a similar exercise using a video of a highly effective lesson. Such experiences provide teachers with real job-embedded professional learning.

## **Through the work of Dr. Roberts and her committees the following recommendations, based on feedback through SCORE listening process, were given to the State Board of Education.**

1. Ensure current and prospective teachers and leaders receive sufficient training in the new evaluation system.
2. Link the feedback that teachers receive with high-quality, collaborative, and individualized professional learning opportunities so that they can improve their instruction.
3. Address challenges with the current quantitative and qualitative measures of teacher effectiveness.
4. Support school and district leaders in becoming strong instructional leaders capable of assessing and developing effective teaching – and hold them accountable for doing so.
5. Re-engage educators in those districts where implementation of the teacher evaluation system has faltered during the first year of work.
6. Integrate the ongoing implementation of the new teacher evaluation system and the common core state standards so that they work together to improve student outcomes.
7. Drive continuous improvement of the teacher evaluation system at the state, district, and school levels.

## **Recommendations from the State Board of Education**

- I. Measurement of the quantitative impact on student performance (all evaluation models)
  1. The state should ensure that additional teachers have access to an individual value-added growth measure, while maintaining the principle that assessments should only be added when they will benefit student performance and should not be added for the sole purpose of measuring teachers. Responsible party: Department of Education.
  2. The prohibition on including students with disabilities in calculating an individual teacher's value-added score should be removed. This prohibition prevents accurate measurement of special education teachers, does not align with the state's goal of improving outcomes for all students, and is based on the statistically inaccurate presumption that students with disabilities will harm teacher effect scores. Responsible party: General Assembly.



# Major Speakers

3. Teachers who do not have access to individual value-added scores should continue to have a portion of their evaluation come from school-wide value-added scores given the positive impact on academic standards this year. However, that portion should be reduced from 35 percent to a lower threshold. Responsible party: General Assembly.
4. School-wide value-added scores should be based on a one-year score rather than a three-year score. While it makes sense, where possible, to use three-year averages for individuals because of smaller sample sizes, school-wide scores can and should be based on one-year data. Responsible party: Department of Education.
5. Teachers with individual value-added scores who receive a 4 or 5 on TVAAS should be allowed to use that score to count for 100 percent of their total evaluation score. Because the TVAAS score comes at the end of the year, these teachers would still receive feedback from observations during the year. Responsible party: General Assembly.
6. The options available for the 15 percent achievement portion of the evaluation scores should be significantly limited, prioritizing options that can be calculated prior to the start of the following school year and ensuring that the options provide legitimate measures of impact on achievement. After one year, the General Assembly should revisit the 15 percent measure and consider removing this as a factor in evaluations if the measure does not align with student outcomes. Responsible parties: State Board of Education & General Assembly.

## II. Changes to the qualitative rubric (TEAM model)

1. The instructional components of the rubric should be left largely intact to build on successful implementation and to increase educator familiarity with the rubric. The department should undergo a careful examination during the coming year to determine if there are ways to streamline the rubric further for 2013-14. Responsible party: Department of Education.
2. The state should continue to train evaluators to use the rubric holistically and should provide professional development to ensure that teachers and evaluators understand that the rubric should not be viewed as a checklist. Responsible party: Department of Education.
3. The state should provide access to additional examples of performance levels for teachers through increased video libraries, sample lessons, and through facilitation of peer-to-peer observations. Responsible party: Department of Education.
4. The professionalism component of the rubric should be significantly reduced and streamlined. There are redundancies in the rubric and significant grade inflation led to artificial inflation in overall scores. Responsible parties: State Board of Education & Department of Education.
5. The state should explore the use and funding of student surveys and pilot programs to use video scoring of observations at district discretion. Each of these areas has shown significant promise in national pilots and we should encourage their use in Tennessee. Responsible party: Department of Education.

## III. Increases in process efficiencies (all evaluation models)

1. Teachers who receive a 5 on either their overall evaluation score or on their individual TVAAS score should have a more streamlined evaluation process the following year. This process should include one full-length observation and two additional short, unscheduled visits with limited paperwork. Responsible parties: State Board of Education & Department of Education.
2. Teachers who receive a 1 on either their overall evaluation score or on their individual TVAAS score should have additional, unannounced, full-length observations with feedback to ensure they receive professional development to improve. Because many evaluators systematically failed to identify the lowest-performing teachers in 2011-12, it is critical that this policy include teachers who receive a 1 on the individual TVAAS score, meaning that students in their classes advanced significantly less than would be expected. Responsible parties: State Board of Education & Department of Education.
3. The evaluation data system should continue to be measured and streamlined to increase efficiencies, reduce time and paperwork on school districts, and allow for increased functionality. Responsible party: Department of Education.

## IV. Management of district implementation (all evaluation models)

1. Currently, under the provisions of State Board of Education's Teacher and Principal Evaluation Policy 5.201, districts that have a significant variance between value-added scores and observation scores can lose their right to implement alternative evaluation models and can be subject to more intensive state monitoring. The board, with the assistance of the department, should more clearly define what this means. As part of this intervention, evaluators with observation scores that deviate significantly from the quantitative scores should have their certification as evaluators re-evaluated and be required to attend re-certification classes. Responsible parties: State Board of Education & Department of Education.
2. The state should utilize its eight Centers of Regional Excellence (Field Service Centers) to provide district and school leaders with increased access to professional development in areas of high need of evaluation implementation. Responsible party: Department of Education.

# TPA Annual Conference Speakers



## **Kenneth Williams** **Solution Tree** **Strengthening Collaborative Leadership**

Williams is a former teacher, assistant principal, and principal. He shares his experience and expertise as a recognized trainer, speaker, coach, and consultant in education and leadership. Ken is the chief visionary officer of Unfold the Soul, LLC, a company dedicated to inspiring individuals and teams to perform at the highest level. Skilled in developing productive, student-focused learning environments, Ken is former principal of The Learning Academy at E. J. Swint in Jonesboro, Georgia, and Damascus Elementary School in Damascus, Maryland. His firsthand experience with transforming challenged schools translates into action-oriented presentations that inspire hope, create a clear vision, and offer practical strategies to those overwhelmed by challenges.

His leadership was crucial to creating a successful professional learning community (PLC) at Damascus, a challenged school that needed a new direction. The results of his efforts can be seen across all grade levels. Over a two-year period, the school's state standardized test scores revealed a significant increase in the percentage of students performing at proficient and advanced levels. The process of building a PLC at E. J. Swint continues thanks to Ken's work in laying a solid foundation in this under served community.

## **Emily Barton** **TDOE Assistant Commissioner of Curriculum and Instruction**



At the TPA Annual Conference Barton explored, Common Core State Standards (CCSS), what they should look like in teaching and learning and why they are important to students of today. She shared with me her perspective on the following questions:

Why we are transitioning to Common Core?

Common Core has unique features that are important for everyone to understand. And the standards are grounded in research about the skills students need to compete in today's economy.

Are there plans to keep the new standards living?

We don't yet have a great answer to that question, but there is great interest in ensuring that the standards keep up with the needs of higher education and employers.

What about the writing assessment.?

The new writing assessment is built around text-based prompts. We plan to release anchor papers soon. The rubric was released in October and is currently available on the website at [www.tncore.org](http://www.tncore.org). Grades 8th and 11th will take writing on line this year.

What is the future of training for CCSS?

The training is extensive and scheduled for January – May of this year. The full schedule is also listed on the web.

How are you going to track the fidelity of the training?

Summer training will reach 30,00 teachers. We plan to train outstanding educators to implement local training and follow up with teachers. Principals are receiving overviews of CCSS in as many venues as possible, including LEAD conference and TPA.

What about districts that do not have technology to meet the future assessment needs?

Longer testing windows should enable all districts to accommodate students with their current level of technology, however the department is involved in budget discussions regarding the future needs. Pilot/field testing will happen in the spring 2014 with PARCC item tryout.

For more information please go to:  
[www.tncore.org](http://www.tncore.org)  
[www.parcconline.org](http://www.parcconline.org)

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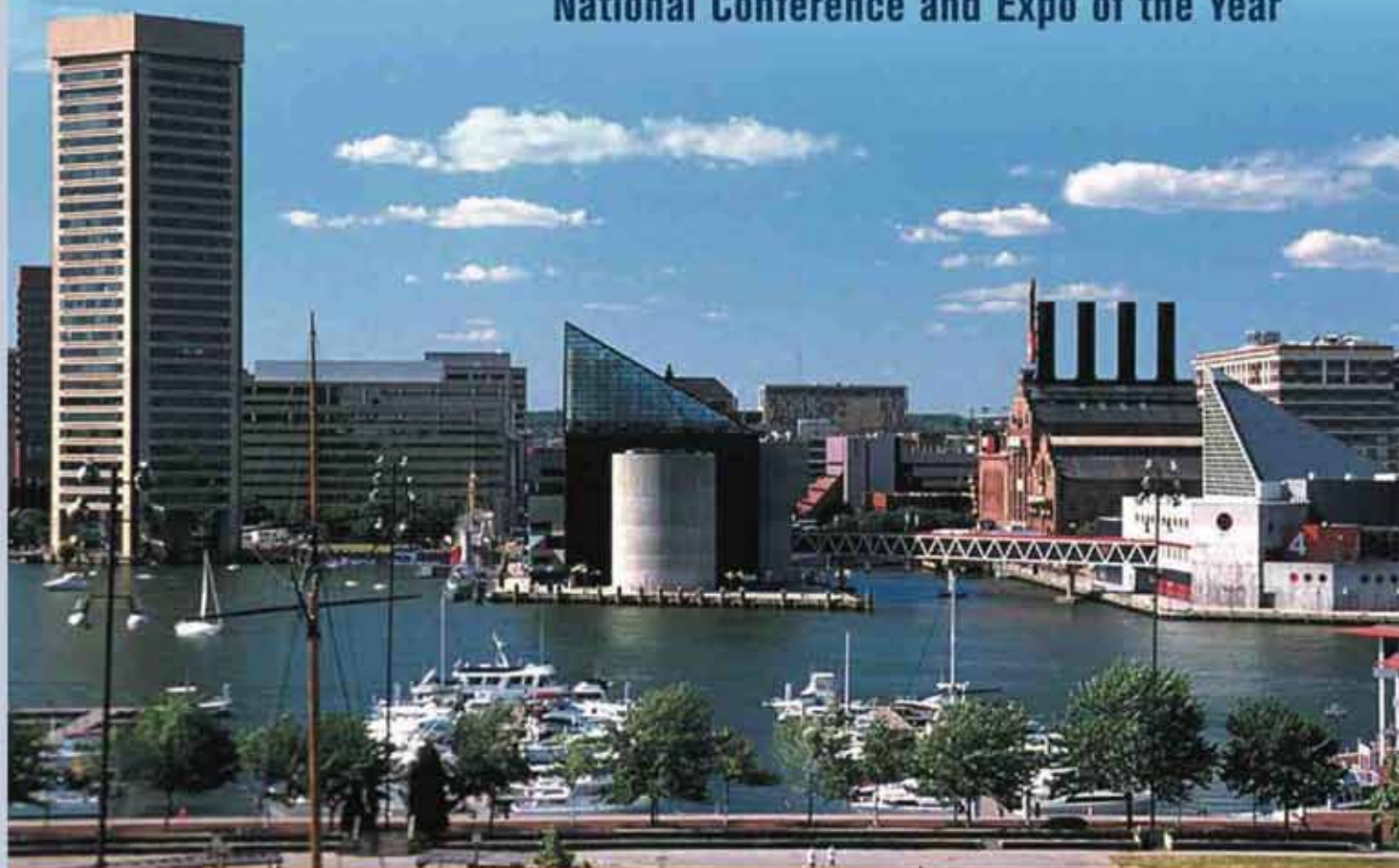


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## Off the Clock...from page 13

development.

By contrast, most SIG schools are tasked with making huge changes but not trusted to manage themselves with any greater degree of freedom. Two of Delaware's SIG schools, Stubbs Elementary School and Glasgow High School, both in the Christina School District, are trying the staff-staggering approach but not as part of any larger innovation strategy. Both schools are staggering teacher's daily start and end times so they can add an extra hour a day for all students. (The work day for staff does not exceed the agreed-upon 7.5 hours.)

### Expanding Time Outside of School

The most common single ELT approach is extending learning outside of the regular school schedule, an approach that avoids much of the cost and controversy of paying for and restructuring teacher's work. In some ways, it is like adding traditional after-school, Saturday, and summer programs. For one thing, it preempts complaints from parents who prefer the regular school schedule; if they don't want their children to stay after school, they don't have to. Although the federal government requires that grantees who provide time in this manner make it available to all students, it does not actually require that students use it. Schools, then, typically target expanded learning time programs to struggling students during out-of-school hours or in the summer.

In Philadelphia, for example, the Summer Learning and More (SLAM) program, a 22-day session of intensive reading and math instruction, is how South Philadelphia High School plans to use its SIG money to expand time. Teachers, too, can opt in or out of most expanded learning plans. In Carson City, Nev., for instance, Eagle Valley Middle School is staggering schedules for a handful of willing teachers who will start later in the morning and work later in the afternoon to run an intervention program for struggling students. (As a SIG grantee, Eagle Valley is offering after-school programs, staffed by teachers and paraprofessionals, for all of its students.)

**But make no mistake: there is nothing simple about expanding time outside of the school schedule.** Almost all of the schools with plans to extend time in this way rely on a community partner, an external provider, or both, and most of them require additional staff, often volunteers or members of a public service corps. Coordinating partners is an immense task, one that often exceeds the capacity of school administrators. So an intermediary must often step in, to manage staff and coordinate funds. There is a cost to

this, as well.

One such intermediary, The Providence After School Association (PASA), raises more than \$2 million annually from a mix of local, state, federal, and private funds. PASA is also the reason why that city has such a robust program for expanded learning. One of a handful of its SIG schools, Roger Williams Middle, is expanding time through the city's After Zone programs. Functioning like neighborhood campuses, the zones are anchored by a school, but they also offer art classes, sports, and academic enrichment outside of the regular school day and often outside of the regular school facility recreation centers, libraries, and youth centers. After Zone also extends beyond the school year, with Summer Scholars, a four-week program focused on science, technology, engineering, and math that is jointly taught by staff from community organizations and teachers from Providence public schools. Overseeing all of this, including the After Zone staff, which includes AmeriCorps members, local college volunteers, and teachers, is PASA.

In New York City, The After School Corporation (TASC) manages a network of schools that are adding at least three extra hours a day. TASC sets ELT guidelines, but each of the 17 elementary and middle schools it works with partners with a different community organization, and each has teams that determine how best to add time. One of the TASC schools, Thurgood Marshall Academy in Harlem, was founded in the early 1990s by New Visions for Public Schools and the Harlem-based nonprofit Abyssinian Development Corporation. Now, Abyssinian provides community educators that, often with the help of teachers, provide an after-school science inquiry program to the academy's lower school, as well as other small-group enrichment activities in the late afternoon.

**Relying on outside partners to develop and staff extra learning requires a different management approach.** It means sharing information, space, and even funding, are continuing points of contention between school-based and out-of-school institutions. But the school and out-of-school partnerships are the reason why TASC's ELT schools can offer their students three or more hours a day of learning. And partnerships have helped make Boston's Edwards Middle School another one of Mass 2020's success stories. At Edwards, the national nonprofit Citizen Schools provides on-site programming, academic support, college and career guidance, and apprenticeships for three hours in the afternoon, Monday through Thursday. Staffed by a combination of AmeriCorps members, volunteers, and paid staff, Citizen Schools calls itself a second shift of educators and plans to expand even beyond the 18 cities it now



serves.

Universities are another good source for second-shift educators. At the Stanford New School in Palo Alto, Calif., a charter school created and supervised by Stanford University's School of Education, teachers will be paid more (under contract) to work Saturdays and after school, but the school knows that it will need more staff. To meet its ambitious SIG plans, which call for extending the school year (by four days in the first year and six in the second) and adding after-school and summer bridge programs, the school will hire additional teachers and bring in a collection of paid college assistants and tutors.

But not every place has access to plentiful partners and extra staff. In Montana's rural Big Horn County, Pryor Middle School is one of a handful of SIG schools, or what the state calls its Promise Schools. Pryor's plans for more time, up to 100 hours a year, were based primarily on offering after-school programs and lengthening its existing summer program. What may sound like a simple strategy for big cities like New York City or Boston, or university towns like Palo Alto, Calif., is doubtful in a place like Pryor, whose entire population barely hits 700. For Pryor to offer drama and science clubs after school, or to double the length of its summer program (to six to eight weeks), it must ask more of its dozen or so teachers, most of whom live an hour's drive away in Billings. Teachers are already stretched so it's taxing no matter how we do it, says Mandy Smoker Broaddus, who directs Indian Education for the Montana Office of Public Instruction. Pryor's plans to expand learning time, then, can't turn to outside partnerships.

### Changing the Way We Use Time

**The third approach to extending learning time is to use existing time differently and, presumably, more efficiently.** But as sensible as this approach may sound, its results often fall well short of the mark. Many schools are proposing to gain time for instruction by decreasing non-instructional time, namely lunch, recess, or the time allotted for students to move between classes. For example, Rio Vista Elementary School in California's Mt. Diablo Unified School District, one of the roughly 100 SIG schools in the state, proposed to cut the transition time between classes from five minutes to three minutes. This change, the school claims, would add eight minutes a day for first- and second-graders and six minutes for the third-, fourth-, and fifth-graders. Ostensibly redeployed throughout the day for math or reading instruction, these few minutes add up to just one extra day of instruction per year. And no research

on time and learning has ever found an effect from a single day of instruction.

Rio Vista also moved recess so that it now comes before lunch, a move that school officials say research backs as a way to save transition time. Research on the lunch-recess switch is indeed growing, but it focuses on nutrition and obesity, not time. A 2009 study in the *Journal of Child Nutrition and Management* found that students waste less and consume more nutritious food when recess is scheduled before lunch. The reason is simple: the kids are hungrier after recess, and when they eat well, they behave better. These findings have little to do, however, with the potential time savings that some school officials are citing. Calabasas Elementary School in the Pajaro Valley Unified School District of California, for example, says that its new Play First, Eat Second schedule will generate 15 extra minutes of instructional time. The school also will eliminate an extra afternoon recess for grades one through three, adding what the school says will be another 10 minutes of instruction for physical education, science, social studies or art.

If this all sounds like nickel and diming, it is. For the most part, these SIG schools are extending learning time without changing anything at all, is appealing option for schools charged with implementing so many reforms at once. The result will be much less appealing, since curbing lunch and recess, to cite just one popular example, won't improve student or school outcomes. To the contrary, a recent review of 50 studies on school-based physical activity by the federal Centers for Disease Control found evidence that recess has a positive effect on academic achievement. Further, rushed lunchtimes and shortened recesses often anger parents. Lauren Greve, a clinical psychologist in Providence, is outraged that the district has cut recess in an attempt to add instructional hours elsewhere. The mother of a first-grader whose school now allows 10 minutes of recess if kids hurry through lunch, Greve calls it incomprehensible that 20 minutes of recess time cannot find its way into this mission that purports to be about our children's educations.

**Schools that restructure rather than add time aren't all trading minutes. Some acknowledge in their plans that more time is not analogous to better learning.**

Nebraska's Minatare Elementary School, for example, states in its plans that student engagement is more important than merely adding minutes to the day. It is the quality use of those minutes that matters. That philosophy also seems to inform new strategies at The Construction

# Off the Clock

Careers Center in St. Louis, Mo., the nation's first charter school focused on the construction trades. The center wants to gradually add 200 hours to its school year. But first it is addressing factors that routinely prevent students from effectively using the time they already have: It is working on reducing the number of suspended students by improving discipline policies, decreasing the percentage of students who drop out by adding advisory periods and improving the transition from summer, and establishing an early warning system for students in need of intervention.

**At some point, plans to use time differently are difficult to distinguish from simply adopting new strategies to improve education. Focusing on attendance and discipline, for example, may seem an unusual approach to extending learning time. But for the most vulnerable populations at low-performing schools, chronic absenteeism is a huge problem that leads to correspondingly big losses in learning time. Minatare Elementary, which knows the problem well,** will have a counselor track attendance and contact students' homes whenever they are absent. Likewise, SIG schools in the San Francisco Unified School District plan to designate a staff member, in this case a parent liaison, to contact parents of children with spotty attendance. And the Chelsea Career and Technical Education High School in New York City is partnering with a nonprofit to call and even visit the homes of absentees. It seems worthwhile effort: a recent report found that at least 20 percent of the city's fourth-graders in 300 schools were chronically absent, leading to lower achievement by both students and their schools.

Many schools are also turning to technology to boost learning time. Some, like Wilbur Cross High School in New Haven, Conn., are assembling teams to examine how technology can give students more time. Others are jumping right in, even if they are not yet specific or particularly sophisticated about their plans. Gentry High School in Mississippi, for example, is starting a 90-minute, computer-based literacy class for students with low scores in reading, while Gossler Park Elementary in New Hampshire plans to open technology classrooms, after school. New York City's Long Island City High School promises online learning opportunities, and South Plains Academy in Texas will issue laptops to its students. Some are turning to outside organizations for help. Michigan's

Buchanan High School is using Education 2020, a management system that helps districts provide virtual instruction, to provide remediation and ACT preparation during an extra hour supervised by a media specialist and a counselor for at-risk students.

More polished are the designs of a few charter school networks. They include California's Rocketship Education, which uses a hybrid model of traditional and computer-based learning with daily, 100-minute blocks of independent study. A network of charter high schools, Carpe Diem, adds even more flexibility: it offers not just online learning but year-round start dates and early graduation, all under the banner of its motto The Power to Choose Your Place (Online) or Our Place (On Campus). Similarly, a spin off of New York's successful School of

One (one of the first to customize instruction through technology) is the city's newest attempt to give every student a mix of modalities for learning. The spinoff, called New Classrooms, uses School of One software to assign each student a playlist of learning modules, including large- and small-group instruction, individual tutoring, and online learning. It's not clear whether efforts like New Classrooms can improve the quality of learning for students in otherwise failing schools, or whether Rocketship and Carpe Diem can offer designs that are effective as well as efficient. What is clear is that technology is rapidly expanding as an educational tool and will surely expand options not just for extending time but for enhancing learning.

## The Future of ELT

The NCTL published a report last year describing what makes ELT schools work well. These schools, the report says, use time to address individual needs, to build a culture of high expectations, to continuously strengthen instruction and the use of data, to provide a well-rounded education, and to prepare students for college and career. These desirable goals, the report acknowledges, are neither new nor unique to extending time. The point is that time is the device, the enabler, for these practices to take root and flourish.

There is evidence that ELT works. An analysis of data from the national School and Staffing Survey found that schools with longer-than-average schedules maintained a focus on both core academics and subjects like physical education and music. Leaders of successful ELT schools say that more time has increased student time on task, broadened the curriculum, and allowed for more experiential learning, greater attention to individual students, and stronger adult-child relationships. These ELT schools use time well to improve teacher effectiveness and student engagement. They recognize that good teaching requires time to plan, just as good learning requires more than seat time in a classroom. In these schools, community organizations provide more than just hit-or-miss help, technology means more than new laptops, and student engagement is not disconnected from teaching and learning. Teachers, in turn, are attracted to these schools because they see a strategy for great education that both depends on and supports them as professionals. But these schools didn't get this way by adding minutes or hours or even days. Good schools are made by strong networks that support and demand great leaders, who create and cultivate effective teams of teachers, who really know what and how to teach students. To suggest that our nation's worst schools will be transformed, and that student outcomes will improve, because of more time is not any different than suggesting that they will be transformed by more money. Both are necessary, and both boast plenty of persuasive adages about why more is better. But both are overly simplistic treatments to the very complex problem of improving education.

**School leaders know this. The bottom line says Ron Karsen, principal of Dayton Street School in Newark, N.J., is that if I can guarantee quality instruction, then**

**I won't need the extended time** We'll be able to use the time we have to get the work done. Leaders like Karsen are grateful for SIG funding, but they know that transforming a school is not really about time. If it were, schools that have been operating for years with extended schedules would not be identified as low performers. There would be no SIG funding for San Francisco's Everett Middle School, which extended its day by an hour six years ago. Nor would Akili Academy, an elementary charter school in the Recovery School District in New Orleans, which has had an eight-hour schedule since 2007, be receiving more than \$700,000 in SIG funding. **Yet, according to the U.S. Department of Education's website of resources, Doing What Works, increasing time is a quick win for turning around chronically low- performing schools.**

The nation's hope, codified in federal school improvement strategy, is that its worst schools will get better by adding time. Yet, this ignores what we know about turnarounds and what we know about time. That many SIG schools are finding ways around adding time, either by leveraging summer and after- school programs or by tinkering with minutes from recess and lunch, signals measures that are at once creative and desperate.

**More time for learning should be a priority for the nation, if closing achievement gaps really is a national goal. But the ELT movement must learn from itself. It must acknowledge that its strategies for success are not really first or mostly about time, lest extending**

**time be just one of many reforms that is adopted and dropped as budgets allow.**

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## Principal Leadership Key to Boosting Student Engagement

Fostering student involvement in a school is a rewarding endeavor, but it's one that requires proper guidance from school leaders. A recent study published in *Management in Education* describes the efforts of one elementary school's staff to increase student participation in broader, school-wide issues.

For "The Role of Leaders in Enabling Student Voice," Penn State researchers Dana Mitra and Stephanie Serriere worked with Dewey Elementary\* principal Donnan Stoicovy to research student involvement. Dewey implemented a number of practices to engage kids with the school as a whole. "Small-school gatherings", or SSGs, were held once a month by faculty. They were typically comprised of 12 to 15 students, with two to three students from each grade level. These were also complimented by "all-school gatherings" (ASGs) that occurred weekly to foster community spirit and engagement. Additionally, grants from the state's Department of Environmental Protection and Department of Education gave teachers paid release time to opt in to a "Schoolyard" project. Once a month, participating classes spent time outdoors on innovative projects, such as studying the effects of certain composts on plants and writing about their findings in a "zine."

The researchers analyzed interviews and observations to discover common themes in how teachers implemented and felt about the school's practices. They found that the biggest challenge for school leaders arose from maintaining a strong vision for the entire school, while still allowing faculty to use SSGs in a manner that suited their teaching style. Researchers emphasized the benefits of allowing teachers to opt in to this program, rather than it being imposed from the top down. Flexibility is essential to the program's success; Stoicovy says that if Dewey's teachers "begin to look at other ways to make our school a better place, to find ways to improve whatever the problem is that they come up with, I'll feel really good about that."

\*School name was changed by the authors.  
—Dateline NAESP





## Expect More Achieve More Coalition: Suggested Talking Points

*September 7, 2012*

### What is the Expect More, Achieve More Coalition?

- The Coalition is a statewide alliance of business, community, and education organizations in Tennessee that supports high academic standards in public education. **As of September 7, 2012, over 100 organizations from across Tennessee are coalition members.**
- The Coalition's goal is to build both statewide and local support and awareness of Tennessee's efforts to raise the bar in the classroom so that every student graduates high school prepared for postsecondary education and the workforce.
- **The Coalition believes that when we expect more, students achieve more.**

### Why is this work important?

- A good education means better job prospects; in today's economy, competition for jobs comes not just from across town but from around the world.
- In Tennessee, only 16 percent of students meet college readiness benchmarks on the ACT in English, math, reading, and science.
- In a national survey, 97 percent of students indicated that they plan to continue their education after high school, but far too few are graduating with the skills they need to thrive after high school.
- This is a challenge because 7 of the 10 fastest growing jobs in Tennessee require some form of post-secondary education.

### What is Tennessee doing to improve?

- Tennessee is improving; from effective teaching in the classroom to high academic standards, Tennessee is taking important steps to better prepare students for the future.
- One part of Tennessee's work to better prepare students for college and the workforce is to raise expectations by raising academic standards.
- **Standards are the knowledge and skills that students are expected to learn in each grade and subject.**
- Tennessee took the first step to raise standards in 2009 and now we are raising the bar again through an effort called the Common Core State Standards.



#ExpectMoreTN

[www.ExpectMoreTN.org](http://www.ExpectMoreTN.org)

### What are the Common Core State Standards?

- The Common Core State Standards are a set of standards in math and English that were developed by state leaders to ensure that every student graduates high school prepared for the future. To date, 47 states, including Tennessee, have voluntarily done so.
- With the Common Core, teaching and learning will include more critical thinking and problem solving. The goal is less memorizing and more understanding.
- Students will learn important concepts in earlier grades—just as they do in the highest performing schools internationally – and build on those each year.
- Eventually, new tests will replace the current TCAP tests in math and English/language arts and measure learning under the standards. These tests will be more difficult and they may mean that scores will be lower, at least initially.

### Why is raising standards so important?

- Ultimately, the Common Core standards will help better prepare students for success after high school graduation.
- The skills and knowledge students will learn with the new standards are those needed for success in today's workforce. Whether in manufacturing or research, job applicants need critical thinking, problem-solving, and teamwork skills to succeed.

### What can I do to help?

- Stay informed and educated – [www.ExpectMoreTN.org](http://www.ExpectMoreTN.org) contains resources for parents and community members, including a detailed look at what the Common Core will mean for students in each grade.
- Support your child – our students are up for the challenge, but parental involvement is critical to helping a child achieve more. You may notice that school is getting harder and that students are expected to learn in new ways. **Call your child's teacher or school and ask how you can help at home.**
- To move forward with higher standards and expectations, parents, businesses, and communities need to be vocal about the importance of better-preparing students for the future. Tennesseans are up to this challenge.



#ExpectMoreTN

[www.ExpectMoreTN.org](http://www.ExpectMoreTN.org)

# Gathering Strength



In my writings and presentations about the theme of resilience I always highlight the notion of a “charismatic adult,” a term introduced by the late psychologist Julius Segal. I cited him in last month’s article. Segal, in his discussion of the journeys of children who triumphed over adversity, defined such an adult as one from

whom “a child or adolescent gathers strength.”

I was immediately drawn to this definition when I first read it in an article written by Segal in 1988. I found the image of “gathering strength” not only to be very powerful but in concert with a major finding in the resilience research literature. When adults who had overcome challenging childhoods were asked to reflect upon what factors contributed to their perseverance and hope, an almost universal response was that there was at least one adult in their lives who steadfastly believed in and supported them. Their resilience was rooted in great part in their interaction with this charismatic adult.

My long-time friend and colleague Sam Goldstein and I expanded upon the age range in which charismatic adults have influence. We emphasized that not only youngsters but adults as well need the presence of such figures in their lives. The development and maintenance of emotional and physical well-being at any age are best accomplished when we have charismatic adults by our side, individuals who provide encouragement and support within a safe and secure relationship.

In light of this belief, I frequently ask people attending my workshops to think about whom they would list as their charismatic adults, both when they were children and now as adults. I also ask who would list them as their charismatic adults since I believe that in order to lead a more purposeful, resilient life, we not only require interactions with people from whom we gather strength, but we must also serve in this capacity for others.

I continue to be impressed by which ideas in my presen-

tations elicit the most reflection and discussion, whether I am speaking to a group of parents, teachers, mental health professionals, executive coaches, or financial and business leaders. Invariably, the concept of a charismatic adult is right at the top of the list.

Many parents have said, “I want to be a charismatic adult in the lives of my children,” while teachers have uttered a similar comment about their students. When consulting with therapists and executive coaches, they too voice the hope that they might serve as charismatic adults in the lives of their clients.

## Charismatic Adults in the Financial World

As an illustration, the idea for the book I co-authored with David Richman, *The Charismatic Advisor: Becoming a Source of Strength in the Lives of Your Clients*, was borne out of David attending a presentation I gave about nurturing resilience in children. David is the National Director of an Advisor Institute for a major investment company and has consulted with scores of financial advisors and teams. After hearing me speak David observed that any financial advisor would love to be perceived by clients as a person from whom they gathered strength. This insight prompted David to arrange for us to conduct workshops together for financial advisors, interview advisors, and apply Segal’s notion to the business/financial world. In our book we provide many case examples of strategies that can be used by advisors to assume the role of charismatic adults. It was evident from the feedback we received from advisors that they embraced the image of being a source of strength to their clients.

I have frequently posited that serving as a charismatic adult as well as having such adults in our lives is a basic dimension of leading a resilient lifestyle. Although I was not originally planning to devote this month’s column to the theme of charismatic adults, several events in the past couple of weeks have prompted me to do so.

## A Writer’s Appreciation for His Teacher

My wife Marilyn, who writes an excellent blog about mystery books ([www.marilynsreads.com](http://www.marilynsreads.com)), alerted me to an article penned by bestselling mystery as well as nonfiction author Brad Meltzer. The article titled “World’s Greatest Teacher” appeared in the September 30, 2012 issue of *Parade Magazine* and captures the impact that one person can have on the course of a youngster’s life. Meltzer notes that in the ninth grade his family moved



# Dr. Robert Brooks

from Brooklyn to Florida and that “most of my teachers at Highland Oaks Junior High seemed to look past me; I was one more student among hundreds. Ms. (Shelia) Spicer, however, took a special interest.”

Ms. Spicer told him, “You can write.” While scheduling conflicts did not permit him to transfer into her honors English class, she challenged him with honors work. Ten years later, after his first novel was published, he returned to Ms. Spicer’s classroom and handed her his first novel and said, “And I wrote this for you.”

Meltzer reports, “Ms. Spicer began to cry. She’d been considering early retirement, she said, because she felt she wasn’t having enough of an impact on her students. I didn’t know how to make Ms. Spicer understand what she’d done for me. Thanks to her, I fell in love with Shakespeare. (In fact, she once forced me to read the part of Romeo while a girl I had a crush on read Juliet.) I learned how to compose an essay. It was her belief in me that gave me the confidence to become a writer. I owed her.”

Ms. Spicer did not retire for another 13 years. Meltzer attended her retirement party. After being given a crystal vase as a gift, Ms. Spicer told those at her party, “For those of you complaining that kids have changed, and that it’s harder to teach these days, you’re getting old. You’re getting lazy. These kids haven’t changed. You have. Do not give up on these kids!”

Meltzer went up to thank Ms. Spicer for “changing my life all those years ago. I realized that night that I was still, and would forever be, her student. Oh, and my crush who read the part of Juliet? I married her. I owe Ms. Spicer for that, too.” Often we don’t realize the extent to which we have served as a charismatic adult for others.

## All Students Will Achieve

Related to Meltzer’s experience with Ms. Spicer is a book I just finished reading, *The Daggett System for Effective Instruction* by Dr. Bill Daggett, the Chairman and Founder of the International Center for Leadership in Education (ICLE) located in Rexford, New York. I feel fortunate that during the past few years I have had the opportunity to meet and interact with Bill and his colleagues and to speak at ICLE’s “Model Schools” conference as well as at different schools and schools districts in which Bill and ICLE staff consult. I am very impressed with Bill’s insights pertaining to the concepts of rigor, relevance, and relationships in educational practice.

Bill captures the lifelong influence of teachers when he described research that ICLE has conducted. In reviewing the characteristics of schools in high poverty areas in which students excelled, Bill observes, “There was – and remains – in all of the schools we studied a shared belief in and commitment to the concept that all students will achieve. Note that this belief was typically and purposely phrased not as can achieve but rather as will achieve.”

The students at these high poverty and high-achieving schools were interviewed to obtain their perspective. Bill writes, “We asked them when they first realized they were smart. Most said sometime between third and fifth grade.

When asked how they knew, they said it was a teacher who told them and that message gave them a new sense of confidence that they would be successful in school. The students also told us what kinds of teachers were the best at helping them learn. Most important to every student was this: The teacher cares about me and knows something personal about me. Also, the teacher has rules, but is fair, knows the subject matter, uses a variety of learning activities, and makes learning interesting and fun.”

The description of these educators provided by their students epitomizes the characteristics of charismatic adults.

## A Community Focusing on Resilience

Last week I gave two presentations in Ridgefield, Connecticut, one in the afternoon for professionals in the fields of education and mental health and the other in the evening for parents and community members. I was invited to Ridgefield by Dr. Carol Mahlstedt, a psychologist who was instrumental in helping to found Project Resilience (for more information about this impressive program please visit their page <http://www.facebook.com/ProjectResilience>). Carol and her colleagues continue to strive to involve the entire town in seeking ways to nurture the social and emotional growth and resilience of children and adolescents in Ridgefield. Judging by the very large turnout for my evening talk they have been successful in engaging many members of Ridgefield in this project.

Following both presentations I spoke with a number of people and also received follow-up e-mails. Not surprisingly, many of the comments pertained to the importance of becoming charismatic adults not only to one’s own children but to all children in the community. One person noted, “It truly takes a village to raise a child.” Another said, “It would be wonderful if a town were filled with charismatic adults. Both the kids and adults would benefit in such an

# Gathering Strength ...

environment.” *Charismatic Adults in the World of Business and Healthcare*

At another recent event, I spoke for the second consecutive year at the *Coaching in Leadership and Healthcare: Theory, Practice, & Results Conference* sponsored by the two institutions at which I have an appointment, McLean Hospital and Harvard Medical School. The conference is geared for mental health professionals, executive coaches, and coaches in healthcare. My presentation centered on three key concepts: mindsets, intrinsic motivation, and resilience. I attempted to identify the characteristics of the mindset and actions of a charismatic professional.

Prior to my presentation, several attendees who heard me at last year’s conference stopped to tell me that my talk and writings prompted them to consider the influence of charismatic adults in their personal and professional lives. An executive coach reported that immediately after the 2011 conference he wrote to one of his mentors to thank him for the role he played in his professional development. Another participant, drawing on questions that I encourage be posed in our coaching or clinical practices, said that she now routinely asks executives with whom she consults to identify someone who served as a charismatic mentor when they were beginning their careers. She then asks them to describe specifically what that person said or did to be so identified and what they (the executives with whom she works) are doing so that people in their organization will describe them in similar positive terms. This coach also informed me that she applies the same questions to herself, examining the ways in which her interactions and strategies contribute to her being seen as a charismatic person to her clients.

Following my presentation at this year’s coaching conference, I had the opportunity to chat with participants for about 40 minutes. Similar to what occurred in Ridgefield, many of the conversations involved the theme of charismatic adults. One regular subscriber to my monthly website articles who has also read several books I co-authored with Sam Goldstein said that he especially enjoyed accounts of charismatic adults.

He elaborated, “In the case material you describe in your talks as well as in your writings, you give examples of actions we can take to become charismatic adults. It’s obvious from your clinical and consultation work you have plenty of examples. Have you ever thought of asking people who read your monthly newsletter or people who attend your presentations to send you examples of charis-

matic adults from their lives?”

I replied that I had not formally invited people to do so but that even without making such a request people have sent me illustrations of charismatic individuals who enriched their lives either as children or adults.

This man responded, “In last month’s article you described some examples of how a clinical and school psychologist (Steve Baron) applied the concept of islands of competence in his work. I found the examples very helpful and applicable to my own work. Even though some people have taken the initiative to send you stories about their charismatic adults it might be interesting to invite people to send you examples of charismatic adults that you can then share with others.”

## An Invitation

I told him that I liked his suggestion. The more I thought about his suggestion, the more appealing it became. Thus, I would welcome receiving any vignettes that people would like to share about charismatic adults from their child or adult lives. What did they say or do that led you to gather strength from them? How old were you at the time? I would also enjoy reading any illustrations of when you served as a charismatic adult to others. If you do send me a vignette, please let me know if I have permission to use it in any future writings and, if so, would you like me to use your name or prefer the source remain anonymous?

I think we can all benefit from learning about the experiences of others, especially if these experiences prompt us to reflect upon the questions:

“What have others said or done that have added strength to my life?”

“What might I say or do so that others will gather strength from me?”

I do hope to hear from some of you.

Dr Brooks can be found on the web at:  
[contact@robertbrooks.com](mailto:contact@robertbrooks.com)

His monthly newsletter is available by free subscription on his website.

I have often used his writings as stimulating “conversation starters” with my staff. You might find this practice helpful as well. - CP

# National Distinguished Principals Honored in Washington, D.C.



The celebration for this year's National Distinguished Principals wrapped up Friday, October 19, with an awards banquet at Washington, D.C.'s Capital Hilton Hotel.

Sponsored for nearly 25 years by VALIC, the banquet served as a capstone for the two-day celebration of this year's class of NDPs. Honorees, who represent public and private elementary and middle schools from across the country, received the traditional NDP bell engraved with their names, as well as a congratulatory letter hand-signed by President Barack Obama.

At the event, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan delivered congratulatory remarks, and was honored himself with NAESP's Honorary National Distinguished Principal (NDP) Award, an honor given to officials who demonstrate support for the principalship.

Duncan, who has said many times that great principals make great schools, called the honorees "extraordinary." "During these tough economic times, somehow principals are doing more with less," he said. "Thank you for the example of service and commitment that you all show."

In his remarks, Duncan went on to tout the importance of early childhood education, as well as principal preparation and support. Further, he said the Department needs to initiate a principal ambassador program to help decision-makers guide education policy.

NAESP Executive Director Gail Connelly echoed Duncan's support, calling the 60 principals exemplars of successful school leadership. "For more than 25 years, our National Distinguished Principals program has recognized the nation's most accomplished principals—front-line champions for children—who vastly impact individual lives and strengthen schools," she said. "We congratulate the NDPs for nurturing positive school culture that meets children's social, emotional, and academic needs."

NDP festivities kicked off Thursday, October 18 with reception at the National Archives, which gave principals the opportunity to explore the Rotunda for the Charters of Freedom, home of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. On Friday, October 19, NDPs were invited to a tour of the White House gardens, posing for a group photo before the famed 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue lawn. Visit this recap page for more on this year's program.

Established in 1984, the NDP program recognizes public and private school principals who make superior contributions to their schools and communities.



## NAESP Board of Directors

Pictured Above with the national NAESP Board during the National Distinguished Principals October gala are two Tennessee Principals. **Dr. Nancy Meador** (front row, second from left), Principal of Madison Middle School, Madison, TN, is serving as President-Elect and **Teresa Dennis** (second row, third from the left), Principal of Ruby Major Elementary School in Hermitage, TN, is the newly appointed Zone 4 Director.



# RETHINKING PRINCIPAL EVALUATION: NATION'S PRINCIPALS RELEASE NEW FRAMEWORK FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE



NAESP and NASSP have released a landmark policy document on principal evaluation. *Rethinking Principal Evaluation: A New Paradigm Informed*

by Research and Practice was developed after a year-long effort that teamed leading researchers on evaluation with a committee of practicing principals. The report provides lawmakers at the federal, state, and local levels with a set of research-based policy recommendations and practical guidelines designed to help schools and districts meaningfully measure the effectiveness of principal and assistant principals.

The initiative highlights the principal's voice in the evaluation discussion, a perspective that has largely been missing from the national debate. "This report was created by principals, for principals and takes the best of their expertise and pairs it with the latest research," said NAESP Executive Director Gail Connelly. "It is essential to insert the principals' voice and the standards in the redevelopment or refinement of evaluation systems to change practice to improve schools."

NAESP was compelled to take on this initiative because of the national discourse on teacher and principal effectiveness that was defined primarily by student standardized test scores. While the focus on principals as catalysts for school reform and sustained improvement is important, we knew that there were far better ways to measure a principal's performance. Standardized test scores are one measure of student learning, and only represent a narrow, one-dimensional, snapshot in time. They do not paint the whole picture of student performance, let alone the competency of a principal and the effectiveness of his or her instructional leadership. The report identifies six key domains of school leadership that should be incorporated into principal evaluation systems:

- Professional growth and learning;
- Student growth and achievement;
- School planning and progress;
- School culture;
- Professional qualities and instructional leadership; and
- Stakeholder support and engagement.

While the focus on principals in their role as the catalyst for school reform and sustained improvement has been

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# Report Outlines New Paradigm for Principal Evaluation

critically important over the past several years, the current direction in federal, state, and local policy that ties principal evaluation to student test scores is misguided and inconsistent with the research. NAESP believes that every school leader should receive a fair, valid, comprehensive evaluation that is informed by research, linked to a realistic trajectory of growth and improvement, and supported by high-quality professional development that is designed to improve practice. According to briefing panelist Jon Millerhagen, who is principal of Washburn Elementary School in Bloomington, Minnesota, and served on the Principal Evaluation Committee, principal evaluation systems must be about building principals' capacity for leadership. "It all comes down to [the question of] how do we build instead of take down," he said.

Rethinking Principal Evaluation represents a call to action for federal, state, and local policy makers to rethink the approach to principal evaluation based on a comprehensive set of measures that recognize and support the complex work principals perform as committed leaders of our nation's schools.

As NAESP works to advance an advocacy agenda that builds the capacity of principals, the advocacy team will continue to use the report as a powerful tool in policy

making for three important reasons

1. The report is the only comprehensive body of knowledge that brings forward the research on principal evaluation to synthesize the evidence on effective practice to inform policy.
2. The report shows that we must fundamentally change the policy and practice so that principal evaluation becomes a process that will truly build the capacity of principals by linking to high-quality professional development.
3. The report captures the voice of principals, who were instrumental in developing the report, defining the full range of measures they want to be held accountable for.

Rethinking Principal Evaluation signals the launch of a new paradigm for principal and assistant principal evaluation. It's time for policy makers and practitioners to focus on measuring, in multiple and meaningful ways, the aspects of students' learning environments that school leaders most directly influence.

Visit [www.naesp.org/principal-evaluation](http://www.naesp.org/principal-evaluation) to read the full report.



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# Second Annual SCORE Prize Winners

On October 8th the State Collaborative on Reforming Education (SCORE) announced the four winners of the 2012 SCORE Prize during an event at the historic Ryman Auditorium. The winners – three schools and one school district – were recognized for dramatically improving student achievement. The prize event, attended by educators, parents, students, and other stakeholders, included remarks from Tennessee Governor Bill Haslam, SCORE Chairman and former U.S. Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist, Tennessee Commissioner of Education Kevin Huffman, SCORE President and CEO Jamie Woodson, and video remarks from U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan.

“Our ultimate goal is that every student graduates from high school prepared for college and the workforce,” SCORE Chairman Bill Frist said. “These schools and districts are proof points for what works in making progress towards that goal. This is a night to celebrate the success of teachers, principals, administrators, parents, and most importantly, students.”

## The 2012 SCORE Prize winners are:

- **Elementary: John Sevier Elementary, Maryville City Schools**
- **Middle: Rose Park Math and Science Magnet, Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools**
- **High: Covington High School, Tipton County Schools**
- **District: Hamblen County Schools**

“The stories of these schools and districts are inspiring,” said SCORE President and CEO Jamie Woodson. “These winners represent diverse areas across Tennessee, and all are faced with different and unique challenges. The SCORE Prize is an opportunity for all of us to share their stories of success.” The SCORE Prize awards \$10,000 to the elementary, middle, and high school and \$25,000 to one district in Tennessee that have most dramatically improved student achievement.

Winners were chosen in a two-step process. The first stage identified finalists through a weighted criteria selection process that took into account TVAAS growth and TCAP improvement. This process also factored in attendance rates and socioeconomic status. College-readiness data, such as ACT and college-going rates, were considered for high schools and districts. The second stage consisted of site visits to the finalists to document the policies and practices that have enabled them to make significant gains in student achievement.

## About the Winners

- **John Sevier Elementary**, part of Maryville City Schools, serves 548 students in grades PK through 3. Fifty-five percent of the school's students are economically disadvantaged. The school's three-year TVAAS growth average is 9.1 in math and 7.6 in reading, meaning John Sevier is helping its students make significant gains in these subjects. Between 2010 and 2012, the achievement gap between economically disadvantaged and non-economically disadvantaged students has narrowed by 7.1 percentage points in reading and 22.9 points in math.
- **Rose Park Math and Science Magnet**, a non-selective magnet in Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, serves 395 students in Nashville in grades 5 through 8. The school is 61 percent economically disadvantaged. The school's three-year TVAAS growth average is 5.7 in math and 2.0 in reading. The school has made significant progress in narrowing achievement gaps between various racial and economic subgroups. Most significantly, the achievement gap between black and white students narrowed by 11.4 percentage points in reading and 16.2 percentage points in math between 2010 and 2012.
- **Covington High School**, part of Tipton County Schools, serves 790 students in grades 9 through 12. Seventy-two percent of the school's student population is economically disadvantaged. The school has significantly contributed to its students' performance on the Algebra I End of Course exam, posting a three-year average TVAAS score of 50.7. Between 2009 and 2010, the school's college going rate increased 10 percentage points to 63 percent.



- **Hamblen County Schools** serves 9,615 students in East Tennessee. Sixty-two percent of the district's students are economically disadvantaged. The district's three-year TVAAS growth average is 13.9 in Algebra I, meaning the district is helping its students make great gains in this area. Thirty-nine percent of the district's high school students are enrolled in AP or IB courses, and the district has a 61 percent pass rate on AP exams.

In addition to the SCORE Prize winners, **Rolanda Mack**, a junior at Covington High School, was chosen as the "Students Rise to the Challenge" winner. The competition invited students from across Tennessee to write essays about the innovation happening in their classrooms. Finalists were selected through a Facebook poll. Mack, who read her essay during the Prize event, wrote about Deborah Walker, her dance and drama instructor, saying that, "a teacher who doesn't give up or lose faith in you, but instead guides you, motivates you, then watches as you grow, is what every student should find in every teacher."

### **The list of finalists for the 2012 SCORE Prize:**

#### **Elementary**

**Boones Creek Elementary, Washington County Schools**

**John Sevier Elementary, Maryville City Schools**

**Pigeon Forge Primary, Sevier County Schools**

#### **Middle**

**Power Center Academy, Memphis City Schools**

**Rose Park Math/Science Magnet School, Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools**

**Southside Elementary, Henderson County Schools**

#### **High**

**Covington High School, Tipton County Schools**

**Fayette Ware Comprehensive High School, Fayette County Schools**

**Ravenwood High School, Williamson County Schools**

#### **District**

**Hamblen County Schools**

**Maryville City Schools**

**Tipton County Schools**

"The SCORE Prize is awarded to recognize tremendous success in preparing students for the future," said SCORE President and CEO Jamie Woodson. "Each of the 2012 SCORE Prize finalists has made significant strides in raising student achievement levels. All 12 finalists, as well as the communities that support them, should be proud of the progress their children are making. Their work demonstrates that meaningful improvement in public education is possible."

To learn more about the 2012 winners and finalists or the Prize selection process, visit [www.tnscore.org/scoreprize](http://www.tnscore.org/scoreprize).

# 2011 SCORE Prize Winners and Finalists - How They are Continuing to Succeed

Focusing on all students having the chance to be successful, **Fairview Elementary School** was the elementary winner of the 2011 SCORE Prize. With an emphasis on data and assessment, Fairview uses a data wall to display student success. At this school, students don't just take standardized tests; teachers also use formative assessments to keep track of how their students are doing. From good communication to collaboration, students are given the attention and supports they need. This has enabled Fairview's students to improve faster than most of their peers throughout the state.

With more than 63 percent of students classified as economically disadvantaged, **Charlotte Elementary** is raising the bar and closing the achievement gap. Selected as a 2011 SCORE Prize finalist, Charlotte Elementary credits high expectations and collaboration to its rising TVAAS averages. Using data to make decisions regarding instruction and hiring high quality teachers in all grades also leads to their success.

**John Sevier Elementary** was a 2011 SCORE Prize elementary school finalist. By providing teachers with consistent feedback, using technology to quickly assess how students are performing, and using data to identify to meet school wide challenges and meet student needs, John Sevier was able to narrow the achievement gap while improving achievement levels in math and reading for all of their students.

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