Better Schools

9TH IN QUALITY

We Will Not Be Silent

49TH IS NOT OKAY!

PLEASE DON'T MAKE ME MOVE TO TEXAS!

IF THEY WERE 49TH!!!

STOOP S AND GUNDY WOULD BE FIRED

49TH IN PAY
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It’s April 2014, spring is here, tax season is upon us, school testing’s underway, spring sports playoffs are beginning and the end of the school year is looming. Only a few more weeks of the legislative session to endure as we continue to work on bills that concern us. Special thanks to all of you who made the effort to attend the rally on March 31st. From my perspective it was a huge success. What a great day!!!

The rally was focused on funding (HB 2642), students, teachers and testing. Our speakers did a great job of providing participants with facts and figures to use while lobbying their legislators. Special thanks also goes out to the planning committee consisting of representatives from OEA, OSSBA, OkPTA, OkACTE, OROS, Tulsa CTA, and CCOSA for a job well done. HB 2642 has taken on a life of its own since the rally. It was modified by the Senate after the rally to share in the off the top funding with roads and add additional days to the school calendar. The bill is still alive and a work in progress. As long as it is still alive, we have a chance to get additional funding for public education and the school funding formula.

Our summer conference is in Norman this year June 5-6, 2014 and is shaping up to be a great conference. Our pre-conference is June 4, 2014 and is a joint effort with USSA where we will be presenting new legislation. The Pete Rhames golf tournament is scheduled for June 3, 2014 at the Broadmoore golf course, additional information will be sent to you soon. Come join us in June.

The legislative session is moving along at a very busy pace. We are still monitoring several bills including the appropriation bills. We are still having our legislative briefings at CCOSA on Tuesday mornings from 9:00 to 10:00 A.M. The following bills are still getting a lot of attention: Funding HB 2642, RSA HB 2625, Common Core HB 2399, Charter Schools SB 573, Testing SB 1654, and of course additional funding bills, including supplemental appropriations for FBA and ad valorem reimbursement funds for this year. Hopefully, we will be closing the books on many of these in the near future.

I feel extremely blessed to be a part of this great organization. We have assembled a great staff to assist you in meeting the demands of your positions. Our goal is to better serve you as we move forward in developing programs that provide you more benefits and support. My staff and I are committed to your success and making your job better. Never before in the life of CCOSA have we had to work to develop mutual respect between the agencies and branches of government as we have today. Our goal is to build bridges of respect, honesty and collaboration so that the children you serve have a bright and prosperous future.

Please let us know if we can be of assistance. Thanks for joining CCOSA and allowing me to work for you.
As I look around at all of the success stories that occur in our schools in the State of Oklahoma, I constantly remind myself that these things just don’t happen by accident. Despite the numerous problems that exist in public education today, somehow we continue to persevere and rise above the elements. Inadequate school funding, a flawed accountability system, loss of local control, and too much emphasis placed on high stakes testing bring frustration to most educators. Factor in societal issues such as poverty, language barriers, single parent households, and drug and alcohol addiction that filter into the school setting and it’s amazing how well educators respond to these difficult challenges. Obviously, the hard work from dedicated professionals is prevalent in our schools. However, in my opinion, one will find the presence of servant leadership embedded in the school culture.

The concept of “servant leadership” is certainly not anything new. The concept was first coined by Robert K. Greenleaf nearly 50 years ago. The servant leader focuses primarily on the growth and well-being of people and the communities to which they belong. According to Robert K. Greenleaf, “Good leaders must first become good servants. The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant-first to make sure that other people’s highest priority needs are being served.”

Another research project conducted by Edward B. Hess found several common leadership characteristics in high performing companies that he also refers to as servant leadership. Leaders in these companies value service and have high emotional engagement, loyalty and productivity. Nearly all of the leaders are humble and passionate and care about the details of the business. They lead by example and believe that behaviors build trust, the primary ingredient that is essential for communication. Respect, honesty, teamwork, willingness to admit mistakes, and acknowledgment of contributions of others are character traits that are also found in these working environments. Like behavior, a servant’s attitudes and beliefs are the foundation to successful leadership. These leaders also continue to spend time working on the front line with their employees and customers. They believe that if the right culture and environment is created; people will do extraordinary things.

Oklahoma is blessed to have school administrators that adhere to servant leadership. It’s the foundation for successful schools. Servant leadership—It’s what school administrators do best!

References
Barlow turns negotiation into collaboration, so everyone is heard, and everyone wins.

Joe Siano
Superintendent
Norman Public Schools

BARLOW
Education Management Services
www.barloweducation.com

BWA ARCHITECTS
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OSAG
As a member of the governing board, executive committee and now president-elect of American Association of School Administrators (AASA), I have the privilege of writing an article once a year for Better Schools. Since I only do this once a year, this is my first opportunity to thank the Oklahoma membership of AASA for their support in last year's election. When I received the call from Dan Domenech informing me that I had been elected to serve as President of AASA, it was a humbling experience. However, what was even more humbling was that I received every vote cast in Oklahoma. Words cannot express how much that meant to me.

National education policy, like national economic and immigration policy (the list goes on and on), is a victim of the partisan gridlock that is Washington. Currently, we have three pieces of legislation that promote three different versions of reauthorization - the Student Success Act (which has passed the House of Representatives) and two Senate bills. The Strengthening America's School Act passed out of committee last year on a party line vote. The Every Child Ready for College and Career Act failed in committee on a party line vote, but because of the way Senate rules work, it could still come before the Senate. While the Chair of the Senate Health, Labor, Education and Pension Committee, Senator Ted Harkins, continues to say he is optimistic that Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) reauthorization will get to the Senate floor this session, most experts are doubtful.

With ESEA caught in a Washington gridlock, the AASA legislative staff has turned their attention to other areas of concern for superintendents. The staff has been working with the Federal Communication Commission on new rules for E-rate; the Department of Agriculture on rules for the school lunch program; and the Department of Justice on school discipline. While the reauthorization of ESEA may be in limbo, there is still plenty of legislation for AASA staff to monitor. Two areas that have received a lot of staff attention since the first of the year are full funding of IDEA and vouchers. The Educate Act, a bipartisan piece of legislation that will fully fund IDEA in ten years, is a bill the AASA strongly supports. AASA strongly opposes legislation that has been introduced in the House and Senate to expand voucher programs. IDEA funding and vouchers are just the tip of the iceberg of AASA advocacy efforts on behalf of the nation's public schools and the superintendents who lead them. For those of you who would like the opportunity to meet with your members of Congress face-to-face to discuss federal education policy, AASA has scheduled the annual Advocacy Conference on July 8-10, 2014 in Washington, D.C. In the past, Oklahoma has had a large delegation of superintendents in attendance at this conference. I would not expect this year to be any different, so please come and join us.

The 2015 National Conference on Education will be held February 26-28 in San Diego, California. The National Conference this year will be special as we celebrate the 150th anniversary of AASA.

In closing, I want to thank those of you who are members of AASA. This great organization cannot exist without its members. For those of you who are not members, why aren’t you? AASA is working on behalf of every child and every school district in the United States every day. No other organization does as much to protect our nation's public schools as AASA. AASA is the only voice on Capitol Hill for the nation's school superintendents. AASA, the school superintendents’ association, needs your support. Please enroll today and add your voice to the other 10,000 educational leaders who are AASA members.
In March 2014, Julie Bloss, Principal from Grove Early Childhood Center was selected to represent Zone 8 on the Leading P-3 Committee in Alexandria, Virginia. In Alexandria, she met with a committee of other early childhood principals along with NAESP Executive Director Gail Connelly, NAESP President Nancy Meador, NAESP President Elect Mark White and Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy and Early Learning Dr. Libby Doggett.

In 2005, NAESP developed *Leading Early Childhood Learning Communities: What Principals Should Know and Be Able to Do*, to serve as a best practice guidebook and standards for principals serving students in prekindergarten and the early elementary grades. This body of work has helped principals rethink the connections in K-12 schools to early learning. Given the exponential growth in research and practice surrounding early childhood education over the past seven years, now commonly referred to as P-3 education, NAESP is working to update the standards for practice. As practicing principals, the committee worked to align high-quality early childhood learning from prekindergarten to the third grade, reviewing the most current research and best strategies in an important effort to establish consensus-driven indicators of effective practice for elementary principals in early childhood education, or P-3 education. The committee will continue to work throughout June updating the NAESP publication which will be presented at the NAESP national conference in Nashville, TN in July, 2014. The publication will be available for purchase through the NAESP bookstore.
Association News

**OAESP**

**CONGRATULATIONS TO KAREN HEIZER** who is our OAESP Administrator of the Year/National Distinguished Principal. Chosen from many outstanding elementary administrators in Oklahoma, Karen is the principal at Hoover ES in Enid. Ms. Heizer, an extraordinary administrator who is highly respected among her colleagues in the profession and her school community, will be honored at a special ceremony in Washington D.C. this fall. Congratulations also go out to Suzanne Lair, principal at Jenks West ES, who was named the Principal of Excellence and Betinna Kates, principal at Deer Creek ES, the James R. Burnett Distinguished Principal.

Thank you to all OAESP members who provided feedback on the OAESP Mid-Winter Conference electronic survey. SURVEY SAYS….next year we will try a one day format so please save the date: Thursday, January 29, 2015 at the Reed Conference Center in Midwest City. Next year’s keynote speaker will be Kerry Purcell of the PBS documentary “The Principal Story.” In her successful tenure as a principal in the Chicago Public Schools, Kerry used techniques such as data interpretation and analysis, building and sustaining professional learning communities and creative use of fiscal, human and time resources to support school improvement. Please make plans now to attend!

**LETS HEAR IT FOR** …Grove Early Childhood Center principal Julie Bloss for being selected to represent Zone 8 on the NAESP Leading P-3 Committee in Alexandria, Virginia. See page 5 for a detailed account of this prestigious committee’s work. Thank you Julie for representing us so well!!!

Please join us at the CCOSA Summer Conference on June 5-6 at the Embassy Suites in Norman. We will honor our retiring members and administrators of the year at our Thursday luncheon held in University C at 11:30 a.m. In addition, all members are invited to attend an OAESP breakfast meeting on Friday morning at 8:30 a.m. Also, don’t forget as you make your summer plans, to put the NAESP Annual Conference: Best Practices for Better Schools, on your calendar. It will be held in “Music City” July 10-12, 2014 at Gaylord Opryland, Nashville TN. The event kicks off with the “Denim and Dancing” event on the General Jackson Showboat, the evening of July 9th. There will be live music, great food and drink, a photo booth, and New York Times Best Selling Author – David Baldacci. You won’t want to miss it!

**OASSP**

Congratulations to Mr. Rodney Maynard, Principal, Davis High School, for being named 2015 Oklahoma High School Principal of the Year and Mr. Rob Miller, Principal, Jenks Middle School, selected as 2015 Oklahoma Middle School Principal of the Year. Both of these leaders embody the passion and work ethic for education that make our Oklahoma schools great! These two administrators, along with other award winners, will be recognized at our CCOSA Summer Conference June 5, and receive $2,000 plus a trip to Washington D.C. in the fall to be honored on a national level.

Our state Assistant Principal of the Year, Mr. Clay McDonald, along with OASSP Director, Dr. Vickie Williams, traveled to Washington D. C. April 2-5, where they met with Oklahoma Congressmen and participated in a Congressional Roundtable. United States Secretary of Education, Arnie Duncan, keynoted the awards gala on Friday evening.

April 2, OASSP Executive Board members met at the CCOSA office where they discussed the up-coming OASSP events that will be held in conjunction with the CCOSA Summer Conference in June, the OASSP Fall Conference (October 29, 2014), reported on National Association of Secondary School Principal’s (NASSP) news, heard about Value Added Measures, presented by Dr. Kerri White, received an update on Oklahoma legislative action presented by Mr. Ryan Owens and learned about new technology by TeleComp and VTEL. OASSP will be soliciting area representatives for 2014-2015 to serve on the executive board in the coming months. Representatives serve for a 2-year term, attend 4 executive board meetings (2 are held at conferences) and communicate with their regional membership about organizational news and membership. If you are interested in becoming more involved in your organization, please contact Dr. Williams.

At this summer’s CCOSA Summer Conference, OASSP will host their annual golf tournament Monday, June 2, at John Conrad Golf Course, Midwest City beginning at 9:00am. Secondary School Principals will honor retiring members (Please contact our office so we can order your retirement watch if you are retiring this year) and award winners at their OASSP Luncheon Thursday, June 5 at 11:30am in University A. OASSP’s business meeting/breakfast is open to all members and will take place from 8:30-9:30am on Friday, June 6, in University A at Embassy Suites Conference and Hotel, Norman.

(Continued on next page)
OMLEA

OMLEA Board Members send out a huge thank you to all middle level “super heroes” who attended the OMLEA February Conference. With over 250 educators in attendance, keynote speakers Kim Campbell and Mark McLeod did a fabulous job of sharing key strategies for managing middle level students and keeping them engaged in learning. Jason Galloway, principal at Sequoyah Middle School in Edmond and OMLEA board member, was chosen to be the association’s President-Elect for 2014-2015. Next year the conference will move back to the Renaissance Hotel in Tulsa so be sure and mark your calendars for Thursday, February 26 and Friday, February 27, 2015. Our featured keynoter will be well known speaker Jack Berckemeyer.

We also have several positions available on the OMLEA Board. Please contact Gracie Branch (branch@ccosa.org), OMLEA Executive Director, if you would be interested in being considered for a board position for next year. OMLEA is committed to providing quality professional development for Oklahoma middle level educators.

ODSS

ODSS is continuing its efforts to collaborate with other special education stakeholders by participating in panel discussions at the Oklahoma Parents Center’s Regional Conferences in Okmulgee and Shawnee, on April 15 and 16. ODSS members Margie Bemis and Sharon Baker will participate in the Okmulgee panel, while members Sally Thomason and Julie Wolfhrum will participate in the Shawnee panel. The focus of the discussions is on relationship-building and using effective communication skills to create better IEPs, increase parent engagement and boost student achievement.

At the CCOSA Summer Conference on June 5, ODSS has planned a strand of breakout sessions geared to special education issues. Also, at 11:30 a.m. that day, ODSS will honor its Director of the Year, Maurice Walraven Award winner, Jimmie Prickett Scholarship winner, its officers and a number of retiring and transitioning directors. Nominations for the awards and scholarships will be closing soon, with winners to be announced in May.

The ODSS Fall Conference has been scheduled for October 23 and 24, 2014, at the Sheraton Hotel at the Reed Center in Midwest City. The first day will focus on behavior interventions at the Tier I, II and III levels, while the second day will focus on reading issues. Make reservations by 5:00 p.m. on October 3, to lock in the ODSS’ hotel room rate.

OASA

This school year is winding down, but things are still busy with OASA. We currently have 685 members. This is up for the fourth consecutive year! OASA ballots have been counted and District Administrators of the Year have been named. Those names are listed on the awards page of this issue.

OASA Officers will be attending the AASA State Leadership conference May 1-3rd.

We are gearing up for CCOSA Summer Conference which will be here soon! We are back in Norman this year and hope that you have June 4-6 on your calendar. The conference will again be held at the Embassy Suites Convention Center.

If you are an OASA member who is planning to retire at the end of this year or if you know an OASA member who is retiring, please contact the CCOSA office (deanne@ccosa.org or 405-524-1191) and let us know so that we can honor these retirees at our OASA Banquet on Wednesday, June 4!
Pop Quiz, Anyone?

BY ANDREA KUNKEL
CCOSA Staff Attorney

I don’t know about you, but I don’t miss the days when I entered the classroom to find the teacher or professor cheerfully handing out a pop quiz. Just for old times’ sake, though, why don’t you take the following “quiz” to test your knowledge of IEP meeting requirements? I promise that each and every answer comes directly from either Chapter 4 or 11 of Oklahoma’s Special Education Handbook. No grades on this one; you’re only testing yourself.

1. “IEP” stands for:
   a. Individual Education Plan
   b. Individualized Education Plan
   c. Individualized Education Program
   d. None of the above

2. True or False: Under certain circumstances, IEP meetings can be conducted without inviting the parent to attend.

3. Which of the following statements is True?
   a. The parent can bring individuals who have special knowledge or expertise about the child to IEP meetings.
   b. The parent can bring individuals who have special knowledge or expertise about the child to IEP meetings as long as the parent notifies an LEA representative in advance.
   c. The parent can bring individuals who have special knowledge or expertise about the child to IEP meetings as long as the parent provides an LEA representative with at least one (1) school days’ notice.
   d. The parent can bring individuals who have special knowledge or expertise about the child to IEP meetings, but the LEA can bar from attending those persons that it determines do not have special knowledge or expertise about the child.

4. True or False: LEA employees can fulfill more than one IEP team member role at IEP meetings (i.e., the administrative representative can also serve as the qualified person who can interpret assessment results and explain their implications).

5. Which of the following statements is False?
   a. The administrative representative at the IEP meeting must be qualified to provide special education services.
   b. The administrative representative at the IEP meeting must be qualified to provide or supervise the provision of special education services.
   c. The administrative representative at the IEP meeting must be authorized to allocate resources in the LEA as provided by the IEP.
   d. The administrative representative at the IEP meetings must be knowledgeable about the general education curriculum and the availability of the LEA’s resources.

6. Under the IDEA, a surrogate parent is appointed for a child when:
   a. No parent or guardian can be located for the child.
   b. The child is a ward of the state.
   c. The child is an unaccompanied homeless youth.
   d. The biological parent can be found, but chooses not to participate.
   e. All of the above.
   f. Answers a., b. and c.

7. If a student requires the appointment of a surrogate parent, who appoints that person?
   a. A court or agency.
   b. The LEA.
   c. The student.
   d. The biological or adoptive parent.
8. **True or False:** After IDEA rights have transferred to the adult student, the LEA must continue to send notices to the parent.

9. **True or False:** An IEP team meeting is not required to include more than one regular education teacher of a student, no matter how many regular education teachers the student has.

10. **A child/student must be:**
   a. Invited to attend every IEP meeting, beginning at age 14.
   b. Included as a member of the IEP team whenever appropriate.
   c. Invited to attend every IEP team meeting upon turning 16 or beginning with the first IEP of 9th grade, whichever comes first.
   d. Both a. and b.
   e. Both b. and c.

11. **Which of the following statements is True?**
   a. LEAs must provide parents with 10 calendar days’ notice prior to each IEP meeting.
   b. LEAs must provide parents with 10 school days’ notice prior to each IEP meeting.
   c. LEAs must provide parents with prior notice of each IEP meeting that is sufficient to enable them to participate and to make arrangements for others they want to participate.

12. **True or False:** If a parent is unable to attend an IEP meeting, the LEA must use other methods to ensure parent participation, including individual or conference phone calls.

13. **If an IEP team is unable to reach consensus regarding one or more issues, who makes the decision about the issue(s)?**
   a. There is no single decisionmaker. The IEP team must continue to meet in an attempt to resolve the issue.
   b. The special education teacher who holds appropriate certification, subject to the parent’s IDEA procedural safeguards.
   c. The administrative representative on the IEP team, subject to the parent’s IDEA procedural safeguards.

14. **Which of the following statements is True?**
   a. If an IEP team is unable to reach consensus regarding one or more issues, the LEA is still responsible for offering the student FAPE in an IEP developed within the IDEA timelines.
   b. If an IEP team is unable to reach consensus regarding one or more issues, IDEA timelines are placed on hold until consensus is reached or a decision about the issue(s) is made by an administrative hearing officer or judge.

15. **True or False:** IDEA regulations provide that an IEP meeting may only be conducted without a parent in attendance if the public agency is unable to convince the parents that they should attend.

For any score less than 10, better keep your Special Ed Director on speed-dial or the Handbook on your Favorites list.

Answers: 1 – c, 2 – False, 3 – a, 4 – True, 5 – a, 6 – f, 7 – b, 8 – True, 9 – True, 10 – e, 11 – c, 12 – True, 13 – c, 14 – a, 15 – True
STAR Enterprise™ assessments approved by Oklahoma SDE

We want you to be among the first to know that STAR Enterprise™ assessments, including STAR Early Literacy™ and STAR Reading™, are now approved as formative assessments for the K-3 Reading Sufficiency Act. You will find them on the RSA-Approved List under STAR™ Early Learning Enterprise.

This is great news for Oklahoma educators, because STAR Enterprise editions are the leading computer-adaptive assessments for determining acquisition of reading skills by PreK-3 emerging readers through ongoing screening and progress monitoring.

As directed by the K-3 Reading Sufficiency Act, reading skills such as phonological awareness, phonics, reading fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension are to be assessed using a screening instrument approved by the State Board of Education. STAR assessments have now been so approved. They include Student Diagnostic Reports, Screening Reports, and Instructional Planning Reports, which provide a bridge from assessment to instruction.

Call or email your Renaissance Learning™ representatives below for more information:

Sydney Nicholas
(866) 563-1084
Sydney.Nicholas@renlearn.com

Heather Tennyson
(866) 559-6571
Heather.Tennyson@renlearn.com
Back in the fall of 2006, I was just beginning to understand the responsibilities of a middle school assistant principal. I was several months into my very first administrative position and was summoned to a local medical clinic for an annual physical examination. I was accustomed to such visits and knew that in order to drive a school bus, an appointment with a medical doctor was a prerequisite. Much to my dismay and astonishment, I was informed by the practicing nurse that I had high blood pressure.

As a former high school athlete who stayed relatively active throughout my college experience and into the first several years of my teaching career, high blood pressure was inconceivable. Noticing the look of bewilderment upon my face, the nurse asked if I had undergone any stress related circumstances either at home or work. I immediately replied that I had recently taken a job as a middle school administrator. With that being said, the nurse explained that principals face a relentless amount of stress, and that I needed to care for myself.

When I returned to school, I informed my administrative colleagues that I had passed my physical exam, but needed to monitor my blood pressure. Both of my colleagues reiterated the stressful nature of the job and the need for some type of physical activity to counteract its harmful physiological effects.

Thanks to the coaxing from dear administrative friends over the years, I can now happily report that my blood pressure is back to normal. According to the physician’s assistant at my last check up, my blood pressure could be bottled and sold. I have since become obsessed with running. I have discovered that the best way to refuel after a long and stressful day at school is to go for a run prior to interacting with my wife and children. In addition, I have dropped a few needed pounds, look and feel much more physically fit, and have twice the energy.

I mention the information above to say that our profession is extremely stressful. If we expect to live long and happy lives, we must care for our mental and physical well-being. If your medical condition does not allow running, try engaging in a number of other less obtrusive activities such as walking, biking, swimming, or golfing. Something as simple as twenty minutes of exercise daily can have profound effects on your livelihood.

Furthermore, I would recommend some type of annual wellness check. If Health Choice is your health care provider, you are eligible to receive a $200 stipend each year for participating in a health exam. During the exam, your blood pressure will be taken, weight measured and several vials of blood will be drawn. The blood work will then be sent to a laboratory for analysis. Within a month, results of the exam comparing your cholesterol, triglycerides, glucose and blood count levels to an optimal range will be sent to you in report form through the mail.

Excellus BlueCross BlueShield provides members “The ExerciseRewards Program.” Paying you for working out, The ExerciseRewards™ Program is a fitness facility reimbursement program available only to SimplyBlue Plus members in addition to Base, Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum, and Bassett Gold Select members. As covered members on a policy, subscribers and their spouse or domestic partner can receive up to $600 a year to help pay for their fitness facility memberships. (Every six months, subscribers can earn up to $200 and their eligible spouse/domestic partner can earn up to $100). You can choose your own fitness club or exercise center, or visit www.ExerciseRewards.com to view a list of participating ExerciseRewards fitness facilities and print a voucher for:

- 10% or more discount on enrollment fees and/or membership dues
- Free one-week trial (limited to three facilities)

As the ancient proverb states, “A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.” It is never too late to begin the adventure toward health and wellness. Get out of the office chair and make the dream a reality!”
Parents in Grief

BY SHERRI COATS
ODSS President-Elect
Director of Special Services, Byng Public Schools

Professional Development is an important component in increasing rigor, relevance, and relationships. It provides opportunities to add to our ever-growing toolbox of tools that educators need to be successful. Relations with parents are so important, yet can be so volatile if we don’t have enough tools to support parents.

In 1994, I experienced the grieving process upon learning my parents were killed, together in an automobile accident, by a drunk driver. I read everything I could get my hands on about loss and grief to help me cope with the loss of my parents, who were only 49 and 50 at the time. As I worked through the stages of grief, I could see myself healing and more prepared to face the weeks and months ahead.

Since that time, I have learned so many things about loss and grief. One of the most valuable lessons I learned is that grief is not just limited to the loss of a family member. It also extends to any loss, including loss of a job, loss of a home, loss of personal possessions, and even loss of hopes and dreams. Secondly, I learned that grief is a process and not an event.

So how does this relate to what we do as educators, you say? Many times, I have had the distasteful task of being the first person to inform a parent of a student’s suspected or identified disability. Every parent has hopes and dreams for their child and there is a sense of loss and grief that parents must go through when they learn that their child has a disability. The greatest gift we can give parents, upon learning of this loss, is time; time to process, time to grieve, and time to reframe expectations and create new hopes and dreams.

The stages of grief, as I have seen them demonstrated by parents, are:

1. Denial – Parents don’t admit there is a problem. We hear statements such as, “They don’t do that at home”, “My other children did that early on; they are fine now”, “Just a normal kid; all kids do that”, “Just stubborn”, “xxx family member was like that; he grew out of it”.

2. Anger and Blame – Parents are angry and deflect the problem elsewhere. We will hear statements such as, “You are wrong”, “You don’t know my kid; I know my kid”, “You are picking on my kid”, “You are doing this because of my child’s race”, “He’s just not interested in what you are teaching”, “Why has the school waited so long to do anything about this?”, “What have you done to help?”

3. Bargaining – We will find another way to solve this. We will hear statements such as, “Move him to another classroom”, “I will hire a tutor/send him to tutoring”, “We will get counseling”, “Punish him”, “Retain him”, “Need another/a different evaluation”.

4. Depression – Parents recognize the problem and feel hopeless. We will hear parents make these statements, “I should have seen it sooner”, “I have that disorder too”, “What will the future be like?” Parents will often cry, feel sad, and make statements that demonstrate self-pity, self-blame, or worry.

5. Acceptance – Parents recognize the disability and are ready to be proactive and address the needs of the student. Parents are then ready to partner with school to find solutions, redefine their expectations, define the needs, and develop a plan.

Just by listening to parents, we can determine what stage they are in and it allows us to not take these statements personally. Some parents work through all five stages of grief in a single meeting and some parents need months and sometimes even years to come to acceptance. The final lesson I learned is grief is different for everyone. One doesn’t necessarily go through every stage, the stages aren’t always in order, and parents often cycle back through the various stages. Parent’s may not be the easiest to deal with as they go through the grieving process, but it helps to know the stage of grief that the parent is operating from and how to be supportive as they work toward acceptance.
For over a year, I have had the privilege of working with over 60 school administrators and board of education members on the Oklahoma Visioning Project. This group of committed public school advocates has given their time, knowledge, skills, and passion in an effort to create a long-term vision for how we can best serve our students and families now and in the future.

For too long, Oklahoma’s elected leaders have made education policy and funding decisions devoid of long-range planning and objective, evidence-based research. Education leaders know that school improvement is a continuous process, but it must be a coordinated approach based on research for meeting the needs of students.

This collaboration between the OSSBA and CCOSA has resulted in a draft document that the Steering Committee is reviewing with the nationally recognized education think tank McREL (Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning). This collaboration will ensure that national and research-based evaluation methods are the foundation of this document. Highlights of the draft document include guiding principles, key issues, transformational practices, and recommendations in the identified areas of focus including:

1) Teaching, learning and assessments for student success
2) Expanded learning opportunities for student success
3) Financial resources
4) Climate, culture and organizational efficacy
5) Physical resources
6) Partnerships for human and organizational capital development
7) Governance, leadership and accountability

Once the Steering Committee has fully vetted the draft document, our next goal is to begin the process of bringing stakeholders from inside and outside the field of education to the table to provide input and suggestions to strengthen it and its core message. I am confident that in a short period of time we will be ready to bring this process to its intended conclusion. Mass communication methods will be utilized to relay information to the public on this informed vision for the future of public education in our state.

Our approximate timeline for public release of the document is early summer, and we will be discussing as a group on the best coordinated approach for mass communication of our Vision and protecting the integrity of its plan and message.
Better School S April/May 2014

Oklahoma's Rally for Education Speech

BY ERIKA VINSON
Warner High School Senior

• I am a flower. When I was only a seed, the gardeners planted me. I was placed in the perfect spot to grow—Oklahoma Public Schools. The gardeners watered me and watched over me. They watched me transform from a tiny seed then to a tiny sprout. They watched my petals unfold. They watched my color become vibrant. And if I ever started to wilt, they added nutrients, water, and love. I have been growing in public schools for fourteen years. I was fortunate to be planted at a time when conditions in the garden allowed for unlimited growth for each flower. But as I look around the garden now, I see destruction. There are more flowers, seeds, and sprouts now, about 678,000, but fewer gardeners. As funding for the garden has been cut year after year, standards and expectations for the garden becomes higher and higher. To a flower in the garden it seems like all of our time and the money is spent on testing us. No test has made me the flower I am today. My gardeners have. My gardeners were my third grade teacher who showed me how to use my reading talents to bring joy to others, and my eighth grade writing teacher who tore apart my literary works and helped me put them back together in a beautiful way, and my chemistry teacher who taught us flowers not only about the elements in the periodic table but also about life—Yes, life beyond the garden. These are the people in public education, in this garden, that made me the flower I am. Not, absolutely not, the end of instruction tests. My teachers did it. And when I look around, I don't see them being helped the way they should be. Instead they are given more flowers to look after and higher standards to attain with fewer resources in drought like conditions.

• I may be a flower ready to be transplanted to a new garden called college, but this doesn’t ease my worry for the future of public schools because I know someone who is just a little seed in the garden. This is my eight year old little brother Ty. I want Ty to have the same opportunities I had in public school. He deserves the same love and attention I received in the garden. Sadly because of the increasing student to teacher ratio, he will most likely have classes with large numbers of students. The gardeners cannot possibly give the seeds the attention they require and deserve. Another issue I see in the garden is that right now every seed, sprout, and flower is looked at as being the same. Non-educators want the gardeners to teach the seeds using the same exact methods. What they do not realize is each seed is different. Each requires a different kind of care. Some need less water while others need more, some need a warmer climate than others, and some need more fertilizer than others. They may not get there the same way, but each and every seed is capable of becoming a strong, beautiful flower.

• I have had many great gardeners in my life who have understood this concept, and one of these gardeners is my mom. My mom pours everything she has into her classroom. She focuses on the needs of each student and teaches them in a way that will benefit them the most, but this becomes increasingly difficult to do as she is stressed over common core, rigorous testing, and teacher evaluations. She worries over her students. She comes home stressed with tears in her eyes. She used to feel powerful and important as a teacher. She knew that what she did made a difference. It did make a difference and still does. Every gardener makes a difference. I have no doubt that every one of you gardeners out there want to see your seeds and sprouts grow into strong flowers, just like my mom. However, I fear that until our public schools are funded appropriately, our teachers’ jobs will become increasingly difficult. Higher standards are wonderful. We all want stronger flowers to send out into the world; however this cannot happen if funding to our public schools is continually cut and the focus continues to be on testing.

• The garden is producing stressed flowers at all stages of growth—especially our third graders. They know what failing that test means. They are scared of it and stressed over it. I may not be a doctor, an attorney, or even a dentist, but I know that stressed flowers wilt! Is the goal of this garden to produce wilting flowers? No! The goal is to create flowers strong enough to be transplanted into life outside the garden and not just to survive, but to thrive. It’s time to stop stressing the flowers in the garden. It’s time to fund our schools. I want to personally thank every teacher, administrator, and all other school personnel for being a gardener, and for being here today to fight to help keep Oklahoma’s flowers from wilting. God bless you all! Thank you!
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➢ Breakout Sessions

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◆ Restoring Hope and Well-being to Change Lives◆

Adam Sáenz will be the first to admit that his journey through life so far has been an amazing one, filled with tremendous highs and profound lows. At every important juncture there have been two common elements, lifesavers that appeared when he really needed it: education and teachers. Along the way, this son of blue collar parents has gained two doctorate degrees, with training at Harvard Medical School and Oxford University. Adam is not your ordinary school psychologists. His personal story will inspire you; his professional workshops will empower you.

❉ 2014 Summer Conference Registration Information❉
CONFERENCE HOTEL: Embassy Suites Norman Hotel & Conference Center: 405-364-8040

For more information: www.ccosa.com
Register online at: www.regonline.com/2014SummerConf
CONFERENCE SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

JUNE 2, 2014 MONDAY
9:00 am OASSP Golf Tournament John Conrad Golf Course, Midwest City
Sponsored by Achieve 3000, Jostens, Life Touch, & Sadlier

JUNE 3, 2014 TUESDAY
7:00 pm Vendor Set-Up Oklahoma Ballroom F-J
9:00 am OASA Pete Rhames Golf Tournament Broadmoore Golf Course
5:00-9:00 pm CCOSA Executive Committee Meeting Zoo's, 1335 24th Ave NW, Norman

JUNE 4, 2014 WEDNESDAY USSA Pre-Conference Workshop
7:30-8:15 am SNU Graduates Meet and Greet Embassy Suites-Norman
8:00 am Registration and Exhibit Hall open (both open all day)
8:30-9:30 am Opening Ceremonies Oklahoma Ballroom A-E
9:30-10:00 am Coffee Break-Exhibit Hall-Sponsored by Boynton Williams & Associates Oklahoma Ballroom F-J
10:00-11:00 am Second General Session Oklahoma Ballroom A-E
11:05-11:50 am Breakout Session I University A-C, C & Boomer/Soooner
11:50 am-12:30 pm Lunch Oklahoma Ballroom A-E
12:30-1:00 pm USSA Business Meeting/Exhibit Hall Open University A, B, C, & Boomer/Soooner
1:00-1:45 pm Third General Session Oklahoma Ballroom F-J
1:50-2:35 pm Breakout Sessions II University A, B, C & Boomer/Soooner
2:35-3:00 pm Vendor Break Oklahoma Ballroom A-E
3:00-3:45 pm Breakout Session III Oklahoma Ballroom F-J
6:15 pm OASA Awards Banquet Oklahoma A, B, C, D

JUNE 5, 2014 THURSDAY
7:00-8:30 am Pictures (CCOSA staff and board members for all associations) Crimson Room (Hotel Side)
7:30 am Registration and Exhibit Hall Open (both open all day) Oklahoma Ballroom F-J
8:00-9:00 am Breakout Session I Oklahoma Ballroom F-J
8:30-9:30 am OASA Business/Breakfast Meeting, Door Prizes by Cariker School Services Boomer/Soooner
8:30-9:30 am OASSP Business/ Breakfast Meeting, Door Prizes by Cariker School Services University A
8:30-9:30 am ODSS Business/ Breakfast Meeting University B
8:30-9:30 am OAESP Business/ Breakfast Meeting University C
9:45-10:15 am SECOND GENERAL SESSION: Recognition of CCOSA Scholarship Winners Oklahoma Ballroom E-F
10:15-11:00 am Federal Legislative Update: Presented by Amanda N. Kahruse, Director, Government Relations, NASSP TBA
“WHAT IS HAPPENING IN WASHINGTON?” TBA
Political Debate: State Superintendent of Education TBA
11:20-11:40 am Republican Candidates-Joy Hofmeister, Dr. Janet Barresi and Brian Kelly
11:40 am-12:20 pm Democratic Candidates-Dr. John Cox, Dr. Freda Deskin, Dr. Jack Herron & Dr. Ivan Holmes
12:30 pm Conference Concludes
Teacher Leader Effectiveness Update

Recertification Training Sessions – Tulsa Model

Recent research in teacher evaluation has demonstrated that continued training is necessary in order to improve the reliability and validity of all evaluation systems. The requirements for Oklahoma TLE programs include recertification training for all administrators in their chosen model every two years. This year, the Tulsa Model recertification training will focus on (1) changes to the Tulsa Model rubric, (2) changes in Tulsa Model processes, and (3) further calibration training.

Modifications have been made to the Tulsa Model rubric to clarify descriptors and reduce ambiguity in language. These changes are designed to increase the reliability and validity of ratings. Calibration training is also designed to improve rater accuracy. Process changes include a new option for administrators – a Goal Setting Form that may, in certain circumstances, be used in lieu of a Personal Development Plan (PDP). The Goal Setting Form is a more collaborative method of helping teachers improve. We are excited about providing this additional option for helping teachers address indicators in need of development. The Recertification Training Sessions will be one-day sessions, held in the summer and fall. Expect a very full day, starting promptly at 8:00 a.m. and concluding at 5:00 p.m.

Tulsa Model Initial Training Sessions

Initial training in the Tulsa Model for new administrators will be provided this summer and fall. The training is delivered in three-day sessions with an additional session scheduled for January.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Dates</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>City</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 29-31</td>
<td>CCOSA</td>
<td>2901 Lincoln</td>
<td>OKC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 26-28</td>
<td>Jenks Math &amp; Science Building (Jenks HS)</td>
<td>105 East B Street</td>
<td>Jenks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 16-18</td>
<td>Kiamichi Technology Center – Atoka Campus</td>
<td>1301 West Liberty Rd.</td>
<td>Atoka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 13-15</td>
<td>CCOSA</td>
<td>2901 Lincoln</td>
<td>OKC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 26-28</td>
<td>CCOSA</td>
<td>2901 Lincoln</td>
<td>OKC</td>
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</tbody>
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Watch the CCOSA website TLE page (it’s under the Professional Development tab at www.ccosa.org) for complete information on upcoming trainings. Registration for the available spaces at each site will be made on a first-come, first-serve basis.

McREL Training Dates Location Address City

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<tr>
<td>July 15-16</td>
<td>CCOSA</td>
<td>2901 Lincoln</td>
<td>OKC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 9-10</td>
<td>Jenks Math &amp; Science Building (Jenks HS)</td>
<td>105 East B Street</td>
<td>Jenks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 23-24</td>
<td>Kiamichi Technology Center – Atoka Campus</td>
<td>1301 West Liberty Rd.</td>
<td>Atoka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 14-15</td>
<td>Great Plains Technology Center</td>
<td>4500 SW Lee Blvd</td>
<td>Lawton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 15-16, 2015</td>
<td>CCOSA</td>
<td>2901 Lincoln</td>
<td>OKC</td>
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For more information please contact Wiley Copeland at (580)326-2705.
**CCOSA Award Winners!**

### 2014-2015 OAESP

**Elementary Principal of the Year!**

Karen Heizer  
Hoover ES  
Enid Public Schools

**OAESP Principal of Excellence**

Suzanne Lair  
Jenks West Elementary  
Jenks PS

**OAESP James Burnett Distinguished Principal**

Bettina Kates  
Deer Creek ES  
Deer Creek PS

### OASSP

**High School Principal of the Year!**

Rodney Maynard  
Davis HS  
Davis PS

**Middle School Principal of the Year!**

Rob Miller  
Jenks MS  
Jenks PS

**Assistant Principal of the Year!**

Clay McDonald  
Piedmont HS  
Piedmont PS

**OASA ASST. SUPT./CENTRAL OFFICE**

DISTRICT #1  
Michelle Bryson, Guymon

DISTRICT #2  
Sandy Johnson, Woodward

DISTRICT #3  
Jeffery Herbel, Enid

DISTRICT #4  
Gay Washington, Stillwater

DISTRICT #5  
Trish Williams, Tulsa

DISTRICT #6  
Paul Fowler, Claremore

DISTRICT #7  
Bret Towne, Edmond

DISTRICT #8  
Tom Trigalet, Sapulpa

DISTRICT #9  
Julie Dawson, Tecumseh

DISTRICT #10  
Brad Tackett, Coweta

DISTRICT #11  
Clifta Fugett, Muldrow

DISTRICT #12  
Beth Richert, Clinton

DISTRICT #13  
Jeremy Hogan, Cache

DISTRICT #14  
Angela Mills, Mustang

DISTRICT #15  
Merry Stone, Duncan

DISTRICT #16  
Jerry Swayze, Purcell

DISTRICT #17  
Bruce Plunk, Byng

DISTRICT #18  
Rachel Pugh, Wister

DISTRICT #19  
Linda Coffman, Valliant

DISTRICT #20  
Ron Dyer, Central CTC

**OASA DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT OF THE YEAR**

DISTRICT #1  
Josh Bell, Tyrone

DISTRICT #2  
Jeff Thompson, Sharon-Mutual

DISTRICT #3  
Shawn Hime, Enid

DISTRICT #4  
David Pennington, Ponca City

DISTRICT #5  
Jarod Mendenhall, Broken Arrow

DISTRICT #6  
Tom Linihan, Adair

DISTRICT #7  
Pam Deering, Mid-Del

DISTRICT #8  
Bo Osborn, Carney

DISTRICT #9  
Sam McElvany, Wewoka

DISTRICT #10  
Jerry Needham, Oktaha

DISTRICT #11  
John Cox, Pegrus

DISTRICT #12  
Mike Maddox, Canute

DISTRICT #13  
Robert Trammell, Snyder

DISTRICT #14  
James White, Piedmont

DISTRICT #15  
David Brewer, Temple

DISTRICT #16  
Mike Martin, Davis

DISTRICT #17  
Todd Crabtree, Byng

DISTRICT #18  
Mark Ichord, Hartshorne

DISTRICT #19  
Craig Wall, Valliant

DISTRICT #20  
Greg Winters, Canadian Valley CTC
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