

Executive Director's Notepad . . .

PAESSP Joins The Campaign for Fair Education Funding



By Paul M. Healey, Ph.D., PAESSP Executive Director

As you are probably aware, the legislature is currently working on the issue of school funding once again with a report due in the summer of 2015. I stated “once again” because many of us remember the last attempt at a new funding formula which came out of another legislative study known as the Costing Out Study. We also remember that school districts began receiving additional funds from 2008-11 as a result of this study, which was aimed at providing fair funding to school districts over a six-year period. We also know that after year three of the rollout, the Costing Out Study, and the move to close educational funding gaps across the state, was put on a back shelf. So, here we go again with a new study and some potential new formulas to be drafted and debated in the coming months.

We all know and understand that the current funding to school districts is inadequate and unfair, and we applaud the efforts to take a hard look once again at a fair education funding formula. PAESSP has joined *The Campaign for Fair Education Funding*, which is an independent group comprised of approximately 45 educational groups and organizations interested in this important topic. The mission is to ensure that Pennsylvania adopts and maintains an adequate and equitable system of funding public education by 2016. Every public school must have the resources necessary to enable every child to meet state academic standards, be prepared for post-secondary success and become productive, knowledgeable and engaged adults. Educating our children is a collective imperative that has positive social and economic benefits for the Commonwealth and its communities.

The campaign is guided by the following principles (*The Campaign For Fair Education Funding*):

➤ ***Accuracy is important***

The new system must be based on real costs necessary to meet state academic standards and must use accurate, reliable, verifiable and current school and community data that addresses factors including poverty, English proficiency, school enrollment and other objective measures that impact those costs.

➤ ***Students and schools need stability***

The new system must be transparent, sustainable, equitable and long-range — and supported with sufficient, stable and broad-based resources. A new basic education funding system is the foundation for educating all children, including children with special needs who will require additional resources through the special education allocation.

➤ ***Responsibility is shared***

The new system must operate based on shared fiscal responsibility among the local community, the state, individuals and commercial taxpayers, recognizing the differing levels of local funding available and the relationship between adequate financial support and student outcomes.

➤ ***Accountability is required***

The new system must include strong accountability standards to ensure that schools invest efficiently and effectively to boost student achievement and help ensure post-second-

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ary success. These standards also should allow and/or encourage schools to pursue and sustain operational cost-saving and cost-sharing options that are consistent with ongoing efforts to foster student achievement and success.

PAESSP is proud to be a governing member of this group with a seat at the table where we can represent the interests of school leaders as it relates to fair education funding. It is our hope that this group will be instrumental and influential with any new funding formula that is eventually enacted. PAESSP will continue to provide updates to our members about this very important topic and we suggest that in addition to visiting our website, members can get additional information about the campaign at www.fairfundingpa.org.

PAESSP Tree of Distinction

Honoring Principal of the Year Awardees

By Dr. Paul M. Healey, PAESSP Executive Director

As a permanent tribute to all of our past principal awardees, the Pennsylvania Association of Elementary and Secondary School Principals (PAESSP) has recently installed a **Tree of Distinction** in the state office lobby, which includes the names of all of our past principal awardees (National Distinguished Principals, High School Principals of the Year, Middle Level Principals of the Year and Assistant Principals of the Year). The PAESSP Board of Directors approved the construction of this special tree so that we could remember and pay tribute to all of the great school leaders across Pennsylvania. (See photo on right.)

The **Tree of Distinction** has a prominent place at our headquarters whereby visitors can scan the names of all of the deserving school leaders who have made positive contributions on behalf of their students and school districts. *We hope our own members will enjoy this tribute when they visit the PAESSP office.*

We also encourage our members to nominate school leaders who are worthy of such recognitions when the applications for the principal of the year awards are announced at both the state and national levels.



Attention PAESSP Members

If you have recently retired, changed your school district or have a new title, please let us know so we can update your membership record. Contact Melissa Plantz at (717) 732-4999 or e-mail her at plantz@paessp.org. Don't let your membership lapse due to incorrect information!