

# Meet Your New President... Dr. Maureen D. Letcher



Dr. Robert Gildea (left), Superintendent of Hollidaysburg Area School District, and Dr. Maureen Letcher (right) receiving the National Blue Ribbon School (NBRSS) Award at the National Recognition Ceremony, November 2022, in Washington, D.C. Also pictured is Aba Kumi, director of the NBRSS program, U.S. Department of Education.



Dr. Maureen D. Letcher

**Maureen D. Letcher, D.Ed.**, Principal of Hollidaysburg Area Senior High School in the Hollidaysburg Area School District is the 2022-2023 President of the Pennsylvania Principals Association. Recently, Dr. Letcher provided her thoughts regarding the association and other important topics related to the principalship. The questions and her responses appear below and on the following pages.

**Q: What are your goals as president of the Pennsylvania Principals Association?**

**A:** *Being President of the PA Principals Association is a position that I am honored to have. Part of my role is to work with the PA Principals to advocate for the work we do as the backbones of our buildings. As we go through our days, it is important to have a network of people who can be relied upon to ask questions, give advice or just be a sounding board. I want to make sure that all principals feel that they have a group in place to whom they feel comfortable reaching out.*

**Q: Where do you see the PA Principals Association in two years following your presidency? Is there anything that you'd like to leave as your legacy?**

**A:** *The PA Principals Association has been in excellent hands with the past presidents. I truly believe in the need for collaboration and support among principals across the state. In each region, it is important to know your representative and feel comfortable to ask questions, advice or just having a listening ear.*

**Q: Why do you believe it is a benefit for principals and other educational leaders to become a member of the PA Principals Association?**

**A:** *There are a number of benefits to being a member of the PA Principals Association that range from legal support, to professional development, to networking, to legislative updates, to finding a group of like peers upon whom you can rely. In a job where one can feel like you are alone on an island, one of the most important aspects of being a member is to belong to a group who can support, relate and understand all aspects of your job.*

**Q:** What advice do you have for those new (or aspiring) to the principalship?

**A:** When you first start out, find a mentor. This person may or may not be a mentor in name, but find someone you trust, who has experience and with whom you feel comfortable. There is no room in this job for an ego, and you need to be able to admit that you are wrong because you will make mistakes. Learn from your mistakes and move forward in a more knowledgeable way.

**Q:** What are some issues that you feel are or should be important to principals and education leaders in Pennsylvania?

**A:** One of the major issues we all are experiencing is the teacher shortage. This not only has made our jobs as administrators more difficult, but it has also increased the load for teachers who have to cover for others and sometimes teach more than one class at a time. Through this issue, we need to focus on morale for our faculty, our students and our community. Being the most positive person in your building is important for success.

**“ I am honored to represent the amazing principals and assistant principals across Pennsylvania. During my term, I will advocate for our members. I will do all I can to implement a support system for principals and assistant principals, and I will ensure that they feel valued, for it is the roles that they play in our districts that have made and will continue to make the education system in Pennsylvania to be one of the best that this country has to offer.”**



Pictured above, from left to right: Maureen with her sons, Maxwell (17) and Mitchell (15).

Dr. Maureen Letcher became the 2022-24 President of the PA Principals Association when the ‘gavel was passed’ to her by Dr. Jonathan Ross, the 2020-22 President, during the annual business meeting at the LEAD22 Conference in October.

Maureen with the recipients of the Hollidaysburg Area Senior High School Principal Award.

**Q: How do you see public education evolving in our post-pandemic world?**

**What lessons have been learned?**

**A:** *In our post-pandemic world, we have learned we can do it... "IT" being just about anything. The word "resilient" was continuously used when describing the students and the educators during the pandemic. Educators were adaptable, flexible and outside-of-the-box-thinkers. Technology use went beyond what we ever thought possible. Educational settings were different from anything we have experienced as teachers thought outside of the box to conduct class virtually: online labs were taught, and breakout rooms were used. We utilized every online method of teaching available, and we were successful. Additionally, we continue to use these types of resources to enhance our once traditional classrooms.*



**Maureen accompanied the Hollidaysburg Area Senior High School band on their trip to Disney World where the band, chorus and orchestra performed.**

## ABOUT YOUR PRESIDENT

**Maureen D. Letcher, D.Ed.**, Principal of Hollidaysburg Area Senior High School in the Hollidaysburg Area School District, is the **2022-2024 President of the Pennsylvania Principals Association**. She has been a member of the association for 22 years.

Dr. Letcher has served in her current role as principal at Hollidaysburg Area Senior High School since 2013, and as assistant principal at Hollidaysburg Area Senior High School from 2009-2013. During her tenure as a principal, she has worked in a small rural school (a 7<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>-grade building), in a traditional junior high school (grades 7,8,9) and in a senior high school (grades 10, 11, 12). She began her career in education as an English teacher in the Williamsburg Community School District and also served as a dual enrollment English teacher for college speech and freshman composition at Allegheny College/Williamsburg School District.

Dr. Letcher most recently held the position of PA Principals Association President-Elect. She served on the PA Principals Board of Directors as the Central III Secondary Regional Representative from 2018-2019. She is a member of the Blair County Principals Association and has served as its chair since 2001. She is also a member of the Hollidaysburg Rotary Club, the Blair County of Chamber of Commerce and is a graduate of the Blair County Chamber of Commerce Leadership Class of 2017. In addition, Dr. Letcher serves on the Board of Directors for the Hollidaysburg Community Partnership as well as on the Board of Directors for the Women's Caucus of the Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators (PASA).

Dr. Letcher earned a Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education English with a minor in political science from the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown. She received a Master of Science in Secondary Guidance Counseling, her Principal Certification and a Doctorate in Administrative Leadership from the Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

Dr. Letcher is the mother of two boys, Maxwell Baronner (17), and Mitchell Baronner (15). She has been married to Richard Baronner for 23 years. They reside in Duncansville, Pennsylvania.

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**Follow her on Twitter at [@mletcher1](https://twitter.com/mletcher1)**