





# Student Loan

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

Fall is here and hopefully, your school year is off to a great start! You may have noticed that *The Pennsylvania Administrator* may look a bit different. We are in the process of adding some new features and giving your professional journal a much-needed revamp! We hope the changes are to your liking!



On a different note, we hope you are taking full advantage of your new, online community, “*The Principals Exchange*” (or “*The Exchange*”). If you have not yet checked it out, please visit: <https://exchange.paprincipals.org/> and log in using the same information that you use to log in to our website. (Page 12) Remember, the PA Principals Association is here for you to provide legal advice and support, professional development opportunities and various other tools and resources you need to be an effective school leader.

We are introducing two new features in this issue: **Letter to the Editor** (see opposite) and **It happened to me... The benefit of legal protection** (Page 11)

If you want to submit an article for the Winter 2024 issue, please submit it to me at [sherit@paprincipals.org](mailto:sherit@paprincipals.org) no later than Friday, Dec. 18, 2023. (Page 44) Our next *theme edition* will be the Spring 2024 issue. Check [www.paprincipals.org](http://www.paprincipals.org) and your inbox for further details.

*Enjoy this issue!*

**Sheri L. Thompson, Editor**

## Dates to Remember

### JULY

**15-17 UNITED - The National Conference on School Leadership (NAESP & NASSP)**  
Nashville, Tennessee

### AUGUST

**4-6 SUMMIT24 - For PA Educational Leaders (PA Principals Association)**  
Pittsburgh Marriott North & Ehrman Crest Elementary and Middle School  
Cranberry Township, Pennsylvania

## Attention Retired or Newly Retired PA Principals Members!

If you have recently retired or will be retiring soon, you are eligible to receive one year of free membership in the PA Principals Association before paying for a retired membership (visit <https://www.paprincipals.org/member-services/join-renew-pa-principals-association-membership/>).

Please contact the Director of Membership and Finance at [quagliani@paprincipals.org](mailto:quagliani@paprincipals.org) or (717) 732-4999, ext. 116, to receive your free year or for more information. Also, if we do not have your updated contact information, we will not be able to reach you.

## Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor:

I just received my copy of Spring “Administrator” and found it very enlightening. Although I have retired after a rewarding 52-year career in education, I still enjoy seeing current professional’s approaches to issues we dealt with over my tenure.

I have a daughter who is an elementary teacher in Saratoga Springs, New York, and I always share the journal with her, who in turn often shares it with her colleagues and principal. I currently live in Adirondack Park in Upstate New York and unofficially consult with a 450-student, Pre-K-12 school district. I believe they will find the articles about student handbooks and structured literacy very helpful. I particularly like the “Scarborough’s Reading Rope” piece. I wish we had that when I first started in education in 1968. I believe I would have been a much better teacher and principal.

I served with pride on the then PAESP board as a conference chair, regional representative and officer in the late 80s/early 90s and feel it helped form who I became and who I am, both professionally and personally. I ordered the Fred Rogger’s book mentioned in one article, even though I am no longer an “official educator.” Once a teacher, always a teacher.

Keep up the good work.

—Fred Brown  
Emeritus Member  
94-95 NAESP President

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**Telephone: (717) 732-4999 • Fax: (717) 732-4890**

**Email: [sherit@papprincipals.org](mailto:sherit@papprincipals.org)**

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# The Advantage of Effective Teams

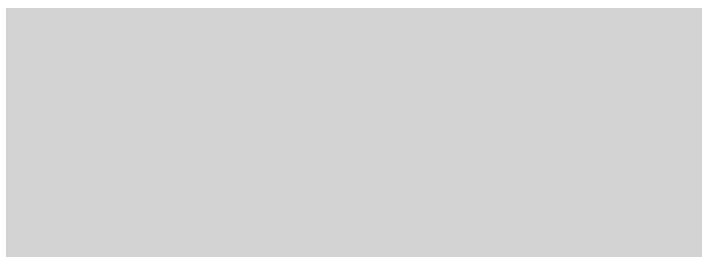
*By Dr. Eric C. Eshbach, PA Principals Association Executive Director*



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## NATIONAL DISTINGUISHED PRINCIPAL

# Karen L. Krisch Named Pennsylvania's 2023 National Distinguished Principal



**Karen L. Krisch**, Principal of Marion-Walker Elementary School in the Bellefonte Area School District, has been named **Pennsylvania's 2023 National Distinguished Principal (NDP)** by the Pennsylvania Principals Association. She was honored with this award at SUMMIT23 for PA Educational Leaders in August. As a state winner in the National Association of Elementary School Principals'

(NAESP) National Distinguished Principal (NDP) Program, Mrs. Krisch will also be honored by NAESP this fall.

An educator for 29 years, Mrs. Krisch served in her current role as principal at Marion-Walker Elementary School (K-5) since 2017. Previously, she was principal at Bellefonte Area Elementary School (2013-2017); principal (2005-2013) and vice principal (2002-2005) at Bellefonte Area Middle School; and an assistant administrator for the Bald Eagle Area School District (2000-2002). She also taught vocational education (Career Prep class) at the secondary level for six years, specifically to high-poverty students.

"We congratulate Karen Krisch, an exceptional leader and principal, for being named Pennsylvania's 2023 National Distinguished Principal. Karen has demonstrated a passion for social and emotional learning in her continued efforts to make it part of their school and district culture. In addition, her outstanding leadership skills and devotion to the Marion-Walker Elementary students, staff and community are qualities that make her a distinguished principal and a role model for principals and school leaders across the commonwealth," said Dr. Eric Eshbach, Executive Director, PA Principals Association.

Under Mrs. Krisch's leadership, many significant initiatives and programs have been implemented at her school and in the district. Serving as a mentor to new principals in the district is at the top of that list. She was also instrumental in helping to bring reform to the district's safety plan and protocols over the years. This included students and staff being accounted for during all safety drills, providing armed intruder training to students and staff, serving on the emergency operations team, and most recently, revamping the reunification process. She is also passionate about social and emotional learning (SEL) and has had extensive training in school-based mindfulness as well as serving as a presenter on the topic. She has also worked with researchers from Pennsylvania State University to determine the effectiveness of the district's SEL programs. "In my school, mindfulness is

part of this process to encourage self-care for teachers as well as students," she shared.

In addition to being a member of the Pennsylvania Principals Association and the National Association of Elementary School Principals, Mrs. Krisch is a member of the Pennsylvania Association for School Administrators, the Pennsylvania Association for Student Assistance Professionals (PASAP) and Leadership Centre County (Class of 2019). She has presented at the PASAP Conference (2010 – present) and at the Central Intermediate Unit 10 Annual PARA Conference 2022, and co-authored an article published in Phi Delta Kappan on leadership for mindful practices.

"I am so honored to be selected as the NDP for Pennsylvania. I have been able to become a good principal because I have been surrounded by other great principal colleagues who have mentored me along the way. My school teams have always contributed so much to my growth as a principal over the years. I would not be here without all of them," said Mrs. Krisch.

Mrs. Krisch earned a Bachelor of Science in communications disorders from The Pennsylvania State University, a Bachelor of Science in elementary education from Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania and a Master of Science in international education from Northcentral University. In her spare time, she has a "craft room," and spends much time Cricut crafting. "I also ride my bike to school even though the teachers tell me I look like Ms. Gulch from the Wizard of Oz," she joked. ■

*"Karen Krisch is a consummate professional and a truly remarkable principal and leader in our district. She goes above and beyond for the students, staff and families in the Bellefonte Area School District and in her elementary school. She is a most deserving, exemplary principal."*

Dr. Tammie Burnaford  
Superintendent  
Bald Eagle Area School District

Save  
the  
Date



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FOR EDUCATIONAL LEADERS

**August 4-6, 2024**

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&  
Ehrman Crest  
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