

Thank you for the opportunity to attend the 2019 NSBA conference in Philadelphia. This conference was held over 3 days and had many sessions we could attend. I must admit it was difficult to choose. I will say I spent most of my time concentrating on items that interest me and could have a burdensome impact on any district. There was a lot of information on making schools safe and the challenges of districts with mental health, drug abuse, suicide, suicide ideation, bullying, cyber bully, social media and trauma among students. While dealing with all of these potential factors the need for sound practices and policies in place is imperative. There was also information on moving schools into the future and why it is no longer effective to use the industrial model we as a society have been using for the past 200 years. The future is personalized learning which I am happy to say we as a district are embracing. The key note speakers were inspiring. Following is a recap of the sessions I attended and some of the highlights.

General Session: Day 1:

Call to action for all school districts to advocate on a federal level for IDEA. In 1975 the federal government promised the state to fund IDEA at a 40% level that level currently is about 16%. Public education is a birth right which needs protection, We need to meet every student every day where they are.

It is time to unite the nation in support of public education.

<http://myschoolmyvoice.nea.org/>

Sir Ken Robinson was the keynote speaker. He is an amazing and inspirational speaker.

1. Human talent is EVERYWHERE. Not only in a brick and motor school building.
Learning takes place everyday everywhere
2. Humans are highly diverse but our desires for knowledge is sometimes buried deep
 - a. When you find a child's spark you must refine and develop it
 - b. Great teachers energize and inspire students to learn and to do their best
 - c. One of the greatest relationship is that of the student and the teacher

The question was posed about what is needed to learn and or to teach. A willing student and a willing teacher. Learning can take place wherever the two coexist.

Children are naturally curious and absorb information from the world around them so from the time they are born they are learning and communicating. The purpose of school is much more intentional and is designed to teach those subjects you wouldn't naturally be exposed to ie: calculus.

Schools are a community of LEARNERS. Now is the time to fix our school system

Why do we group students by age rather than interest or ability?

The system is failing us because we do not promote creativity or collaboration. Schools are more of a competition and test taking. Why is it important what you grade is? Why are we not moving to competency-based education?

We are living in a time of revolution and progress

1. Technology
2. Changing Social Behaviors
3. New AI technology
4. Children no longer PLAY and they need physical activity.

It is time to create an environment for learners. We have eroded the culture of learning by making testing more important than personal development.

CYBERBULLYING, SOCIAL MEDIA AND ONLINE THREATS

*****Presented by Lifetouch Presenter Jeff Bean*****

Students today are taking to social media at younger and younger ages we need to focus on the middle school students and support their needs. We are at a crossroads where emotional councilors and social workers are becoming the life blood. We need to partner and monitor for school and student safety

Tips for monitoring social media

1. Create dead accounts that can not be traced back to you
2. Work with police to develop programs to scan for buzz words and our emoji
3. Work with reverse google search to identify images that may be posted
4. Create an anonymous reporting mechanism
5. STOP ZERO tolerance

b. Get people involved

- Parents
- Administration
- Social & Emotional councilors
- Safety Resource Officers
- School Safety Director
- BARK for Schools

The numbers are staggering for how quickly and how many students are attached to technology

- 95% have smartphones
- 85% use YouTube
- 72% use Instagram
- 69% use SnapChat

- 51% use Facebook
- 45% are online “constantly”

THE CHANGING LANGUAGE OF ADOLESCENCE

- I have to say I did not take away a lot of really good information from this session it mainly focused on the evolution of the English language and the changes of language from region to region.
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*****INNOVATIVE LEADERSHIP FOR SCHOOL REDESIGN*****

Social Emotional Learning “According to a 2011 meta-analysis of 213 studies involving more than 270,000 students, those who participated in evidence-based SEL programs showed an 11 percentile-point gain in academic achievement compared to students who did not participate in SEL programs” (CASEL citing Durlak, et. Al., Child development)

Learner Agency

1. Growth mindsets: I can learn
2. Self-efficacy; I can do this
3. Relevance and purpose; This is important to me
4. Social belonging; I belong here
5. Goal setting and management; These are my goals, and I can reach them
6. Metacognition; I know myself and what I need to do
7. Social capital; I can get help when I need it

These are all concepts I feel we as a district are working toward and are accomplishing in many ways.

FLEXIBLE SCHEDULING. What if we made time the variable and learning the constant?

Day 2:

Penny Vadla and I attended the Native American and Alaska Indian Business meeting where new officers were elected.

*****The Impact of Mental Health Awareness in the Classroom*****

Blaise Aguirre MD

This was one of the most insightful meeting I attended it stressed the need for both policy and support for mental health awareness.

1. Mental Health is a Global problem. Globally 10-20% of children and young people experience a mental disorder, this % is increasing on an annual basis. 50% of adults with disorders experience them prior to the age of 15. So, it is important to pay attention to promotion and prevention practice. Schools are well placed to deliver such practices, of the amount of time they spend with students.
2. From 2006-2011 Inpatient visits for suicide, suicide ideation, and self-injury increased by 104% for children 1 to 17 years, and by 151% for children ages 10 to 14 years during this period.

Possible Reasons for the increase include or implicate

1. Increased academic pressure and homework loads
2. The severe recession of the late 2000's
3. Changes in family structure, in patterns of substance misuse, and in obesity rates
4. Growth in the use of electronic communications, especially social media
5. Many studies link frequency of social media use to poor psychological well-being
 1. Changes in social interaction are relevant for suicide and suicide-related outcomes
 2. Studies show the desire for suicide results from the combination of social disconnection/alienation, loneliness and the perceived burdensomeness ie., feeling as though one is a burden on others

Dr. Aguirre made some great points about all of us doing the best we can in the moment and the need to meet students where they are at any given point in time. If a student is mad, depressed, angry ect. They can not reflect on the situation and it is our job to help them find

the place where they can regulate. Intervention that is both direct and constant have better outcomes than the occasional and or only intervening in the case of a negative action.

It is important staff is purposefully and properly trained thru professional development to handle situations and raising awareness of the need for mental health interventions.

*****Drugs, Substance Abuse and Public Schools: An NSBA Legal Guide for School Leaders***

https://static.coreapps.net/nsba2019ac/handouts/08631ed8-21e7-4a0a-9373-1cef1a27b5_1.pdf

https://static.coreapps.net/nsba2019ac/handouts/08631ed8-21e7-4a0a-9373-1cef1a27b5_2.pdf

There is some great information in both of these links if you take the time to look them over.

When looking at the problem teachers and schools play an important role in supporting the



Dr. Blaise Aguirre MD

mental, social and emotional needs of students whether you like it or not. More and more students are taking prescribed medication and while teachers may not be directly involved in the disbursement of medication they are often the first to notice changes in moods, performance and behaviors of students.

There are students taking medical marijuana and as a state with legalized marijuana laws this may become something we need to look at.

Educating students of the effects of vaping is becoming more prevalent across America. Being able to identify electronic delivery systems becomes more challenging each day when they have “jules” that look like jump drives, a pencil, ect.

Monday

*****Suicide Prevention, Response, and Liability Concerns for Schools”*****

This session was about what districts need to do to protect the students and the district from liability. They presented numerous cases and talked about what districts did well as well as where districts failed to meet their obligations to protect the students. Again a lot of really great information in the following link

Focus on creating board policy to address "Suicide Policy"

We currently have no adopted policy in place for

5141.41 Child Abuse

5141.5 Mental Health

5141.51 At-risk youth

5141.52 Suicide Prevention

I for one would encourage the board to look at these policies and develop a plan to address the needs for policy governing these subjects

Professional Development for all staff

https://static.coreapps.net/nsba2019ac/handouts/406a387e-b2a8-4919-b924-9a18b1718cc0_1.pdf

*****Becoming a better board member part 3 superintendent evaluation****

There is many things our board is doing well in my opinion my only suggestion would be to do a mid-year evaluation to redirect and or approve the progress of the superintend.

https://static.coreapps.net/nsba2019ac/handouts/471d857e-2710-45b7-a93a-6174ab8bc2e7_1.pdf

The one really interesting thing the speaker did here was to have half the people clap the nation anthem while the other half was clapping happy birthday. The point in this exercise was to show each side thought the other side clapping the same thing they were. Point being we all need to clarify we are talking about the same thing.

*****Closing Session****

The keynote was Michele Gay whose daughter was killed in the Sandy Hook school shootings. Mrs. Gay walked us thru that tragic and emotional day.

The main take away for me was, No matter how prepared we think we are we aren't!

In partnership with other parents Mrs. Gay has founded safe and sound schools as a tool for schools to evaluate where they are in the process of safe schools.

<https://www.safeandsoundschools.org/>

Our mission is to support school **crisis prevention, response, and recovery**, and to protect every school and every student, every day.

We have always — and only — focused on school safety. We are firm in our mission and firm in our resolve, and we will continue to provide research-based education, tools, and resources to ensure the safest possible learning environment for the youth of our nation.

In closing I would like to thank you for the opportunity to attend the National School Board Association Conference this year. I had the opportunity to talk to school board members from across the country and realize we are all facing many of the same needs. As school board members it is our responsibility to advocate on a local, state, and, federal level for our students.