



BEN WIGGINS
GASSP PRESIDENT

Why Join GASSP?

From time to time, I get this question from young administrators. It leads to an excellent opportunity to share the critical role GASSP serves administrators across the state. I share the importance of joining a professional organization, networking and mentoring and how these three components lead to successful careers in administration and keep administrators on the cutting edge in their profession.

I firmly believe it is critical for each administrator in our state to join and be an active member of a professional organization. GASSP ensures that our members are informed of all important information both from a state and national level that impacts our profession.

The networking component of GASSP allows administrators from across the state to share and steal ideas from colleagues that have “been there and done that.” The role of administrator can be a lonely place and the networking ensures we are hearing from and learning from successful administrators. Conferences such as the upcoming Fall Conference in Savannah play a critical role in allowing administrators to learn best professional practices in leading a middle and or high school.

After administrators join GASSP and begin networking, they will soon form relationships that can and often do lead to a mentoring relationship. There are many times during a school year where an administrator needs to be able to pick up the phone and speak to someone that can mentor them through the process of decision making. The mentoring relationship allows this to occur outside of their system and with the freedom of not having to involve the central office. It is a safe, nurturing environment where the mentor can talk through all of the options and help the administrator with the decision making process based on their experiences.

I hope all of you have already registered for the fall conference and we look forward to seeing you there and learning from some of the best administrators in the state as they present timely topics.

Ben Wiggins
Principal, Oconee County High School

UPCOMING GAEL CONFERENCES

GASPA FALL CONFERENCE
Nov. 14-16, St. Simons

GAEL FALL LEGAL ISSUES
Nov. 16-18, Athens

GACIS WINTER CONFERENCE
Dec. 5-6, Reynolds Plantation

I am Stephanie Johnson, the very proud turnaround principal for Maynard Jackson High School in Atlanta, Georgia. Turnaround leadership provides extraordinary opportunities to make positive changes in the lives of students and entire communities while fulfilling meaningful purpose. When accepting an opportunity to transform a school and community, there are a few things a great principal can't forget. The first is that effective leadership begins with laserlike vision that prioritizes student achievement without distraction, and the way a leader prioritizes the way time is spent during the instructional day must align with vision for student achievement. The second is that all students can learn, and everything a great leader does should provide equity and access to learning at the highest levels of mastery for every student served under his/her leadership. The third is the power of providing transparent communication to build trusting relationships with key stakeholders (students, parents, teachers, feeder school educators, and community members). Don't play with the truth, seek solutions! Fourth, hire competent and effective teachers and develop them. Additionally, turnaround principals must know the power of engagement. Let's face it, at-risk student populations requiring turnaround principals are seldom intrigued or motivated by the newest state accountability measures tied to our schools. However, no matter how disengaged a student learner may be, every at-risk student has a talent and an interest. And when great leaders build comprehensive programs that incorporate extracurricular activities, athletics, and opportunities that promote student talents and interests in addition to creating an engaging and supportive instructional program, students connect and achieve beyond expectation.



STEPHANIE JOHNSON - GASSP HS POY
NASSP POY FINALIST



SUE ZINKIL – GASSP MS POY

Last year, I was named the Georgia Middle School Principal of the Year. It was overwhelming to receive this award knowing the caliber of other middle school principals I have the privilege to work with in Cherokee County as well as the excellent leaders I have met across our state. That being said, I was thrilled to bring this recognition home to Teasley Middle School. Our staff work so hard every day to reach the lofty goals we set for ourselves and to do so while taking care of our students outside of the classroom and school. When my school celebrated this award with me, I recognized that this award was reflective of everyone's hard work, not just mine; I was just sitting in the principal's chair when together we met so many of our goals. The most important charge we have, which defines our culture, is to positively impact the lives of our students. I work every day with exemplary educators who take their role as a calling, not only to teach, but to positively change the lives of all the students with whom they come in to contact. I appreciate GASSP recognizing me as the Middle School Principal of the Year and am thankful to work each day with a school filled with educators who are Teachers of the Year in the eyes of their students, their students' families and one grateful principal.



Please join the GASSP network of administrators on Twitter by accessing our Twitter account [@gassp](https://twitter.com/gassp). Great networking and Sunday night Twitter chats that are great professional development opportunities.

Have you ever wondered how another school has implemented something? I remember standing in one of the main school hallways during my first year, looked around, and felt so ineffective. Was this PBIS program designed based on best practices? How were we supposed to model appropriate behavior? What data should we analyze to measure its effectiveness? Two months later I found myself at the GASSP conference and heard two other schools who were using a PBIS model. We were able to share stories and ultimately our PBIS program improved because of them.

I believe I must be responsible of my own learning and model this belief for our teachers, but even more I know I am only as effective as the network of people I am surrounded by throughout the school year. It was at some point standing in the hallway thinking about PBIS I also realized...this is a lonely job. I need colleagues to talk to, so I can get better for our students.

GASSP offers a variety of professional learning opportunities. I encourage you to model the way, commit to sharpening your saw, and come out to the next AP Workshop on January 11, 2017!

Jessica Ainsworth, Ed.D.
Assistant Director of Assessment
Douglas County School System



Dr. Gwendolyn Taylor was selected in July of 2016 to serve on the NASSP Board of Directors as the national Middle School At-Large member. The Board is comprised of twenty members nationwide, and members serve a two-year term. Dr. Taylor will serve on the Policy and Governance Committee, one of six committees of the Board. The purpose of the Policy and Governance Committee is to ensure that all necessary policies and related administrative regulations are in place, and that the governance of the protocols of the Board are in compliance with all federal, state and local statutes. The Board also reviews and adjudicates alleged violations of the code of ethics of Board policy or other matters that may be detrimental to the Association. The Policy and Governance Committee reviews all policies of the Association to ensure that each is current and in compliance with law and regulation. The committee also develops any necessary policies and presents such policies to the Board of Directors for approval. The committee develops annual schedules for the review of policy, as well as operating rules concerning hearings and other meetings of the committee. The committee may approve the submission of all policies, board member legal documents, and other such certificates for approval to the Board of Directors. It will also collect and serve as the repository for all documents which require the signature of participating members of the Board of Directors. The Policy and Governance Committee reports annually to the Board of Directors concerning activities of the committee, and reports to each Board of Directors Meeting the status of various policies contained in the Board Policy Manual.

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