

PAIS CONNECTIONS

Good Morning,

As we enter 2026, I find myself thinking about a Japanese word: *kaizen*. It translates to "good change"—the kind that happens one small step at a time. One more genuine question asked in a faculty meeting. One more moment of really listening before responding. One more iteration of an idea. Without fanfare, a positive shift happens.

What I'm Thinking About as We Return

As we return to our schools this week, what if we gave ourselves permission to think smaller? ...have one real conversation... try one new approach... learn one new thing.

That's true for PAIS, too. We're listening. We're learning alongside you. We're making one small, good change - such as a monthly newsletter to keep you informed.

The beauty of *kaizen* is that all of us can improve by one percent. We don't have to be perfect. We just strive to be one degree better. That's the work and it's enough.

Happy New Year,

Liz Hofreuter, Executive Director



ACCREDITATION

Fall 2025 Full-Scale Accreditation Visits

- The Agnes Irwin School
- Frankford Friends School
- The Hill School
- The Montessori School
- The Montgomery School
- West Hill School

Fall 2025 Interim Accreditation Visit

- Ancillae-Assumpta Academy

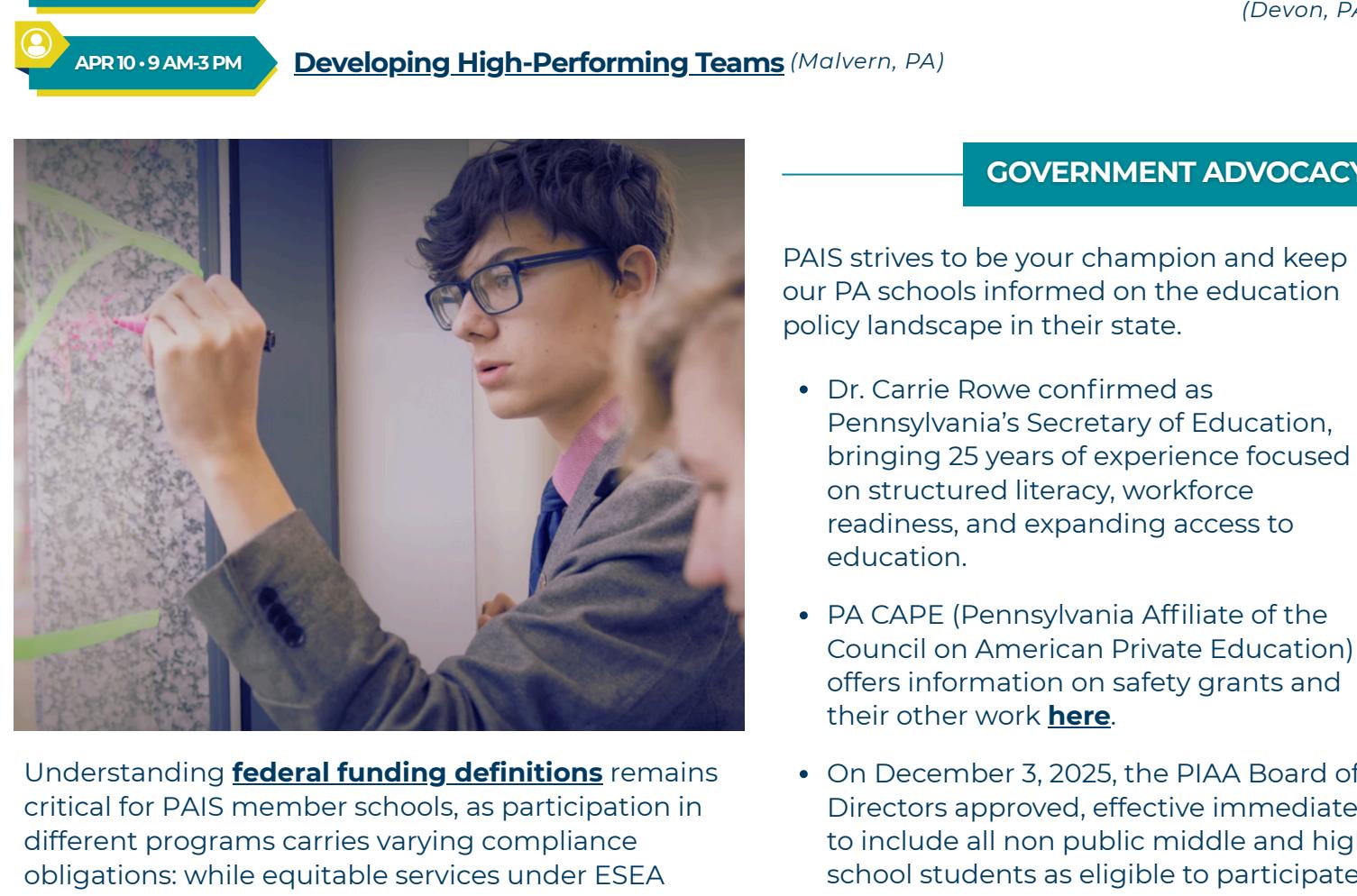
Many thanks to these schools for hosting visits and a special word of gratitude to the professionals who served on these committees. Your service is invaluable to the schools we serve and to the **strength and transformative power of PAIS accreditation**.

Just like you, PAIS is held to peer-reviewed quality benchmarks. For more than two decades, **ICAISA**-recognized accreditors, like PAIS, have set the highest bar for schools.

- Peer-Reviewed and Proven
- Continuous Improvement, Not Just Compliance
- Independence with Integrity
- Trusted and Accountable

ICAISA recognition is both a shield of integrity and a mark of excellence that schools and families can trust.

The **Heads' Retreat** was a restorative and energizing experience, filled with meaningful conversation, shared learning, and invaluable time connecting with colleagues.



PROGRAMMING

It's a new year, and we are also knee-deep in the 2025-26 school year. The winter months offer especially great opportunities to learn something new (think **Meeting Medic** and **Supporting Student Mental Health**) and connect with other educators (for example, in our **Winter Book Study**). PAIS programming offers something for everyone. Check out January opportunities below, and several **SAVE-THE-DATE** events for the Spring! The "main event" for this month is the **Elevate Learning Conference**. We hope to see you there!

JAN 8 • 9-9:30 AM [Meeting Medic](#) (begins)

JAN 13 • 3:30-4:45 AM [From Insight to Action: Harnessing Student Voice to Drive Meaningful Change](#)

JAN 14 • 7-7:30 PM [Mindfulness for Educators](#) (begins)

JAN 16 • 1:30 AM-12:15 PM [Say Goodbye to Substitute Chaos! A PAIS Sponsor Resource Spotlight](#)

JAN 27 • 3:30-4:30 PM [Supporting Student Mental Health: Current Trends & Recommended Practices](#)

JAN 28 • 4-5 PM [PAIS Winter Book Study Discussion](#) (begins)

JAN 29 • 8:30 AM-12 PM [A Pre \(Elevate Learning\) Conference Experience](#) (Villanova, PA)

JAN 29 • 1:15 PM JAN 30 • 9 AM-3:45 PM [Elevate Learning, a Teaching and Learning Conference](#) (Villanova, PA)



[VIEW ALL UPCOMING PROGRAMS](#)



[SAVE THE DATES](#)

MAR 6 • 9 AM-3 PM [Making Injustice Visible: Encouraging Conversations About Power & Representation](#) (Devon, PA)

APR 10 • 9 AM-3 PM [Developing High-Performing Teams](#) (Malvern, PA)



GOVERNMENT ADVOCACY

PAIS strives to be your champion and keep our PA schools informed on the education policy landscape in their state.

- Dr. Carrie Rose confirmed as Pennsylvania's Secretary of Education, bringing 25 years of experience focused on structured literacy, workforce readiness, and expanding access to education.

- PA CAPE (Pennsylvania Affiliate of the Council for American Private Education) offers grants and other work [here](#).

- On December 3, 2025, the PIAA Board of Directors approved, effective immediately, to include all non-public middle and high school students as eligible to participate in a public school team of their residence if their school does not offer their residence in a co-op for a particular sport. Learn more [here](#).



Understanding **federal funding definitions** remains critical for PAIS member schools, as participation in different programs carries varying compliance obligations. While equitable services under ESEA (Title I, II, IV) and CAPES Act status under ESEA do not trigger federal recipient status because funds remain under local education agency control, participation in other programs does — distinctions that require careful legal review before program participation.

[Read more from Venable LLP.](#)

CONNECTIONS

PAIS values its members and aims to bring people together to share ideas and support each other in the goal to build stronger schools. We are better together and more than the sum of our parts!

Our **Circle of Peers Roundtables** are designed to connect people in similar roles throughout our schools to discuss topics of importance. The roundtables are offered at no charge for our members.

January Circle of Peers Roundtables: DEI Directors and Practitioners, Early Childhood & Lower School Directors, Middle School Directors, School Nurses, & Upper School Directors

February Circle of Peers Roundtables: Administrative Assistants, Admissions Directors & Staff, Alumni Engagement Coordinators, College Counselors, Development/Advancement Directors & Staff

Share pictures of your school with us! We would love to feature pictures of our schools in future newsletters. Please [email us](#) with pictures you would like to share.

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