



**John E. McKenna, Ed.D.**

***Curriculum Vitae***

College of Education, Educational Leadership Program  
Academic Complex | 325F | Niagara University, NY 14109

**(716) 286-8603**

[jmckenna@niagara.edu](mailto:jmckenna@niagara.edu)

## **EDUCATION**

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### **Post-**

#### **Doctorate**

**2021 Harvard University**  
*Harvard Graduate School Executive Education & Harvard Graduate School of Education*

- **Certificate:** School Management & Leadership (CSML)
- **Certificate:** Authentic Leader Development

**2014 Cornell University**  
*School of Industrial and Labor Relations & The SC Johnson College of Business*

- **Certificate:** Executive Leadership

### **Ed.D.**

**2008 State University of New York at Buffalo**  
*Department of Educational Leadership & Policy*

- **Dissertation Title:** *The Development and Implementation of a Balanced Literacy Intervention Program*
- **Certification:** School District Administration (SDA) 1998
- **Major:** Leadership & Policy

### **M.S.**

**1992 Niagara University**

- **Certification:** School Administrator Supervisor (SAS)
- **Major:** Educational Administration & Supervision

### **B.S.**

**1988 State University College at Buffalo**

- **Certification:** Elementary, N-6; Special Education, K-12
- **Major:** Elementary Education, K-6 and Exceptional Education, K-12

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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2023 – Present

**ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, Leadership Studies Department**  
*Niagara University, Lewiston, New York*

### Current Research / Teaching Focus

- Dr. McKenna participates in ongoing research in areas related to educational leadership and policy, specifically in identifying approaches to lead organizations through crises as well as organizational assessment and accountability, and employer / employee relations.
- He also is focused on the design of plans to develop and manage strategic change, and the impacts of leadership on organizations and individuals. Additional interests are in leadership strategies and practices to promote social - emotional wellness among students, staff, and community, as well as promoting a positive culture through direct connectedness, empowerment, and collaboration.

### Department Involvement

#### **2023 Chair, Adjunct Faculty Information Resource Manual Committee**

- Coordinated and developed a 20+ page Adjunct Faculty Resource Manual, providing essential information that outlines the onboarding / employment process including university resources and campus services, as well as policies, practices, and procedures for the College of Education.

#### **2023 Co-Organizer and Presenter, COE Workshop on Preparation for Hiring, Interviewing, Certifications, and Resume Review**

- Developed a workshop and panel discussion including hiring, interviewing, certifications and resume requirements and best practices for elementary and secondary student teacher candidates in the Department of Education; worked with Dr. Kate Scarpina.
- May 5 & Dec. 11, 2023: Presented "Hiring 101 Tips and Suggestions to Find the Right Teaching Position."

#### **2023 Invited Presenter for Walter Polka's ADS 840 Class**

- Presented my Dissertation and reviewed the process on how I developed a mixed methods study.

### College Involvement

#### **2023 Reviewer, Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) Accreditation**

- Reviewed School Building Leader and School District Leader Program Key Assessments for validity and reliability.
- Scored papers and aligned CAEP and NELP tasks.

#### **2023 Faculty Representative, Leadership Studies Department, Graduate Open House**

- Assisted in providing counsel to prospective Masters and Ph.D. students for the Leadership Studies graduate-level program, and had discussions regarding Leadership Study Department's Programs, practices, and policies.
- Informed students about how our Vincentian values influence the curriculum, how they are incorporated by faculty, and the real impacts that have been made by our community to affect the larger world and student experience.

#### **2023 Consultant, Niagara University Graduate Counseling & Applied Psychology Programs**

- Worked with Evan Pierce and Derron Hilts to help aid in outreach initiatives for Niagara's Graduate Counseling & Applied Psychology Programs.
- Reviewed and discussed methods and strategies to increase enrollment in these programs and how to form direct partnerships with local school districts - specifically school principals and human resource personnel.

**2023 - Present – ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, Leadership Studies Department, cont.**

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**2023 Faculty Representative - Niagara University Graduate Commencement**

- Supported, encouraged, and engaged with students and faculty.

**2023 Dissertation Committee Member**

- *Author: Sharon Singh, Niagara University*
- Dissertation Title: A Mixed Methods Study of Pre-Service Teacher Training, Mental Health, and Adverse Childhood Experiences; In process of collecting data.

**2023 Dissertation Committee Member**

- *Author: Kelley Moore, Niagara University*
- Dissertation Title: The Phenomenological Understanding of the Lived Experience of Female Superintendents in Florida: Potential Reasons Why Females Continue to be Underrepresented; In process of collecting data.

**University Involvement****2023 Facilitator, Artificial Intelligence / IoT / AI Program Development**

- Worked with the Department of Computer and Information Sciences (CIS) to forge partnerships and develop collaborations to offer IoT/AI programs for local school districts including Niagara Falls, Lewiston-Porter, Grand Island and Williamsville Central School District.

**2023 Reviewer, Niagara University Department of Leadership Studies Educational Leadership Program Candidate Program Guide: Fall 2023 Edition**

- Reviewed the comprehensive program guide which is the “go-to” resource for Educational Leadership Program policies, procedures, and protocols for Niagara University.

**2023 Faculty Representative, Spring 2023 Ph.D. Research Symposium, Niagara University**

- Ph.D. candidates present their dissertation proposals and discuss their research and findings with faculty and other candidates.

**2023 Faculty Representative, Fall 2023 Ph.D. Research Symposium, Niagara University**

- Ph.D. candidates present their dissertation proposals and discuss their research and findings with faculty and other candidates.

**2023 Contributor, M.S. Ed. Educational Leadership School District / Building Online Information Session for Prospective Students – with Dr. James Mills**

- Assisted with student recruitment: Helped clarify the value of the Leadership Studies graduate-level program, having discussions regarding Department’s Programs, practices, and policies.

**2023 Contributor, Ph.D. in Leadership & Policy Information Session for Existing Students – with Dr. Walt Polka**

- Assisted with disseminating and clarifying information: Helped clarify the course requirements and expectations for the Educational doctoral-level program, having discussions regarding the Department’s Programs, practices, and policies.

**2023 Featured Presenter for Darron Hilts, Ph.D., NCC, NCSC**

- Invited to present to Master Level Students who are currently enrolled in completing their internship in School Counseling.
- Presented Social - Emotional Learning Programs that schools can implement, and the importance of leadership, engagement, and collaboration in the school environment.

## **2023 - Present – ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, Leadership Studies Department, cont.**

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### **Discipline Involvement**

#### **2023 President, Phi Delta Kappa, Buffalo-Niagara Chapter – Niagara University**

- Assembled a Leadership Team to Reestablish PDK and Increase Niagara University's Presence as well as make more personal contacts in the WNY educational community.
- Reinstated the PDK Buffalo-Niagara Chapter

#### **2023 Chairman, Niagara University Alumni Leadership Advisory Council**

- Manage ongoing work with an alumni committee of practicing administrators from across New York State as part of the CAEP Accreditation Process, collecting data and information to help make programmatic decisions.
- Lead the committee of stakeholders in the review of our existing SBL and SDL programs to seek information for ongoing improvement, to provide input and feedback, to analyze data, and to be in the forefront of leadership preparation.

#### **2023 President, UBGSEAA (University of Buffalo Graduate School of Education Alumni Association)**

- President: 2019 - 2023
- Board of Directors: 2013 - Present

#### **2023 Faculty Representative, Niagara University, CIDEL (Committee to Identify and Develop Educational Leaders)**

- Connect and collaborate with colleges and universities across western New York to collaboratively promote educational leadership programs, workshops, and forums.

#### **2023 - Featured Annual Commencement Speaker, SUNY at Buffalo (2019 - 2023)**

- President of UB's GSEAA (Graduate School of Education Alumni Association).

#### **2023 Board of Directors, University of Buffalo Alumni Association (UBAA) 2016 - 2023**

- SUNY UB Compliance Team, 2021 - 2023
- UB Alumni Strategic Planning Team, 2021 - 2023
- UBAA Finance Committee, 2022 - 2023
- UBAA Membership Committee, 2016 - 2022

#### **2023 Board of Directors, ISEP (International Society for Educational Planning)**

- Elected to Board of Directors: January 2023 - Present
- Elected to Board of Directors: October 2015 - 2018

#### **2023 Editorial Review Board, SAANYS (School Administrators Association of New York State) Peer-Reviewed Journal, "Vanguard": Publication for School Building and District Leaders**

- Peer review and formal editorial comments on other scholars' proposed articles for "Vanguard" Journal.
  - Winter 2023
  - Spring / Summer 2023
  - Fall 2022

#### **2023 Editorial Review Board, ISEP Peer-Reviewed Quarterly Journal, "Educational Planning"**

- Peer review and formal editorial comments on other scholars' proposed articles for Quarterly Journal.

#### **2023 Peer Reviewer, ISEP Annual Conference Presentation Proposals**

- Peer review and formal editorial comments on other scholars' presentation proposals for annual ISEP conference.

#### **2023 Subcommittee Reviewer, ISEP Quarterly Journal, "Educational Planning"**

- Subcommittee to review digital vs. print distribution and financial implications.

**2023 - Present – ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, Leadership Studies Department, cont.**

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**2023 Member, ATE (Association of Teacher Educators)**

- Member. (2013 - 2017) and (2022 – Present).
- Presented at numerous conferences.
- Reviewer. Reviewed / Critiqued proposals to speak at Annual Conferences. (2014 - 2015).

**2023 Dissertation Committee Member, University of Buffalo**

- *Authors: Salvatore Curella, Alan Inghram, Joshua Janese, University of Buffalo*
- Dissertation Title: Addressing the Increase of 9th Grade Behavior Referrals Post-Pandemic in Three Western New York High Schools, Completed May 2023.

**Community Involvement****2023 Liaison, Buffalo Sabres Multiverse Project with School Districts in Western New York**

- Intermediary between Buffalo Sabres organization and western New York school superintendents to bring free books and an interactive website to grades 7-10.

**2023 Service Project Director, Make-A Wish Foundation**

- Partnered Niagara University with Make-A-Wish in building engagement and support, creating a proposed plan and establishing specific goals and activities and garner participation in this initiative.
- Aligned and engaged Niagara University sport teams and clubs to unite them around the Make-A-Wish Service Project, while Collaborating with Niagara Falls High School to create alliances between both school communities.

**2023 Leadership Consultant, McKenna Leadership**

- I also take my real-world leadership experience and strive to help those in my profession as well as our external community learn leadership skills that will help make the world a better place.
- Visit [McKennaLeadership.com](http://McKennaLeadership.com) to learn more.

**2023 Featured Presenter & Co-Organizer, Annual Root-Ed Conference (Buffalo, New York)**

- Presented to local school administrators and educators in our WNY community.
- Topic: *Dynamic Meetings in Action.*
- Activity: *Compare & Contrast Activities 1 & 2.*
- Conference Topic: *Leaders – Grasp Your Impact! How You Can Create Highly Effective Cultures and How To Step Up and Meet Today's Challenges.* (July 13, 2023).

**2023 Interview Committee Member, Director Position Interviews at Buffalo Urban Teaching Fellows**

- Acted as Niagara University Representative on Western New York Interview Committee to hire Founding Director of TNTP's Buffalo Urban Teaching Fellows (BUTF), which will be a residency-based, grow your own teacher preparation program that will prepare talented professionals from diverse backgrounds to teach in Buffalo, in partnership with a consortium of Educator Prep Programs.
- Candidate search based on Buffalo-area schools needing a well-trained, diverse teacher workforce who are committed to teaching in the city long-term.

**2023 Consultant, TReC, Niagara University**

- Worked in conjunction with Bob Morreale to discuss a new mission with strategies and goals, focusing on collaborative partnerships between the public and private sector.
- Advised on approaches to strengthen local partnerships and grow the business through the development of a strategic plan.

**2023 - Present – ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, Leadership Studies Department, cont.**

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**Current Courses****SPRING 2023****2023 EDU 599 Spring:** Technology, Data Analysis and School Improvement**2023 EDU 632 Spring:** Leadership and the School Building Leader**2023 EDU 637 Spring:** Personnel Administration & Employer / Employee Relations**SUMMER 2023****2023 EDU 649 Summer:** Capstone for the School Building Leader**FALL 2023****2023 EDU 599 Fall:** Technology, Data Analysis and School Improvement**2023 EDU 632 Fall:** Leadership and the School Building Leader**2023 ADS 730A Fall:** Organizational Assessment and Accountability

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**Adjunct Courses Taught Prior to Appointment – 2014 – 2022****(Most recent listed below):****2022 EDU 649 Fall:** Capstone for the School Building Leader**2020 EDU 649 Spring:** Capstone for the School Building Leader**2020 EDU 649 Fall:** Capstone for the School Building Leader**2019 EDU 649 Summer:** Capstone for the School Building Leader

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**SPRING 2024****2024 EDU 599 Spring:** Independent Study**2024 EDU 637 Spring:** Personnel Administration & Employer / Employee Relations**2024 EDU 649 Spring:** Capstone for the School Building Leader**2024 ADS 710A Spring:** Organizational Theory, Development, & Strategic Change

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**Dissertation Committees****2023 Dissertation Committee Member, University of Buffalo**

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**2023 Dissertation Committee Member, Niagara University**

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- Dissertation Title: *A Mixed Methods Study of Pre-Service Teacher Training, Mental Health, and Adverse Childhood Experiences*; In process of collecting data.

**2023 Dissertation Committee Member, Niagara University**

- Author: Kelley Moore
- Dissertation Title: *The Phenomenological Understanding of the Lived Experience of Female Superintendents in Florida: Potential Reasons Why Females Continue to be Underrepresented*; In process of collecting data.

2017 – 2023

**ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT FOR HUMAN RESOURCES*****Williamsville Central School District, Williamsville, New York***

Williamsville is a high achieving school district in Western New York with approximately 10,000 students and over 3,000 employees. In this role, worked comprehensively with the Leadership Team, district and school-based teams, committees, groups, and individuals, in all capacities. Responsibilities include but are not limited to the following:

***Bargaining Unit Management***

- Led teams to successfully complete contract negotiations with seven bargaining units.
  - Contract negotiations/administration and collective bargaining decisions for all bargaining units.
- Effective resolutions of serious disciplinary matters with various bargaining units.
- Effective and extensive legal knowledge regarding personnel matters.
- Assisted with the development of MOAs (Memorandum of Agreement) with bargaining units.
- Grievance administration and management.
- Administration and review of LOA (Leaves of Absence) and accommodations due to pandemic-related issues.

***Hiring Practices and Procedures Management***

- Established District hiring committee that reviewed / revised all hiring practices and procedures for WTA members.
  - Restructured and completed the new **District Hiring Guide** for WTA members.
  - This guide brought consistency in hiring practices and is now utilized to hire all instructional staff members.
- Reviewed and revised all hiring practices and procedures for WAA members.
  - Created the new **Administrative Hiring Guide** for WAA members.
  - Developed and implemented brand new hiring practices and procedures for all Williamsville Administrative positions including Assistant Superintendents, Principals, Assistant Principals, Directors, and Coordinators.
  - Utilizing these new procedures, the HR department coordinated the hiring of an unprecedented 23 new building administrators, an Assistant Superintendent, and two central office administrators from 2017 – 2020.

***Restructured the hiring and evaluation practices related to all Coaching positions***

- Reviewed and revised the process for hiring and evaluating coaching positions.
- Established an application process to ensure the highest quality candidates are recommended and reviewed annually.
- Established an evaluation tool for post-season evaluations.
- Developed an expectations and responsibilities checklist.

***Restructured the establishment and evaluation of extra-curricular clubs and activities***

- Established a District extra-curricular committee that restructured and revised how extra-curriculars are formed, evaluated, and compensated.
- Created a new annual application process that is reviewed with all building principals and representatives of the WTA to determine appropriate compensation levels.
- Created a new evaluation form to support the application process.

***Established a District Online Course Process***

- Developed a **District Online Course Committee** that created guidelines and procedures so staff can take online courses and receive credit for participation.
- Implemented in 2018 and has enhanced professional development offerings and choices that have been a benefit to staff throughout the pandemic.



## **2017 - 2023 – Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, cont.**

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### ***Staffing management and evaluation***

- Led all staffing and hiring decisions including recruitment, selection, and induction.
- Successfully completed District Staffing Report, as well as staffing needs and requirements on an annual basis since 2017 with the leadership team and building principals.
- Developed **new online posting procedures** where positions are now posted on the “careers” page of the website as well as WNYRIC.org.
- Reviewed and verified the employment qualifications of all applicants as well as existing employees, including appropriate teaching and administrative certifications and the minimum qualifications required for each position.
- Developed personnel agendas for the monthly BOE meetings.
- Instituted annual GCN training which ensures compliance with state and federal training and policy distribution requirements.
- Oversaw approval for contracted supports such as the District physician, hearing officers, and 913 medical examinations.
- Ensured the compliance of NYS Civil Service Law.
- Reviewed NYSERS / NYSTRS, Workers’ Compensation, and NYS unemployment claims.
- Created a **new process** to utilize uncertified substitute teachers to expand substitute coverage in specific situations.
- Implementation of a **new online Substitute Orientation Program**.
- Developed a **new evaluation process** and instrument to evaluate Assistant Principals.
- Established **new evaluation procedures** for non-APPR (Annual Professional Performance Review) personnel.
- Successfully established and implemented **new procedures** for the Non-Williamsville Personnel Engagement Process to screen student teachers, interns, and volunteers who engage in our schools for an extended period of time.

### ***Payroll / Benefits / Personnel Management***

- Oversaw payroll for an organization with an approximately \$200 million budget.
- Benefit administration for all employees instructional, non-instructional and CSEA.
- Oversaw salary, seniority, and personnel records for all District employees.
- Streamlined the payroll claims process by creating **one consistent form** with procedures for submitting payroll claims.
- Coordinated successful RFP process to renegotiate health care and benefits.

### ***New Training presentations developed for the entire administrative staff***

- *Evaluation & Documentation of Employee Performance*
- *Harassment & Discrimination Training*
- *Litigating Claims for Unemployment Benefits*
- *Employee Evaluation, Discipline & Termination*

### ***Policy Management / Reporting / Miscellaneous HR Duties***

- Administration of applicable Federal and State laws/regulations and school District policies.
- Labor relations and grievance administration for instructional and non-instructional staff.
- Complaint Officer for non-contract complaints alleging legal discrimination and harassment.
- Successfully completed the BEDS (Basic Educational Data Systems) report for the State Education Department annually since 2017.



2020 – 2021

**ACTING SUPERINTENDENT – [Click here to learn more.](#)*****Williamsville Central School District, Williamsville, New York***

Williamsville is a high achieving school district in Western New York with approximately 10,000 students and over 3,000 employees. In this role, worked comprehensively with the Leadership Team, district and school-based teams, committees, groups, and individuals, in all capacities. Responsibilities include but are not limited to the following:

**Ensured that ALL Williamsville students would continue to have a high-quality, equitable education by developing the new “Hyflex” Concurrent Instructional Model to deliver remote and hybrid instruction for grades 5-12:**

***Development:*** *Developed the **Transition Planning Matrix** model in September 2020 to mobilize and unify the District around a common Vision, Mission and Goals, and as an organizational guide to establish strategic committees and facilitate the District and community’s transition to this model.*

**Results**

- Development of a strategic plan that created specific committees and mobilized groups to actively engage in the process of creating and developing a high-quality instructional model for remote and in-person instruction for grades 5-12.
- Creation of the “**HyFlex**” **Concurrent Instructional Model**, phase-in plan, extensive professional development support, and a comprehensive Technology Structure including Technology Integrators and Facilitators as well as various supports for students and families including social emotional learning and creative engagement.
- Established and led the following committees at the District level since appointment at Acting Superintendent:
  - ***Reset, Relaunch, Return committee***
    - Effectively and efficiently developed an instructional model for grades 5-12.
    - Developed a phase-in plan to successfully implement the model.
    - Created a professional development model to train and support middle school and high school staff members and successfully transition into the new model.
    - Created a technology plan and testing system to support middle school and high school students and ensure the proper technology was in place to support the model.
    - Created daily video updates and website page to maintain constant communication.
  - ***Make-it-Happen committee***
    - Research remote and hybrid learning models and make recommendations for future instructional programs for grades K-12.
  - ***Social Emotional Academic Learning committee***
    - Provide an ongoing support structure for students and staff.
    - Developed check-in questionnaires to conduct wellness checks for students and staff.
    - Continued to provide professional development to staff in conducting community circles, as one way to provide a daily check-in with students.
    - Engaged student leaders to actively participate and help facilitate social-emotional practices.
    - Supported ongoing training and professional development to faculty and staff on engaging students, SEL competencies, and Trauma Informed Care.
  - ***Creative Engagement committee***
    - District committee and related building committees were formed.
    - Each building has a facilitator who represents the school and coordinates activities.
    - Actively engage students in meaningful K-12 activities.
    - **#WILLPOWER District Unity Initiative** – created to help better unite the District and community.

## **2020-2021 – Acting Superintendent, cont.**

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### **Results, cont.**

- *Assisted in implementing the **Elementary Instructional Model***
    - Ensured elementary hybrid and remote programs had the technology, staffing, and training necessary to be successfully implemented.
  - *Developed the **Student Leadership Structure***
    - This included the creation of the **District Student Leadership Council**, a group that is comprised of SIHAC students as well as class officers from each high school. It was developed in September 2020 to unify student leaders across the District and actively engage them in District programs and community service projects to benefit all students K-12.
    - *Met regularly with the following stakeholders:*
      - **Students and staff** during daily building visits to positively bond and communicate.
      - **Student leaders** including class officers and SIHAC students to listen to concerns, gather feedback and exchange ideas regarding instructional programs.
      - **PTSA Council** and officers to listen to concerns, and answer questions regarding our Reset, Relaunch, Return plan, as well as COVID-19 related questions.
  - *Developed a student-driven **Make-A-Wish** District wide community service project with the **Creative Engagement** committee, the **Social Emotional Academic Learning** committee, and student leaders from all three high schools; a District wide Make-A-Wish Leadership Team was formed, and each school will also have their own committee; each building will kick off the initiative in March of 2021.*
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### **Restructured the Strategic Planning Model – Reviewed and revised our strategic planning process to align the vision, mission, and goals throughout all buildings across the District**

***Development** Introduced the new **Strategic Planning Model Matrix in December 2020** – a new, powerful, structured, long-range planning model, incorporating all stakeholders including the Board of Education, Superintendent, Leadership team, building and district level administration, instructional staff, non-instructional staff, and community members around a common Vision, Mission and Goals and core beliefs to unite the District and community.*

### **Results**

- Creation of a clear Vision, Mission, and Goals.
- Development of the **Strategic Planning Model Matrix** to show vertical and horizontal articulation of annual goal setting and review process.
- Development of common action plan templates and procedures to be used across the District.
- Development of timelines and expectations to monitor and evaluate progress of building and District goals.
- *Created the **Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Initiative***
  - Analyzed and introduced the concept of creating awareness, tolerance, and acceptance, embedded strategically and permanently within our culture, and making it part of our Strategic Plan and integrating it throughout the District.
- *Developed the **Leadership Round Table***
  - Meet periodically with presidents of all bargaining units to discuss District needs and brainstorm ideas and solutions.

## 2020-2021 – Acting Superintendent, cont.

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### **Capital Projects – supported and currently supervising the development of the following:**

- **Spotlight on Music 2018 Capital Project** – a tax-neutral capital project aimed at improving the music space for students at each high school – approximately \$37 million.
  - **School Security Improvement Capital Project 2020** – maximizing the physical and emotional security and safety of our students at all 13 of the District’s schools – approximately \$43 million.
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### **COVID-19 Preparedness**

- **PPE and Building Safety Measures**
  - Ensured all were put into place to maximize safety for students and staff.
- **Transportation Planning**
  - Ensured the effective, efficient, and safe transfer of students to and from school.
- **Established system for communicating daily COVID-19 updates to staff and students**
  - Frequent meetings with Leadership Team and Administrators to provide COVID-19 guidance.
  - **COVID-19 Education website page – consistent review and updating**
    - Yellow, Orange and Red Zone Micro-Cluster information page with presentations and videos.
    - COVID-19 Education page with multiple up-to-date links and videos.
    - Micro-Cluster FAQs page from testing procedures to travel guidelines.
- **Implemented COVID-19 regulations regarding ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) accommodations, LOA (Leaves of Absence), childcare leaves, and leaves related to FMLA**
  - Ensured compliance with new and evolving state and federal regulations related to COVID-19, including the New York Emergency Paid Sick Leave Law and the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA).
  - Processed multiple new requests and inquiries related to remote work accommodations, childcare leave, and quarantine / isolation protocol.
  - Established and secured appropriate staffing to deliver instruction.
- **Ensured District was prepared for COVID-19 guidance as well as Micro-Cluster designation guidance**
  - Daily communication with Erie County Department of Health (ECDOH).
  - Regular communication with New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH).
  - Continued communication with Governor’s office.
  - Daily communication of reported cases to the community.
  - Regular updates to website regarding changes to state and local guidelines.
- **Communication and actions regarding testing, protocols, and procedures**
  - Regular updates to community regarding school re-opening based on ever-changing guidance to testing procedures.
  - Communicated with all stakeholders on testing scheduling and protocols.
  - **Planned and coordinated first rate testing sites and protocols**
    - Secured BinaxNOW Rapid Tests.
    - Registered with NYSDOH for our Limited-Service Laboratory (LSL) to conduct testing.
    - Contracted with Nursing Agency to administer BinaxNOW Tests.
    - Send out consent forms and scheduling information to parents / guardians via WITS.
      - Communicated random COVID-19 testing results to our school community through WITS mail, text, and social media.

## **2020-2021 – Acting Superintendent, cont.**

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### **Communications Initiatives**

- ***Williamsville District Website Updates***
  - Created new Relaunch Plan page for Reset, Relaunch, Return presentations containing:
    - Committee information.
    - Health and Safety Return to School videos presented by each principal.
    - Screencasts for Relaunch Plan video presentations representing middle and high schools.
- ***Superintendent Video Updates for Community and Staff***
  - Provided daily video updates from September 2020 – November 2020.
  - Transitioned to weekly video updates sharing the most important and pertinent information of the week from November 2020 – June 2021.
- ***Weekly District Newsletters for Community and Staff***
  - District Office provides weekly updates which reside within District newsletters.
  - All 13 schools share important information and instructional / program highlights from their buildings which reside within individual school newsletters.
- ***Additional Communications***
  - ***Sports Streaming***
    - Established accounts on YouTube for each high school athletic department.
    - Created a streaming bundle with webcam, internet hotspot and laptop.
  - ***School Spotlight***
    - Monthly presentation at the Board of Education meeting, highlighting the positive instructional initiatives for a different designated school during each meeting.
  - ***Special Recognition Video Presentations***
    - Recognize exemplary students and staff members during Board of Education meetings.
  - ***#WILLpower Wednesday Midweek Motivation Videos***
    - A student-led weekly social media initiative in which they provide a motivation or inspiration throughout the District.
  - ***Throwback Thursdays Videos***
    - A monthly retrospective reflection on WCSD's rich tradition and history.

## **NEW INITIATIVES – Acting Superintendent, cont.**

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### **Development and Implementation of New 2021 Programs**

- ***Universal Pre-Kindergarten District Based Program***
  - Utilized district staff and facilities.
- ***Creation of elementary STEAM Labs***
  - Each elementary had designated staff and space for program delivery.
- ***Creation of Learning Labs at the middle and high school levels***
  - Each middle and high school had designated staff and space for program delivery.

1995 – 2017

**PRINCIPAL*****Tonawanda City School District, Tonawanda, New York***

Fletcher Intermediate School (Grades 4, 5) 2009 - 2017

Mullen Elementary School (Grades PreK - 5) 1995 - 2009

**1995-2017 PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE / LEADERSHIP SUCCESS (1995 - 2017) – Principal**

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- **Niagara Region / NYSPTA of Western New York.** (2007 - 2017).
  - Educational Chairman for Western New York Region.
  - Legislative Chairman for Western Region/Regional Representative to Legislative Education Conference in Albany.
- **Leader in Me Program.** (2010 - 2017).
  - Coordinated the implementation of this program to develop leadership and citizenship skills in students and staff.
  - Fletcher Elementary became regional visitation site.
  - School honored with outstanding recognition award at Buffalo State College.
- **National Research Study – SUNY at Buffalo Department of Counseling, School & Educational Psychology National Research Studies.** (2009 - 2017).
  - RTI Tier 1 Strategies Study – development of Classroom Strategy Scales to measure Tier 1 RTI effective strategies.
  - VIABLE – II Study – development of an effective screening tool for social and behavioral concerns.
  - Academic and Behavioral Competency (ABC Study) – development of a school wide behavioral management system.
- **National Research Study – Canisius College Education Department.** (2014 - 2015).
  - School Based Intervention Research Project – participated in National Research Study with the U.S. Department of Education, studying children with high functioning autism spectrum disorders.
- **Fletcher School Identified by Better Outcomes, LLC., as one of the top 30 high performing schools in New York State** based on student achievement and socio-economic status. (February 2017).
- **Appointed by New York State Commissioner of Education to serve as a member of the Principal Preparation Project Advisory Team.** Charged with completing the Principal Preparation Project undertaken by the University of the State Of New York; Regents Research Fund on behalf of the New York State Education Department and made possible by a Wallace Foundation Grant. Albany New York. (September 2016 - June 2017).
- **Appointed New York State Delegate** for the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NAESP) National Leaders Conference. Washington D.C. (June 2016).
- **Tonawanda Schools awarded the “Excellence in Collaboration Award”** by the Erie County Association of School Boards for Fletcher school’s collaboration with the Herschel Carousel Museum for the “*T-NT S.T.E.A.M. is Dynamite!*” STEAM program. (May 2016).
- **Niagara Region PTA Legislative Chairman** representing the Western NY region to lobby educational legislation/reforms to the New York State Senate and Assembly. Albany, NY. (2012 - 2016).
- **National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP).** (2006 - 2016).
  - New York State Delegate for the NAESP National Leaders Conference. Washington DC. (March 2016).
  - Presenter for the NAESP Annual Conference. Topic: “Maintaining Positive Morale Through the use of Classroom Walkthroughs, Peer Observation and Teacher Reflection.” Washington DC. (July 2016).
  - Capital Contact for Western New York. (2006 - 2010).
- **Planned and organized “Google Camp” with NYSCATE, SAANYS and UBAA. Tonawanda High School. (2015).**

**1995-2017 PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE / LEADERSHIP SUCCESS (1995-2017) – Principal, cont.**

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- **Co-creator of the Western New York Task Force on New York State Education Policy.**
  - Developed testimony for the Governor’s Education Task Force Commission to review the Common Core. Daemen College, Amherst, New York. (November 18, 2015).
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- **Selected by New York State Education Department / Questar Assessment Inc.** to participate on the Test Construction Review Committee. (October 2015).
- **Appointed by New York State Education Department** to serve as a Common Core Ambassador. Trained to develop and implement the Common Core Learning Standards throughout New York State. (2012 - 2014).
- **Tonawanda Administrative Supervisory Group** – Executive Board President. (2006 - 2013).
- **Tonawanda City School District’s Balanced Reading and Writing Program.** Developed and coordinated the implementation of this program which has been utilized throughout the District and was the topic of my Doctoral Dissertation.
  - **Invited to present the program and dissertation data at Harvard and Oxford Universities.**
  - **This program resulted in significant increases in student achievement at the school and district levels and helped the district win multiple awards including a National Blue Ribbon of Excellence.**
- **District Principal Leader** for the NYSED Strengthening Teacher and Leader Effectiveness (STLE) Grant.
- **Universal Pre-Kindergarten Program.** Wrote, created, and coordinated the original program incorporating the Tonawanda City School District’s staff and curriculum successfully into the program.
- **Principal Leader** of the NYSED “Response to Intervention Personnel Development Project”.
- **Principal Representative** on the District Curriculum Council, District Budget Advisory Team, District Support Team, Comprehensive District Education Plan, District Planning Team, Labor Management Teams, District PTA Council, and District Elementary Report Card Committee.
- **Facilitator / Trainer** for EPIC (Every Person Influences Children).
- **District Coordinator** for processing and reporting BEDS data to the State Education Department.
- **District Principal Leader** of the District Assessment Committee.
- Coordinated the development and implementation of programs for the NYSED Extended School Day Violence Prevention (ESD/SVP) Grant.
- Coordinated and supervised NYSED testing administration and correcting procedures for NYS Assessments at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.
- Supervised and coordinated the development of The District Elementary Language Arts, Social Studies, Math and Science Curricula to meet New York State Standards.
- Developed “Adopt-A-School” business partnerships and “Adopt-A-Agency” program that coordinated community service projects with local agencies. As a result, won The Business First “Pathfinders Award” for innovative programs with local businesses and agencies.

## **1995-2017 PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE / LEADERSHIP SUCCESS (1995-2017) – *Principal, cont.***

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### **Capital Projects**

- ***TONA2020 Capital Project*** – Co-Chairman of District Capital Project (until 2017) to consolidate three elementary schools into one campus. Worked directly with Superintendent to oversee all aspects of the project including facilities, programs, funding, and public relations.
- ***Tonawanda 2000 Capital Project*** – Facilities Co-Chairman in 2002-2003. The Tonawanda City School District implemented a 26-million-dollar capital project. Mullen Elementary School constructed a new instructional wing (eight classrooms) as well as a new library media center and cafeteria. Actively involved in a leadership capacity in all aspects of the project including:
  - *Facilities chairperson*
  - *Planning and presenting at public information sessions*
  - *Physical design of the building with the architects*
  - *Instructional planning (all-day kindergarten, district pre-kindergarten program, library media center usage and strategic action plan design, etc.)*
  - *District restructuring and planning – major leadership role in reconfiguring our district*

## **PREVIOUS EDUCATIONAL AND TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

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- 1994 – 1995**     **Assistant Principal** – Colonial Village Elementary School, Niagara Wheatfield Central School District – Sanborn, New York
- 1993 – 1994**     **Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA) / Coordinator of Instructional Programs & Special Projects -**  
Central Office, Niagara Falls City School District, Niagara Falls, New York  
**Dean of Students** – LaSalle Senior High School
- 1990 – 1993**     **Geraldine J. Mann Elementary School** – Niagara Falls, NY  
**Teacher** – Grade 3
- 1988 – 1990**     **Niagara Street Elementary School** – Niagara Falls, NY  
**Special Education Teacher** – Intermediate level



## SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

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### Professional Publications

#### **Professional Works in Progress - Books**

Polka, W., **McKenna, J.**, & VanHusen, M. (Eds.). (Contract issued). *Dealing with the Urgent Educational Challenge: Promoting Social-Emotional Well-Being Among Teachers, Students, and Families*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Education Publications. Written / Edited 2023 – 2024; To be published in 2024.

#### **Books**

Polka, W., **McKenna, J.**, & VanHusen, M. (Eds.). (2023). *Coping with Educational Crises*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Education Publications.

Polka, W., **McKenna, J.**, & VanHusen, M. (Eds.). (2023). *Managing Yourself and Others During Crises*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Education Publications.

Polka, W., & **McKenna, J.**, (Eds.). (2016). *Confronting Oppressive Assessments*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Education Publications.

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#### **Book Chapters**

**McKenna, J.**, Polka, W., & VanHusen, M. (Eds.). (2023). Preface – Managing Yourself and Others During Crises: Key Leadership Visions, Approaches, and Dispositions to Survive and Thrive. In J. McKenna W. Polka & M. VanHusen (Eds.). *Managing Yourself and Others During Crises: Key Leadership Visions, Approaches, and Dispositions to Survive and Thrive*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Education Publications. (p. xv-xvii).

**McKenna, J.** & Polka, W.(Eds.). (2023). Introduction – Managing Yourself and Others During Crises: Key Leadership Visions, Approaches, and Dispositions to Survive and Thrive. In J. McKenna W. Polka & M. VanHusen (Eds.). *Managing Yourself and Others During Crises: Key Leadership Visions, Approaches, and Dispositions to Survive and Thrive*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Education Publications. (p. xix-xxii).

**McKenna, J.** & Polka, W., & VanHusen, M. (Eds.). (2023). The New Future is up to us: Perspectives of Managing Yourself and Others Based on Crisis Experiences. In J. McKenna, W. Polka & M. VanHusen (Eds.). *Managing Yourself and Others During Crises: Key Leadership Visions, Approaches, and Dispositions to Survive and Thrive*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Education Publications. (139-157).

**McKenna, J.** & Polka, W. (Eds.). (2023). Matrix of 8 Essential Leadership Elements for Navigating Crisis. In J. McKenna, W. Polka & M. VanHusen (Eds.). *Managing Yourself and Others During Crises: Key Leadership Visions, Approaches, and Dispositions to Survive and Thrive*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Education Publications. (159-165).

**McKenna, J.**, Polka, W., & VanHusen, M. (Eds.). (2023). Preface – Approaches for Coping with Educational Crises: Views from School Leaders Who Did It! In W. Polka & J. McKenna (Eds.). *Coping with Educational Crises: Approaches from School Leaders Who Did It!* Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Education Publications. (p. xi-xiii).

**SELECTED PUBLICATIONS, cont.**

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**Book Chapters, cont.**

Polka, W., **McKenna, J.**, & VanHusen, M. (Eds.). (2023). Introduction – Approaches for Coping with Educational Crises: Views from School Leaders Who Did It! In W. Polka & J. McKenna (Eds.). *Coping with Educational Crises: Approaches from School Leaders Who Did It!* Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Education Publications. (p. xv-xviii).

**McKenna, J.** & Polka, W. (Eds.). (2023). Constructing a Comprehensive Crisis Management Framework: Sunflower Unified School District Case Study. In J. McKenna & W. Polka (Eds.). *Coping with Educational Crises: Approaches from School Leaders Who Did It!* Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Education Publications. (53 - 73).

**McKenna, J.** & Cooper, M. (Eds.). (2023). Human Resources During Crises: Emphasize the HUMAN in Human Resources. In J. McKenna and Moira Cooper (Eds.). *Coping with Educational Crises: Approaches from School Leaders Who Did It!* Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Education Publications. (111 - 133).

**McKenna, J.**, VanHusen, M., & Polka, W. (Eds.). (2023). The Next Era is Up to Us: Seizing Opportunities and Creating a New Future. In J. McKenna, W. Polka, M. VanHusen (Eds.). *Coping with Educational Crises: Approaches from School Leaders Who Did It!* Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Education Publications. (151 - 165).

Polka, W., & **McKenna, J.** (2016). Preface - Confronting oppressive assessments: How parents, educators, and policymakers are rethinking current educational reforms. In W. Polka & McKenna (Eds.). *Confronting oppressive assessments: How parents, educators, and policy-makers are rethinking current educational reforms.* Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Education Publications. (p. xiii-xix).

Polka, W., & **McKenna, J.** (2016). What are we really doing to our children? Rethinking federal and state education reform policies. In W. Polka & McKenna (Eds.). *Confronting oppressive assessments: How parents, educators, and policy-makers are rethinking current educational reforms.* Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Education Publications, (1-21).

**McKenna, J.** & Polka, W. (2016). Using an industrial-age paradigm for education is not smart, especially in the digital age. In W. Polka & McKenna (Eds.). *Confronting oppressive assessments: How parents, educators, and policy-makers are rethinking current educational reforms.* Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Education Publications, (21-35).

**McKenna, J.**, Smilinich, C., Mambretti, M., Regan, D., & Burris, C. (2016). Principals with Principles: The Dilemma of implementing Destructive Policies. In W. Polka & McKenna (Eds.). *Confronting oppressive assessments: How parents, educators, and policy-makers are rethinking current educational reforms.* Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Education Publications, (71-95).

**McKenna, J.** & Polka, W. (2016). Thoughts on what to do next at the local level. In W. Polka & McKenna (Eds.). *Confronting oppressive assessments: How parents, educators, and policy-makers are rethinking current educational reforms.* Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Education Publications, (113-125).

Polka, W., & **McKenna, J.** (2016). Political perspectives regarding changing the current educational reform agenda: The winds of change are blowing stronger. In W. Polka & McKenna (Eds.). *Confronting oppressive assessments: How parents, educators and policy-makers are rethinking current educational reforms.* Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Education Publications, (147-160).

**McKenna, J.** & Polka, W. (2016). Why not create a brighter future for all our students by legislative changes to the educational current reforms? What if we just do it! In W. Polka & McKenna (Eds.). *Confronting oppressive assessments: How parents, educators, and policy-makers are rethinking current educational reforms.* Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Education Publications, (161-179).

Blankstein & **McKenna, J.** (2013). Data-Based Decision Making for Continuous Improvement: Overcoming Fear of Data. In Blankstein. *Failure is Not an Option: 6 Principles That Advance Student Achievement in Highly Effective Schools.* Thousand Oaks, California: Corwin & Hope Foundation, (179-180).

## **SELECTED PUBLICATIONS, cont.**

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### **National and Regional Published articles**

**“Vanguard” Journal: The School Administrators Association of New York State (SAANYS - the leading NY state organization for School Building and District Leaders).**

- **McKenna, J. (2024).** Powerful Ways School Leaders Can Support the Social Emotional Wellness of Teachers and Staff. *Fall/Winter, Written / Edited in 2023; To be published in 2024.*
- **McKenna, J. (2023).** Connections and Personal Relationships. *Vanguard, Spring/Summer, 2023.*
- **McKenna, J. (2022).** Essential Leadership Strategies for Navigating Crisis. *Vanguard, Fall, 2022.*
- **McKenna, J. (2016).** How Great Administrators Foster Great Ideas. *Vanguard, Spring / Summer 2016, Vol. 45, No.2.*
- **McKenna, J. (2016).** Meeting the Challenge to Support English Language Learners. *Vanguard, Winter 2016, Vol. 45, No.1.*
- **McKenna, J. (2015).** How to Rejuvenate in the Eye of a Storm. *Vanguard, Fall 2015, Vol.44, No.3.*
- **McKenna, J. (2014).** Interactive Walkthroughs That Empower Students and Staff and Create Dynamic Synergy. *Vanguard, Winter 2014, Vol. 43, No.1.*

**HOPE Foundation: National organization to promote best practice in education and a systematic approach to school improvement.**

- **McKenna, J. (2010).** Funding in Tough times. *What’s Working in Schools, Volume 3, Issue 3, HOPE Foundation. March 2010.*
- **McKenna, J. (2010).** Pillars of Leadership. *What’s Working in Schools, Volume 3, Issue 2, HOPE Foundation. February 2010.*
- **McKenna, J. (2010).** Strengthening your Guided Reading Groups: The cornerstone for student success. *What’s Working in Schools, Volume 3, Issue 1, HOPE Foundation. January 2010.*
- **McKenna, J. (2009).** Using Data and Collaborative Teaming for School Success. *What’s Working in Schools, Volume 2, No. 4, HOPE Foundation. April 2009.*
- **McKenna, J. (2009).** From Red Flagged to Blue Ribbon: A Balanced Literacy Reading and Writing Program That Reaches All Learners. *What’s Working in Schools, Volume 2, No. 3, HOPE Foundation. March 2009.*
- **McKenna, J. (2009).** From Red Flagged to Blue Ribbon: One District’s Quest to Reach All Learners. *What’s Working in Schools, Volume 2, No. 2, HOPE Foundation. February 2009.*

### **Peer Reviews of Other Scholars' Works**

**2023 Editorial Review Board, Peer-Reviewed "Vanguard Journal", School Administrators Association of New York State (SAANYS - the leading NY state organization for School Building and District Leaders).**

- **2023 Peer review and formal editorial comments on other scholars' proposed articles for "Vanguard" Journal.**
  - Winter 2023
  - Spring / Summer 2023
  - Fall 2022
- **2023 ISEP Peer Reviewer of Annual Conference Presentation Proposals**
  - Peer review and formal editorial comments on other scholars’ presentation proposals for annual ISEP conference.
- **2023 ISEP Editorial Review Board for Peer-Reviewed Quarterly Journal, "Educational Planning"**
  - Peer review and formal editorial comments on other scholars' proposed articles for Quarterly Journal.
- **2023 ISEP Subcommittee Reviewer for Quarterly Journal, "Educational Planning"**
  - Subcommittee to review digital vs. print distribution and financial implications.
- **2022 ISEP Peer Reviewer of Annual Conference Presentation Proposals**
  - Peer review and formal editorial comments on other scholars’ presentation proposals for annual ISEP conference. (October 2022).

## PRESENTATIONS – INTERNATIONAL, NATIONAL, AND REGIONAL

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### International Presentations

#### **2015 Hanban / Confucius Institute (Beijing, China).**

Topic: *Developing Global Partnerships and Sharing Best Practices.*

New York State Delegate for the Chinese Bridge Delegation for American Principals and Educators sponsored by the College Board and the Hanban-Confucius Institute.

**Featured Presenter.** Selected to present to the Chinese American Delegation. Beijing, China. (November 2015).

#### **2012 Van Leer Education Conference (Jerusalem, Israel).**

Topic: *Regulation and Trust.*

Invited to participate in the Van Leer Educational Conference as a discussion leader and panelist/presenter with world education leaders. (May 2012).

#### **2006 Oxford University (Oxford, England).**

Topic: *The Development and Implementation of a Balanced Literacy Intervention Program.*

Selected to present Doctoral Thesis and Research to faculty, and participants at the Oxford Round Table. (2006).

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### ***International Presentations for International Society for Educational Planning (ISEP)***

#### **2023 Session Facilitator and Presenter: International Society for Educational Planning Conference. (Washington, DC).**

- **Presentation Topic:** *It's People – Not Programs: The Importance of Building Direct Connections and Personal Relationships with Students and Staff.* (October 12, 2023).
- **Presentation Topic:** *Managing Yourself and Others During Crisis: Key Leadership Visions and Approaches to Create Educational Opportunities and Possibilities for the Future.* (October 12, 2023).
- **Thematic Session 1:** *People: Session Sponsors: Dr. John McKenna and Dr. John Hunt.* (October 11, 2023).
- **Session A: Theme 1:** *Dr. John McKenna and John Hunt: Designing a Teacher-Leadership Program for a Whole-school Focus on Education for Sustainable Development.* (October 11, 2023).
- **Session D: Theme1:** *Dr. John McKenna and John Hunt: The Personal Reflective Diversity Inventory: A Research Instrument to Analyze the Impact of Attitudes and Experiences on Organizational Culture.* (October 11, 2023).
- **Research Lightning Talk - Topic:** *The Importance of Direct Involvement and Personal Connections to Support Students and Staff. Discussion Session.* (October 11, 2023).
- **Session G: Theme 1:** *Dr. John McKenna and John Hunt: A Policy Implementation Shaping Work Harmony in Schools in Turkey: Teacher Career Levels.* (October 12, 2023).
- **Session J: Theme 1: Dr. John McKenna and John Hunt:** *Rural Initiative for Training Administrators with Special Education Expertise: A Redesign of Doctoral Experiences.* (October 12, 2023).
- **Session L: Theme 1: Dr. John McKenna and John Hunt:** *COVID and the Lost Opportunity for Lasting Change.* (October 12, 2023).
- **Session M: Theme 1: Dr. John McKenna and John Hunt:** *The New York State Parental Involvement Survey: A Phenomenological Study of Perceptions of Erie County Parents in Suburban School Districts Regarding the Degree to Which District Leaders Facilitate Their Continuous Involvement In Special Education Processes.* (October 12, 2023).

## PRESENTATIONS – INTERNATIONAL, NATIONAL, AND REGIONAL

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### **2022 International Society for Educational Planning Conference. (Virtual).**

Topic: *Analysis and Application of the Eight Essential Leadership Elements for Navigating Crisis. (October 12, 2022).*

Topic: *Essential Elements and Strategies for Navigating Crises. (October 12, 2022).*

### **2015 International Society for Educational Planning Conference. (Baltimore, MD).**

Topic: *Just Say W.H.O.A. (We Hate Oppressive Assessments) Promoting the Rethinking of Federal and State Education Policies: A Grassroots Study.*

Topic: *Promoting the Rethinking of Federal and State Education Policies. (October 9, 2015).*

### **2013 International Society for Educational Planning 2013 Conference. (Niagara Falls, NY).**

Topic: *Rethinking the Standards Approach to Accountability: Planning and Advocating for Real Change. (October 4, 2013).*

Topic: *Dynamic APPR: Interactive Strategies to Maximize Participation and Empower Others. (October 3, 2013).*

### **2012 International Society for Educational Planning Conference (Kansas City, Mo).**

Topic: *Rethinking federal and state educational policies about academic standards and the knowledge convergence movement. (October 11, 2012).*

Topic: *Caught Between Trust and Regulation. (October 11, 2012).*

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## ***National Presentations for Association of Teacher Educators (ATE)***

### **The 2024 Annual Meeting of the Association of Teacher Educators (Anaheim, California).**

Topic: *It's People Not Programs: The Importance of Building Direct Connections and Personal Relationships with Students and Staff. (March 29, 2024).*

Topic: *Coping With Educational Crises: Approaches from School Leaders Who Did It! (March 29, 2024).*

### **The 2023 Annual Meeting of the Association of Teacher Educators (Jacksonville, Florida).**

Topic: *Managing Yourself and Others During Crisis: Key Leadership Visions, Approaches, and Dispositions to Survive and Thrive. (March 27, 2023).*

### **The 2017 Annual Meeting of the Association of Teacher Educators (Orlando, Florida).**

Topic: *Author Roundtable Discussion. Confronting oppressive assessments: How parents, educators, and policy-makers are rethinking current educational reforms. February 13, 2017*

Topic: *Confronting oppressive assessments: How parents, educators, and policy-makers are rethinking current educational reforms. (February 13, 2017).*

### **The 2016 Annual Meeting of the Association of Teacher Educators (Chicago, Illinois).**

Topic: *Just say W.H.O.A. (we hate oppressive assessments): A grassroots rethinking of federal and state education reform policies. February 15, 2016.*

Topic: *The Rethinking of Federal and State Education Policies Part 2. (February 14, 2016).*

### **The 2015 Annual Meeting of the Association of Teacher Educators (Phoenix, Arizona).**

Topic: *Rethinking federal and state educational policies about academic standards and the knowledge convergence movement. (February 16, 2015).*

Topic: *"Just say whoa!" ...Promulgating the rethinking of federal and state educational policies regarding academic standards. (February 16, 2015).*

### **The 2014 Annual Meeting of the Association of Teacher Educators (St. Louis, Missouri).**

Topic: *Rethinking federal and state educational policies about academic standards and the knowledge convergence movement. (February 17, 2014).*

Topic: *Advancing Teacher Education that Matters in Teaching Learning and Schooling. (February 17, 2014).*



## **PRESENTATIONS – INTERNATIONAL, NATIONAL, AND REGIONAL**

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### **National Presentations for Association of Teacher Educators (ATE), cont.**

#### **The 2014 Summer Meeting of the Association of Teacher Educators (Niagara Falls, NY).**

Topic: *Rethinking federal and state educational policies about academic standards and the knowledge convergence movement.* (August 5, 2014).

Topic: *Analyzing State and Local Assessments.* (August 4, 2014).

#### **The 2013 Annual Meeting of the Association of Teacher Educators (Atlanta, Georgia).**

Topic: *Rethinking federal and state educational policies about academic standards and the knowledge convergence movement.* (February 17, 2013).

#### **The 2013 Association of Teacher Educators Summer Conference (Washington, D.C.)**

Topic: *Rethinking federal and state educational policies about academic standards and the knowledge convergence movement.* (August 5, 2013).

### **National Hope Foundation Presentations Overview (2008 - 2013)**

National organization to promote best practice in education and a systematic approach to school improvement.

***Selected as Keynote National Presenter for conferences and educational institutes related to instructional leadership and program development.***

- Conducted presentations and workshops on how to implement the six principles of "*Failure is Not an Option*," a systematic approach to school improvement.
- Presented at various educational summits and workshops across the country as well as developed instructional webinars.
- Chosen to write related articles for the HOPE Foundation National Newsletter, "*What's Working in Schools.*"

### **National Presentations – Hope Foundation**

- **Hope Foundation Educational Institute (Ithaca, New York).**  
Topic: *Essential Leadership Strategies to Create and Synergize a PLC.* (August 2012).
- **Hope Foundation; Arkansas Department of Education (Little Rock Arkansas).**  
Topic: *New Administrator Induction Training.* (July 2011, and September 2011).
- **Hope Foundation; Proviso School District (Chicago Illinois).**  
Opening Day Keynote and Breakout; Topic: *Literacy Across the Curriculum.* (August 2011).
- **Hope Foundation Year End Conference for Columbus Public Schools (Columbus, Georgia).**  
Topics: *RTI Implementation & Differentiated Instruction.* (June 2011).
- **Hope Foundation Administrative Retreat for Joliet Public School District (Joliet, Illinois).**  
Topics: *The Six Principles in Action, Productive vs Destructive Leadership, Leadership Lessons from Literature.* (July 2010).
- **Hope Foundation Educational Institute (Houston, Texas).**  
Topic: *The Six Principles in Action.* (February 2010).
- **Hope Foundation Educational Summit (Niagara Falls, New York).**  
Topic: *The Six Principles in Action.* (August 2009).
- **Hope Foundation Educational Summit (Savanna Georgia).**  
Topic: *From Red Flag to Blue Ribbon.* (December 2008).

### **National Webinars – Hope Foundation**

- Topic: *Productive vs. Destructive Leadership Strategies.* Broadcast live. (12/8/11).
- Topic: *Differentiated Instruction K-12 Practical Strategies.* Broadcast live. (11/8/11).
- Topic: *Maximize Professional Development with Declining Resources.* Broadcast live. (9/22/11).
- Topic: *How to Prevent Bullying in your School.* Broadcast live. (6/9/11).

## PRESENTATIONS – INTERNATIONAL, NATIONAL, AND REGIONAL

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### National and Regional Presentations

#### **2024 Scheduled Presenter: CIES (Comparative and International Education Society) National Annual Conference (Miami, Florida)**

Book Launch: *Coping With Educational Crisis: Approaches From School Leaders Who Did It.* (With Dr. Walter Polka). (March 13, 2024.)

Paper Presentation: *Making Student Centered Instruction More of a Reality in More Teaching Learning Settings: Lessons Learned From USA Case Studies.* March 14, 2024.

#### **2024 Scheduled Presenter: School Administrators Association of New York State (SAANYS) State Conference (Lake Placid, New York).**

Topic: TBD. Featured Presenter. (October 2024).

#### **2023 Co-Organizer, and Featured Presenter, Annual Root-Ed Conference (Buffalo, New York).**

Presentation Topic: *Dynamic Meetings in Action.*

Activity: *Compare & Contrast Activities 1&2.*

Conference Topic: *Leaders – Grasp Your Impact! How You Can Create Highly Effective Cultures and How To Step Up and Meet Today’s Challenges.* (July 13, 2023).

#### **2022 School Administrators Association of New York State (SAANYS) State Conference (Lake George, New York).**

Topic: *Leadership Strategies and Lessons for Future Crises.*

**Featured Presenter.** (October 2022).

#### **2017 SUNY New Paltz (New Paltz, New York).**

Topic: *Achievement against the Odds.*

**Featured Presenter.** Fletcher School Identified by Better Outcomes, LLC., as one of the top 30 high performing schools in New York State based on student achievement and socio-economic status. (June 2017).

#### **2016 National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) Annual Conference (Washington, D.C.).**

Topic: *Maintaining Positive Morale Through the use of Classroom Walkthroughs, Peer Observation and Teacher Reflection.*

**New York State Delegate / Presenter** for the NAESP National Leaders Conference. (March 2016).

#### **2016 Data Analysis Technical Assistance Group (DATAG) (Saratoga, New York).**

Topic: *APPR Has Gone Through Changes as Districts Determine How Teachers Will be Rated.*

**New York State Panelist / Presenter.** (July 2016).

#### **2015 New York State Board of Regents and New York State Education Department Learning Summit on Teacher and Principal Evaluation (Albany, NY).**

Topic: *The Effects of the Regents Reform Agenda.*

**New York State Panelist / Presenter.** (May 2015).

#### **2015 Hamilton Fulton Montgomery BOCES (Johnstown, New York).**

Topic: *Envisioning Success: Creating Vision, Mission, and Goals.*

**Creator / Presenter** of “The Workshop for Superintendents and Principals.” (2015).

#### **2015 Graduate School of Education (GSE) Hire Education Conference – SUNY at Buffalo (Buffalo, NY).**

Topic: *Preparing for Your Future Career in Education.*

**Organizer / Presenter.** (April 2015).



## PRESENTATIONS – INTERNATIONAL, NATIONAL, AND REGIONAL

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### *National and Regional Presentations, cont.*

#### **2013 Summit for Smarter Schools – Riviera Theatre (Tonawanda, New York).**

Topic: *Common Core Learning Standards, Testing and Evaluation.*

**Featured Presenter** for Partnership for Smarter Schools. (February 2013).

#### **2013 New York State Council of School Superintendents (NYSCOSS) State Conference (Albany, New York).**

Topic: *Leadership: Addressing the Monumental Changes and Challenges to Improving Schools.*

**Featured Presenter.** Co-Sponsored by the Leadership for Educational Achievement Foundation (LEAF) and the School Administrators Association of New York State (SAANYS). (April 2013).

#### **2013 NYSUT “One Voice United” Rally (Albany, New York).**

Topic: *The Effects of the Common Core Learning Standards, Testing and Evaluation.*

**Featured Presenter** and the only principal selected from New York State to present to over 20,000 people. (June 2013).

#### **2013 Summit for Smarter Schools – Kleinhans Music Hall (Buffalo, New York).**

Topic: *Common Core Learning Standards, Testing and Evaluation.*

**Featured Presenter** for Partnership for Smarter Schools. (October 2013).

#### **2013 School Administrators Association of New York State (SAANYS) State Conference (Rochester New York).**

Topic: *Courageous Leadership in Times of Massive School Change: How to Conduct Effective Walkthrough Observations that Empower Students and Staff.*

**Featured Presenter.** (October 2013).

#### **2013 New York State Senate Committee of Education at City Hall (Buffalo, New York).**

Topic: *Effects of the Regents Reform Agenda.*

**Niagara Region PTA Legislative Representative.** Presented Regional PTA Testimony to the New York State Senate Committee of Education (October 2013).

#### **2013 Hartwick College Educational Forum – Kleinhans Music Hall (Oneonta, New York).**

Topic: *Implementing New Standards and High Stakes Testing.*

**Featured Presenter** for Partnership for Smarter Schools. (September 2013).

#### **2012 New York State Network Team Training (Albany, New York).**

Topic: *How to Collect and Analyze Data.*

**Featured Presenter.** (November 2012).

#### **2012 Niagara Catholic High School Educational Summit (Niagara Falls, New York).**

Topic: *Implementing the New Common Core Learning Standards.*

**Co-founder / Presenter** of the “The Learning Professionals” Staff Development Group; created the first annual Educational Summit at Niagara Catholic High School. (May 2012).

#### **2012 Niagara Region PTA – Lewiston Porter CSD (Lewiston, New York).**

Topic: *Bully Prevention strategies K-12.*

**Featured Presenter.** (March 2012).

#### **2012 Niagara Region PTA – North Tonawanda CSD (North Tonawanda, New York).**

Topic: *Bully Prevention strategies K-12.*

**Featured Presenter.** (February 2012).

## PRESENTATIONS – INTERNATIONAL, NATIONAL, AND REGIONAL

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### National and Regional Presentations, cont.

#### **2012 Niagara Region PTA – PFLAG (Niagara Falls, New York).**

Topic: *How Schools and Communities Work Together.*

**Featured Presenter.** (February 2012).

#### **2011 Niagara Region PTA New York State Annual Conference (Lockport, New York).**

Topic: *Bully Prevention Workshop.*

**Featured Presenter.** (Fall 2011).

#### **2011 Niagara Region PTA Regional Conference (Lockport, New York).**

Topic: *Implementing Common Core Learning Standards.*

**Featured Presenter.** (Fall 2011).

#### **2011 Niagara Region PTA Regional Conference (Lockport, New York).**

Topic: *Implementing Common Core Learning Standards.*

**Featured Presenter.** (Spring 2011).

#### **2010 Niagara Region PTA Regional Conference (Lockport, New York).**

Topic: *Implementing Common Core Learning Standards.*

**Featured Presenter.** (Fall 2010).

#### **2010 Probationary Administrators Workshop – Millennium Hotel (Cheektowaga, New York).**

Topic: *Essential Skills for New Administrators.*

**Keynote Speaker.** (March 2010).

#### **2008 SUNY at Buffalo Research Symposium (Buffalo, New York).**

Topic: *The Development and Implementation of a Balanced Literacy Intervention Program.*

**Featured Presenter.** Selected to present Doctoral Dissertation to faculty and students. (2008).

#### **2006 Harvard University Research Symposium and International Forum (Cambridge, Massachusetts).**

Topic: *The Development and Implementation of a Balanced Literacy Intervention Program.*

**Featured Presenter.** Selected to present Doctoral Thesis and Research to faculty, students, and participants. (2006).

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### Television

#### **LCTV/ Lockport Community Television: Special Guest on Local Cable TV Shows to discuss the following topics:**

- Topic: *Educational Reforms and Policies (2013).*
  - Topic: *Implementing the Common Core Learning Standards.* One Episode. (December 2013).
  - Topic: *Our Schools – High Stakes Testing and Parent Concerns.* Two Episodes. (Summer 2013).
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### Podcasts

#### **Co-Founder, Co-Host: Compass for Kindness (January 2024)**

- Podcast Episode 1: Intro Episode – Leading with Kindness. *January 10, 2024.*
- Podcast Episode 2: Interview with Colleen Marchetta, *Hope Totes.* *January 10, 2024.*
- Podcast Episode 3: Interview with Dr. James Newton, *Principal at Bishop Timon High School.* *January 10, 2024.*
- *Spotify, TBD.*
- Interviews with amazing people who show kindness, caring and empathy.

#### **Guest: Take Notes with Jen Rafferty (January 2024)**

- Podcast Episode 1: Intro Episode – Empowerment & Empathy in Leadership. *January 25, 2024.*
- *Spotify, TBD.*
- Interviews with experts in Educational Leadership.

## **HIGHER EDUCATION / PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION / LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE**

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### **Niagara University**

- **Assistant Professor, Leadership Studies Department:** 2023 - Present.
- **Adjunct Professor:** 2014 - 2022.
- **Guest Lecturer / Presenter / Volunteer:** 2012 - Present.
- **Presenter / Participant, Student Showcase:** 2012 - 2017.

### **SUNY at Buffalo Graduate School of Education Alumni Association (UBGSEAA)**

- **President:** 2019 - 2023.
- **Featured Annual Commencement Speaker:** SUNY at Buffalo: 2019 - 2023.
- **Distinguished Alumni Award, Alumni Association: (UBAA):** May 2022.
- **Organizer of Virtual Conference with NYS Commissioner Rosa:** 2022.
- **Organizer of WNY Event with NYS Commissioner Elia:** 2019.
- **Elected Vice President:** 2014 - 2016.
- **Distinguished Alumni Award, Graduate School of Education: (GSEAA)** May 2014.
- **Board of Directors:** 2013 - Present.
- **Organizer and Presenter at SUNY at Buffalo Graduate School of Education:** Hire Education Conference.
  - Topic: Preparing for Your Future Career in Education. April 2013 and April 2015.

### **University at Buffalo Alumni Association (UBAA)**

- **Board of Directors:** 2016 - 2023.
- **SUNY UB Compliance Team:** 2021 - 2023
- **UB Alumni Strategic Planning Team:** 2021 - 2023
- **UBAA Finance Committee:** 2022 - 2023
- **UBAA Membership Committee:** 2016 - 2022

### **International Society for Educational Planning (ISEP)**

- **Board of Directors:** 2015 - 2018; January 2022 - Present.
- **2023 Editorial Review Board:** ISEP Peer-Reviewed Quarterly Journal, "Educational Planning"
  - Peer review and formal editorial comments on other scholars' proposed articles for Quarterly Journal.
- **2023 Peer Reviewer:** ISEP Annual Conference Presentation Proposals
  - Peer review and formal editorial comments on other scholars' presentation proposals for annual ISEP conference.
- **2023 Subcommittee Reviewer:** ISEP Quarterly Journal, "Educational Planning"
  - Subcommittee to review digital vs. print distribution and financial implications.

### **Association of Teacher Educators (ATE)**

- **Member:** (2013 - 2017) and (2022 – Present).
- **Presenter:** At numerous conferences.
- **Reviewer:** Reviewed / Critiqued proposals to speak at Annual Conferences. (2014 – Present).

### **School Administrators Association of New York State (SAANYS - the leading NY state organization for School Building and District Leaders)**

- **President:** Statewide organization. 2015 - 2016.
- **NYS Board of Directors / Executive Board Member:** 2009 - 2017.
  - Chairman of the Western New York Region representing approximately 90 school districts.
  - Member of the Western New York Executive Board of Directors.
- **Editorial Review Board:** Peer-Reviewed Journal, "Vanguard"
  - Peer review and formal editorial comments on other scholars' proposed articles for "Vanguard" Journal.
    - Winter 2023
    - Spring / Summer 2023
    - Fall 2022

## HIGHER EDUCATION / PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION / LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

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### PDK (Phi Delta Kappa) Buffalo - Niagara Chapter and Buffalo State Chapter

- **President:** 2023 - Present.
  - **Board of Directors: 2014 – 2023**
    - Assembled a Leadership Team to Reestablish PDK and Increase Niagara University's Presence as well as make more personal contacts in the WNY educational community.
    - Reinstated the PDK Buffalo-Niagara Chapter
  - **President, Buffalo - Niagara Chapter:** January 2023 - Present.
  - **President, Buffalo State Chapter:** 1997 - 2000, and **Vice President of Programs** 1996 - 1997.

### Committee to Identify and Develop Educational Leaders (CIDEL)

- **Faculty Representative, Niagara University:** 2023 - Present.
  - Connect and collaborate with colleges and universities across western New York to collaboratively promote educational leadership programs, workshops, and forums.
- **Developed / Coordinated Ed Camp Leadership Buffalo:** November 2014.
- **President:** 2013 - 2015.
- **Vice President:** 2011 - 2013.
- **Board of Directors:** 2010 - 2017.

### Niagara Region PTA of Western New York (Member: 2007 – 2017)

- **Educational Chairman:** Western New York Region. (2010 -2017).
- **Legislative Chairman:** Western Region. (2010 - 2017).
- **Regional Representative:** Legislative Education Conference in Albany. (2010 - 2017).
- **Regional Delegate:** NYSPTA Conference. (2012 - 2016).
- **Keynote Speaker:** Presidents and Principals Dinner. (March 2011 and 2013).
- **Assisted in the Development** of the “Stop Bullying Now” Bully Prevention Program / Toolbox.

### State University of New York at Buffalo Confucius Institute

- **New York State Delegate:** The Chinese Bridge Delegation for American Principals and Educators sponsored by the College Board and the Hanban-Confucius Institute. (2015).
- **Selected Presenter:** The Chinese American Delegation. Beijing, China. (November 2015).
- **Participant:** Chinese Teacher Exchange Program.

### “Partnership for Smarter Schools” – Advocacy group for improved instructional initiatives in NY State. (2012 - 2015).

- **Co-Founder / Panelist / Presenter:** Worked with local education leaders, political leaders, and parent/teacher organizations.
- **Coordinated Regional Forums on Policy and Practice at:**
  - Erie 1 BOCES. (December 2012).
  - The Riviera Theatre, North Tonawanda, New York. (February 2013).
  - SUNY at Buffalo. (April 2013).
  - Kleinhans Music Hall Buffalo New York. (2,500 attended). (October 2013).
  - Multiple high schools and venues across Western New York.

### Tonawanda Administrative Supervisory Group

- **President:** Executive Board, 2006 - 2013.

### Medaille College

- **Adjunct Professor, Department of Education:** Courses: 1996 - 2003.
  - *Foundations of Special Education*
  - *Current Issues in Education*
  - *Strategies for Working with Students with Special Needs*
  - *Literacy In the Content Areas*
  - *Strategic Literacy Instruction for Diverse Learners*

## HIGHLIGHTED HONORS & AWARDS

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- **Friend of Education Award** in Recognition of an Outstanding Career with Superior Performance, Dedication and Service Which Has Touched Countless Lives – **2022**
  - School Administrators Association of New York State (SAANYS)
- **New York State Senate Proclamation for Outstanding Leadership** for successfully leading the Williamsville Central School District as Acting Superintendent during the pandemic – **2021**
  - New York State Senate
- **Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award – 2021** [Click here to learn more.](#)
  - State University of New York at Buffalo Alumni Association (UBAA)
- **Kappa Delta PI Honorary Lifetime Member Award – 2018**
  - Niagara University Chapter
- **NYSPTA Advocate in Action Award** for Dedication and Service to students, parents, and teachers – **2015**
  - NYSPTSA
- **New York State Senate Legislative Resolution for Dedication and Service – 2015**
  - New York State Senate
- **Distinguished Alumni Award – 2014**
  - State University of New York at Buffalo Graduate School of Education Alumni Association (GSEAA)
- **Friend of Education Award – 2014**
  - Presented by the West Seneca Teachers Association
- **PKD (Phi Delta Kappa) International Presidential Award as Distinguished Principal of the Year – 2013**
  - Buffalo / Niagara Chapter
- **Walter Potocki Award for Distinguished Leadership and Service – 2013**
  - Niagara Region PTSA
- **Leader in Me Award for outstanding school participation and program implementation – 2013**
  - Franklin Covey, Inc.
- **New York State Outstanding Educator of the Year Award – 2012**
  - School Administrators Association of New York State (SAANYS)
- **Erie County Legislative Resolution for Devotion and Dedication in Education – 2010**
  - Erie County Legislature
- **Shooting Star Outstanding Achievement Award – 2010**
  - Make-A-Wish Foundation
- **Business First: Who's Who in Western New York Education – 2009, 2010**
  - For accomplishments in Educational Leadership
- **Honorary Life Membership Award – 2005**
  - New York State PTA
- **Business First: Pathfinders Award – 1998**
  - For developing partnerships between business and educational Leaders