

PAIS CONNECTIONS

Good Morning,

Garry Ridge, former CEO of WD-40, reminds us that "Every room is full of lived experience you cannot see. Different roads. Different weather. Different bruises. Same destination: wanting to matter."

As school leaders and teachers, we matter profoundly in a child's life. But in February, that sense of purpose can get buried under the ice and snow of the season.

So instead of letting winter wear us down, what if we pause to reflect on how much we truly matter in other lives? How might that awareness shift the way we listen?

The way we open ourselves to learning something new?

That last question makes me wonder. Who is that parent, alum, or community member you could learn from, and in doing so, offer them the chance to matter in the life of a child?

Share a name or two with me please. We'd love to invite them into our conversations to learn from them. Email me at lhofreuter@paispa.org.

Happy Groundhog Day, a beloved Pennsylvania tradition and a hopeful sign of spring.

Liz Hofreuter, Executive Director

Wisdom begins the moment you realize your experience isn't the only valid one in the room.

ACCREDITATION

The second half of the PAIS accreditation year kicks off on February 22 with a Full Scale visit to **The Kiski School**. Other Full Scale visits will be held at **Tower Hill School**, **Goshen Friends School**, **Villa Maria Academy High School** and **La Salle College High School**. Seven Interim and two Focused Revisits will also be held between now and the end of March.

The PAIS Commission for Accreditation remains busy strengthening and growing the process by reviewing five of our existing Self Study Sections, in addition to the launch of an alternative process for the Interim visit.

And finally, the spring also includes the launch of our ICAISA five-year review in addition to the creation of a standalone Vision Statement for PAIS Accreditation.



Connecting with
JILL SARADA
HEAD OF SCHOOL
FANNY EDEL FALK
LABORATORY SCHOOL

"You're always a learner first."

PROGRAMMING

Professional learning is ultimately about elevating the impact of your knowledge, methodologies, wisdom, and kindness on your students. It's all about the students! With a focus on students, PAIS is happy to offer **student programming**, bringing students together from different schools for collaborating, learning, and finding purpose. This Spring, we are offering two programs:

- On **Sunday, April 12**, Friends Council On Education, PAIS, and George School are collaborating on a Student Diversity Conference, **JOY**, to be held at George School. Student teams from 7th & 8th and 9th - 11th grades will be invited.
- A **Middle School Student Purpose Summit** (Earth Week theme) on **Thursday, April 23**, led by the World Leadership School and held at Sewickley Academy in Pittsburgh.

And, looking ahead to the Fall of 2026, The Shipley School will host our annual Middle School Student Leadership Conference, **RISE**, on October 7, 2026. For now, **SAVE the DATES** for these programs. You will be notified when registration opens.

And, as we, as a Nation, celebrate our 250th Anniversary, Philadelphia will be the center of activity for **Civic Learning Week National Forum**, March 9-10, 2026. PAIS was proud to serve on the planning committee to represent independent schools.

FEB 3 • 11-11:30 AM	<u>Independent School Group Retirement Plan: Escape the Trap of Other Plans</u>
FEB 3 • 3:30-4:30 PM	<u>Recommended Practices for Medical Leave & Return from Leave Policies</u>
FEB 5 • 3:45-5 PM	<u>Developing Strategies for Resilience and Well-Being</u>
FEB 10 • 3:30-4:30 PM	<u>Parents as Partners in Supporting Student Mental Health</u>
FEB 12 • 9 AM-2 PM	<u>Professional Growth Visits</u>
FEB 18 • 3:30-5 PM	<u>Curriculum Reimagined</u> (<i>begins</i>)
FEB 19 • 11 AM-12:30 PM	<u>Leading Well: A Reflective Journey for Heads of School</u> (<i>Heads Wellness Series</i>)
FEB 27 • 9 AM-4 PM	<u>Sacred Pause: A Healing Circle for Educators of Color</u> (<i>Newtown, PA</i>)



VIEW ALL UPCOMING PROGRAMS



SAVE THE DATES



APR 10 • 9 AM-3 PM

Developing High-Performing Teams



MAY 1 • 9 AM-3 PM

The Advocate Educator

GOVERNMENT ADVOCACY

We are keeping a close eye on the FITC dialogue and sharing lessons learned from the Pennsylvania EITC and OSTC in the national conversation as there is still a great deal left to be defined.

We are also watching the way independent school contracts and admissions policies are being examined, so we thought we would offer a resource or two from our colleagues in the legal world.

Shield or Sword? Key Updates to Enrollment Agreements to Address Common Problems Facing Independent School Administrators

Fisher Phillips reviews their **education predictions for 2025** and makes a new **list for 2026**.

CONNECTIONS

A core goal of PAIS programming is to build collaborative relationships that foster peer support, shared learning, and meaningful exchange. Our cohort-based programs create community and strengthen professional connections.

One of our most impactful offerings, **Teaching the First Three Years Institute (TF3Y)**, is now open for registration for the 2026-27 school year. Designed to support early-career teachers, TF3Y is led by experienced leaders and educators from PAIS schools and includes three in-person days in August (Aug 3-5 in Pittsburgh or Aug 10-12 in Philadelphia), along with virtual sessions throughout the school year.

Topics include independent school culture, navigating relationships with parents, students, and colleagues, supporting neurodiverse learners, curriculum design, and more.

Support your early-career teachers with TF3Y this summer!

"Teaching the First Three Years Institute was such an amazing experience. The topics that were presented were right on target. I really benefited from the individual lesson demonstrations, which gave each participant a chance to demonstrate their lessons and get valuable feedback, and then redo to see improvements in action. We also learned so much by working with our peers. The presenters have a wealth of knowledge and real life experiences. Put TF3Y Institute on your Must Do List NOW!"

- Testimonial from a Summer 2025 participant



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