



# NSPRA

# 2026

**NEW ORLEANS, LA • JULY 19-22, 2026**

*Let the Good News Roll!*

LIFTING VOICES, LASTING IMPACT

SEMINAR PROGRAM

the leader in school communication



# WELCOME TO NSPRA 2026

*Let the Good News Roll!* LIFTING VOICES,  
LASTING IMPACT



*Welcome to New Orleans!*

Welcome to New Orleans and to four days of learning, connection and inspiration with school communication professionals and education leaders from across the country. Whether you're attending your first Seminar or your fortieth, NSPRA 2026 is your opportunity to:



## LEARN

Explore practical strategies, innovative tools and real-world examples from colleagues and experts.



## CONNECT

Exchange ideas, grow your network and strengthen your professional community.



## EXPLORE

Discover new ideas, fresh perspectives and practical solutions you can bring back to your district.



## APPLY

Leave inspired and equipped with ideas you can immediately put into practice.

Every conversation, every session and every connection has the potential to create lasting impact for your schools and communities.

*We're glad you're here*



## THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE

**1,300+**  
ATTENDEES

**150+**  
LEARNING SESSIONS

**AWARDS &  
RECOGNITION**

**NETWORKING  
EVENTS**

**MARKETPLACE**

**SIGNATURE  
EXPERIENCES**



# THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

*Let the Good News Roll!*

LIFTING VOICES,  
LASTING IMPACT



## GOLD SPONSORS



Booth 206



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Booth 207



Booth 309



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Booth 614-110



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GOLD MINE ROUNDTABLES



Booth 206



ParentSquare

Booth 312

FIRST TIMERS SEMINAR SESSION



Booth 408

PUPPY PAWLOOZA

NICHOLS  
STRATEGIES



HEADSHOTS



ATTENDEE RIBBONS

Booth 215



ATTENDEE LANYARDS

CREATIVE  
EFFECTIVE  
LASTING

POWER PARTNER SESSION



PRODUCT DEMO



Booth 513

PRODUCT DEMO



Booth 505

PRODUCT DEMO



Booth 305

## EXHIBITORS

Alpaca

Booth 210

ECRA Group, Inc.

Booth 410

Peachjar

Booth 406

SheSpeaks  
Communications

Booth 313

Amplify Creative

Booth 213

GrackleDocs

Booth 609

Presentation Solutions, Inc.

Booth 603

Social News Desk

Booth 509

Argo Translation

Booth 414

IMS Technology Group

Booth 503

Rally

Booth 212

TeacherLists

Booth 605-107

Class Intercom

Booth 315

Kordica Communications

Booth 515

School Revenue Partners

Booth 311

Wordly

Booth 712

Consortium of State School  
Boards Associations

Booth 214

Nextdoor

Booth 608

School Spirit PR

Booth 211

Your PR Toolbox

Booth 412

SchoolStatus

Booth 303

# MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR SEMINAR EXPERIENCE



*Let the Good News Roll!* LIFTING VOICES,  
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*You're* here to learn, connect and grow — and we're here to help you make it count.



1

## STEP OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE.

Attend a session outside your specialty area or comfort zone. You never know where your next great idea will come from!



2

## CONNECT WITH SOMEONE NEW.

Introduce yourself to someone you don't know. Build your network and exchange ideas; you're not alone in the work you do.



3

## EXPLORE THE MARKETPLACE.

Visit exhibitors, discover new solutions and gather resources that can help you and your district communicate even more effectively.



4

## SHARE IDEAS AND INSIGHTS.

Engage in conversations during sessions, roundtables and breaks. Your perspective matters, and someone else could benefit from it.



5

## CAPTURE IDEAS. TAKE ACTION.

Identify three ideas you'll implement when you return home. Small actions today can lead to lasting impact in your schools and communities.



*Leave Inspired. Make an Impact.*

You are a powerful voice for your schools and communities. Thank you for all you do!



## TIPS FOR SUCCESS

### PLAN AHEAD

Review the schedule, build your personal plan and leave room for surprises.

### BE PRESENT

Put away distractions and be fully engaged in the experience.

### BALANCE YOUR TIME

Mix learning with networking and relaxation — you'll recharge and gain more.

### STAY INFORMED

Check the Seminar app and signage for the latest updates and room changes.

### MAKE IT YOUR OWN

There's no one right way to experience Seminar. Explore what interests you, make meaningful connections and create an experience that works for you.

### Thank You, LASPRA Members!

A very special thank you to our wonderful New Orleans hosts from the Louisiana SPRA chapter—including the host chapter committee and the entire LASPRA Executive Board. Thanks for the warm Louisiana welcome!





# CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

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## GET STARTED



### REGISTRATION

Grand Salon/Grand  
Ballroom Foyer - Floor 1

#### HOURS

**Sat:** 12 - 5 p.m.  
**Sun:** 7:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.  
**Mon:** 7 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
**Tue:** 7 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
**Wed:** 7:30 - 10:30 a.m.

Pick up your name badge, badge  
ribbons and more.



### MEMBER CENTER

Churchill Ballroom - Floor 2  
(In the Marketplace)

#### HOURS

**Mon:** 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
**Tue:** 7:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Whether you're a longtime  
member or new to NSPRA, the  
Member Center is your place to ask  
questions, explore resources,  
connect with staff, pick up free  
"I ♥ Public Schools" pennants and  
win prizes in the new "Unlock the  
Connection" member game.



### BOOKSTORE

Churchill Ballroom - Floor 2  
(In the Marketplace)

#### HOURS - BOOK SIGNINGS

**Mon:** 11:50 a.m., 1:30 p.m.  
**Tue:** 12:20 p.m.

Buy your favorite school PR gear:

- ROAD2NSPRA Seminar T-shirts
- NSPRA fleece pullovers, socks  
and Bolt plushies
- School PR totes and water bottles

And explore industry books, including  
titles authored by Seminar speakers.  
**PLUS, check out the Book Bargain Bin!**



### MARKETPLACE

Churchill Ballroom - Floor 2

Visit with exhibitors offering tools and services to strengthen  
your district's communication efforts. Learn about the latest  
innovations and connect with representatives who can help  
you find the right solutions for your schools.

**Mon:** 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
Light bites at 7:30 a.m. and 11:45 a.m.

**Tue:** 7:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
Light bites at 7:30 a.m. and 12:15 p.m.

### ALSO IN THE MARKETPLACE!



**Free  
Headshots**

Professional  
photographer!



**Puppy  
Pawlooza**

Sponsored by  
Nichols Strategies



**Relaxation  
Stations**



### CODE OF CONDUCT

All Seminar attendees  
must observe the  
Seminar Code of  
Conduct.

[nspra.org/Seminar-  
Conduct](https://nspra.org/Seminar-Conduct)



### QUIET ROOM

Bourbon  
Boardroom - Floor 3

This low-sensory room  
offers a peaceful  
environment for anyone  
who needs a moment to  
recharge.



### NURSING/ LACTATION ROOM

Private space will be  
available at the Seminar host  
hotel for anyone who needs  
a quiet, comfortable place to  
pump or nurse. **Stop by  
registration for the keys.**

# SESSION FOCUS AREAS

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An icon before the title of a session denotes the general focus area of the session as indicated below. Each focus area designation is based on information submitted by the presenter(s), and a session may cover a broader perspective.



Generative **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE** in school public relations/communications (research, strategies, use cases, policies, best practices, etc.)



**CHAPTERS** (operations, leadership and programming in SPRA chapters)



School public relations/communication **CAREER** (skills, knowledge and resources for charting a personal career path)



Internal and/or external **ENGAGEMENT** (family and community engagement, research, programs, campaigns, activities, etc.)



**EQUITY** (communication efforts that support diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging, including research, strategies, programs, campaigns, activities, etc.)



School public relations/communication for Educational Service Agencies (**ESA**), Intermediate Units, **BOCES** and/or County Offices of Education



School public relations/communication **ETHICS** and law



School public relations/communication **LEADERSHIP** (strategic counseling, reputation management, relationship building, organizational dynamics, mentoring/guidance, professional development, etc.)



**MARKETING/ BRANDING** for school systems (research, strategies, programs, campaigns, activities, etc.)



School public relations/communication **STRATEGIC PLANNING** (research and evaluation strategies, coordination/management of effective programs, results, etc.)



School public relations/communication **TACTICS** (best practices, tactics, tools, activities, etc.)





# FLOOR PLAN FLOORS 1 & 2

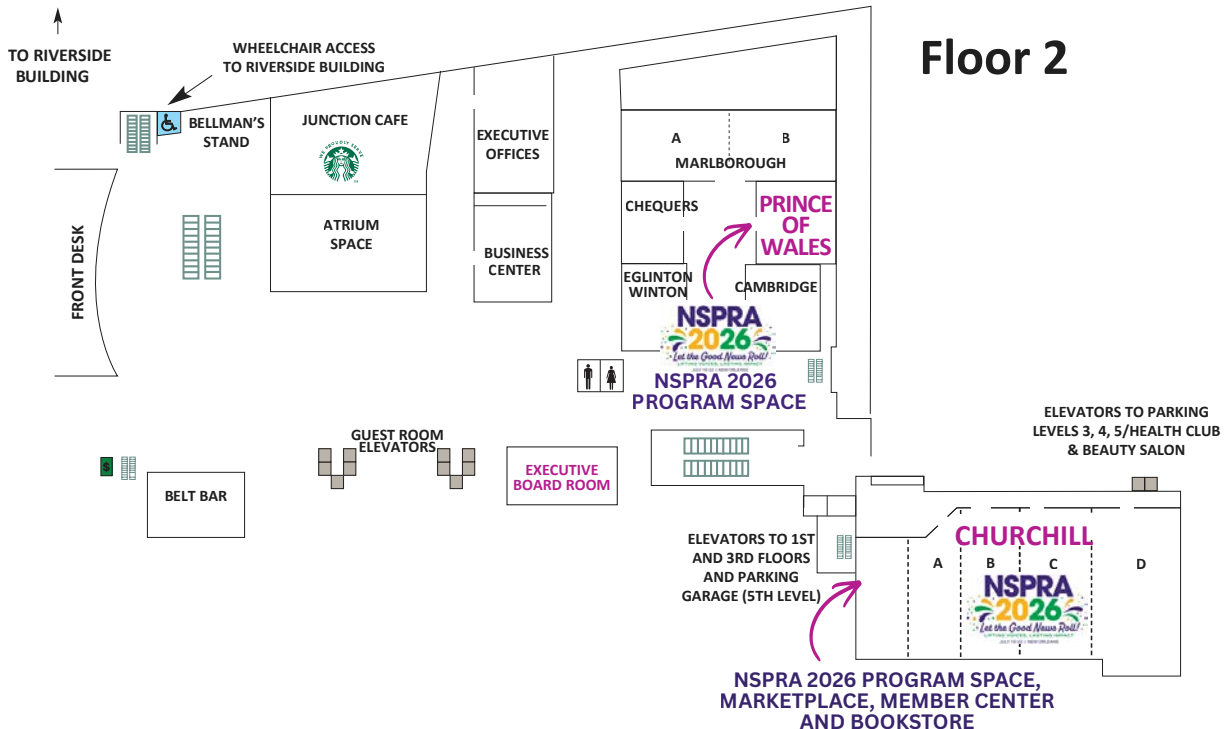
*Let the Good News Roll!* LIFTING VOICES,  
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## Floor 1

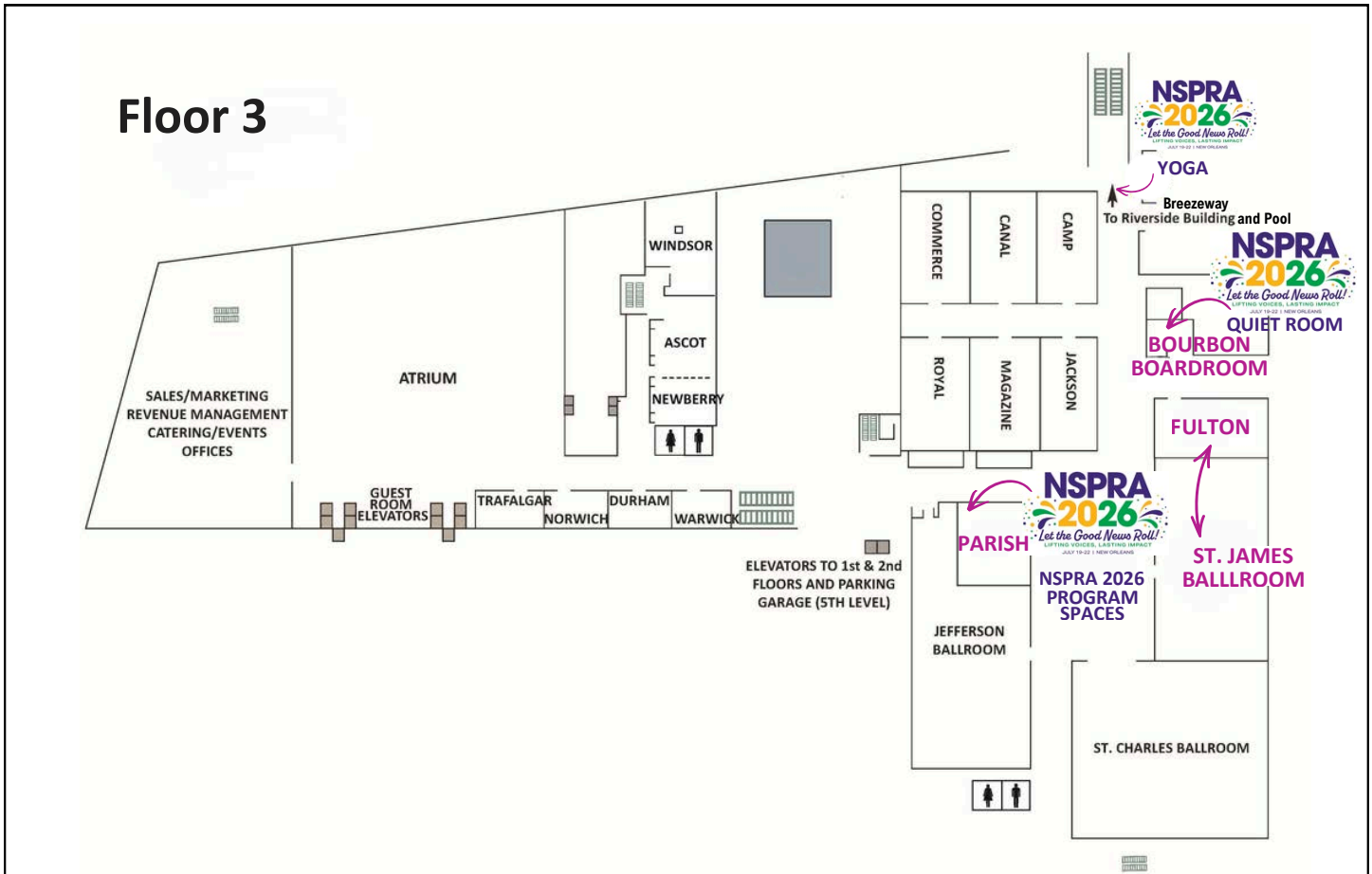


## Floor 2



# FLOOR PLAN FLOOR 3

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# SESSION FORMATS

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Choose from different session formats to meet your professional development needs:



## SKILL SESSION

1 HOUR

Live lecture, panel discussion or interactive session with time for Q&A.



## GOLD MINE ROUNDTABLE SESSION

20 MINUTES X  
3 ROUNDS

A live mini-session on a program/best practice topic, with time for Q&A, presented at a table for 8-10 people during three 20-minute rounds.



## INDUSTRY INSIGHTS SESSIONS

40 MINUTES

Bring your lunch to these midday sessions and learn about resources, products and services offered by Gold Sponsors.

## TARGET AUDIENCES

### Session Target Audiences

Some sessions include an icon indicating the intended experience level. Unmarked sessions are suitable for all experience levels. Designations are advisory and based on information provided by presenters.

- N New PR professional (0-3 years)**  
Build foundational knowledge and practical skills.
- A Advancing professional (4-7 years)** Strengthen strategic communication practices and planning.
- M Mid-career professional (8-14 years)** Advance strategic expertise and advisory leadership skills.
- V Veteran professional (15+ years)** Explore emerging trends and complex issues shaping school communication.

## APR LEARNING OPPORTUNITY

### Accreditation in Public Relations Learning Opportunity

If the Accreditation in Public Relations (APR) seal appears by a session name, the presentation has content that can help those pursuing their APR learn more about best practices in strategic public relations.

These sessions are NOT formal accreditation preparatory classes, but they do address some of the knowledge, skills and abilities tested in the accreditation process.



## EVALUATE THE SESSIONS YOU ATTEND

### Your Feedback Matters!

Please evaluate the sessions you attend to help us plan for future Seminars.

- 1** To evaluate a session, click on the "Agenda" icon in the NSPRA 2026 mobile app.
- 2** Then click on the title of a session and click the "Survey" icon.



Feedback on sessions will be shared with each presenter.

NSPRA maintains the exclusive rights to make audio and video recordings during sessions and other events of the NSPRA National Seminar. Seminar sessions and events may not be audio or video recorded without prior approval by NSPRA. Registered attendees may take still photos and screenshots during sessions for notetaking purposes only.





## DOWNLOAD THE MOBILE APP

[nspra.org/NSPRA-2026-App](https://nspra.org/NSPRA-2026-App)

On your mobile device, navigate to  
**[guidebook.com/space/nspra](https://guidebook.com/space/nspra)**

Or search for the app and download on

Download on the App Store
or
GET IT ON Google Play

**1** DOWNLOAD GUIDEBOOK

On your mobile device, navigate to  
[guidebook.com/space/nspra](https://guidebook.com/space/nspra)

Download the app via the **App Store** or **Google Play**.

**2** ENTER THE PASSPHRASE

On the **BOTTOM MENU**, click on "Passphrase" and enter:

nspra2026

**3** ENTER YOUR EMAIL

Where prompted, enter your email:

Email you registered with for NSPRA 2026

An email with a login link will be sent.

**4** FINISH SETUP

When prompted, re-enter:

nspra2026

Complete your profile and download the NSPRA 2026 guide.

Visit the Registration Desk onsite for assistance.

Scan me!

COMPLIMENTARY  
**WI-FI**

NETWORK  
**2026Seminar**

PASSWORD  
**NSPRA2026**

# NSPRA EXECUTIVE BOARD



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Kelly Wachel, APR  
President



Heidi Vega, APR  
Immediate  
Past President



Janine Thorn  
Vice President for  
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Dr. Jennifer Cruz  
Vice President at Large  
- Superintendents



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David Beil  
Northwest Region  
Vice President



Christy McGee, APR  
Southwest Region  
Vice President

# MEET THE CANDIDATES

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## NSPRA EXECUTIVE BOARD ELECTIONS

Four NSPRA Executive Board offices are up for election in 2026. In accordance with NSPRA Bylaws:

- If a race is uncontested, the Executive Board may affirm the candidate by acclamation during the Annual Meeting at the NSPRA 2026 National Seminar in July. All candidates for office in 2026 are running uncontested.
- Terms for newly elected board members will begin on October 1, 2026.



**CURTIS CAMPBELL**

Candidate for  
**PRESIDENT-ELECT**



**SHAYLA CANNADY, PH.D.**

Candidate for  
**VICE PRESIDENT FOR DIVERSITY ENGAGEMENT**



**DANIELLE CLARK, APR**

Candidate for  
**SOUTH CENTRAL REGION VICE PRESIDENT**



**MIKE SCHOEMER**

Candidate for  
**NORTH CENTRAL REGION VICE PRESIDENT**



Scan this QR code or visit [nspra.org/News/four-candidates-seek-election-to-nspra-executive-board-1](https://nspra.org/News/four-candidates-seek-election-to-nspra-executive-board-1) to learn more about the candidates.



## HEAR FROM THE CANDIDATES



### PRESIDENT-ELECT AND VICE PRESIDENT FOR DIVERSITY ENGAGEMENT CANDIDATE SPEECHES

- 📅 Sunday, July 19
- 🕒 1 - 2:30 p.m.
- 📍 Grand Ballroom D (Floor 1).

The candidates for president-elect and vice president for diversity engagement will address attendees at the Annual Meeting and Celebration of Achievement.



### REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT CANDIDATE SPEECHES

- 📅 Sunday, July 19
- 🕒 4 - 5 p.m.

Regional vice president candidates will speak during their respective Regional Colleague connections meetings:

#### SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

📍 Grand Salon 20 - 24 (Floor 1)  
(AR, KS, LA, MO, OK, TX)

#### NORTH CENTRAL REGION

📍 Grand Salon 3 & 6 (Floor 1)  
(IL, IA, MN, NE, ND, SD, WI, MANITOBA, NORTHWESTERN ON)



# REAL TIME TRANSCRIPTS

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QR codes listed below link to real-time, AI-generated audio or transcripts of the presentations through Wordly. Bring your own device and headphones to listen in or read along with the presentation content.

Fulton



Grand Ballroom ABC



Grand Salon 9-12



Grand Salon 21-24



Grand Ballroom A



Grand Ballroom D



Grand Salon 13-16



Product Demo 1



Grand Ballroom B



Grand Salon 3-6



Grand Salon 15-18



Product Demo 2



Grand Ballroom C



Grand Salon 7-10



Grand Salon 19-22



St. James



SPECIAL OFFER FOR NEW MEMBERS!

YOU'RE JUST

**\$25**

**AWAY FROM NSPRA MEMBERSHIP.**

If you registered for the FULL NSPRA 2026 National Seminar as a non-member, that means you've already paid the additional **\$200** non-member rate.

*Apply that \$200 toward your first year of membership!*



**ASSOCIATE  
MEMBERSHIP**

FULL YEAR MEMBERSHIP

REGULAR PRICE

~~\$225~~

YOUR PRICE

**\$25**



**PROFESSIONAL  
MEMBERSHIP**

FULL YEAR MEMBERSHIP

REGULAR PRICE

~~\$315~~

YOUR PRICE

**\$115**



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USE  
PROMO CODE

**NEXTSTEP26**



Questions? Email [membership@nspra.org](mailto:membership@nspra.org)

Offer valid exclusively for NSPRA 2026 National Seminar registrants who registered as non-members. Offer is not transferable.

Offer valid through August 31, 2026.





# UNLOCK THE *Connection!*



## HOW TO PLAY



All attendees get **ONE CHANCE EACH DAY** to choose the correct key and unlock the prize box.



If your key opens the box, you'll select a hidden prize card to reveal what you've won.



Will your key unlock this year's **GRAND PRIZE?**

### FEATURED GRAND PRIZE



**ONE NSPRA ACADEMY  
REGISTRATION**

*Your connection. Your community.  
Your year to grow.*

Additional hidden prizes include:



NSPRA Studio registration



Road2NSPRA merchandise



Exclusive NSPRA swag



*...and more!*



Stop by the Member Center  
*daily to try your luck!*



# NSPRA 2026



*Let the Good News Roll!*

LIFTING VOICES, LASTING IMPACT.

JULY 19-22 | NEW ORLEANS



# THIS IS A SIGN

**Get a FREE palm reading at  
NSPRA Booths 207 & 209**



# FINALSITE

websites | communications | mobile apps | enrollment | marketing services

# SEMINAR SCHEDULE

*Let the Good News Roll!* LIFTING VOICES,  
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## SATURDAY, JULY 18

12 - 5 p.m.

### Registration

Grand Salon/Grand Ballroom Foyer (Floor 1)

## PRE-SEMINAR WORKSHOPS

**Pre-Seminar workshops require separate registration and an additional fee.**

9 a.m. - 3 p.m.



### NSPRA Academy for Crisis Communications - Applying Strategy in a Live Simulation

Prince of Wales (Floor 2)

Rick Kaufman, APR, Bloomington Public Schools, Minn.



### NSPRA Academy for New Professionals

Parish (Floor 3)

Melissa McConnell, NSPRA, Kan.

9 a.m. - 12 p.m.



### Family and Community Engagement

Churchill A2 (Floor 2)

Patricia Weinzapfel, Ind.

12 - 5 p.m.



### Managing High-Stakes Media Inquiries

Churchill A1 (Floor 2)

Lesley Brinton, APR, Ala.; John Huddleston, Ala.; and  
Todd Jaeger, J.D., Ariz.

1 - 4 p.m.



### Leading a Communications Team

Churchill A2 (Floor 2)

Danielle Airey, APR, Peoria Unified School District, Ariz.

## SUNDAY, JULY 19

7:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.

### Registration

Grand Salon/Grand Ballroom Foyer (Floor 1)

8 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.



### Chapter Leaders Meeting and Breakfast

St. James Ballroom (Floor 3)

8 a.m. - 12 p.m.

## PARTNER POWER SESSION

**Partner Power sessions are not included with Seminar registration; separate, advanced registration is required.**



### Lead Unreasonably: Branding, Marketing and Hospitality That Sets Your District Apart

Grand Salon 7 & 10

CESO Communications



1 - 2:30 p.m.

## Annual Meeting and Celebration of Achievement

Room: Grand Ballroom D (Floor 1)

Presiding: Kelly Wachel, APR, NSPRA President

2:45 - 3:45 p.m.



### How to Make the Most of Your First NSPRA Seminar

Grand Ballroom D (Floor 1)

Mary Helen Downey, Rapides Parish School Board, La., and  
Holly Holland, Calcasieu Parish School Board, La.

Sponsored by AnswerQuest answerquest



### Programming with Purpose: A Step-by-Step Blueprint for a High-Value Chapter PD Calendar

M

Grand Salon 7 & 10 (Floor 1)

Trinette Marquis, APR, California SPRA Chapter

 **REGIONAL AND SUPERINTENDENT COLLEAGUE CONNECTIONS**

4 - 5 p.m.

**Regional Colleague Connections - Mideast**

Grand Salon 15 & 18 (Floor 1)  
Leader: Andrew Robinson, NSPRA Mideast Region VP  
D.C., Ind., Ky., Md., Mich., Ohio, Va., W.Va.

**Regional Colleague Connections - North Central**

Grand Salon 3 & 6 (Floor 1)  
Leader: Terri McHugh, APR, NSPRA North Central Region VP  
Ill., Iowa, Minn., Neb., N.D., S.D., Wis., Manitoba,  
Northwestern Ontario

**Regional Colleague Connections - Northeast**

Grand Salon 19 & 22 (Floor 1)  
Leader: Monica Lester, APR, NSPRA Northeast Region VP  
Conn., Del., Maine, Mass., N.H., N.J., N.Y., Penn., R.I., Vt.,  
New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia,  
Eastern ON, Prince Edward Island, Quebec

**Regional Colleague Connections - Northwest**

Grand Salon 9 & 12 (Floor 1)  
Leader: David Beil, NSPRA Northwest Region VP  
Alaska, Idaho, Mont., Ore., Wash., Alberta, British Columbia,  
Northwest Territories, Saskatchewan, Yukon

**Regional Colleague Connections - South Central**

Grand Salon 21 & 24 (Floor 1)  
Leader: Jake Potter, APR, NSPRA South Central Region VP  
Ark., Kan., La., Mo., Okla., Texas

**Regional Colleague Connections - Southeast**

Grand Salon 7 & 10 (Floor 1)  
Leader: Kate Crowder, NSPRA Southeast Region VP  
Ala., Fla., Ga., Miss., N.C., S.C., Tenn., Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands

**Regional Colleague Connections - Southwest**

Grand Salon 13 & 16 (Floor 1)  
Leader: Christy McGee, APR, NSPRA Southwest Region VP  
Ariz., Calif., Colo., Ha., Nev., N.M., Utah, Wyo.

**Colleague Connections - Superintendents**

Fulton (Floor 3)  
Leader: Dr. Jennifer Cruz, NSPRA VP at Large -  
Superintendents

6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

**Opening Reception** Sponsored by  FINALSITE

River City Venues - Transportation provided  
Seminar registrant badge or guest badge required for entry.  
Shuttle buses will depart from the Hilton New Orleans  
Riverside Hotel Side Drive, located outside on the Floor 1  
level near the NSPRA Registration Desk.

**MONDAY, JULY 20**

6:30 - 7:30 a.m.

 **Stretch. Breathe. Reset. (Yoga)** N

Breezeway to Riverside Complex (Floor 3)  
Jenny Mirmelstein, Suffern Central School District, N.Y.

7:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.

**Registration**  
Grand Salon/Grand Ballroom Foyer (Floor 1)

**Marketplace, NSPRA Member Center and NSPRA Bookstore Hours**  
7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
Churchill (Floor 2)

7:30 - 8:30 a.m.

**Cultivating Connections Breakfast** featuring lite bites  
Churchill (Floor 2) *In the Marketplace*

8:30 - 9:30 a.m.

**SKILL SESSIONS**

 **Federal Advocacy 101: How to Communicate Federal Education Issues to Your Community** M

Grand Salon 9 & 12 (Floor 1)  
Julie Feasel, Consortium of State School Boards Associations

 **From Decline to Destination: How DeSoto ISD Reduced Enrollment Loss From 16% to 2% in Four Years** V

Grand Salon 21 & 24 (Floor 1)  
Tiffanie Blackmon-Jones and Usamah Rodgers, DeSoto ISD,  
Texas





### From Messenger to Strategist: How Communications Can Lead AI Integration in School Districts

V

Grand Salon 15 & 18 (Floor 1)

Ricardo Carlos, Rialto Unified School District, Calif.



### Lifting School Voices Through Agile Communication and AI: Building What Stakeholders Need, Not Just What's Planned

N

Grand Salon 7 & 10 (Floor 1)

Amanda Materre-Banks, Ed.D., BrighterCogs, Texas



### Making Money Make Sense: Creative Strategies for Telling Your School Finance Story

N

St. James Ballroom (Floor 3)

Debbie Brewster, Wisconsin School Public Relations Association, Wis., and Emily DeBaker, Racine Unified School District, Wis.



### One Size Doesn't Fit All: Tailoring Community Engagement for Real Impact

N

Grand Salon 3 & 6 (Floor 1)

Raquel Williams, Adams 12 Five Star Schools, Colo.



### Partnerships Helped Us Turn Bond Failure into a Massive Success

M

Grand Salon 19 & 22 (Floor 1)

Kevin Dudley and Theresa Tanner, Spokane Public Schools, Wash.



### When Social Media Strikes: Supporting Staff in the Age of Online Criticism

M

Grand Salon 13 & 16 (Floor 1)

Marci Orr, APR, Mexico School District #59, Mo.

9:30 - 10 a.m.

## Product Demos BREAK



### DocAccess - Making District Documents Accessible Without the Headache (Product Demo)

Churchill B1 (Floor 2) *In the Marketplace*

Taylor Gordon CIVICPLUS



### Fillin' Seats & Feedin' Futures: A Cajun Recipe for Enrollment Growth in the Age of School Choice (Product Demo)

Churchill B2 (Floor 2) *In the Marketplace*

SchoolMint

10 - 11:45 a.m.

## General Session

Grand Ballroom (Floor 1)

sponsored by TeacherLists

### 2026 National School Communicator of the Year

Honoring All Chapters' Nominees, NSPRA Finalists and Winner



Presented in partnership with  
 FINALSITE

### Real Matters:

#### Building Trust in an Unreal World

Mariana Atencio, Keynote Speaker,  
Peabody Award-Winning Journalist and Bestselling Author

UNLIMITED ON-DEMAND LEARNING FOR NSPRA MEMBERS

# STREAM

## YOUR SCHOOL COMMUNICATION LEARNING

*Anytime. Anywhere.*

- ✓ Hundreds of hours of expert-led learning content
- ✓ Personalized recommendations
- ✓ Curated learning paths organized by interest, role and experience level



**LOG IN AT:**  
**plus.nspira.org**

Use your NSPRA member login credentials





# Let the good communications roll.



Explore our newest back-to-school innovations, including Canva integration, AI Assistant, and electronic signatures—built to save staff time and strengthen family engagement.

**Visit ParentSquare at Booths 312 & 314**

See live demos • Pick up exclusive swag



TARGETRIVER

# Facing Challenges

WITH ENROLLMENT OR  
PASSING A BOND OR LEVY?

## HELP EXISTS!

VISIT TARGET RIVER'S BOOTH

[TARGETRIVER.COM/EDUCATION](https://targetriver.com/education)



# CONGRATULATIONS

TO THE

## 2026 NATIONAL SCHOOL COMMUNICATOR OF THE YEAR

### Finalists!



**Holly Brooker**

Director of Community Relations  
Ulster BOCES  
*New York School Public Relations Association*



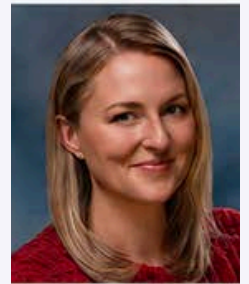
**Celi Haga, APR**

Chief of Staff and Executive Director of Strategic Communications  
Eastern Carver County Schools  
*Minnesota School Public Relations Association*



**Lori Perlow**

Public Information Officer  
Haddon Township School District Communication Consortium  
*New Jersey School Public Relations Association*



**Tove Tupper, APR**

Chief Communications Officer  
Highline Public Schools  
*Washington School Public Relations Association*



### THE WINNER WILL BE ANNOUNCED AT THE GENERAL SESSION

Monday, July 20, at 10 a.m. GRAND BALLROOM (FLOOR 1)



### HEAR FROM ALL FOUR FINALISTS AT THE NATIONAL SCHOOL COMMUNICATOR OF THE YEAR FINALISTS PANEL DISCUSSION

Monday, July 20, at 2:15 p.m. Grand Salon 21 & 24 (Floor 1)



Presented in partnership with



Scan to explore the complete list of 2026 School Communicator of the Year honorees representing NSPRA chapters nationwide.

[nspra.org/SCOY](https://nspra.org/SCOY)

11:45 a.m. - 2 p.m.

## Networking Lunch BREAK

Churchill (Floor 2) *Light bites in the Marketplace;* [view menu](#)



# JOB-ALIKE NETWORKING

Find Your People

During the Networking Lunch Break

**MONDAY, JULY 20**  
**12 - 2 P.M.**  
At the Member Center  
(in the Marketplace - Churchill Floor 2)

Connect with peers who share your role, your challenges and your goals.



**12 - 12:20 p.m.**  
**Communications Directors and Leaders**



**12:25 - 12:45 p.m.**  
**Team of One / Small District Communicators**



**12:50 - 1:10 p.m.**  
**Digital Media and Social Media Professionals**



**1:15 - 1:35 p.m.**  
**Videography, Photography and Content Creators**



**1:40 - 2:00 p.m.**  
**Shared Service Agencies (BOCES, ESA, IU, County Offices)**

Drop in, *join the conversation,* and grow your professional network.

12 - 1:30 p.m.

## Superintendents' Luncheon *by invitation only*

Grand Salon 3 & 6 (Floor 1)

*Keynote:* Laurie Dent, Ph.D., 2026 Bob Grossman Leadership in School Communications Award Winner and Superintendent, Sumner-Bonney Lake School District, Wash.

*Recognizing 2026 honorees*

12:15 - 12:55 p.m.

## INDUSTRY INSIGHTS SESSIONS

**From Listening to Legitimacy: Engineering Trust Through Voice Infrastructure**

M

Grand Salon 9 & 12 (Floor 1)

Dana Cave  ThoughtExchange

**Level Up: Fixing the Communication Systems Frustrating Your Families**

Grand Salon 7 & 10 (Floor 1)

Greg Turchetta  apptegy

1:05 - 1:45 p.m.

## INDUSTRY INSIGHTS SESSIONS

**Jazzing Up District Communications: Finding Your Rhythm Across Every Channel**

N

Grand Salon 9 & 12 (Floor 1)

Lindsey Fowlkes  ParentSquare

**Re-Engaging Lapsed Volunteers for Long-Term Retention**

Grand Salon 7 & 10 (Floor 1)

Mark Hopwood  Momentum

**INDUSTRY INSIGHTS SESSIONS**

LEARNING SESSIONS  
OFFERED BY  
GOLD SPONSORS

*Bring your lunch and learn!*

**Grand Salon 7&10, 9&12 | Floor 1**

22

NSPRA 2026 SEMINAR PROGRAM 

2026-2027

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WEBINARS

*Learn. Connect. Lead.*

NSPRA's year-round series of webinars helps school communicators grow their skills, build connections and lead with confidence anytime, anywhere.

**All designed for you. All included with your NSPRA membership.**



Powerful learning experiences. Meaningful connections. Practical tools.

**Stronger communication.  
Greater impact.**

## YEAR-ROUND LEARNING & CONNECTIONS



### MEMBER MONDAY

Monthly facilitated conversations on timely topics, real challenges and practical solutions.



### K12PRCHAT

Monthly peer-to-peer chats to share ideas, ask questions and learn from school communicators across the country.



### LEADERS LEARN

Virtual panel discussions with communication leaders and experts on relevant education issues.

Supported by  
ThoughtExchange



### PR POWER HOUR

Practical communication tactics, tips and best practices shared through real-world district examples.



### MINI LABS

Hands-on sessions focused on digital tools, platforms and workflows that support school communication work.



### MICRO LABS

Pre-recorded learning bursts that zoom in on one practical tool, platform, or communication workflow.\*

\*Exclusively on NSPRA Plus



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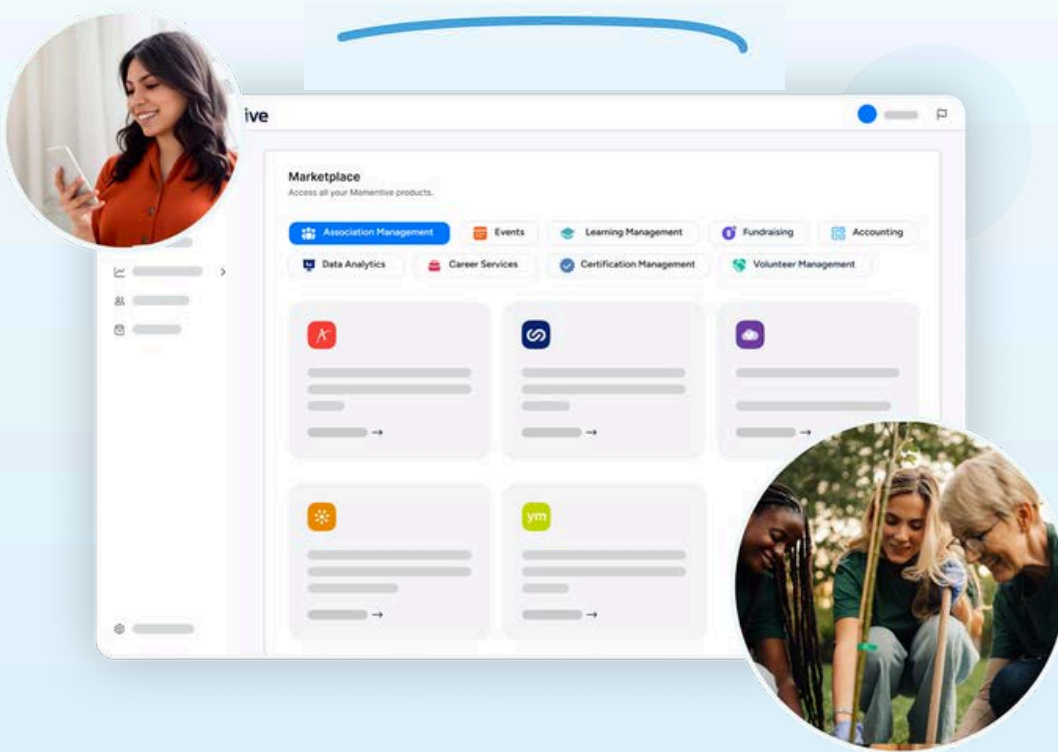
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2:15 - 3:15 p.m.

SKILL SESSIONS



**Beyond the West Wing: The Strategic Value of a School District Chief of Staff**

M

Fulton (Floor 3)  
Coty Kuschinsky, Saginaw Intermediate School District, Mich.



**Creating a Shared Vision: The Process Behind Our Strategic Plan**

Grand Salon 13 & 16 (Floor 1)  
Tee Bunch-Boney, Ed.D., Fallon Graham, Ed.D., and Maranda Hall-Bell, Ed.D., Chesapeake Public Schools, Va.



**Data Without the Dread: Telling the Story of Your Digital School Communications**

N

Grand Salon 7 & 10 (Floor 1)  
Mia Murphy and Amber Parker, North Carolina Virtual Public School, N.C.



**Elevating Accessibility for Multilingual Audiences Through Cultural Communication**

M

Grand Ballroom B (Floor 1)  
Victoria Martinez and Raj Rai, APR, San Juan Unified School District, Calif.



**Escape the Content Chaos: 3 Keys to Unlocking Clear Website Content**

N

Grand Ballroom C (Floor 1)  
Monica Agudelo, Chesapeake Public Schools, Va.



**From Listening to Leading: How Student Town Halls Are Transforming Engagement, Belonging and Decision-Making**

M

Grand Salon 9 & 12 (Floor 1)  
Joan Sahlgren, Loudoun County Public Schools, Va.



**More Than Memos: Building Culture Through Strategic Internal Communications**

M

Grand Ballroom A (Floor 1)  
Elena Olmstead, Educational Service District 123, Wash.



**National School Communicator of the Year Finalists Panel Discussion**



Grand Salon 21 & 24 (Floor 1)  
Moderator:  
Cindy Warner, APR, 2025 NSPRA School Communicator of the Year  
Panelists:  
Holly Brooker, Ulster BOCES, N.Y.  
Celi Haga, APR, Eastern Carver County Schools, Minn.  
Lori Perlow, Haddon Township School District, N.J.  
Tove Tupper, APR, Highline Public Schools, Wash.





**Neighbors by Chance, Partners by Crisis: School PR in Times of Staff Misconduct**

N

Grand Salon 15 & 18 (Floor 1)  
Jill Browning, APR, Community High School District 99, Ill.; and Anna Gonzales and Todd Mielcarz, West Aurora School District 129, Ill.



**Pocket to Pro: Photography that Grows with You**

N

Grand Ballroom D (Floor 1)  
Danielle Evans, Ascension Parish Public Schools, La.



**Small Team, Big Support: Making Consultants Work for You in a One-Person Communications Office**

M

Grand Salon 19 & 22 (Floor 1)  
Adam Breen and Shawn Tennenbaum, Ed.D., San Benito High School District, Calif., and Emily F. Popek, APR, Nichols Strategies, Calif.



**The Impact of AI on Your Digital Content and Online Search (SEO)**

M

Grand Salon 3 & 6 (Floor 1)  
Chelsea Janke, CEL Marketing PR Design, Minn.

3:15 - 3:30 p.m.

BREAK

3:45- 4:45 p.m.

SKILL SESSIONS



**Calibrating Creativity - Equipping Your [Small] Team to be the Best Storytellers Without Burning Out**

M

Grand Ballroom D (Floor 1)  
Mitchell Roush, Grand Island Public Schools, Neb.



### Changing for Good (News): Defying the Traditional Divide to Build Lasting Media Partnerships

M



Grand Salon 7 & 10 (Floor 1)

BriAna Wycoff, Lincoln Public Schools, Neb.



### Culturally Responsive Communication and Newcomer Engagement: Using the Welcome to ACPS Toolkit and Home Visits

M



Grand Ballroom B (Floor 1)

Julia Burgos, APR, and Krishna Leyva, Alexandria City Public Schools, Va.



### Flipping the 80/20: How Hybrid Human + AI Workflows Supercharge School Communications

M

Grand Ballroom C (Floor 1)

Elizabeth Graswich, Ed.D., Los Angeles County Office of Education, Calif., and Drew Mathias, Heartfelt Strategy, Calif.



### From “Take What You Get” to Strategic Ask: Building a Case for Your PR Budget

M

Grand Ballroom A (Floor 1)

Elizabeth Domite, Rapides Parish School Board, La.



### Power in Partnership: How an ESC Led a Countywide Public Schools Week Campaign That Lifted Every District’s Voice

M

Grand Salon 19 & 22 (Floor 1)

Amanda Rice, Butler County Education Service Center, Ohio



### Storytelling That Puts Money Back into the Classroom

M

Grand Salon 15 & 18 (Floor 1)

Jennifer McClain and Lucha Ramey, Penn-Harris-Madison School Corp., Ind.



### The Clock Is Ticking: Building Your District’s Digital Accessibility Plan

M

Grand Salon 9 & 12 (Floor 1)

Jillian Aykens, CESA 6, Wis.



### Trauma-Informed Leadership: A Playbook for School PR Pros and School Leaders

M



Grand Salon 21 & 24 (Floor 1)

Rick J. Kaufman, APR, Bloomington Public Schools, Minn.



### Verified: Fighting for Trust in a Sea of Speculation

M

Grand Salon 3 & 6 (Floor 1)

Alex Wolff, Pelham Union Free School District, N.Y.



### Words That Work: Messaging to Build Trust and Unite Communities Around The Public Education Promise



Grand Salon 13 & 16 (Floor 1)

Shane Haggerty, APR, AASA, The School Superintendents Association, Va.

## TUESDAY, JULY 21

7 a.m. - 5 p.m.

### Registration

Grand Salon/Grand Ballroom Foyer (Floor 1)

### Marketplace, NSPRA Member Center and NSPRA Bookstore Hours

7:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Churchill (Floor 2)

7:30 - 8:30 a.m.

### Bagels and Belonging Breakfast featuring lite bites

Churchill (Floor 2) *In the Marketplace*

8:30 - 9:30 a.m.

## SKILL SESSIONS



### Conversations at Scale: Why Your Surveys Are Failing and How We Fixed It

M

Grand Salon 3 & 6 (Floor 1)

Rich Stowell, Alpine School District, Utah, and  
Babatunde Ilori, Parsec Education, Calif.



### Elevating Education Together: Highlighting the Collective Impact of Northern Kentucky Public Schools with the First Regional Accountability Scorecard

M

Grand Salon 7 & 10 (Floor 1)

Candace Gibson, Northern Kentucky Cooperative for  
Educational Services, Ky.



### From Viral to Survival: How One School Division Turned a Viral Negative Moment Into Transformative Change

M

Grand Salon 9 & 12 (Floor 1)

Chelsea Vongehr, Petersburg City Public Schools, Va., and  
Brendan Williams-Kief, Georgetown Public Affairs, D.C.



NEW



# Leadership for Public Trust

A joint AASA and NSPRA  
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## Lead with clarity. Build public trust.

Elevated scrutiny. Competing expectations.  
Rapid misinformation. Higher stakes.

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It's a core leadership responsibility.

**Leadership for Public Trust** is a joint learning experience presented by NSPRA and AASA, The School Superintendents Association, designed for school communication leaders, superintendents and district leadership teams who must lead collaboratively during critical moments.



[nspra.org/LPT](https://nspra.org/LPT)



## THREE LEADERSHIP INSTITUTES. ONE POWERFUL IMPACT.



### CIVIC LEADERSHIP

**Navigating complexity,  
competing expectations  
and public trust.**

Make confident decisions  
grounded in student needs,  
community context and  
long-term public trust.



### NARRATIVE LEADERSHIP

**Shaping understanding,  
alignment and  
momentum.**

Build a shared narrative  
that reflects your purpose  
and advances your  
district's vision.



### CRISIS LEADERSHIP

**Leading with clarity,  
credibility and care  
under pressure.**

Prepare, respond and  
recover in ways that  
protect trust and move  
your district forward.



### STRONGER TOGETHER.

The experience is most impactful when  
superintendents and communication  
leaders participate together.

- ✓ Navigate complexity with confidence.
- ✓ Shape the narrative.
- ✓ Respond with clarity.
- ✓ Build and sustain public trust.



## Leading Together: Practical Ways Communicators Can Help Principals Build Trust and Drive Vision

M



Grand Ballroom C (Floor 1)

Alisha Erickson, Susannah Gentry and Amy Patton, Franklin Special School District, Tenn.



## Staying, Growing and Thriving: Building a Sustainable Career in School PR

M

Grand Salon 21 & 24 (Floor 1)

Jessica Hull, Roseville City School District, Calif.



## Stop Guessing, Start Connecting: The Role of Analytics and AI in Next Gen Communication

V

Grand Ballroom A (Floor 1)

Eric Hansen, Diamond Lake School District 76, Ill.



## Students as Strategic Communicators: Inside Porterville USD's Camp Create Model

M

Grand Ballroom B (Floor 1)

Diego Corona and Hannah Moore, Porterville Unified School District, Calif., and Jill Johnson, Ed.D., Class Intercom, N.J.



## **CANCELLED:** The Breakfast Club Effect: Empowering Storytellers from Within

M

Grand Ballroom D (Floor 1)

Becky Coyle and Brandon Langer, Montgomery County Intermediate Unit, Pa.



## The Communicator's Guide to School District Data and Analytics

N



Grand Salon 19 & 22 (Floor 1)

Adam Cibulka, ECRA Group, Ill.



## When Everything Goes Dark: Communicating Through a Ransomware Attack

M



Grand Salon 15 & 18 (Floor 1)

Tove Tupper, APR, Highline Public Schools, Wash.



## Winning at the Ballot Box When It's Harder Than Ever: Research-Based Strategies for Passing Referendums

N



Grand Salon 13 & 16 (Floor 1)

Annette Eyman, APR, Kordica Communications, Neb.

9:30 - 10 a.m.

## Product Demos BREAK



## Communicating Through Budget Deficits: Modern Strategies for Engagement (Product Demo)

Churchill B1 (Floor 2) *In the Marketplace*



**ASK ME ANYTHING**

*School PR Pre Office Hours*

*Also happening now!*

**TUESDAY, JULY 21**  
9:30 - 10 a.m.

**Topic: Pursuing Your APR**

Member Center in the Marketplace Churchill (Floor 2)

10 - 11 a.m.

## SKILL SESSIONS



## Addressing Friction, Building Trust: A Practical Approach to Customer Experience

M

Grand Salon 7 & 10

Jessica Scheckton, APR, and Alyssa Teribury, NSPRA; and Nick Kohn, Ph.D., Qualtrics



## Driving Results: A RPIE-Driven Roadmap From Recruitment Crisis to Fully Staffed Bus Routes

M



Grand Ballroom A (Floor 1)

Marybeth Kench, Kingsport City Schools, Tenn.



## From Communicator to Strategic Advisor: Leading When Trust Is on the Line

M



Grand Salon 21 & 24 (Floor 1)

Jill Wagner, APR, Idea Emporium, Calif.



## From Crisis to Cohesion: How Strategic Communications Preserved Culture After a School Safety Scare

M



Grand Salon 9 & 12 (Floor 1)

Lori Buselt and Raquel Greer, Ed.D., Maize USD 266, Kan.



## From Receivership to Recovery: Communications That Turn Around a District

M

Grand Salon 13 & 16 (Floor 1)

Henry Pettiegrew II, East Cleveland City School District, Ohio

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 **Leading with Listening: Building Trust Through Two-Way Engagement** M

Grand Ballroom C (Floor 1)  
Ahmad Gibson and Laurie Heinz, Community Consolidated School District 15, Ill.

 **Let the Good News Rule: Use Communications to Build the District You Want** M

Fulton (Floor 3)  
Amanda Ensor, Talking Points, Colo., and Patti Moon, Aurora Public Schools, Colo.

 **Maximizing Community Partnerships: Building Lasting Connections Between Your District and Local Businesses** M

Grand Salon 3 & 6 (Floor 1)  
Ana Munguia, Pasco School District, Wash.

 **Playful on Purpose: Creative Storytelling Strategies for School Communicators** M

Grand Salon 15 & 18 (Floor 1)  
Ashlee Meredith, New Kent County Public Schools, Va.

 **Removing Barriers at the Front Door: Using Engagement to Improve Early Registration** M

Grand Ballroom B (Floor 1)  
Gladis Bourdouane, Alexandria City Public Schools, Va.

 **Solo iPhone to Full Video Team: Scaling Your Video Strategy for Every Budget** N

Grand Ballroom D (Floor 1)  
Janet Mann, Zionsville Community Schools, Ind., and Paul Weller, Central Indiana Educational Service Center, Ind.

 **Three Bond Attempts, One Breakthrough: What Finally Made the Difference** M

Grand Salon 19 & 22 (Floor 1)  
Stacy Hawn, Bennington Public Schools, Neb.

11 - 11:15 a.m.

**BREAK**

11:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

**SKILL SESSIONS**

 **Beyond Helping Hands: Leveraging Volunteer Ambassadors to Enhance Community Engagement** M

Grand Salon 3 & 6 (Floor 1)  
Emily Gagnon and Kate Martin, APR, Bloomington Public Schools, Minn.

 **Branding Made Easy: Building an All-In-One Brand Portal Anyone Can Use** N

Grand Salon 13 & 16 (Floor 1)  
Georgie McKean and Renée Roa, Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES, N.Y.

 **Don't Stop Believing: The Psychology Behind School PR's Irreplaceable Role in the Age of AI** V 

Grand Salon 21 & 24 (Floor 1)  
Sondra Whalen, APR, Vernon Verona Sherrill CSD, N.Y.

 **Families Don't Leave Schools. They Leave Experiences. How Communications Leaders Stop Enrollment Loss and Win Trust Back** M

Grand Ballroom A (Floor 1)  
Justin Elbert, APR, Klein ISD, Texas, and Greg Turchetta, Apptegy, Ark.

 **Managing Meaning: How Narrative and Storytelling Accelerate Organizational Change** M 

Grand Ballroom D (Floor 1)  
Shane Haggerty, APR, AASA, The School Superintendents Association, Va.

 **Not a Ghost Story: How Authentic Engagement Guided Kaukauna's \$198 Million Facilities Journey** M

Grand Salon 15 & 18 (Floor 1)  
Bryanna Moody, Kaukauna Area School District, Wis.; Debbie Brewster, Howick Associates, Wis.; Kit Dailey, Eppstein Uhen Architects, Wis.; and Megan Prestebak, Miron Construction, Wis.

 **On the Record and Under Budget: Vodcasting** N

Grand Salon 9 & 12 (Floor 1)  
Sonja Bailes, Jason Rowland and Andrea Schwartz, Bossier Schools, La.

 **Seizing Social Space: How Data Improves Your School District's Social Content** M

Grand Ballroom B (Floor 1)  
Maneka Monk, Bob Mosier and Meghan O'Brien, Anne Arundel County Public Schools, Md.

 **The Best Time to Communicate About Your Finances Was Yesterday - And Every Day!** M

Grand Salon 19 & 22 (Floor 1)  
Justin Dearing, APR, Coley Fehringer and Julie Thannum, APR, CESO Communications, Minn.

 **The Future Moves with Us: Passing a Career Technical Education Referendum Six Decades in the Making** M 

Grand Salon 7 & 10 (Floor 1)  
Ashley Kryscynski, Andrew Munson, APR, and Ryan Rowe, Washtenaw ISD, Mich.

 **Trust at the Roots: 5 Tips to Build a Brand on a Budget** M

Grand Ballroom C (Floor 1)  
Carlondrea Hines and Ashley Sukhu, St. Louis Park Public Schools, Minn.

12:15 - 2:30 p.m.

**Networking Lunch BREAK**

Churchill (Floor 2) *Light bites in the Marketplace;* [view menu](#)

12:30 - 2 p.m.

**Current APR Professionals Networking Luncheon**

Private location, shared with registered APRs via email  
Lunch sponsored by  **ParentSquare**

**NSPRA Council of Presidents Luncheon** *by invitation only*

Private location, shared with NSPRA past presidents via email

12:45 - 1:25 p.m. *Bring your lunch and learn!*

**INDUSTRY INSIGHT SESSIONS**

 **Burn the Playbook: 15 Unhinged Hacks for School Communicators** N

Grand Salon 9 & 12 (Floor 1)  
Morgan Delack and Joshua Sauer, APR  **FINALSITE**

 **The Ripple Effect: How Misaligned Communication Undermines Engagement**

Grand Salon 7 & 10 (Floor 1)  
Steven Anderson  **PowerSchool**

 **ASK ME ANYTHING** Also happening now!

*Drop in anytime!* No registration required.

| 1:00 – 1:30 p.m.                                                                                                                                                                      | 1:30 – 2:00 p.m.                                                                                                                                                            | 2:00 – 2:30 p.m.                                                                                                                                                               | 2:15 – 2:45 p.m.                                                                                                                                                 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Photography</li> <li>• Videography</li> <li>• Content Creation</li> <li>• Career Development</li> <li>• FOIA &amp; Public Records</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teams of One</li> <li>• Strategic Planning</li> <li>• Program Development</li> <li>• Mentorship</li> <li>• Ask Anything</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• APR</li> <li>• Referendums &amp; Bonds</li> <li>• Department Leadership</li> <li>• Strategic Communication</li> <li>• FACE</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership</li> <li>• Superintendent Relations</li> <li>• Crisis Communication</li> <li>• Strategic Planning</li> </ul> |

Member Center in the Marketplace (Churchill, Floor 2)

1:35 - 2:15 p.m.

*Bring your lunch and learn!*

**INDUSTRY INSIGHT SESSION**

 **Pass Your Next Bond, Attract More Students and More!**

Grand Salon 9 & 12 (Floor 1)  
Brian Epperson  **TARGETRIVER**

2:45 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.

**SKILL SESSIONS**

 **Beyond the First 48 Hours: Crisis Comms When the Crisis Doesn't End** M

Grand Ballroom C (Floor 1)  
Melissa Reese, Allentown School District, Penn.

 **Bringing the Spotlight Back: Rebuilding Connection Through Strategic Storytelling** N

Grand Ballroom D (Floor 1)  
Shawn Jansen and Viviana Miyake, Merced Union High School District, Calif.

 **Building Equity and Trust in Bond and Workforce Housing Outreach** M

Grand Salon 3 & 6 (Floor 1)  
Diego Perez, San Mateo-Foster City School District, Calif.

 **Leading Differently: Building Influence and Professional Presence as a Neurodivergent School PR Professional** N

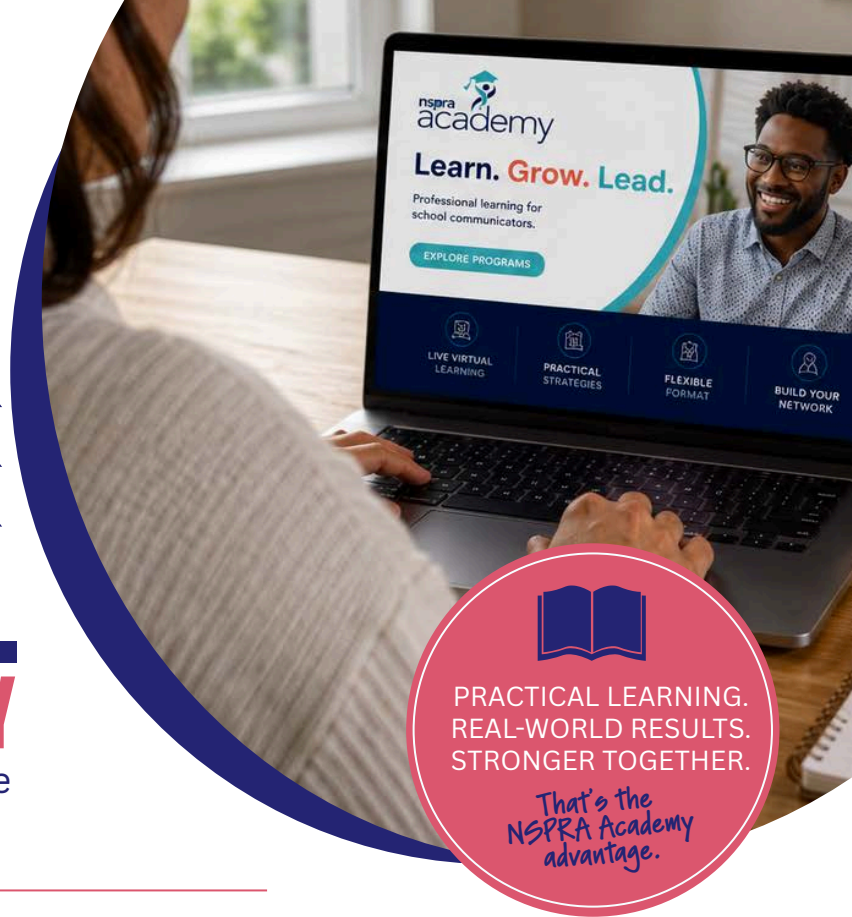
Grand Salon 15 & 18 (Floor 1)  
Courtney Bonfante, Monticello Central School District, N.Y.



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Grow.  
Lead.

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Professional learning built for every stage of your school communications career.



## WHY NSPRA ACADEMY?



### BUILT FOR EVERY STAGE

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### EXPERT-LED TRAINING

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## 4 SIGNATURE TRACKS



### NEW PROFESSIONALS

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### STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

Build strategy. Drive engagement. Lead with confidence.



### CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS

Prepare, respond and lead when it matters most.



### SMALL DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENTS

Practical communication strategies for today's superintendents.

## 7 FOCUSED TRACKS

### REGIONAL SERVICES



### SOLO COMMUNICATOR

### WORKFORCE COMMUNICATIONS



### COMMUNICATION TEAM LEADERSHIP

### PRINCIPALS



### CUSTOMER SERVICE



### FAMILY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (FACE)

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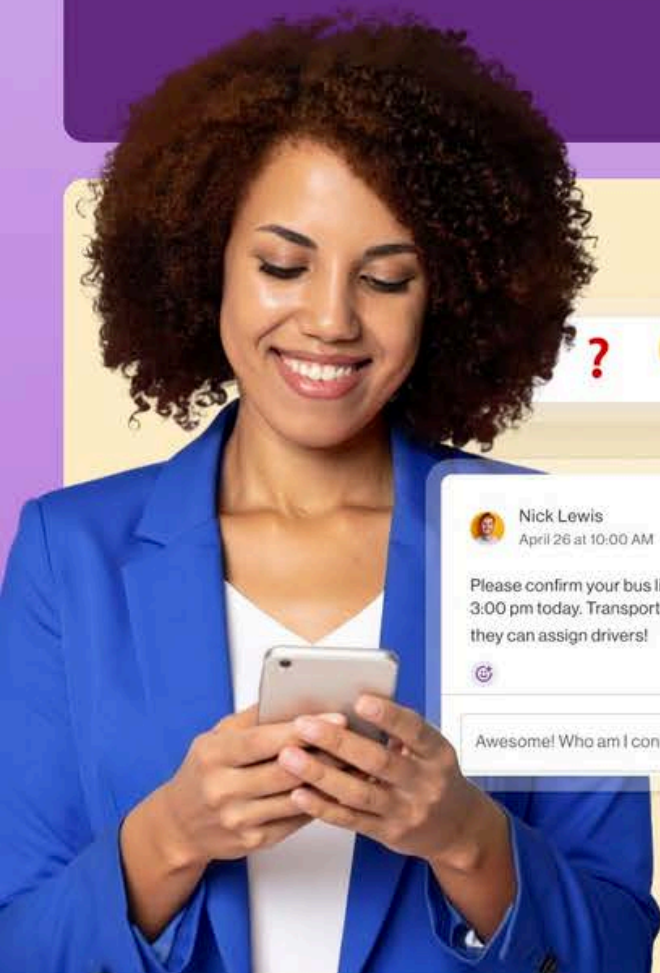
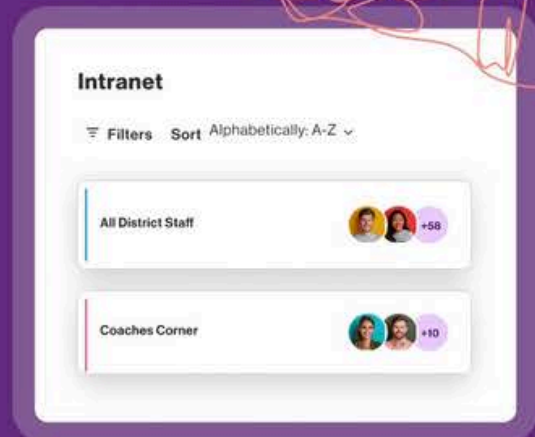
the leader in school communication  
**nspra**



# Internal communication is hard. It doesn't have to be.

Staff Connect brings updates, your intranet resources, messaging, and engagement insights into the Apptegy platform your district already trusts.

- Live announcement feed with comments and reactions
- Staff-to-staff messaging built right in
- See who read, reacted, and engaged



See Staff Connect



[apptegy.com/staff-connect](https://apptegy.com/staff-connect)



**Lights, Camera, Connection: Using Film to Strengthen School Communications**

N

Grand Ballroom B (Floor 1)  
Kimberly Pruitt, Saginaw Intermediate School District, Mich.

**One District, One Vision: Navigating Identity Through Consolidation**

N

Grand Salon 19 & 22 (Floor 1)  
Jeremy Batchelor and Stacy Quinones, Youngstown City School District, Ohio

**Signal Boost: Turning Campus Whispers into District Roars**

M

Grand Ballroom A (Floor 1)  
Mary Helen Downey and Jeff Powell, Rapides Parish Public Schools, La.

**Small Team, Big Results: Creating an Award-Winning School Magazine with AI**

N

Grand Salon 7 & 10 (Floor 1)  
Allison Bergeron, Mater Dei High School, Calif.

**The Ethical Compass: Making High-Stakes Decisions in School Public Relations**

V



Grand Salon 21 & 24 (Floor 1)  
Lesley Bruinton, APR, School Spirit PR, Ala.

**The New Role of Print Media in a Digital Age**

M

Grand Salon 13 & 16 (Floor 1)  
Aurora Wilson and Kaitlin Witzberger, The Impact Group, Ohio

**Throw Yourself a Lifeline: Navigating Today's School PR Storms**

V



Grand Salon 9 & 12 (Floor 1)  
Danielle Clark, APR, Harris County Department of Education, Texas

**Why Print Matters: Elevating School Communications Through Thoughtful Design and Professional Printing**

Fulton (Floor 3)  
Louis Petersen and Catherine Sherlock, Orange-Ulster BOCES, N.Y.

3:45 - 4 p.m.

BREAK

4 - 5 p.m.

SKILL SESSIONS

**Behind the Lens: Real-World School Video That Reflects Every Voice**

N

Grand Salon 3 & 6 (Floor 1)  
Elyjah Wilbur, San Juan Unified School District, Calif.

**Beyond the Logo: Building a Unified District Brand Across Diverse Schools**

M

Grand Salon 15 & 18 (Floor 1)  
Kaela Lewis and Alani Morales-Paulino, Jefferson Parish Schools, La.

**Crisis to Clarity: Being the Calm During the Chaos**

N

Fulton (Floor 3)  
Karin Butyn, Ohio County Schools, W.Va.

**FAMnopoly: Connecting Families, Schools, and Communities to Cultivate Student and Family Success**

N

Grand Ballroom D (Floor 1)  
Alaria Benton, Wanda Walker and LaSheka White, Guilford County Schools, N.C.

**Fear-Free Content Calendars: A Practical, Flexible Approach**

M

Grand Salon 19 & 22 (Floor 1)  
Aurora Meyer, APR, Slide Nine, Ohio

**The Cost of "Perfect": Why Authentic Visuals Build More Credibility Than Flawless Ones**

N

Grand Salon 7 & 10 (Floor 1)  
Shanti Clancy, Ed.S., Lincoln County Schools, N.C.

**The Good News Beehive: Building an Ambassador Network to Share Success Stories**

M

Grand Salon 21 & 24 (Floor 1)  
Ashton Brellenthin, Albuquerque Public Schools, N.M.

**Unlocking Every Narrative: Shining Light on Our Most Unique Students' Journeys**

N

Grand Salon 9 & 12 (Floor 1)  
Kerri Schuette, Shasta County Office of Education, Calif.





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## CONNECT WITH OUR TEAM



**Justin Elbert, APR**  
*Director of Communications*  
Justin.Elbert@pbk.com



**Diana Portales**  
*Associate II, Multimedia Specialist*  
Diana.Portales@pbk.com



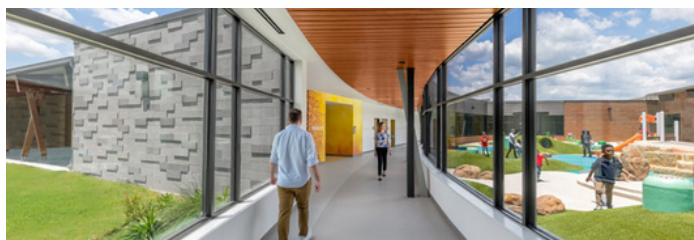
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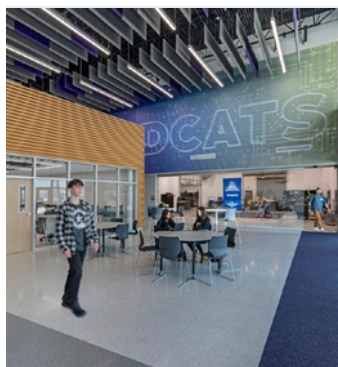
**45<sup>+</sup>**  
YEARS IN K-12  
EXPERIENCE



**90<sup>+</sup>**  
DISTRICT  
CLIENTS



**140<sup>+</sup>**  
BOND  
CAMPAIGNS



**\$30B<sup>+</sup>**  
SECURED IN  
FUNDING



6 - 9 p.m.

## NSPRA Awards Celebration and Dinner

TICKET REQUIRED [view menu](#)  
Grand Ballroom A-C (Floor 1)

### 2026 Gold Medallion Awards Presentation



### 2026 Bob Grossman Leadership in School Communication Award

Recipient: Laurie Dent, Ph.D.,  
Sumner-Bonney Lake School District, Wash.



### 2026 Barry Gaskins Mentor Legacy Award

Recipient: Danielle Airey, APR,  
Peoria Unified School District, Ariz.



### 2026 Presidents Award

Recipient: Trent Allen, APR,  
San Juan Unified School District, Calif.

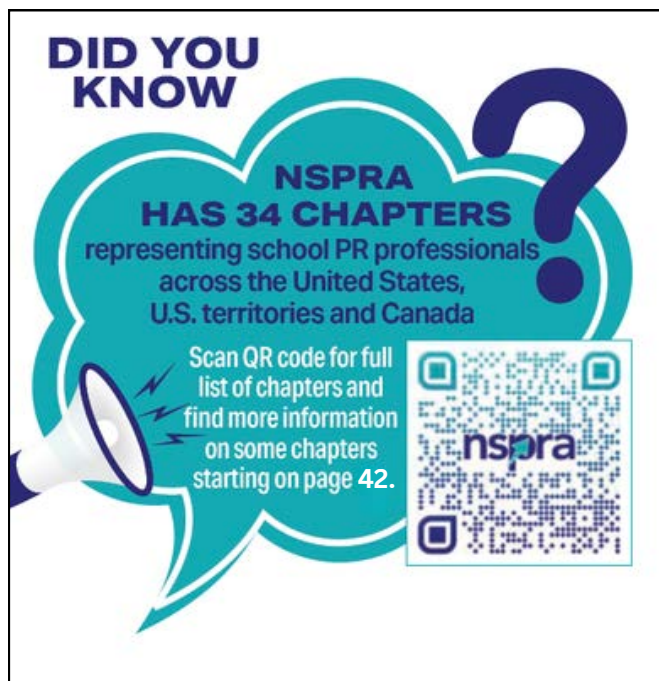


## WEDNESDAY, JULY 22

7:30 - 10:30 a.m.

### Registration

Grand Salon/Grand Ballroom Foyer (Floor 1)



8:30 - 9:30 a.m.

## SKILL SESSIONS

### NSPRA Micro Labs Mic Drop

Grand Ballroom A-C (Floor 1)

*Inspired by NSPRA's new Micro Lab series on NSPRA Plus, this fast-paced session brings short-form learning to the Seminar stage. School communicators will each have just five minutes and one slide to share a practical tool, workflow, shortcut, or strategy you can try in your own district. Expect quick demos, fresh thinking, and real ideas you can put to work right away.*

#### AI Translations and Captions for Meetings

Nicholas Fuentes, Wordly

#### Quick Hit Website Tips

Monica Agudelo, Chesapeake Public Schools, Va.

#### Quick Hit Photography Tips

Janet Mann, Zionsville Community Schools, Ind.

#### Sounding Good on Camera

Chad Oliver, Collier County Public Schools, Fla.

#### Social Media Student Intern Tips

Kari Yeagy, Hallsville School District, Mo.

#### AI Music Generation

Kate Crowder, Germantown Municipal School District, Tenn.

#### Canva Templates

Hatara Tyson, Orangeburg County School District, S.C.

#### Crisis Readiness

Kevin Dudley, Spokane Public Schools, Wash.

#### Messaging Review Tips

Raj Rai, APR, San Juan Unified School District, Calif.

#### Enrollment Marketing Wins

Kristyn Hunt Cathey, APR, Alief ISD, Texas



# 2026 INDIVIDUAL AWARD HONOREES

LEADERSHIP • MENTORSHIP • IMPACT



**LAURIE DENT, PH.D.**

Superintendent  
Sumner-Bonney  
Lake School District (Wash.)

**grossman**  
AWARD



**DANIELLE AIREY, APR**

Chief Communications Officer  
Peoria Unified School District  
(Ariz.)

**gaskins**  
AWARD



**TRENT ALLEN, APR**

Chief of Staff  
San Juan Unified School District  
(Calif.)

**presidents**  
AWARD

CONGRATULATIONS TO  
OUR 2026 HONOREES!

# Find ThoughtExchange at NSPRA 2026



JOIN US FOR OUR PANEL SESSION

Hear this story and more unique ways leaders are moving from  
**Listening to Legitimacy through Voice Infrastructure**

in our panel session on Monday.

📍 Grand Salon 9 & 12 (Floor 1)  
📅 Monday, July 20, at 12:15 PM

KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING

Join us for our daily, customer-exclusive workshops:

**Pulse, Not Polls**

📍 Marlborough B, Second Floor  
🕒 30 minutes (Customer-Only)

Bring your laptop and strategic thinking for a hands-on overview of ThoughtExchange's newest innovations—with tangible takeaways you can use right away.



SCAN TO  
READ THE FULL STORY





9:45 - 10:55 a.m.

## GOLD MINE ROUNDTABLE SESSION 1

Grand Ballroom A & B (Floor 1)

Sponsored by  


### Table Numbers and Topics:

- #1 Quick Tips for Using AI to Improve Your Comms
- #2 Join the Team that Drives the Future: A Regional School Bus Driver Recruitment Campaign\*
- #3 “Choices Are Worth It” Enrollment Marketing Campaign\*
- #4 Magic Starts By Showing Up Attendance Campaign\*
- #5 “Did You Know? With Dr. T.” Building Trust With a Weekly, Low-Cost Superintendent Video Series
- #6 The District Playbook: Using a Sports Podcast to Expand Coverage, Build Community, and Elevate Student-Athletes
- #7 Community and Connection: Reimagining School and District Events Through a Family Engagement Lens
- #8 Amplifying District Voices: Launching and Sustaining a District Podcast
- #9 Small Team, Big Crisis: Scalable Strategies for School Crisis Communications
- #10 Beyond Translation: Reaching, Engaging, and Celebrating Multilingual Families
- #11 Hitting the Right Notes: Reinvesting in Your Members Through PD and Connection (for SPRA Chapter Leaders)
- #12 HR Summit: Strengthening Leadership and Talent\*
- #13 Cowboys United We ARE the Choice Campaign\*
- #14 Our Voice, Our Safety: A Student-Driven Campaign\*
- #15 Walking Through Time: A Celebration of 150 Years\*
- #16 District-Wide Logo Rebranding Initiative\*
- #17 Discover Excellence: School Choice Campaign\*
- #18 Regional Crisis Communications Coordination to Support Students and Families\*
- #19 Here We Grow Again: Cultivating Staff Belonging Through a Low-Cost Community Garden
- #20 From Bell to Bell, No Cell: How Early Engagement Led to a Seamless Policy Transition\*
- #21 Champions for Kids: Building a Culture of Appreciation Through Weekly Staff Recognition\*

#22 Attendance Matters: Your Future Starts with Attendance Campaign\*

#23 TCSS U: Informing Advocates for Our Schools\*

#24 2026 Educational Programs and Operations (EP&O) Levy Vote Campaign\*

#25 Anytime. Anywhere. Early Literacy Media Campaign for the State of Michigan\*

#26 I AM SDP District Marketing Campaign: Using Authentic Voices to Change the Public Narrative\*

#27 Digital Marketing to Increase Applicants in a Lean Candidate Pool

#28 Take Our 2-Minute Survey! Parent Perception Survey Campaign\*

#29 From Confusion to Clarity: Birth - 4 Years Enrollment Campaign\*

#30 St. Cloud Area Schools Referendum Campaign\*

#31 Customizing High School: LPS Focus Programs Strategic Enrollment Marketing Campaign\*

#32 Power of an Exit Poll: From Setback to Success\*

#33 Flight Plan 2035: Launching an Academic Vision\*

#34 Grow With Us: GCS Celebration of Excellence\*

#35 Choose TISD Pre-K Enrollment Campaign\*

#36 Bus Driver Recruitment Campaign\*

#37 Student Dialogue: Voice, Belonging and Impact\*

#38 CVSD Paraeducator Shortage: We're Hiring! Campaign\*

#39 Highline Education Levy Campaign

#40 Come Together! Communication Platform Roll-Out\*

#41 NSPRA Research Services: Get the Data You Need for More Strategic Communications

#42 Bond Issue Proposal: From Feedback to Progress\*

# 43 "Northeast Early College: More Than a High School" Enrollment Marketing Campaign\*

# 44 Redesigning mcpss.com: Creating an Accessible, Unified Web Platform\*

# 45 School Engagement Dashboards: Turning Data into Action\*

# 46 Celebrating the Denver Public Schools Experience: A Storytelling and Recruitment Campaign\*

#47 The : Facts and Fiction

\* 2026 Gold Medallion Award or Golden Achievement Award winners

11:05 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

## GOLD MINE ROUNDTABLE SESSION 2

Grand Ballroom A & B (Floor 1)

### Table Numbers and Topics:

Sponsored by  


- #1 Quick Tips for Using AI to Improve Your Comms
- #2 Join the Team that Drives the Future: A Regional School Bus Driver Recruitment Campaign\*
- #3 “Choices Are Worth It” Enrollment Marketing Campaign\*
- #4 Magic Starts By Showing Up Attendance Campaign\*
- #5 Off the Shelf and into Schools: Communicating Your District’s Strategic Plan
- #6 Building Trust on a Tight Budget: Practical Strategies for One-Person Shops
- #7 Turning Pages Together: Building Community By The Book
- #8 Local Love, Real Stories: Social Campaigns That Build Trust and Engagement
- #9 District Leadership Undercover: Our Take on “Undercover Boss” to Humanize the Superintendent
- #11 Using Student Voice on Facebook to Grow Engagement
- #12 HR Summit: Strengthening Leadership and Talent\*
- #13 Cowboys United We ARE the Choice Campaign\*
- #14 Our Voice, Our Safety: A Student-Driven Campaign\*
- #15 Walking Through Time: A Celebration of 150 Years\*
- #16 District-Wide Logo Rebranding Initiative\*
- #17 Discover Excellence: School Choice Campaign\*
- #18 Regional Crisis Communications Coordination to Support Students and Families\*
- #19 Because You Know Where the Bodies Are Buried (Figuratively): How to Transition from PR Professional to Elected School Board Member
- #21 Champions for Kids: Building a Culture of Appreciation Through Weekly Staff Recognition\*
- #22 Attendance Matters: Your Future Starts with Attendance Campaign\*
- #23 TCSS U: Informing Advocates for Our Schools\*
- #24 2026 Educational Programs and Operations (EP&O) Levy Vote Campaign\*

#25 Anytime. Anywhere. Early Literacy Media Campaign for the State of Michigan\*

#26 I AM SDP District Marketing Campaign: Using Authentic Voices to Change the Public Narrative\*

#27 Show and (Don’t) Tell: What Happens When You Choose Authenticity Over Perfection

#28 Take Our 2-Minute Survey! Parent Perception Survey Campaign\*

#29 From Confusion to Clarity: Birth - 4 Years Enrollment Campaign\*

#31 Customizing High School: LPS Focus Programs Strategic Enrollment Marketing Campaign\*

#32 Power of an Exit Poll: From Setback to Success\*

#33 Flight Plan 2035: Launching an Academic Vision\*

#34 Grow With Us: GCS Celebration of Excellence\*

#35 Choose TISD Pre-K Enrollment Campaign\*

#36 Bus Driver Recruitment Campaign\*

#37 Positioned to Compete: Research-Driven Hiring\*

#38 CVSD Paraeducator Shortage: We’re Hiring! Campaign\*

#39 Highline Education Levy Campaign\*

#40 Come Together! Communication Platform Roll-Out\*

#41 NSPRA Research Services: Get the Data You Need for More Strategic Communications

#42 Bond Issue Proposal: From Feedback to Progress\*

#43 “Northeast Early College: More Than A High School” Enrollment Marketing Campaign\*

#44 MCPSS-U: Building Advocates for Our District\*

#45 School Engagement Dashboards: Turning Data into Action\*

# 46 Celebrating the Denver Public Schools Experience: A Storytelling and Recruitment Campaign\*

#47 The : Facts and Fiction

Note: #10, 20 and 30 OPEN in Session 2

\* 2026 Gold Medallion Award or Golden Achievement Award winners

12:15 - 12:30 p.m.



**Seminar Closing, 2027 Seminar Preview and Live Prize Drawing for a 2027 Registration**

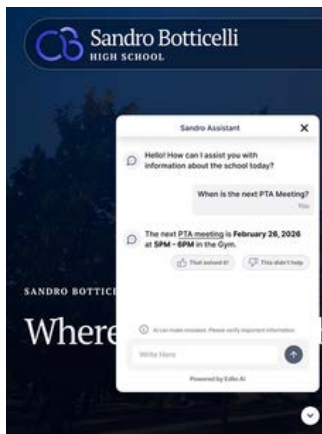
Grand Ballroom A & B (Floor 1)



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## Break Down Barriers with **Edlio Accessibility**

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Congratulations, Terri Brewer, APR  
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**CINDY WARNER, APR**  
2025 NSPRA School  
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NSPRA Emerging Leader  
Ramiro Alvarez, M.Ed.





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# Welcomes You

## 2026 NSPRA National Seminar

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✓ NEWS







# Laissez les bons temps rouler from the Bold North





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Congratulations

**CELI HAGA, APR**

Minnesota School  
Communicator of the Year





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SCHOOL PUBLIC RELATIONS  
ASSOCIATION

MOSPRA is proud to  
be represented by  
Kelly Wachel as the  
**NSPRA President!**

We applaud her vision,  
professionalism, and  
dedication to leading  
and supporting school  
communicators.



*Kelly Wachel, APR*  
NSPRA PRESIDENT







In New England, we **SUPPORT**  
**LEARN GROW** ADVOCATE  
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# The Top Five Reasons to Join NJSPRA



### A Built-in Brain Trust

Never fly solo again. Gain instant access to a statewide network of peers who understand the unique challenges of school communications.



### Professional Growth that Sticks

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### A Seat at the Table

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### A Culture of Recognition

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## Welcome NYSPRA Members!

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- ✓ Networking Opportunities
- ✓ Monthly Member Check-ins
- ✓ National Seminar Scholarships

Annual Conference  
March 8-10, 2027  
Turning Stone Resort & Conference Center





# GROWING TOWARDS GREATNESS

*The Ohio School Public Relations Association is in full bloom! We planted the seeds for something special this year, welcoming a record number of attendees to our 2026 Spring Conference in Columbus, Ohio, where school PR professionals from across the Buckeye State came together to grow with purpose. We also celebrated our highest number of award entries ever, showcasing the incredible talent and impact of school PR professionals in Ohio. A powerful reminder of the impact of school PR across our state.*

## ROOTED IN CONNECTION

 [board@ohspra.org](mailto:board@ohspra.org)  [ohspra.org](https://ohspra.org)



**OHSPRA**  
OHIO SCHOOL  
PUBLIC RELATIONS  
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A circular inset image showing two glass awards. The awards are triangular and have the OHSPRA logo and text engraved on them. The background of the main image shows a group of people at a conference, with blue balloons spelling out "OHSPRA" in the background.



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Sunshine State School Public Relations Association

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UTAH SCHOOL PUBLIC RELATIONS ASSOCIATION





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**Washington School Public Relations Association exists to strengthen public education by championing the power of strategic communication and fostering a network of support, resources and collaboration among our members.**




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- Learn and connect on our members-only listserv.
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- Free monthly online professional development.
- Access to WSPRA library of resources.
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- NSPRA National Seminar scholarship opportunities.
- Member-only mobile app to connect and engage.

**No one understands your work better than WSPRA members. Connect with us!**



**WSPRA** | wisconsin school public relations association

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**Congratulations to our 2025 School Communicator of the Year**

**JIM STRICK**  
Communications Director  
Neenah Joint School District

[www.wspra.org](http://www.wspra.org)