

Seminar Schedule at a Glance

This Schedule at a Glance provides a general overview of the daily schedule of events for the NSPRA 2026 National Seminar on July 19-22, 2026, in New Orleans, La.

All listed times are for the Central Time Zone. Please note that times are tentative and may be subject to change. *As of April 29, 2026*

Times listed in local event time.

Saturday, July 18

9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Pre-Seminar Workshop: Family and Community Engagement (\$295)

Strong family and community engagement (FACE) efforts are essential to student and district success, and this half-day workshop will help school communicators and FACE professionals build those efforts with purpose. Explore effective strategies for engagement, collaboration and communication across diverse audiences, with tools you can bring home and use right away. Whether you oversee community relations and engagement or help to support engagement efforts in your communications role, this workshop offers fresh insights, adaptable templates and inspiring examples. Let's take the mystery out of the relationship between communications and engagement, whether you are on a team or a solo shop. Join us to elevate the way your district connects with the people it serves.

9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Pre-Seminar Workshop: NSPRA Academy for Crisis Communications - Applying Strategy in a Live Simulation (no cost to current NSPRA Academy enrollees; \$425 to non-Academy enrollees)

Crisis situations don't wait for perfect timing, and this full-day workshop will equip you with the skills, tools and instincts to respond with clarity and calm. You'll walk through realistic simulations, develop essential crisis materials and learn strategies that strengthen trust before, during and after high-stakes moments. Whether you're new to crisis communications or looking to sharpen your expertise, this workshop delivers deep practice and practical takeaways. Join us to elevate your readiness long before your next unexpected call or headline.

9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Pre-Seminar Workshop: NSPRA Academy for New Professionals (no cost to current NSPRA Academy enrollees; \$425 to non-Academy enrollees)

Kick off your Seminar experience with a dynamic, full-day workshop designed specifically for school PR professionals in their first few years. This immersive session helps you build a strong foundation in research, planning, messaging and relationship-building, while connecting with peers who are learning the ropes right alongside you. Expect hands-on activities, real-world scenarios and practical templates you can use immediately. Start your Seminar week with clarity, confidence and a brand-new network of colleagues.

12 – 5 p.m.

Seminar Registration Desk open

12 – 5 p.m.

Pre-Seminar Workshop: Media Response for Sensitive Staff Situations (\$395)

Staff-related issues can quickly become front-page news, and your response sets the tone for your district. In this half-day workshop, superintendents and communication professionals will get hands-on practice managing high-profile situations that demand fast, credible responses. Develop clear, confident on-camera messaging, craft effective holding statements and align media responses with internal and parent communications. Attend solo or with your team and leave equipped to lead through the story — not just react to it.

1 – 4 p.m.

Pre-Seminar Workshop: Leading a Communications Team (\$295)

Whether you're supervising your first communications staff member or managing a full team, this half-day workshop will help you lead with clarity, purpose and confidence. Explore practical approaches to delegation, workflow design, coaching, and creating a healthy team culture that supports high-quality work. You'll gain tools to strengthen collaboration, streamline priorities and communicate expectations that elevate everyone's performance. Join us to build the leadership practices your team and district deserve.

Sunday, July 19

7:30 a.m. – 7:30 p.m. Seminar Registration Desk open

8 – 11:45 a.m. Leaders Meeting Breakfast (*open to SPRA chapter leaders*)

8 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Partner Power Sessions (*additional cost and separate registration*)

Lead Unreasonably: Branding, Marketing and Hospitality That Sets Your District Apart (\$200)

8:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. | CESO Communications

When people think of your district, what impressions, experiences and feelings come to their minds? Is that what you want them to think about? Inspired by restaurateur and author Will Guidara's best-selling book, *Unreasonable Hospitality*, this interactive session challenges school leaders to rethink branding, marketing and the overall customer experience through the lens of extraordinary service and bold brand differentiation. Designed for school communicators, superintendents, principals and district leaders, this interactive session will give you the chance to:

- Master branding fundamentals to create a clear, compelling identity that differentiates your district from its competitors.
- Learn customer service and reputation management strategies that foster positive interactions with your students, families, staff and community.
- Explore marketing, enrollment and retention tactics to position your schools effectively in a crowded marketplace where much of the "what sets us apart" language gets lost.

Noon – 1 p.m.

Lunch Break

1 – 2:30 p.m.

Annual Meeting and Celebration of Achievement

- Association Report
 - 2026 Mark of Distinction Exemplary Chapters
 - 2025-2026 Member Recognitions (Emerging Leaders; Accreditation in Public Relations Pinning Ceremony; participants for APR Cohort, NSPRA Academy programs and Leadership in School Communications program; Learning and Liberty Legacy Leaders; Golden Achievement Awards; Publications and Digital Media Excellence Awards; Scholarship Recipients)
 - Presentation of Candidates for 2026-2027 NSPRA Executive Board
-

2:30 – 2:45 p.m.

Break and Distribution of 2026 Golden Achievement Awards

2:45 – 3:45 p.m.

How to Make the Most of Your First NSPRA Seminar

3:45 – 4 p.m.

Break

4 – 5 p.m. **Regional and Superintendent Colleague Connections**

5 – 6:30 p.m. Break

6:30 – 8:30 p.m. **Opening Reception**

Monday, July 20

7 a.m. – 5 p.m. Seminar Registration Desk open

7:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Marketplace, NSPRA Member Center and NSPRA Bookstore open

7:30 – 8:30 a.m. Monday Continental Breakfast Kickoff

8:30 – 9:30 a.m. **Skill Sessions**

9:30 – 10 a.m. Break and Product Demos in Marketplace

10 – 11:45 a.m. **Monday General Session and Awards Presentation**
• 2026 National School Communicator of the Year
• Keynote speaker

11:45 a.m. – 2 p.m. Networking Lunch Break
• Sit-down and quick-serve dining options available **inside Seminar hotel** and at the nearby **RiverWalk Outlets**.
• Lite bites available in the Marketplace.

12 – 1:30 p.m. **Superintendents' Luncheon featuring 2025-2026 Superintendents to Watch** (*by invitation only*)

12:15 p.m. – 12:55 p.m. **Industry Insights Sessions**

1:05 – 1:45 p.m. **Industry Insights Sessions**

2:15 – 3:15 p.m. **Skill Sessions**

3:15 – 3:45 p.m. Break

3:45 – 4:45 p.m. **Skill Sessions**

Tuesday, July 21

7 a.m. – 5 p.m. Seminar Registration Desk open

7:30 a.m. – 3 p.m. Marketplace, NSPRA Member Center and NSPRA Bookstore open

7:30 – 8:30 a.m. Tuesday Continental Breakfast Kickoff

8:30 – 9:30 a.m. **Skill Sessions**

9:30 – 10 a.m. Break and Product Demos in Marketplace

10 – 11 a.m.	Skill Sessions
11 – 11:15 a.m.	Break
11:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.	Skill Sessions
12:15 – 2:30 p.m.	Networking Lunch Break <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit-down and quick-serve dining options available inside Seminar hotel and at the nearby RiverWalk Outlets. • Lite bites available in the Marketplace.
12:30 – 2 p.m.	NSPRA Council of Presidents Luncheon <i>(by invitation only)</i> Current APR Professionals Networking Luncheon <i>(open to APRs only)</i>
12:45 – 1:25 p.m.	Industry Insights Sessions
1:35 – 2:15 p.m.	Industry Insights Sessions
2:45 – 3:45 p.m.	Skill Sessions
3:45 – 4 p.m.	Break
4 – 5 p.m.	Skill Sessions
6 – 9 p.m.	NSPRA Awards Celebration and Dinner <i>(additional fee required)</i> - NEW! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2026 Bob Grossman Leadership in School Communications Award • 2026 Barry Gaskins Mentor Legacy Award • 2026 Presidents Award • 2026 Gold Medallion Awards

Wednesday, July 22

7:30 – 10:30 a.m.	Seminar Registration Desk Open
8:30 – 9:30 a.m.	NSPRA Micro Labs (live, in-person, how-to demonstrations) - NEW!
9:30 – 9:45 a.m.	Break
9:45 – 10:55 a.m.	Gold Mine Roundtables Session 1
10:55 – 11:05 a.m.	Break
11:05 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.	Gold Mine Roundtables Session 2
12:15 - 12:30 p.m.	2026 Seminar Closing and 2027 Seminar Preview - NEW!