

Southwest Region Chapter Reports – March 2018

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Arizona School Public Relations Association (ASPRA)

Kim Mesquita, chapter president

Chapter Well-being: ASPRA membership is stable, yet active. We have seen some turnover in membership, but it is usually a result of someone leaving his or her public relations position within the district, only to be replaced with the new hire. We currently have 130 members.

There is a minimal level of participation on the chapter's listserv compared to five years ago. Members seem to be contacting other members directly when they have questions or need advice.

We have held three professional development meetings so far this school year. Topics include Social Media Metrics, Public Records Requests, Online Social Media Threats, Education Foundations Associated with your District, Handling OCR/ADA Compliance Requests, How State Data Can Help You with Your Next Election, and Why Our Work Matters.

Finances are stable, thanks to a dedicated member who strives takes her role as Treasurer seriously.

The Executive Board has regular meetings via conference call. We struggle with decision-making using this method. We are more efficient and effectively and work much more cohesively when we meet in person.

Chapter Projects/Collaboration Efforts: The executive board kicked off the year by focusing on two areas that needed attention: Membership Criteria, and the ASPRATIONS Award Criteria. Committees, led by executive board members, formed to discuss possible changes/improvements. ASPRA members are participating in the committee discussions.

Our largest fundraising event, supporting our local School Board Association, occurred in December. Dedicated executive board members and approximately 30 members covered this project where members reported on conference sessions, award presentations, and other activities via the School Board Association social media sites (Twitter & Facebook). The funding received from this project will help support our summer conference.

With membership support, the annual ASPRATIONS Awards Luncheon is being moved to the fall. Members feel they will be able to spend more time during the summer to focus on what particular projects/communication efforts they want to nominate.

Summer conference is our focus at this point.

Professional Development Programs/activities: Professional development topics already covered during regular meetings include Social Media Metrics, Public Records Requests, Online Social Media Threats, Education Foundations Associated with your District, Handling OCR/ADA Compliance Requests, How State Data Can Help You with Your Next Election, and Why Our Work Matters.

Again, our chapter is fortunate to have a member as part of the NSPRA executive board member. The wonderful Heidi Vega provides our chapter with updates from NSPRA.

Major Chapter Issues or Concerns: We have struggled with finding members who want to take on leadership roles within the chapter.

Issues or Areas That Could Use NSPRA Regional or National Support: Thankful for NSPRA proactive approach on communication efforts pertaining to the recent tragedy in Florida and the upcoming school walk-outs. Continue these types of efforts.

State or Local Issues That NSPRA Should Keep an Eye On: Continued funding and/or support for public education in Arizona seems to be an on-going concern. Empowerment scholarships are being supported and expanded by politicians. The movement for continued “School Choice” campaigns seems to be growing larger. Although we do not disagree with school choice, the marketing efforts are clearly not in favor of public education being a viable school choice option.

California School Public Relations Association (CalSPRA)

Manny Rubio, chapter president

No report submitted.

Colorado School Public Relations Association (COSPR)

Tammy Schiff, chapter president

No report submitted.

Utah School Public Relations Association (USPRA)

Kimberly Bird, chapter president

No report submitted.