

NSPRA Chapter Report Form

Prior to each Board meeting, the NSPRA Regional Vice Presidents are asked to prepare reports that provide an update on issues or activities in their regions. This includes asking each chapter in the region to provide a report on their activities as well as highlights of any issues impacting education in their states. This helps NSPRA stay apprised of chapter activities, success and challenges.

Chapter presidents are asked to complete this form and submit it to your Regional Vice President prior to each NSPRA Executive Board meeting – held in November, March and July. The deadlines for submitting your report are included in the [Chapter Deadlines](#) list on the website under the NSPRA Info tab/Chapters/Updates for Chapter Leaders.

Please provide a brief update on the following:

- 1. Chapter well-being** – A state-of-the-chapter summary (i.e., active or dormant; growing or declining membership; regular meetings; fiscally thriving; what’s working, what isn’t, etc.).

The North Carolina School Public Relations Association (NCSPRA) is approaching the 2019-2020 year with much optimism and enthusiasm. Again this year, we are working to provide as many quality professional opportunities as possible and strengthen our network among school communications/public relations professionals in the state while maintaining the Association’s solid finances.

Membership

NCSPRA kicked off its annual membership drive in September with a goal of having 150 individual members and 60 member districts for 2019-2020. Just four weeks after launching our membership drive, we had 66 individual members representing 36 districts and one affiliate organization. Membership is expected to increase substantially as members complete their registration for the upcoming fall conference.

Finance

NCSPRA’s financial status is strong. We received our annual sponsorship from Blackboard, and our membership drive is underway. We also expect to see a significant increase in revenue as a result of hosting the fall conference this year. Vendor sponsorships already exceed what we had for the conference in 2017, and we have surpassed our sponsorship expectations (our goal was to have a minimum of \$5,000 in sponsorships to offset conference expenses). We expect to have another successful Blue Ribbon Awards program, which has generated revenue for us over the past several years, and we are reintroducing the NCSPRA Winter Workshop concept in December, which will generate additional revenue. We believe our various programs for 2019-2020 will further strengthen the Association’s finances.

- 2. Chapter projects/collaboration efforts** – An overview of projects and collaborations: new, ongoing or completed.

NCSPRA has a full event calendar for 2019-2020 that includes the following:

- NCSPRA/SC-NSPRA Fall Conference, November 6-8, Wilmington
- NCSPRA Winter Workshop (a professional development program in partnership with our state school nutrition association), December 6, Hillsborough
- Blue Ribbon Awards and Ceremony, January 31, Greensboro
- NCSPRA Leadership Academy (a professional development program in partnership with the N.C. Center for the Advancement of Teaching), April 2-3, Cullowhee
- NCSPRA 50th Anniversary Luncheon, May 1, Location TBA

Our upcoming, ongoing, and completed projects are listed below.

- **Fall Conference:** This year, NCSPPRA is hosting the annual NCSPPRA/SC-NSPPRA fall conference in Wilmington, November 6-8, at the new Embassy Suites Wilmington Riverfront Hotel. The conference theme is “Adventure, Attitude, and Azaleas,” which is a reference to Wilmington’s distinction as the home of the N.C. Azalea Festival. The conference is a partnership between the North Carolina and South Carolina state chapters, and it features 12 full-group sessions and a series of concurrent mini-sessions. Other activities on the schedule include our mentor-mentee matchup, vendor showcase, azalea dinner and party, and state chapter meetings. Approximately 100 people are expected to attend. The agenda is available on the NCSPPRA website: www.ncsppra.org/fallconference2019.
- **50th Anniversary:** In 2020, NCSPPRA will celebrate its 50th anniversary of being organized as a state chapter of the National School Public Relations Association. To commemorate the occasion, we are planning to host an anniversary luncheon on May 1. The program will include information about the Association’s history, special guests, and a professional development session. All current and former members will be invited to attend, and we plan to extend a special invitation to former NCSPPRA presidents and winners of the Barry Gaskins Service Award for Outstanding Contributions to School Public Relations. The anniversary luncheon and program will be held in place of our annual springtime “Final Four” workshop, which will return in 2021. We did not want to overload the spring months with events, and we will encourage members to engage in the professional development opportunities offered at the Winter Workshop, NCSPPRA Leadership Academy, and 50th anniversary program.
- **NCSPPRA Winter Workshop:** Several years ago, NCSPPRA partnered with PANC (Personnel Administrators of North Carolina) to host a Winter Workshop. We are revisiting this concept and partnering with the School Nutrition Association of North Carolina (SNA-NC) to host a Winter Workshop on Friday, December 6 in Hillsborough. The agenda includes five sessions that will focus on innovative school nutrition programs, marketing and promotional efforts, messaging through effective photography, the No Kid Hungry statewide initiative, and more. Our connection with SNA-NC is made possible through our network with the N.C. Association of School Administrators (NCASA) and its affiliate organizations. NCSPPRA is one of the Association’s affiliate organizations along with SNA-NC and PANC.
- **Blue Ribbon Awards:** NCSPPRA is expecting another highly successful Blue Ribbon Awards program, which recognizes effective school communications and public relations. The awards ceremony is tentatively planned for January 31, 2020. The Georgia School Public Relations Association (GSPRA) will judge our contest. This year, we are working on efforts to accept submissions online, which will save time and money for our member school districts. Our goal is to exceed 300 entries, which we have done in the past few years.
- **NCSPPRA Leadership Academy:** For the third consecutive year, NCSPPRA is partnering with the N.C. Center for the Advancement of Teaching (NCCAT) to host the NCSPPRA Leadership Academy, April 2-3. This professional development program is conducted in small-group, retreat style format on the NCCAT campus (adjacent to Western Carolina University) in Cullowhee. The program has involved about 30 participants each of the two previous years – we hope to increase participation in 2020 with the goal of reaching the 48-participant capacity.
- **Online Membership Program:** In September, NCSPPRA launched the MemberClicks online membership management system. Members can complete the membership process online as well as register for conferences, professional development, and other activities.

▪ **Judging GSPRA Awards Program:** In September, the NCSPPRA Board of Directors served as judges for the Georgia School Public Relations Association's publications, photography, and electronic media contest. GSPRA will return the favor by judging NCSPPRA's Blue Ribbon Awards contest entries in December. The contest judging partnership between NCSPPRA and GSPRA has been in place for a number of years, and it continues to be effective.

3. Professional development programs/activities – An overview of current professional development efforts.

Please see the second question for information about our professional development activities.

4. Major chapter issues or concerns – What is the chapter currently struggling with?

No issues/concerns to report.

5. Issues or areas that could use NSPPRA regional or national support – Identify specific issues or concerns with suggestions for how NSPPRA can provide support.

Now more than ever, it is important for NSPPRA to continue its efforts to provide professional development that focuses on inclusivity, diversity, and tolerance. School districts need support and knowledge about how to handle difficult situations related to race relations, LGBTQ and gender fluidity, socioeconomic factors, and other national social issues that often become school issues. School districts have to be prepared to “do the right thing” even when “the right thing” is not popular in some communities.

It also is important for NSPPRA to help guide the narrative on school safety and security. The media and others seem to scrutinize and sensationalize school (and bus) safety to instill fear, danger, and panic. Is the negative narrative surrounding school safety driving parents away from public schools for “safer” options such as charter, private, or home schools? Also, because school districts feel that it is important to have safety at the forefront of the conversation, does this somehow send a counter message? Are parents thinking, “Because they (the schools) talk about security so much, the schools must really be unsafe or otherwise the extra security would not be needed?” Have we discussed school safety to the point that the strategy is working against public schools?

6. State or local issues that NSPPRA should keep an eye on – Provide a brief synopsis of each issue that is impacting communication efforts, schools and education that might have future national implications.

One issue that is affecting education is the lack of a state budget for 2019-2020. The Republican-controlled North Carolina General Assembly passed a budget, but it was vetoed by the Democratic governor. Budget negotiations have been at a standstill, and no compromise is in sight. The N.C. House overrode the Governor's veto during a surprise vote when most Democratic members were absent. The N.C. Senate has not been able to override the veto and has threatened to adjourn the session without a state budget in place. Meanwhile, school districts have been operating based on last year's budget, and teachers and other school employees have not gotten a pay increase.

7. Additional items of note – A summary of other chapter-related items not covered in the other categories.

We would like to thank NSPPRA for an outstanding National Seminar in Washington. The sessions were excellent, and the keynote speakers were of outstanding quality. We are looking forward to 2020 in St. Louis. For the 2020 National Seminar, we would like for NCSPPRA to have more presence at the national level, and

therefore, we are planning to encourage our members to attend the National Seminar and consider submitting a proposal to present a session.

Additionally, we hope NSPRA will provide some type of acknowledgement at the national level for NCSPRA as we celebrate our 50th anniversary in 2020.

This report respectfully submitted by Todd Hagans
NCSPRA President, 2019-2020
October 28, 2019
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