

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 (NCSPPRA) is extremely excited about 2020 as our Association celebrates its 50th anniversary as a state chapter of the National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA). A special program and luncheon is planned for May 1, 2020 to celebrate the occasion.

Membership

Our membership for 2019-2020 is 119 individual members representing 59 school districts, one charter school, and three affiliate organizations. We had a few school districts that had not been members previously to join this year.

Finance

NCSPPRA is in good financial shape after profitable Winter Workshop and Blue Ribbon Awards programs. This spring, we will begin working with Blackboard on our annual sponsorship, which renews July 1. We also are considering a summertime or early fall “back-to-school” professional development program, which should generate additional revenue.

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

Below is a list of events that remain for the 2019-2020 year:

- NCSPPRA Leadership Academy (a professional development program in partnership with the N.C. Center for the Advancement of Teaching), April 2-3, Cullowhee
- NCSPPRA Election, April 6-24
- NCSPPRA 50th Anniversary Luncheon, May 1, Gastonia
- NCSPPRA Board of Directors Planning Retreat, June 22-23, Location TBD

A summary of our upcoming, ongoing, and completed projects is listed below.

UPCOMING PROJECTS

- **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 is open to 48 participants.

The focus for this year's Academy is giving school PR professionals an opportunity to learn from PR professionals who are not in the education field. Because of our partnership with NCCAT, this program is made available free-of-charge to school PR professionals.

- **NCSPPRA Election:** The annual NCSPPRA election will be conducted April 6-24. The Association will see a change in its top leadership as a new president and vice president will be elected. Our current vice president, Dr. Patricia Hollingsworth (Durham Public Schools), and our current treasurer, Ken Derksen (Wayne County Public Schools), have been chosen by our nominating committee as candidates for the president and vice president positions. In addition to the four officer positions, two Board of Directors positions are up for election. The new president will be responsible for appointing the Presidential Appointee, State Coordinator, and Superintendent Liaison positions. Current NCSPPRA president, Todd Hagans (Gaston County Schools), will serve in the Immediate Past President position. The newly-elected officers and Board members assume their leadership roles on June 1.
- **50th Anniversary:** This year, NCSPPRA is celebrating its 50th anniversary of being organized as a state chapter of the National School Public Relations Association. To commemorate the occasion, we will host an anniversary program and luncheon on Friday, May 1. The program will include information about the Association's history, special guests, and two professional development sessions. 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 is being held in place of our annual springtime "Final Four" workshop.
- **NCSPPRA Board of Directors Planning Retreat:** The annual planning retreat is tentatively scheduled for June 22-23. Once a new president is elected, that person will be responsible for coordinating the retreat, determining a location, developing an agenda, etc.

COMPLETED PROJECTS

- **Blue Ribbon Awards:** NCSPPRA conducted another successful Blue Ribbon Awards ceremony and brunch on January 31, 2020 at the O. Henry Hotel in Greensboro. The program recognized effective school communications and public relations efforts for 2019. Thirty-six school districts were honored during the ceremony. There were 267 entries submitted, and 250 of them won either a gold, silver, or bronze level award. A gold level entry in each of our eight categories was chosen as the "Best of the Best" winner for that category. Additionally, the Barry Gaskins Service Award was presented to Charlie Glazener, a former NCSPPRA president who retired from Asheville City Schools in 2017. This year, entries were accepted through an online submission process, which seemed to work well, and again this year, members of the Georgia School Public Relations Association (GSPRA) judged the contest. For more information about the Blue Ribbon Awards, pictures, and a list of winners, visit www.ncsppra.org/blueribbonawards2019.
- **NCSPPRA Winter Workshop:** On December 6, NCSPPRA partnered with the School Nutrition Association of North Carolina (SNA-NC) to host a Winter Workshop at The Whitted Building in Hillsborough. The agenda included sessions that focused on innovative school nutrition programs, marketing and promotional efforts, messaging through effective photography, and the No Kid Hungry statewide initiative. Approximately 75 people attended, which exceeded our goal of 50 attendees. The success of the Winter Workshop has led to discussion of making it an annual event and reaching out to other affiliate organizations to focus on topics such as bus transportation, personnel, exceptional children, etc.

▪ **Fall Conference:** NCSPPRA hosted the annual NCSPPRA/SC-NSPPRA fall conference in Wilmington, November 6-8, at the Embassy Suites Wilmington Riverfront Hotel. The conference theme was “Adventure, Attitude, and Azaleas,” a reference to Wilmington’s distinction as the home of the N.C. Azalea Festival. The conference was a partnership between the North Carolina and South Carolina state chapters, and it featured 12 full-group sessions and a series of concurrent mini-sessions. Other activities included a successful mentor-mentee matchup program, vendor showcase, azalea dinner and party, and state chapter meetings. Approximately 80 people attended, which was slightly lower than anticipated. We received overall positive feedback on the conference survey, and attendees seemed to be pleased with the session topics, presenters, activities, location, hotel, etc. The 2020 fall conference will be hosted by SC-NSPPRA in Charleston. The NCSPPRA Board and the SC-NSPPRA Board are planning to have a meeting in March to discuss the fall conference beyond 2020, which will aid in NCSPPRA’s planning of the conference in 2021.

ON-GOING PROJECTS

▪ **Strategic Planning Process:** NCSPPRA is conducting a strategic planning process with the goal of developing a three-year strategic plan for the Association. Two members of the NCSPPRA Board of Directors – Ken Derksen (Wayne County Public Schools) and Dr. Greg Shull (Cleveland County Schools) – are coordinating the strategic planning efforts. When complete, the strategic plan will outline goals, programs, finances, etc. for the 2020-2021, 2021-2022, and 2022-2023 fiscal years.

▪ **Executive Director Position:** NCSPPRA is going through a time of transition with its executive director position. NCSPPRA plans to appoint a new executive director by late spring/early summer. In the meantime, the officers and Board of Directors are responsible for handling the executive director duties.

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?

None.

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.

With the political season here, we know that schools will be brought into the political debate. NSPPRA may want to provide resources to members about how to navigate politics, especially since the presidential election and others are expected to be contentious.

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.

The State of North Carolina has yet to adopt a budget for the 2019-2020 fiscal year. This is putting significant strain on school districts as they are being cautious with spending. The Republican-controlled North Carolina General Assembly passed a budget last summer, but it was vetoed by the Democratic governor. The N.C. House overrode the Governor’s veto in September during a surprise vote when most Democratic members were absent. The N.C. Senate has not been able to override the veto and adjourned without a state budget in place. Medicaid expansion and pay raises for teachers are at the crux of the budget standstill.

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

We would like to thank NSPRA for its willingness to provide a resolution or proclamation that acknowledges the 50th anniversary of NCSPRA. We are working with the national office on this, and we are very appreciative for NSPRA's efforts to bring attention to this momentous occasion for the North Carolina chapter.

We also want to thank NSPRA for its hard work in planning what looks like to be another outstanding National Seminar. We look forward to having a good group in St. Louis to represent NCSPRA.

This report respectfully submitted by Todd Hagans
NCSPRA President, 2019-2020
February 24, 2020
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