

Conference Agenda

Wednesday, November 12

- 2:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m. Welcome
2:15 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. Session I
3:20 p.m. – 4:45 p.m. Session II
5:30 p.m. Reception

Dinner on your own

Thursday, November 13

- 8:30 a.m. – 9:15 a.m. Breakfast
9:30 a.m. – 9:45 a.m. Welcome
9:45 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. Session III
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Session IV
12:15 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. Lunch
1:45 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Keynote
3:15 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Session V
4:00 p.m. – 4:45 p.m. Session VI
6:00 p.m. President's Reception

Dinner on your own

Friday, November 14

- 8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Breakfast
9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. State Meetings
9:45 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Session VII
10:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. Session VIII
11:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Closing Remarks

Other featured speakers will include:

- Ken DeSiegenthart, Patron Insight LLC
- Mary Beth Hill & Becky Bean, Lexington School District One
- Mary Ann Byrd & Julie Putnam, Kershaw Co. School District
- Julie Romig, Central York (Pa.) School District
- Cynthia Robbins Shah-Khan, Guilford Co. Schools
- Cynthia Robinson, Spartanburg School District Six
- Jason Rhodes, Buncombe County Schools
- Dan Nelson, ParentLink

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

Eric Alexander



Eric Alexander, skier, climber, and mountaineer is achieving his goals while playing an instrumental role in helping others to achieve their own. More than an adventurer, he is a person who embodies a picture of hope and possibility for the rest of us. Think you can't reach the next summit that is calling to you? Eric believes you can. Honing in on the messages of trust, courage, teamwork, leadership, integrity, and innovation, Eric shares insights on how to move forward in spite of your fears and (sometimes) your peers, stepping out in faith to prove, as he says, that "we are the experts on ourselves."

Outreach. Eric shares this inspirational story with audiences all over the country, but when he is not traveling he teaches disabled skiers in Vail, Colorado, and directs Adventures Beyond Limits, an organization that educates and encourages youth with disabilities in the outdoors. In June of 2006 Eric coled a 30 mile trek through the Andes of Peru with nine blind students ending at Machu Pichu. In 2007, this same group climbed Mount Kilimanjaro in Africa.

Overcoming Obstacles. Climbing has not always been without its trials. Eric reminds us of our humanity and demonstrates the courage it takes to succeed in climbing to the "top of the world." He survived a 150-foot fall onto a three-foot ledge in the Himalayas on Mount Amadablam in 2000. The fall caused him to develop pulmonary edema, and it became clear that he would need to be airlifted to safety. For eight months, he struggled with pneumonia and was unable to train for Everest. Gaining inspiration from his team and his faith, Eric dared to dream once again and fought back to play an instrumental role in this historic ascent. Today, Eric continues to climb and look for new challenges both personally and in the outdoors while challenging people to overcome the "Everest's" in their own lives redefining the limits of what we can achieve.

Early Life. Eric grew up in the Colorado Rockies and started climbing in his teens. He was a member of the University of Denver ski team, which led him to pursue work as a Ski Patrolman in Vail and in the French Alps, as well as instructing at Beaver Creek Resort.

Eric is also the author of *The Summit*, which explores how to gain wisdom in the application of trust, courage, innovation, teamwork, leadership, and integrity to overcome your own Everests.

Conference Sponsors



Session Descriptions

Fighting the Virus: Working Together Through a Viral Scenario

Jason Rhodes, Assistant Communications Director, Buncombe County Schools, Asheville, NC

It takes only hours for a story to go viral. What would you do as media calls begin to pour in and how would you deal with criticism and perception on social media and with the media in general? We will work together through a viral scenario, answering questions such as: Does this story have viral potential? How can our initial involvement in the story lessen any potential blows? How to spread the word when a resolution is reached?

Can We Talk?

Cynthia Robinson, Chief Communications Officer, Spartanburg County School District Six

From Crisis management to social media, we all know that issues surrounding public education are unpredictable and oftentimes unexpected. Join your fellow school communicators as they discuss the strategies, challenges, and successes of their professional careers. This PR talk show will feature communicators from North and South Carolina who can speak to the everyday and not so everyday encounters that we should always be prepared for. Your host will encourage audience participation in this fun, yet information session on the business of school public relations. So the question is...."Can We Talk?"

Lighten Up! How to make communications fun and successful

Cynthia Robbins Shah-Khan, Director of Communications, Guilford County Schools

School PR doesn't always have to be so serious. There are great ways to lighten up - when the situation is right - to improve engagement and just make work more fun. Find out how to embrace creative strategies to reach students, staff, the community - even media. From using social media to writing emails and news releases, you'll learn when it's okay to use humor and when it's not. We'll also share examples of ways to turn those boring mass emails and other communications into something people will actually read - and respond to.

Dream Big: Making Dreams Reality

Mary Beth Hill, Chief Communications Officer, Lexington County School District One
Becky Bean, Communications Director, Lexington County School District One

We all realize that public education faces more competition now than any time in the past. As we seek strategies to build support for public education we have to get creative! The Lexington One Communications Office shares their video campaign highlighting successful Lexington One graduates as a way to inspire students and build community support.

Building the trust you need for your school district to succeed

Ken DeSieghardt, Patron Insight

It's a common sense idea: School districts that are trusted by their key stakeholder groups can more easily move forward, knowing that the default reaction in the community is likely going to be, "If the school district thinks it's a good idea, then it must be." But, building and nurturing those kinds of relationships require steady attention to the factors that, according to patrons, separate school districts that can be trusted, from those where trust is not so automatic. This program will dive into the key elements of the district/community relationship that, according to 22 years of research, are critical to creating a long-standing, trusting relationship.

How to Build Trust

Eric Alexander

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Make "getting out the good news" easier for your schools!

Mary Anne Byrd, Communications Director, Kershaw County School District

Julie Putnam, Webmaster/Multimedia Coordinator, Kershaw County School District

After seeing many of our schools struggle with technical & time issues in "getting out their good news", we wanted to make their communications jobs less stressful and more effective. Now, designated contacts in all our schools use iPads to take photos and video, then edit, share, and post directly online. Our superintendent has called it the best idea we've ever had! Julie & Mary Anne share tips & tricks that make iPads super communications tools for your schools.

Leading Through Communications: Building Community-Wide Support for Your School's Active Shooter Drill

Julie Romig, Director of Communications and Marketing, York County (Pa.) School District

Session Description: In October 2013, Central York School District took a lead role in planning and implementing an active shooter drill in real-time with 1,700 students, 500+ faculty, parents and more than 60 law enforcement agencies representing federal, state and local governments. The drill, which included a real-time relocation/reunification component and tested the school's crisis communications plan, sparked months of collaboration and communication within the community. Major areas to be presented include the rationale for taking a lead role in planning an active shooter drill in your community; building support for the drill through communications leadership; collaborating with law enforcement agencies to prepare for the worst; and lessons learned from a school's perspective.

K12 Communication in the Digital Age

Dan Nelson, Executive Vice President, ParentLink

Participants in this session will learn about mobile growth trends and the influence of social media in the K12 education market. Focusing on 5 principles for effective use of social media and mobile technology, participants will also learn how to leverage parental engagement to drive greater student learning and achievement.