



# SUNSPRA

Sunshine State School  
Public Relations Association



**“Thursday Thoughts” – 9.15 & 22.16**

**Kevin Christian, APR, CPRC, SUNSPRA President**

### **NSPRA’s Leading Edge Update**

NSPRA is sharing the latest issue of [The Leading Edge](#) and has asked me to share it with all SUNSPRA members. This year’s first issue summarizes important changes to the national conference and other information pertinent to chapters and members. I encourage you to take 5-10 minutes to read through the entire issue.

### **IT’S TIME – TO RENEW YOUR SUNSPRA MEMBERSHIP**

Last membership year, SUNSPRA met the objective of increasing membership by 10 percent... except we actually increased 22 percent! It’s time to renew YOUR membership, so please [CLICK HERE](#) to complete your renewal process with the fillable pdf form. SUNSPRA is only as strong as its membership – and we are growing significantly, already in this new school year! ***I encourage you to renew today!***

Welcome back to this **returning member**:

- Karen Jordan Public Information Officer, Hernando County Schools

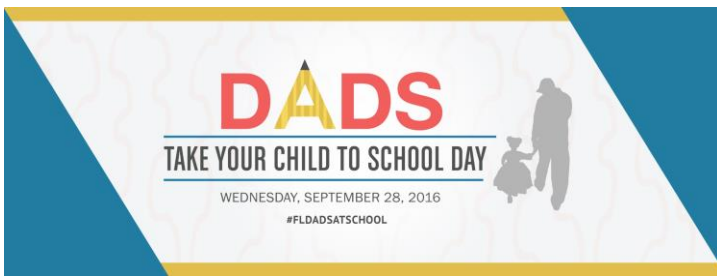
### **SUNSPRA CONFERENCE – YOUR THOUGHTS?**

***Having received little response, I’m submitting this to you again for serious consideration***

We are working with FASA to create a “Communications / PR” tract for the 2017 summer conference. Overall session topics discussed so far include:

- Diversity. Reaching our diverse/ELL students
- How to positively build school culture
- Closing the gap of student achievement
- Public Relations – UPDATED LIST *could include*:
  - How to Handle The Digital Mindset (making the most of your tech world)
  - Public Records Requests: How to Effectively Handle These
  - Managing Unauthorized Facebook pages & Posting Student Activities
  - Crowd Funding: Maneuvering the Minefields
  - Going LIVE with 1 Person (Mevo & LiveStreaming)
  - Managing Media with Class
  - Declutter Your Desktop – Finding Your Way in a Digital World
  - Presenting the BEST Image – Look the Part, Act the Part, Be the Part
  - Social Media: Winning Against Hate
- Setting panel discussions for all levels: Panel of AP’s for the Aspiring admins, Panel of Principals for the AP’s, Panel of Supt for the Principals, etc.

***Here’s where you come in --- what would YOU like to see included as a session topic? As a school PR professional, certainly you have concerns and ideas to explore. What are some of those? Share with me and we’ll create a great SUNSPRA-led tract for our members and school administrators.***



## **Dads Take Your Child to School Day**

DOE is promoting the second annual “Dads Take Your Child to School Day” happening on Wednesday, October 28. For more info: <http://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-7741/dps-2016-133.pdf>. There’s also a toolkit linked at this site for more resources.



## **Get to Know the APR and Become a Leader in the Field**

As this year’s chair of NSPRA’s Accreditation Committee, I’m challenging ALL my professional colleagues in SUNSPRA, NSPRA, FPRA and FPRA Ocala to step up and accept this challenge: ***if you will commit to the APR process, I will help you achieve success any way I can!***

Once you sign up, you have one year to complete the process and take the CBE, or Computer-Based Exam. This year marks a brand new version of the test, so studying is more crucial than ever to ensure you’re up to date with current PR practices and trends.

What can you do to prepare? Consider any or all of these options:

- I’m holding regular face-to-face study session in my local area (Ocala). You’re welcome to telephone in and participate (conference calling).
- Study Buddies – pair up with someone in your local area to lunch with regularly, review materials, and quiz each other on a regular basis
- Webinar study sessions – available at a cost to you, these self-paced sessions give you a structured approach at your convenience
- APR Study Guide – a complete and thorough document to help you prepare for the exam
- Current Public Relations textbooks on the college bookshelf
- Other tools

I know FPRA offers its members local and state rebates to sit for the CBE regardless of outcome. As well, **SUNSPRA will offer a \$100 rebate to any member who sits for the CBE.**

Remember, there are three primary steps to achieving your APR:

1. Readiness Review Questionnaire
2. Readiness Review
3. Computer-Based Exam

Many candidates find the best way to prepare is a combination of study methods. Earning your APR is a process that makes you better at what you do every day. You’ll discover you REALLY DO know what you’re doing when it comes to implementing RPIE on a regular basis.

It takes a professional—someone with exceptional experience, broad expertise, and strong dedication and values—to thrive in the public relations industry. The APR certifies that you're working with the best.

## **LEGISLATIVE / HEADLINE RECAPS**

### Collier County school gets tough on anthem protestors

A Collier County principal is requiring students to stand during the national anthem at school events or face ejection.

### One Miami-Dade school says no to homework; will others follow?

This year, one Miami-Dade school is trying something radical: Ending homework. At least, the mandatory kind.

### Polk County School District modifies plans for Westwood, LA-Addair

Polk County Schools will make an addendum to the plans for the two turnaround middle schools whose plans were not approved by the State Board of Education.

### The School Board of Sarasota County is a step closer to naming a new superintendent.

The school board selected four finalists who will be interviewed for the leadership position. The new superintendent will succeed Lori White who is scheduled to retire Tuesday, Feb. 28.

### Clerical jobs to go first as Hillsborough school officials look for more budget cuts

About 50 clerical workers in the Hillsborough County School District's central offices have had their jobs eliminated and are looking for other district positions as officials look to steer more money to classrooms.

### Recess fight will move back to Tallahassee

After nearly two years, the "recess moms" can claim victory in Orange County, where the local school board is set to require daily recess in all public elementary schools.

### National teacher shortage hits Florida districts, too

Florida school districts scrambled to find teachers this summer as the nation grappled with a teacher shortage that will continue to grow unless leaders take steps to reduce the "leaky bucket" of teacher attrition, according to a new national study released late Wednesday.

### Judge rejects motion to force schools' hands in Florida third-grade retention lawsuit

One of those hindrances was appeals by the defendant school districts, including Pasco and Hernando, which created a stay on the order. After winning the first round of their case against Florida's third-grade promotion rules, students ran into roadblocks when trying to use Judge Karen Gievers' ruling to claim a fourth-grade seat.

## **AND FINALLY...**

In our current SUNSPRA membership, I count 19 different school districts in Florida with PR professionals on their staffs. While I know there are additional PROs in other districts, I'm privileged to share information with YOU on a regular basis. I hope this information educates, enhances, and enlightens you on the job -- and sometimes outside the job. ***Thanks for all you do for students, teachers, staff, and citizens in your district!***

Until next time, keep shining the light on school PR in Florida!

*Kevin*

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