



## ***"Thursday Thoughts" – 9.29.16 & 10.6.16***

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

***LOTS of info in this issue. I encourage you to read thoroughly. As well, I hope your district weathered Hurricane Matthew without severe damage. Brevard, Volusia and Flagler counties are obviously hard hit. Please let me know if SUNSPRA can provide support in any way to your impacted district.***

### **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!***

### **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.***

### **Latest from NSPRA**

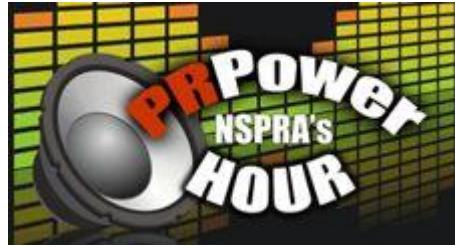
[NSPRA This Week e-newsletter](#)

Videos to watch: [Oregon's Promise to Keep: The Year Ahead](#) (GREAT video!)

Park Hill ["Believe in Me" video](#) (another GREAT video!)

**NSPRA's PR Power Hour**  
**October 14, 2016**

## **Gender Inclusiveness: Traversing the Intersection of the Law and Practice**



Time: Noon **Eastern** Time (11 A.M. CT; 10 A.M. MT; 9 A.M. PT; 9 A.M. Arizona, 8 A.M. Alaska)

Registration for each of these PR Power Hours is \$50 per registered attendee for NSPRA members. For non-NSPRA members, it is \$80 per registered attendee.

**Register for five or more Power Hours** and receive access to the audio file of each program you purchase **for no additional fee**.

Registrants to individual PR Power Hours can receive access to the audio file for an additional fee of just \$10.

[Register online now!](#) You can also download and complete the [registration form](#) then return it to NSPRA by fax or mail.

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## **Gender Inclusiveness: Traversing the Intersection of the Law and Practice**

Every student has the right to attend school in a safe and supportive setting, regardless of gender. This is supported by a number of legal protections at the federal, state and local level. Yet some of the most unsettling challenges parents, families and schools encounter involve grappling with the legal issues around raising and schooling gender-expansive or transgender children. How can we effectively take the law into consideration while implementing gender inclusive practices in our schools that respect gender diversity, support struggling parents and educate our publics? This program will help your district traverse the intersection of law and practice by outlining some of the challenges, sharing some legal principles to keep in mind and offering tips for informal advocacy to safeguard the rights of all students to be affirmed and supported for who they are.



**Panelists:** **Joel Baum**, senior director, professional development and family services, Gender Spectrum, San Leandro, Calif.; and **Asaf Orr, Esq.**, Transgender Youth Project staff attorney, National Center for Lesbian Rights, San Francisco, Calif.



**Moderator: Trent Allen, APR**, senior director, community relations, San Juan Unified School District, Carmichael, Calif., and NSPRA Southwest Region vice president

[Register Today!](#)

If you have any questions on the Power Hours, please contact Beth Pernerewski at [bpernerewski@nspra.org](mailto:bpernerewski@nspra.org).



## 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 on Monday evenings, 5:30pm-7:30pm, on the following dates: Oct. 10, 17, 24; Nov. 7, 14, 21, 28. You're welcome to telephone in and participate (conference calling – *let me know if you want to do so*).
- 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.



### **Five Layers of School Safety** *A Professional Development Webinar*

Even though school safety seems to become a hot topic only after a school shooting, safety needs to be a year-round focus for schools and districts. It's especially timely with October's upcoming Safe Schools Week. How do schools prepare for events ranging from playground injuries and bus accidents to school threats and everything in between?

Join **school safety experts** Gary Sigrist, Jr. and Dr. Scott Poland as they discuss the various layers of school safety and emergency response planning. Topics will include how to develop an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP); including plan administration, staff training, exercises, technology and school culture.



**Five Layers of School Safety**  
Wednesday, October 12 (9:00am PT / 12:00pm ET)  
<http://bit.ly/Oct2016SafetyWebinar>

Attendees will learn about:

- What they can do to prepare for safety events
- Who should be in charge during an incident
- How to start developing an Emergency Operations Plan
- Tips on working with local first responders
- How students can help improve school safety

**BONUS:** Webinar attendees will receive a free white paper, **Five Layers of School Safety**.

[Register for this free professional development webinar today](#). The information and resources shared will help ensure your school or district is a safe environment where students can learn and be set up for academic success.

**-West's Education team**  
**SchoolMessenger solutions**  
[info@schoolmessenger.com](mailto:info@schoolmessenger.com)

## **LEGISLATIVE / HEADLINE RECAPS**

### **Creepy Clown Hoaxes Causing Schools Problems in Southeast**

Law enforcement officials have been warning that people involved in a rash of creepy clown hoaxes across Alabama could be prosecuted. Threats of clowns luring kids into woods or attacking students at school have been spreading fear on social media and causing school lockdowns across the state for several weeks. The trend started last month in the Carolinas and at least one threat in Alabama has been linked to a call originating in Georgia. Some police departments have identified and arrested suspects who have used the clown persona to make threats against schools. A fearful 11-year-old Georgia girl was in trouble after taking a knife to school to protect herself from the threats.

### **Parents Need to Be Prepared for Lockdowns Too**

Sharon Holbrook believes that parents need to be as prepared as students are for school emergencies. The Cleveland-based writer, who also pens parenting columns for the Washington Post, says that many school crisis situations are exacerbated by poor communication with parents. Holbrook bases her opinion on personal experience and discussions with other moms. She points out the obvious — that parents are not trained emergency responders — and suggests ways that they need to be included in the school's crisis preparation.

### **Central Florida school districts looking for nearly 100 teachers**

Central Florida school districts are still seeking to hire nearly 100 teachers, more than a month after classes started. They attribute the vacancies to stiff competition for candidates, high numbers of retiring teachers and growing student enrollment.

### **Broward promotes twins who opted out of state test**

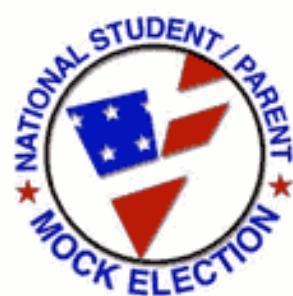
It took a legal battle but twins Dylan and Jadyn Paternoster on Monday returned to Manatee Bay Elementary as fourth-graders despite the principal's objections.

### **An extra hour a day goes a long way for Florida's 'Lowest 300' schools**

For 311 Florida elementary schools, that's the length of time they've been told to extend their day this year, just to focus on reading. It could be the fix that lifts them off the list of lowest performing schools on the state's language arts test. Or not.

### **Participate in Mock-Election Day**

The National Student/Parent Mock Election's Mock-Election Day is November 3, 2016. You can register your school or district to participate in a free civic education project that educates students about the value of taking part in the democratic process. Teachers and students who join the project get to review candidate profiles, discuss issues and cast their vote. An online ballot option makes it easily accessible from computers, laptops, tablets, and smartphones. Votes are tallied in real-time. The project gives students (and parents wishing to participate) all across the country the opportunity to cast their votes for candidates in both the federal and state elections. Participants can also vote on the issues they care about. For more information and to register, go to [www.nationalmockelection.org](http://www.nationalmockelection.org).



## **AND FINALLY...**

### **NSPRA's Tip of the Week - Exposing Your District: Using Photography to Focus Your Schools**

As school public relations professionals, we can rely too much on the written word and forget about the role visuals play in conveying our messages. A photograph is one of the most effective and simple ways to tell a story. In this Tip Sheet, NSPRA member Gail Kahover ([Kahover.g@nb27.org](mailto:Kahover.g@nb27.org)) shares some tips for making you a better photographer and bring your messages into focus. The tips cover

what makes a good photo, how you can take them, camera equipment — no, you don't need an expensive camera — and editing software.

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

*Kevin*

***Kevin Christian, APR, CPRC***

SUNSPRA President

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