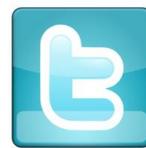




SUNSPRA

Sunshine State School
Public Relations Association



“Thursday Thoughts” – 5.18.17

Kevin Christian, APR, CPRC, SUNSPRA President

My goodness, what a week we’ve had with Tallahassee. At this point, it’s anyone’s guess what public school funding will look like. Regardless, [here’s a brief cartoon](#) offered by the Florida House to explain its version of House Bill 7069. SUNSPRA members and others recognize there’s lots of information NOT included or covered in this cartoon. Read the news item mentioned later for more details on this.

Meantime, a panel of judges is reviewing, scrutinizing, and scoring the entries for this year’s SUNSPRA Medallion Awards. Will you be among the winners? Here’s a look at what you can expect from SUNSPRA at next month’s FASA conference in Orlando:

Wed., June 14, 11am—12:15pm – “Managing Media with Class” with Kevin Christian, APR, CPRC, Marion County Public Schools

Wed., June 14, 11am-12:15pm - “You Went Viral! Now... What Do You Do?” with Ben Tobias, Public Information Officer, Gainesville (FL) Police Department (moved up from Thursday)

Wed., June 14, 1:30pm-2:45pm – “Social Media: Handling Hateful Posts” with Greg Turchetta, Collier County Public Schools

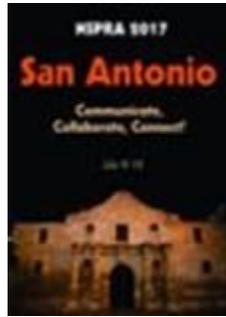
Wed., June 14, 3:15pm general session – MEDALLION AWARDS

******UPDATED: June 14, 5PM - Dinner sponsored by SchoolMessenger and Peachjar @ The Capital Grill on I-Drive. This dinner is for superintendents, CIOs and PIOs/PR officers. Additional guests may attend at their own expense. Thanks to Nancy Gallardo and Quintin Graves, respectively with School Messenger and Peachjar, for sponsoring this great opportunity for high-level networking, great food and conversation, connections, and relationship building.***

OPTIONAL: Thurs., June 15 – 11am-12:15pm – Medallion Award Workshop (if enough RSVPs)

For more information on the FASA conference, [click here](#).

Come July, NSPRA's annual conference heads west to San Antonio, TX. Conference hotels are already sold out but NSPRA offers a great concierge service that will find you another room AND put you on the waiting list for free! Here are details on this year's NSPRA Conference in San Antonio (click the graphic):



Communicate, Collaborate, Connect!

Join us for the [64th Annual Seminar](#) in San Antonio, July 9-12, 2017
[Hyatt Regency San Antonio Riverwalk](#)

FLORIDA LEGISLATIVE & ISSUES UPDATE THIS WEEK

Hillsborough school superintendent turns down raise, gets three-year contract

The Hillsborough School Board gave superintendent Jeff Eakins a new three-year contract, telling him at a meeting Tuesday evening that they were amazed he turned down offers of a raise.

[Read Full Story](#)

Florida School Boards Association joins chorus seeking HB 7069 veto

Florida has two groups advocating on behalf of school boards, and they are not always asking for the the same things.

[Read Full Story](#)

Superintendents unite around call for HB 7069, K-12 budget veto

Florida's school district superintendents are speaking in one voice now against HB 7069 and the Legislature's approved K-12 public schools spending for next year. The association representing the superintendents is joining a chorus of calls on Gov. Rick Scott to veto HB 7069, as almost all of the state's school boards and a slew of other groups are doing. The superintendents also want Scott to reject \$23.7 billion in primary funding for K-12 schools, over opposition to the Legislature's approved increase of only 0.34 percent in spending per student. ([more](#))

Scott faces increasing pressure on school funding

The chorus of voices calling for Gov. Rick Scott to veto a controversial education bill — and perhaps part of the state budget for public schools — grew Tuesday, even as supporters tried to push back. Two of the state's major education organizations — the Florida School Boards Association and the Florida Association of District School Superintendents — sent letters to Scott on Tuesday asking him to nix a wide-ranging schools bill (HB 7069) unveiled on the next-to-last business day of the 2017 legislative session. ([more](#))

Florida school boards: Education bill 'substantially flawed,' 'unworthy' of Scott's approval

Add the Florida School Boards Association to the growing list of groups calling for a veto of HB 7069, the mammoth \$419 million K-12 public schools bill Republican lawmakers unveiled and passed in the final days of their annual session. In a letter to Gov. Rick Scott on Tuesday, the FSBA -- which represents 64 of the state's 67 elected county school boards -- calls the bill "substantially flawed and unworthy of your approval to be enacted into law." ([more](#))

RECESS & TESTS: How key education issues landed in the Legislature

After all the discussion and number-crunching around funding cuts and teacher salary structures that

took place immediately following the adoption of the state education budget in Tallahassee last week, educational leaders now have more time to think about some of the policy-related initiatives that came out of the 2017-18 legislative session.

[Read Full Story](#)

Florida House takes to YouTube to defend its education bill in cartoon form

The Florida House took to YouTube on Saturday to defend and explain the massive education bill lawmakers approved five days earlier, using an animated video to respond to “rumors and gossip” about the legislation. The bill (HB 7069) is deeply controversial, with the Senate barely passing it on a 20 to 18 vote, and many education advocates urging Gov. Rick Scott to veto the 277-page, multi-pronged measure. But House leaders call the legislation “transformational and sweeping education reform,” saying it will provide good teacher bonuses, help students in struggling schools, mandate recess and cut back on testing. ([more](#))

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HZ2x06Qxvrg&app=desktop>

Florida Labor Leaders, Parents Urge Veto of Education Bill

After barely surviving a Senate vote, the \$419 million education package - House Bill 7069 - is now headed to Gov. Rick Scott's desk; while many are hoping its journey will end in a veto. After debating a number of education issues, the Florida Legislature conducted closed-door meetings in the final hours that resulted in a nearly 300-page bill. The final draft included more than 60 different policies that impact public education. One such policy is a controversial \$140 million program that could close some struggling schools as early as this summer and use public money to build charter schools. Rich Templin with the Florida AFL-CIO said the bill leaves people across the state hanging. ([more](#))

Proposed Florida law would steer federal money away from poor students, districts say

Catalina Fernandez sat in her tiny, light-blue office with three young boys who needed a little extra help focusing on their goals for the week. The work, she said, is critical to the success of Pasco County's Hudson Elementary School, where 85 percent of the students are considered low-income and 40 percent require extra academic help. To keep track, the school's two guidance counselors post a weekly calendar of meetings like this one. "But in a school like ours, with the challenges we face every day, many times we are being called away," the counselor said. "We try to maintain a schedule. But that is very difficult." It's about to become more so. ([more](#))

Orange County Public Schools is instituting a new policy: “Everyone who qualifies for a state (blue vendor) badge will be required to provide proof they are authorized to work in the U.S. – BADGES WILL ONLY BE DISTRIBUTED UPON RECEIPT OF PROOF TO WORK IN THE U.S.

NATIONAL ISSUES THIS WEEK

Federally Funded Voucher Program Has Negative Effect on Student Achievement

A new study shows that students involved in Washington, D.C.'s school voucher program [performed worse on standardized tests](#) within a year after entering private schools than peers who remained in the public schools. Overall, D.C. students who used vouchers had significantly lower math scores, and voucher students in kindergarten through fifth grade turned in significantly lower reading scores. The review of the nation's only federally funded voucher initiative follows several other recent studies of state-funded vouchers in Louisiana, Indiana and Ohio that suggested negative effects on student achievement. Critics are pointing to the results as they try to counter the Trump administration's push to direct public dollars to private schools.

Public School Advocates Fighting Arizona School Voucher Expansion

Public education advocates in Arizona have [launched a referendum campaign](#) to halt the controversial expansion of the state's school-voucher-style Empowerment Scholarship Accounts program. Members of [Save Our Schools Arizona](#) are gathering signatures to refer their proposal to the November 2018 ballot. Recently signed into law by Governor Doug Ducey, the expansion opens the program to all public- and charter-school students. Estimates show up to 30,000 parents could use the ESAs by 2022. The program diverts almost all of a student's state funds from their local school

district for private school tuition or other educational expenses. ESAs were originally intended for select students, including those with disabilities and those from poor-performing schools.

School Social Media Policies Back in the Spotlight

With practically every adolescent and teen carrying cell phones packed with rapidly expanding social media options, educators and students alike are navigating new waters in schools across the nation. For example, several recent controversies in North Carolina — involving fighting, racial slurs and alleged police brutality — were all [ignited by social media postings](#). Many observers there are suggesting that parents and schools have not kept up with the social media explosion and that it's time to reexamine policies and practices. Meanwhile in Wisconsin, four public schools in Madison are doing just that via a pilot program that is [blocking student access](#) to a host of popular social media apps — including Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and 30 others. Officials say the effort will test whether student behavior, school safety and grades improve with [fewer online distractions](#). The results will be used in reassessing district policy on social media.

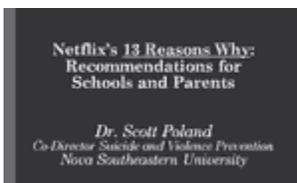
Resource — Two Resources Dealing With Netflix's *13 Reasons Why*

Thanks to our colleagues at the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) as well as school psychologist Dr. Scott Poland, we can share two resources to deal with the possible ramifications of the Netflix program. Thanks to international consultant and speaker Dr. Stephen Sroka, who specializes in the well-being of adults and our students, we have permission to use the PowerPoint of Dr. Scott Poland. NSPRA has worked with Dr. Poland through NASP and learned from him during the Columbine tragedy many years ago.

Here are the two resources:



- NASP: [13 Reasons Why Netflix Series: Considerations for Educators](#)



- Dr. Scott Poland: [Netflix's 13 Reasons Why: Recommendations for Schools and Parents](#) (PowerPoint)

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

Kevin

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