



CINDY WARNER, APR

Cindy Warner, APR has served as the Public Relations and Community Education Supervisor for the Shelby County School District in Birmingham, AL since 2002. She has over 30 total years of combined experience working in the media, and in non-profit and school public relations.

Cindy is actively involved in the Alabama School Public Relations Association (ALSPRA), where she has served three terms as president and in other leadership roles. Cindy currently serves as the NSPRA Southeast Region Vice President on the NSPRA Executive Committee and as the board liaison on the NSPRA APR Committee. She also serves as a facilitator for the online2learn APR Study Course. Cindy is a past recipient of NSPRA’s Gold Medallion and Golden Achievement awards, as well as numerous awards from ALSPRA and ACEA, including the Nez Calhoun Distinguished Service Award and Communicator of the Year awards from ALSPRA, and the Outstanding Coordinator award from ACEA.



PATRICIA WEINZAPFEL

Patricia Weinzapfel recently retired from the Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation in Indiana. For the past ten years, she served as the district’s Executive Director of Family Engagement. Prior to working in education, Patricia spent 15 years in broadcast journalism. She graduated from Northwestern University and is the author of Closing the Loop, A Powerful and Practical Guide to School-Home Communication (expected February 2022). Patricia currently works with schools and districts across the nation as a school-home communication consultant.



Spring Conference

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2022

7:00 PM. #TNSPRANightOut

Join us at the Harpeth Hotel in Franklin, TN, for drinks and hors d'oeuvres.

Sponsored by Apptegy

130 2nd Avenue North, Franklin, TN 37064, in the heart of Historic Franklin, within steps of boutiques, antique stores, one-of-a-kind restaurants and, nightlife.

Parking for the mixer is at Second Avenue Parking Garage - 108 2nd Ave S, Franklin, TN 37064

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2022

Public Safety Center, 304 Beasley Court, Franklin, TN

A special thanks to Williamson County Schools for hosting our conference.

8:00 Breakfast & Welcome, Kate Crowder, TNSPRA President

8:15 A Seat at the Table: Strategic Leadership, Cindy Warner, APR

Being a great leader starts with developing actionable skills that help move school communication professionals from simply being tacticians to strategic advisors. Learn what skills are needed to elevate your work performance and ensure that you have a seat at the leadership table.

9:30 Break

9:45 Using Communication to Bring Families into the Learning Process, Patricia Weinzapfel

Covid taught us-communicating with families is not just nice, it’s absolutely necessary. But the jargon, acronyms, and authoritative tone we use and the overwhelming information we provide can sometimes create barriers. This interactive session will equip you with usable tips and techniques to communicate more effectively with families

11:00 Lunch, Sponsored by Blackboard



LESLEY BRUINTON, APR

Lesley Bruinton is a nationally-acclaimed school public relations practitioner having served in the field for more than a decade. The Accredited in Public Relations practitioner has more than 20 years of professional experience including a stint as a broadcast journalist.

In this chapter of her career, Lesley serves as the Executive Vice President of Nichols Strategies, LLC, where she manages the day-to-day operations of the company to assist school districts in resolving communications challenges. Ever the strategist, Lesley is able to synthesize issues quickly and offer solutions to superintendents and communication leaders.

Lesley is a past president of the National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) where she led the organization through a critical juncture leading to the hiring of a new executive director, the creation of a strategic plan and an increase in membership. She is also a two-time past president of the Alabama School Public Relations Association. Lesley is a 2020 AASA Women in School Leadership Award winner and a three-time NSPRA Gold Medallion winner, the association's highest honor.

She is an innovator in her field who seeks to provide thought leadership and advocacy of the profession. A hallmark of her work is the understanding that the strategic use of communication and creativity can assist in solving organizational challenges. Lesley is based in Alabama where she resides with her husband and two school-aged children. Her family is guarded by a rescue dog whose bark is worse than his bite.

12:00 Communicating with Different Audiences, Lesley Bruinton, APR

Educators know the importance of differentiating instruction for children, but districts must also tailor communications to meet the unique needs and interests of internal and external audiences. Through a choose-your-own-adventure learning experience, discover best practices communicating with different audiences.

1:15 Cybersecurity, Craig Williams, ALSPRA

2:00 Break

2:15 Hold Please, Developing Holding Statements for Crisis Communications, Cindy Warner, APR

When a crisis happens the media often calls before all the facts of a situation have been determined. This session will teach you how to be prepared with sample holding statements that allow you to acknowledge the situation while still gathering the details. More importantly it gives the media something they can use immediately and helps school PR pros avoid the absolute “no-no” of saying “No Comment”.



Are you following us virtually? Please email kathleen.crowder@gmsdk12.org for meeting invitations.