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Western Workshop

For those of you in our western region, please join Us for a PenSPRA West/AIU PR Role-Alike Meeting on Sept. 26, 2014 at 12:30 pm. Award-winning journalists Susan Morgans and Laura Pace Lilley of Mt. Lebanon Magazine will discuss how public relations officers can sharpen their pitches to the media, and pump up press releases to garner better media coverage. They will also provide participants tips for writing for the web and social media. These seasoned journalists have extensive backgrounds in writing feature and breaking-news articles, and both are Golden Quill winners. Lunch will be provided at the session, which will be held at the AIU Central Office, located at 475 East Waterfront Drive in Homestead. Please RSVP to Sarah McCluan at Sarah.McCluan@aiu3.net by Sept. 24, 2014.

Part 2 of the poll

The second part of the Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup poll on American's opinions on public education has been released. The focus of this section was on teachers and curriculum. Some highlights include: Six of 10 Americans said entrance requirements into teacher preparation programs should be more rigorous.

61% of Americans opposed using student standardized test scores to evaluate teachers.

For the first time in the five years that we asked the question, American trust and confidence in teachers declined; nonetheless a majority of Americans (64%) said they trust teachers.

A majority of Americans (58%) said the curriculum used in their community's schools needs to change. More Americans agree than disagree that students should have shorter summer breaks and longer breaks at other times of year — akin to a year-round school scenario.

Click here for the full report

http://pdkintl.org/noindex/PDKGallupPoll_Oct2014.pdf

Membership

Thanks to those of you who have already sent in your PenSPRA membership renewals. If you haven't had a chance yet, you can renew online with a credit card here

http://www.penspra.org/protected/PenSPRA_MemberSignup.aspx

Or you can find an application to mail in with a check here

<http://www.penspra.org/BecomeaMember.aspx>

It's 2014. What's happening with NCLB?

2014 is the target year for NCLB legislation; the year when all American students would cross the line into proficiency. While our students have made gains, work remains to be done. What happens next with this legislation that forced such dramatic changes in our schools? NSBA is asking this question for us and attempting to get some answers out of Washington.

<http://nsba.org/newsroom/nsba-urges-us-senate-action-esea>

National panel on current education issues

The Network for Public Education is sponsoring a Webinar on current education issues. The webinar is available to anyone with internet access through live streaming on the web, Saturday Oct 11 from noon to 5. You can find more information here

<http://t.co/CwR7msO32y>.

Job Opportunity

The State College Area School District is looking for a Director of Communications, as PenSPRA Executive board member Julie Miller has moved on to a new position at Penn State. Thank you for your service to PenSPRA Julie, and good luck! Details on the position are here goo.gl/BnJk0P

PA Newsmakers

The Sept 14th episode of Pennsylvania Newsmakers has a good general description of education funding issues in PA. Perhaps it would be of interest to some members of your community. It describes the problems school districts are facing with education funding. The segment begins around the 14 minute point. <http://www.newsmakerstv.com/shows/governors-race-unions-and-public-school-funding.html>

News from around the state and nation

Editorial on the property tax reform bill

http://www.pennlive.com/opinion/index.ssf/2014/05/yes_property_taxes_need_to_be.html

These two articles offer an explanation on the argument over how Corbett has funded schools, as campaign ads continue to confuse the public

<http://www.factcheck.org/2014/06/playing-politics-with-education/>

http://blog.pennlive.com/capitol-notebook/2014/09/corbetts_key_electoral_battleg.html

Many were surprised last week when Corbett called for a review of the PA Common Core, which has been approved, but the review hearings have now been postponed.

<http://www.post-gazette.com/news/education/2014/09/18/House-education-committee-postpones-hearings-on-Pa-version-of-Common-Core/stories/201409180275>

Why was Ron Tomalis in New York City speaking to private investors on how to sell technology to schools?

<http://www.post-gazette.com/news/education/2014/09/21/Tomalis-spent-time-in-NYC-advising-private-equity-investors/stories/201409210080>

The executive branch in PA retains email for a very short time period, and a newspaper is suing to lengthen the time. (open records issue)

<http://www.post-gazette.com/news/politics-state/2014/09/16/Post-Gazette-sues-state-over-email-retention-policy/stories/201409160069>

The pension reform bill isn't making much headway

<http://www.post-gazette.com/news/politics-state/2014/09/15/Pension-overhaul-languishing-in-Pa-Legislature/stories/201409150022>

Legislation on school construction, snow make-up days and a statewide accounting website has now passed both the House and Senate

http://www.pennlive.com/politics/index.ssf/2014/09/house_passes_education_bill_th.html

New report from Brown University cites lack of access, transparency and accountability in charter schools

<http://annenberginstitute.org/?q=news/2014/09/17/charter-school-law-authorizer-practices-need-upgrades-strengthening-address-rapid-gr>