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Franklin Regional High

When tragedy strikes, such as the April 9 incident in the Franklin Regional School District near Pittsburgh, it hits home for all school PR practitioners. Our thoughts immediately go to those who are managing the crisis, as well as those whose lives have been impacted by this senseless violence. And it is in these unfortunate situations that we are reminded to make sure our crisis plans are updated and ready to be implemented. Crisis has no geographical boundaries. PenSPRA is here for all Pennsylvania school districts.

Symposium Survey

The PenSPRA Symposium was held last week in Bedford Springs. It was a great day of sharing and learning. Look for a summary of the writing techniques shared by our keynote speaker in the next issue of e-Comm. If you weren't able to make it, we hope you were able to follow on PenSPRA's facebook or twitter.

Whether you attended or not, we hope you can take a few minutes to respond to our survey about the Symposium. Your input is very valuable to us in planning next year's Symposium

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1yIMkL-pQveAeZ4VqD0OjSjdul3MJrOBZXg5QM_na2qM/viewform

Eastern and western regional workshop dates

Save the date for the eastern region workshop – 9 am to 12 pm on Friday, June 6th at the Montgomery County IU. Look for details on the agenda in the next issue of e-Comm.

The western region will be having a workshop on June 20 at 1pm at the Allegheny Intermediate Unit. Pittsburgh Post-Gazette education reporter Mary Niederberger will discuss what to expect from the media during a school crisis.

Foundation conference looking for volunteers; earn free sessions

The National School Foundation Association is holding its national conference in Philadelphia from Wednesday May 7 to Friday, May 9. They are looking for volunteers to help staff the event. If you volunteer for the conference you can attend conference sessions for free. It's a great opportunity for PR professionals with Foundations in their school districts, who serve on Foundation boards, or who are thinking of starting one. Volunteers are needed for registration, logistics and more. If interested, please contact Christine Liberaski at liberacd@npenn.org.

To see a listing of workshops at the conference, click here <http://www.schoolfoundations.org/index.cfm?nodeID=71537&audienceID=1>

Member requests

The Allegheny IU is looking for an intern. Details on the position are here. Please contact Sarah McCluan at Sarah.McCluan@aiu3.net to apply.

Mars Area School District will host the seventh annual Flipped Learning Conference (FlipCon 2014), June 23-25 at Mars Area High School. Jon Bergmann and Aaron Sams, educators and co-authors of "Flipped Learning: Gateway to Student Engagement," and Molly Schroeder, Google Education Summits presenter and Edina Public Schools technology integration specialist, will serve as keynote speakers. For more information, click here

Finally, the Watson Institute and KEYTEX Energy are partnering with The Pittsburgh Riverhounds to host the 2nd annual Special Kick Clinic, a FREE afternoon of soccer fun for kids and young adults with special needs and their siblings at Highmark Stadium on Sunday, April 27 from 1-3 p.m. The clinic will be led by Pittsburgh Riverhounds coaches and players along with players from The Riverhounds Academy youth development program and other volunteers. Exhibitor tables are also available. Register online at www.thewatsoninstitute.org.

SchoolMessenger webinar

Register now for an information-rich webinar that will give you a head start on building and launching a successful district app, with a one hour professional development session exclusively for PenSPRA members. You'll learn the latest trends in mobile app development for K12 and beyond. Includes insights learned from hundreds of app launches including: the 3 distinct approaches to app development and which may be right in your district; the most popular content types and how to source them; and the latest research to help justify your app investment. You'll get actionable tips including creative ideas for funding your app. Join us Tuesday, April 22, 2014 at 11:30 a.m for this information-rich webinar to get a head start on building and launching a successful district app.

<https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/420461529>

News from around the state and nation

Is your district's vo-tech school experiencing growth like this? And if so, is your department helping to communicate the issue?

http://articles.philly.com/2014-04-07/news/48943374_1_chester-county-intermediate-unit-coatesville-programs

Recent national article about high school rankings

<http://apps.washingtonpost.com/local/highschoolchallenge/schools/2014/list/pennsylvania-schools/>

Teacher are speaking out against testing

<http://www.thenation.com/blog/179193/brooklyn-teachers-push-back-against-high-stakes-testing#>

Cyber snow day legislation

http://www.pennlive.com/midstate/index.ssf/2014/03/proposal_would_allow_cyber_sno.html

Public school students make up the vast majority of students at Ivy league schools

<http://blog.centerforpubliceducation.org/2014/04/04/public-high-schools-are-prominent-in-ivy-league-rosters/>

How testing changes what a teacher teaches, written by teachers

http://hechingerreport.org/content/testing-taking-schools-teachers-one-school-explain_15431/

Good reference on how PSSA's are administered, for someone unfamiliar with the process

<http://www.mcall.com/news/local/mc-pssa-testing-atmosphere-20140330,0,1783387.story?page=3>

Revenue estimates for PA are down in recent months

http://www.pennlive.com/midstate/index.ssf/2014/04/pa_revenue_taxes_shortfall_tom.html

Lengthy interview with Diane Ravitch on testing, charters and poverty

<http://billmoyers.com/episode/public-schools-for-sale/>

What is happening in New York City with the new mayor and charter schools?

<http://www.nybooks.com/blogs/nyrblog/2014/mar/27/new-york-charters-against-deblasio/?insrc=hpss>