

Ecomm July 17

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Welcome from Vicki Flotta, President

Welcome to the 2013-2014 school year! I hope the summer has been a time for you to catch up on some projects that got pushed to the back-burner during the 2012-2013 school year, rest a little bit and “re-charge your batteries” in time for staff and students to return to school in a few weeks.

I am extremely honored to be serving as PenSPRA’s President for the next two school years, and at the same time, extremely nervous, because I have the distinct pleasure of following our Immediate Past President Nicole McGalla. Nicole did a fantastic job leading our organization the past two years and keeping it strong through a difficult time in the history of public education in Pennsylvania. For as tall as I am, my feet are on the short side, but hopefully I’ll grow into those large shoes that Nicole left me to fill! (If you don’t know me, I apologize for the bad joke, but if you know me, you knew it was only a matter of time before I threw in a bad joke. I thought I would get it out of the way early!)

I look forward to working with our dedicated Executive Board and our Executive Director to keep PenSPRA a growing and vital organization; one that is not only valuable to its members, but also essential to school districts and IUs across the state. More than ever, PenSPRA must continue to provide our members with the most up-to-date information and tools to position all of our jobs (regardless of the title) as a key component to the success of public education in Pennsylvania. Remember, PenSPRA is here to help you whenever you need us.

Please feel free to contact me or anyone on our Executive Board if you have an issue that you need help with or if there is something you would like PenSPRA to focus on as we begin another school year together. And thanks to everyone who has kept the conversation going on Linked In! The responses on Linked In are a great example of the willingness of PenSPRA members to share with one another and I encourage everyone to join our group on Linked In if you haven’t already done so. It’s another great example of the value of your membership.

It won’t be long before the students are back and we’ll be engrossed in the full swing of another school year. No matter what issues you encounter, keep your chin up, a smile on your face and never forget how valuable you are.

Thank you for the trust you have placed in me as your President. If we haven’t met, I look forward to doing so, either meeting you at a workshop, our symposium or through a phone call or an email. Feel free to contact me if there’s anything I can do to help! Here’s to a successful 2013-2014 school year!

Best wishes!  
Vicki F. Flotta  
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#### Nuggets and Other Tips from NSPRA

The NSPRA conference was held in San Diego last week, and a twitter search found some useful links and great quotes I thought I would share. One request from our colleagues across the country is to begin to use the hashtag #schoolpr if you are on twitter. This way we can all find useful information about school PR news from across the country by simply searching "schoolpr." Technology is changing the face of professional development, and making it available in convenient and inexpensive ways.

Make a note in your calendar (and your budget) that the NSPRA Annual Conference for 2014 is being held in Baltimore, Maryland, from July 13-16, 2014. This location should allow us to have a good sized PenSPRA group in Baltimore next summer!

Here is some of the information from the conference, via twitter.

#### Social Media Tips

[http://prezi.com/wmhuhbhikmcw/how-can-a-school-district-engage-digitally/?utm\\_campaign=share&utm\\_medium=copy](http://prezi.com/wmhuhbhikmcw/how-can-a-school-district-engage-digitally/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy)

#### Email marketing techniques

<http://michaelallenclark.com/sites/default/files/uploads/NSRPAwithNotes.pdf>  
<http://communication.aurora12.org/nspra2013/>

#### Common Twitter Mistakes (for the more advanced user)

<http://www.edudemic.com/2013/07/10-twitter-mistakes-youre-probably-making/>

#### Twitter Basics (for you or a teacher just getting started on twitter)

<http://leadingmotivatedlearners.blogspot.com/2013/07/twitter-getting-started.html?m=1>

#### Nugget Phrases

Conference attendees tweeted some of the phrases and ideas that really caught their attentions during keynotes and sessions. Some thought provoking ones below:

"Candor builds trust. It is truth with attitude, delivered now. The longer you wait, the more you must explain the gap." – Jim Lukaszweski, APR

"Victims want trust and truth. Truth is 15% fact & 85% emotion." - Jim Lukaszweski, APR

"One of the greatest battles we face is finding the truth when things happen." - Jim Lukaszweski, APR

"Silence is the most toxic strategy any leader can choose." - Jim Lukaszweski, APR

“Trouble is change in disguise.” - Jim Lukaszweski, APR

“Paradox: Our love for yesterday is challenged by our fear of tomorrow.” -Jim Lukaszweski, APR

“Determine if your information is a bite=twitter, snack=fb/email or a meal=web story?” -Kitty Porterfield

“The power of encouraging the dialogue is endless.” – Brian Woodland

Finally, this video was used during one of the keynote speeches at NSPRA. It is a palindrome. It could be interesting to share with teachers for back-to-school time. It is a neat conversation starter, on why things are not always as they appear.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=42E2fAWM6rA&feature=youtu.be>

## PenSPRA to Present for PASBO

Thanks to President Vicki Flotta and member Cecile Bowman for working with PASBO to present “The Ups and Downs of Social Media” via webcast in October. Currently the potential date of the broadcast is Wednesday, October 23 from 9:30 – 11:00 AM.

Here’s a little more information about the broadcast:

Using social media in schools doesn't have to be scary. While social media in education continues to be something of a hot topic with arguments both for and against, more and more schools are finding ways to effectively use social media to provide communication from the school to students and parents, promote school activities, and provide a central page where students and teachers can share information. Join us for this webcast that will discuss the ups and downs of social media, and provide ideas on how you can harness these tools to expand communication with your communities. Learn about: Social Media as a Communication Tool, Use policies in schools and Social Media tools including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn  
The intendend audience is Business Managers, Communications Directors, Technology Directors and Superintendents . The invited speakers are Cecile D. Bowman, Director of Communications, Mt. Lebanon SD and Vicki Flotta, Director of Public Relations, Bethel Park SD.

## News From Around the State and Nation

An Editorial on Standardized Testing from the New York Times. (Note: Overall this is a strong piece, but it fails to clarify American performance on international tests, taking the default position that we do poorly. As we have discussed in prior issues of e-Comm Alert, American students in many sub groups and subjects are tops in the world, and in other subjects are not as far behind as the media claims.)

[http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/14/opinion/sunday/the-trouble-with-testing-mania.html?smid=tw-share&\\_r=1&](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/14/opinion/sunday/the-trouble-with-testing-mania.html?smid=tw-share&_r=1&)

Thorough Article on the New Teacher Evaluation System Here in PA

[http://www.lehighvalleylive.com/bethlehem/index.ssf/2013/07/pennsylvania\\_rolling\\_out\\_new\\_t.html](http://www.lehighvalleylive.com/bethlehem/index.ssf/2013/07/pennsylvania_rolling_out_new_t.html)

NCLB Waiver Update

<http://triblive.com/news/allegheeny/4296703-74/waiver-education-pennsylvania#ixzz2Z6h72Rs0>

Another version of NCLB update

[http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/campaign-k-12/2013/07/house\\_lawmakers\\_set\\_to\\_debate\\_.html](http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/campaign-k-12/2013/07/house_lawmakers_set_to_debate_.html)