

**BOARD BRIEF**

Date: July 19, 2019

For ACTION \_\_\_\_\_  
For INFORMATION X\_\_\_\_  
Board Agenda: Yes \_\_\_  
No X\_\_\_

**FROM:** Helen Lloyd, Director of Communications  
**THROUGH:** Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr., Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools  
**TO:** The Honorable Cindy Anderson, Chair, and Members of the Alexandria City School Board  
**TOPIC:** Update from the Office of Communications on the National School Public Relations Association Conference

**SUMMARY:** The Office of Communications and the superintendent attended the National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) conference held in Washington DC from Sunday July 14 through Wednesday July 17. The conference offers a variety of skill sessions at a variety of levels from entry level to advanced strategic communication [training sessions](#). There is also a separate track for superintendents. The keynote speaker at this year’s conference was NPR journalist Michele Norris who gave insight into The Race Card project.

On the final day of the conference, the superintendent along with staff from the Office of Communications presented a Gold Mine session on tackling race and equity issues from a communications standpoint.

During the closing banquet, the Office of Communications received a Gold Medallion award, which is the highest honor from NSPRA for their strategic communication campaign: “Reinventing the Titans: Ending Modern-Day Segregation and Creating Equity at T.C. Williams High School.”

**BACKGROUND:**

Staff within the ACPS Office of Communications are members of two professional associations; the National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) and its local affiliate, the Chesapeake School Public Relations Association (CHESPRA). These are both under the umbrella of the Public Relations Society of America. These two associations provide professional development and opportunities to share ideas and collaborate with communication staff from other school divisions throughout the year. They also provide a network of support in case of a large-scale emergency. Communication staff from all over the country provided crisis communication support following the Columbine shooting incident, for example, while the communications director who oversaw communications during the Columbine incident now provides annual crisis communication training at NSPRA conferences.

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**RECOMMENDATION:** The Superintendent recommends the School Board reviews the information contained in this brief.

**IMPACT:** This professional development session supported the development of strategic thinking and communication skills within the Office of Communications.

**CONTACT:**

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