

JEA/NSPA OUTREACH: ON-SITE TRAINING

FALL 2015 | SUBMITTED BY SARAH NICHOLS, MJE

All journalism teachers and their students deserve support and training regardless of factors like location, funding and available resources. The JEA/NSPA convention model offers fantastic programming for our attendees, but the bottom line is that some of the teachers and students most in need are unable to attend.

As the summit between JEA and NSPA board members in Chicago revealed, both organizations want to do more to reach underserved populations and help struggling programs. Teachers sometimes are thrown into the journalism classroom to teach and advise with little or no training, and despite their best efforts, they are unable to get things rolling. They may not have money to print or host a website, and students quickly lose interest when their work has no audience. Or worse, they may get a publication up and running only to come under fire because students didn't have the necessary training and coaching in terms of law and ethics. Or they don't know organizations like JEA and NSPA exist and how we can help. They simply aren't connected.

GOALS:

- to reach teachers/students/programs unable to attend our conventions
- to help journalism classes gain sufficient skills necessary for producing student media
- to connect "outliers" to the greater scholastic journalism community (membership increase)
- to collaborate between JEA/NSPA to benefit both teachers and students

OVERVIEW:

Three teacher-trainers will work as a team for one year and will visit each location together to run a two-day workshop. The focus will be reporting/writing, law and ethics, visual presentation and leadership. Schools will apply to be selected and will undergo pre-training conferences online to establish goals and develop a relationship with the trainers. During the workshop, students and teachers will have direct instruction, hands-on practice and personal guidance from all three teacher-trainers. As part of the training, each school will set up a news website hosted by and funded by School Newspapers Online.

The trainers will be current high school advisers/teachers and will offer ongoing support as a PLC. Two or three workshops will take place during the same school year, with the idea of visiting different parts of the country (based on JEA and NSPA membership as well as applications and state director feedback).

The on-site training and ongoing outreach with schools in underserved areas gives us a chance to help build the foundation for teachers and their students and demonstrates JEA core values of pedagogy (putting excellent teachers in the classroom to provide solid instruction using best practices), advocacy and community (bringing together all types of teachers/programs and making connections for students and teachers through PLCs in a positive and supportive relationship).

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS:

This initiative does not affect the current budget. The initial plan calls for \$3,500 per training with the intention of training at two or three sites (\$10,500 maximum for one full year). This cost would be shared equally by JEA and NSPA (estimated \$5,250 maximum JEA expense) for the 2016-17 budget cycle.

NEXT STEPS:

At the Nov. 12 board meeting, I will make a full presentation to JEA and NSPA board members with Valerie Kibler. The presentation will outline details about school selection criteria, curriculum, budget, timeline and data collection. At the meeting, we hope to hear questions and incorporate input from all stakeholders. Based on the initial presentation and related feedback, I will craft an exact budget proposal in December and January for consideration at the winter budget meeting. I am happy to entertain as many questions as possible prior to the November board meeting as well and will continue to adjust the presentation based on all feedback I receive.