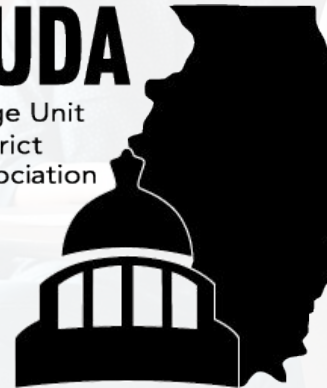


# 2023 Communications Conference

*A conference for Central Office Administrators presented  
by LUDA School Communication Experts*

**LUDA**  
Large Unit  
District  
Association



Monday, December 4 at Hotel Arista, Naperville

# Overview

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A one-day, in-person conference concentrating on communications for Central Office Administrators presented by LUDA and other School District Communication Experts.

Please [register](#) for this conference by Friday, November 17th.

**Make your Hotel Arista [reservation directly online](#) or call 630.579.7834.**

- If booking via phone, you must mention the “LUDA District Communication Seminar”, code LUD1223





# Agenda

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8:30 am - 11:45 pm  
General Sessions

11:45 pm - 12:15 pm  
Lunch

12:15 pm - 3:15 pm  
Breakout Sessions

*Proudly sponsored with support from  
Robbins Schwartz*



## **Interacting with the Media**

This session will be a panel presented by 3 LUDA Communication Directors who are also former journalists (both TV and print). They provide a unique perspective on school-media communications as they have worked in both arenas. They also have perspectives working in the Chicago TV market as well as Downstate TV and print markets. Topics will include: managing information flow, crisis messaging and spokesperson training, post-crisis evaluation, and building strong media relationships.

**Rachel Dyas, Coordinator of Public Relations,  
Media & Marketing, Springfield Public  
Schools District 186**

**Matt Rodewald, Director of Communications,  
Central CUSD 301**

**Dayna Brown, Director of  
Communications/Community Relations,  
McLean County Unit 5**

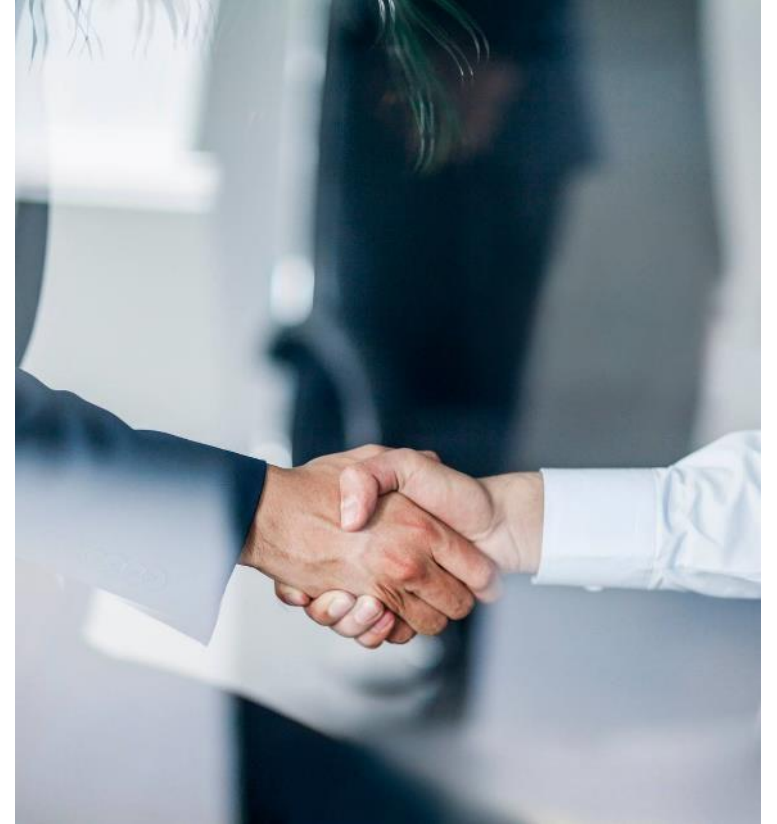
# 8:30 am to 9:30 am

Grand Ballroom, 1st Floor

## **Forging Your Path - Use Your Strategic Plan to Build Your Brand**

Your organization's strategic plan is the roadmap to its success. As a district leader, you play a critical role in keeping your district on the path to achieve its mission and vision. Learn how you can use the progress of a strategic plan to build your district's brand, and how to create connections that bring your staff, students, families and community along on your journey.

**Cathy Kedjidjian, APR, Executive Director of Communications & Strategic Planning, Glenview School District 34**



# 9:30 am to 10:30 am

Grand Ballroom, 1st Floor

## How to Best Utilize Your Communication Director: Why the Position Is So Important

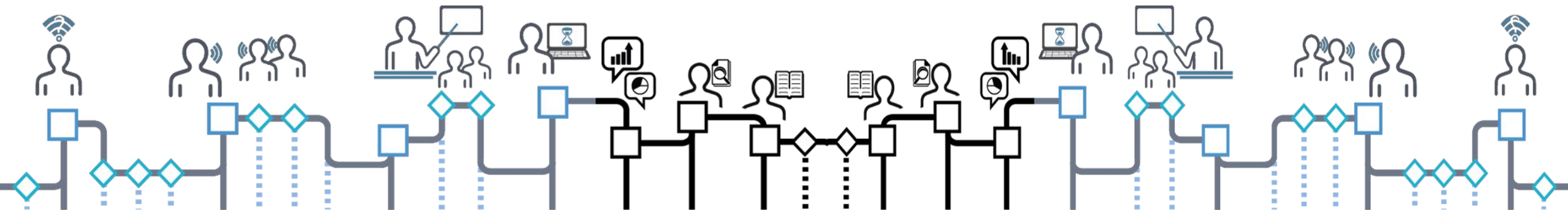
Communications Directors: How you can best utilize them in your district. What can you do if you don't have one?

Since the advent of social media and other new communications tools. The role of communications director has become more and more common, especially in larger districts. From crisis management, community engagement, media training for administrators, communications directors are a vital part of the leadership team in a school district. Hear from three veteran communications directors on how to best utilize this position.

**Jean Malek, Executive Director of Communications & Community Relations, Lake Zurich Community Unit School District 95**

**Denise Barr, APR, Director of Communications and Public Engagement, Huntley Community School District 158**

**Brett Clark, Director of Communications, Maine Township High School District 207**



# 10:45 am to 11:45 pm

Grand Ballroom, 1st Floor

# 12:15 pm to 1:15 pm



## **PR-HR Partnership: Working Together For The Good Of The District**

- Tasks assigned to school district Human Resources Departments are wide-ranging and constantly changing. Pairing up with your district's Communications Director may help you solve problems in ways you never would have imagined. This presentation will share examples of how Naperville 203's Communications and HR departments have come together to benefit the school community.
- Presenter: Alex Mayster, APR, Executive Director of Communications, Naperville CUSD 203 and Bob Ross, Chief Human Resources Officer Naperville CUSD 203.

## **Beyond the Redaction Marker: Tools and Strategies for Managing Difficult FOIA Requests**

- Some of the most challenging communications issues that school districts face can go hand-in-hand with some of the most complex FOIA requests they receive. Every superintendent and communications professional can benefit from understanding the scope of FOIA and obligations for responses, especially with regard to individuals who make frequent, broad, or sensitive requests for information and records. This session will cover some statutory limits on school districts' FOIA obligations, special types of requests, practical strategies for responses, and proactive steps for school districts to consider.
- Presenters: Matthew Swift, Associate, Robbins Schwartz; Catie Locallo, Partner, Robbins Schwartz

## **Compassionate Crisis Management: Guiding Schools Through Student and Staff Loss**

- Panel Discussion: In the face of tragedy, schools and districts often find themselves grappling with the unthinkable - the loss of a student or staff member. The emotional and logistical challenges that arise in such moments require careful navigation and strategic communication. This panel discussion aims to equip you with essential tools and insights to effectively address these delicate situations, including coordination with mental health professionals, considerations of cultural sensitivity and diversity, media management, and long-term healing and recovery.
- Moderator: Sydney Stigge-Kaufman, Executive Director of Communications and Strategic Partnerships, East St. Louis SD 189

# 1:15 pm to 2:15 pm



## **Social Media: A Love/Hate Relationship**

- In this session, participants will hear best practices surrounding social media use including why a social media policy is so important; staff use of social media; and knowing when, and when not to, respond to comments and/or inaccurate posts.
- Presenters: Erica Loiacono, Director of Community Engagement & Communications, Wheaton CUSD 200; Alex Mayster, Executive Director of Communications, Naperville Community Unit School District 203

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## **Brand Building and Effective Communications Through the Use of Multi-Tiered Communications**

- If you are not telling your story, someone else is. We will share how we turned communications around by creating a multi-tiered communications campaign that incorporates mailings, videos, social media and web to ensure that you are reaching your entire community - whether they have students in your schools or not.
- Presenters: Tonya Daniels, Executive Director of Communication and Community Relations, Elmhurst School District 205; Dr. Keisha Campbell, Superintendent, Elmhurst School District 205



# 2:15 pm to 3:15 pm

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## From the Heart to the Heart: Engaging Video Production on a Budget

- A cell phone, microphone, and a video editing software program is all you need to develop heartfelt, engaging, and motivating videos. In this session, attendees will see how easy it is to get started with video production, storyboard creation, shot-list development, and how to tell the district's story through video.
- Presenter: Brent Edwards, Director of Communications, Yorkville CUSD 115

## Understanding Today's Linear Media

- It's important for school districts to understand how fast today's news cycle is, what viewers are actually watching, and what you can do with or without the media to control the narrative. From big markets to small, there are a variety of factors that tell us there are different paths we can take for messaging going forward.
- Presenter: Matt Rodewald, Director of Communications, Central CUSD 301

## Leveraging Your Website for Success

- Your website is the communications hub and brand for your school district. Whether you are doing a complete overhaul or refreshing your design, it's important to do your research. In this workshop, we will review key foundational steps and things you should consider as well as current website trends that will help you engage your stakeholders, reach your goals and measure your success.
- Presenter: Denise Barr, Director of Communications and Public Engagement, Huntley 158