

# WHY CONVENTIONS MATTER

A quick resource in support of national journalism conventions and their impact on teachers, students



**Journalism Education Association (JEA) and National Scholastic Press Association (NSPA) conventions serve the educational program by providing opportunities beyond those available in the school setting, including these important benefits:**

- participation in a professional learning community
- Break with a Pro sessions with industry professionals
- campus recruiters, admissions officers and military representatives at trade show to help students with college and career planning
- media tours
- opportunities for enrichment and personal/school recognition
- teacher training and Certified or Master Journalism Educator certification testing

**For more information, visit JEA**

<http://jea.org/home/news-events/national-conventions/>

**NSPA**

<http://studentpress.org/nspa/conventions>



**JEA/NSPA conventions are endorsed by the National Association of Secondary School Principals**

## **Meet with members of a professional learning community**

"The chance to meet face to face with my journalism professional learning community truly energizes and refocuses progress toward our team's SMART goals each spring and fall. Collaborating with teachers who are actually in our content area (as opposed to building 'PLCs' cobbled together of singleton teachers) allows us to analyze valid data on student achievement to find out what works in the journalism classroom and implement new ideas to improve student learning. I know that my teaching has improved, and student learning has improved, based on my work with the National Journalism PLC." —*Jill Chittum, MJE, Bella Vista, Ark.*

## **Hone 21st-century skills**

"Conventions are the best value-added educational opportunity school boards can provide for student journalists and their advisers. Students gain that once in a lifetime chance to meet the likes of Bob Schieffer, Stone Phillips, Steve Lopez and Lisa Ling. We could never afford to bring these professionals to our schools. It also gives students a chance to hone 21st-century skills like collaboration, creativity, communication and problem-solving, which are career skills we hope all students will leave with when they graduate." —*Jane Blystone, MJE, school board director, North East (Pa.) School District*

## **Expose students to admissions officers, recruiters, experts in journalism**

"Participation and achievement in national competition bring not only value to the students' college marketability, but also prestige to the school. Students meet face to face with college reps geared to their particular interests. I've had students who were offered amazing deals for college admission right off the convention floor. Students' awareness of the infinite possibilities of a well-respected profession is greatly enhanced by the excitement generated at these conventions." —*Kimberly Messadieh, El Camino Real Charter High School, Woodland Hills, Calif.*

## **Test knowledge and gain recognition**

"Attending a national convention provides students opportunities beyond those available in the school setting. In addition to learning from America's foremost professional journalists and leading journalism advisers, they have the opportunity to test their knowledge and skill at the highest level against student journalists from around the nation." —*Gary Lindsay, MJE, retired teacher, current journalism mentor and JEA director, Region 3/North Central*

## **Provide life-changing experiences for students with limited resources**

"Besides the academic experience of the convention, taking low-income students — many of whom have never flown before, never stayed in a hotel, never toured another city — is a life-changing opportunity for them. It opens their eyes and minds to things they have heretofore not contemplated or experienced." —*Steve O'Donoghue, California Scholastic Journalism Initiative, Sacramento, Calif.*

## **Improve student achievement**

"When students see 5,000 other people their age come together for something bigger than themselves, it lights a spark in them that I've never been able to replicate. Conventions provide a push to be better; whether it's competing in Write-offs or being a Pacemaker finalist, success drives success and sets the bar high for next year's kids. Students who win awards get recognized, and that makes for good PR back home, but more importantly administrators and community members come away with a newfound respect for what advisers and student journalists do." —*Rod Satterthwaite, CJE, Dexter (Mich.) High School and JEA director, Region 6/Mid-Atlantic and Great Lakes*

## **Earn certification and highly-qualified status**

"Tests for Certified Journalism Educator (CJE) or Master Journalism Educator (MJE) certification take place at fall and spring conventions as well as "Get Certified" sessions specific to each area of the Journalism Education Association's Standards for Journalism Educators. Attending a JEA/NSPA national convention gives teachers the unique opportunity to demonstrate their qualifications to teach scholastic journalism and their commitment to students through this professional recognition. National certification through JEA provides tangible evidence of a highly-qualified journalism educator." —*Kim Green, MJE, Columbus (Ind.) North High School and chair, JEA Certification Commission*