EDA 612: Developing your Professional Network (CPSEL #4, 5 &6)

Kenneth M. Hill

EDA 612: Pro Development Seminar II

February, 25 2024

Professor Adam Bernstein

Clear Administrative Services Credential Program

National University

EDA 612: Assignment 3: Developing your Professional Network (CPSEL #4, 5 & 6)

**Assignment: As a school or district administrator, what are some professional organizations (district, regional, county, state, ASCD, AASA, etc.) that you should consider joining or accessing, that would increase your professional network and help you to grow as a school leader? If you already belong to one or more organizations, please describe. If not, which organizations are most relevant to you, and what describe why? How would you go about joining them? What specific skills or areas of growth would you like to learn from your peers or others in the organization(s), that you feel would most benefit you as a school leader and help you to grow professionally? What strengths do see in yourself, that you feel you would be able to contribute to a professional network? What benefits would an internal or external organization bring to you? (Please respond in a two-to-three-page reflective paper.)**

**Present Professional Organization Membership:**

[**USC Rossier School of Education Alumni Network:**](https://rossier.usc.edu/alumni)

USC Rossier School of Education offers their graduates an extensive networking community, offering diverse alumni engagement events and professional learning opportunities. SC is known to create and foster professional networking relationships represented in the large and varied alumni and partnerships within and beyond the Rossier School of Education. SC promotes and strengthens these many opportunities on dynamic social media platforms that broadcast professional and personal news, promote events and volunteer opportunities that align to and advance the mission of USC Rossier. As advertised, the USC Alumni Association’s mission is to encourage “the overall advancement of the University of Southern California by engaging all alumni for life, building a culture of philanthropy among the Trojan Family, and being the representative voice for all USC alumni” (<https://rossier.usc.edu/alumni>).

I have hosted one SCervice community volunteer event in 2022, but have been to busy to continue this sponsorship (<https://www.hemlockh.com/uscervice>). I recruited and organized a “beautification” event at my previous school site. I plan to repeat this sponsorship at my present location in the near future. I have been to a few guest speaker events, in-person and online. I plan to return to teaching as an adjunct as soon as I get done with my Professional Clear Credential program. The transition back into administration and relevant expectations was an anticipated demand that I did not want to compromise. As stated, I will also continue to follow SC speaker and community invites, usually on Linkedin and/or email to sponsored SC Events.

[**Associate Administration of Los Angeles (AALA)**](https://www.aala.us/)**:**

The Associated Administrators of Los Angeles (AALA) has been around since 1981, combining AESA (elementary association), LAASSA (secondary association), CDS (supervisory association) and ACCE (adult association), representing administration in the Los Angeles Unified School District. AALA is the exclusive bargaining unit for all certificated supervisors.

Personally, my only interaction with AALA is that I was “forced” to use a field-representative as a personal 3rd-party representation to guidethrough a “conference memo” initiated by my supervisor. This was an unwarranted and proved to be an unfounded accusation that caused a lot of stress and disappointment. However, I was forced to go through the process that allowed first-hand experience of the value of my union representation. I was and continue to be quite disappointed in their efforts and protection. Lately, my National University coach was nominated to a leadership role in AALA which is something of a personal interest down the road and closer to retirement. I would take the experiences, good and bad, and fight for the equitable strength AALA represents in any due process.

There are quite a few leadership opportunities that might be of future interest: **AALA President:** Chief Negotiator for AALA and selects members of the negotiating team. **Executive Board:** The oversight and policy level direction for the management of the Association. **Representative Assembly:** Policy-making body of the Associated Administrators of Los Angeles. **Members:** Grouped into six separate departments, each represented by a Vice President and two Directors. **School Support Administrator Department;** Nonschool-based administrators who serve in the central offices, local district offices and other external support services locations. **Classified Department:** Personnel assigned as Directors, Deputy Directors, Administrators, Managers, Specialists, and other administrative positions in Facilities, Food Services, Information Technology and Transportation. **Early Education Department:** Early Education Center PrincipalsT. **AALA Standing Committees: Political Action Committee (PAC):** Separate entity within the Associated Administrators of Los Angeles. Representative Assembly members serve a dual role as PAC members in order to distribute funds voluntarily collected from members for political action activities. **AALA Budget Committee:** Composed of active members selected by the President to represent each AALA Department, as well as the Executive Board Vice Presidents or their designees. **AALA Election Committee:** Composed of two members from each AALA Department selected by the Department Vice Presidents. The Committee is charged with reviewing nominations for AALA Executive Board elections and serving as the first appeal for any discrepancies in AALA Constitution and Bylaw voting procedures.

In all honesty, the little interaction with AALA as a protection, support, and representation of a fellow member at the school-site, the experience was so poor and resources so inadequate, this AALA structure is just another bureaucratic entity with glorified titles and unearned salaries. That sounds quite cynical and oversimplified; however, if you can’t protect and support the fundamental members on a fundamental level, it makes one a bona fide critic. As stated, if I desire one day to seek such “glorification,” I would try to serve and protect the front lines instead of my cv.

**Possible Networking:**

Here are a few organizations that I might consider. Firstly, I am deeply interested in academic research. The [**American Educational Research Association**](https://www.aera.net/) (**AERA**) is a respected organizationfocused on educational research in educational pedagogy. AERA’s 25,000 members include “scientists, teachers, students, administrators, state and local agencies, counselors, and evaluators.” Holding a doctorate in educational psychology, AERA is a forerunner in cognitive science, “sociology, history, economics, philosophy, anthropology, and political science.”

I receive emails and conference invites from [**The National Education Association** (**NEA**)](https://www.nea.org/)

, the largest labor union in the United States.I’ve thought about joining this network, but, at the secondary level, it seems more focused on certificated teaching. However, it looks like it also represents university teaching as well which would be applicable. I am impressed with the 3 million membership headquartered in Washington, D.C. I believe administrators, though not in the classroom, should be always refining instructional skills as instructional leaders.

Lastly, I read a lot of articles from the [Chronicles of Higher Education](https://www.chronicle.com/). A lot of the respected authors and scientists that are of intrinsic interest are published on this platform. This is also another membership that I have not committed to yet though the content is of high quality and keen scrutiny. Platforms like this would extend my understanding of unknown networks and would place on my radar of guest speakers, volunteer opportunities, international seminars, etc. This is one of a few platforms that the content matches the integrity of viable academic scientific scrutiny. This platform supports virtual events, career opportunities, and advice blogs tailored to the educator. I will be joining this membership in the near future.