



## **SPE Annual Conference 2023** **September 13-14** **The Essex, Essex, VT**

### **AGENDA**

*NC-SARA is pleased to facilitate and support the 2023 SPE Annual Conference! This year's program has been created by regional compact SARA staff and SPEs. It is designed to address the most pertinent SARA topics and provide multiple opportunities for discussion and engagement. We also hope to provide ample time for connection and sharing ideas with fellow attendees.*

**Registration Table:** Tue. evening - Lobby of Main Inn; Wed. morning – Ballroom  
**Conference:** Atrium  
**Meals:** Ballroom

**Wi-Fi      Network:** Essex-meetings  
**Wi-Fi      Password:** Teambuilding

*All times listed in Eastern*

### **Tuesday, September 12**

6:00 pm – 8:00 pm **Registration Table Open**

### **DAY ONE – September 13**

7:30 am      **Breakfast and Registration Table Open**

9:00 am      **Welcome**

- **Jared Abdirkin**, Director, SARA, New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE) & Co-Chair, Policy Implementation Team
- **Marianne Boeke**, Interim President & Vice President, Research and State Partnerships, NC-SARA
- **Heather Bouchey**, Deputy Secretary, Agency of Education, State of Vermont

- **Terri Taylor-Straut**, Senior Director, Educational Programs, NC-SARA
- **Michael Thomas**, President and CEO, New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE)

9:30 am

### SPE Leadership

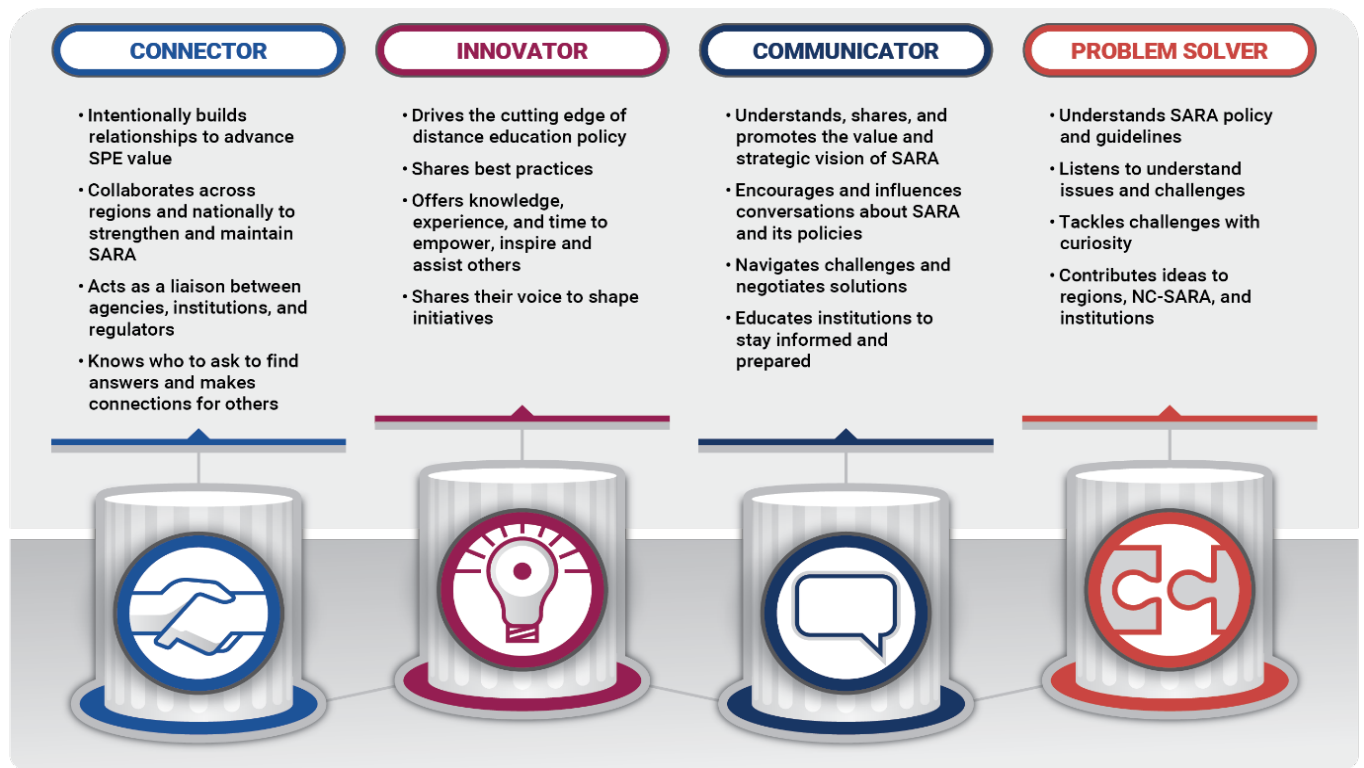
In this session, participants will learn about the four leadership pillars (Communicator, Connector, Innovator, Problem-Solver) that were developed by the SPE Leadership Design Team. SPEs from the design team will introduce the four pillars as well as the process they used to develop them. The relevant SPE leadership pillars are noted in each session throughout this agenda.

#### Presenters:

- **Tamara Baysinger**, State Authorization Manager, Idaho State Board of Education
- **Elisa Jaden**, Regional SARA Director, Postsecondary Student Access and Success, Southern Regional Education Board (SREB)
- **Terri Taylor-Straut**, Senior Director, Educational Programs, NC-SARA

#### SPE Leadership Institute Design Team Members:

- **WICHE SPE:** Tamara Baysinger
- **SREB SPE:** Alana Boles
- **NEBHE SPE:** Whitney Vaillancourt
- **MHEC SPE:** Lisa Pundt
- **Compact Staff:** Elisa Jaden (SREB)
- **NC-SARA Board Members:** Larry Tremblay and Paul Shiffman
- **NC-SARA Staff:** Terri Taylor-Straut



10:15 am

**Department of Education Regulations Affecting SARA - Update**

In this session, participants will learn about proposed regulation changes that may be coming from the Department of Education and could impact SARA. There will be ample time reserved in this session for large group discussion.

SPE Leadership Pillars: Communicator, Problem-Solver

**Moderator: Jeannie Pauline Yockey-Fine**, General Counsel and Vice President, Policy, Regulatory Affairs, and Administration, NC-SARA

**Presenters:**

- **Lanna Dueck**, Executive Director, Arizona SARA Council; NC-SARA Board Member
- **Aaron Lacey**, Partner & Chair, Higher Education Practice, Thompson Coburn LLP

11:15 am

**Break**

11:45 am

**Three Federal Regs in Play: Online Program Managers, Third-Party Servicers, & Professional Licensure**

The U.S. Department of Education has been busy this year updating regulations and guidance. Three of them have a huge impact on institutions serving students online and/or in other states. Restrictions are being sought for student recruiting and revenue-sharing for Online Program Managers. The definition of which contracted activities fit being classified as a regulated “third-party servicer” is expanding. Institutions may be asked to provide more assurance or evidence that programs in professional fields meet each state’s licensure requirements. This last one includes changes by the Veterans Administration, as well. Bring your questions as we will leave adequate time to address your interests.

SPE Leadership Pillars: Innovator, Problem-Solver

**Moderator: Molly Hall-Martin**, Director, W-SARA, Policy Analysis and Research, Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE)

**Presenters:**

- **Cheryl Dowd**, Senior Director, State Authorization Network and WCET Policy Innovations, Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE)
- **Russ Poulin**, Executive Director, WCET & Vice President for Technology-Enhanced Education, Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE)

12:30

**Lunch**

1:30 pm

**SPEs – A Community of Practice**

Over the last year we have seen great opportunities, and challenges, for SARA. What tools and professional development are fellow SPEs utilizing and engaging in to optimize their SARA work? How are SPEs helping to ensure institutions' compliance with SARA policies and processes? Are there ways you intend to use the recently approved state grant funds to support your effective practices? On this annual occasion to engage with both new and experienced SPEs, this session will provide an opportunity for focused interregional dialogue to share best practices and great ideas.

**Moderator: Jared Abdirkin**, Director, SARA, New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE) & Co-Chair, Policy Implementation Team

SPE Leadership Pillars: Connector, Innovator

3:30 pm

**Break**

4:00 pm

**Policy Modification Process – Reflection on Process and Thinking about 2024**

In this session, participants will have an opportunity to reflect on the important progress we've made in the first several months of the new SARA Policy Modification Process. Our achievements were made possible by the involvement of fellow committed stakeholders! We will celebrate our success so far, look ahead to what's coming, and consider how we can improve future iterations of the process. Time will also be reserved to discuss upcoming issues that could be included in the 2024 Policy Modification Process.

**Moderators:**

- **Jennifer Armour**, Associate Director, Academic Affairs, Kansas Board of Regents & RSC Chair, Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC)
- **Angela Lee**, Executive Director, District of Columbia Higher Education Licensure Commission & NC-SARA Board Member
- **Sam Loftin**, Director of Consumer Protection, Washington Student Achievement Council & Co-Chair, Policy Implementation Team

SPE Leadership Pillars: Innovator, Problem-Solver

5:00 pm

**Reflections & Wrap Up**

- **Marianne Boeke**, Interim President & Vice President, Research and State Partnerships, NC-SARA
- **Terri Taylor-Straut**, Senior Director, Educational Programs, NC-SARA

5:15 pm

**Adjourn**

6:00 pm

**Social Dinner Hosted by NC-SARA (Hotel)**

## DAY TWO – September 14

7:30 am      **Breakfast**

9:00 am      **Welcome**

- **Jared Abdirkin**, Director, SARA, New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE) & Co-Chair, Policy Implementation Team
- **Emily Jacobson**, Director, Student and Institution Support, NC-SARA

9:15 am      **SARA Student Complaints**

Providing consumer protection for students in higher education continues to be a subject of intense scrutiny and importance. Today we will look at NC-SARA's process for reviewing and responding to student complaints, which is just one form of student consumer protection. This session focuses on the NC-SARA Complaint Dashboard which is currently undergoing a restructuring. We will learn from two student complaint experts on how they process these grievances and discuss the need for potential SARA policy changes around consumer protections to meet the needs of today's students.

SPE Leadership Pillars: Communicator, Problem-Solver

**Moderator: Sara Appel**, Director of M-SARA, Policy & Research, Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC)

**Presenters:**

- **Rachel Christeson**, Director, Research and Data Analysis, NC-SARA
- **Heather DeLange**, Director, Office of Private Postsecondary Education, Colorado Department of Higher Education
- **Ross Miller**, Director of State Authorization and Reciprocity, Indiana Commission for Higher Education / Indiana Board for Proprietary Education

10:15 am      **Break**

10:45 am      **SPE Discussion – Key Learnings, Takeaways, Next Steps**

As we close out this conference, session participants will have an opportunity to engage with fellow SPEs and Compact staff from their region. What are your top takeaways? What do you hope is changed or put into action in the months and/or year ahead? What is uniquely important for your region to consider? Based on the session yesterday keep in mind the SPE Leadership pillars and how they frame and guide your work moving forward.

SPE Leadership Pillars: Connector, Communicator

**Moderator: Jared Abdirkin**, Director, SARA, New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE) & Co-Chair, Policy Implementation Team

11:45 am

**Wrap Up**

- **Jared Abdirkin**, Director, SARA, New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE) & Co-Chair, Policy Implementation Team
- **Marianne Boeke**, Interim President & Vice President, Research and State Partnerships, NC-SARA
- **Terri Taylor-Straut**, Senior Director, Educational Programs, NC-SARA

Noon

**Adjourn (boxed lunches will be provided to go)**