

## Welcome to Day Two!

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

**Raymond Audett**, Director, Information Technology, NC-SARA



# SARA Student Complaints

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

**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

# SARA Student Complaints

SPE Annual Conference

14 September 2023

# 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 Propriety Education

# Complaint

- A formal assertion in writing that a person, institution, state, agency or other organization or entity operating under the provisions of the *SARA Policy Manual* has violated the policies set forth in the *SARA Policy Manual* or of laws, standards or regulations incorporated in the *SARA Policy Manual*.

 *SARA Policy Manual*, page 14

# SARA Complaints

- Only those complaints resulting from distance education courses, activities and operations provided by SARA-participating institutions to students in other SARA states come under the coverage of SARA.

↳ *SARA Policy Manual, page 41*

# Concerns

- A broader term that encompasses a range of issues that a student may bring to the attention of the institution. These concerns may or may not escalate to the level of a formal complaint.
- Concerns can be more general and may not always involve specific incidents. They can be related to a student's overall well-being, safety, academic progress, or personal challenges.

# The College's toilet paper is bad, collective action is needed

By [Adam Jutt](#) - November 8, 2021



## University of Waterloo students want two-ply toilet paper on campus, student councillors say



Idea stemmed from student dissatisfaction over using one-ply toilet paper

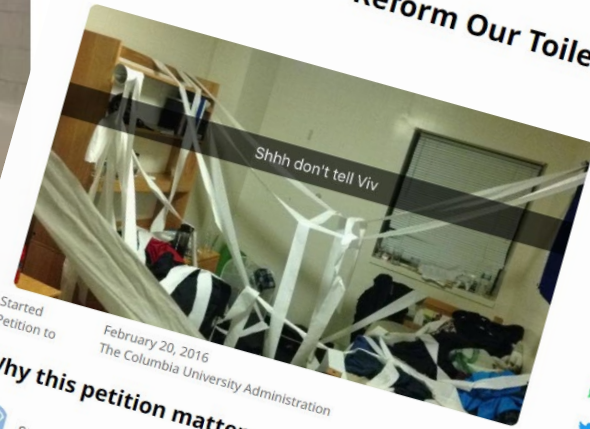
[Carmen Groleau](#) · CBC News · Posted: Dec 05, 2018 1:01 PM CST | Last Updated: December 6, 2018



Many students at the University of Waterloo are hoping student council will lobby the university to get better toilet paper on campus.

[change.org](#) Start a petition My petitions Browse Membership  
Petition details Comments Updates

## Reform Our Toilet Paper



### Why this petition matters

Started by [Columbia College Student Council](#)  
Started Petition to February 20, 2016 The Columbia University Administration  
Currently, the University uses low-quality double ply toilet paper in its facilities. This has led to many students feeling rear-ended by the University.

### Petition Closed

This petition had 166 supporters

- Send a message
- Send a message
- Tweet to your followers
- Copy link

### 3. One-ply toilet paper



[giphy.com](#)

One-ply toilet paper makes a quick run to the restroom take five times longer than it should. "Back in the good old days they used crumpled up newspaper as toilet paper, and even *that* is thicker than the crazy thin stuff we get at UW. Stupid one ply paper got us unrolling 10 times more each time, so if you really think about it it's probably cheaper just to buy two-ply or three-ply toilet paper to go through less rolls of it. C'mon UW, simple cost-benefit analysis." said junior art major Andrea Tiffany. Would it kill you to buy some paper thicker than the old "my dog ate my homework" excuse? Our butts depend on it.

# SARA Student Complaints

A Colorado Story

October 2, 2019



**COLORADO**  
Department of  
Higher Education

# Does the complaint rise to the level of a SARA complaint?

Does the student live outside of the institution's home state?

Is the complainant alleging issues with online learning?

Does the complaint include issues with student or academic services?

Is there a pattern of complaints from other students (SARA or not)?

# If deemed to be a SARA complaint...

Has the student filed a complaint with the institution?

Establish a partnership with IHEs

Notify the SPE in the student's location

Does the complaint arise to the level of the home state SPE and the student's state SPE working together to resolve?

Establish partnerships with SPEs

# DE Complaints (are they really that different than f2f)

- Lack of response by instructor, advisor, financial aid
- Changes to program
- Miscommunication
- Frustration
- Grades
- Discrimination

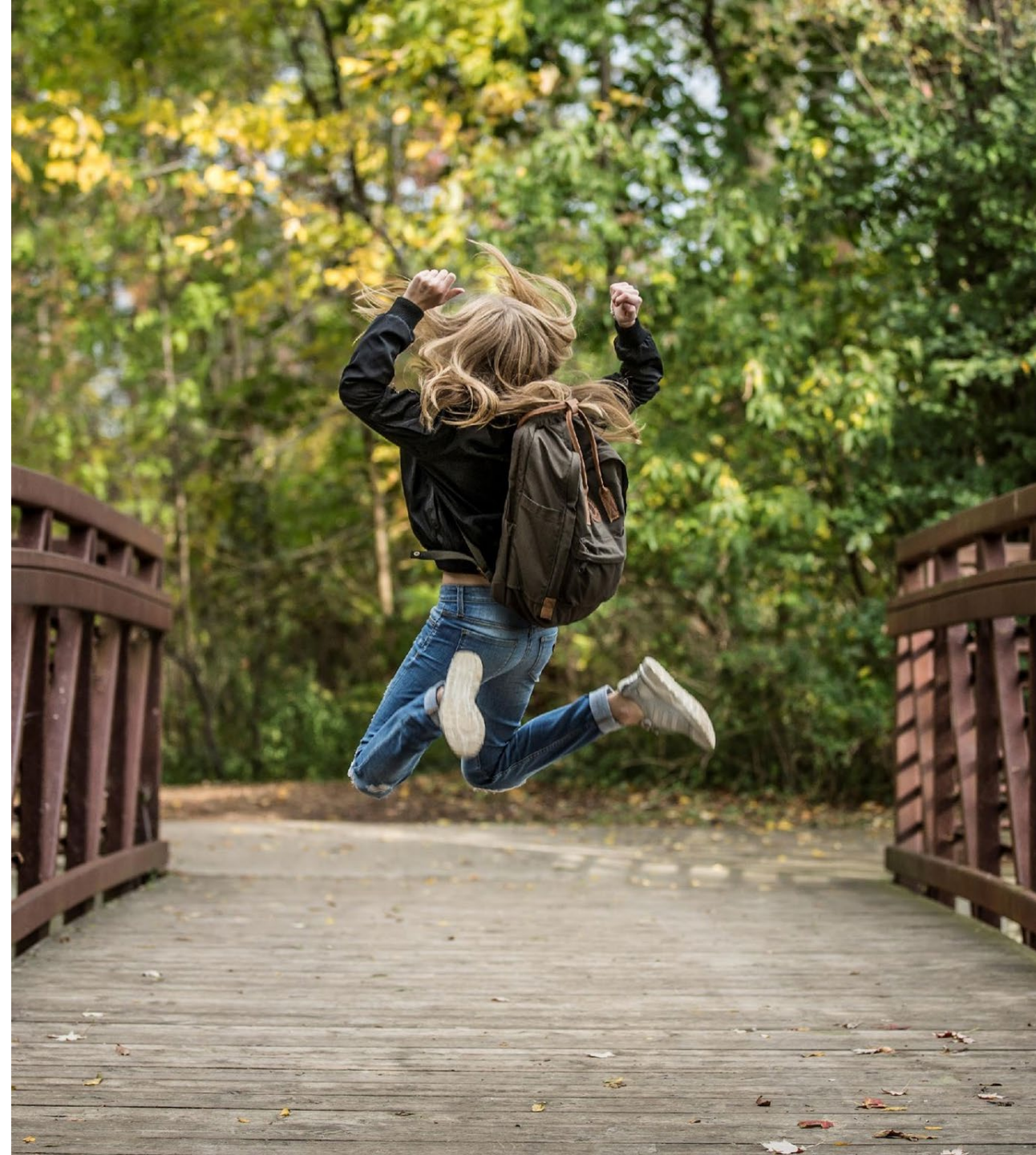
# Catastrophic Planning - It isn't just for IHEs

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How do you receive student complaints?

Do you have back up ways to receive student complaints?

Communication with students



# Thank You!

**Heather DeLange – Colorado SPE**

September 13-14, 2023



**Indiana Commission for Higher Education**

# **SARA and Non-SARA Student Complaints**

**Ross Miller**

Director of State Authorization and Reciprocity

September 14, 2023

ICHE

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# STUDENT COMPLAINT OVERVIEW



# ICHE STUDENT COMPLAINT PAGE



MENU



Indiana Commission for Higher Education



Search CHE



## Student Complaints

[Home](#) [CHE](#) > [Student Complaints](#)

The Commission for Higher Education is responsible for responding to formal complaints against public, independent non-profit and proprietary institutions of higher education in Indiana. While the Commission has limited authority over colleges and universities, and cannot offer legal advice or initiate civil court cases, Commission staff will review submitted complaints including those dealing with alleged violations of their ADA, and work with student complainants and institutions. Complaints dealing with the following topics should be handled by other state agencies or Commission staff:

- **Financial Aid:** If a student has been denied state of Indiana financial aid, they may file an [appeal](#) or direct any questions to the Student Support Center by calling 1 (888) 528-4719.
- **Law Violations:** If a student believes that a college or university has violated state or federal law, he/she may wish to contact the [Office of the Indiana Attorney General](#) at (317) 232-6201 or by using this [comment form](#).
- **Discrimination:** If a student believes that an institution has acted in a discriminatory manner, he/she may wish to contact the Indiana Civil Rights Commission (ICRC) using the [ICRC's complaint form](#) or call them at (800) 628-2909.
- After filing a complaint with the Attorney General's Office or ICRC without resolution, the student may still hire an attorney and adjudicate the complaint through the court system.

INDIANA COMMISSION FOR  
HIGHER EDUCATION

# ICHE STUDENT COMPLAINT PAGE

## PROCESS FOR FILING COMPLAINTS

**Within two years of the incident** about which the student is complaining, he/she must contact the Commission for Higher Education using our [complaint form](#)

Please note that the Commission cannot, by law, review complaints related to course grades, academic sanctions or discipline/conduct matters. In other areas, such as transferring credits between public institutions, the Commission has greater statutory authority.

Please follow the steps outlined below to submit a complaint:

### STEP 1

If a student has concerns related to classroom situations or administrative actions, he/she should contact the faculty or staff member(s) with whom he/she has a conflict. It may be possible to resolve the concerns without the need for formal institutional action. However, if the student's complaint is not resolved satisfactorily, or if the complaint cannot be resolved by contacting the faculty or staff member(s), the student should proceed to STEP 2.

### STEP 2

The student should file a complaint through his/her institution of higher education's established complaint process. Information on the process can usually be found in the institution's academic catalog, student handbook or website. If the student is unable to resolve the complaint in this manner, he/she should proceed to STEP 3.

### STEP 3

After receiving a complaint through our complaint form, Commission staff will review the submitted materials and contact the submitter for any required additional information or clarifications. The Commission will then send a copy of the complaint to the institution against which the complaint has been filed and ask for a response within three weeks. After receiving the college or university's response, Commission staff will determine whether the institution's student complaint process has been followed and exhausted and what additional steps or follow-up may be taken. The Commission will inform both parties involved in the complaint.

If you have additional questions about the complaint process, or want to clarify that your individual complaint is reviewable by the Commission, please feel free to contact [complaints@che.in.gov](mailto:complaints@che.in.gov).



# ICHE STUDENT COMPLAINT FORM



**STUDENT COMPLAINT**  
State Form 55658 (R / 11-16)  
INDIANA COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

**INDIANA COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION**  
Attn: Complaints  
101 West Ohio Street, Suite 300  
Indianapolis, IN 46204-1984  
E-mail: Complaints@che.in.gov

- INSTRUCTIONS:**
1. Please note that the Indiana Commission for Higher Education cannot act on anonymous complaints.
  2. All fields must be completed.
  3. Please attach any documents that support your complaint and/or show that you have gone through your institution's complaint procedure and e-mail or mail this form to the address above.
  4. Direct questions pertaining to this form to (317) 464-4400.

| COMPLAINANT INFORMATION   |                |   |                |
|---|----------------|---|----------------|
| Name of complainant   |                |   |                |
| Address (number and street)   |                | City  | State ZIP code |
| Preferred telephone number<br>( )   | E-mail address |   |                |
| How do you prefer to be contacted? <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone <input type="checkbox"/> E-mail <input type="checkbox"/> No preference  |                |   |                |
| If Commission staff members need to contact you via telephone, may they leave a message or voice mail? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No   |                |   |                |
| Affiliation with the college or university named below:<br><input type="checkbox"/> Current Student <input type="checkbox"/> Former Student <input type="checkbox"/> Parent or Guardian of Current / Former Student<br><input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |                |   |                |
| Degree level and major / concentration (e.g. B.S. in Accounting) of affected student  |                | Date of attendance at institution (mm/dd/yyyy)<br>Start: _____ End: _____ |                |
| Have you gone through the institution's formal complaint process? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No<br>If you answered "Yes", please submit documentation showing that you have exhausted your appeals at the institutional level. Please see page 2 on how to submit such documents.<br>If you answered "No", please explain in your detailed complaint description why you were unable to complete the complaint process. Note that the Commission will normally only address complaints after a student has exhausted his/her appeals at the college or university level. |                |   |                |
| SCHOOL INFORMATION  |                |   |                |
| Name of institution   |                |   |                |
| Location of institution (city and state)  |                |   |                |
| COMPLAINT   |                |   |                |
| Please describe your complaint in detail, including the names of any college or university faculty or staff you spoke to about the complaint. Attach additional sheets as needed.   |                |   |                |



# ICHE STUDENT COMPLAINT FORM

|   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| <b>COMPLAINT (continued)</b>  |                          |
| Please give titles and contact information for the individuals you mentioned above, if any.   |                          |
| How would you like your complaint to be addressed? Please note that the Commission cannot, by law, review complaints related to course grades, academic sanctions or discipline / conduct matters.  |                          |
| Will you be submitting additional documentation, such as e-mails from school officials, transcripts, course syllabi, contracts, brochures, catalogs and/or tuition bills, which substantiate your complaints? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No  |                          |
| By submitting this form, I affirm that I am a current or former student of the institution named above or the parent or guardian of a current or former student of that institution who is currently under age eighteen (18) and is under my legal guardianship. I agree to allow the Indiana Commission for Higher Education to submit a copy of my complaint and supporting materials to the above named institution and/or state portal agency for a response. I further authorize the institution to transmit student records related to me or the individual(s) under my guardianship affected by the institution's actions to the Commission for review. I understand that I may have to submit an information release form to the institution. Additionally, I recognize that my complaint may be subject to Indiana's public records law as defined in Indiana Code 5-14-3. I certify that the information I have provided to the Commission is complete, true, and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. |                          |
| Signature   | Date signed (mm/dd/yyyy) |
| Printed name  |                          |



ICHE

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# RECURRING TYPES OF SARA STUDENT COMPLAINTS



# RECURRING TYPES OF SARA STUDENT COMPLAINTS

- Licensure Disclosure
- Unofficial Withdrawal
- Clinical, Internship, Student Teaching Requirements
- Unique Situations



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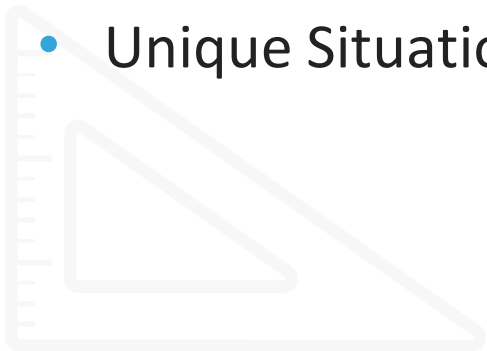
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# TYPES OF NON-SARA STUDENT COMPLAINTS



# TYPES OF NON-SARA STUDENT COMPLAINTS

- Conduct and Academic Dismissals
- State of Residence and In-State Tuition
- Financial Aid and Grants
- Release of Transcript and Unpaid Debt
- Program Admission
- Unique Situations







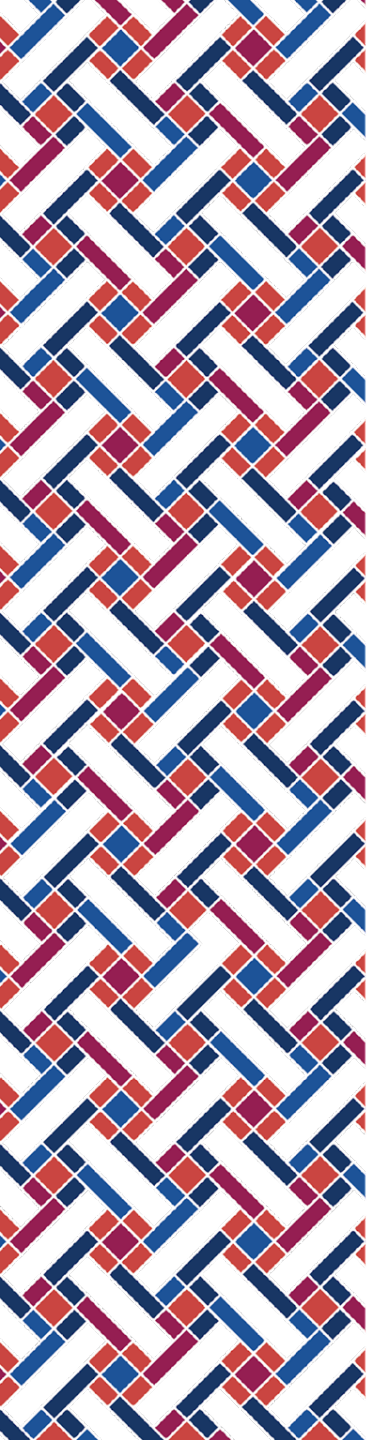
**INDIANA COMMISSION** *for*  
**HIGHER EDUCATION**

# NC-SARA Complaints Dashboard

# Questions







Countdown to the  
next session:

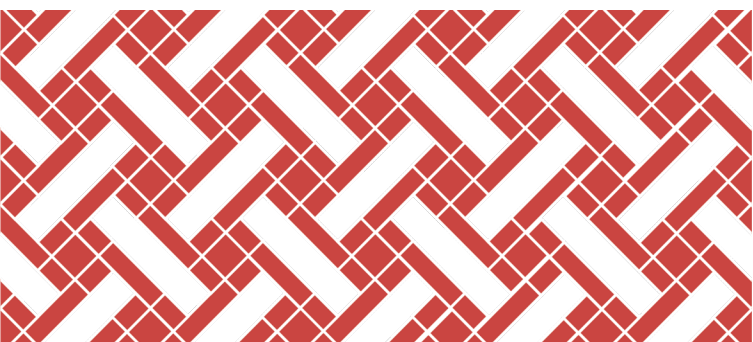
# BREAK!

# 10:00

mins:  secs:  type:

 Breaktime for PowerPoint by Flow Simulation Ltd.

Pin controls when stopped



# **SPE Discussion – Key Learnings, Takeaways, Next Steps**

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

# SARA SPE Conference Fall 2023



## Conference Debrief

Thursday, September 14<sup>th</sup> 2023

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**Please separate into your respective regional groups (SREB into 2?)**

**Compact Staff in each group will take notes for further regional follow-up**

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# Regional Compact Staff



**Jared Abdirkin**

**Charlotte Ochs**



**MIDWESTERN  
HIGHER EDUCATION  
COMPACT**

**Sara Appel**

**WICHE**



Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

**Dr. Molly Hall-Martin**

**Shelley Plutto**

**SREB**

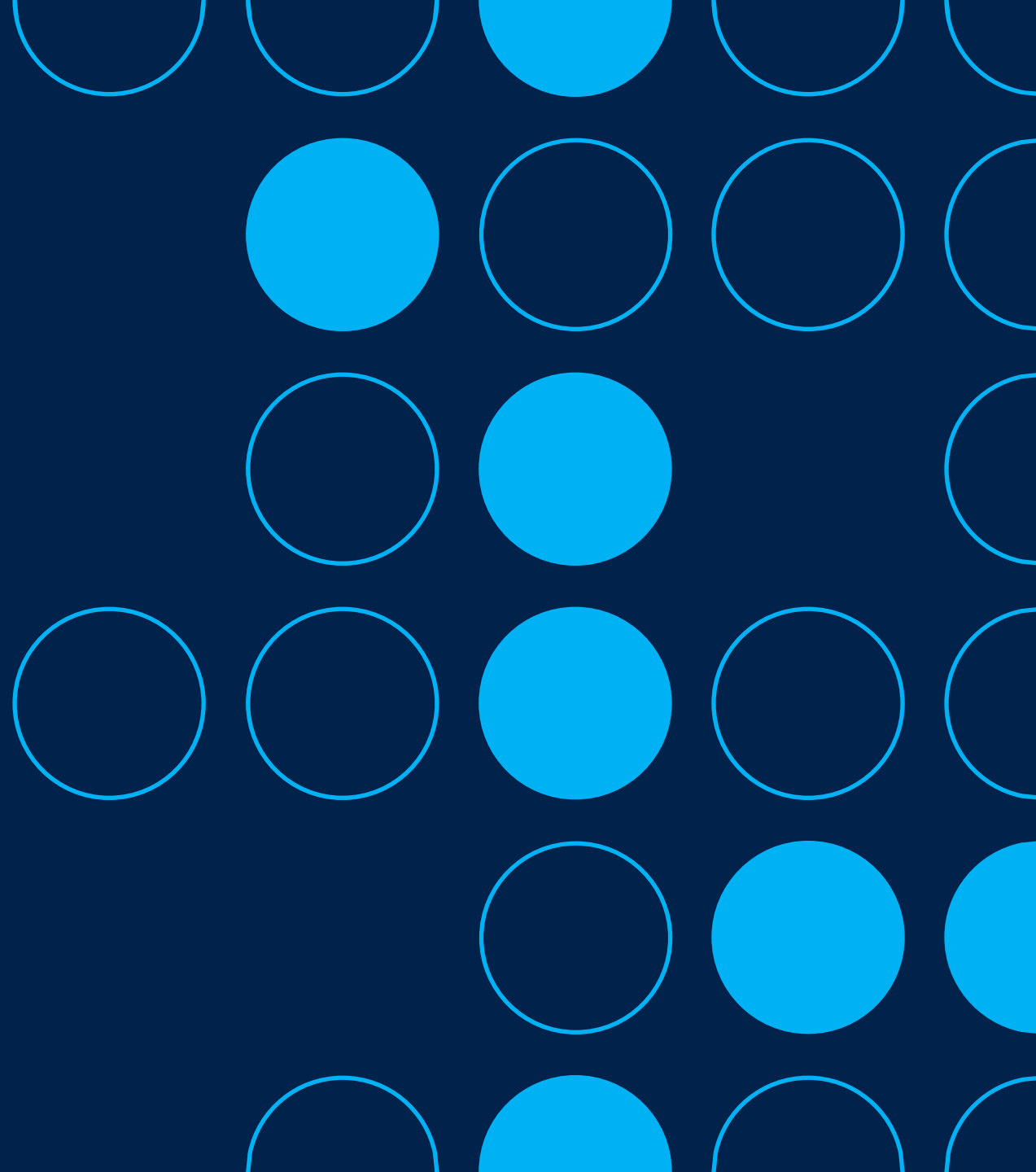
Southern Regional  
Education Board

**Elisa Jaden**

## Regional Group Discussion Prompt 1

What did you learn  
over the last two days  
that you want to  
pursue and/or change  
for your state SARA  
work?

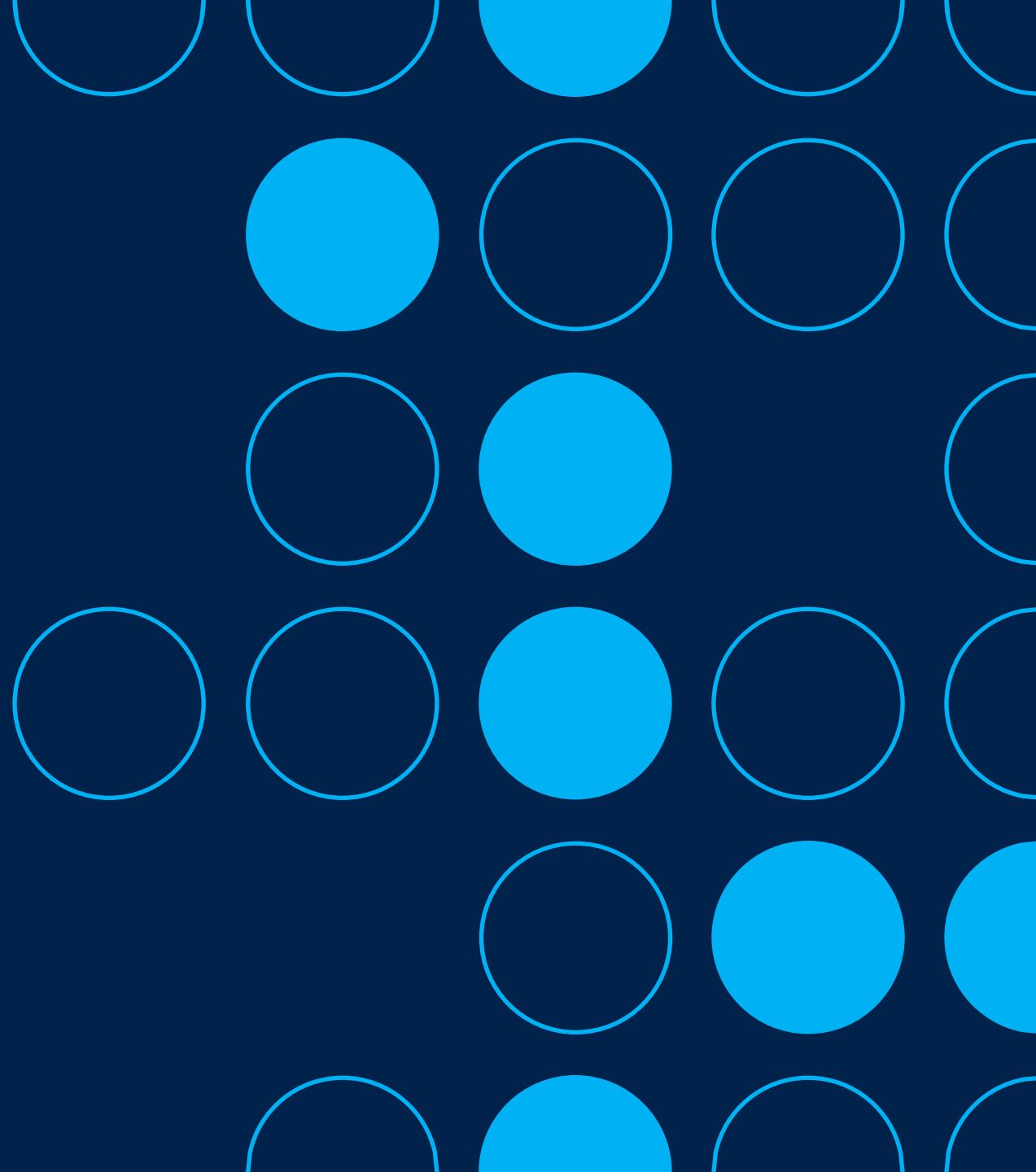
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## Regional Group Discussion Prompt 2

What have you learned about how another region operates that you would like to see incorporated into your regional meetings or engagement?

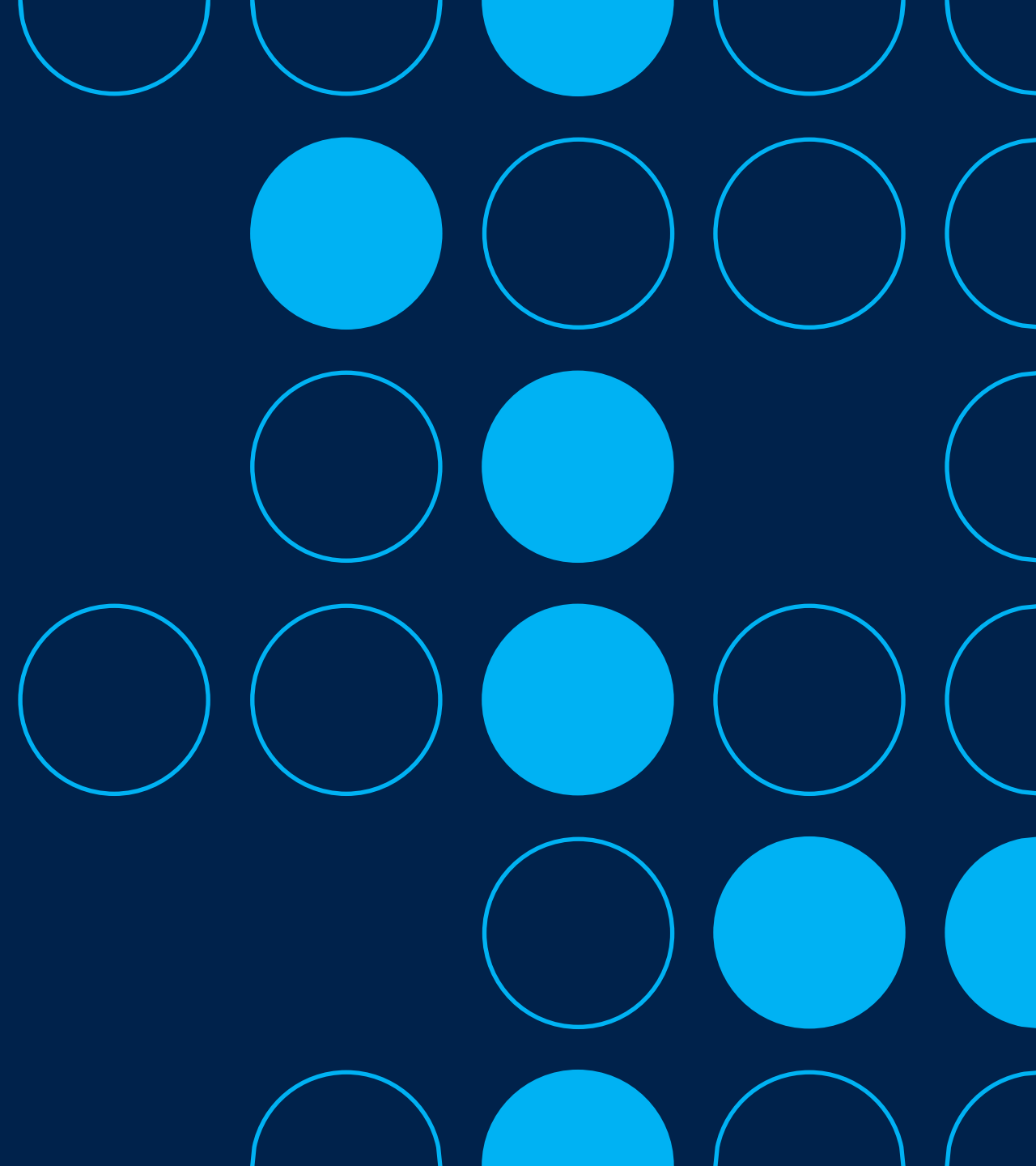
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## Regional Group Discussion Prompt 3

What would you like to see NC-SARA do differently or change in the year ahead that would benefit your SARA work?

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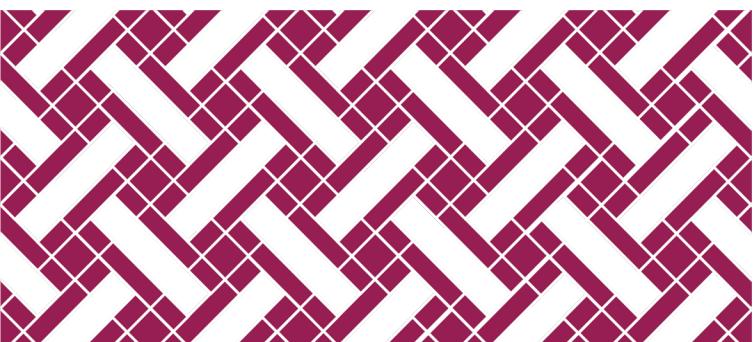




# SARA Data Updates

**Rachel Christeson**, Director, Research & Data Analysis, NC-SARA

- Surveys: SPE Annual Survey; Conference Evaluation; PMP Survey
- Distance Education & Workforce Development Reports – Now available!
- October 3 – 2022 Data Report and dashboard release
- October 10 – Data Report webinar – registration now open
- 2024 Data reporting changes



## Wrap Up

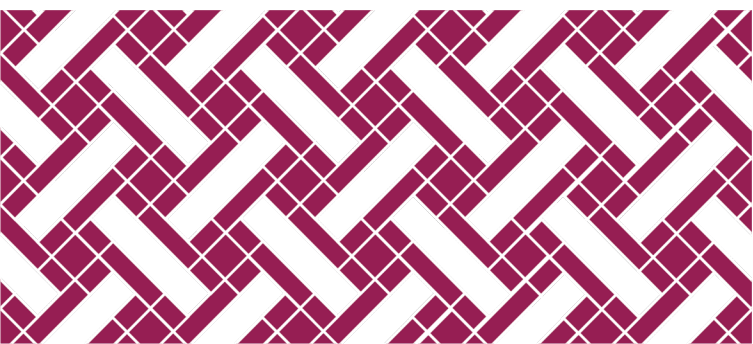
**Jared Abdirkin**, Director, SARA, New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE) & Co-Chair, Policy Implementation Team

**Marianne Boeke**, Interim President & Vice President, Research and State Partnerships, NC-SARA

## Day 2 SPE Leadership Reflection

1. What can NC-SARA do to help SPE Staff to support your professional development related to SPE Leadership?
2. Use the Conference Reflection document to make notes for your own follow-up.





**Thank you!**

**See you next year in Indianapolis!**