

# NASASPS Annual Conference



St. Louis, Missouri April 27-30, 2025

## Conference Program

### SUNDAY, APRIL 27

1:15 pm

**Optional Baseball Social - St. Louis Cardinals vs. Milwaukee Brewers**

Tickets sold separately.

12:00 - 5:00 pm

**Registration**

4:00 - 5:00 pm

**New Member/Attendee Workshop**

**NASASPS Board of Directors**

Join us for an exclusive New Member/Attendee Workshop, designed to provide a comprehensive introduction to private postsecondary education and the valuable resources offered by NASASPS.

- **Introduction to NASASPS:** Gain insight into the mission, vision, and goals of NASASPS, and how it supports state administrators in overseeing private postsecondary institutions.
- **Navigating the Conference:** Get insider tips on how to navigate the conference schedule, choose sessions that align with your interests, and maximize networking opportunities with fellow attendees and industry professionals.
- **Meet the NASASPS Community:** Connect with experienced members and conference veterans who will share insights on getting involved and making the most of your membership.
- **Exploring Resources:** Discover key NASASPS resources, including publications, research, and tools to help administrators stay informed and address challenges.
- **Interactive Q&A Session:** Engage in an open discussion where you can ask questions, seek advice, and connect with both new and experienced attendees.

This workshop is an excellent opportunity to kickstart your NASASPS conference experience, build valuable connections, and gain the knowledge and confidence needed to navigate the private postsecondary education landscape successfully.

6:00 - 7:00 pm

**Welcome Reception**

Join us for a lively welcome to St. Louis at Thompson Coburn's offices, right next door to the conference hotel.



7:00 – 10:00 pm

**NASASPS Hospitality Suite**

Join fellow attendees for informal networking in the NASASPS Hospitality Suite. Thank you to our Hospitality Suite Sponsor, Cyanna.



## MONDAY, APRIL 28

- 7:30 am - 4:00 pm **Registration**
- 7:45 - 8:30 am **Breakfast**
- 8:30 - 8:45 am **President’s Remarks and Host State Welcome**
- 8:45 - 9:45 am **The Federal Regulatory Outlook for 2025**  
*Aaron Lacey - Partner and Co-Chair, Higher Education Practice, Thompson Coburn LLP*  
*Katie Wendel - Counsel, Higher Education Practice, Thompson Coburn LLP*  
 Aaron Lacey and Katie Wendel, senior members of Thompson Coburn's Higher Education practice, will discuss the status of the U.S. Department of Education, including new faces at the agency, anticipated policy and rule changes, and enforcement trends. They also will discuss the status of the Biden administration's regulations (e.g., gainful employment, financial responsibility) and the litigation challenging those regulations. They will focus on issues that are expected to be of particular interest to state regulators.
- 9:45 - 10:00 am *Break*
- 10:00 - 11:00 am **Enhancing Support for Distance Education Students: Collaboration in Complaint Management**  
*Heather DeLange - Director, Office of Private Postsecondary Education, Colorado Department of Higher Education*  
*Rachel Christeson - Director for Research and Data Analysis, National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA)*  
*Ross Miller - Director of State Authorization and Reciprocity, Indiana Commission for Higher Education*  
*Sara Appel - Director, Midwestern State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements*  
 In 2022, approximately 10 million college students took at least one online course, and some may face challenges that lead them to file complaints with their institutions, SARA State Portal Entities, or agencies such as the Department of Veterans Affairs. This session explores the many places where these complaints can be submitted, key issues raised, and the effectiveness of inter-agency communication in resolving them. Attendees will discuss how improved data collection, enhanced communication, and collaborative strategies can streamline the complaint process, reduce student frustration, and inform policy changes, creating a more supportive environment for distance education students.
- 11:00 - 12:20 pm **State Updates: Latest News & Hot Topics**  
*Moderator: Kevin LaMountain - Executive Director, Arizona Private Postsecondary Education*  
 NASASPS will present a summary of the responses to the Spring 2025 State Updates Survey, including hot topics and upcoming changes from the states. State regulators will give brief reports on new or pending changes to their state regulations or processes and respond to questions as time allows.
- 12:30 - 1:30 pm **Welcome Lunch – Table Topic Discussion**  
*Thank you to our sponsor EdVera for hosting this event.*
- 1:30 - 1:45 pm *Break*



1:45 - 2:45 pm

**What's the Legal Basis?**

*Cheryl Dowd - Senior Director, SAN & WCET Policy Innovations, WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies*  
*Sarah Levy - Senior Director for Policy and Regulatory Affairs, National Council State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA)*

Compete with institution and regulator colleagues to learn and share about the entity(ies) that directs legal requirements, how the legal authority is derived, how to find the particulars of the legal requirements, and the consequences for failing to follow the legal requirements. The session is intended to clarify often misunderstood directions from states and federal agencies regarding legal responsibilities and guidance to ensure states are clear in providing direction and for institutions to understand how manage compliance.

2:45 - 3:00 pm

*Break*

3:00 - 4:00 pm

**Concurrent Sessions:**

**1. Licensure Compliance 201: Comparing Programs to Educational Requirements in Other States/Territories**

*Kris Maul - Co-Founder and Principal, Higher Education Licensure Pros LLC*

Current Title IV regulations and NC-SARA policy require institutions to understand if programs meet educational requirements for professional licensure where the institution is located and where students are located at the time of initial enrollment. Come learn from other participants and share your experiences in this collaborative workshop where we will dig deep into curriculum comparisons for several license types, including nursing and teaching. We will focus on how to compare curriculum, reliance on external factors (i.e., specialized or programmatic accreditation, passing a national examination, becoming nationally certified, compacts/reciprocity agreements), and how to identify, monitor, and communicate changes.

**2. Career Burnout Prevention: Finding Balance from Stress Management through Self-Care**

*Kathy Espinoza - Owner, Author, Kathy Espinoza Speaks*

Career Burnout is one of the biggest challenges in the workforce in 2025. Many gifted leaders experience frustration, irritability, mood swings, chronic fatigue, and insomnia. Some become cynical or pessimistic about leadership, teaching, students, and colleagues. They may prefer to avoid others and lose interest in things that used to bring them joy. Avoiding career burnout is easier said than done. How do people stay motivated? How do working professionals juggle work, relationships and kids? We each set the tone for our coworkers and family, as we interact and move through life and knowing when you are 'out of balance' is half the battle. This session will offer you practical tips to help you become a 'Balanced' leader who can nurture your career and family and avoid career burnout.

4:00 - 4:15 pm

*Break*

4:15 - 5:00 pm

**Concurrent Meetings:**

**1. NASASPS Business Meeting**

Open to all NASASPS member levels.

**2. SAN Meeting – Special Presentation**

**Anchors Aweigh for Change: How to Leverage Your Insights to Influence Laws**

**Anne M. Kligen, JD** - Academic Authorization & Compliance Associate, The University of Mississippi

**\*Jennifer Lewis, M.Ed., MHA** - Associate Director of Compliance and Ethics, University of Southern Mississippi

**Kelly Karki** - State Regulatory Manager, Purdue Global

**Kenneth M. Heard, III** - Director for Academic Compliance, Office of Academic Compliance, Effectiveness, and Research FERPA Officer, Office of the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, University of Mississippi Medical Center

**\*Krista M. LeBrun, Ph.D.** - Assistant Executive Director eLearning & Instructional Technology, Mississippi Community College Board

**\*Shanna Murray Luke, EdD** - Director of eLearning, William Carey University

Government regulatory changes can create ripple effects with unintended consequences. As a subject matter expert, you play a critical role in voicing concerns, sharing insights, and influencing policymakers at all levels—local, state, and federal.

This session will equip you with practical tools to make a meaningful impact on the regulatory process. You'll learn strategies for crafting compelling comments, tracking proposed laws, and drawing lessons from successful policy reforms. Engaging, hands-on exercises will build your confidence and empower you to leverage your expertise in advocacy and policy shaping.

\*Will not be in-person to present

6:00 – 10:00 pm

**NASASPS Hospitality Suite**

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## TUESDAY, APRIL 29

8:00 - 9:30 am

### Breakfast Sessions:

**1. Regulator Breakfast – Listserv Live!**

*Thank you to our sponsor Verif-y for hosting this event*



**2. SAN Member & Attendee Breakfast**

9:30 - 9:45 am

*Break*

9:45 - 10:45 am

### Concurrent Sessions:

**1. Navigating Compliance Issues in Change of Ownership**

**Antonio Williams** - Assistant Program Manager, Louisiana Board of Regents: Proprietary Schools and Licensure

**Chandra Cheatham** - Director of Procurement Services/Assistant Director of Proprietary Schools, Louisiana Board of Regents: Proprietary Schools and Licensure

**Mighan Johnson** - Assistant Program Manager, Louisiana Board of Regents: Proprietary Schools and Licensure

What documents verify ownership in terms of licensure, what financial documents are required, and how do cutoff deadlines and responsibilities contribute to the change of ownership process? The Louisiana Board of Regents Proprietary Schools staff was faced with some unique change of ownership scenarios within the past three years. This caused staff to delve deeper into what is required to document ownership. During these change of ownership reviews our team was tasked with the responsibility of determining whether the traditional Secretary of State documents meet the requirements for proving ownership, whether financial documentation could be submitted under specific circumstances, and what would be the appropriate cut-off deadline to maintain compliance. Staff and legal counsel were able to determine the appropriate resolutions for each unique circumstance and complete the change of ownership review for the schools.

**2. The Higher Education Triad: Ensuring Student Success Amid Political Uncertainty**

**SAN Session**

**Will Miller** - AVP for Continuous Improvement and Institutional Performance, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University

This presentation delves into the dynamics of the Higher Education Triad—state regulators, the Department of Education, and accreditors—examining how they collectively shape institutional accountability and student success. We will explore how political turmoil and uncertainty impact the relationships among these stakeholders and influence policy decisions. By highlighting the essential role of collaboration among all three entities, we emphasize the critical need to center student outcomes in every regulatory and accreditation process. Attendees will gain a comprehensive understanding of how these groups operate together and the importance of aligning their efforts to create meaningful, student-focused higher education improvements.

10:45 - 11:00 am

*Break*

11:00 am - Noon

**Concurrent Sessions:**

**1. How can AI Enhance the Work of State Regulators? Examples from 3 States**

**Kevin LaMountain** - Executive Director, Arizona Private Postsecondary Education

**Magda Rivers** - Deputy Director, Georgia Nonpublic Postsecondary Education Commission

**Sean Seepersad** - Division Director, Connecticut Office of Higher Education

This panel presentation will present how 3 different states, Arizona, Connecticut, and Georgia are utilizing AI in their regulatory work. The presentation will include practical examples that attendees can consider in their own regulatory work. These include using AI to calculate federal financial composite scores and analyze financial statements for concerns, regulatory research, help guide, curricular reviews of unaccredited programming, and synthesizing and analyzing different kinds of data. Example prompts will be provided that attendees can utilize in their own work. There will also be a discussion around the rules concerning the use of AI in regulatory agencies.

**2. Automating Professional Licensure Disclosure in a Multi-System Institution: a Collaborative Approach**

 **SAN Session**

**David Yang** - Information Security Analyst, James Madison University

**Sarah Cheverton** - State Authorization Compliance Officer, James Madison University

Various factors limit the degree to which some higher education institutions can automate the individualized direct disclosure process required by CFR §668.43(c) for licensure programs. These institutions still depend on some level of manual work. James Madison University will show how it has used a highly collaborative approach to incrementally automate tasks while planning for a more fully automated process. This incremental approach enables stakeholders to work within the constraints of the institution, develop a mutual understanding of needs, leverage emerging technologies, and better ensure a sustainable process. Attendees will consider how this approach could apply to their institutions.

Noon - 1:30 pm

**Lunch on your own**

1:30 - 2:30 pm

**Legal and Compliance Considerations in Closing a Program or School**

**Jen DeMay** - Attorney, Duane Morris

**Jessica High** - Attorney, Duane Morris

The presentation will cover the regulatory and legal steps for closing a program, location or institution. The presentation will also cover federal regulations regarding closed school discharge and the anatomy of a good teachout agreement.

2:30 - 3:00 pm

**Puppy Break**

Decompress with a cuddle! NASASPS thanks LIRN for sponsoring this break. 

3:00 - 4:00 pm

**How to Identify Colleges at Risk of Closing**

**Robert Kelchen** - Professor and Department Head, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Many private colleges and universities are under financial stress, and there are growing concerns about the ability of some colleges to continue operating. In this session, join Robert Kelchen, professor of higher education at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and a scholar of higher

education finance, as he discusses metrics that regulators can use to identify colleges that may be on the brink of closure to help support students and employees.

4:00 - 4:15 pm

*Break*

4:15 - 5:00 pm

**Concurrent Meetings:**

**1. NASASPS Annual Meeting**

Open to NASASPS regular members only.

**2. SAN Meeting**

6:00 – 10:00 pm

**NASASPS Hospitality Suite**

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**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30**

7:30 - 8:30 am

**Breakfast**

8:30 - 9:30 am

**AI and EdTech Procurement: Legal Considerations for Schools and Regulators**

*Caitlyn Shelby - Associate, Education Group, Cooley LLP*

*Shannon Noonan - Associate, Education Group, Cooley LLP*

*Kristin Marshall - Associate, Cyber/Data/Privacy Group, Cooley LLP*

Institutions are leveraging AI and edtech to try to increase efficiency, drive research and development, and accelerate equity and accessibility for students. Many are grappling with the complex and dynamic legal implications of integrating technology into their operations. At the same time, states are tasked with keeping laws and regulations up to date with emerging technology. This discussion will focus on trends in federal and state laws governing edtech as well as strategies institutions can consider when using edtech and AI tools. Topics covered will include student data privacy and data security, contracting elements, and digital accessibility considerations.

9:30 - 9:45 am

*Break*

9:45 - 10:45 am

**Accreditor Panel**

*Andrew Lootens-White - Vice President of Accreditation Relations, Higher Learning Commission (HLC)*

*Beth Hepler - Senior Accreditation Coordinator, Accrediting Council for Continuing Education & Training (ACCET)*

*India Y. Tips - Executive Director, Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES)*

*Leah K. Matthews - Executive Director, Distance Education Accrediting Commission (DEAC)*

*Mark S. McKenzie - Executive Director, Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine (ACAHM)*

*Michale S. McComis - Executive Director, Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges (ACCSC)*

This engaging session convenes esteemed experts and thought leaders in private postsecondary education to explore the significance and impact of accreditation in ensuring quality and accountability, particularly in light of the new administration's renewed focus on reforming the accreditation process. Our distinguished panelists, comprising experienced accreditation professionals, will share their expertise, experiences, and insights, providing attendees with a comprehensive understanding of the current accreditation landscape and potential future changes.



10:45 - 11:00 am

*Break*

11:00 am - Noon

**State Regulation of For-Profit Colleges: Two Perspectives**

*Carolyn Fast - Director of Higher Education Policy and Senior Fellow, The Century Foundation*

*Robert Shireman - Senior Fellow, The Century Foundation*

*Jason Altmire - President and CEO of Career Education Colleges and Universities*

This session will explore how changes at the federal level related to oversight of career colleges and universities will affect the role of state regulators. The session will be a lively discussion incorporating two distinct perspectives: the perspectives of Dr. Jason Altmire, the President and Chief Executive Office of Career Education Colleges and Universities, the national trade association representing private postsecondary career schools, and the perspectives of Bob Shireman and Carolyn Fast, Senior Fellows at The Century Foundation, a think tank focused on consumer protections in higher education.

Noon – 12:15 pm

**Closing Remarks**



