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Contact:

John Hendron, Principal Story Architect

media@pdkintl.org

Educators Rising Celebrates the Next Generation of Educators at 2026 National Conference

Arlington, VA—July 7, 2026— More than 3,300 aspiring educators, teacher leaders, and education advocates from across the nation gathered in Portland, Oregon, June 20–23 for the 2026 Educators Rising National Conference, an annual celebration of teaching, leadership, and the future of education. The conference theme, *Teach with purpose, lead with passion* was selected at last year's conference held in Orlando, by the organization's student delegation.

Hosted by Educators Rising, the nation's only career and technical student organization focused exclusively on teaching and education-related careers, the conference brought together middle school, high school, and collegiate students to explore the teaching profession, develop leadership skills, and compete in national competitions designed to showcase their talents and readiness as future educators.

Throughout the four-day event, students participated in national competitive events spanning education and leadership topics, attended dozens of breakout sessions led by education experts and practitioners, and connected with peers and mentors from across the country. Teacher leaders also engaged in professional learning opportunities focused on supporting and growing educator pipelines in their schools and communities.

The conference featured keynote presentations by 2025 National Teacher of the Year **Ashlie Crosson** and 2025 Oregon Teacher of the Year **Bryan Butcher Jr.**, both of whom challenged attendees to embrace the impact and possibilities of a career in education.

Every student gathered here represents possibility," said **Jeanie Lee**, chief executive of Educators Rising. "At a time when many young people are searching for purpose and belonging, our students have found both through service to others. They are building the leadership, communication, and collaboration skills that communities need, while learning something even more important: that they can play a role in helping others learn and grow."

One of the conference's most popular sessions, *Hacktivate 2026*, challenged students to rethink where, how, and with whom learning happens. Acting as designers, students reimaged the high school experience and pitched their ideas to a set of judges. The session reflected Educators Rising's belief that educators do more than teach content. They create the conditions, experiences, and relationships that make learning possible.

Many of the students attending the conference competed for national titles across dozens of competitions and contests aligned to competencies required in education-related jobs like teaching. Before attending the conference, they had to place at the state level. A full list of the top competitors is available on our website (<https://educatorsrising.org/2026-competition-results/>).

Educators Rising also extends its gratitude to the parents, teacher leaders, chaperones, judges, volunteers, state coordinators, and education partners whose dedication and support made the conference possible. Their investment in students helps ensure that future classrooms will be led by talented, prepared, and passionate educators.

The 2027 Educators National Conference will take place in June 2027 in Columbus, Ohio.

About Educators Rising

Educators Rising supports a national network of more than 20,000 students across all 50 states who are exploring how they can make a difference through teaching, leadership, and service. Through rigorous coursework, hands-on experiences, leadership opportunities, learning-focused competitions, and community, students develop skills, build confidence, and begin to see themselves as people who can help others learn, grow, and succeed. Learn more at educatorsrising.org.

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