



Conference Planning Subcommittee February Meeting Notes

The 2017 Conference Planning Subcommittee met via telephone on February 18th, 2016 at 1:00PM EST. (12:00PM CST, 11:00AM MST, 10:00AM PST, 9:00AM AKST).

Those in attendance were: Mike Radke (MI—Chair), Marcia Beckman (ID), BJ Granbery (MT), Sonya Morris (FL), Jack O'Connor (MT), Lynn Sodat (VA), Jewell Stanley (SC), Veronica Tate (VA), Bob Harmon (WA—NASTID CEO), and Monica Kemper (CA – A+ Events).

Meeting Agenda

1. **2016 Conference Debrief** ([View Attendee & Exhibitor Evaluation Results](#))

450 attendees responded to the overall conference survey. Most of the responses were very positive. The major attendee complaints had to do with the construction on the convention center, the overlapping sessions, and the session scanners not always working. The committee asked A+ Events staff to consider/generate possible solutions to timing of sessions so there is less overlap.

45 exhibitors answered the exhibitor evaluation. The results were mixed, with about half of the responses very positive. The major complaints were with the exhibit hall hours, slow booth traffic, and with the decorator company.

2. **2017 Theme and Initial Thoughts**

Engagement REvolution is the theme for the Long Beach Conference. Community, parent, student, and educator engagement is one of the major topics of interest. The committee is still intending to conduct a pilot convening session with a group of experts to work with schools that have identified a need centered on engagement. A decision about the pilot convening project should be made soon, due to the advance planning it will require.

3. **2017 Conference Initial Decisions (to be finalized in the March meeting)**

- [Existing Proposal Questions](#) (Make minor changes? Leave "as is?")

For the last several years, Instruction, Leadership, and Policy have been the three overarching proposal categories. The committee agreed these categories are still appropriate. They reviewed the list of topics of interest – and suggested

some minor changes: add Engagement, remove Flexibility Waiver – replace with Flexibility.

Submitting a Proposal Step-by-Step:

Characteristics – Committee members commented on some sessions that were not marked as “sponsored,” – but then were obviously a product promotion. Proposals are not to be commercial advertisements – and this is specified on the general proposal information page – but should also be a clearly defined part of the actual proposal submission process.

Explain the research base and data used – More emphasis could be placed on sessions featuring schools that have proven results data to verify their success.

Details – A suggestion was made to merge the “Combined presenter bio” and the “session introduction” into one, as the information is usually redundant.

Presenters – It would be good to cap the number of presenters per session to five, due to the limited time of each session.

- [Existing Proposal Review and Grading Process](#) (Make adjustments? OK "as is?")

Page 2 Rubric – Combing the research with the data – The committee agreed to leave this as is, since the rubric has worked well in the past.

- [Exhibit Hall Stage for Vendor Presentations?](#) (Keep it? Expand it? Adjust it? End it?)

The exhibit hall stage presentations were popular – most sessions were full and attendees were engaged and interested. Exhibitors enjoyed having a place to make a sales pitch to an audience.

The Private exhibit rooms were also popular and well attended. Placement is a key factor, but these will likely be continued again.

Final decisions on the above items will be made during the March Conference Planning Subcommittee meeting.

This group meets the third Thursday of every month at 1PM Eastern time. The next meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, March 17th, 2016 at 1:00PM Eastern**, (12:00PM CST, 11:00AM MST, 10:00AM PST, 9:00AM AKST).