



## Conference Planning Subcommittee April 2017 Meeting Notes

The Conference Planning Subcommittee met via telephone on Thursday, April 20, 2017 at 1:00PM Eastern (12:00PM CDT, 11:00AM MDT, 10:00AM MST & PDT, 9:00AM.)

Those in attendance were: Karen Campbell (NJ—Chair); Ken Banter (GA); Paula Daniels (MI); Mike Radke (MI); Otistene Smith (AR); Sonya Morris (FL); and Beth Wooster (NE).

A+ Events Staff: Lisa Brandes (COO), Monica Kemper (NASTID Director of Events—CA), and Marcus Cheeks (NASTID Deputy Director—MS).

### Meeting Agenda

1. Review information from session hosts at the Long Beach conference:

- Below is a review summary of the most significant comments from 88 completed session hosts forms:
  1. Good session, positive remarks = 65
  2. Standing room only, overcrowded (mostly workshops) = 19
  3. Overlapping sessions affected attendance and those that left early = 6
  4. Noise from the Exhibit Hall was a distraction = 2
  5. Internet connectivity = 1

The committee discussed the information collected from the session host sheets. The consensus was to ensure there are plenty of sessions happening at the same time, to avoid the complaints in Long Beach when there were only two sessions going on and they were overcrowded. A+ Events staff will make certain this is not a problem in Philadelphia.

2. Identify the kinds of keynote speakers to pursue:

- Specific names are important, but better to have general themes and types of presentations
- Review and discuss this [Possible Keynotes document \(includes links to speaker videos and other materials\)](#)

The committee reviewed the keynote document and made the following decisions:

### **Yes, extend an invitation:**

- **Hill Harper** – He has already been invited as a Sunday afternoon possibility. His bookbags initiative project is being considered as an Exhibit Hall activity for attendees to participate in. The bookbags would be donated to Philadelphia Title I schools. The committee was enthusiastic about the bookbag idea but they realize 10,000 backpacks is probably not a realistic quantity. The committee discussed sponsored logos on the backpacks and whether that would be an issue. Karen offered to write an email to the Philadelphia school district officials to ask if commercial logos would be ok on donated materials.
- **John King** – He has already been invited and the committee is in favor of the decision.
- **Diane Ravitch** – She is a researcher and often focuses on the unintended consequences of education reform. The committee said she is a thought provoking speaker, and though controversial they would like to invite her.
- **Joe Biden** – He might be difficult to get in touch with – but the committee felt he would be great and they would like to invite him, and/or Jill, his wife.
- **Doug Lemov** – The committee thought he might be good the keynote following the Distinguished Schools celebration. The committee was interested in him, they said he seems very inspirational.
- **Salome Thomas-EL** – He spoke as a featured speaker at a National Title I Conference about four years ago. He was well received by attendees and the committee would like to invite him. Salome is a public charter school principal – at a school that serves mostly all Title I kids.
- **Linda Darling-Hammond** – The committee felt she is highly regarded, and a very impressive speaker who would be a nice addition to the Conference. She has a background in special education, is well known, and would be a draw.
- **Vicki Phillips** – She has done work in PA and her background sounds very interesting.
- **Gloria Ladson-Billings** – The committee thought she is an impressive speaker, focused on support for African American students and would like to invite her.
- **Tara Brown** – She has spoken every year for the last five or six years at the Conference and is always very well received by the crowd. The committee



said she connects with the audience well, and she would most likely accept the invitation.

**Invite as Second Tier if needed:**

- The committee discussed Rahm Emmanuel and a possible panel discussion around role of extraordinary principals. The committee liked the concept but would choose someone other than Rahm Emmanuel to be the moderator. They felt the panel would need a strong facilitator, such as **Chris Christie**.
- **Dorinda Carter Andrews** – None of the committee members were very familiar with her, but thought she might be of interest for the panel. Maybe not a top choice as a keynote, but they would like to keep her on the list.

**Do not invite:**

- **Eddy Zong** – He is potentially controversial – which isn't a bad thing, but the committee wasn't sure his message is a fit for the Conference. He was a high school dropout and encourages kids to pursue entrepreneurship, rather than college. The committee took him off the list.
- **Marian Wright Edelman**– The committee has invited her many times over the past ten years, but she doesn't speak at this type of conference.
- **Linda Cliatt-Wayman** – The committee agreed to remove her from the list.
- **Secretary of Education DeVos** – She is unreliable because of her position, but not impossible. However, inviting her would put the Conference in a vulnerable position if she cancelled at the last minute. We would likely not give a yes or no until the last minute, making her too high risk.

**Next Step:**

A+ Events staff will review a final list of invitees with Karen, before sending the initial invitations.

The next committee meeting will be a conference call on **Thursday, May 18th, 2017 at 1:00PM Eastern** (12:00PM CDT, 11:00AM MDT, 10:00AM MST & PDT, 9:00AM.)