

The NAEA Convention: An Investment In Your Future

NAEA Mission Statement: To advance art education through professional development, service, advancement of knowledge, and leadership.

A cynical—and completely uninformed—view of participation in art education association conventions is that "it's all a waste of time", or that "nothing really happens at conventions that has any real consequence to the home school". How wrong they are! A response to abrasive and hollow accusations needs to be made, and a case for your convention participation must be set forth—directly, simply, and fully. The case isn't complex. The following are several convention facts and key points to mention as advantages to your participation.

- Over 550 sessions, presentations, and seminars are offered each year—all focus on art education content and issues. Even the tours, which take you to art and architecture can be used in your lessons the next day!
- Some 125 to 140 companies exhibit the latest texts, art equipment, supplies, high-tech products, and instructional resource materials.
- Every year between 2,000 and 3,000 professional art educators from the U.S. and many foreign countries attend to discuss, participate, and orient you with national and federal issues in art education.
- Many districts, state departments of education and institutions grant official staff development or renewal certificate credit to attendees.

NAEA conventions and exhibits are 100% art content oriented, so increased funding is becoming more available from staff development funds, PTA/PTO's, school activity accounts, local councils/guilds, high school leagues, and administration discretionary accounts to assist NAEA art educators in attending. But **YOU** need to apply.

Your attendance is a professional commitment. You will acquire substantive information on critical art education issues (national and federal) that is simply not available elsewhere. The hundreds of sessions conducted by recognized education leaders (including the exhibition of art equipment, supplies, texts and high-tech products that contribute to a solid art education learning environment) constitute the world's largest professional art education development program.

You will be introduced to a whole new world of emerging issues and trends in art education from different areas of the nation. Identifying and discussing such trends and issues, which may be the topic in your state, district or school this year, will give you more time to reflect upon them, understand them, and perhaps fashion your own initiatives applicable to the unique conditions of your community, school, or program.

You will enhance your art education skills in a wide spectrum of areas. Over 550 different sessions from which to select: Curriculum Development, Research, Theoretical Concerns, Computers, Art Assessment, and Special Needs—are among the many areas covered in-depth. All sessions are designed to provide guidance and enhance your skills in becoming a more effective art educator.

You become a part of the premier national and federal forum on public school art education in the United States. The NAEA Delegates Assembly—consisting of leaders of state/province associations, meet during the annual NAEA convention and adopt programs, motions and resolutions for the advancement of art education. These meetings are open to all NAEA members. The assembly is composed of your state leaders and depends upon the participation of you and thousands of other art educators.

You will, through the contacts you make with other art educators at the NAEA convention, develop an informal network of colleagues. Their advice and counsel during the year could be most helpful to you. Some NAEA members count this advantage as premier. The idea of picking up the phone or writing a letter to discuss a problem with a colleague whose experience and judgement you respect is an attractive one. It often brings out the real problems, and their solutions, in bold relief.

You will be able to focus specifically on issues that are unique to your position—elementary, higher education, museums, secondary, middle , or art administration. It is important to have close interchange with those who share the same problems, challenges, and opportunities. NAEA has that kind of program, with sessions in job-alike categories, e.g., elementary, middle, and in topical sessions, e.g., research, minority concerns, computers, or curriculum. You will return home with a different—and vastly improved—orientation of art education today and tomorrow because of your participation with the National Art Education Association.

Your attendance at the NAEA Convention and Exhibition is one of the best investments you and your institution can make, the beneficiaries will be the children of your school and the schools of all your colleagues across the nation.