

August 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

The National Science Teachers Association's [first regional conference on science education](http://www.nsta.org/conferences/area1.aspx) for 2016 will be in Minneapolis, Minnesota, October 27–29. Find it online at <http://www.nsta.org/conferences/area1.aspx>.

This professional development event focuses on the following strands that will enable educators to bring better science education to all students:

Teaching Science in a Connected World

Students and teachers have access to many forms of technology. These technologies can be effective tools for accessing information, delivering instruction, communicating ideas, connecting with people around the world, and building professional learning networks. Educators attending the sessions in this strand will explore instructional materials, technologies and strategies for effective learning for students and adults, and responsible use of digital resources and processes. Workshops and presentations will focus on one or more of the following:

- Engaging in lessons or units of instruction that emphasize digital literacy and appropriate use and validity of online sources.
- Demonstrating instructional strategies that utilize digital resources, such as flipped instruction, use of sensors, cloud-based collaboration, simulations, and assessment.
- Supporting digital student research and projects, including those that use big data.
- Evaluating and utilizing online educational resources.
- Creating professional learning networks facilitated by technology.
- Using technology to meet the needs of different communities and learners.

STEMify Instruction through Collaboration Across the Curriculum

STEM can be a powerful unifying theme across the curriculum and in many settings. STEM provides an opportunity for collaboration among teachers, disciplines, and schools, as well as postsecondary, informal education, and community partners. Educators attending sessions in this strand will explore models of integrated STEM education programs, learn strategies to effectively STEMify lessons, and investigate how to effectively engage students. Workshops and presentations will focus on one or more of the following:

- Exploring strategies that effectively STEMify instruction and integrate the practices and concepts of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.
- Presenting models that differentiate instruction for all learners.
- Sharing rationale and implementation of STEM school and education models.
- Presenting strategies for collaboration across STEM disciplines and grade levels,
- Connecting STEM experiences in the classroom with postsecondary education and career readiness.
- Demonstrating effective collaborations with community partners like businesses, nonprofits, museums, and postsecondary education institutions.

Celebrating Elementary Science and Literacy Connections

Children are born investigators. Science is an engaging way to develop students' skills in thinking creatively, expressing themselves, and investigating their world. Reading, writing, and speaking are inspired through science experiences. Educators attending sessions in this strand will gain confidence in teaching science, learn strategies for literacy and science integration, and celebrate elementary science. Workshops and presentations will focus on one or more of the following:

- Demonstrating instructional strategies that integrate science and literacy skills through science and engineering practices and crosscutting concepts.
- Experiencing strategies and tools for elementary science and literacy integration, such as science notebooks, trade books, student presentations, outdoor learning, and project-based learning.
- Investigating elementary scientific concepts, pedagogy, and learning progressions.

This conference will offer educators opportunities to learn how to effectively integrate various instructional approaches into their teaching and learning environments.

We hope you and your colleagues will take advantage of this unique offering.

Jean Tushie, Conference Chair
Lee Schmitt, Program Chair
John Olson, Local Arrangements