

Justification Toolkit

Making the case for support of travel, funding, and time off—especially in times of tight budgets and reduced staff—to attend any conference requires a solid understanding of the potential benefits of attending. NCTM’s conferences are not just an opportunity for you to improve your instructional practice and gain ready-to-use teaching and assessment strategies. They are also an opportunity to benefit the professional development of your colleagues, supervisor, and district. Use this toolkit to help define and clearly communicate these benefits in order to make the case to attend.

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Why You Should Attend

NCTM's conferences are a great opportunity to expand both your local and national networks, and they can help you find the information you need to prepare your pre-K–grade 12 students for college and career success. Classroom teachers, administrators, math coaches, supervisors, college professors, and preservice teachers can all benefit from the sessions and learning at this event.

Participants attend these conferences to—

- improve their knowledge and skills with high-quality professional development and hands-on activities;
- gain insights by connecting and sharing with like-minded educators;
- collect free activities that will keep students engaged and excited to learn; and
- learn from industry leaders and test the latest educational resources.

Expenses & Benefits

Beyond fulfilling your personal professional development goals, you can rightly claim that attending NCTM’s conferences will also enable you to bring expertise and knowledge back to your school or district. When you propose a conference for approval, be sure to *focus on what you will specifically bring back to your school or district*. You’ll also want to connect your responsibilities, goals, and challenges to your conference experience. To help you make a strong case for attending, here are some goals common to our attendees and the ways in which NCTM’s conferences meet these goals.

Benefits Worksheet

GOAL	How NCTM’s Conferences Support Your Goal
Gain insight into successful implementation of college- and career-ready standards , including the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics	Meetings feature experts in mathematics education who can help you correlate the Common Core State Standards, as well as other state standards, to your curriculum and give you research-based strategies to assist with implementation. A variety of sessions provide tools to help you make the connections that you can take them back to your classroom.
Stay on top of current (and future) trends in mathematics education	NCTM’s conferences offer concurrent sessions, workshops, and bursts to keep you ahead of the trends in mathematics education. You will gain new and effective intervention methods, refine your assessment techniques, discover the latest technologies, and acquire strategies to address the needs of each and every student—including those considered “high needs.”
Expand your professional network	At these events you’ll connect with knowledgeable speakers and session leaders as well as experience exceptional peer-to-peer networking opportunities where you will learn from others and grow your network.
Keep your students engaged and excited about learning	Experts in mathematics education, who are breaking new ground and witnessing real success in schools across the country, present workshops and sessions to share their insights and strategies.
Gain fresh ideas and get inspired	Get inspired by keynote speakers and leaders in mathematics education who will stimulate your passion for teaching mathematics.
Learn about new advances and technologies for the classroom	Talking with vendors can be a great way to access expert knowledge and learn about new products and educational resources. Tour a lively exhibit hall, test the latest educational resources, and collect free activities and lesson plans to bring back to the classroom.
Bring information back to your school or district	Session handouts are posted and available on the NCTM website after the event. You’ll be able to support the investment of time and budget dollars by setting up training sessions or sending out information on your return.



Conference Strands

All sessions, workshops, and bursts are submitted to unique topic strands developed by the Program Committee. See below for strand titles and descriptions:

Tools and Technology: Using Technology to Effectively Teach and Learn Mathematics

Sessions in this strand include, but are not limited to, the innovative implementation of tools and technology, along with ways to use tools and technology to promote critical thinking and engagement, visualize and understand mathematical ideas, help students communicate their mathematical thinking, or build community and connection. In addition, sessions that address how courses in computer science can support mathematical reasoning and instructional goals are welcome.

Access, Equity & Empowerment: Teaching Mathematics with an Equity Stance

This strand will focus on illuminating and eliminating inequities in mathematics education by sharing actions that can be implemented to reframe, reconceptualize, and/or intervene in order to provide high expectations for each and every student and to disrupt the status quo. Sessions in this strand include, but are not limited to, pedagogical approaches that empower diverse populations of learners, including culturally responsive teaching, teaching for social justice, teacher noticing, and differentiation. Presentations focusing on theoretical foundations in social justice that frame equitable mathematics teaching and that permeate other strands and sustainable practices at all levels to promote fair and equitable mathematics teaching and learning are also encouraged.

Purposeful Curriculum: Cultivating Coherence and Connections

Sessions in this strand include, but are not limited to, the coherent development of mathematics curricula, learning progressions, and connections across topics and across all grade levels. Sessions that highlight the role that application, modeling, and contextualization should play, along with associated challenges, are encouraged. We invite reflection on current trends such as the meaningful use of teacher-created tasks and lessons, the use of technology, and the effective use of open curricula, especially as they relate to cultivating coherence and connections. Proposals with special emphasis on high school pathways are encouraged.

Teaching, Learning, and Curriculum: Best Practices for Engaging Students

Classroom communities that provide access to meaningful mathematics through collaboration, coherent discourse, and student engagement empower learners to be successful in mathematics. Moreover, effective teaching of mathematics supports students' conceptual as well as procedural understandings. Sessions in this strand include, but are not limited to, those that showcase classroom-tested and/or research-supported ideas and strategies, particularly the eight research-informed instructional practices from NCTM's *Principles to Actions*, as well as equitable instructional practices that create effective mathematics experiences and position each and every student to make sense of mathematics.



Assessment: A Tool for Purposeful Planning and Instruction

Assessment is an integral component of planning mathematics instruction to best meet the needs of each and every learner in the classroom. Sessions in this strand include, but are not limited to, those that examine various assessment types and assessment that connects mathematics content and practices, as well as examining assessment that uses data to inform and provide feedback to teachers and students, support instructional decisions, and improve programs. Sessions that are aligned with principles of formative as well as summative assessment are welcome.

Professionalism: Learning Together as Teachers

Mathematics teachers are professionals whose work stretches beyond the four walls of their classroom. Through effective professional learning, teachers engage in a mathematical community that inspires, supports, and encourages ongoing growth and learning. Sessions in this strand will focus on, but not be limited to, both cultivating teacher's professional interests and activities such as lesson study, action research, book study, mentoring, collegial planning, coaching, social media, and virtual collaboration. Sessions that equip teachers to work with broader communities, such as advocating in their buildings and districts, addressing parent concerns, and working with researchers are encouraged.

Mathematical Modeling: Interpreting the World through Mathematics

According to the [GAIMME Report](#), "Mathematical modeling is a process that uses mathematics to represent, analyze, make predictions or otherwise provide insight into real-world phenomena." The Common Core State Standards for Mathematics, as well as many state standards, have an emphasis on mathematical modeling. Sessions in this strand will focus on, but are not limited to, how to find and design effective mathematical models, how to determine if mathematical models are reasonable and effective, working with open-ended tasks with potentially multiple solutions, and using applications of technology to make sense of mathematics.

Emerging Issues and Hot Topics

Mathematics education is fluid, with new developments and issues constantly emerging. Sessions in this strand may include, but are not limited to, emerging ideas and practices rooted in, expanding on, or challenging existing literature or developments in educational policy. Presentations should be forward-thinking and characterized by pioneering, innovative, or non-traditional thinking and practice. This strand particularly supports presentations across grade bands and content areas.



Expenses Estimate

Conference expenses are affected by a number of factors. Use the following worksheet to help you develop a cost estimate for attending your selected conference. Be prepared to compare the expenses against your benefits worksheet in order make the case for attendance.

Expense	Guideline	Cost
Conference Registration		\$
Preconference Workshop Registration <i>(if applicable)</i>	Optional fee, separate from conference registration.	\$
Flight	Estimate using a travel service	\$
Lodging	NCTM has negotiated discounted conference rates for hotel accommodations. Room rates for the Annual Meeting start at \$269* per night. <i>*Tax not included.</i>	\$
Transportation	Estimate using a travel service. Be sure to include transportation to and from the airport to the hotel. If driving, remember to include estimated parking costs and mileage reimbursement.	\$
Food Per Diem		\$
TOTAL		\$

Opportunities to Save

There are a number of ways you can save on your conference attendance. Here are two options to explore:

- If you register by the early-bird registration date, you can **save up to \$80 per person!**
- NCTM offers a discounted rate for a group of five or more attendees from the same institution. Register a group to **save 15% on each registration.**



Registration Rates

Registration Type	EARLY BIRD Registration Rates	REGULAR Registration Rates	ONSITE Registration Rates	Notes
Discounted Member Registration Fees				
Member Full Registration	\$405	\$445	\$485	Applies to full individual members, e-members, and e-member teachers from pre-K–8 schools. Membership must be verified with member number.
Member One-Day	\$324	\$344	\$364	
Emeritus & Life Members	\$275	\$295	\$315	
Registration Fees for Nonmembers				
Nonmember Full Registration	\$505	\$545	\$585	(Nonmembers are given the option to join NCTM for FREE)
Nonmember One-Day	\$374	\$394	\$434	Does not include NCTM membership.
Nonteaching Guest	\$275	\$295	\$315	Must accompany paying registrant.
Student Registration Fees				
Student Member	\$203	\$223	\$243	Membership must be verified with member number.
Student Member One-Day	\$172	\$189	\$206	
Student Nonmember	\$253	\$273	\$293	(Nonmembers are given the option to join NCTM for FREE)
Student Nonmember One-Day	\$202	\$218	\$234	Does not include NCTM membership.
Note: Groups of five or more paying with a single payment receive a 15% discount on all registrations				

Registration Deadlines

EARLY BIRD Registration Rate	REGULAR Registration Rate	ONSITE Registration Rate
By March 23, 2018	By April 24, 2018	Begins April 25, 2018



Testimonials

Hear what past attendees have said about NCTM in-person meetings, conferences, and events:

"The energy, the high level of participation, the spirit, and getting together with so many people. It's just wonderful."

"When I read blogs or look at different schools throughout the country and then see that they are going to be here, to be able to meet those people and connect with them in person—that really is an exciting thing."

"You're exposed to so many different ideas from so many different places and things that I have never even considered. Especially when you look around and see people incorporating different things in their own individual ways it's like, 'Oh, I can use that too.'"

"If you're a new teacher, I think coming to the NCTM Annual Meeting is a huge deal. Just to see what's out there . . . see the different exhibits, hear different speakers—it gets you inspired."

"It's so awesome and great to be around so many like-minded people who want to do well for their students, and we're all teaching the same content and we all have the same goals in mind."

"Having the opportunity to take an idea and go back to my classroom on Monday and be able to use it, that's been the most valuable thing for me."

"If you're thinking about going to the Annual Meeting next year, definitely go. You'll be able to talk with your peers, people who have knowledge about mathematics, research, research knowledge, practitioner knowledge . . . You'll be able to find what you're looking for."

"I will go to every workshop, every session I can starting at 7:00 a.m. in the morning!"



Justification Letter

Dear Educator,

We have prepared the following letter to assist you in garnering support from your principal or district leader to attend an NCTM Conference. Feel free to customize the document to help “make the case” for your attendance.

Dear <Colleague>,

At the NCTM 2018 Annual Meeting & Exhibition in Washington, D.C., educators at all levels will be brought together to enhance their professional skills, knowledge, and careers. I would like to attend this event, which is scheduled for April 25–28, 2018, to learn best practices central to implementing college- and career-ready standards, including the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics.

To meet my professional development goals, I am seeking approval for the registration fee, travel expenses to the conference, and minimal food expenses during the conference. The detailed cost breakdown is listed below. <Insert your expense estimate numbers here>

- Conference Registration _____
- Preconference Workshop registration (if applicable) _____
- Flight _____
- Lodging _____
- Transportation _____
- Food per diem _____
- Total estimated conference cost of _____.

By attending this conference, I will be able to select presentations (sessions, bursts, and workshops) from the following topic strands that are specific to my grade level:

- Tools and Technology: Using Technology to Effectively Teach and Learn Mathematics
- Access, Equity & Empowerment: Teaching Mathematics with an Equity Stance
- Purposeful Curriculum: Cultivating Coherence and Connections
- Teaching, Learning, and Curriculum: Best Practices for Engaging Students
- Assessment: A Tool for Purposeful Planning and Instruction
- Professionalism: Learning Together as Teachers
- Mathematical Modeling: Interpreting the World through Mathematics
- Emerging Issues and Hot Topics

My participation in this program will complement our school’s objectives, and I plan to return with resources to share what I’ve learned with my peers, and to give our students the tools they need to succeed.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

<Your Full Name>