

Getting the Most from Attending the NEAFCS Annual Meeting

Have a few goals in mind before arriving:

1. Write down a few goals to accomplish at, and/or shortly after attending the meeting/conference. Have at least 1-2 personal goals, and 1-2 professional goals.

Personal Goals: Examples:

- a. Work-life balance - Plan to attend daily wellness activities, schedule time to exercise in the hotel gym, pool or take a daily walk.
- b. Self-care - Schedule a manicure or haircut. Arrange for a trip to a local museum or bookstore in the area.
- c. Bring a book to read a little each day and unwind.
- d. Meet at least 2 new colleagues with the intent of developing new friendships.
- e. Plan to have a new experience or try new regional foods. (Grand Rapids MI. Regional food examples: Wet Burrito, Dutch baked goods and traditional dishes).

Professional Goals: Examples:

- a. Learn at least one new skill to increase participant success in your programs (making learning more interactive or relevant).
 - b. Improve your teaching, delivery, or evaluation methods.
 - c. Bring back a new curriculum or tools to improve an existing curriculum.
 - d. Learn how to increase your involvement or leadership in national or state affiliate activities.
 - e. Volunteer at the conference: Introduce a speaker, staff the registration desk, help organize the silent auction items. Apply to be an NEAFCS Ambassador (deadline is July 31, 2025)
 - f. Join a committee and attend any related meetings or visit their table at the conference.
2. Print out the detailed agenda for the conference for reference. Look for sessions and opportunities that support your goals. Contact the hotel or local chamber of commerce for more ideas on opportunities to meet your goals. For example, is there a workout facility in the hotel. Is the hotel adjacent neighborhood walkable and safe. Is there a bookstore nearby? Which restaurants serve local/regional foods that you want to try?
 3. Create a contact list of everyone from your state who is attending and your NEAFCS Regional Director.

4. Packing –

- a. Dress code – Business casual most of the time. Awards program – Business to formal. School colors and logo wear on Tuesday. Dress in layers, hot outside and over-conditioned conference or hotel rooms.
- b. Bring snacks and a water bottle
- c. Pack a swimming suite, workout clothes, comfortable shoes
- d. Over the counter meds., just in case (headache, stomachache, allergies, cold, etc.)
- e. Silent auction items and/or money to buy something in the auction.
- f. Business cards
- g. Highlighter
- h. Book

5. After the Meeting

- a. Call, email or send notes to presenters and new connections.
- b. Implement one new program or idea.
- c. Share what you experienced and learned with your state affiliate members at your next meeting or by sending a summary report to all members.