



## Georgia Science Teachers Association

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To Whom It May Concern:

The Georgia Science Teachers Association (GSTA) is collaborating with the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) to host the 2018 National Conference on Science Education in Atlanta, Georgia from March 15–18, 2018. This event will attract science educators from all over the United States and the world, but it will also address the specific needs of Georgia science educators. At this conference, teachers choose from hundreds of workshops, demonstrations, and presentations covering every discipline, grade level, and teaching focus from grades preK–16. They hear nationally renowned speakers address the hottest topics in science education and learn about classroom-tested strategies from their Georgia colleagues.

To help participants make the most of the professional learning opportunities available at the Atlanta conference, the conference planning committee has focused the conference around four strands that explore topics of current significance to educators in and beyond Georgia:

- **Focusing On Evidence of 3-D Learning** - Georgia, similar to other states, has adopted standards that build on a three-dimensional approach, which calls on students to use disciplinary core ideas, science and engineering practices, and crosscutting concepts to explain real-world phenomena and solve authentic problems. This strand will help teachers, whether they are 3-D novices or experts, expand their understanding of three-dimensional teaching, learning, and assessment.
- **Imagining Science as the Foundation for STEM** - STEM education continues to be a priority in Georgia as we seek to provide today's students with the real-world, innovative skills that they will need to be successful in tomorrow's world. Sessions in this strand will allow participants to develop their understanding of how to plan and teach collaboratively within these integrated learning environments.
- **Reflecting On Access for All Students** - Just as science encompasses diverse fields of learning from astronomy to zoology, Georgia's science educators are called upon to equitably meet the needs of and engage ALL learners. This strand increases participants' understanding of the unique needs of various types of learners and helps them reduce barriers to full participation in science.
- **Comprehending the Role of Literacy in Science** - A great number of personal and societal issues require citizens to draw upon a foundation of scientific knowledge, technological understanding of problem solving, and the ability to design scientific solutions to obtain, evaluate, and communicate information in order to make informed decisions. The Science Georgia Standards of Excellence explicitly connect science learning to literacy. This strand will allow educators to become advocates of literacy in preK–12 science and engineering, to see the connections between science and literacy, and to learn literacy strategies that encompass active student engagement.

Beyond the sessions in these strands, these additional events will provide Georgia science educators with ideas and resources that they can take directly back to their classrooms:

- GSTA Annual Meeting and reception to allow Georgia science teachers to network and connect with the organization
- Sessions conducted by Georgia DOE personnel
- Two share-a-thons, sponsored by the Georgia Science Supervisors Association and the Georgia Youth Science and Technology Centers, featuring innovative Georgia science teachers
- More than 150 conference sessions by Georgia science teachers, leaders, and university faculty
- Exciting and education-based field trips to local science-related facilities
- Exhibits where teachers can learn about and try tools and resources to further enhance the skills of science educators

The confirmed General Session speaker for the Atlanta National Conference is Ron Clark, founder of the Ron Clark Academy in Atlanta. Mr. Clark will share his journey from teaching in a low-wealth rural area in North Carolina to the inner-city streets of Harlem in New York City. Along the way, Mr. Clark will share inspirational stories of how his students made outstanding growth in test scores, conducted projects that garnered worldwide attention, and were invited to the White House three separate years to be honored by the President.

We are confident that the programming and events associated with the 2018 National Conference on Science Education in Atlanta, Georgia will allow conference participants to return to their respective districts/schools armed with their new approaches to support their students' science learning. They will return to their schools re-energized and ready to use their newly acquired science education knowledge and pedagogies to provide meaningful science instruction for their students, preparing them to be successful in a scientifically literate workforce.

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