



## So...You're Going to the ISACS Annual Conference...

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As a participant in the ISACS Annual Conference, you will hear from leading national and international leaders in education, supplemented by exceptional teachers who have translated this research into classroom practice. To make the most of your conference experience, ISACS teacher leaders would like to share some helpful strategies for extending learning beyond the ISACS Annual Conference experience.

What should you do before, during and after the conference to maximize the impact of professional development? Here are some suggestions:

### **Before the conference...**

- Research the conference theme and look for intersections with current initiatives in your school.
- Find time to thoroughly read the conference program and thoughtfully select sessions to stretch your thinking and vision.
- Preview the major speakers. Who are they? What are their areas of expertise?
- Make sure faculty members are aware of the diverse topics and session offerings: distribute conference programs at school and make sure everyone is aware of online access to this information. Remind faculty that many sessions are repeated to allow more flexibility in selecting sessions to attend.
- Become familiar with the work of the major presenters: do reading before or after the conference (books, articles), access TED ([www.ted.com](http://www.ted.com)) videos of speaker presentations.
- Pre-read: identify and select seminal works or newer articles written by the featured speakers. These can be distributed before summer break or any time prior to attending the conference. ISACS posts suggestions for pre-reading on the website and books written by major speakers can be purchased at the conference for additional post-conference study.
- Create teams of teachers to investigate specific topics. Increase the impact of the presentations by forming teams who attend sessions around a particular theme or topic.

### **During the conference...**

- Share the responsibility of taking copious notes, tweeting or blogging during sessions. Two teachers attending the same session can work together to capture content. Make notes available at your school with some type of public postings (i.e., email, Moodle, Wikis, Webpages). Knowing there is an expectation of sharing what has been learned will raise the level of focus and the quality of notes.
- Chat with others at the conference to share resources and expertise.
- Connect and communicate with other attendees on Twitter.
- Collect contact information from exceptional speakers. Some of the speakers are willing to answer questions via email following the conference experience and many may be available to present or consult at your own school.
- Offer your feedback by completing the online conference evaluation. Share your interest in future topics and speakers and continue to attend ISACS conferences and workshops to continue your learning and professional growth. Many of the upcoming ISACS workshops offer extensions of the conference topics.

### **After the conference...**

- Dedicate professional time or opportunities to share, discuss and reflect upon the conference content. This may come in the form of full faculty presentations, small group sharing/discussion or any online format. The essential element is the commitment to set aside dedicated time and opportunity for considering the salient points from presentations. Facilitating this sharing is also a valuable growth experience for all teachers.
- Set long-term goals for extended study of conference topics.
- Visit the schools which have successfully translated the conference topics.
- Encourage outstanding faculty members to consider presenting at future conferences. Each conference offers opportunities to share the translation of current research into classroom practice. Presenting is a powerful form of professional development.