



January 2021

Dear Principal/Administrator:

The North Carolina Science Teachers Association (NCSTA) will be hosting our Professional Development Institute (PDI) November 4-5, 2021 at the Benton Convention Center in Winston-Salem. NCSTA was formed in 1969 with the mission of promoting excellence in science teaching and learning in North Carolina.

As the need for students to become stronger in science, so does the need for well-qualified science teachers and administrators who know how to develop relevant and high-quality science and STEM programs. Our PDI strives to help with this development.

The theme of this year's PDI is **Launch your science program into a higher orbit** and features the following strands:

Strand #1: Launching Science through Digital Literacy

The Digital Literacy strand will focus on the four following areas: Leadership in Digital Learning, Digital Citizenship, Digital Content and Instruction, and Data and Assessment. The professional development goals are:

- Teachers will demonstrate leadership in accelerating their integration of digital teaching and learning pedagogies.
- Teachers will model and teach digital citizenship by the ethical, respectful, and safe use of digital tools and resources that support the creation of a positive digital school culture.
- Teachers will know and use appropriate digital tools and resources for instruction.

Strand #2: Launching Science through Blended and Virtual Science Classes

Teaching science via blended and virtual classes that are engaging, inquiry-based, and student-center are challenging. Effective laboratories that facilitate student learning is imperative and doing so on multiple platforms can be perplexing. Today's current climate also necessitates the incorporation of social justice elements in our classes. Authentic virtual assessment is similarly required for launching science learning to that next level.

Strand #3: Launching Science through Environmental STEM Lessons

As students design experiments to better understand their environment, they can integrate the areas of STEM with the life, earth, physical, and space sciences to become scientifically literate citizens who understand the natural world and create ways to improve our environment. Science lessons become engaging when students conduct inquiry, use higher-order skills, and participate in real-world strategies as they learn how to protect their environment.

The PDI offers multiple concurrent sessions led by state, regional and nationally known science specialists and educators. These sessions offer a variety of science and STEM concepts from instructional strategies to informational sessions hosted by DPI. This highly-specialized professional learning event will enable educators to help students stay globally competitive in terms of innovations and invention.

We are confident the programming and events associated with the NCSTA Professional Development Institute will help to ensure successful implementation of science education into our schools and communities. For more information, please visit the NCSTA website www.ncsta.org and follow the PDI links.

We hope you and your colleagues will take advantage of this exceptional opportunity.

Sincerely,

NCSTA Board of Directors