**Conference Planning Tips**

**Planning Phase**

* You should select a conference nominating and planning committee to help with the planning and carrying out of the conference.
* According to the bylaws your budget has to be approved by January. You should be aware that if you go over your budget by 10% you will need to obtain further approval from the board.
* Look at your state sales and meals tax laws to determine if NCCSD might be exempt from tax as we are a 501 (c) (6) organization. (Copy of exemption letter attached)
* Try to figure out the cost per person from previous conferences to determine the conference fee.
* Identify risky Events that may require additional insurance (Harbor Boat Cruise) and consider event insurance.
* Late Registrations (due to states waiting for travel approval you more than likely will run into this issue) you should keep this in mind when ordering for the conference (example gifts for attendees).

**Hotel**

* Make sure to ask for the government rate. The federal government rates can be found online by city. Also be sure that comp rooms for you and your staff are part of the hotel contract.
* If you are planning to have a buffet you can provide the hotel with 10% less than your actual head count. If you end up needing more food they will be able to provide it and charge you.
* Also be willing to try to bargain with the hotel. Just because the hotel provides you with a cost for a service you may be able to get them to give it to you for a lower rate.
* It is important to keep in contact with your hotel for reservations vs the registrations you will be receiving. This can help you predict a head count more accurately.
* Hotel supplied AV is very expensive check to see if you can use outside vendor When negotiating contract
* Issue of additional tipping (hotel and any extra activities) check to see what is already included in your contract.
* See if the hotel will provide free internet access to attendees
* Ask hotel to honor the conference rate before and after the event for those who want to spend extra time in your city

**Sponsor Helpful Information**

* Sponsor vs Vendor Spotlight Form. We provided a “Vendor Spotlight” form for sponsors interested in speaking at the conference. Consider limiting this to sponsors and make your position clear from the outset.
* Logos for the sponsors. Sponsors were asked to provide their company logo to use for the conference poster. When we provided the logos to the vendor to create the poster we were told the resolution was very low and therefore, the print quality was going to be very poor. It was suggested the logos have a resolution of at least 300DPI.
* Vendors changed their attendees last minute which effected name tags or groups they were placed in.

**Additional Guests**

* Guest Fees & getting accurate guest head count. Those who are guests and attend the extra events will be an additional cost. It is important to figure out how much money you are going to have to pay for any additional guests for special events when determining what the guest fee will be.

**Conference Materials**

* You will need to determine ahead of time how you will distribute PowerPoint presentations to the conference attendees (expect many last minute changes to slides including at time of presentation). We opted for sending the PowerPoints after the conference.
* Bios will be needed for all presenters if you plan to include them in the conference booklet. Consider defining the length in advance for consistency

**Registrations/Receipts**

* You will need to coordinate with the treasurer on the registration form and the address for payment.  NCCSD has a Gmail account for registrations.  If the treasurer receives registrations and payments, you will want to coordinate a schedule and format for obtaining updated registration information from the treasurer.
* If you receive registration information, you will want to forward that information to the treasurer for depositing the payment in the bank account and for updating the conference registration information.

**Expenses**

* NCCSD has a debit card.  Depending on which is easier, you may want to obtain the debit card information from the treasurer or refer bills to the treasurer for payment.
* The hotel will probably want to be paid in full prior to the conference, but the amount due after any deposits exceeds the amount that can be paid via debit card.  A electronic payment should be requested from the treasurer roughly two weeks before the conference.  Any slight overages can be billed to the debit card, and any refunds will be sent from the hotel.