

NASDSE'S 76<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE AND BUSINESS MEETING

NASDSE  
DENVER  
2014

***State Drivers of Systemic Improvement***

OCTOBER 4 – 7, 2014

THE WESTIN DENVER DOWNTOWN • DENVER, COLORADO





## ***National Association of State Directors of Special Education, Inc.***

***225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 420, Alexandria, VA 22314***

***Tel: 703/519-3800 • Fax: 703/519-3808 • [www.nasdse.org](http://www.nasdse.org)***

Dear Colleagues:

It is my pleasure to invite you to NASDSE's 76th Annual Business Meeting and Conference that will take place October 4-7 in Denver. The theme for this year's conference is ***State Drivers of Systemic Improvement***. With the new focus from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) on systemic improvement and Results-Driven Accountability, this year's conference showcases state initiatives that address these new challenges. The conference is specifically designed to inform states and to share ideas so that states don't have to 're-invent the wheel' in order to get their systemic improvement plans started down the right path. As the nation's premier provider of assistance to the nation's state directors of special education, NASDSE invites you to Denver to share your energy and ideas to best serve our nation's six million infants, children and youth with disabilities.

This year's conference includes sessions on: (1) providing school-based mental health services; (2) educating transient children and youth; (3) the Department of Education's new GRADS360 system; and (4) on-line learning for students with disabilities. In addition, we will be joined by Melody Musgrove, OSEP Director, who will have a conversation with the state directors about implementation of the new RDA initiative. As always, there will be an update on both congressional and Administration activities. Last year's new feature – You Pick – will also be back!! We expect that the Silent Auction will continue to be a big hit and State Night – a tribute to our Colorado hosts – will take place at the new, high-tech History Colorado Center.

I urge all state directors to arrive in Denver in time to attend NASDSE's Annual Business Meeting for state directors (or your designee) that will take place on Saturday, October 4th beginning at 12:00 noon. Lunch will be served in conjunction with our business meeting. The agenda will include a report on the state of NASDSE and our key initiatives. In addition, it will provide you with a unique opportunity to meet with your colleagues – including the new state directors since last year's meeting – have private conversations about your most pressing issues and to plan follow-up activities. It is very important that you attend this meeting to provide input and guidance for the NASDSE board and staff. Following the business meeting, there will be an opportunity for small group meetings.

Our opening reception recognizing new state directors will take place on Sunday evening after the Sponsor Showcases have concluded, giving you the opportunity to meet our new leaders and network with all participants attending the conference.

The time we spend together in Denver will provide for formal and informal discussions, food for thought and a host of networking opportunities in a lively collegial venue. Come prepared to participate in a wide variety of activities and be sure to bring a contribution for the Silent Auction.

I look forward to seeing you in Denver!

Fred Balcom  
NASDSE President

# CONFERENCE ORGANIZERS



**Fred Balcom**

NASDSE President  
Director, Special Education Division  
California Department of Education



**Frank Podobnik**

NASDSE President-Elect  
Administrator, Special Education Division  
Montana Office of Public Instruction



**Randy Boyer**

NASDSE Conference Cohost  
Assistant Commissioner  
Accountability, Performance and Support Division  
Exceptional Student Services  
Colorado Department of Education



**Colleen Riley**

NASDSE Conference Cohost  
Director  
Early Childhood, Special Education and Title Services  
Kansas State Department of Education

# REGISTRATION AND ACCOMMODATIONS

## Registration Information

The special Early Bird conference registration rate is \$475 and is available through Friday, September 19th. To qualify for this rate, a complete conference registration form and check, purchase order (original or copy) or credit card information must be received by September 19th. The regular and on-site registration rate of \$535 takes effect on September 20th. The registration fee includes conference materials and all conference events.

[Click here](#) to complete your registration and make payment by credit card or check. Checks (made payable to NASDSE) or an official purchase order should be mailed to:

**NASDSE Annual Conference  
c/o Linder & Associates, Inc.  
2150 Wisconsin Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20007**

Purchase orders may also be faxed to (202) 298-6974 or emailed to [nasdse@linderassociates.com](mailto:nasdse@linderassociates.com).

## Guest Tickets

Guest tickets for individual evening activities are available for purchase by conference attendees if purchased prior to Friday, September 19th. After this date, we cannot guarantee that tickets will be available. Guest tickets for State Night are \$80 if purchased by September 19th and will be \$100 after that date. Guest tickets for the President's Reception are \$50 if purchased by September 19th and will be \$75 after that date.



Colorado State Capitol building at sunset



## **Cancellations**

A \$100 processing fee will be imposed for conference registration cancellations made after Friday, September 19th. Registration fees for cancellations after Friday, September 26th will not be refunded. Cancellation notices must be submitted directly to [nasdse@linderassociates.com](mailto:nasdse@linderassociates.com) or faxed to (202) 298-6974.

## **Denver Accommodations**

The Westin Denver Downtown, the conference hotel, is located at 1672 Lawrence Street, Denver, CO 80202. The hotel's website is <http://www.westindenverdowntown.com/>. NASDSE has reserved a block of rooms for conference participants at the special conference rate of \$169 per night, plus tax. Conference participants are responsible for making their own accommodations. Reservations can be made by calling 888-627-8435 or online using this dedicated link:

<https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/StarGroupsWeb/booking/reservation?id=1406178959&key=229B73F5>.

If you are making your reservations by phone, please identify yourself as part of the NASDSE conference in order to qualify for the special group rate. The special conference rate is available from September 28th – October 11th so that conference attendees may arrive early or extend their stay.

To ensure you receive the conference rate, make your reservations by Wednesday, September 10th. Reservations made after Wednesday, September 10th will be confirmed on a space and rate available basis. Also, please advise the hotel staff at that time of any special room requirements you may have.

## **Conference Agenda**

[Click here](#) to view and download the conference agenda.

# BUSINESS MEETING AND CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

## Preconference Annual Business Meeting for State Directors of Special Education

NASDSE's Annual Business Meeting for state directors (or their designees) will begin with lunch at 12:00 noon on Saturday, October 4th. This session provides a rare opportunity for state directors to meet in a closed-door session with their peers. State directors are urged to arrive in Denver in time to attend this important meeting. NASDSE President Fred Balcom and Executive Director Bill East will give NASDSE's State-of-the-Organization report. President Balcom will accept nominations for NASDSE officers and the Board of Directors. There will also be an opportunity for state directors to discuss current issues of concern to the membership. Following the business meeting, there will be an opportunity for small group discussions.

## Sponsor Showcases

Following the conclusion of the general sessions on Sunday afternoon, all conference attendees will have an opportunity to attend the Sponsor Showcases – mini-sessions hosted by NASDSE's conference sponsors – to learn more about the opportunities that they can provide for states. NASDSE intentionally limits the number of sponsors at our conference so that attendees and sponsors have as much time as possible to network with each other. We encourage everyone to attend the Sponsor Showcases. As an added incentive, participants are eligible for a door prize that is awarded for each showcase.

## Colorado State Night

This year for State Night, conference attendees will head to the History Colorado Center in downtown Denver. Designed by an all-Colorado team, the Center prides itself on presenting Colorado's vibrant history with new perspective. Upon arrival, guests will be invited to explore the inspiring and hands-on, high-tech exhibits before enjoying a delicious dinner.

## Installation of Officers, Awards Ceremony and President's Reception

The installation of the new NASDSE Board of Directors and the presentation of NASDSE's annual awards are a conference highlight. It is at this time that NASDSE honors outstanding individuals for their work on behalf of individuals with disabilities. NASDSE's annual awards include the following:

- The **Martha J. Fields Award of Excellence** is presented to an individual or organization that has made extraordinary contributions in helping NASDSE realize its mission and goals.
- The **Heritage Award** is presented to an individual for significant service and contributions to NASDSE and to the field of special education.
- The **R. Elwood Pace Humanitarian Award** is presented to an individual who engages in services or activities of a humanitarian nature that exceed his/her professional responsibilities.



### **NASDSE's Silent Auction Tradition**

NASDSE has a long-standing tradition of hosting a Silent Auction at its annual conference, the proceeds of which are used to support training for new state directors. Conference attendees are encouraged to donate an auction item representing his/her state. Donations may be brought to the Silent Auction desk beginning Saturday morning. The auction is always fun and is a great source of gifts and mementos to take home. Start thinking now about a great idea for a donation that represents your state. Be sure to leave room in your suitcase to take home a special item that you win!

### **Conference Attire**

Daytime attire for the conference is business casual. Temperatures in Denver in October can range from 70°F during the day to 40°F in the evening. State Night dress is casual. Dress for the Installation Awards Ceremony and President's Reception is more formal (men should plan on wearing a tie).

### **Transportation**

Denver International Airport (Airport Code – DEN) is located 26 miles from the Westin Denver Downtown. There are commuter shuttles, taxi service and all major car rental companies located at the airport. Information about Denver International Airport and ground transportation can be found at <http://www.flydenver.com/>. The Westin does not provide a shuttle to and from the airport.

## CONFERENCE SPONSORS

NASDSE would like to thank its corporate sponsors for their support of the conference and their ongoing work with NASDSE throughout the year. We encourage you to take the opportunity to meet with them at the Sponsor Showcases and during the networking breaks. This year's corporate sponsors include:

- Autism Curriculum Encyclopedia/NECC
- Bookshare/Benetech
- Curriculum Associates
- Frameweld, LLC
- Key2Ed, Inc.
- Leader Services
- Learning Ally
- MicroScribe Publishing, Inc.
- Pingora Consulting, LLC
- Teachers-Teachers.com
- Voyager Sopris Learning

You can find links to all of our corporate sponsors on NASDSE's website at <http://www.nasdse.org/ResourceLinks/tabid/59/Default.aspx>

## Local Attractions and Experience Denver

There is no shortage of things to do in the Denver area. For information on local attractions, extended stays and activities in Denver, go to <http://www.denver.org/things-to-do/>.



Denver Pavilions