

Virtually Together in 2021



Just like educators, NIET had to teach and lead virtually this past year as our work continued to grow and expand. In addition to converting our on-site support and collaboration to Zoom, we also provided ways to gather and learn together as we redesigned our conference and summer institute to be online, creating a way for our partners across the country to engage and interact during the pandemic.

Ultimately, NIET hosted its largest ever national conference in 2021 — and it was entirely virtual. Almost 1,200 attendees joined during the event held March 3-5, and as a benefit of virtual, more than 100 chose to view the sessions later. The NIET National Conference featured

keynote addresses and conversations, including John Hattie, John King, and Natalie Wexler. The event centered on the theme of Next Level Learning, and educators were able to take sessions on tracks designed for teacher leaders, principals, and higher education officials. While there is never a substitute for an energized, packed ballroom full of educators, the virtual experience was still interactive and engaging, and the vast majority of participants reported taking away key learning and rated the conference highly.

This summer, NIET hosted its second National Summer Institute virtually, building off many of the takeaways from the national conference in structuring high-quality virtual training

experiences. Almost 500 educators gathered July 14-15 on NIET's online platform to take sessions focused on student ownership, digging into the updates to the *Teaching and Learning Standards Rubric*. Educators were able to take sessions with their school and district teams, who often gathered together and interacted virtually with NIET specialists and peers.

While we have learned a great deal about delivering live online learning, just like teachers, we are ready to get back to in-person as much as possible. Our 2022 National Conference in Dallas (see back cover) will offer a return to in-person collaboration. To learn more and register for the 2022 National Conference, visit NIET.org.