

**National Partnership for Educational Access
7th Annual Conference Evaluation Summary**

On April 16-17, 2015, the National Partnership for Educational Access held its 7th annual conference. Hosted in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the conference included three keynote presentations (Joshua Aronson, NYU Steinhardt; Laura W. Perna, University of Pennsylvania; and Salome Thomas-EL, Thomas Edison Charter School), a panel presentation of alumni and family members, 38 workshops, and a networking reception. The conference drew a national crowd of 335.

A comprehensive evaluation was administered both at the conference and online after to gauge participant experiences. In total, 201 conference attendees completed the survey, representing 68 percent of those eligible to participate. Of the respondents, 61 percent were first time conference attendees, while 39 percent had previously attended.

Reasons for Attending

In terms of why respondents chose to attend the conference:

- 92 and 89 percent indicated ongoing professional development and opportunities for networking, respectively, were either important or very important in their decision to attend.
- 89 percent indicated meeting new colleagues was an important or very important reason they attended.
- 52 and 50 percent indicated the location and cost of the conference, respectively, were important or very important considerations.

Satisfaction with the Conference

We asked a range of questions to gauge participant satisfaction with the conference, including both the structure and the quality/value of the conference. Feedback included:

- 96 percent of respondents indicated they found the conference overall valuable or very valuable.
- 92 percent of respondents identified opportunities to exchange best practices with others as valuable or very valuable, and 90 percent indicated workshop sessions and the range of topics covered during the conference were valuable or very valuable.
- 94 percent of respondents found the keynote speakers somewhat, valuable, or very valuable.
- 83 percent found available resources to assist their organization valuable or very valuable.

When asked to specify two-three of the most valuable aspects of the conference, more than 80 respondents listed networking and meeting with colleagues, and another 51 listed the workshops. Other common references included sharing best practices, connecting with resources, information, and exhibitors, the topics featured, the alumni and family panel, the keynotes and their research, the conference location, and the range of participants. Many presenters noted the opportunity to share was one of the most valuable aspects of the conference, and others appreciated the opportunity to learn from others, be inspired and reinvigorated to do access work, exchange ideas with other like-minded individuals, and learn about the NPEA Data Counts project.

Future Conference Going

When asked about the likelihood of attending next year's conference in Baltimore, 88 percent of respondents indicated they are likely to attend.

