



Workforce Development Committee

Spring 2026 Report - Full Committee History From March 2016

Through April 2026 with Charges and Goals Through 2029

As we are in the midst of America's 250th year, I also want to say, happy Jones Point Monument setting week here in D.C. As we meet in the D.C. area this week, it is worth remembering that on April 15, 1791, the South cornerstone of the federal district was set at Jones Point. That moment was 235 years ago this week, and it is a reminder that surveying has always sat at the center of how this country measures, defines, and builds.

As we prepare for the four-hour joint meeting with Military, Membership, Workforce Development, and Marketing, I wanted to pull together the full history of the Workforce Development Committee. As this report shows, the committee reached its ten-year mark last month. We have not really had this full story in one place before. I wanted to go back to the beginning, show what was actually built, point out what was completed, talk about what stalled over the years, and lay out what still needs to be done. This report brings together information from the NSPS website for meeting minutes and committee reports, web searches, committee files I already had, newer resources created over the last few years, and the work completed during my time on the committee.

This committee is now more than fifty people strong. That number says something about our committee! It shows that members keep showing up. They join the monthly Zoom calls when they can. They help create and review the material. They bring ideas that are working in their states. They keep pushing the work along between our national spring and fall meetings. That is why this report is written the way it is. It is meant to show what a committed committee has and can build over time.

How the committee got here

The Workforce Development Committee grew out of the larger Future of Surveying effort (funded by NCEES) that began in January 2016. That effort brought together leaders from across the profession to discuss several problems that had been building for years. Too many people do not understand what surveyors do. Students were not finding clear paths into the profession. Outreach looked different from state to state. Mentoring was uneven. The image of the profession still lingered behind the actual work being done in the field and the office.

That same year, in March of 2016, the NSPS Board approved a motion directing NSPS to explore and implement a Geospatial Workforce Development Initiative. Over the next few years, workforce development began appearing more often in board reports and spring meeting discussions. Emily Pierce helped lead the early effort, and Tim Murphy later carried the committee forward and kept it moving through a difficult period.

Like many groups, this committee lost some of its stride during the COVID years. That was not because the need went away. It was the opposite. The shortage was still there. The need for better outreach was still there. The lack of clear public understanding was still there. The profession still needed a stronger pipeline. What changed after that period was the willingness to rebuild more virtually.

The NSPS Fall meetings held in September 2021, an onsite meeting in Oak Brook, Illinois, helped restart that momentum. The committee was still trying to define its place within NSPS, and there were overlaps with other

groups, but the energy had started to return. By May of 2022, regular Zoom meetings were helping keep the work moving. Those meetings gave people a place to bring ideas, sort through what was worth doing, and actually finish things. That steady pace turned out to be one of the biggest changes in the life of the committee.

Since then, the committee has met more than forty times, with smaller working groups meeting even more often when projects needed extra attention. It sounds simple, but it helped change the pace of the committee's work. When a group only meets twice a year, ideas tend to sit. Once this committee started meeting more often, those ideas had a better chance of turning into something useful.

A real short look at the timeline

In January 2016, the first Future of Surveying forum brought together 18 organizations and publications to discuss the profession's future. The discussion covered public image, outreach, education, recruiting, mentoring, and how surveying should explain itself to the public.

In March 2016, the NSPS Board approved the Geospatial Workforce Development Initiative, which gave the effort a formal place within NSPS. Emily Pierce was serving as chair at that time. By June 2016, the forum process had produced an action plan built around three main areas: brand and image, education, and recruiting and mentoring. A year later, in June 2017, the Baton Rouge meeting pushed the work forward by focusing on tools, target audiences, message development, and ways states could use shared materials rather than starting from scratch.

By fall 2017, Workforce Development was active enough to appear in Board reports. By spring 2019, Tim Murphy was chair and asked that Emily be recognized for helping build the committee in its early years.

Another turning point came in 2022, when the committee began holding regular monthly Zoom meetings. By March 2023, the first national outreach package was in place. That package included a recruiting PowerPoint, a narrated version of the PowerPoint, a career path poster, postcards, newsletter ads, and a contact map to help states know where to turn for support.

In 2024, the committee refined its focus and expanded our work. Liaison updates from other NSPS committees became a regular part of the conversation. Outreach 101 moved closer to completion. CareerView XR gained traction. The early work that later led to the NSPS Military Committee also took shape during this period.

In 2025, several of those efforts moved into final products. CareerView XR launched. CrEW was completed. Mentoring support moved ahead. Technician-focused conversations picked up speed. States began experimenting with boot camps, tech days, and local outreach efforts, using shared materials rather than creating everything from scratch.

By early 2026, the committee has now entered a more strategic phase. The focus is no longer only on creating new tools. It had also shifted toward coordination, wider use, and making sure the work could continue in a steady way.

What changed in the last four years

The biggest change over the last four years is that the committee moved from broad discussions to practical work. For a long time, the profession has understood the problems. Not enough young people were coming in. Public understanding of surveying was limited. Mentoring looked different from place to place. Students and parents often had little sense of what modern surveying really looked like. What had been missing was a shared set of tools that states, chapters, and individual surveyors could actually use.

By 2023, that began to change. The recruiting presentation, narrated version, career path poster, postcards, ads, and contact map may not have seemed dramatic by themselves, but together they showed real progress. The committee was no longer only describing the need. We were starting to answer it.

That work continued through 2024 and 2025. Outreach 101 became one of the clearest examples. It took time to build, but it gave members and states a practical guide with ideas, talking points, opportunities, and simple ways to begin. It made it easier for people to help without feeling like they had to invent their own plan first.

The same is true of the career path posters. They gave states a starting point they could shape for local use without having to build every piece themselves. That kind of support saves time, cuts down on repeated effort, and gives the profession a more consistent public message.

The committee also moved further into digital outreach. CareerView XR and the web-based surveyor experience gave members something current to share with students at conferences, career fairs, school visits, and public events. Students already live in a visual world, so the profession has to show itself in ways that feel current and real. CareerView XR helped us do that. So did the web-based surveyor experience tour on BeASurveyor.com (THANK YOU, NCEES, for providing the funding to make this happen!), along with QR-based event materials and simple talking points that connected in-person outreach to a larger national message.

Another shift was that the committee stopped treating workforce development as only a student recruiting issue. Recruitment is part of it, but it is not the whole picture. The profession also has to think about retention, technician development, leadership development, and the path from entry-level work to licensure and long-term careers.

That is where CrEW became so useful. It brought together ideas the profession has long needed to say more clearly. If firms do not help people grow, support mentoring, encourage credentials, support licensure, and show them a future in the profession, people will continue to leave. CrEW gave shape to that challenge and widened the committee's focus beyond outreach alone.

That same wider view can be seen in the committee's technician work. Tech days, boot camps, online training paths, community college connections, and shared state examples all became part of the discussion. Indiana and Michigan held boot camps in 2024 & 2025. North Carolina hosted a large tech day at Wake Tech with hands-on stations and a strong turnout. These examples gave others something useful to learn from. Now, who wants to join the discussion for a possible 2026 boot camp? There are already a couple planned!

One more clear change over the last few years is the committee's role within NSPS. Workforce Development now works more closely with Education, YSN, CST, Trig Star, Marketing, and the Military Committee. That has helped reduce repeated effort and made it easier to see how these areas support one another. The motion that led to the creation of the NSPS Military Committee in 2024 came out of this larger workforce conversation. That is a good example of what can happen when people start viewing the pipeline as a single, connected effort rather than a set of separate projects.

What the Future of Surveying Forum effort still gives us

The Future of Surveying Forum effort deserves more than a passing mention because so much of the committee's present work grew from that earlier push.

The 2016 forum was built around a simple but honest concern: the number of surveyors was shrinking, the profession did not have a strong shared message, and the public still did not really know what modern surveying was. The forum gathered leaders from many corners of the profession and asked them to speak for their organizations, not just for themselves. That structure gave the conversation a wider view than one group could have created alone.

At the same time, it is fair to say that the Future of Surveying effort did not continue as a visible national program in the same way it started. The name faded. The forum structure did not stay in public view year after year. Some of the early energy drifted. That does not mean the effort failed. It means the profession had the right ideas before it had enough structure to keep them moving.

There are still a few clear lessons in that.

First, the profession needs a common message. The forum kept coming back to definitions, talking points, and a shared public explanation of surveying. That is still true today. States make more progress when they are not trying to explain the profession from scratch every time they walk into a classroom or career fair.

Second, face-to-face outreach still works best, but it works better when it is backed by shared materials and modern digital tools. The committee's current use of classroom visits, conference booths, QR pieces, BeASurveyor.com, and CareerView XR lines up closely with what the forum was pushing for.

Third, people need tools that are ready to use. If every volunteer has to invent their own presentation, poster, talking points, and follow-up plan, the work slows down, and the message drifts. The committee has finally started giving states what the forum asked for almost a decade ago.

Fourth, technician development belongs in the same conversation. The 2017 group talked about technician training and distance learning. The committee is still dealing with that same need through boot camps, tech days, online paths, and support pieces like CrEW.

Fifth, continuousness has to be built on purpose. Work like this does not carry itself. It needs regular meetings, clear ownership, working files that people can find, deadlines, and some way to measure whether the tools are being used. That is still one of the larger jobs ahead.

FS & PS Exam Trends And What They Show

The 2025 NCEES Squared Report figures in this report show a much healthier picture than the profession saw 10 years ago. FS examinee volume rose from 900 in fiscal year 2014 to 2015 to 2,286 in fiscal year 2024 to 2025 (This is for "ALL takers"). PS examinee volume rose from 841 to 1,825 over the same period (again, these numbers are for "ALL" takers, not just first-time takers).

The growth was not a straight line. There were drops and disruptions, especially during the pandemic years. Still, the longer view is clear. More people are entering the pipeline, and more people are staying in it long enough to move toward licensure.

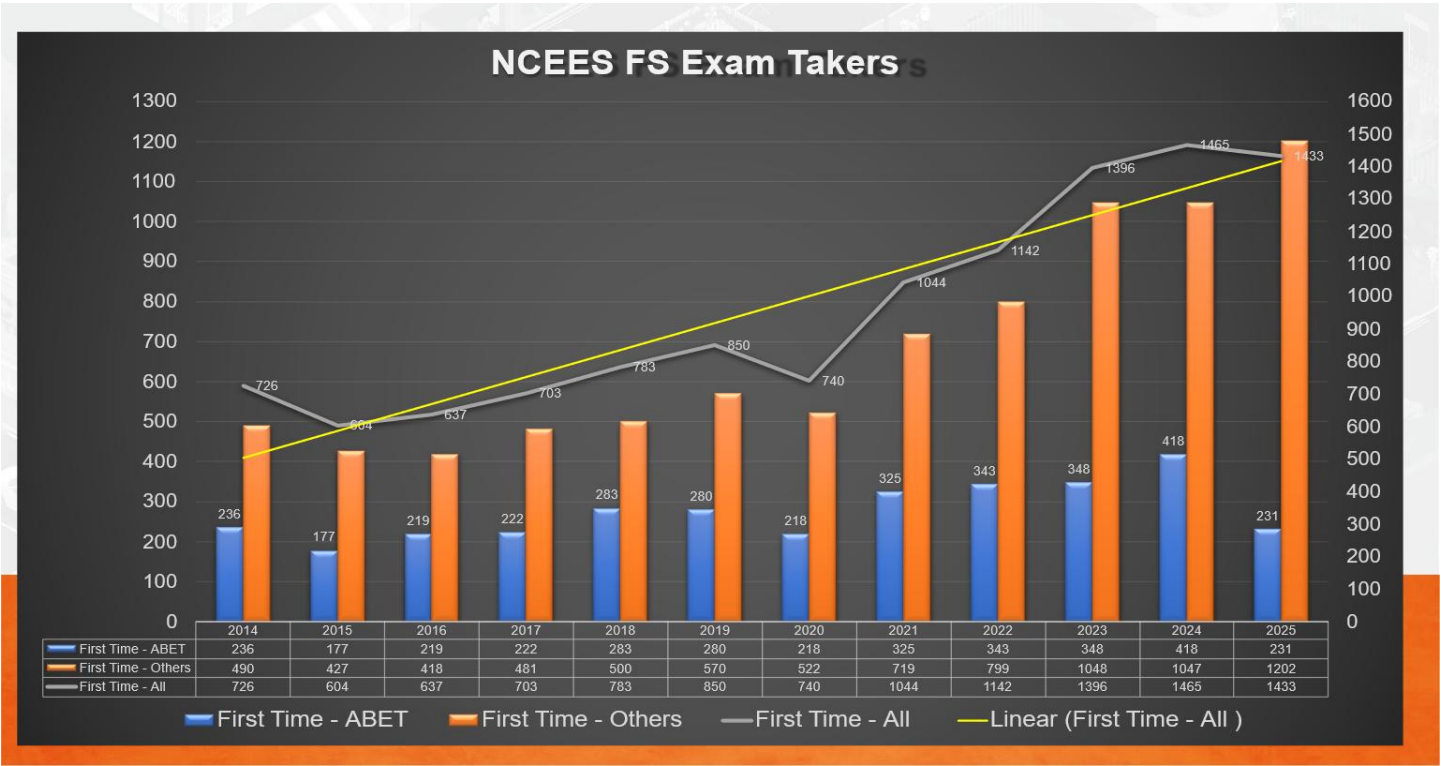
That should be taken as encouragement, but not as a reason to relax. Higher examinee numbers do not solve everything. They do suggest that awareness is improving, that programs and alternate entry paths are helping, and that people still see value in becoming licensed. At the same time, the committee knows the profession still loses people along the way. That is why technician pathways, mentoring, career growth, and employer support need to stay in the center of the conversation.

PASS RATES

FS Exam

The Fundamentals of Surveying (FS) exam is designed for recent graduates and students who are close to completing an undergraduate degree in surveying. Passing it is an important first step in the surveying licensure process.

	Overall takers				Takers with EAC/ETAC/ ANSAC-ABET bachelor's degree				Other takers			
	FIRST TIME		REPEAT		FIRST TIME		REPEAT		FIRST TIME		REPEAT	
	VOLUME	PASS RATE	VOLUME	PASS RATE	VOLUME	PASS RATE	VOLUME	PASS RATE	VOLUME	PASS RATE	VOLUME	PASS RATE
FS	1,433	63%	853	35%	231	76%	73	37%	1,202	61%	780	35%

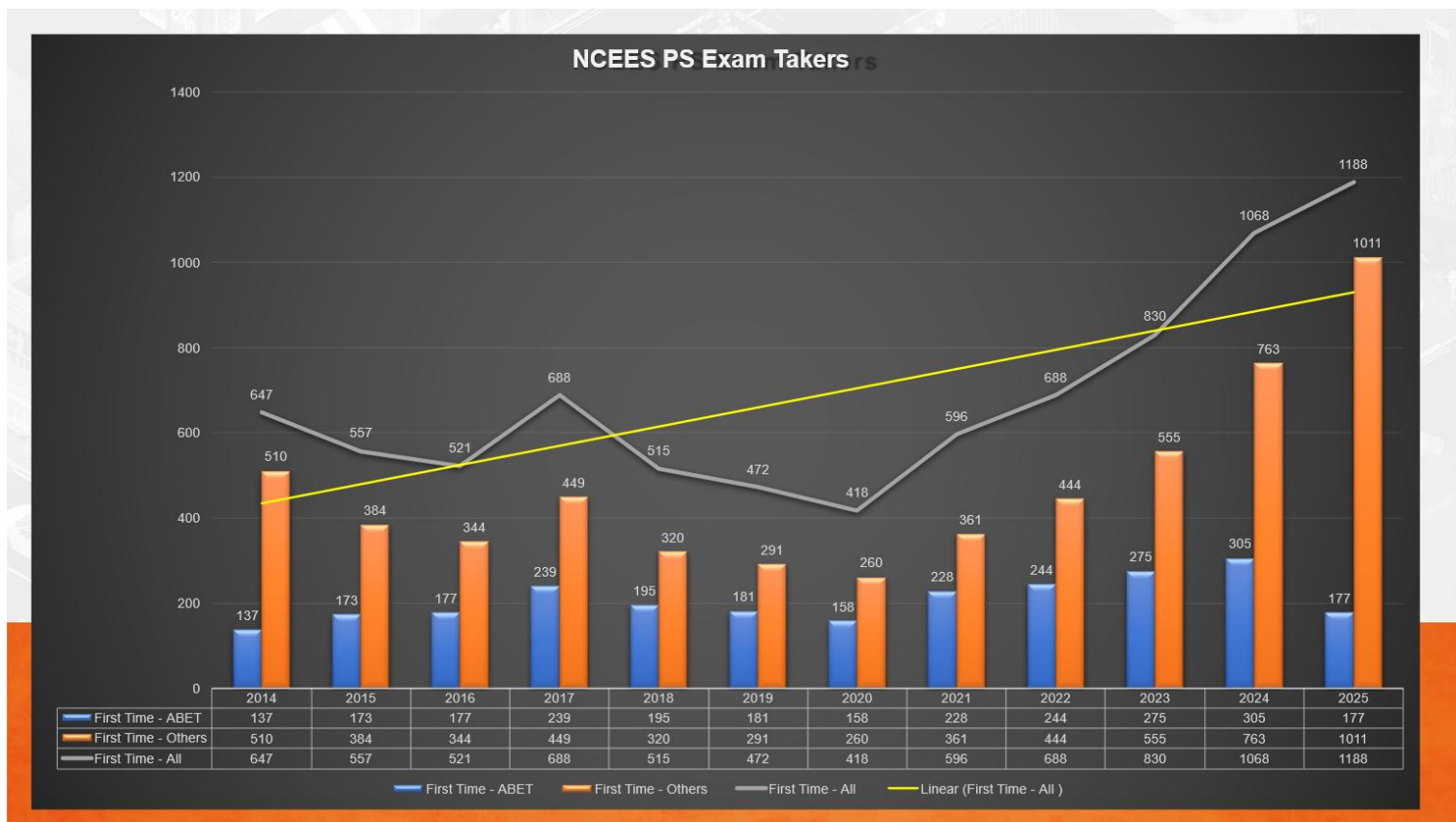


PS Exam

The Principles and Practice of Surveying (PS) exam is designed for surveyors who have gained at least four years of work experience. NCEES member boards require candidates to pass it as part of the licensure process.

	Overall takers				Takers with EAC/ETAC/ ANSAC-ABET bachelor's degree				Other takers			
	FIRST TIME		REPEAT		FIRST TIME		REPEAT		FIRST TIME		REPEAT	
	VOLUME	PASS RATE	VOLUME	PASS RATE	VOLUME	PASS RATE	VOLUME	PASS RATE	VOLUME	PASS RATE	VOLUME	PASS RATE
PS	1,188	60%	637	43%	177	70%	92	43%	1,011	58%	545	43%

Other takers include examinees who do not hold a bachelor's degree from an EAC/ETAC/ANSAC-ABET-accredited program or who did not provide bachelor's education information during exam registration.



What Still Needs Work

The committee has real accomplishments to point to. It also still has unfinished work in front of us.

One need is a cleaner committee archive. Too much history, too many notes, and too many deliverables still live in too many places. If this work is going to last past the people doing it now, the committee needs a better home for what it has built.

Another need is broader state use of the tools already available. A lot has been created. Not enough of it is being used everywhere. Some states are doing excellent work. Some are still only slightly connected. The committee needs wider adoption, not just more material.

Technician retention and growth also need continued attention. The profession cannot solve its shortage by focusing only on licensed surveyors or future college graduates. It needs strong technicians, clear advancement paths, and better support for the people already doing the work.

Partnerships outside NSPS still need time and follow-through. Conversations with groups such as AGC, ABC, ASCE, and NSPE are useful, but they need structure if they are going to turn into something lasting.

Measurement is another challenge. It is easy to count events, booth visitors, or handouts. It is harder to connect outreach to real follow-through. Over time, the committee needs a simple way to track what converts into student interest, local programs, mentoring, exam growth, hiring, and membership.

And finally, the profession still has image work to do. Progress has been made. The message is better than it was. The tools are better than they were. But too many people still picture surveying through an old stereotype. The profession has to keep showing the mix of history, law, field work, research, technology, mapping, problem solving, and public service that actually defines the work.

Goals Through 2029

The committee's updated charges for 2025 through 2029 already point in a good direction. They make it clear that workforce development includes outreach, recruitment, technician training, leadership development, military transition support, state coordination, conference presence, and work with other committees and outside groups.

Looking ahead to 2029, a few goals stand out.

The committee needs a simple national dashboard to track adoption, events, mentoring, technician efforts, and longer-term trends without burying members in paperwork.

It needs an active workforce development or outreach contact in every state society.

It needs a repeatable boot camp and tech day model that states can use with only modest local changes.

It needs to keep building out the Be A Surveyor system so teachers, counselors, career changers, and employers can find what they need quickly.

It needs to keep Workforce Development tied closely to Membership, Education, Marketing, Military, YSN, CST, and other connected work.

It needs more multilingual and state-ready material.

And by 2029, it should be able to show not just activity, but progress people can see in technician retention, licensure movement, and public awareness.

Closing

The Workforce Development Committee is in a much stronger place than it was a few years ago. That did not happen because of one meeting, one motion, or one chair. It happened because members stayed with the work.

We met regularly. We shared state examples. We helped move projects from idea to use. We pushed into technician issues, mentoring, digital outreach, career awareness, and long-term growth. We kept showing up.

This report is meant to reflect the work completed by the WHOLE committee members over the last 10 years. Some efforts moved fast. Some took longer than expected. Some early national work lost steam before the profession had enough structure to carry it. Even so, the larger picture is encouraging. The committee now has a base to build from. It has more tools. It has stronger alignment. It has wider participation. It has a better sense of what needs to happen next.

There is still a LOT more to do, and everyone on the committee knows that. But there is also more in place than there used to be!

The next chapter of this committee should not be about starting over. It should be about building on what members have already put in place, getting more people to use it, and keeping the work moving in a steady, useful direction.

Schedule:

American School Counselors Association (ASCA)

- 2026 – New Orleans, LA (July 11–14)
- 2027 – Columbus, OH (July 17–20)
- 2028 – Seattle, WA (July 15–18)
- 2029 – Charlotte, NC (July 14–17)

National FFA Convention & Expo

Held in Indianapolis through 2033

- Partnership with the Indiana Society of Professional Land Surveyors remains key.
- Next convention: October 21 – October 24, 2026

ACTE CareerTech VISION

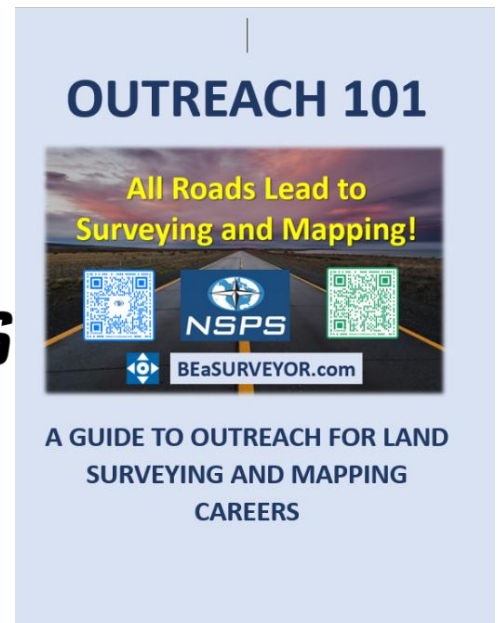
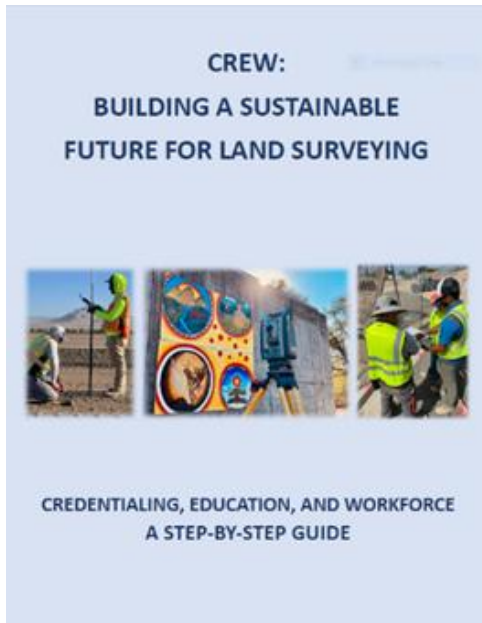
- 2026 – New Orleans, LA (December 2–5) – ACTE's 100th Anniversary
- 2027 – Las Vegas, NV (December 8–11)
- 2028 – San Antonio, TX (November 29 – December 2)
- 2029 – Phoenix, AZ (November 28 – December 1)

National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM)

- 2026 – Denver, CO (October 28–31)
- 2027 – Orlando, FL (October 27–29)
- 2028 – Minneapolis, MN (October 11–14)
- 2029 – Boston, MA (September 26–29)



HIRING OUR HEROES



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