Are you going to the NAEA annual convention this year? You should! It’s right here in Boston from March 14 - 16. Last year it was in Seattle and in 2020 it’s in Minneapolis. If you’ve never been, there are several things that could be helpful for a great conference experience. Put on comfy shoes and join the excitement! Book a hotel, or stay with a friend.

First, you need to be a member of the NAEA. It’s easy to join, and you automatically become a member of the Massachusetts Art Education Association (MAEA) as well. Next, register for the conference soon! There are 140+ ticketed events, hands on workshops, gallery and historical tours, that cost extra but are well worth it. Register now: https://www.naea19.org.

The format of the convention is pretty simple. You’ll use a digital or paper catalog with hundreds of session descriptions, location, time and audience listed. The NAEA app is great, and includes the schedule, the sessions, and links to handouts. If you go to a session and LOVE it you can visit the link to gather all the shared materials the presenter has included, and not have to lug them around with you.

Over the years I’ve had the pleasure of seeing Eric Carle, Faith Ringgold, and Nick Park who offer their humor and wisdom to the sea of attendees. This year Amy Sherald, who painted the luxurious painting of Michelle Obama, is the opening speaker.

In the evening you are welcome to many parties offered by local or distant associations.

I highly recommend a backpack or giant bag of a sort. Vendors fill a ballroom to sell their wares and give away a variety of samples, pencils, erasers, catalogs and occasionally something fantastic like a rolling cart or other high-ticket item.

Anne Charron, MA Art Ed ’01

PS … remember that this year Anne has been named the Massachusetts Secondary Art Educator.