

Minutes of: NCME BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
January 10th and 11th, 2002 – Washington, D.C.

Attending: H.D. Hoover (president); Linda Crocker (vice-president); John Fremer (past-president); and directors: LeAnn Gamache, Suzanne Lane, Mark Reckase, Sharif Shakrani, and Rebecca Zwick. Not attending: Catherine Welch. AERA staff attending: Gerald Sroufe, interim executive director; Linda Dziobek, director of publications (Thursday); Helaine Patterson, director of outreach and professional liaison (Friday). Special guest: Lynn Olsen, senior editor, *Education Week*.

Note: This meeting of the Board had originally been scheduled for September 13th –14th and was postponed because of the tragic events of September 11th. The agenda and materials discussed in the January meeting were the same, in most respects, as those prepared for the September meeting.

- A. Announcements and Review of the Agenda included expressions of concern for Catherine Welch, who was unable to attend for health reasons, logistics regarding lunch and dinner, both outside the Radisson Barcelo Hotel, and anticipation of Lynn Olsen's presentation on the following day.
- B. Approval of April 2001 Board of Directors' Meetings Minutes provoked a discussion of editing future minutes to make them appropriate for publication on the website. The issue of the timeliness of the approval of the minutes, since the Board meets infrequently, was resolved by a proposal to circulate minutes to the directors electronically as soon as possible following the meeting. It was understood that in rare instances where more than editorial changes were required – where a unanimous vote of approval was not achieved immediately -- the minutes would be deferred until the next Board meeting. The minutes of the April Board meetings were approved as edited.
- C. Confirmation of Next Meeting Dates: April 1st and 4th, 2002, from 4:15 to 7:00 PM each day; the New Orleans hotel and meeting room to be determined.

D. ADMINISTRATIVE AREA

The president's report provided advance notice of some items to be discussed under various committees, along with several specific announcements: (a) Ron Berk wishes to be replaced as the official NCME photographer, and to phase out as organizer and spiritual leader of the Fitness Run. Suggestions for a successor as a photographer were considered, as well as the notion of procuring a digital camera to permit easy transfer of photos to the website. The president was encouraged to consider an appropriate acknowledgement for the fine photographic work Berk has provided over the years. (b) The annual meeting program includes more paper sessions and fewer symposia, reflecting the guidance of the president and Board. (c) It was noted that the traditional NATD session was dropped this year because they had not responded to entreaties, but that it was anticipated that the sessions would be restored in the future. The NCME Board will look for ways to renew ties with

NATD. (d) Sharif Shakrani and Arnold Goldstein will serve as tellers for the 2002 election. (e) It was agreed that there should be some flexibility with regard to the principle (not required in the bylaws) of restricting candidates for president of NCME to those members with Board experience. (f) It was announced that Don Yarbrough would continue to serve as NCME representative to the Joint Committee on Standards for Education Evaluation; Mike Kolan will replace Julie Noble on the Joint Committee on Standards for Education and Evaluation. (g) Brad Hanson will replace Del Harnisch as the website editor and this information will be communicated to members in the annual meeting program. (h) *Educational Measurement*, a standard in the field, has been published about every 20 years and the last version, edited by Robert Linn, was published in 1988. President Hoover called attention to the need to begin planning for the next volume. Recent volumes have been published jointly with McMillan and the American Council on Education. Suzanne Lane volunteered to speak with Bob Linn about his experience as the editor and to initiate discussion with ACE on consideration of an ad hoc committee. (i) The Board expressed its enthusiasm for inviting Felice Levine, incoming Executive Director of AERA, to the NCME breakfast meeting and to the Board meetings at the annual meeting in New Orleans. Levine officially begins at AERA on May 6th.

The Board considered at some length an email from Barbara Plake. The email queried the Board about its potential involvement with an ad hoc committee comprised of representative from the three associations, responsible for the Standards, to provide guidelines or frameworks for states seeking to implement the testing procedures of the new ESEA legislation. The Board noted that the burden of testing in the new bill would be at the state level. John Fremer observed that the new legislation, calling on mandatory testing of all children, grades 3 through 8, in reading and math, was the biggest event in the history of testing. He urged that anything that can be done to promote the Standards in this context would be appropriate for NCME, while reminding the group that NCME would not take on the role of policing federal policy. Mark Reckase reported on his experiences with a working group for NAGB that was trying to determine how to respond to the legislation. There was discussion that the education system likely lacked the capacity to effectively implement the legislative requirements, and that NCME might want to focus on issues related to training users of tests and such activities as providing workshops for state department staff. Others proposed that it might be useful to work more closely with the NATD and Council of Chief State School Officers. LeAnn Gamache said such high-visibility policy issues made it imperative that NCME devote a concentrated time period to define the role of NCME as a first step in designing strategic interventions. The Board joined AERA in indicating receptivity to the proposed ad hoc committee and participation in exploratory meetings.

E. STANDARDS AREA.

Long Range Strategic Planning/Implementation was addressed indirectly with regard to a number of policy issues before the Board (e.g., NCME response to new federal legislation heightening the use of assessment for accountability, publications, website, outreach activities).

F. NCME AND THE MEDIA.

This was the topic for the Friday session of the Board meeting. Lynn Olson of *Education Week* identified the testing questions of most concern to media, media views regarding reliable and unreliable sources of information, strategies and tactics for working with media, and the importance of providing sound knowledge to policy discussions in a timely fashion. Olson noted that media hear most from outspoken individuals (Kohn) or advocacy groups (FairTest), least often from independent, objective sources such as NCME. She explained that most reporters had a humanities background, not a statistical background, and that it was important to be certain they understood the significance of terms often viewed simply as the jargon of the measurement field. She offered a list of terms that begged for clarification: “standardization,” “alignment,” “appropriate use,” “confidence intervals,” and “multiple measures.” Olson had read a number of NCME journals provided by Helaine Patterson and judged that the topics were exactly the ones policy makers needed to learn about, but they were not accessible to anyone outside the measurement community.

Olson suggested a number of strategies that NCME might undertake to get its message out: (1) provide best understanding syntheses of controversial issues; (2) develop a “media availability” over time (e.g., contacts, background information, available speakers who can tell stories); think in terms of glossaries to assist press and policy makers. She offered a number of tips for working with the media: (a) stipulate you are on background when it suits your purposes; (b) build relationships with reporters over time; (c) repeat key points you want to be certain the reporter understands at the conclusion of the quote; (d) provide necessary context, even if one is not asked to do so; (e) understand the press for “neutral reporting”: the other side will also be included in the article; (f) prepare your key “bullet” in advance – what you want to have quoted.

Included in this discussion was consideration of the AERA pressroom activity at the annual meeting and ways NCME could take advantage of it. Patterson agreed to treat two or three key sessions from the NCME program as part of the AERA “featured sessions,” and will expect to hear from NCME about which sessions to highlight for press attending the meeting.

Olson asked the group to identify some key issues in the measurement area and received the following list: (a) capacity with regard to design of tests, production of items, analysis and interpretation of test results; (b) disconnect between knowledge of achievement scores and knowledge of successful interventions; (c)

unintended consequences of any major shift in direction; and (d) adequacy of preparation of teachers and principals.

G. PUBLICATIONS AREA.

Discussion was organized around the August 20th report of the committee, as presented by Rebecca Zwick: (1) the nomination of Brad Hanson to serve as website editor was approved; (2) the proposal to contract with Riverwatcher, a commercial firm located in Illinois, to house the website was approved; (3) the website policy guidelines were approved, with the suggestions mentioned below; (4) the report of the ad hoc committee created to review the ITEMS publication was approved and the committee dissolved; and (5) names were solicited for individuals to replace two editors near the end of their terms: Jeri Benson (EM:IP); Doug Becker (newsletter).

Zwick also raised two issues that were deferred to the April 1st meeting of the Board, online paper submission and online membership directory. The Board discussion of online submission was largely favorable, except for the problem of providing tabular and graphic information with the present software. It was agreed, however, to add a phrase to current publications along the lines of, “electronic submission of final copy is ‘preferred’” as the opportunity arises. The Board will be informed by AERA’s experience in these two areas and will seek additional information from Yong Zhao about presentation of the tables and graphics online.

The Board suggested a number of items for consideration of the website policy. One suggestion was to exercise care in selecting links and making NCME available as a link to other sites. Another suggestion was to provide a disclaimer along with the links. It was concluded that the approved website policies should be housed within the Publications/Editorial manual.

With regard to the publication of the ITEMS, the Board voted to include them on the website and to provide notice of their future availability in forthcoming issues and on the website.

With the assistance of Linda Dziobek, AERA publications director, the issue of garnering royalties from commercial information brokers listing NCME journals was considered. The budget implications of doing so were not clear and the publications committee was tasked to investigate the pros and cons of electronic publication of NCME journals through commercial houses such as JSTORE.

H. MEMBERSHIP/RECOGNITION AERA.

LeAnn Gamache reported that the committees responsible for various awards have been appointed and are engaged in the task. One issue that has emerged is the dearth of candidates for some of the awards, notably, the Annual Award (this year concerning the application of educational measurement technology to a specific problem). The Board concluded that, while it was preferable to choose

among many candidates, one outstanding candidate was sufficient to make the award. However, it is not required that the award be given annually.

Membership committee recommendations included (1) conduct of analyses of the database of existing members, (2) conduct of a membership survey to examine member satisfaction and suggestions for improving the organization, and (3) recruitment efforts including possible rental of appropriate membership lists. The last item generated a conversation of “market segments,” raising the question: Who should be members of NCME? Among the suggested targets for membership recruiting were graduate students in departments of measurement; department of education staff; AERA divisions D, H, I and L; and attendees from the CCSSO’s large-scale assessment conference and regional AERA meetings.

The discussion of databases raised questions of the suitability for the current database, maintained by AERA, to support the analyses desired (e.g., is there any information about members who have withdrawn?). Further information will be collected on this topic. The committee was requested to draft a proposal for a direct mail marketing effort targeted toward the CCSSO’s meeting for consideration at the April 1st meeting of the Board.

I. STANDARDS AREA

The prepared report was not directly considered in the absence of the chair, but its content was acknowledged and several of the key issues raised were discussed in the context of other reports.

- J. OUTREACH AREA. Suzanne Lane presented three reports/surveys covering topics in recruitment and outreach. One document presented version #4 of the brochure being developed jointly by APA and NCME, which is intended to introduce the field of psychometrics to graduate students. The Board made a number of editorial suggestions to accompany its approval of the document. It was also suggested that it might be helpful if some parts of the draft were edited for the NCME website. It was understood that a separate brochure, designed to market NCME, was also under consideration.

A proposal for the development of a NCME brochure is to be presented to the Board at the meeting on April 1st in New Orleans. The Board’s discussion raised special concerns about the content, design, number to be produced, and overall marketing strategy of the brochure and the Board hoped to receive a proposal addressing each of these issues.

A third consideration, offering funds for “Underrepresented Minority Students” to attend the NCME annual meeting was not approved. The Board shared the concerns for minority representation in the association as expressed by Stephen Sireci, but felt it would be preferable to encourage support by the students’ institutions.

- K. BUDGET. The 2001 audit was approved. The 2002 budget was approved.

- L. OTHER. The final item considered by the Board was the establishment of the Young Scholars Award, funded by an endowment in honor of Jason Millman. Discussion of the criteria to be associated with the award included the following: (1) candidates no more than 5 years beyond doctorate; (2) award based on papers submitted to NCME for presentation at the annual meeting. Gamache is to form a two-year, 7 person committee, to begin work to establish a name and procedures, criteria, and announcements in concert with activities of the 2002 annual meeting. It is intended that the first awards will be made in 2003; it is anticipated that the award will be for \$1,000.
- Respectfully submitted, Gerald Sroufe