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Contributors to this newsletter included: Peter Hendrickson, Thel Kocher, Joe O’Reilly, Bonnie Wilkerson and Stephanie Gertz

The NATD Newsletter is published twice yearly by the National Association of Test Directors, an association of professionals with responsibilities for assessment programs in K-12 public educational settings. For more information about the NATD, visit our website – www.natd.org

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NATD President's Column

Navigating NATD and the AERA/NCME Conference

Peter Hendrickson, Ph.D.

NATD President 2005-06

Graduate school was a time of lean family finances (think young kids) and tight University of Washington budgets. My advisor took me to a Washington Educational Research Association (WERA) conference at SeaTac Airport but AERA and NCME were out of the question. Later WERA work and better finances (think kids now in graduate school) made possible the annual conference but a professional conference with over 10,000 in attendance was a bit of a mystery.

A colleague from Texas called today, planning to attend the NATD Symposium and annual meeting for the first time, so a brief conference user's guide seemed in order.

NATD

Our organization meets once a year face-to-face. The Board and executive committee meet by conference call several times between annual meetings. All active members are invited to the breakfast from 7:30 to 8:30 in the Nikko Hotel, Mendocino Room. Test publishers host us and ask only that I give them a firm count for planning. I'll send members a formal invite and ask for FAX back. A brief business meeting follows with formal approval of newly elected officers. Most folks will want to stay to hear Jim Popham, a longtime NATD member and friend, speak about the unique state testing program in Wyoming. Jim is always entertaining and is held in high regard across the profession.

The NATD Board will meet privately that evening at a local restaurant and many of us will then attend the Division H "Movers and Shakers" meeting at a local hotel—see AERA.

NATD active members are also invited to the NATD dinner either Saturday or Sunday night hosted by test publishers. This is a great opportunity to catch up with old friends and make some new connections with colleagues from around the country. A brief awards ceremony is held and the outgoing president is administered a special oath. Following the dinner a few colleagues seek out a jazz club for late entertainment. Last year in Montreal was exceptional, but we would expect San Francisco to have a lot to offer as well.

Finally, many NATD members attend the NATD/NCME Joint Symposium scheduled for 12:25 Sunday in Ballroom I of the Nikko Hotel. The National Council on Measurement in Education has offered a treasured spot on their program for many years. This year President Elect Bonnie Wilkerson invited Eva Baker of CRESST, Gage Kingsbury of NWEA, and Judy Arter of the Assessment Training Institute to speak on "Beyond NCLB: From Measuring Status to Informing Improvement." Discussant is Karen Banks, a

consultant with Data Detectives, former vice-president for Division H of the AERA, and former NATD president

NCME

The National Council on Measurement in Education holds a three-day conference independent of but within the AERA conference. Most sessions will be at the Nikko Hotel. They produce their own program and provide excellent pre-conference training sessions. See the web <http://www.ncme.org/annual/index.cfm>. The NCME Breakfast Sunday combines awards and a provocative presidential address. Test directors with measurement interests join NCME for their sessions.

AERA

Most NATD members are also American Educational Research Association (AERA) members. They account for much of the active membership in Division H, focused on research and accountability in the schools. (See <https://www.aera.net/divisions/?id=73> for more information on Division H). Each Division has a Vice President. Our Vice-President has been Mary E. Yakimowski-Srebnick from 2003 to 2006. Steve Henry is the incoming Vice-President. Active members willing to do committee work attend the Movers and Shakers meeting Friday evening. The location is generally announced at the NATD breakfast. The Division H breakfast Monday is not to be missed for maintaining and generating professional connections, as is the Social that evening. AERA headquarters is in the Moscone Center.

Wise conference attendees spend several hours prior to the conferences planning their days using both hard copy programs from NCME and AERA and on-line versions. As the sessions are spread over several hotels, a street map is essential. Choice hotel rooms (either less expensive or more convenient) go quickly so early booking is advised. BART makes Oakland hotels feasible as a lodging alternative. Feel free to contact any NATD Board member for conference tips.

I hope I see you there.

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Highlights of AERA/NCME/NATD/DRE meetings San Francisco – April 6-11, 2006

The table below reflects our current understanding of dates, times and venues for AERA, NCME, NATD and DRE. See most recent updates at our NATD WWW site, WWW.NATD.ORG.

Thurs., Apr. 6	8:30-4:30	DRE (Directors of Research and Evaluation) meeting Hotel Nikko, Golden Gate room
Fri., Apr.7	7:30-10:30	NATD breakfast and business meeting Hotel Nikko, Mendocino room Guest speaker: Jim Popham “Can a State’s NCLB Tests be Instructionally Supportive? Keep Your Eyes on Wyoming, Because They’re Building Them!”
	Noon	AERA meeting begins Moscone Convention Center and conference hotels
	Evening	NATD Board meeting Indigo Restaurant
Sat., Apr.8	All day	NCME meeting begins Hotel Nikko
	Evening	NATD Dinner hosted by test publishers
Sun., Apr. 9	8:00-10:15	NCME breakfast and presidential address Hotel Nikko, Ballroom Advanced registration is required.
	12:25-1:55	NATD/NCME Symposium Hotel Nikko, Ballroom I “Beyond NCLB:From Measuring Status to Informing Improvement”
Mon., Apr. 10	7:30-10:00	AERA Division H breakfast & business meeting. Advanced registration at AERA Registration \$5.00
		Last Day of NCME meeting.
	Evening	Division H Social Jillian Metreon 101 – 4 th Street
Tues., Apr. 11		Last Day of AERA Meeting

Last year's symposium – Proceedings now available

Dealing with Cheating

Summary of the 2005 NATD Symposium

Cheating comes with the territory if you are a test director. Twenty years ago this topic was first addressed at a NATD symposium. And in 2005 cheating was discussed again, but from some new perspectives. The symposium papers have now been compiled in the 2005 NATD Annual Proceedings.

The first paper is by Greg Cizek on systemic influences on cheating. Since we are part of the system I think you will find his points thought provoking. And you won't want to miss some of his examples, including an actual final from a college "Coaching Principles and Strategies of Basketball" course with such items as "how many halves are in a basketball game?"

The second paper looks at the latest statistical and computer techniques to identify cheating. Caveon and NWEA teamed up to test some of the latest techniques using actual test data files. If you are involved in your state's testing or conduct large scale testing of your own you will want to read about what may soon be considered best practices in testing.

Finally, Karen Banks approaches the issue from the perspective of a district administrator who has to enforce consequences for cheating. Her paper will have you asking yourself 'how well prepared is my district for 'the testing season from hell' that Karen experienced?'

The 2005 NATD Symposia Proceedings entitled "*Current Guidance For Integrity In Testing*" has been posted on the website at <http://www.natd.org/natdproceedings2005.pdf>. If you would like a copy e-mailed to you just contact Joe O'Reilly at joreilly@mpsaz.org.

And stay tuned for the 2006 Proceedings if you are not able to attend the conference in San Francisco. Papers on using data to improve instruction by Eva Baker, Gage Kingsbury and Judy Arter promise to make for another great publication next summer.

In case you missed this in the fall newsletter

NATD Symposium – San Francisco, April 2006

Beyond NCLB: From Measuring Status to Informing Improvement

While recent focus on large scale assessment has been in the realm of accountability to benchmarks and standards, important issues of how movement toward those same benchmarks and standards can be facilitated through large scale assessment need to be addressed. This symposium will focus on identified issues of note in using data to move beyond the accountability focus of NCLB and toward a focus on improving student learning.

Although the issues of data use to improve student learning are legion and complex, they can be rather simplistically described in three contexts: having the right data, having the tools to help translate data into meaningful instructional information, and having the knowledge of the data and data tools to be able to use them together.

Presenters:

Eva L. Baker, University of California –Los Angeles

Title: Turning an Accountability Policy into a Learning System

G. Gage Kingsbury, Director of Research, Northwest Evaluation Association

Title: Tools to Translate Data into Meaningful Instructional Information

Judith A. Arter, Assessment Training Institute

Title: What Users Need to Know and Be Able To Do To Use Data for the Improvement of Instruction: a perspective on bringing teachers and student-learners into the analysis of test results and planning of future actions.

Discussant: **Karen E. Banks**, Consultant, Data Detectives

Moderator: **Bonnie C. Wilkerson**, Northbrook School District 27, Northbrook, Illinois

UPDATES

Board Elections and Amendments to our Constitution

By now, all active members should have received an envelope with ballots for elections to the NATD board and for several proposed amendments to our constitution. The package includes statements from each of the candidates and clear explanations of the reasons for each of the proposed amendments. All ballots must be returned to Past President Thel Kocher by March 24. If you are an active member and did not receive the packet, please contact Thel by fax at 952-848-4056.

Joint Committee on Testing Practices (JCTP)

The Joint Committee on Testing Practices is an organization supported by several organizations including the NATD. Its next meeting will be immediately prior to the AERA meeting in San Francisco. Our representatives have been Stephanie Gertz and Judith Levinson.

Remember *The ABC's of Testing*? JCTP drafted the original document years ago and the original videotape includes some fun shots of 80's fashion. While some of the ABCs are still good today, it seemed time to update the document. JCTP will be meeting just prior to NATD, where the ABCs will be reviewed. After that, Stephanie would love to get NATD input on the latest draft. So please see her at NATD, or send her an email (StephJLG@aol.com) and she'll send you the latest version.

State/District Sanctions for Testing Misbehavior

NATD wishes to collect and post current versions of state and local policies specifying sanctions for testing misbehavior. Please email any state or local policies from your locale to NATD President Peter Hendrickson at the following address: phendrickson@everett.wednet.edu.

We will compile the submissions and post them to the NATD website. The NATD Board feels a current collection would provide guidance to those considering drafting new or rewriting existing policies.

Revising the Mailing List

As in any volunteer organization, the maintenance of an accurate mailing list is an ongoing challenge. Our treasurer, Sherry Rose-Bond, has been working hard to remove inactive names and track down new addresses for past members of the organization. If you have information that would help, please contact Sherry at srosebond@columbus.k12.oh.us. Also, don't forget to notify us if you move. We hate to lose track of old friends.

NATD Breakfast at AERA

The NATD meeting in San Francisco begins with a breakfast hosted by Pearson. We need an accurate count, so it essential that you RSVP to the email from Peter Hendrickson giving details. If you did not receive that email, please contact Peter at phendrickson@everett.wednet.edu