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Message from the President

Bonnie Strykowski, Ph.D.
NATD President

This has been quite a year. New York City was a great backdrop for our 2008 annual events. The various meetings were spread around midtown Manhattan giving us the opportunity to mix and mingle in the Theater District, Times Square, the Yale Club and other notable landmarks of one of the greatest cities in the world. As always it was a great time to network with colleagues as well as meet new members of our profession. We had an eventful week beginning with our 2008 Annual Breakfast and Business Meeting and later with the Annual Dinner at the Yale Club. Our 2008 Symposium jointly sponsored with the National Council on Measurement in Education addressed cutting edge indicators of global competitiveness. Drs. David Berliner, Arizona State University, Kenneth Wong, Brown University, and Eugene Owen, National Center for Education Statistics, presented their own perspectives and engaged each other as well as the audience in a provocative discussion of the topic. The NATD Outstanding Contribution Annual for 2008 was presented to Dr. G. Gage Kingsbury for his accomplishments in the field of test and measurement. At the dinner meeting, we transitioned officers and I became the President and Dr. Phil Morse became the President-Elect. Dr. Mary Yakimowski, a former President of NATD, was elected as a board member at large.

After the meeting, the executive officers immediately turned our attention to the 2009 Annual Meeting in San Diego. We have a great new topic for our symposium addressing the issues of testing and accountability in our limited English proficient students. We are

working on our breakfast and business meeting as well as the annual dinner.

The climate of our country has changed dramatically since March of 2008, yet, our work goes on. As professionals in our workplaces and in our field, issues of testing, measurement, global competitiveness, accountability systems, growth models and using test data for student success are essential elements of our workday that help us guide our organizations to be successful and productive. Our members work in leadership positions in the public and private sectors in K-12 school districts, college and university settings, state and/or federal government, corporations, and not for profit agencies. Our diversity of workplaces, educational backgrounds, geographic locations, and private interests and avocations, make us a strong, diverse group.

We anticipate another great annual meeting of the National Association of Test Directors in San Diego. Reach out to fellow test directors or testing professionals and ask them to join us in our professional organization. I joined NATD when I visited the Topeka Kansas School District and I met Dr. Steve Henry. He invited me to join NATD and to attend the annual events as well. That was the beginning of a very professionally rewarding experience for me. I am honored to be your President this year. So share the wealth and talents of our organization and its membership. A membership application is enclosed for you to renew your own membership as well. Also, you may want to nominate someone to serve as a board member or to receive our annual award. We look forward to hearing from you and seeing you in San Diego.

Dr. Bonnie Strykowski is NATD President and Chief Accountability Officer for Community Consolidated School District 181 in Westmont, IL.

Nominations Sought for NATD Leadership Positions

NATD is proud to count you among our members. Having you as a colleague enriches us all. However, sometimes we need more! Being a member is a passive activity; we'd like to encourage you to take a more active role in NATD. You can do this by submitting the name of a colleague or of yourself to be considered as a candidate for one of the NATD offices that will become vacant in April 2009. These include:

- President Elect
- Secretary
- Member-at-Large

Please take a moment to consider the opportunity participating in this way will afford you: you will have a leadership role in an important professional organization and you will have the opportunity to interact with other like-minded professionals. If you have the interest and time to give a little back to NATD (or if you know of someone who does), please send your name and a brief summary of your professional activities to the Chair of the Nominating Committee, Sherry Rose-Bond at srosebond@columbus.k12.oh.us. Please do this while the idea is fresh in your mind. Your NATD needs you!

Nominations Sought for NATD Outstanding Contribution Award

The NATD Board of Directors, several years ago, established an award to recognize individuals who have made outstanding professional contributions in the area of applied educational assessment in schools. One or two individuals may be recognized each year conditional upon approval by the Board of Directors. Individual(s) recognized by this award are nominated from any of the myriad areas in the wide field of educational assessment including but not limited to measurement theory, promotion of best professional practices, teaching of measurement and assessment, and use of assessment information for curriculum, instruction, policy making and communication with stakeholders.

Procedures for nominating a candidate for the award, along with additional information about the award are found on the NATD web site, <http://www.natd.org>.

Procedures:

- The awards are given at the annual meeting of the NATD, if the Board of Directors approves a worthy candidate.

- Nominations are solicited through an NATD newsletter article, the NATD Website, and/or other electronic means.
- An awards committee, appointed by the Board, reviews nominees and recommends one or two candidates to the Board
- The recipient of the award is recognized at the meeting with a certificate.

Previous recipients of this award included:

Carole Perlman (2003)
Ed Drahozal (2003)
Steve Henry (2004)
Jim Bray (2004)
Joe Hansen (2005)
Joseph O'Reilly (2006)
Robert L Linn (2007)
G. Gage Kingsbury (2008)

Please give serious consideration for nominating a worthy candidate for the 2009 award.

2009 NATD/NCME Joint Invited Symposium

NCLB at Year 8 in the Assessment of English Language Learners: Taking Stock of the Assessment and Accountability System

NATD is planning the invited joint symposium with NCME at the AERA/NCME Annual Meeting in April in San Diego, California. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 required that English Learners enrolled in the US public schools be identified as a subgroup, and meet Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) goals. Title III also required states to set targets for English Learners' linguistic and academic achievement. This symposium will provide an opportunity to take stock of the federal testing and accountability guidelines as they relate to English Learners, focusing on testing policy, psychometric issues,

and policy implementation, including sanctions under NCLB.

Participating in the symposium will be panelists Jamal Abedi, University of California, Davis; David Francis, University of Houston; and Rebecca Kopriva, University of Wisconsin. Discussants are Gregory Cizek, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Robert Linquanti, WestEd.

Please plan to attend this symposium in San Diego.

Classroom Assessment vs. Educational Measurement



George Olson, Ph.D.
NATD Treasurer

Ten to fifteen years ago, education majors, if they even took a course related to educational assessment, usually enrolled in courses with titles like "Educational Measurement," or "Educational Tests and Measurement." The textbooks used in these courses had similar-sounding titles and were filled with psychometric jargon (e.g., Spearman-Brown Prophecy Formula) and lots of equations. It is little wonder that students typically found the material presented in those courses and textbooks to be largely irrelevant.

While there were some early attempts (e.g., Hills, 1976) to make concepts of educational

measurement accessible to teachers, it was not until the 1990s that textbooks emphasizing assessment principles relevant to classroom teaching (e.g., Oosterhof, 1990; Nitko, 1996) began to appear. In 1998 Black and Wiliam published their influential paper, *Inside the Black Box*, (Black & Wiliam, 1998) which argued that greater attention needed to be given to formative assessment in the classroom. Earlier this decade, Stiggins and his associates (e.g., Chappuis, 2004; Chappuis & Stiggins, 2005; Stiggins, 2002, 2004) published a slate of articles expanding on Black and Wiliam's argument for assessment *for* learning rather than *of* learning. Stiggins and others argued that, while traditional standardized assessment procedures still play an important role in education, it is formative, classroom assessment that has the greatest potential to positively affect teaching.

Today, most colleges of education offer graduate or undergraduate courses with "classroom assessment" in their titles. Furthermore, during this decade alone, literally dozens of new books have been published on classroom assessment; whereas, during the same period, relatively few new, psychometrically oriented books on measurement have appeared.

What do these new courses and textbooks have to offer? First, it is clear that classroom assessment is viewed as comprising much more

Classroom Assessment vs. Educational Measurement (Cont'd)

than grading papers and scoring tests. There is a clear focus on using assessment to reinforce learning. This includes describing learning targets in unequivocal terms so that students, their parents, and other teachers have a clear understanding of what students are expected to know and be able to do at the conclusion of an instructional unit, and what will be accepted as evidence that the targets have been achieved. Hence, there is much discussion about learning outcomes—especially about higher-order learning outcomes—and what assessment procedures are best for assessing those outcomes.

Classroom assessment calls for frequent assessment of student progress, not necessarily for determining grades but so that teachers, students, and their parents can stay apprised of what has been accomplished, what still needs to be accomplished, and what obstacles to success need to be removed. Additionally, various assessment procedures that support learning, such as student-led conferencing and student peer and self assessment are usually emphasized.

Does this new emphasis on classroom assessment affect NATD? Currently, depending upon whose list you use, there exists between 50 and 100 doctoral programs in education research methodology, measurement, and assessment. Virtually all of these are in research universities, and, while showing increases lately due to the requirements of NCLB, have relatively low enrollments. Since many, if not most, graduates of these programs seek university positions, there are few of these individuals available to serve public school research, testing, and evaluation departments.

What is likely to happen (or be happening), in smaller school districts particularly, is that existing personnel (teachers? counselors?) who have had an undergraduate or graduate course in educational measurement (or more recently, classroom assessment) are moved into positions of test coordinator or assessment

director. Depending upon the type of course(s) these individuals have had they may or may not be in a position to provide the types of service testing directors and their associates have typically provided. On the other hand, if these individuals have not been exposed to the more recent concepts of classroom assessment, they may not be in a position to help teachers facilitate learning through assessment. *Classroom assessment*, as a course of study, is *not educational tests and measurement*.

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Dr. George Olson is NATD Treasurer. He is also Professor of Leadership & Educational Studies and Director of the Center for Public School Research

The Care and Feeding of Doctoral Students



*Peter Hendrickson, Ph.D.
Everett Public Schools*

Urban school districts of a certain size with access to local graduate schools tend to generate doctoral students from within the staff. So often they are among the most capable teachers and administrators who are already fully engaged with their school careers and life-at-large. Doctoral students may feel their program is ill understood by colleagues, even by their supervisors who have not been through the committee and dissertation fires.

At present six teachers and administrators in our district of nearly 19,000 students are known to be in doctoral programs. They represent the University of Washington, Seattle University, Washington State University, and the University of Oregon. The programs range from educational leadership to second language acquisition. Some are in their first year and one is defending her dissertation in a few days. My own studies were completed over 20 years ago at the University of Washington.

It appeared that while each of the students had an advisor and many had a committee, they did not necessarily have a support group for the rigorous journey. Names were gathered from administrative colleagues and we first met for an hour after school in my office two years ago. The format was simple—tell your story, round robin, and let the conversation follow. I supplied one box of cookies and bottled water. My facilitation required only the lightest of touches as they were most interested in each other's work. Those who

were a cohort ahead of a colleague told them what to expect and provided living proof that you really could make it to the next step while working full time with three kids at home.

We decided to plan future meetings after work hours (if high school principals have such a time) but off campus at a local brew pub. Meetings there are also scheduled for an hour but as the personal relations have flourished, the conversations have lengthened. The students now buy their own beverages and several extend the hour to enjoy the pub food. We meet five or six times a year and bear some relationship to a Professional Learning Community (DuFour et al, 2004). In this case the learning is distributed across institutions and the topics are diverse. The common threads are a collective thirst for scholarly work within the fabric of public schools and parallel journeys into the terra incognita of comps, committees, dissertations and capstone projects.

My professional reading yields resources which they may not have encountered in their studies such as the AERA Standards for Reporting Empirical Social Science Research in AERA Publications (2006). Early each year I provide copies of the district's educational research protocols and I make sure they're current with the most recent issue of *The Standard Deviation*, the Washington Educational Research Association newsletter/journal which I edit. I'm always scouting for journal authors and have mined the doctoral group for articles as I've encouraged them to present at regional conferences.

While the students benefit from each other's experiences and research areas, I've benefited, too. Colleagues have become friends, even co-investigators. There are no surprises when one wants to conduct a study as we have talked long before permissions are sought. I've come to know some of their advisors and have a better sense of current doctoral programs. And each of them has suggested an article or two I really should be reading.

This no-cost, minimal preparation activity helps establish our status as a community of learners.

Care and Feeding of Doctoral Students (Cont'd)

I look forward to relationships lasting long after they've defended and basked in the glow of congratulations from colleagues, spouses and children.

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Dr. Peter Hendrickson is a Past President of NATD and Assessment Specialist for Everett Public Schools in Everett, Washington.



Membership Application

National Association of Test Directors US Department of Revenue Taxpayer ID# 222659646

Membership Application Form - Annual Membership - January 1st to January 1st

Courtesy Title:

Name: _____

Title: _____

Organization: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____

ZIP: _____

Phone: _____

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Email: _____

Category*:

Check here to request that your directory information not be published on our NATD web site

*Membership Categories:

Active Member: Responsible for educational testing programs in settings not primarily for profit

Emeritus Member: Active NATD member for at least five years and no longer employed on full time basis

Associate Member: Not directly responsible for testing programs and/or involved in test development primarily for profit

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