

ASSOCIATION FOR SCIENCE TEACHER EDUCATION

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In This Issue :

President's Message	1
Announcements	3
Election information	4-6
Election Ballot as an Insert	
Conf. Announcement	7



President's Newsletter Message **Kathy I. Norman, ASTE President**



**Make it a
priority to
develop your
political
advocacy skills
for science
education.**

Science education is at a critical time. Many young people are inadequately served; elementary science is non-existent in many school districts; student scores are down; and teachers are retiring. If you have not yet read Thomas Friedman's *The World is Flat: A Brief History of the 21st Century*, buy your copy and read it now. Friedman makes a clear point to educators: if we are to compete in the global economy, we must make changes now or be left behind by the rest of the world.

Make it a priority to develop your political advocacy skills for science education. Why political advocacy? There are critical issues before the U.S. Congress and state legislatures. In January Senators Domenici, Bingaman, Alexander and Mikulski introduced the *Protect America's Competitive Edge (PACE) Act*. PACE includes three bipartisan bills designed to implement the 20 recommendations contained in the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) 2005 report *Rising Above the Gathering Storm*. The number one action item in *Rising Above the Gathering Storm* is to improve K-12 science and mathematics education. Full action by the Senate on these bills is still pending.

In May Representative Vernon Ehlers introduced legislation that will ensure that NCLB science assessments are included in the state AYP beginning in 2008 and that annual science assessments in grades 3-8 will begin in 1009. It is anticipated that no action will be taken on this bill until Congress begins work to reauthorize No *Child Left Behind* next year. Including science in the accountability measures will put science on an equal footing with the other curriculum areas. You may write letters of support and inform your Congressman of your support for *Science Accountability Act (H.R. 5442)*.

On June 6th, the House Science Committee unanimously passed the *Science and Mathematics Education for Competitiveness Act (H.R. 5358)*, which strengthens and expands existing programs at the National Science Foundation (NSF) that would allow for more teacher training, bring more science and math majors to teaching, and improve undergraduate science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) courses. It is unclear when, and if, this bill will come to the House floor for a full vote.

Consider the fact that those who occupy positions of power often have little background or formal training in educational policy and even more frequently have little experience or expertise in science education. It makes sense that science

(Continued from page 1)

teacher educators need to become involved in advocacy for legislation that promotes science education. Policymakers may be very interested in educational outcomes, but they may have only anecdotal information and their own personal experiences to draw from (*Ready Response Handbook: A Guide to Faculty Involvement in Public Policy*, 2002). Remember that "the squeaky wheel is the one that gets oiled." Verbal and highly visible constituents make their desires known and demand action. Policymakers act quickly and respond to what appear to be urgent needs. Science teacher educators must be at the forefront of initiating and informing policies regarding science and science teacher education; if we fail to do so, we are handing over the job to those with little expertise in our specialization. The voices of university faculty are rarely heard outside our world of education and academe. Even when policymakers read our research reports, they may misinterpret its implications and importance.

Advocacy refers to individuals who believe in a cause and are willing to support it in multiple ways (Delcourt, 2003). Advocacy for science education programs can result in legislation for increased funding and new programs. In two accounts of successful advocacy actions, Delcourt reported five key characteristics common to leaders in advocacy: passion, preparation, inspiration, perseverance, and the ability to take advantage of serendipity (making the most of chance meetings and other opportunities to present their cause). Those who are more successful than others in advocacy efforts tailor their strategies to adapt to their environments, allowing them to accomplish their goals more effectively.

The policy process includes distinct stages: issue definition, agenda setting, policy formulation, policy adoption, implementation, and evaluation. Steps to follow in building policy connections include identifying "actors," setting up a communication system, communicating regularly, visiting face to face, prioritizing issues, collaborating, and translating or tailoring research to the interest and needs of policymakers (Brown, 2002).

Advocacy efforts need to be built on an understanding of and appreciation for the members of the legislature as well as their work environment. Legislators' actions are typically connected to deeply held values, and it is important to acknowledge those values. It is also important to be familiar with the legislators' views and positions on specific issues. Advocates must be clear in their own minds what they are asking for, should articulate why their views are important issues, and should acknowledge opposition to their position. Offering to provide more information is an essential action of advocates. "Agreeing to disagree" is sometimes necessary; it maintains respect, preserves relationships and enables advocates to return in the future. Advocates should always acknowledge the importance and impact of the work of legislators and staff, and should express appreciation for past efforts. Political leaders typically have too much work to do and too little time to do it. They cannot master every subject under consideration; advocates can provide insight and expertise where needed. To be a valued resource, advocates must develop a relationship in which they are held in high regard. Legislators and their staff value these relationships; efforts invested in developing these relationships will pay high dividends (Evans and Degutis, 2003).

There are particular questions that legislators want to know about advocates. Does he know what he is talking about? Does she understand the issue's complexity? Is he understandable? Can she convey it simply and succinctly? Does he understand the downsides of the proposal? Is she willing to acknowledge the downsides? Is he really interested in solving the problem or just getting his point adopted? Do I trust this person? Is the information she is giving me honest and reliable? What does he want from me? What is she asking for? Does he realize how this issue or this proposal relates to other interests or positions? How can she help me accomplish my objectives?

Characteristics of associations whose members are successful advocates in education programs can be of assistance to ASTE. These associations establish strong communication networks and regularly distribute newsletters, have clearly stated goals and objectives, regularly provide training opportunities, and routinely visit legislators. They are also able to mobilize quickly to act on fortuitous situations, can easily explain how the organization's goals are related to issues being considered, and enjoy the assistance of at least one influential supporter. (Delcourt, 2003)

It is vital that we, as member of ASTE and as involved citizens, become active in political advocacy. Recommendations on this topic and up-to-date legislative information are available at <http://www.nsta.org/legislativenews>, <http://www.stemedcoalition.org/> and <http://www.stemedcaucus.org/>. Check out these resources and plan to take at least three positive steps by the end of 2006 as an advocate to help improve science education.

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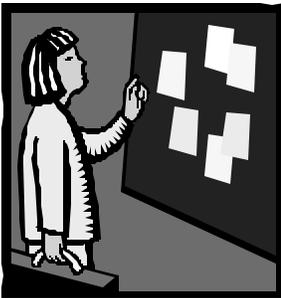
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Advice on becoming an effective political advocate includes the following (Delcourt, 2003):

- Get to know the personnel in the legislative office.
- Visit your legislator's office on a regular basis.
- Bring two to three people with you to represent the views of your group when visiting legislators.
- After a visit or vote, call or write a thank-you note.
- Check in by phone with your legislator's office on a regular basis to find out what is happening and to see if you can be of assistance.
- Keep in touch with issues before the legislature through your lobbyist or state department of education.
- When you bring an issue to your legislator, be very clear about the views you are representing and the reasons for your perspectives.
- If you are asked for information and are not certain of the facts, say that you will look into it and get back to the office.
- Invite the official and staff to visit a school, program or class, to offer a first-hand view.
- Keep the name of organizations that are important to the issue (such as ASTE) recognizable to and in prominent view of decision-makers.

Announcements



Eugene P. Wagner is the Executive Secretary of ASTE. He may be contacted at:

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ASTE Election Announcement

Please take a moment to vote for new leaders for ASTE! Voting is simple. You can either vote by paper ballot **or** online. Either way the Deadline is: **November 01, 2006**

- 1) Paper Ballot - the ASTE ballot is in this ASTE Newsletter. Simply complete the ballot and mail it to the address on the reverse side
- 2) Online Ballot - Go the ASTE website and vote electronically: <http://TheASTE.org> Just follow the easy directions. ASTE members need to use their last name and ASTE voter PIN to vote online. Members can have their voter PIN emailed to them automatically. Simply go to the voter page on the ASTE website and click on the link "Need your voter PIN?"

Thank you for supporting ASTE!!

Your vote ensures a strong leadership team!

Candidates for PRESIDENT

Warren J. DiBiase, Candidate for ASTE President Elect, 2007

I am an Associate Professor of Science Education at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte where I currently teach courses in middle and secondary science education at the undergraduate masters and doctoral levels. In addition, I have over 20 years experience as public school science teacher. My first experience with ASTE was attending a meeting of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Unit as a doctoral student in 1993. Since then, I have regularly attended and presented at both regional and international annual meetings. I have taken on numerous leadership responsibilities. For example, I have been the director of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Unit, chaired the ad hoc committee on regional units, and served on numerous committees. I currently chair the committee on Membership and Participation. Also, I chaired the 2002 conference in Charlotte and served as the program coordinator for the 2004 annual meeting in Nashville. I am currently a senior member of the ASTE Board of Directors and a member of the Executive Committee.

If elected president I will represent membership and help guide the organization as we continue to grow and mature. I will work to make certain that ASTE has a place at the table for discussions and action items in science teacher education. I will foster collaboration with and advocate for members of the science education community. I will work to increase membership. I will work to maintain the welcoming environment of ASTE and the mentoring of both new members and graduate students. Being active in ASTE is an integral part of my work as a member of the science education community. I am committed to help ASTE grow and evolve, to continue to address and meet the needs of all those involved in science teacher education, and to become the voice recognized by legislators and policy makers on all issues of science teacher education.

Meta Van Sickle, Candidate for ASTE President Elect, 2007

I have been an active member of ASTE since 1991. I have attended and presented at every conference every year for a total of 15 years. It has been my pleasure to serve on ad hoc committees such as the mentoring committee and local arrangements for the first stand-alone AETS conference in Jan 1993, held in Charleston, SC. I also served as an elected at-large board member for three years. During those board years I worked as the publications committee co-chair, first with Barbara Spector and second with Michael Clough. It was an arduous set of years with updating Standard Operating Procedures, gaining a new contract for the JSTE and ensuring the continuing succession of editors for the various columns, sections and our newsletter.

I enjoy working with people and love the ASTE organization. We have many great leaders from whom I learn every year. My college is supportive of my leadership with a science teacher education organization. I believe in scholarly performance and research and as such enjoy learning from both forms of scholarship through the ASTE membership. I want to encourage the continuation of rigorous scholarly works—both research and performance and the political action of the ASTE. My own presentations have included a variety of scholarly performance materials, from curriculum pieces to match the national science education standards, to research pieces that used survey instruments to measure teacher and scientists' growth in specific teaching pedagogy over the years.

Candidates for ASTE Director at Large (5)

Randy L. Bell, Candidate for Director at Large

I have been an active member of ASTE since attending my first meeting in 1995. That meeting opened my eyes to the potential of a national organization of science educators to make a difference in research, policy, and service. My participation in ASTE includes publications in ASTE-associated journals, presentations at regional and national conferences, workshops, and elections, publications, and technology committee work. Recent accomplishments for which I played a direct role include:

- Establishing the Technology Education Committee,
- Drafting the ASTE Position Statement: Technology in Science Teacher Education
- Establishing the National Technology Leadership Initiative Award

Continued on the next page

Randy L. Bell, Candidate for Director at Large— Continued

- Launching the ASTE section of *Contemporary Issues in Technology in Teacher Preparation*
- Securing funding for technology rooms at ASTE conferences
- Serving as program chair for the 2002 Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference

Leadership starts with service, and I believe that my record of service during the past five years reflects this philosophy. The commitment I make by accepting the nomination for a Director at Large position is to continue to serve ASTE in its mission to promote excellence in science teacher education through scholarship and innovation. As a Board member, I will be prepared to commit the necessary time and energy to maintain the excellence of the association and consider new ideas for improving ASTE. My participation in ASTE over the past 11 years provides a strong experience base for me to make a positive contribution to the organization, and I am excited about the possibility of serving in this capacity.

Marcia Feters, Candidate for Director at Large

I have had the opportunity to serve the ASTE community in a variety of ways. The following list captures some of these opportunities: I am just coming off my term on the ASTE elections committee; For the last 5 years I have served as the “long term contact” to the ASTE board for the Inclusive Science Forum (and as the chair of this Forum during its first year); I have helped plan events for the Women in Science Education forum for the last 3-4 years; I have served as a conference proposal reviewer and as a mentor to new members.

In the last 3-5 years, I have participated in an average of 3-4 presentations per conference as either lead presenter or co-presenter. I have helped organize pre-conference workshops in: Inclusive Science (3), Teaching Science with Toys, and Field Experiences. Conference presentations have cut across a broad range of topics including: Inclusive Science (4), Using Toys to Teach Science, Analogies, Portfolios, Video Analysis of Teaching, Course Reform, and Physics Education reform efforts(3).

The theme that runs through my service to ASTE and my presentation history is making science and science education accessible and expanding the community. I want to work with ASTE to make sure that the organization and its activities serve all communities involved in science teacher education. My work with ASTE will focus on building connections between these various groups and making sure each of these groups has a voice in ASTE.

Kevin Finson, Candidate for Director at Large

I see ASTE as having a unique role in articulating research into practice for science educator preparation, and being the national leader in communicating best practice to policy makers at all levels. I have been grateful to have been a member of ASTE as it has grown in these capacities over the years. I have presented at each of the annual ASTE conferences, and am the editor of the *Journal of Elementary Science Education*. I have served on planning committees for two annual conferences. I have also served on ASTE's Elections Committee, and have been an active member of the Inclusive Science Education Forum and currently serve as chair of that group. At the regional level with NC-ASTE, I have served as a past director site coordinator for two regional meetings.

As a Director at Large, I would continue to strive to uphold and promote the mission and goals of ASTE while representing the diverse backgrounds and interests of the members of ASTE, and I will work diligently to maintain the identity of the organization. I have always valued the interaction, sharing of research, and collegial nurturing that is a hallmark of ASTE. I value the strong grass roots heritage of the association, and am an active voice for maintaining and strengthening ties between the regional organizations and national association. As a Director at Large, I would continue these efforts. I would also seek ways to continue efforts of the Board to become more streamlined and efficient in its operations and more visible to the membership as a whole. In addition, I believe it is important to maintain the viability of special interest groups (the various forums, in particular) that serve to enrich our organization so much.

Continued on the next page.

Additional ASTE Officer Candidate Statements

Dee Goldston, Candidate for Director at Large

First and foremost, I am honored to be nominated for an ASTE Board position. I became a member of ASTE as a doctoral student in the early 1990s working at the registration desk while learning "behind the scenes work" of conference operations. Since that time, I have been actively involved in ASTE serving on the Editorial Review Board; Program Coordinator of ASTE sessions held in conjunction with NSTA; Proposal Reviewer for annual meetings; Planning Committee member for the ASTE Conference (Charlotte, NC); and Associate Editor of JSTE. Each year I have presented papers either individually, with peers or with graduate students. I conducted a pre-conference workshop and published in JSTE.

Drawing upon my ASTE involvement and leadership experiences (President-Council of Elementary Science International, NSTA Council member & NARST International Committee) in other professional organizations, I have gained a range of experiences that have provided me many opportunities both nationally and internationally to present and discuss research, projects and issues challenging science education. As such, I can envision ASTE leadership influencing national directives reflective of the current re-emphasis on promoting students pursuit of STEM careers coupled with improving minority students' science education. Second, given ASTE's international spirit, I visualize substantial initiatives that promote "inclusively" that draws in international members, nurtures and sustains intergenerational (graduate students, teachers, mentors) contributions, and bridges inter-organizational endeavors. Last, as a maturing organization, I see ASTE's research community continuing to grow by refining its mission, operations, and its capacity to provide a professional science teacher education knowledge base.

Tisha Morrell, Candidate for Director at Large

I have been actively involved in ASTE since the early 1990's when I joined as a classroom teacher and a graduate student. Besides regularly attending and presenting at our annual conferences, I am the Director of the Northwest Region and served on the Awards Committee (1997-2000), the Finance Committee (1993-1996), and, currently, the Conference Committee. I have reviewed for *JESE* and served a rotation on the Board as the Representative of the Regionals (2003-2005).

Most recently, I served as a Conference Coordinator for the 2006 Annual Conference in Portland. The greatest benefit of helping to organize the conference was interacting with so many ASTE members--prior to, during, and following the Oregon Conference!

I am a faculty member in the School of Education at the University of Portland, following ten years as a high school biology teacher in New York and Oregon. Most of my research has focused on examining the reform-based teaching strategies used by preservice and beginning teachers, including the effects on students and teachers of infusing technology into the classroom.

I would be honored to serve the Association on the Board of Directors. I am keenly aware of the changes the Association has been undergoing and the challenges that lie ahead as our organization continues to grow. I will work to maintain and nurture the regional and international voices on the Board as ASTE seeks to strengthen its presence in the setting of national and international science education policy.

Candidates for ASTE Elections Committee (3)**Kathy Cabe Trundle, Candidate for Elections Committee**

I am honored to be nominated as a candidate for the Elections Committee of ASTE, an organization in which I have been an active member since 1999. I have presented papers each year at the ASTE international annual meetings, served on committees, and supported the ASTE journals. I also mentor doctoral students as they attend their first ASTE meetings and present papers.

I am an active member of the Mid-Atlantic Region of ASTE, and I regularly present papers at regional conferences. I also served as the Director of the Mid-Atlantic Region and as the Program Chairperson for the annual Mid-Atlantic Regional meeting in Corbin, KY.

In addition to my regular participation in the annual ASTE meetings at the international and regional levels, I am the Conference Co-Chairperson for the 2008 Program, and I am a member of the ASTE Awards Committee. I also serve on the Editorial Review Board for the *Journal of Science Teacher Education*, and I publish my research in ASTE journals.

Continued on the next page

Additional ASTE Officer Candidate Statements

Kathy Cabe Trundle, Candidate for Elections Committee — Continued

If selected for the Elections Committee, I will serve ASTE by working with the committee to “promote leadership and support for professionals involved in the education and development of teachers of science at all levels.” I will work with the committee to develop the strongest and most inclusive slate possible with nominees who are representative of our ASTE membership, including different nationalities, various cultural backgrounds, and representative of various types of science teacher education institutions (e.g., private colleges, research institutions, departments of education, etc.).

Laura Henriques, Candidate for Elections Committee

I am pleased to be nominated to serve on the ASTE Elections Committee. I have been involved with ASTE since my graduate student days and find it to be one of my more fulfilling professional organizations. I know many of our members and won't be shy about asking them to run for office. I look forward to getting to know more of our members. I was on the 2001 conference committee (Costa Mesa), the professional development committee and have read conference session proposals. I was the Far West Regional Director from 2002-2005. As a K-12 teacher I relished the opportunity to attend state and national science teacher association conferences so that I could learn new things to do in my class and learn more about the craft of teaching. I view ASTE in a similar way. Each conference has provided me with research based pedagogical strategies which I can implement into my own methods classes. I also come back to my campus newly invigorated.

Our profession is at a crossroads. Not since Sputnik has there been so much attention to STEM and Science Education. ASTE needs to be an active participant in shaping the conversations and the direction of activity.

Rose Pringle, Candidate for Elections Committee

In 1992 as an international student in science education, I was introduced to and made my first ever conference presentation at the Southeastern Association for the Education of Teachers in Science (SAETS). Upon returning to the States in 1997, I immediately regained active membership in both the regional and national organization. At the national level, I have participated in annual conferences as a presenter, reviewer and a member of WISE. I am currently in my third year on the editorial review board of the *Journal of Science Teacher Education* and have been a reviewer for the *Journal of Elementary Science Education* since 2001. My involvement at the regional level includes encouraging graduate students and other colleagues to become involved, presenter and reviewer. In 2003, as President Elect of SAETS, I successfully planned and implemented the 2004 conference at the University of Florida. Notable, at this meeting our colleagues in the southeastern region unanimously voted to support changing the name of the national organization from AETS to ASTE. In 2005, as president, I was given an award recognizing my contribution and service to the regional organization.

If I am elected to the Elections Committee of ASTE, I will seek to understand the laws governing this committee and will uphold the standards important to conducting fair elections and dealing with the related issues. I promise to make myself available to the organization and will work toward maintaining fairness and integrity of the processes.

Use the included paper ballot or Vote electronically by **November 1, 2006**

Please join us at the 2007 ASTE International Conference
Character, Critique and Controversy in Science Teacher Education
Hilton Clearwater Beach Resort Clearwater Beach, Florida January 3-6, 2007

The Hilton Clearwater Beach Resort is recognized for its prime location on “The Best City Beach on the Gulf of Mexico”. It is the only hotel property on Clearwater Beach with its own private beachfront. The resort is located on 10 acres of powder-white beach, offering guests a tropical setting, beautiful sunsets over the Gulf of Mexico and an array of activities. The hotel is extending the **conference rate of \$119/night** for three days prior to and following the conference so you can make an extended vacation out of the trip – even spend New Year's Eve on the beach if you like!! Please make sure to use the ASTE group reservation code **ASTGN** when making your reservations.

Keynote Presentations

Dr. Marvin W. Berkowitz - *Understanding Good Education for Character and for Science*

Dr. Howard Johnston - *Raising Science Standards, Raising Children: An Agenda for the 21st Century*



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<u>Issue</u>	<u>Items due by</u>
Fall	Oct. 15
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Remember to vote for your 2007 ASTE Officers.

Use the included paper ballot or Vote electronically by
November 1, 2006

Details inside!

Plan now for the 2007 **ASTE annual conference** in
Clearwater Beach, Florida
January 3-6, 2007

Details about the conference, tours, workshops, and attractions will be available in the next few months.

Get the most up to date information on the web at <http://TheASTE.org>.

Conference Chair

Dana L. Zeidler, University of South Florida - Tampa (zeidler@coedu.usf.edu)

Details inside!