Do We Lead, Follow or Get Out of the Way?

Over the course of the last few years, ASTE has positioned itself nationally as a key leader for science education and science education research. We have distinguished ourselves by creating a niche that is significantly different from NSTA and NARST. We have thriving journals, the Journal of Science Teacher Education, the Journal of Elementary Science Education, and representation in the Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education journal and in Science Education. Our association is healthy and we annually attract over 50% of our membership to our annual conference. Few other organizations boast such a committed membership.

So where do we go from here? What is next for ASTE? I believe that it is time that ASTE take another step in gaining prominence nationally and encourage our membership to continue to take on active leadership roles nationally as policy is being shaped and implemented. But not everyone can serve on panels, boards, and may not be given the opportunity to voice their professional expertise in settings where policy makers can hear them. What can they do? How do all our members become advocates for science education?

Continued on next column

For the last two years, Joseph Shane, Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania and Regina Toolin, University of Vermont have been leading the ad hoc Committee on Policy and Government Relations for ASTE. Through their efforts, we have made significant links to NSTA and other entities regarding advocacy for science education.

Continued on Page 2

President’s Newsletter Message

Jon Pedersen, ASTE President
President’s Newsletter Message Continued from Page 1

In addition, Joseph Shane, Regina Toolin and Jodi Peterson, National Science Teachers Association, have put together presentations and workshops for NSTA and ASTE focusing on how teachers and teacher educators can become policy advocates at a grassroots level. They suggest:

- Politics is all about “What you have that you don’t want to lose and what you don’t have but would like to gain.”
- Teachers and researchers have traditionally been underrepresented in the policy/decision-making process.
- Decision makers will continue to implement education policies whether or not we are at the table.

Furthermore, they encourage everyone to take action to support effective education policy as it pertains to science teacher education and to make sure that you communicate with policymakers, making your voice heard. How is this accomplished? Here are some key suggestions that can be used to help get your message to policy makers.

1. Relationships matter.  
   – Become the expert that a legislator thinks of when an issue related to science teacher education comes up. This means that you will have to make an effort to get to know your legislators (locally or nationally) and provide them with straightforward (read one page) information regarding your expertise. As well, get to know the legislators’ aides. Although you may feel that you are being put off by not getting the ear of the legislator, don’t be. They are the eyes and ears of the legislator and are relied upon to collect key information and communicate it clearly and succinctly to the legislator.

2. Honesty matters.  
   – Tell both sides of an issue if asked. One of the worst things that can happen in a conversation with a legislator is to be defensive or one sided. You should represent both sides of an issue when asked.

3. Presentation matters.  
   – Keep your message to a legislator short and simple. Explain an issue, what it will do, what it will cost, and what you want the legislator to do within two minutes. Remember, that you are only one of hundreds of individuals who may be vying for their attention. Communicate your message in a one page bulleted format.

4. All legislators matter.  
   – It is critical to learn to work with legislators from both political parties. Remember that the party currently out of power will likely be the party in power within a few years. It is smart politics to work with and support any legislator who is willing to be supportive of your issues.

5. Courtesy matters.  
   – Many people get frustrated when a legislator won’t vote their way on an issue of importance—and then respond by doing or saying something to offend the legislator. In politics, you must live to fight another day as there will always be other issues that will come up.

   – This can’t be stressed enough! Know the political process. If you wait to get involved in a political issue when it is up for a vote you have waited too long.

7. Public relations matter.  
   – Letters to the editor or op/ed pieces get on the radar screen of policymakers, the news media, and the general public. Many state legislators, Senators and House Representatives use their local papers as a means of keeping in “touch” with their constituents. Use this vehicle wisely keeping in mind the earlier suggestions.

8. Communicate your message clearly and efficiently.  
   – Don’t think in terms of writing a long multiple page white paper on a subject. The policy makers won’t have time to read it, and may not understand our “jargon”. So, keep it simple. Focus on some of these key components:

   - What are core issues?
   - What is (are) your (our) message(s)?
   - How do the issues/messages fit existing legislation and funding resources?
   - What, specifically are you asking them to do?

9. Do your homework!  
   – There is nothing more frustrating to a legislator than someone who is advocating for a particular perspective and yet they have not fully read the particular legislation or they simply are not fully aware of the details of the issue(s).

Although these 9 recommendations from Shane, Toolin and Petersen may not make you an expert overnight, they are well thought out guidelines that can assist you in being a voice for science education. If not us, who; and if not now, when?

The time is right...we all need to step up and be advocates for science education.
ASTE Regional Conference Announcements

ASTE Northeast Regional Meeting October 22-24

Announcing the 2009 ASTE Northeast Region meeting October 22-24 at the Pocono Environmental Education Center (PEEC) in PA.

We are very excited to hold the 2009 ASTE Northeast Region meeting at PEEC again this year. PEEC is located within the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. It is a beautiful setting that includes access to shady hemlock gorges, diverse lowland and upland forests, rushing waterfalls and streams, unique flora and fauna of boreal bogs, and ponds teeming with insects and amphibian life.

The conference will begin on Thursday evening with an opening dinner followed by a panel session and activity. After the session we will gather around a bonfire and make s’mores. Paper sessions will be given during Friday morning and early afternoon. An afternoon break will follow that with optional activities available including a very scenic waterfall hike. Evening roundtable and poster sessions will occur over dessert and wine. Additional paper sessions will take place on Saturday morning with the conference concluding after lunch.

Session formats will include 20-minute paper sessions (15 minute presentation followed by 5 minutes of questions and discussion), roundtable discussions, and a poster session.

The 2009 conference registration fee includes all meals and lodgings. Lodging options will include cabins and yurts.

Registration information will be coming soon on the conference Web site.

Additional information about PEEC is available online at: http://www.peec.org/

Al Bodzin, Beth Klein, and Star Weaver
2009 ASTE Northeast Region conference co-chairs

ASTE Mid-Atlantic Regional Meeting September 18-19

The 2009 Mid-Atlantic regional meeting will be hosted in Ohio for the first time. Please mark your calendar, invite your colleagues, and plan to join us!

Dates: September 18-19, 2009 (rooms also are available on September 17)

Location: Shawnee Resort and Conference Center, Friendship, Ohio
Phone: 1-800-282-7275

http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/tabid/788/Default.aspx

Room Rate: $85/night per room (1 to 4 person occupancy)

Reservations Deadline: August 1, 2009

Bunkrooms, which can sleep up to 6 people, are available at the above rate of $85/night plus $12 for each person over the 4-person occupancy, and cabins also are available. Please contact the center for cabin rates (about $162 per night).

Conference Chairperson: Karen Irving

Please direct all questions to Karen (irving.8@osu.edu) who will be sending out a call for papers this summer.

We hope to see you in Ohio this fall!

Kathy Cabe Trundle
Regional Director
ASTE Mid-Atlantic Region

Consider getting involved with your Regional ASTE Group
ASTE Regional Conference Announcements Cont.

Southeastern Region ASTE Conference (SASTE) October 9-10

We are very excited to announce that the Southeastern Region ASTE Conference (SASTE) will be held at [Kennesaw State University](http://www.kennesaw.edu) October 9-10, 2009. Located just north of downtown Atlanta, Kennesaw State University is the third largest university in Georgia, offering more than 65 graduate and undergraduate degrees, including new doctorates in education and business. A member of the 35-unit University System of Georgia, Kennesaw State is a comprehensive, residential institution with a growing student population of more than 21,000 from 142 countries.

KSU’s commitment to excellence in science education is evidenced by its highly-subscribed elementary, middle and secondary education undergraduate and graduate programs. There are currently 14 full-time, tenured or tenure-track faculty working towards addressing the critical need for high-quality science teachers in Georgia’s schools, and the university has just announced the opening of its Center for Teacher Development in Science and Mathematics to support its initiatives in this area.

The SASTE Annual Conference will begin on the afternoon of Friday, October 9th, with a reception, poster session, and roundtable discussion around the conference’s theme, “Science Teacher Recruitment and Retention...Whose Problem is it to Solve?”. Later on in the evening, we anticipate visiting one of our local informal science education partners, most likely either the [Georgia Aquarium](http://www.aquarium.org) or the [Tellus Northwest Georgia Science Museum](http://www.tellus.org).

ASTE Cont.

Saturday, October 10th, will consist of morning and afternoon concurrent sessions and a buffet lunch where our nationally-recognized keynote speaker, [Sheila Tobias](http://www.sheilatobias.com), will share her vision for “Science Teaching as a Profession: Why it isn’t, How it Could Be”. Ms. Tobias is a much sought-after consultant and has authored several books on science and math education-related topics, including her latest improving the state of the science teaching profession.

Please consider joining us and bringing the preservice and inservice teachers and teacher educators who work with your P-12 science education programs to join the strong and supportive SASTE community this fall!

Contact the conference chair, [Dr. Greg Rushton](http://www.gregrushton.com) for more information about this year’s event.

North Central Region ASTE Conference Oct. 9-10

Save the date! The North Central Region is having their regional meeting in Dubuque, Iowa hosted by the University of Dubuque, October 9-10, 2009. For more information, presentation applications, and registration contact:

Mickey Kolis
[KOLISMW@uwec.edu](mailto:KOLISMW@uwec.edu)

Additional Regional ASTE Meeting information can be found at [http://theaste.org/meetings/](http://theaste.org/meetings/)

Continued at top of next column
ASTE Sponsored Monograph, Women’s Experiences in Leadership in K-16 Science Education Communities: Becoming and Being

The ASTE sponsored monograph, Women’s Experiences in Leadership in K-16 Science Education Communities: Becoming and Being, will be available mid-summer from Springer Publishers. The monograph was approved by the Publication Committee (Bill McComas and Randy Bell, co-chair) and the ASTE Board of Directors during the 2007 summer board meeting. Harmen van Paradijs, Springer Publishers, worked with the co-editors, Katherine Wieseman and Molly Weinburgh, throughout the project.

Women’s Experiences in Leadership in K-16 Science Education Communities: Becoming and Being has 16 chapters from 22 contributing authors and focuses on leadership within women’s experiences. The book represents a courageous step because it exposes innermost tensions, dilemmas, problems and fears regarding leadership issues in ways that make them visible for others moving into similar circumstances. As stated in the book, the purpose is to provide inspiration and guidance for educators/academics in K-16 science education, as well as individuals in other professions, as they develop as leaders. The intent is to share the authors’ wisdom about leadership, which has been carefully cultivated over the years. Although the content draws from the lives and wisdom of K-16 female science educators/academics in the United States, we believe that the tensions, dilemmas, and feelings are universal. Theoretical and practical orientations embracing relational ways of knowing are used to ground authors’ sharing, examination, and discussion of leadership. Relational ways of knowing are encompassed in the idea of women’s ways of knowing and operating. We believe that this orientation has potential for educational institutions, scientific and research organizations and laboratories, and the private sector.

The monograph begins with an opening by Past-president Janice Koch that sets the context for the chapters that follow. The authors represent a variety of leadership styles and range from emeritus professor to a first year teacher and from science educator to scientist. Our understanding of relational ways of knowing and a desire to honor authors’ experiences led us as editors to support differences in style across chapters and preserve the beauty of authors’ experiences. In her closing, Mary Atwater offers provocative suggestions and challenges for the future of leadership in science education.
Informational Texts for Elementary Grade Level Teaching

Informational text, a type of nonfiction that conveys information about the social or natural world, comprises the majority of reading and writing done by adults and represents the majority of passages offered to students in standardized tests. This genre is notably underrepresented in the primary and upper elementary grades. Many teachers have a hard time acquiring informational text. Classroom libraries in wealthier schools continue to be far better stocked than those in poorer school, with more of all kinds of text, including informational text (Duke, 2000a, 2000b). Filling classroom libraries in all schools with a range of materials is an important step toward helping all children interact with informational text.

Beyond Penguins and Polar Bears, is an NSF-funded project that provides a solution for elementary teachers searching for science-themed informational texts to use with their students. Each month’s issue of the Beyond Penguins and Polar Bears magazine [http://beyondpenguins.nsdl.org] provides free informational text written for students at K-1, 2-3, and 4-5 grade levels. Each text is offered in text-only, illustrated book, and narrated electronic book formats. The variety of reading levels and formats allows teachers to differentiate instruction or support English Language Learners. The texts are also suitable for after-school programs or at-home exploration.

Based on feedback we have received from teachers, these informational text materials are one of the things that teachers value most from the cyberzine’s collection of articles, lesson plans, podcasts, and teaching strategies.

You can browse the wide range of topics (including states of matter, rocks and minerals, and ecosystems) at [http://beyondpenguins.nsdl.org/information.php?topic=stories] Also available: related science activities or downloadable templates for reading comprehension and strategy instruction.

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Citation:

Research on Innovative Uses of Digital Video in the K-12 Classroom and Its Implications for Teacher Education

Issue 10(1), March 2010

Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education

Call for Special Issue Papers

Science Education Section

The use of moving images has been a tool in the science education teaching methodology for the past 100 years. With the advent of new tools to capture, edit, and explore digital movies, teachers are able to invent new ways for their students to investigate science using video technology. We are calling for articles for a special issue in the CITE Journal that describe the research on the use of digital video in the K-12 science classroom. Digital video is being defined broadly as any sequential set of digital images that provide a sense of motion when played at a specific frame rate. This could be the use of commercial video, student- or teacher-created video, sequences of images captured from a computer screen, animations, graphic simulations, Flash movies, and more. Authors are encouraged to take advantage of hyperlinks within the article to provide supporting evidence, including sample digital video projects that adhere to copyright guidelines. Each article should draw connections between classroom research and implications for teacher preparation.

Manuscripts must be submitted no later than September 15, 2009. Go to the following URL for more information regarding submissions:

http://www.citejournal.org

Click on the “Submissions” box in the top menu. Then click on “View Author Guidelines and submit a new paper”. After reviewing the guidelines, click on “article submission form” and select “Special issue: Digital Video” under CITE – Science to submit your manuscript.

John C. Park (john_park@ncsu.edu)

Science Education Section Editor
Recognition for Science Teacher Preparation Programs

In January of 2009, the following institutions were recognized by NSTA as meeting the 2003 NSTA Standards for Science Teacher Preparation. These institutions demonstrated excellence through assessment alignment, data collection, reflection and improvement of programs based on data (for a complete list, go to www.nsta.org/preservice).

Congratulations!

Adelphi University, Baylor University, Cedarville University, Concordia University, George Washington University, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania, Louisiana State University at Alexandria, Louisiana Tech University, Mississippi State University, Muskingum College, Ohio University, Saint Louis University, Salem State College, Southeastern Louisiana University, Southern Connecticut State University, Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, Teachers College Columbia University, University of Mississippi, University of Scranton, University of Toledo, Towson University, University of Alaska Fairbanks, University of Arkansas at Little Rock, University of Hawaii at Manoa, and University of South Carolina Upstate

ASTE Continues to Support Recognition Process

A sincere thank-you goes to the ASTE community for continuing to support the NSTA recognition process for meeting the Science Teacher Preparation Standards. This is a rigorous process where institutions have content, pedagogy and student learning requirements that are demonstrated through assessments, data collection, reflection and program improvement. The Audit Team members Elizabeth Allan, Erica Brownstein, Rita Hagevik, Joseph Shane, and William Veal thank ASTE for providing a meeting room for auditing to take place.

ASTE also provided a meeting room for Reviewer Training. Reviewers apply and are trained to review submissions for NSTA Science Teacher Preparation Program recognition. In January, the following successfully completed the first stage of the reviewer training: Cheryl Grable, Don Schillinger, Erin Peters, Stephen Burton, Jann Joseph, and Gerald Ketterling. Their dedication to the profession is appreciated!

If you have questions about the NSTA recognition process or would like to become a reviewer, please contact the Preservice Coordinator, Erica M. Brownstein at ebrownst@capital.edu or visit the web page at www.nsta.org/preservice.
Proposals are now being accepted for the 2010 ASTE Meeting in Sacramento, CA. Deadline for receipt of proposals is July 3, 2009. All proposals will be subjected to a double-blind review. Since submission rates have increased over recent years, we encourage individuals to craft high quality proposals to increase their chances of acceptance. Final acceptance decisions will be based upon the reviews, as well as the need to provide a balanced program with broad representation of people and projects. Given the mission of the organization, we will favor proposals that offer explicit connections to science teacher education. Please note that there are 4 session formats: Interactive Poster Sessions, Traditional Paper Presentations, Themed Paper Set Presentations, and Experiential Sessions.

The first, Interactive Poster Sessions, is probably the least familiar, but has been used with considerable success at previous ASTE meetings and in other venues. These sessions will include a facilitator who will introduce the 'theme' that connects all the posters and then allow each participant to give a short 1-2 minute overview of the content of their poster. Then the audience will be free to move about the room visiting as many posters as they desire. The Thursday night reception will also feature posters but a facilitator will not be available. Experiential Sessions are like short workshops and are one hour in length.

The proposal submission form as well as conference information and ongoing updates can be found on the ASTE Sacramento Conference Website [http://theaste.org/meetings/2010conference](http://theaste.org/meetings/2010conference).

We look forward to reading your proposal and seeing you in Sacramento, January 14-16, 2010.

Rick Pomeroy
ASTE 2010 Conference Chair
jrpomeroy@ucdavis.edu

Catherine Martin-Dunlop
ASTE 2010 Conference Program Chair
cmartin7@csulb.edu
Discover Gold @ ASTE
Sacramento, CA
January 14-16, 2010

Mark your calendars and book your reservations, ASTE is heading west to Sacramento, California January 14-16, 2010.

Your 2010 Conference planning committee is hard at work planning a full and rewarding conference for all ASTE members, new and experienced. Drawing on the traditions of community building, collaboration and high quality scholarship, the 2010 conference will provide a wide range of opportunities for professional growth. We have reserved all of the hotel meeting space in the Sheraton Grand Hotel in Downtown Sacramento to provide pre-conference and embedded workshops, interactive poster sessions, traditional paper presentations, experiential sessions, technology facilitated instruction, as well as two pre-conference professional development opportunities to meet every attendee’s needs. We are planning an exciting Thursday night reception and poster session, a delicious awards/business luncheon and multiple opportunities for evening dining and entertainment.

The format for the sessions at this conference will appear familiar to regular ASTE conference attendees. Attendees wishing to submit proposals should visit the ASTE Web site at http://theASTE.org and select the 2010 Conference link for more information and the online proposal form.

Traditional paper presentations, themed paper sets, poster, and experiential session proposals are due by July 3rd, 2009. Proposers should realize that it has been the tradition at ASTE conferences that a paper or access to an online paper is expected. Sessions will begin at 8:00 AM on Thursday, June 14th and conclude with the last session on Saturday at 5:00 PM.

The venue for the conference will be the Sheraton Grand Hotel in Downtown Sacramento, just one block from the State Capital. Less than 10 years old, the Sheraton Grand is updating all of their decor, linens, and softscape this year. Most breakout rooms have exterior windows for natural light and the lobby and common areas have multiple sitting areas for connecting with colleagues and old friends. For those of you who are a bit more adventurous, consider arriving a few days before or staying a few days after the conference to enjoy excellent skiing in the Sierra Nevada, unparalleled wine tasting and dining opportunities in world renowned wine regions or take in a show and excitement in the casinos in beautiful South Lake Tahoe or Reno, Nevada. For those wishing to stay in Sacramento, stroll for hours through the California Museum for Women and the Arts, the California Railroad Museum, or the Crocker Art Museum. All three are a short walk or cab ride from the hotel. For dining and entertainment opportunities, the hotel is surrounded by a variety of fine dining opportunities commonly associated with a state capital with even more just 8 blocks away in historic Old Sacramento.

Finally, it is not too early to begin thinking about how to get to Sacramento. Assuming that no one will be traversing the country by covered wagon, the Sacramento International Airport (SMF) is your easiest point of arrival. If you choose to fly, transportation from the airport ranges from $2 for public transit that stops 2 blocks from the hotel, shuttle service for $13-$15, and a $35-$40 cab ride. International travelers may find it easier to fly to San Francisco International Airport (SFO). Sacramento is also served by Amtrak from all parts of the United States. The Amtrak station is about 8 blocks from the hotel with ample cab service available. For those considering the train, the rip over the Sierra Nevada from Reno to Sacramento in the winter is absolutely beautiful as it winds through high mountain passes and above beautiful Donner Lake. Whether by plane, train, or automobile, make tracks to Sacramento in January 2010 to Discover Gold at ASTE.

J. Richard "Rick" Pomeroy
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ASTE 2009 International Conference Pictures

Hard Hat Tour Hartford Science Center  
ASTE Fun Run

ASTE International Region

WISE Meeting Group  

Photos provided by Penny Gilmer

ASTE President Jon Pederson
Focus:

This Science Feature Issue is intended for individuals engaged in teaching and research of formal or informal K-16 science education incorporating traditional and nontraditional ways of knowing. Topics of inquiry should include transformative efforts meant to change the way science-learning environments are constructed in order to develop and encourage inclusiveness and engagement for all learners. These transformative efforts should challenge the paradigm of teaching as telling and learning as listening or passive reception of received knowledge. Examples include, 1) studies that utilized the everyday knowledge and experiences of the learner as the context upon which science inquiry skills could be developed, or 2) that show how authentic images of scientific practice could serve as a context of developing learning environments in science. In addition, transformative efforts may include studies that focus on the identity development of the teachers or instructors.

Continued at the top of next column

We believe transformative efforts can take place in learning environments impacted by the perceived constraints of science standards and benchmarks. Thus, we expect authors to address how their efforts are aligned or address standards, benchmarks, and/or educational expectations within target settings.

Article submissions are requested by November 2009.

The journal link for the call for papers is: [http://www.rapidintellect.com/AEQweb/7sci.htm](http://www.rapidintellect.com/AEQweb/7sci.htm)

A Tradition of Exceptional Leadership

Jon Pederson (ASTE President), Janice Koch (ASTE Former President), & Warren Dibiase (ASTE Past President) (*photo provided by Penny Gilmer*)