



## FROM THE PRESIDENT: KEEPING NCME FINANCIALLY SOLVENT

NCME has always been an efficient organization. We have taken pride in the fact that NCME membership was a “bargain” compared to the costs of belonging to other professional organizations with similar goals and services. NCME consistently has offered members a set of first class, informative publications (the *Journal of Educational Measurement*, *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice*, and the *Newsletter*) and an outstanding annual meeting program, year after year. NCME co-sponsors publication of the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* and the *Code of Fair Testing Practices*. Also, through its various committees, NCME honors the outstanding achievements of members and provides a variety of professional outreach services. The ability of a relatively small organization to deliver such a wide array of services for so little cost has been largely a function of the willingness of our members to donate their time generously to the organization and to our close, working relationship with AERA, sharing the costs of administrative overhead with that larger organization. Finally, in the past, it was common for employing organizations to provide support for members who played a leadership role in the organization because these organizations wanted to encourage their members to serve the profession and valued the resulting visibility. For example, many universities in the past routinely provided graduate assistants to faculty who served as journal editors, at nominal cost to NCME, but universities and other agencies are no longer able to underwrite the activities of professional organizations as readily.

Today NCME must operate in a different economic climate. Costs of publication production, website maintenance, and postage have risen substantially. Annual meeting costs have increased. The contract between NCME and AERA for provision of management services also requires NCME to pay its “fair share” of labor, operational, and infrastructure costs at our central office. While these costs have risen steadily, NCME’s income from interest on investments has declined and membership has decreased. As reported at the 2002 Business Meeting, for the past several years, NCME operated on a deficit budget and has depleted its organizational reserve fund at a rate that is unsustainable unless we take prompt action to balance our budget.

*What has the NCME Board been doing this year to reverse this process?* I am pleased to report that the NCME Board has addressed this problem squarely in the current fiscal year. First, the Board has cut costs wherever possible, including reducing the number of Board meetings and sun-setting several committees. In addition, the Board initiated several new projects designed to increase future royalties revenue by entering agreements to produce electronic forms of past issues of NCME publications for marketing and by contracting with Greenwood Press for publication of the 4<sup>th</sup> Edition of *Educational Measurement*, in collaboration with the American Council on Education. Also, the Board approved actions designed to increase new membership and recapture “lost” members. Finally, in concert with AERA, the Board has approved modest increases in annual meeting registration fees and breakfast (which have been constant since 1997) and increased the costs of journal subscriptions for institutions and non-members. Another financially responsible action would be to increase member dues (which have remained unchanged for four years), but NCME Bylaws require a vote of the full membership. Such a proposal will be placed on the 2003 ballot for your consideration.

*What can members do to help?* Individual members can be of great assistance in putting NCME on the road to solvency. If every member takes all of actions 1-6 listed below and engages in one additional action as listed in items 7-10, NCME could easily be operating “in the black” by next year. Members can help by doing the following:

1. Assist in recruitment of two new members among colleagues and students;
2. Vote to approve the upcoming motion for an increase in membership dues on NCME ballot;
3. Attend the annual meeting (and be sure to register for NCME) and encourage your colleagues and students to do so as well;
4. Let your librarian know the importance of maintaining the institutional subscriptions to JEM and EMIP;
5. Renew your annual membership promptly, reducing the cost of follow-up mailings;
6. Take advantage of the two-year membership renewal;
7. Publicize NCME publications to your colleagues and encourage them to check our website for information on ordering materials ([www.NCME.org](http://www.NCME.org));
8. Encourage the board members and committee members whom you know to consider the cost-effectiveness in evaluating proposals for new service activities or programs;
9. Develop the habit of checking the NCME Website regularly so that the organization can progress toward the cost-saving methods of publishing the Newsletter and other communications with members;

*continued*

## IN MEMORY OF BRAD HANSON



### Bradley Alvin Hanson,

Chief Research Scientist at CTB/McGraw-Hill, passed away unexpectedly in early October near his home in Monterey, California. Brad's stellar career included many significant contributions to educational

measurement. He conducted and published a body of research on methodology in test analysis, scaling, equating, reliability, and security. He authored numerous software programs, many of which he freely provided on his website. He was instrumental in incorporating his developments into systems used in a number of educational testing programs.

Brad earned his doctorate at Stanford University, and he worked for 16 years at ACT in Iowa City, Iowa, before joining CTB in 2001. Brad was a tremendously active and generous research collaborator with more than 50 publications and conference presentations. He was an active member of the American Educational Research Association, the National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME), the Psychometric Society, and the American Statistical Association; he was serving as the Web Site Editor for NCME.

Brad's service to the professional community was extensive and reflected his dedication to improving the quality of practice, research, and scholarship in educational measurement. Brad was a gifted mentor, serving on dissertation committees, working with graduate summer intern programs at both CTB and ACT, and providing guidance to entering professionals. His office door was always open to colleagues who wished to discuss an idea or ask for assistance. His professionalism, keen insights into psychometrics, formidable technical skills, and keen sense of humor will be greatly missed by his colleagues. Brad's volunteer service continued outside the profession, where he served as treasurer of his Iowa City condo association, participated in blood drives, and led bike trips for a local bike group. Brad was an avid bicyclist, read science fiction, and played classical guitar. Brad is survived by his father, Bruce, and his brothers, Scott and Todd.

### ETS TO HONOR FREDERIC LORD

The Educational Testing Service (ETS) recently announced that they will honor psychometrician and longtime ETS employee Frederic Lord by naming a building on their campus after him. Dr. Lord died February 6, 2000. ETS will host the dedication ceremony in April, 2003, at which Frederic Lord Hall will be officially named.

Frederic Lord began his career at the Graduate Record Office of the Carnegie Foundation, working his way up from Research Assistant in 1944 to Assistant Director in 1946. In March 1949 he joined the newly formed Educational Testing Service as Head of Statistical Analysis. In 1950, he moved to the Research Division, where he remained until his formal retirement in 1982, having served as Distinguished Research

Scientist and Chairman of the Psychometric Research Group in the Division of Statistical and Psychometric Research and Services. In 1983 he received the ETS Distinguished Service to Measurement Award, the highest recognition given by ETS to leading scholars in the field of measurement.

Dr. Lord's pioneering work in item response theory spanned more than 30 years and culminated in the publication of his classic book, *Applications of Item Response Theory to Practical Testing Problems*. His bibliography includes more than 140 titles, and his work set new research agendas that continue to drive advances in practice. He has also been honored as a fellow of the American Psychological Association, the American Statistical Association, and the Institute of Mathematical Statistics. A past president of the Psychometric Society and the Division of Evaluation and Measurement of the American Psychological Association, he served on the editorial council of the Psychometric Society from 1953 until 1985, was chairman for eight of those years, and was an associate editor of *Psychometrika*, the Society's journal.

### EDITOR'S NOTE

This issue of the NCME *Newsletter* marks my last as editor. Susan Brookhart of Duquesne University will assume the duties of editor with the new year. I would like to take this opportunity to thank my outstanding advisory board for all their wonderful contributions as well as their continuous support over the last three years. I would also like to thank NCME and its membership for the opportunity to serve in this role – I have truly enjoyed my tenure. Doug Becker

### NEWSLETTER ADVISORY BOARD

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*FROM THE PRESIDENT, continued*

10. Volunteer to work at the NCME booth at the Annual Meeting so that we have full-time coverage to recruit new members and sell NCME publications.

In 2002-2003, it is a primary goal of the NCME Board of Directors and the Central Office management to revive the fiscal health of NCME without decreasing member services or imposing an undue financial burden on our members. With your active support, I am confident that we can achieve that goal and lay a foundation for the viability and continued success of NCME for years to come. *Linda Crocker*

#### **STATE STANDARDS, ASSESSMENTS AND ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEMS UNDER NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND**

*William J. Erpenbach, WJE Consulting, Ltd.*

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act—ESEA) continues the national emphasis on standards, assessments of student learning, accountability for results, and school improvement. It also includes new emphases on attention to elements with the greatest likelihood of stimulating school, district, and State efforts related to improving teaching and the academic achievement of **all** students. Implementation of NCLB will require States to pay particular attention to the following requirements:

- Additional standards and assessments.
- The inclusion of **all** students in the State assessments.
- School, district, and State accountability for the acquisition of English language skills by English language learners including related annual district-level assessments.
- A single statewide accountability system for all schools and districts based primarily on results of annual State assessments in reading or language arts and mathematics.
- School, district, and State accountability for the progress of **all** students including those from all subgroups identified in the law (e.g., major racial/ethnic groups, economically disadvantaged, students with disabilities, and limited English proficient students).
- Specific intermediate student achievement goals including statewide annual measurable objectives to ensure that students make adequate yearly progress toward the 12-year target of all students at or above proficient in at least reading or language arts and mathematics.
- A State system of rewards and sanctions for high- and low-performing schools and districts.
- New requirements for teacher and paraprofessional qualifications for school staff working in Title I programs.
- High-quality, coordinated, and focused professional development for the teaching staff.
- Annual State and school district reports documenting student academic achievement results and progress toward meeting various requirements under the new law.

#### **Principal Changes Regarding Standards and Assessments**

With respect to standards and assessments, there are several significant differences between the prior law and the NCLB Act:

- Additional assessments of student achievement in reading or language arts and mathematics are required as well as the development of new assessments in science. States are required to assess student achievement annually in reading or language arts and mathematics in grades 3 through 8 beginning in 2005-06, and annually in science at least once in each of the grade spans 3 – 5, 6 – 9, and 10 – 12 beginning in 2007-08.
- States must provide annual assessment results to school districts, schools, and teachers not later than the beginning of the next school year following administration of the assessments.
- States are required to develop a single statewide accountability system to determine the progress of all public schools and districts (as well as the State itself). The NCLB Act further requires that the results of the assessments in reading or language arts and mathematics be used as the primary measure of school, district, and State progress and establishes an accountability target of having all students at or above proficient in these subject areas by the end of the 2013-14 school year. While the results of the annual science assessments will not be included in the AYP determinations, the results must be included in the annual State and district reports consistent with the statute and regulations. States and districts must first issue their reports at the beginning of the 2002-03 school year.
- States will also need to develop additional academic content and student academic achievement standards to support the additional assessments that must be developed consistent with the NCLB Act. As under the previous law, these assessments must also include provision for appropriate accommodations and alternate assessments as may be needed by special needs students. Consistent with the 1994 reauthorization, the alternate assessments must also be aligned with a State's academic content standards.
- Beginning not later than the 2002-03 school year, States must provide for an annual assessment of English language proficiency of all limited English proficient (LEP) students enrolled in the State's public elementary and secondary schools. States are further required to develop annual measurable objectives related to LEP students' development and attainment of English language proficiency while meeting the State's challenging academic content and student academic achievement standards. Attainment of the annual measurable objectives for English language acquisition is also one component of a State's AYP requirements.

Finally, the NCLB Act also expanded inclusion provisions designed to ensure that all students participate in State assessments in order to benefit from efforts to improve student achievement. These provisions include assessment of highly mobile students—those experiencing homelessness and those

from migratory families—as well as limited English proficient students and students with disabilities. Under the statute, all students are expected to participate in the State assessments without regard to how long they have been enrolled in a school or district. School, district, and State accountability, however, will be based on students who have been enrolled for a full academic year.

### **THE FUTURE IN ASSESSING SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS**

*Martha L. Thurlow, National Center on Educational Outcomes, University of Minnesota*

With new federal accountability requirements, the urgency of assessing special-needs students against state standards is greater than ever. Federal policy is changing past practice, where students with disabilities and English language learners were excluded from assessment systems. That means that it is time now to stop finding excuses for why these students cannot be measured well, or why schools cannot be held responsible for their assessment results, and to get on with assessing all students in U.S. schools.

In 1994, the Improving America's Schools Act (*IASA*) started a decade-long policy shift requiring that all students be instructed in the same challenging content, and assessed against the same performance levels. The 1997 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (*IDEA 97*) reinforced this requirement, and removed any ambiguity of what the term "all" means. *IDEA 97* addressed the instructional part of the reform equation by requiring that students with disabilities not only must have access to the general curriculum, but also must participate and make progress in the general curriculum. IEP teams were required to identify the services and supports each student needed to access, participate in, and make progress in the general curriculum. This built on *IASA 1994* stipulations that states must define what all children should know and be able to do, and thus all states were in the process of defining the parameters of the general curriculum at the time of the 1997 *IDEA* reauthorization. Further, *IDEA 97* reiterated the assessment requirements of *IASA*, and added more detail on the three ways students with disabilities would participate, specifically in the general assessment, in the general assessment with accommodations, adaptations, or modifications, or in an alternate assessment.

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (*NCLB*) reinforced the assessment requirements of the earlier laws and expanded on them by requiring accountability for the achievement of all students, and all groups of students. Final *NCLB* regulations on standards and assessment specifically clarified that the content in which students are instructed, and the achievement expectations by which success is measured, is the grade level content and expectation. Regulations for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) seem likely to clarify that states have the option to define separate academic achievement standards for a very small percentage of students (.5% in the draft AYP regulations) who have significant cognitive disabilities.

Repeated confirmation that the assessment and accountability requirements of *NCLB* apply to students with disabilities and students with limited English proficiency emphasizes the need for assessment developers, assessment administrators, and the

users of assessment information to be aware of the unique needs of these students. Their participation in large-scale assessments is no longer something that can be shuffled off to special educators or the educators responsible for students with limited English proficiency (LEP).

The National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO) has been working for many years to identify the best ways to include students with disabilities, and more recently LEP students, in state and district assessments. In addition to participation in the "standard" way, the two primary ways to increase the participation of special-needs students are: (1) providing accommodations for students who need them, and (2) using alternate assessments with a small, specifically defined, group of students. These two avenues to inclusion in assessments are often controversial and pose a number of issues about the meaningfulness and comparability of scores. It is likely that the immediate solutions to much of the controversy are going to lie in practical and policy decisions rather than in research-based decisions – in part because the research is not going to provide all the answers that are needed as quickly as they are needed. While NCEO continues to conduct research and to summarize the research of others, it is also identifying the policy options that should be considered to be able to include all students in assessments and assessment reports. Two recent descriptions of policy options for students with disabilities focus on the challenging topics of (1) alternate assessments, and (2) accommodations, particularly those considered to invalidate test scores. However, it will be important to go beyond these to think about universally-designed assessments and to plan ahead for the ways in which computer- and Web-based assessments will need to be designed or adjusted for special needs students. I address these options with examples about students with disabilities, but the solutions may apply to both students with disabilities and students with limited English proficiency.

### **Assessing Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities have specific laws that govern their education. *IDEA* makes it clear that as an element of Part B funding (which provides special education funds to states), students with disabilities must be included in the general curriculum, and in state and district assessments aligned to that curriculum, and their scores publicly reported. The law is very clear that all students are to be assessed, and that the IEP team is to designate what that assessment will be. The law is consistent with the conclusions reached by a special study of the National Research Council (McDonnell, McLaughlin, & Morison, 1997), which emphasized the importance of including students with disabilities in large-scale assessment systems, with accommodations and alternate assessments as options. *No Child Left Behind* confirms the *IDEA* requirements and further extends them into the accountability arena.

*Alternate Assessments.* For those students with disabilities who are unable to take the general assessments even with accommodations, there is to be an alternate assessment. *IDEA* provides neither requirements nor guidance on the structure of the alternate assessment. In the NCEO 2001 survey of state assessment practices, Thompson and Thurlow (2001) found that 24 states had selected a body of evidence or portfolio

approach for their state alternate assessments. Other approaches were checklists, IEP analysis, and performance assessment. The scoring criteria that states had selected for their alternate assessments also varied, falling into two primary types – those that measured student performance and those that measured system performance. Common student criteria included: skill/competence (40 states), degree of independence (32 states), progress (24 states), and ability to generalize (18 states). System criteria typically included: variety of settings (21 states), degree of appropriate staff support (20 states), and appropriateness, for example, of the challenge level (20 states).

Many states now have implemented their alternate assessments and have used a variety of approaches for standards-setting (Olson, Mead, & Payne, 2002; Roeber, 2001; Wiener, 2002) so that scores from the alternate assessments can be included in their accountability systems (Quenemoen & Thurlow, 2002). Yet, as states grapple with the policy implications of the alternate assessments that they have selected, and as they build an understanding of the measurement issues for this “new” assessment population, they are asking questions such as: “Does our alternate assessment reflect our understanding of the best learning outcomes possible?” “Is our alternate assessment valid and reliable?” “Does our alternate assessment clearly raise the bar for students?” States are revisiting their processes for extending academic content standards, for defining student and system criteria that reflect successful outcomes, and for setting achievement standards.

*Accommodations.* Accommodations are changes in assessment materials or procedures that enable the student with a disability to demonstrate knowledge and skills rather than the effects of the disability. This simple definition is not simple in application because of the difficulties of differentiating what some consider to be construct-relevant disabilities, that is, disabilities in the very construct being measured (e.g., dyslexia is a disability directly related to the reading construct) (Koretz & Hamilton, 2000). Further, additional complexity is added because many of the traditional notions of what we are intending to measure are changing (e.g., discussions about whether we intend to measure decoding from printed word or instead intend to measure comprehension, and thus do not need to emphasize decoding).

Over time, views of what constitutes an accommodation (a change that does not affect test validity or comparability of scores) and what constitutes a modification (a change that does affect validity or comparability) have changed, with more state and national tests allowing many more accommodations (Thurlow, Lazarus, Thompson, & Robey, 2002; National Center for Education Statistics, 2002). Despite this, IEP teams are having difficulty making decisions about accommodations, and many more accommodations are being requested for students participating in assessments. Complicating this is the confusion about how to follow federal guidance (Heumann & Warlick, 2000) that indicated IEP teams can decide a student will use a “modification” during testing. While states can determine that a modification invalidates scores for reporting and accountability, it still must

be able to report on participation and performance for all students, as well as include them all in accountability measures. All of this suggests the need for (a) assessments that do not require so many accommodations (or modifications) for students, and (b) better decision making about what accommodations really are needed and which accommodations change the construct measured.

### **Universally-Designed Assessments**

There is great hope that in revisiting the ways in which tests are developed, the field can reduce the need for accommodations. There is no pretense that this approach will alleviate instructional and curriculum-access problems. Those problems will have to be dealt with regardless of the test, unless the tests are dumbed down, of course. Clearly, that is not the intent of standards-based reform and the assessments aligned to high standards. Universally-designed tests refer to assessments that are designed and developed to be appropriate for all students, including students with disabilities and students with limited English proficiency (Thompson, Johnstone, & Thurlow, 2002). While some of the elements of universally designed assessments simply reflect good test and item development practices, they also extend those practices. Test developers know many of these principles and reflect them in their tests, but there is more that can be done. The regulations for *NCLB*, in fact, require that state assessment systems “must be designed to be valid and accessible for use by the widest possible range of students, including students with disabilities and students with limited English proficiency” [§200.2(b)(2)].

### **Computer- and Web-based Assessments**

To meet the *NCLB* requirement for annual testing in grades 3-8 and high school, many states are evaluating the use of computer- or Web-based testing, primarily to be able to have results by mid-summer. This is occurring with much hope but little thought for how these types of assessments will interact with the needs of students with disabilities and LEP students. The interactions that must be considered go beyond questions of physical access to and familiarity with computers and the internet. For students with disabilities, the issues surrounding electronic assessments and accommodations completed within the need for test security, are likely to mushroom rather than decrease (Thompson, Thurlow, Quenemoen, & Lehr, 2002). Systematic consideration of implications, and taking some basic steps to address accommodations for electronic testing are recommended, including: (1) assemble a group of experts to guide the transformation from paper-and-pencil to computer-based assessments, (2) decide how each accommodation will be incorporated into the computer-based test, (3) consider each accommodation or assessment feature in light of the constructs being tested, (4) consider the feasibility of incorporating the accommodation into the computer-based test, and (5) consider training implications for staff and students. Just as is needed for accommodations with paper-and-pencil tests, data should be collected to determine the suitability of particular accommodations overall and for individuals.

## Resources

There are many resources that are available to assessment developers, assessment administrators, and the users of assessment information to become more familiar with all aspects of including students with disabilities and English Language Learners in assessments. While current federal legislation is pushing the issues that surround the assessment of these students to the forefront more quickly than some would wish, the goal is to ensure that these students have access to the general education curriculum (as occurred in New York, where more students with disabilities were found to pass the Regents Exams than had taken them in the past; New York State Education Department, 2001), and to direct much more attention to instructional programs and interventions that will result in positive outcomes. The focus on assessing “difficult to assess” students, however, is likely to improve not only the educational outcomes of these students, but also to improve the world of assessment and measurement.

The National Center on Educational Outcomes has many resources available on the topic of inclusive assessment and accountability. A good starting point is NCEO’s Web site ([www.education.umn.edu/nceo](http://www.education.umn.edu/nceo)). It directs the user not only to NCEO resources, but also to a variety of other resources as well.

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## NCME AWARD FOR TECHNICAL OR SCIENTIFIC CONTRIBUTIONS – CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

In 2003, NCME will honor technical or scientific contributions to the field of educational measurement in 2000, 2001, or 2002. Examples of past awards that have been made in this category include: Susan Embretson for her work in the area of cognitive design systems, Michael Kolen and Robert Brennan for their work in the area of test equating, William Stout for his work in detecting multidimensional DIF/Bias, and Fumiko Samejima for her work on graded-response models. NCME members and others are invited to identify candidates for this significant award. Selection criteria for the award will include, quality, innovation, and importance of the contribution.

Self nominations are encouraged as are nominations for others. Individuals or groups are eligible for this award. Nominees need not be NCME members. A nomination consists of 5 copies of a 3-5 page statement summarizing the technical or scientific contribution. Applicants should clearly describe and demonstrate the importance of the contribution to the field of educational measurement. Additional supporting documentation is welcome. Applications should include the names and addresses of two persons familiar with the specific application and its results. The committee may request further materials and may contact others who are likely to be able to evaluate the contribution.

Nominations should be sent by January 3, 2003, to Terry Ackerman, Department of Educational Research Methodology, 207 Curry Building, UNCG, PO Box 26170, Greensboro, NC 27402-6170. Phone is 336/334-3474; email is [taackerm@uncg.edu](mailto:taackerm@uncg.edu), fax is 336/256-0405. The award will be presented at the NCME Annual Meeting in Chicago, IL in April 2003.

## NCME AWARD FOR CAREER CONTRIBUTIONS TO EDUCATIONAL MEASUREMENT

NCME members are encouraged to nominate individuals for the NCME Career Contributions Award. The award honors living persons whose publications, presentations, and professional activities over a career have had a widespread positive impact on the field of educational measurement. These influential contributions may include theoretical or

technical developments, service to professional organizations, conceptualizations of educational measurement that have enhanced public understanding of measurement programs, applications of theory that have influenced the nature of educational tests and measurements, or innovative ideas that have significantly affected measurement practices.

Recipients of the award since its inception in 1988 are: Melvin Novick, Ralph Tyler, Frederic Lord, Albert Hieronymus, T. Anne Cleary, Ronald Hambleton, Leonard Feldt, Robert Linn, Jason Millman, William Mehrens, Richard Jaeger, Lorrie Shepard, Robert Brennan, Sylvia Johnson, and James Popham.

To be considered by the Award Committee, a nomination must include two items: (a) a 1- or 2-page summary of the nature, significance, and impact of the nominee's contributions to the field of educational measurement and (b) an up-to-date copy of the nominee's vita. Mail nominations to: Robert L. Brennan, Iowa Testing Programs, 334A Lindquist, University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA 52242. Telephone: 319-335-5405; FAX: 319-335-6038; e-mail: [robert-brennan@uiowa.edu](mailto:robert-brennan@uiowa.edu).

The deadline for recipient of written nominations for the 2003 award is January 11, 2003. The award recipient will be recognized at the Annual Meeting in Chicago.

#### **SPECIAL ISSUE ON TECHNOLOGY AND ASSESSMENT**

The Association for Assessment in Counseling (AAC) is planning to publish a special issue of its journal, *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development (MECD)*, in 2004 on issues related to the use of technology in the assessment process. MECD is the official journal of AAC, a division of the American Counseling Association (ACA). Potential topics include but are not limited to:

- Online Test Item Development and Editing
- Current Research on Online Versus Paper/Pencil Tests (including Comparability Studies)
- Issues Related to Item Banking
- Security Issues of Online Assessments
- Use of Technology with Performance Assessments
- Use of Artificial Intelligence in Scoring Assessments
- Use of Technology in Administering and Scoring Tests
- New Technologies for Use in the Assessment Process
- Guidelines for Judging the Quality of Online Assessments
- Use of Technology in Creating Computer-Based Test Interpretations
- Projecting the Future in Assessment and the Use of Technology

The guest editors of this special issue, Janet Wall, Harley Baker, and James Sampson, along with MECD editor, Patricia B. Elmore, invite your ideas for manuscripts concerned with research, theoretical issues, and practical applications in assessment related to the topic of technology and assessment. All manuscripts must have clearly described implications for

the counseling field and for practitioners, educators, administrators, researchers, or students.

If you have an idea for a manuscript or you if have written a manuscript dealing with research in this area and you would like to submit it for review for possible publication in this special issue of the MECD journal, please contact the guest editors or editor by email. The manuscript submitted for consideration should not have been published previously and should not be currently under consideration by another journal. We would also welcome suggestions of individuals whom we might contact as potential contributors. Five copies of manuscripts should be submitted by 15 April 2003 to the Editor, Patricia B. Elmore, Associate Dean, College of Education and Human Services, Mailcode 4624, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL 62901-4624.

- Dr. Janet Wall - [jw4aac@earthlink.net](mailto:jw4aac@earthlink.net)
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#### **HIT ON THIS BLOG**

NCME member Kimberly Swygert has developed and maintains the premier testing blog on the internet. What's a blog? The term is a contraction (of sorts) of the words "web" and "log." A blog is a website to which news and commentary are posted by an author. Additionally, readers post their own notes and comments on the topics, and the topics are continually updated and archived.

Dr. Swygert's blog provides readers with a daily dose of fresh testing news accompanied by insightful and sometimes provocative commentary--a must read for those who are looking for up-to-date, clear thinking on assessment issues. Not exactly Paul Harvey, but close. A key distinction is that readers of the blog can also contribute comments, reactions, additional news items, etc., which are posted unfiltered directly to the blog. Recent topics have included news and comment on test score "flagging" decisions, "teaching to the test," the usefulness of the SAT, and more.

The blog will likely appeal to, well, those who think testing is a good idea, although much of the writing on the blog defies easy categorization. Dr. Swygert, whose expertise is computerized adaptive testing, wraps her testing news in a delightful potpourri of affection for death metal music, recent election analysis, and the current weather in Philadelphia. The URL for the blog, which Swygert calls *The Number 2 Pencil*, is <http://www.homestead.com/swygert/files/no2pencil.html>

Why does she spend so much of her spare time working on the blog? According to Dr. Swygert, "The impression of the general public often seems to be that the people who make standardized tests are these elitist, oddball eccentrics who can't think of anything better to do than write tests that discriminate against women and minorities and special education students and help preserve the status quo in society. Add this to the fact that standardized testing is now an interesting combination of politically incorrect and personally traumatizing--even people who support testing often don't enjoy *taking* these tests--and the result is the current situation,

where article after article critical of testing can be published without ever once presenting a psychometrician's viewpoint." Amen.

#### NCME WEBSITE EDITOR SEARCH

Due to the unfortunate passing of Brad Hanson, NCME is seeking nominations for the position of Website editor. The Website is intended to disseminate information about NCME and its activities, and to serve as a resource and a means of communication for NCME members. The editor's primary role is to continue development of the site and to determine what materials to post, within the framework of NCME policy. This includes screening submissions from NCME members and posting information at the request of the Board. In addition, the Website editor implements special projects, which may be initiated by the Board or by the editor. For example, a depository for NCME conference presentations

and a software "bulletin board" have been initiated on the site. The editor is assisted by an editorial board that he or she appoints, and receives guidance from the NCME Publications Committee and the NCME Board. The Website editor position requires editorial skills, Web skills, initiative, and creativity. The term for the editor is three years, beginning as soon as possible following the identification of a suitable candidate. In addition to providing funds to support the operation and maintenance of the Website, NCME has contracted with a Web services provider, which will be responsible for routine operations and maintenance of the site.

By January 30, 2003, please relay nominations, including information about the nominee's qualifications, to Douglas Becker, NCME Publications Committee, Riverside Publishing, 425 Spring Lake Drive, Itasca, Illinois 60143, or send email to: [douglas\\_becker@hmco.com](mailto:douglas_becker@hmco.com).

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## NCME FITNESS RUN/WALK CHICAGO 2003



Run 5K or walk 2.5K on a lakefront course in beautiful Grant Park

Commemorative T-shirts for all participants

Check the NCME website in the spring for details: <http://ncme.org>.



*Happy  
Holidays*