



NAAC NEWSLETTER

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President's Column

I'd like to thank the membership for giving me the opportunity to serve you as president of NAAC for a second two-year term. I am proud to be a part of such a dynamic organization.

For the past sixteen years, the NAAC annual conference has been an invaluable gathering for hundreds of educators focused on alternative routes to certification. The 2006 meeting in Chicago continued that success. At that recent conference, I had the pleasure of announcing that we intend to expand and improve the annual conference by teaming with the National Center for Alternative Certification (NCAC) to present a joint conference in 2007.

The 2007 Joint Conference will be held at the Hyatt Regency Capitol Hill in Washington, DC, April 4-6. We look forward to being in the nation's capitol during the beautiful cherry blossom season. But more importantly, we look forward to the opportunity to expand the conference's reach by enabling more educators to come together to learn from each other and share their program models, innovative ideas, research, and concerns.

This newsletter offers highlights from the recent conference, including the keynotes, research presentations, election results and membership news. Future issues and our website, www.alternativecertification.org, will keep you updated on the 2007 meeting in Washington, DC. We hope to see all our past participants there, and hope to welcome hundreds of new folks to this important annual meeting.



Dr. Nell Ingram
President



Keynoter Jason Kamras, National Teacher of the Year, addresses the NAAC conference in Chicago.

2006 NAAC ANNUAL CONFERENCE

On March 27-29, NAAC hosted the sixteenth annual conference in Chicago. The conference theme, *Recruiting, Training, Mentoring, and Retaining Alternately Certified Educators*, was addressed by keynote speakers and presenters in more than 60 breakout sessions.

The conference opened with a welcome address from Arne Duncan, CEO of Chicago Public Schools, who spoke of the importance of Chicago's alternative certification programs in providing a high quality, diverse, and motivated workforce to support its ongoing reform efforts. Following Duncan, the 2005 National Teacher of the Year, Jason Kamras, gave an inspirational keynote address entitled "Equity of Opportunity for

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2006 CONFERENCE

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all Children.” Kamras, a middle school math and science teacher in Washington, DC, began his teaching career nine years ago through Teach for America. A staunch advocate for educational equity, Kamras’s message is clear: limited access to well-funded, high quality schools for economically disadvantaged students is the greatest social injustice facing America today. His anecdotes about his resilient students underscored a recurring theme throughout the conference: it’s all about student success.

The opening luncheon keynote, “Celebrating the Success of Alternative Certification,” was given by Dominic Belmonte, former Director of Teacher Preparation, and newly appointed President and CEO of the Golden Apple Foundation in Chicago. Belmonte entertained the audience with insights about teaching and the experiences of first-year interns. He offered advice from his new book, “Teaching On Solid Ground” and signed copies of his books following the luncheon.



Belmonte signs his book for NAAC member Burga Jung.

Tuesday morning, March 28 featured the annual Scholarship Awards presentation. Three outstanding alternative certification interns were presented with \$2,000 scholarships acknowledging their extraordinary work with students. The scholarship winners were Kate Malinowski, Fifth Grade Teacher, Murphy Elementary School, Boston (Bill Smith Scholarship), Matt Morrisette, Biology Teacher, Joliet Catholic Academy, Manhattan, Illinois (NAAC Scholarship), and La'Tasha Bassette, ESL Teacher, O.W. Holmes Middle School, Dallas (Haberman Educational Foundation Scholarship).



Malinowski

Morrisette

Bassette

In her luncheon address that afternoon, Sharon Robinson, President and CEO of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), described the current landscape of teacher education. Robinson identified assessment as the most critical issue for teacher licensure. Teacher education programs need assessments that are clearly linked to goals, and that meaningfully assess teacher performance. After posing a reflective question, “What are we fighting about?,” Robinson highlighted AACTE’s perspective on alternative certification and traditional teacher education programs:

- We must recognize that accountability applies to quality for all candidates
- We must all document the quality of our candidates
- We must all diversify our teaching pool
- We must all strengthen our curriculum
- We must all show that our candidates make a difference in student learning
- We must NOT perpetuate the practice of placing the less qualified or less experienced teachers in classrooms that serve students with the greatest learning needs.

On the final morning, Kati Haycock, Director of The Education Trust, focused on the statistics behind the achievement gap separating low income students from their peers, and reiterated the need to judge our work in terms of student success. In a presentation entitled “Good Teaching Matters,” Haycock emphasized that the quality of teachers has a greater impact on student achievement than any other measurable factor. Research has shown that students who have the benefit of three successive years with high quality teachers far outperform those who experience three years of low quality teaching. Yet, there is scant research explaining the difference between high quality teachers and their less successful peers. She credited systems such as the Dallas Independent School System that are using value-added research to determine which teachers have the greater impact on student achievement.

The conference was attended by nearly 300 administrators, faculty, teachers, mentors, interns, researchers, and others. The meeting was organized by a local planning committee chaired by Gary Ketterling, Associate Professor in the Benedictine University School of Education, and member of the NAAC Board of Directors. The conference was co-chaired by NAAC Vice President Liz Fleming. Other committee members included John Zigmund, Coordinator of Alternative Certification, James Pelech, Instructor, Mathematics Education, and Harry Trumfio, consultant, all from Benedictine University, and Cleo Aquino, Operations Specialist, First Class Alternative Certification Program, Chicago Public Schools.



Ketterling

Highlights from NAAC Research Presentations

New at this year's NAAC annual conference were invited presentations that allowed researchers to share their findings with conference attendees.

Elaine Chin, Interim Associate Director, Teacher Education and Professor of Education, Cal Poly highlighted lessons learned from a study of California's Teacher Internship Programs that began in 1996 and currently produce 18-20% of all newly credentialed teachers in California. The 79 Internship programs are directed by the California Commission for Teacher Credentialing, serve 49 of California's 58 counties and have the same standards for accreditation as the traditional teacher education programs in California. Chin's research questions were: Who chooses to earn a teaching credential through AC programs? What motivates interns to enter teaching and AC programs? And, how can an understanding of intern profiles inform recruitment and retention of teachers, especially for high-need schools? Chin offered a labor force analysis to compare racial diversity, explored credential comparisons in categories of elementary, secondary and special education, and described sample demographics to compare age and gender to state wide population. Further questions were raised through the demographic analyses that indicated mean age was not a good indicator of an individual's life circumstances; race and diversity are sensitive to generational differences in experiences, and often are confounded by social economic status. Chin used a person-oriented approach with life history and motivational analyses to categorize interns into six (6) profiles: Compatible Lifestyles (23% interns), Working Class Activists (18%), Racial Idealists (17%), Followers in Family Tradition (16%), Second Career seekers (14%) and Career Explorers (12%). Chin specifically targeted a major implication for recruitment, diversifying the teacher labor force. To enhance this diversification, funding sources for prospective AC teachers in the Working Class Activist group must be available. And, we need to recruit a more diverse pool of teachers seeking secondary and special education credentials in California.

Pam Grossman, Professor of Curriculum and Teacher Education, Stanford University, explained her current research, A study of pathways into teaching in New York City Schools, and posed the general question, Does the Pathway to teaching make a difference in New York City? Specifically, Grossman's presentation addressed the following research questions: What influences the career choices and pathways of teachers? Who enters

which pathway and why? What influences teachers' contributions to student learning? And, what attributes of teachers, school context and preparation influence the retention of teachers? The study described by Grossman focused on a cohort of 2,056 teachers who entered the classroom in New York City schools in the fall of 2004 through multiple pathways embedded in 16 institutions of higher education that prepared both traditional and non-traditional teachers. Grossman presented some of the initial findings from this study with Don Boyd, Hamilton Lankford, Susanna Loeb, and Jim Wyckoff. Findings included:

- The majority of alternate route teachers are filling positions which were previously filled by teachers with temporary licenses
- Alternate routes have stronger academic qualifications
- Teachers in alternate routes have higher BBEST scores
- Teachers in alternative routes were more likely to have majored in social sciences, and less likely to have majored in education
- Teachers in alternate routes have a little less experience in schools but are more likely to have worked with low-income children

Grossman et al are currently addressing the questions, How do the achievement gains of students differ by the pathways teachers have entered teaching? And, is there a differential attrition for the differing pathways? Grossman highlighted the general finding that the differences within programs are greater than the differences between programs of non-traditional and traditional teacher preparation programs.

Dan Humphrey, Associate Director for Education Policy, SRI International shared characteristics of effective alternative certification. Humphrey detailed seven (7) programs to help session participants understand the type of prospective teachers who choose an alternate pathway and what learning opportunities each pathway in the study provided. The study employed diverse data collection activities at both the program and participant levels, and included multiple interviews with key personnel and document reviews. Program participants were surveyed at the beginning of their participation in the selected program and again at the end of their first year of teaching. Humphrey highlighted several of the study's findings. In particular, he found a great deal of variation between and within alternative certification programs, and described teacher development to be a function of the interaction between the program as implemented, the school context in which participants are placed, and the participants' background and previous teaching experiences.

Steve Tozer, Professor of Policy Studies, University of Illinois at Chicago, together with **Nancy Slavin**, Director of Teacher Recruitment and Workforce Planning, and **Amanda Rivera**, Director of Learning and Development, Chicago Public Schools (CPS), and **Susan Sexton**, Research Associate, Learning Point Associates discussed the research project investigating the current status and impact of Alternative Certification Programs within the teaching population of the CPS. The primary questions are: To what extent are AC Programs helping the CPS meet the teacher vacancy needs? Have those needs changed over time?

The research project will involve multiple methodologies, which include:

- Documentation of AC program descriptions
- Placement analysis and employment records of candidates to document retention rates
- Satisfaction surveys for candidates, mentors, principals, university faculty, and CPS teacher faculty
- Classroom observations and surveys to obtain data on teacher quality
- Interviews of key individuals to document policy development and experiences with AC programs

Through this research, universities and CPS will be able to compare the quality of early-career teachers from AC programs with the quality of a matched sample of graduates of conventional teacher preparation programs, using standards-based classroom observations and gains in standardized achievement scores as comparative measures.

Annual Membership Meeting

The annual NAAC membership meeting was held March 28, 2006 in conjunction with the annual conference in Chicago. During the meeting, president Nell Ingram and vice president Liz Fleming provided members with an update on plans for the 2007 conference, announcing that it will be held jointly with the National Center for Alternative Certification (NCAC) for the first time. Nell Ingram announced that Bill Neal has volunteered to be the new editor of the NAAC Online Journal, and the deadline for article submissions is May 15. The deadlines for Research Grants and Intern Scholarships have been extended to June 15. Treasurer David Keltner asked each member to set a personal goal of recruiting at least one new member in the next year. He announced a goal of 500 members by next year's conference. Each regional representative reported on the discussions at the regional meetings, held earlier in the conference.

Region 1: Leo Kirchhoff reported that there were 41 members in attendance at the regional meeting. They discussed the Journal, dues for California state association members, membership, and ideas for special interest groups (SIGs).

Region 2: Gary Ketterling was re-elected as Region 2 Representative. He reported that 22 people attended the meeting, representing almost every state in the region, except Minnesota. They discussed SIGs, and recommended groups focusing on research, dispositions, and interns. They set up a committee to explore forming state affiliates in the region.

Region 3: Bill Neal announced that Region 3, which covers four states, had members from two states in attendance. He announced that the first Louisiana state association meeting, which was scheduled for November 2005, was postponed due to Hurricane Katrina, and is being rescheduled. The region members discussed SIGs, Program Administrator Awards, and the newsletter, specifically expanding it to include more articles from practitioners.

Region 4: Cyndy Stephens was elected Region 4 Representative. There were 22 people at the regional meeting, and they approved the minutes from the April 1, 2005 meeting, discussed the Journal, and directed members' attention to the Spring, 2006 issue available at the NAAC website. SIGs were a highlight of the discussion with the following areas suggested: research, newsletter, special education, mentoring, and urban education. In addition, Program Administrator Awards were discussed.

Region 5: Bob Henry was re-elected Region 5 Representative. He announced that 12 people attended the meeting, and discussed the Journal, Program Administrator Awards and SIGs. They recommended SIGs focused on mentoring, math/science, online instruction and mobility.

NAAC Election Results

At the recent conference in Chicago, the NAAC membership elected the following members to the Board of Directors. All board members are elected for two-year terms.

President: Dr. Nell Ingram, Dallas ISD Alternative Certification Program

Secretary: Dr. Belinda Gimbert, The Ohio State University School of Educational Policy and Leadership

Region 2: Dr. Gary Ketterling, Benedictine University College of Education

Region 4: Dr. Cyndy Stephens, Georgia Professional Standards Board

Region 5: Mr. Bob Henry, Maryland Troops to Teachers, State Department of Education

IMPORTANT DEADLINES

Journal: May 15 and Sept. 15

Manuscripts for the fall issue of the NAAC Online Journal must be received by May 15 and manuscripts for the Spring issue must be received by September 15, 2006 to be considered for review.

The NAAC Online Journal serves as a forum for the exchange of information and ideas related to alternative certification. For information and manuscript submission guidelines, go to www.alternativecertification.org or contact Bill Neal, Managing Editor at 985-549-2311.

Intern Scholarships: June 15

Three scholarships for outstanding interns will be awarded by NAAC this summer. Recipients will win a \$1,000 scholarship plus up to \$500 in travel expenses to attend the 2007 annual conference. For application information and forms, go to www.alternativecertification.org or contact Judy Corcillo, NAAC Executive Secretary at 202-277-3600.

Research Grants: June 15

NAAC will award up to two grants of \$2,000 each for research in the field of alternative certification. Winners will present their research at the 2007 annual conference. For application information and forms, go to www.alternativecertification.org or contact Judy Corcillo, NAAC Executive Secretary at 202-277-3600.

Mark your calendar!

**The Joint Conference
of the
National Association for
Alternative Certification
and the
National Center for
Alternative Certification**

**April 4-6, 2007
Hyatt Regency Capitol Hill
Washington, DC**

For information, go to www.alternativecertification.org.



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