

# Executive Board Minutes



June 27, 2013  
Chicago, Illinois

## Board Members Present:

Gary L. Anderson (Member-at-Large), Wayne J. Camara (Division D; arrived at noon), Carl A. Grant (Division B), Mary Elizabeth (Beth) Graue (Member-at-Large), Joyce E. King (President-Elect), P. Karen Murphy (Division C; participated by teleconference), Margaret G. McKeown (Member-at-Large), Barbara Schneider (President), William G. Tierney (Past President)

## Staff Present:

Felice J. Levine, Gerald E. Sroufe, Norman Tenorio

## I. Introductory Remarks by President Schneider

AERA President Barbara Schneider's welcome to the Executive Board included an invitation to the Board, Council, and staff to dinner on Friday evening at her home.

## 2. Agenda Review and Approval of Minutes

The February 2013 Executive Board minutes were approved. President Schneider reviewed the agenda, noting that Wayne Camara would arrive at the meeting later in the morning and that P. Karen Murphy would participate by teleconference. The agenda was approved as presented. President Schneider called attention to the Council agenda, which included discussion of four substantive topics where Council leadership and expertise would be sought.

## 3. Report of the President

President Schneider indicated that her emphasis as president would be on

integrating the Annual Meeting theme, "The Power of Education Research for Innovation in Practice and Policy," into the ongoing activities of the Association. Her aim was to build upon, support, and enhance the programmatic ambitions of AERA rather than to advance specific new initiatives. For example, she called attention to a potential collaboration on furthering education research on STEM that would include the National Science Foundation and AERA and a possible effort to develop a research agenda related to the Common Core mathematics standards. President Schneider also called attention to AERA's collaboration with the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research on sharing education research data and the new AERA-MET initiative to support dissertation research using Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) data. She noted that the reports on MET will be presented at the Annual Meeting in Philadelphia. She called attention also to the contribution of education research to the development of a strong AERA amicus brief in the *Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin* case as an example of seeking to have research influence policy and practice.

President Schneider announced that she had completed the task of making appointments to AERA committees and that she had been delighted by the positive responses of those asked to serve. She noted that she hoped the organization would operate with a unified approach to major research issues but that she wanted to ensure also that all voices were heard in bringing excellent research visibly to policy making.

The Executive Board discussed the issue of continuity among themes of the Association presidents, noting that poverty was as pervasive in Philadelphia as in San Francisco; yet, there was to be a different Annual Meeting theme. Carl Grant provided the analogy of walking from one room to another, hoping that in doing so each president would leave the door cracked a bit to carry on initiatives of his or her predecessors. President Schneider agreed and indicated that the Annual Meeting Program Committee was

planning a number of activities that would carry forward a focus on poverty in the 2014 meeting.

## 4. Report of the Executive Director

Executive Director Felice Levine continued the discussion about AERA's role, noting that achieving the mission of the organization did not depend solely on the Annual Meeting or the publications program, as important as both were. She mentioned the new virtual professional development program as one example, and called attention to the reports on other program activities included in the background documents.

Regarding the publications program, Levine noted the continued high ratings of AERA's research journals (3 in the top 10) in the newly released rankings in the Thomson Reuters *Journal Citation Reports* (JCR). She pointed out that the *Review of Educational Research* was the number one journal in education according to citation usage. She also reported that new editors had been appointed for the Social and Institutional Analysis and the Teaching, Learning, and Human Development sections of the *American Educational Research Journal*. She further called attention to a special issue of *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* entitled "Research Using Longitudinal Student Data Systems: Findings, Lessons, and Prospects," in keeping with the 2014 Annual Meeting theme. She also reported that the AERA books program continues to develop and publish new titles, as well as plan for future editions of classic titles from the backlist.

Regarding membership, Levine reported that the numbers were holding steady, with a higher retention rate for "established" members than for new members. President Schneider requested that further analysis of the membership retention data be provided at the meeting of the Executive Board in February.

Regarding the solicitation of editors for the new open access journal, Levine asked each member of the Executive Board to nominate at least three exemplary individuals who could bring passion

and excellence to the challenging role of editing this important new journal.

## **5. Status of AERA's 17th Street Property**

Prior to moving to its present office condominium in 2007, AERA was headquartered in two adjacent townhouses on 17th Street NW, in Washington, D.C. One of the townhouses sold in 2011, and there are two prospective bidders for the remaining building. Since the real estate market and the economy have improved over the last several years, Levine indicated that she was inclined to negotiate a sale closer to the current asking price than the selling price of the property that sold in 2011. The Executive Board supported Levine's pursuing this strategy and seeking improved bids from the prospective buyers. The Executive Board will approve a final sale.

## **6. AERA Taxable Term Loan**

Following discussion, the Board unanimously approved a proposal to pay off a taxable loan secured in August 2012 to refinance the mortgage for the AERA Central Office. Levine and Director of Finance and Administration Norman Tenorio made this recommendation due to a number of limitations of having this debt encumbrance, including (a) protecting AERA from rising interest rates on the loan which were beginning to exceed the interest earned on AERA investments, and (b) the desirability of eliminating the pledge on investments required by the loan that reduces AERA's financial flexibility. Liquidating this loan, they pointed out, enhances AERA financial position.

## **7. Review of FY2012 Financial Reports and Audit**

The audit of Fiscal Year 2012 was reviewed by the Executive Board. Levine indicated that the AERA president, past president, and executive director serve as the audit subcommittee for AERA. She suggested that, after an initial discussion with the auditor, the two presidents and the

auditor, absent the executive director, should have a private conversation as an established feature of the audit review. Past President William Tierney summarized the audit review and the very favorable report of the auditor. Subsequently, the Executive Board unanimously voted to recommend to AERA Council acceptance of the audit. Several members of the Executive Board expressed appreciation for the new audit format and the executive director's intention to adopt that format for presentation of budget and financial reports.

## **8. SIG Petitions and Awards**

The Executive Board, as is required in the Bylaws, approves a set of SIG-related procedures, including petitions to establish awards. The topic of proposed SIG awards stimulated a discussion of the number, magnitude, and equity of AERA cash awards across the program, as the awards under consideration provided a range of amounts for similar distinctions. It was determined that a committee of the Board review current policy and practice for awards across the Association and report to the Executive Board at its February meeting.

The Executive Board approved 9 of the 12 award petitions before it and delegated approval of the three remaining requests to President Schneider and SIG Executive Committee Chair Geni Cowan because of technical problems with the requests. These included petitions for awards by the Teaching History SIG, the Critical Perspectives on Early Childhood Education SIG, and the Technology as an Agent of Change in Teaching and Learning SIG. It was understood that, when these issues were addressed, the three petitions receiving provisional approval would be approved.

## **9. Annual Meeting Issues**

### *Site Selection*

Site selection for the Annual Meeting in 2016 is of special importance as it will be central to activities of the Association's Centennial year. There was considerable

interest in Washington, D.C., as the site for the 2016 Annual Meeting. The Executive Board indicated that it supported the choice of D.C. as long as the package was comparable to what AERA has been receiving for other sites in recent years. The Board saw the Centennial as a unique year and the nation's capital as providing a unique opportunity. Discussion unfolded about the extent to which the labor boycott of certain hotel properties encouraged by UNITE HERE should affect the choice of D.C. or another city. Levine and the Board shared the view and hope that an agreement would be reached shortly between the Hyatt and UNITE HERE to make the situation a non-issue. Following discussion, the Executive Board voted unanimously to grant the executive director the authority to explore additional sites for the 2016 Annual Meeting.

The Executive Board also discussed AERA guidance on site selection, which included consideration of labor and human rights issues. There was some discussion of how the policies could be revised to provide improved transparency about how and why decisions are made. The current guidance is distributed over several documents and might be more reader friendly in the form of an integrated document. It was determined to continue this discussion at future meetings of the Executive Board.

### *Annual Meeting Paper Presentations and Online Paper Repository*

The Executive Board discussed the idea emanating from the joint work of the Annual Meeting Policies and Procedures Committee and the Research Advisory Committee that the Association might experiment with high-profile AERA-wide poster sessions that would display research papers juried and proposed by divisions or other AERA units. The Board discussed the idea and shared the aspiration of elevating the value of poster and roundtable modes of presentation at the Annual Meeting, but was not certain that featured AERA-wide sessions would add to their prestige. Board members observed that presentations at poster sessions are now a major component of the Annual

Meeting but that their importance is not yet understood by all attendees.

Executive Board members shared their divisions' activities aimed to highlight poster sessions, including establishing them as featured divisional sessions and providing special acknowledgment to poster presenters. Problems associated with the recent meeting were discussed: Poor lighting and inadequate room for attendee circulation among the posters resulted from the switch in convention sites and will be addressed next year. In addition, it was recommended that, after acceptance notifications were sent, there should be an article in *AERA Highlights* about poster sessions and an email broadcast to AERA members indicating that all accepted papers meet the same peer review standards and describing the variety of session

formats and how placement decisions about assignments are made.

The question of improving participation in the online paper repository was raised. Past President Tierney recommended that materials convey the idea that it is a professional responsibility to participate in the repository and the fact that intellectual property rights remain with the submitter. The possibility of requiring persons presenting at the Annual Meeting to use the paper repository was discussed, but it was concluded that the repository should be continued on a voluntary basis with additional efforts to call attention to the benefits of participation for submitters.

#### **10. Investment Portfolio**

Materials provided to the Executive Board included policy statements regarding the goals and stipulations

shaping the investment of AERA funds and reports of the outcomes of the investment strategy in recent years. In addition, Gregg Auerbach, AERA's investment manager, provided the Board with a performance review and prognosis regarding the AERA investment portfolio. The long-range investment portfolio, which experienced only moderate growth through the recession years, increased substantially during the past year as a result of the improving economy.

#### **11. Executive Session**

The Board met in Executive Session.

#### **12. Adjournment**

There being no items of new business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.