

MEMO

To: SERVE Board of Directors

From: Jack Sanders

Date: April 4, 2001

Re: May 4-6, 2001 Board Meeting

Greetings from all of us at SERVE.

In this memo we will update you on our plans for the forthcoming meeting of the SERVE Board of Directors and about some related issues that you may wish to consider before our meeting.

1. Our first Board of Directors meeting for 2001 is set for May 4th through 6th in Mobile, Alabama. Board Chair, Al Knight, promises perfect weather and outstanding access to sites of local interest while you are in this beautiful location. A schedule of board meeting events is provided as Enclosure A. You will notice that the schedule includes a new study group structure and special-topic meetings--both of those events are explained in Enclosure B. Call Jan or me if you have any questions about the schedule and Enclosures. Your Board meeting agenda book will arrive at your place of business by overnight mail 10 days prior to our meeting. Contact Jan Moore at this office if you have special mailing instructions.
2. SERVE continues to upgrade and enhance its website with the addition of new capabilities like streaming video (see the SEIR♦TEC web page located at <http://www.seirtec.org/pptech.html>) and dynamic, interactive content (as found on our Comprehensive School Reform page at <http://www.serve.org/UCR/index.html>). Please visit your SERVE website and tell us what you think.
3. In order to accommodate a slight increase in staffing, we have secured five additional workspaces in our Greensboro office. We are also looking at additional workspace in the building housing our Tallahassee office. The lease on our Atlanta office expired at the end of the year. We are now renting that space on a month-to-month basis until we can find other space in the metro area. We will report our progress on this topic at the board meeting.
4. We hope to have our new US Department of Education Contracting Officer, Sharon Horn, provide an update on the national scene at our upcoming Board meeting, too. Sharon has extensive knowledge of and experience in Federally supported R&D programs. Previously, she was the ED project officer for WestEd, operator of the Regional Lab headquartered in San Francisco. I know you will enjoy getting to know her. There is much happening in DC that will be of interest to board members and Sharon will be able to help us understand the trends.

For example, the Congress has asked the Government Accounting Office (GAO) to conduct a study of the R&D centers, Comprehensive Centers, and Regional Educational Laboratories as a way of informing its decision about the proper role of the Federal Government in research, development, and technical assistance. We have just responded to the GAO's request for background information related to this study. Results of the study will be reported early in 2002.

5. Here are some of the major SERVE events that you will be hearing about at the board meeting or that you will be reading about in our newsletters:
 - a. Staff presentations and meetings at American Educational Research Association (AERA) in Seattle, WA – April 10-14
 - b. Staff providing leadership at two National Rural Education Association (NREA) events in March and April
 - c. Staff presentations at the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) Assessment Conference in Panama City, FL - May 2-4
 - d. SERVE Senior Project, Savannah, GA – June 15-16
 - e. SERVE co-sponsorship of CREATE Evaluation Institute, Wilmington, NC – July 19-21
 - f. SERVE Regional Forum, Charlotte, NC – October 21-23
6. SERVE staff held its annual staff meeting at Calloway Gardens, Georgia. This year continued SERVE's strategic planning process that focused efforts at hitting the targets established by the Board last November. There were many highlights to this year's event including our partner, NASA, providing its E-Space Collaboratory, a mobile computer lab used for strategic planning. SERVE helped to "push the envelope" and use the Collaboratory in an innovative and extremely useful way. In a very real sense, SERVE and NASA successfully partnered on this research and development effort.
7. One of the exiting things about being associated with a nationally recognized teacher training institution such as UNCG is learning about the cutting edge work of its faculty researchers. Lloyd Bond, of the Educational Research and Measurement Department at UNCG recently concluded a study of 65 teachers from NC, OH, and the Washington, DC metropolitan area. Dr. Bond and his research team discovered that all 65 of the teachers demonstrated laudable teaching skills, but those who had obtained National Board Certification outperformed their non-certified counterparts on every one of 13 generally recognized measures of good teaching. For example, the National Board Certified Teachers were better at improvising when faced with the unexpected, understanding why students succeed and fail on a given academic task, engaging students without overwhelming them, and anticipating difficulties students might have with new concepts.

This was the first of several studies planned to examine the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification process. The NBPTS report, *A Distinction that Matters: Why National Teacher Certification Makes a Difference*, states that Dr. Bond's study is an "encouraging sign that . . . sends a clear message: When states and local school districts encourage teachers to practice at this level, children benefit." To receive a copy of the report, contact NBPTS at 1-800-22-TEACH or www.nbpts.org.

My special thanks to all of you for your ongoing support of SERVE's work in the Region. You are magnificent in your public service and your dedication to the interests of all children in the Southeast. Have a great spring break and we look forward to seeing you all in Mobile, the first weekend in May.

SERVE
Board of Directors Draft Schedule
Adams Mark Hotel
Mobile, AL
May 4-6, 2000

Friday, May 4:

- 12:00-3:30 SERVE Executive Committee meeting (working lunch)
- 3:30-3:45 Break
- 3:45-5:15 SERVE, Inc. Executive Committee meeting
- 5:30-7:00 Reception (Board members, staff, and local SERVE clients)

Saturday, May 5:

- 7:30-8:30 Breakfast
- 8:30-10:40 SERVE Board of Directors meeting
- 10:40-11:00 Break
- 11:00-12:15 Overview of Procedural Knowledge Work
- 12:15-1:30 Lunch
- 1:45-3:00 Study Groups
- 3:00-3:15 Break
- 3:15-4:30 Special Topic Sessions
- 4:30-5:30 Break
- 5:30-7:00 Cash bar

Sunday, May 6:

- 7:00-8:00 Breakfast and check-out
- 8:00-9:00 SERVE, Inc. Board of Directors meeting
- 9:00-10:30 Presenter on Assessment, Accountability, and Standards

Board Member Study Groups

As a part of our work proposed for the Regional Educational Laboratory for 2000-2005, SERVE has established study groups that will identify, document, and disseminate procedural knowledge gained from our work in the field. Members of the SERVE Board of Directors are included as part of the study groups. We would like to have your input regarding issues, ideas, and policies that affect SERVE's work within your states and throughout the region.

We ask that Board members begin their participation in this important activity during the upcoming meeting. You will be asked to sign up for one of six study groups: Elementary School, Middle School, High School, District, State, or Higher Education. During the meeting you will participate in a facilitated discussion of issues surrounding our work. Topics that will be discussed by the study group are: low-performing schools, advancing educational quality, influencing public policy, early childhood education and the achievement gap, literacy, standards/accountability, and our research and development projects in your states.

Special Topic Sessions

In response to Board member suggestions, we have planned three special topic sessions. The first is *Block Scheduling*, a practice being adopted by many secondary schools in the Southeast. Questions about the research and development behind this practice were raised at our last meeting. SERVE's Paula Egelson will facilitate the session.

The second is on *Teacher Evaluation and Principal Evaluation Processes*. Our Wendy McColskey and Barbara Howard will facilitate a discussion about their region-wide work in this important area. Board members will have an opportunity to experience part of the education process and to make input to some new work SERVE is undertaking.

The third is *A Conversation with Dale Schunk*, the new Dean of the UNCG School of Education. Dale comes to us from Purdue where he headed up the Department of Educational Studies in the School of Education. His research interests are learning, cognition, and motivation. Dale and Jack are interested in finding ways to promote greater collaboration between SERVE and the School of Education.