Abstracts

The Statistics Teacher Network

Beth Bryan - Augusta, Georgia, USA

The Statistics Teacher Network is a newsletter published by the American Statistical Association/National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Joint Committee on the Curriculum in Statistics and Probability. The newsletter is published three times a year, and its list of subscribers covers all levels of statistics educators from kindergarten teachers to university professors as well as professional statisticians. Subscribers come from all parts of the United States, Canada, and many other countries throughout the world.

The objective of the *Network* is to provide a vehicle for information exchange and sharing of ideas among all individuals who are involved in and committed to providing statistical education to all members of society. The newsletter creates that all important link between the classroom teacher and leading educators and statisticians who are in the forefront of the movement to enhance the teaching of statistics. Thus, the teachers and their administrators are able to learn firsthand about new techniques, materials, software, inservice programmes, guidelines for teaching statistics, and current textbooks. Subscribers have the opportunity to share innovative projects which they have developed, submit questions, learn about their colleagues' activities, and be informed about professional conferences and training programmes for teachers.

Data Handling in the New National Curriculum for Mathematics in England and Wales

Glyn Davies - Sheffield, England

The National Curriculum for Mathematics recently introduced to all state schools in England and Wales contains substantially more statistics than previously included in any UK school curriculum. Help and support is constantly sought by both primary and secondary teachers now attempting to implement this new initiative. In my role as

Project Officer : Data Handling in the National Curriculum I am attempting to meet these needs. This initiative has given us the opportunity to review how statistics is taught in our schools and to develop new strategies to improve upon existing good practice. The heading given to the statistical content in the National Curriculum is Data Handling, an unfortunate title which implies a passive act. It is my belief that statistics is best taught through active statistical investigation, in real life, practical situations offering meaningful and enjoyable learning experiences. Examples of the materials I have produced were discussed and further references to other recent international curriculum developments made. Some of the implications of the "National Curriculum" on primary teaching, secondary teaching and teacher training (retraining) were also discussed.

Teaching and Testing of Statistics

Jan de Lange - Utrecht, The Netherlands

A series of examples from experiences taken from experiments that have taken place in The Netherlands and the USA were discussed. This work has been carried out by the Research Group on Mathematics Education (OW & OC) of Utrecht University, with the USA work a collaboration with the National Centre for Research in Mathematical Sciences Education of the University of Wisconsin in Madison. Materials were developed on the subject of Data Visualisation. This subject treats skills such as drawing basic plots (for example, histograms and box plots) and calculating basic numerical summaries of data, but it also treats questions such as the following as being of at least equal importance. What graphical representation is best for this set of data? What do these data tell me? How can I communicate the message through a picture? This approach has implications for testing and evaluation as well as teaching.

Selling High School Juniors and Seniors on Taking an Elective Year of Descriptive Statistics

Grant Phillips - Oxnard, California, USA

This talk described how a year of Descriptive Statistics could fit in a high school's course offerings. Topics include the following: building on a student's successes; games of chance; opinion surveys; US Census 1990; report writing; Galton Board Models; and much more. Classroom handouts were shown and discussed. It is also important to tell students and parents that Descriptive Statistics is necessary and fun.