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## NETWORK A MEETING RECORD

Network A Plenary Meeting  
April 17-20, 1996, Las Palmas, Spain

### Participants

Friedrich Plank (Austria)  
Aletta Grisay (Belgium)  
Luc Van de Poele (Belgium)  
C. Jean Britton (Canada)  
Jana Straková (Czech Republic)  
Niels Plichewski (Denmark)  
Kimmo Leimu (Finland)  
Jacqueline Levasseur (France)  
Dieter Schwedt (Germany)  
Thomas Kellaghan (Ireland)  
Chiara Croce (Italy)  
Lucio Pusci (Italy)  
Carlos Gutierrez (Mexico)  
Gerbo Korevaar (Netherlands)  
Jules Peschar (Netherlands)  
Rosemark Renwick (New Zealand)  
Guillermo Gil (Spain)  
Flora Gil (Spain)  
Michael Richardson (United Kingdom)  
Eugene Owen (United States, Chair)  
Jay Moskowitz (United States)  
Andreas Schleicher (CERI/OECD)

### Observers

Judit Kádár-Fülöp (Hungary)  
Esther García (Spain)  
Fernando Muñoz (Spain)

### Welcome

The meeting was chaired by Eugene Owen. D. José Mendoza Cabrera (Excmo. Sr. Consejero de Educación, Cultura y Deportes of the Canarian Government Sra.) and Dña Esther Garcia González (Directora of the Instituto Canario de Evaluación y Calidad Educativa) provided a kind welcome to the meeting. The meeting hosts were extremely generous and provided excellent hospitality through the meeting. Special thanks are extended to Guillermo Gil and Flora Gil for assisting with the meeting arrangements.

The plenary session discussed drafts of the proposed Network A indicators for EAG as well as reviewing the work of the competency levels and implementation working groups and Cross-curricula Competencies subgroup.

## Draft Indicators

Additional guidance on the structure and content of the indicators will be decided at the PRAG meeting. For purposes of the meeting discussions, it was assumed that there will be an overview section, followed by the indicators. The overview will use information based on the GOALS survey to present the context and will discuss the indicators and associated policy issues in a coherent manner.

For the IALS indicators, it was agreed that the Network would re-draft the indicators as follows and that they would be presented in the following order:

- **R30a, R30b, R30c:** Percentage of adults (ages 16 to 65) scoring at four levels of literacy on the IALS prose, document, and quantitative scales.
- **R31a, R31b, and R31c:** Percentage of adults (ages 16 to 65) by education level on the IALS prose, document, and quantitative scales.
- **R30d, R30e, R30f:** Percentage of younger adults (ages 16-24) and older adults (ages 25-65) scoring at four levels of literacy on the IALS prose, document, and quantitative scales. We will ask Statistics Canada if the sample size will allow us to present indicators for these two age groups.
- **R32a, R32b, R32c:** Percentage of men and women (16 to 65) on the IALS prose, document, and quantitative scales.

For data reduction purposes, data on only one of the three literacy scales may be presented for some indicators, as long as doing so does not omit important information. The standard errors for each indicator, data for the two age groups, and response rate and population exclusion information will be requested from Statistics Canada. We also will request further information on the nonresponse rates; specifically, we will ask Statistics Canada if it is possible to determine how the results were affected when nonresponders are coded at Literacy level 1. Additionally, it was noted that standards regarding response rates for household surveys are different from those for student assessments; this point will be made in a footnote to the IALS indicators.

The IALS indicators will describe each country's pattern of literacy. Charts will be presented as stacked (or horizontal) bar charts.

For the TIMSS indicators, the following decisions were taken. First, the indicators will include all OECD countries who participated in TIMSS as well as non-OECD countries who participate in INES. Second, England and Scotland should be weighted as one country for calculating the international mean but reported separately in the tables. Similarly, Belgium (fr.) and Belgium (fl.), should be weighted as one country for calculating the international mean but reported separately in the tables. Third, for the multiple comparison chart, we will ask Boston College to include data from all OECD countries which do not meet the TIMSS data standards in the computation of the international mean if they do not bias the results. Countries not meeting TIMSS data standards will be flagged and annotated; their data will be shown at the bottom on

the multiple comparison chart. Fourth, we will ask Boston College to provide response rates and population exclusions. Fifth, the following indicators will be drafted:

R06: Student achievement in mathematics and science

- **Table R06a:** Multiple comparisons in mathematics
- **Table R06b:** Multiple comparisons in science

These tables will include the age, grade, mean, standard error for each country as well as the multiple comparisons.

R07: Variation in achievement results for mathematics and science within countries

- **Table/Chart R07a:** Distribution of student achievement scores in mathematics
- **Table/Chart R07b:** Distribution of student achievement scores in science

These tables and charts will still show the percentiles (1st, 5th, 10th, 25th, 50th, 75th, 90th, 95th, and 99th). For the charts, instead of reporting the mean for each country, we will ask Boston College if we can report the interquartile range for each country; the ranges would then be shown as they fall around the international mean. Also, we will add to the charts (in a footnote) the grades sampled for each country.

R08: Variation in achievement results for mathematics and science within classes

- Table/Chart R08a: Variance in mathematics scores
- Table/Chart R08b: Variance in science scores

Within versus between class variance will not be reported. Instead, we will ask Boston College if within class variance and total variance can be reported.

R09: Progress in achievement in mathematics and science

- Table/Chart R09a: Progress in mathematics achievement
- Table/Chart R09b: Progress in science achievement

We will ask Boston College to compute this indicator as:

$$(\text{Upper Grade} - \text{Lower Grade}) / (\text{International mean of Upper Grade} - \text{Lower Grade})$$

Thus, if a country's difference is greater than the mean international difference, a positive value will be found.

The tables will show the scores for the upper grade and the lower grade for each country; the international mean will be shown. The charts will show the zero point as a solid line and the international mean as a dotted line; the differences for each country will be graphed around the international mean.

#### R10: Gender differences in mathematics and science.

- **Table/Chart R10a:** Gender differences in mathematics achievement.
- **Table/Chart R10b:** Gender differences in science achievement.

Similar to R09, we will request that this indicator be as:

$$(\text{Boys} - \text{Girls}) / (\text{International mean of Boys} - \text{Girls})$$

Thus, if a country's difference between boys and girls is greater than the mean international difference, a positive value will be found.

The tables will show, for each country, boys' achievement scores and girls' achievement scores; the international mean should be presented. The charts will show the zero point as a solid line and the international mean as a dotted line; the differences for each country will be graphed around the international mean.

### **Costs and Budgeting**

The implementation plan model provides for more participation in (1) developing the objectives of the test, (2) test development, (3) item development, and (4) consensus building. Greater participation has a cost—in terms of both time and money. Therefore members have requested two budgets—one like the data strategy and the other for the implementation plan—so that they can evaluate the trade-offs and added-value of participation and compare that with a model that requires greater delegation and trust.

Network members were asked to estimate national costs for implementing the data strategy. The cost of about US\$200,000 described in the draft implementation plan is still a typical cost. Costs range from US\$120,000 to US\$1,000,000. We will provide items to be costed in national budgets.

The United States and England have budgeted for first year. In France, the money is currently available (but will be spent on other activities if a decision is not taken soon). Most other attendees believe political support and financial resources will be available, although all stressed the need for prompt formal action by OECD. Of the countries that have formally discussed participation, Spain will not be able to participate fully in the first cycle, although if countries can participate in portions of the strategy they will be able to participate to that extent.

The PRAG will be briefed on the status of the implementation plan and the need to go forward immediately.

The desired schedule would have a tender available January 1997 and a contract awarded by Mid-May.

Andreas was requested to provide the members with the procedures that OECD will use for the collection of funds from the participating countries.

## **GOALS Report**

At the Dublin meeting it was proposed a draft report describing the GOALS project be prepared and reviewed at the next plenary session. Marit arranged for the preparation of the report. However, because of illness, she was not able to coordinate its production. A GOALS report will be prepared and reviewed by Network members at the next plenary session which should take place during the Fall 1996.

Based on the recommendation of Marit and Jay, the Network decided to use the information obtained during the GOALS Survey in the section introducing the indicators and not to publish GOALS indicators. Although several member were confident about the information provided, others were concerned that the conceptual difficulty of measuring this new paradigm made results subject to considerable variation because experts and Network members were forced to interpret the survey questions and responses.

## **CCC Report**

Jules distributed the final version of the CCC Report. The report will now be copy edited at OECD, translated into French, and published. The report will be a volume of the INES series for which the Network previously provided a volume on measuring student outcomes. Everyone was highly appreciative of the work of Jules and Siestke Waslander.

Jules provided a review of the long term objective of the CCC project, steps taken to date, and plans for the forthcoming year. A great deal was learned during the preparation of the CCC Pilot study, including the lack of good existing items and the difficulty of measuring problem solving skills. Over the next year, two activities are planned to consolidate where we are and plan for the next phase of CCC development.

It is anticipated that a conference for policy makers will take place in the late Fall, at the time the CCC Report is published. The purpose of this conference is to communicate to a wider audience the work conducted by the Network on CCC's and to generate support for future activities.

In early 1997 it is anticipated that a workshop will be held to examine if our measured concepts are consistent with the original conceptualization and suggestions for future instrumentation.

No data collection will take place until after these two meetings.

The Network Chair requested that Jules attend a meeting in Stockholm the first week of May at which the development of work skills assessment is to be discussed.