



*Celebrating 50 Years of Leadership  
in Mathematics Education*

April 2011

## ***Acknowledgements***

A number of resources have been used over the years to record the history of ASSM:

- The early history draws on the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Retrospective prepared by Ferd Prevost. In that document, Ferd credits David Dye of Minnesota for the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary document as well as his contributions to the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary document. Also cited were Donald Chambers and Bob Kenney who summarized recent history as well as Steve Leinwand who joined Donald in reacting to drafts.
- The history from the 31<sup>st</sup> to the 39<sup>th</sup> years is based on the work of Frank Reardon, who prepared the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary booklet.
- Barbara Montalto updated the ASSM history in 2005 for the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the organization. She credits the help of many members who shared programs and newsletters providing additional information for earlier years. She also added highlights for the 40<sup>th</sup> through 44<sup>th</sup> years.

This 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition of ASSM's history draws upon the work of previous historians and written documents. In addition to those cited above, the following members have reviewed and contributed to this work: Ann Bartosh, Bill Geppert, Peggy Kasten, Jackie Mitchell and Steve Leinwand.

The work of ASSM's historians, both "official" and "unofficial", and the many members who have shared documents and insights over the years is greatly appreciated. Of special note is Ferd's extensive knowledge of the complete history of the organization and his willingness to share that knowledge with those preparing history documents.

Technology allows this document to be updated and shared easily as new information becomes available. Members are encouraged to assist in making this history more complete and accurate by sharing new information and identifying omissions, errors and corrections that may be needed with the historian.

## *Celebrating 50 Years of Leadership in Mathematics Education*

The 2010 ASSM meeting in San Diego, California was the 50<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the Association of State Supervisors of Mathematics and marked the beginning of the 50<sup>th</sup> year of ASSM's contributions in support of state- and province-level mathematics leaders. This document provides a brief history of the organization and highlights key initiatives, partnerships and other activities as reminders of the issues facing mathematics education and the significant contributions of ASSM and its members over the years.

### ***In the beginning ...***

In August of 1960, a group of about 40 educators met at Hollins College in Roanoke, Virginia to look at programmed instruction materials being published by Encyclopedia Britannica. Attending this meeting were supervisors of mathematics from several states. Twenty-one of them met for breakfast on August 27<sup>th</sup> and explored the possibility of forming an organization of state-level supervisors of mathematics.

Harry Phillips (West Virginia) served as chairman of the impromptu meeting. In the meeting, Mr. George Cunningham (New Hampshire) moved that, rather than make additional plans to organize, they organize. This was discussed, and the consensus was that seldom would they get more than 20 supervisors together and that those who were not present would probably rather get news that the group had organized than learn of plans to call for an organizational meeting. Consequently, the motion to organize was carried and ASSM was born.

At that meeting, Mary Tulock (Connecticut), who was going to the U.S. Office of Education as a mathematics specialist the following month, was elected as the Executive Secretary of the fledgling organization. Harry Phillips was elected President by one vote over Arnold Chandler (Wisconsin) who was then named Vice President. Records show that George Cunningham served as the Association's first secretary-treasurer. Frank Hawthorne (New York) chaired the committee charged with developing a constitution. It was also decided to hold the first formal meeting in Chicago in 1961 on the two days prior to the Annual Meeting of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.

Those present at the August 1960 Roanoke meeting include:

Clarence Bennett, Maine	Rodney Mansfield, Colorado
Enoch Burton, Indiana	Harry Phillips, West Virginia
Arnold Chandler, Wisconsin	Wayland Phillips, Florida
George Cunningham, New Hampshire	George Schlenker, New Jersey
Lamar Fortenberry, Mississippi	Joseph Senta, Minnesota
I. Owen Foster, Indiana	Evan Sweeter, Vermont
Nels Hanson, Washington	Robert Thomas, Oregon
Frank Hawthorne, New York	Gladys Thomason, Georgia
Robert Hedley, Manitoba	Mary Tulock, Connecticut
Carl Heilman, Pennsylvania	Annie John Williams, North Carolina
Merrill Hill, Utah	Note: L. Harold Caldwell, Kansas, attended the Roanoke meeting, but did not attend the breakfast meeting.

After the first ASSM meeting in Chicago in 1961, the organization has met prior to the NCTM Annual Meeting every year. In 1973 and for several years afterwards, ASSM held one session in conjunction with NCSM. Every state, every territory and most Canadian provinces have been represented at meetings over the years.

### ***Highlights of the 1960's ...***

The first annual meeting of ASSM was held April 4-5, 1961 at the Conrad Hilton Hotel in Chicago. The thirty-nine people attending became the charter members of the organization. The charter membership included supervisors and representatives from 25 states, Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia and the U.S. Office of Education. Speakers at the initial meeting included Phillips Jones, President of NCTM and presenters sharing the work of their projects. Most in attendance were state-level mathematics supervisors serving in positions supported by the National Defense Education Act (NDEA).

Many of those in attendance at the Chicago meeting attended the National Conference of State Supervisors of Mathematics a few months later in Washington DC. This conference was sponsored by the U.S. Office of Education on June 19-23, 1961 had four main objectives:

1. To focus attention on the evolving mathematics curriculum in order to determine the most effective things the State Supervisor can do to help strengthen mathematics teaching.
2. To consider how the State Supervisor can help improve in-service and pre-service education for mathematics teachers.
3. To identify the types of research are needed in the field of mathematics teaching and to consider the implications of present research findings.
4. To determine how the State Supervisor can evaluate his State's program for strengthening mathematics teaching and how he can help school systems evaluate their programs.

The proceedings of the conference are reported in Publication # OE-29032: The Leadership Role of State Supervisors of Mathematics released in 1962 by the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Office of Education.

In April 1963, the Association of State Supervisors was accepted as an affiliated group of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. The program for the 1963 annual meeting, held in Pittsburgh, also notes the formation of a Publications Committee. Later that year, the first ASSM newsletter was published with Isabelle Rucker (Virginia) serving as the first editor, adding those duties to her role as secretary and treasurer of the organization.

ASSM developed good working relationships with NSF and U.S. Office of Education during the 1960's. The Association sought and received support for a variety of conferences to enable its members to more effectively serve teachers and students in their states. In 1965, the "Utilization and Evaluation of Federally Support Programs" conference was held at the Kellogg Center at Michigan State University.

ASSM members first became involved with emerging technologies when they were hosted, along with their colleagues in science, at a conference sponsored by IBM in Poughkeepsie NY in November 1964. At the 1967 annual meeting in Las Vegas, many members of ASSM spent most of the week writing a proposal that focused on the use of portable computers - heavy "portable" computers, not laptops - in mathematics education. ASSM received support from NSF for a conference on Computers in Mathematics Education held in Denver on December 8-13, 1968.

ASSM's first decade of leadership and service to mathematics education culminated in a conference focused on supporting students who struggle in mathematics. With the support of NSF, the "Programs in Mathematics Low Achievers" conference was held in Charlottesville, VA on December 4-9, 1969 attended by 48 state supervisors representing 34 states and Puerto Rico. The conference report, "Compensatory

Programs in Mathematics” was released in 1971. This report includes a strong plea for more activity-based programs.

### ***The start of an ASSM tradition ...***

*“At the 1968 meeting in Philadelphia, someone, I think it was Carl Heilman, brought some “goodies” to one of the parties held in the evening. I think Lee Von Kuster of Montana suggested that we have an all-state smorgasbord at the next year’s meeting in Minneapolis. Thus started the tradition of holding such an event each year on the Monday evening of our meeting. Each person brings something, which reflects food from his/her state, and a huge table is set with these delicacies. At the meeting of the group in San Diego, we found a lot of “freeloaders” not from our group attending the smorgasbord. It was decided to hold the “Smorgy” at a different location and restrict attendance to members and guests.” - as reported by Ferd Prevost.*

Some of the more memorable contributions to the Smorgy – Joe Hoffmann (CA) cooking fresh vegetables tempura; the Georgia group providing several fresh peach pies; Bob Kenny (VT) arranging to have Ben and Jerry’s ice cream for us; Bill Futrell’s (WY) beef jerky; the Texas group (Barbara Montalto, Bill Hopkins, Ramona DeValcourt and Cathy Seeley) bringing crock pots of chili and cornbread; Betty Glass (CT), Bob Kenney (VT) and Ferd Prevost (NH) boiling and cracking three fresh lobsters in Boston; and lots of candy, nuts, etc. - including some ‘white lightning” fresh from the hills of Tennessee courtesy of Jim Cannon (TN) early on. Never a balanced diet, but so-o much fun! Unfortunately in the late 1990’s, it became increasingly difficult to find a place that would allow us bring in our own food and the smorgasbord is no longer held.

### ***Highlights of the 1970’s ...***

In December 1972, ASSM partnered with NSF and Memphis State University to hold an assessment conference. The “National, State, and Local Assessment of Mathematics Programs” conference was held in Memphis with representatives from the National Council of Supervisors of Mathematics, the Council of State Science Supervisors and the Council of State Social Studies Supervisors. An ASSM publication “Procedural Guidelines to Mathematics Assessment” was developed and published in 1973. This conference is also remembered for the Peabody Ducks at the famed Memphis hotel.

In 1973, ASSM established a tradition of holding a joint session with NCSM. At ASSM’s 15<sup>th</sup> annual meeting in April 1975 in Denver, the closing general session was titled “Implications of a US Changeover to the Metric System for Education”. Those at the meeting (and subsequent meetings) will long remember the ill-fated “Metric Revolution.”

### ***Highlights of the 1980's ...***

The 1980's are remembered for the mapping of an action agenda for ASSM that paralleled NCTM's "An Agenda for Action" released in 1980. In that year, ASSM members pledged to develop papers on major issues of importance to state supervisors. This initiative known as "ASSM and its 20-20 vision – Twenty Topics Undertaken in Celebration of 20 Years of Existence" addressed the following topics:

- District Level Needs for Mathematics Leadership
- Guidelines for Certification (Elementary and Secondary)
- Staff Development through Teacher centers
- Impact of Research on Classroom Practice
- Preparation of non-Mathematics Teachers for the Teaching of Mathematics
- Strategies for Alleviating the Shortage of Mathematics Teachers
- Reexamination of the Strands Approach to Unify Mathematics Content
- Estimation, Mental Computation and Shortcuts
- Interdisciplinary Curriculum
- Reading in Mathematics
- Placement of Decimals and Fractions in the Curriculum
- Definition of Problem Solving Skills
- Impact of Technology on the Curriculum
- Retention of Mathematics Skills in the Last Two Years of High School
- Acceptance of Metric Measurement by non-Mathematics and Science Teachers
- Inclusion of Mathematics in USOE Basic Skills Funded State Plans
- Philosophy and Purpose of ASSM
- Impact on Publishers
- Responsibilities of State Math Consultants
- Parent Roles, Responsibilities and Activities in Helping Children in Mathematics

This list of topics anticipated many of the issues that would shape the decade of the 1990's and remain relevant today. Some of the issues have changed markedly, notably technology, but they remain important issues.

Attendees at the 1984 annual meeting in San Francisco likely remember the tremor that gently rocked the area. The theme of the conference was ASSM - Meeting the Challenge and making waves like those in the rooftop pool characterized ASSM's commitment to developing an agenda.

The 1985 meeting that convened in San Antonio TX was focused on the “Evaluation and the Mathematics Curriculum”. Much of the discussion focused on the International Mathematics Study (obviously the “first” - before there was FIMSS, SIMSS and TIMSS.) By this time, many members of ASSM had taken on a new responsibility as the state director for the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAESMT) program that began in 1983. This also marked the beginning of some joint efforts with the Council of Presidential Awardees in Mathematics (CPAM).

Several reports were just beginning to surface when ASSM met in Washington DC in 1986. ASSM recognized change was at hand that would affect mathematics education and the role of state supervisors. John Dossey reported on the Standards Commission in 1987 and the work underway on NCTM’s “Curriculum and Evaluation Standards for School Mathematics.” The 1989 annual meeting in Orlando opened with NCTM President Shirley Frye’s session titled “Implementation: What is Next – How Will ASSM Be Involved?”

ASSM President Donald Chambers (WI) reported in 1989 on the year behind and the year ahead and reported opportunities for ASSM. A grant from the EXXON Foundation created the opportunity for us to develop two major grant proposals. They were:

- NSF Proposal – Dan Dolan (MT), Steve Leinwand (CT), and Donald Chambers (WI) met with Iris Carl and Marilyn Hala from NCTM and Tim Kanold, President of CPAM. Together they developed a proposal to NSF to fund a series of six regional conferences to train teams of leaders from each state. Reforms presented were in terms of the NCTM Standards and the MSEB Framework. The “Leading Mathematics Education into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century” regional conferences were planned in 1989 and conducted in 1990. They led to involvement of many people in every state who went on to become leaders in the mathematics education reform.
- Carnegie Proposal – Andy Reeves (FL) and Donald Chambers (WI) developed a proposal for funding that would allow ASSM to meet in the Fall of 1989 and 1990 to develop state and national strategies for school mathematics education reform. The proposal was funded by the Carnegie Corporation to establish and begin maintaining a major role in coordinating the reform efforts. The reports of those conferences are titled “The Coordinated Implementation of National and State-by-State Reform in School Mathematics” and were primarily written by Andy Reeves. These reports describe the process and results of a series of working meetings at which ASSM identified a national action agenda, ASSM position statements were developed, and specific action plans were developed by each participating state, territory and province.

The late eighties and early nineties resulted in more and greater recognition of the work and commitment of ASSM and its members. ASSM came to be recognized as a major force on the national stage in mathematics reform. ASSM was accepted as a member

of the Mathematics Sciences Education Board, influenced the deliberations of NCATE and continued its long and close working relationship with NCTM. In December 1989, ASSM formed a not-for-profit corporation, ASSM INC.

### ***Highlights of the 1990's ...***

Throughout the 1990's ASSM's involvement in many national programs continued. The Second Annual ASSM Planning Conference, funded by the Carnegie Foundation, was held in September 1990. The action plan was revisited and expanded; members shared the status of their state, territory and province actions plans, and position statements were refined. An executive summary of the project was published in October 1991.

ASSM's "Leading Mathematics Education into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" initiative conducted five regional meetings in early 1990. These 3-day conferences provided participants with a context and extensive set of resources to develop and provide leadership at the state, territory and province level in response to the implications and recommendations of recent reports on the status of mathematics education. Teams of regionally networked leaders were formed to promote change and equipped with resources and speaker's kits. Follow-up activities were planned to keep the newly trained leaders involved in local dissemination and implementation activities. A total of 1070 persons participated in the conferences, including some who later became ASSM members.

Other major activities during the 1990's, and in many cases continuing into the 2000's, include:

- The MSELnet (Mathematical Sciences Education Leadership Network) program, supported by IBM, provided training and computers to support an e-mail system for mathematics and science state supervisors.
- ASSM joined the Education Commission of the States and MSEB to sponsor the "State Leaders' Conference on Systemic Change in Science and Mathematics - Visions, Partnerships and Plans" conference in McLean VA on November 14-16, 1991. This is the first of two conferences was funded by a grant from NSF.
- ASSM co-sponsored with CSSS, ECS and MSEB the "Partnerships for Systemic Change in Mathematics, Science and Technology" conference. This two-day conference was held in Washington D.C. on December 7-8, 1992.
- ASSM collaborated with NSCM to publish the "Guide to Selecting Instructional Materials for Mathematics Education" in 1993. This document provides guidance and support to school/district personnel responsible for reviewing, evaluating and selecting instructional materials.
- ASSM members advised the National Assessment of Education Process (NAEP) on item content, reports and facilitated their states' involvement.

- ASSM continued its involvement with the Presidential Awards program leading to the development of another successful proposal. The Lucent Technologies Foundation grant supported meetings of state coordinators, provided intensive professional development staffed by awardees, and resulted in ASSM becoming the principal coordinator of this program through the efforts of Charles Watson (AR) and Larry Wiley (NJ).
- ASSM members have contributed to the dissemination of information about the Third International Mathematics Study. There has been major involvement in the development of new mathematics curriculum approaches and the dissemination of these. New techniques of assessment and the incorporation of technology into state curricula and assessments have also been major areas of involvement. Almost all the states have been caught up in the development of state standards in various subject areas. It is hard to find a state where the center of this activity in mathematics has not been its ASSM members. Once again, as the opportunity to lead has presented itself, those in ASSM have stepped forward to provide a major contribution.
- ENC hosted a conference for ASSM members in Columbus OH in October 1998 - fondly remembered for the party hosted by the Ohio delegation.
- ASSM members participated in the “State Leadership Institute on Standards-Based Mathematics and Science Education” initiative begun in October 1999 and continuing into 2000. This authentic task initiative was sponsored by the National Academy of Sciences and lead by Susan Loucks-Horsley with sessions held at the University of California - Irvine.
- ASSM worked jointly with NCSM on a publication addressing equity. The “Mathematics for All: A Source Book of Essential Information for Leaders in Mathematics Equity” was published by NCSM in 1999.

### ***Highlights of the 2000's ...***

As we moved into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, ASSM continued to be heavily involved in mathematics reform at the national level. During the early 2000's, ASSM and its members continued to be involved in supporting the next generation of NCTM Standards - Principles and Standards for School Mathematics, leading state curriculum standards development, and working on assessment issues at the local, state, and national levels. The passage of the No Child Left Behind legislation intensified ASSM's role in supporting its members in keeping current on research, developing implementation strategies, and leading the way to making mathematics education both responsive to increased demands at the state and local levels and moving mathematics education forward.

ASSM partnered with NCTM on the “Standards and Curriculum: A View from the Nation” project in 2004. ASSM members participated in an examination of standards across states in Park City UT on July 21-24, 2004. The resulting report was published in 2005 and provided a foundation for discussions about the future direction of local, state, and national mathematics standards and curricula.

Other recent and current collaborations and activities include:

- Two Presidential Awardee Academies for Excellence in Teaching Mathematics regional academies conducted in the summer of 2000 supported by the Lucent Technologies Foundation grant. John Sutton (NJ) served as the PAAETM Project Director.
- The “Planning for Results Conference” in collaboration with the Eisenhower National Clearinghouse (ENC) in Columbus OH on October 27-31, 2000. An authentic task process facilitated by ENC resulted in the development of an ASSM professional development plan.
- A visit to the Kennedy Space Center during the 2001 Annual Meeting in Orlando marking the development of a working relationship with NASA. ASSM members were subsequently invited to participate in a meeting in October 2003 at NASA Headquarters in Houston TX. ASSM members participated in the review and evaluation of NASA curricular materials against national and state mathematics standards.
- A collaboration with McREL and ENC to edit “EdThoughts: What We Know About Mathematics Teaching and Learning” published in 2002. This document is a summary of mathematics education research and was distributed to ASSM members.
- The “Dynamic Classroom Assessment: Classroom Assessment in Mathematics” project dissemination conference in Raleigh NC in August 2003.
- The “Charting the Course: West Virginia’s MERIT Navigates Success in Mathematics” dissemination meeting in Charleston WV on May 9-11, 2005.
- The “Bridging the Gap Between Research and Practice in Professional Development” conference in February 2006.
- Administering the mathematics state-level coordination of the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST) program for the National Science Foundation.
- Conducting professional development academies electronically and through summer academies for PAEMST mathematics awardees - a project funded through a grant from the Lucent Foundation.

- A collaborative role in the NAEP Consensus Project that involved soliciting and compiling feedback on the revised NAEP mathematics framework, and more recently, involved in the revision of the Grade 12 Mathematics Framework.

### ***Looking Towards the Future ...***

As ASSM celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2011, the development the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics presents new challenges for most members. Much can be learned from how the organization dealt with similar challenges over the years as the organization looks to the future.

ASSM has joined with the Association of Mathematics Teacher Educators (AMTE), the National Council of Supervisors of Mathematics (NCSM), and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics on a joint taskforce to develop actions and resources needed to help teachers implement the Common Core State Standards in Mathematics (CCSSM). The task force has also considered ways in which the organizations can collaborate in supporting their members to advance each organization's vision of school mathematics. The joint task force report, which has been shared with the leadership of each organization, identifies five priority actions to be taken as soon as possible.

In 2011, ASSM is proud to celebrate the organization's major contributions to the advancement of mathematics education and the provision of leadership to many reform efforts at the national and state, territory and provincial levels over the past fifty years. ASSM continues to be a "band of visionaries" who pull together to share their successes and support their friends and colleagues in times of personal and professional need. ASSM and its members have distinguished themselves by their service and leadership to the mathematics community.