

APA DIVISION 15 PRESENTS

# Newsletter for Educational Psychologists

Winter 2019 Edition



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**Edited by** Dr. Marcus Johnson

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DIVISION 15



# Message from the President

By Dr. Helenrose Fives

Division 15 is a robust community of active scholars who seek to advance the field of educational psychology and provide meaningful research to support the learning experiences of students across the developmental continuum. I am honored to serve as President of this division. The purpose of this message is to highlight some of the work we are doing this year.

At the Executive Committee Retreat in October we were able to move forward on a number of issues. This 2-day meeting gives the Executive Committee extended time to discuss, reflect on, and commit to decisions regarding the well-being of Division 15. This year we approved two ad hoc committees to be classified standing committees: the *Psychology Today* Blog and the Policy Committee.

Under the leadership of Sarah Kiefer and new co-editor Ellen Usher, the *Psychology Today* Blog Committee is responsible for reviewing blog posts for this outlet. There are several blogs in the works related to my presidential theme, *A New Look at Some Old Ideas: Educational Psychology from Yesterday for Tomorrow*. With these blogs authors are invited to share some of what we “know” from educational psychology with the broad readership of *Psychology Today*. We have recently published [our first post](#) by Dr. Tammy Mills.

The Executive Committee also voted to make the Ad-hoc Policy Committee a standing committee. The Policy Committee is dedicated to generating and disseminating policy briefs that highlight the ways that research in educational psychology can inform local, state, and national policy decisions. Under the leadership of Sharon Nichols this committee plans to generate two policy briefs a year. At the 2019 convention this group organized a workshop on how to communicate our research to policy makers. The Policy Committee is already planning another event for APA 2020.

In addition to policy, Division 15 has much to offer practitioners in learning contexts. The work of past presidents Nancy Perry and Michael Nussbaum that focused on research-practice partnerships has evolved into a concerted interest in practice. Specifically, how can we make what we know in educational psychology available and accessible to the teachers, school leaders, and parents who can use that information in real life? Thanks to the interest and leadership of Alysia Roehrig, we now have an ad hoc Practice Committee. This group plans to follow the process of the Policy Committee by spending a year determining what the committee will seek to do and how it should be structured. They are currently developing practice briefs that can be disseminated to the public to share the implications of educational psychology research for practice. Keep an eye out for more information from this committee as the year progresses.



Dr. Helenrose Fives, DI5 President





One of the fun things that the President of Division 15 gets to do is appoint members to serve on one of the 14 committees that keep the Division running. In seeking members to serve on our awards committees I made the very strategic move of looking at the list of past recipients to see who might be willing to serve on these committees. In doing this, I was struck by the lack of diversity among recipients and research topics recognized by the Division. At the same time I happened to be listening to the Division 15 Podcast with Jeffrey Greene's interview of Jessica DeCuir-Gunby and Paul Schutz on their 2014 *Educational Psychologist* article "Researching race within educational psychology contexts." I then had the good fortune to sit next to Dr. DeCuir-Gunby at the Division 15 business meeting. After a discussion of her article some more and the concerns I had about

Division membership and recognition, we decided to form an ad hoc Committee on Race and Diversity in Division 15. Dr. DeCuir-Gunby agreed to chair this committee (proving that who you sit next to at meetings can be serendipitous). Under her leadership they are planning an event for the 2020 APA meeting.

The 2020 annual meeting will be in Washington, DC! As you may have gathered, there will be many things going on during the meeting—not to mention the traditional conference program that will be organized by Program Co-Chairs, Nicole Barnes and Jamaal Matthews. I hope to see you all there!

Sincerely,  
Helenrose Fives, PhD

## Call for Snow Award Nominations

*Applications and Nominations Due January 3, 2020*

Division 15 (Educational Psychology) of the American Psychological Association seeks nominations for the 2018 Richard E. Snow Award for Early Contributions. Given annually, this award is named to a scholar who:

1. has completed their doctoral work within the past ten years (i.e., between the dates of January 1, 2010 and January 31, 2020)
2. has made significant research contributions to the field of educational psychology, and
3. is a member of APA Division 15 at the time of consideration.

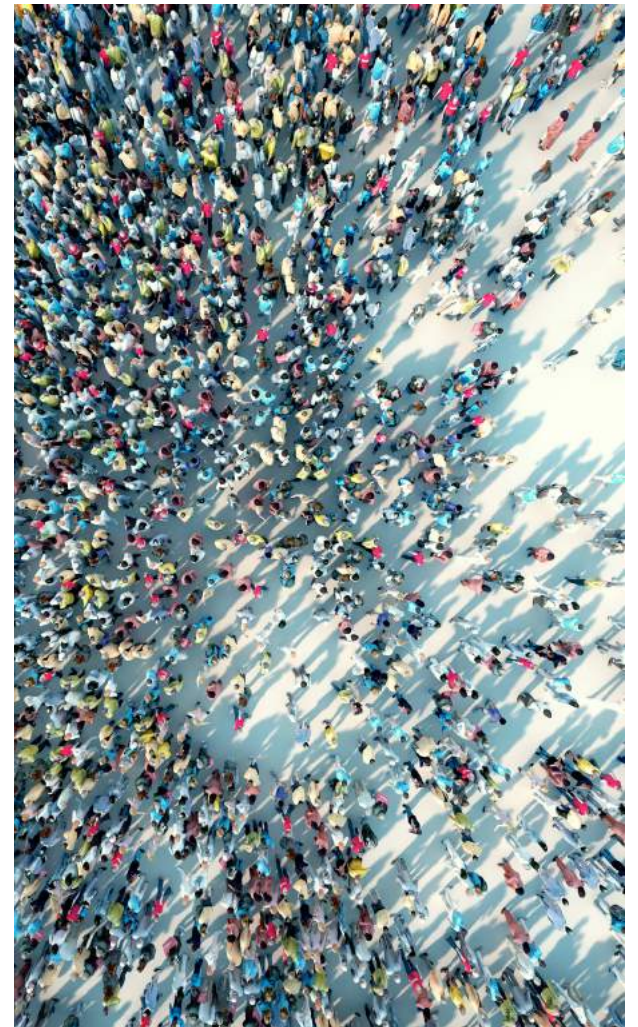
Those interested in submitting a nomination for this award (including a self-nomination) may learn more—and find a list of past recipients—[here](#). Questions may be directed to [Andrew Elliot](#), Award Chair.

# Don't Forget to Renew Your Division 15 Membership!

APA's Membership Services department always receives a wealth of new registrations and renewals in the final days of the year, and because these renewals take time to process, this inevitably results in some Division 15 members being unlisted on our membership reports at the beginning of the year.

- Full APA members can renew via their annual statements and/or by logging into their MyAPA accounts.
- Solely Division 15 members/affiliates can also renew (or rejoin!) online [here](#). Entering your member number helps us locate your record, but it is optional!

Should you have any questions or issues with the process, we encourage you to reach out to Division Services at (202) 336-6013 or [division@apa.org](mailto:division@apa.org). We look forward to another great year!



## Call for Thorndike Award Nominations

*Nominations Due January 17, 2020*

Division 15 is seeking nominations (including self-nominations) for the E. L. Thorndike Career Achievement Award. Nominations should state the name of the nominee and may optionally include a brief description (no more than 2 pages of text) of why the nominee deserves consideration for the award. This award is the highest honor given by Division 15 and is reserved for senior scholars with substantial contributions to research in educational psychology.

Please send your nomination to Clark Chinn at [clark.chinn@gse.rutgers.edu](mailto:clark.chinn@gse.rutgers.edu). A list of past recipients may be found on [the Division 15 website](#).





# Executive Meeting Highlights

## APA 2019 - Chicago, IL

Find full minutes for the 2019 APA Convention Executive Committee Meeting [here](#).

- Interdisciplinary submissions for future APA Convention programs are welcomed;
- Membership continues to hold steady.
- The contract for the *Educational Psychologist's* new co-editors Drs. Jeff Greene and Lisa Linnenbrink Garcia had been vetted, signed, and approved.
- The Podcast and *One Tip* series have been well received.
- Discussion around a new Policy & Practice journal proposal continued, with a unanimous vote to create an ad hoc committee to advance the proposal.
- The International Committee will become a subsidiary of the Membership Committee.





# Approaches and Engagement in Educational Policy: Voices from Across Educational Psychology

By Dr. Marcus Johnson

With a desire to address the involvement of educational psychologists in policy, past president Dr. Michael Nussbaum organized his presidential theme around “Evidence-Based Changes through Psychology, Policy, Professional Learning, and Participatory Practice,” from 2017-2018, and initiated an ad hoc policy and practice committee that has become a standing Policy Committee. Division 15’s heightened engagement in educational policy continued during Dr. Gale Sinatra’s presidential term (2018-2019), with expanded support of policy initiatives and a policy panel at APA 2019. As a result of our recent past presidents’ efforts, a visible uptick in Division 15’s energy around educational policy is apparent, as evinced by:

- Sessions/workshops at the APA convention around policy and practice;
- A new standing Policy Committee chaired by Dr. Sharon Nichols;
- The launching of our inaugural policy brief on reducing weapons in schools;
- Our leadership’s participation in a congressional hearing on violence in schools;
- Dr. Edward Haertel’s Thorndike Career Award speech (2017), addressing the need to validate policy uses of test scores;
- Dr. Sharon Nichols’ webinar concerning “Policy-Informed Scholarship;”
- The creation of an ad hoc committee to explore a new policy and practice journal;
- And, our presence in the larger APA structure (including APA’s Council of Representatives).



Dr. Marcus Johnson, NEP Editor

Additionally, our members have garnered growing media attention and accolades for their involvement in educational policy at the local and national levels, including past president Dr. Rich Mayer, who received the APA Citizen Psychologist Award for his leadership on his local school board; Dr. Michele Gregoire Gill, who also received the APA Citizen Psychologist Award and serves on APA’s Coalition for Psychology in Schools and Education; Dr. Kathryn Wentzel, who recently completed her term as an AERA Congressional Fellow; and past AERA president Dr. David Berliner, who continues to give international and national speeches to advocate for the role of social science research in educational policy.





Division 15 members' participation and interest in the various aforementioned events, activities, publications, and media have very much been appreciated, and we hope the energy and momentum of our membership can further our involvement in policy. Below, are some of the key messages and recommendations for approaching and engaging in educational policy from our Divisional leaders and events.

**Dr. Sharon Nichols** says, "It seems time to take what we know about teaching, learning, and motivation, and consider how it all plays out within the educational policy terrain that directs what teachers do...This is especially critical as our student population diversifies Educational psychologists can work with local school contexts to understand the policy-directed constraints and affordances that directly impact teachers' work with their students." In her webinar "Policy-Informed Scholarship," Dr. Nichols further suggests strategies for disseminating Educational Psychology work, including writing editorials, use of social media, directly contacting local representatives, and explicitly highlighting implications for educational policy in our work, to name a few.

"Simply understanding what the policy process is, what policy actually is, I think could help us be better researchers and help us think more clearly about ways that we can have influence through our work. . . Putting together a corpus of work, forming [lobbying] groups amongst researchers for certain ideas, and being really clear about how either the law or policy can help us get our ideas out there and improve the educational process. So there is a lot to be learned just by engaging the political process... So I think it is worth our while to learn more about how the government works." – **Dr. Kathryn Wentzel**, AERA Congressional Fellow. To hear more from Dr. Wentzel, please listen to [her podcast interview](#).

"I wish that the [Educational Psychology] researchers, who have this abundance of data right now that we

have collected over decades, to show what is healthy, what is good for human development, what is good for creating a healthy society, and for children growing up in the future, had a greater voice in the legislatures and in the media; because I think we have a lot to offer." – **Dr. Ron Avi Astor**, Professor of Social Welfare (UCLA). Dr. Avi Astor goes on to express in [his podcast interview](#), that he'd encourage Educational Psychology scholars to engage with the policy efforts and professionals within and across scholarly organizations like APA and AERA, write op-eds and/or briefs, and communicating with local school boards and superintendents to help them interpret data, conduct focus groups, and come up with solutions that are research-based.

"The policy arena is an area that urgently needs to be informed by educational research, including but not limited to educational psychology. Policy staffers often turn to the Internet or to advocacy groups for ideas and information to inform policy, but such information often lacks a strong empirical base, is based on misconceptions, and/or is biased in various ways. Issues such as value-added accountability systems or class-size reduction are examples of policies based on sometimes questionable assumptions," says **Dr. E. Michael Nussbaum** in his [2017 presidential statement](#). Dr. Nussbaum further expresses that to be effective, "we need to package our research in relatively simple terms that a variety of policy people will understand; search for concise but empirically based arguments."





# Interview With a Past President: Dr. E. Michael Nussbaum

Interview by Christina Nishiyama

Dr. E. Michael Nussbaum served as President of Division 15 from 2017 – 2018. As Past President and a 25-year member of the Division, Dr. Nussbaum shared insight into his Presidential term, as well as issues and opportunities for engagement in the field of Educational Psychology. Inspired by an opportunity to provide leadership to Division 15 and create institutional structures to make the Division more effective, Dr. Nussbaum's main goal as President was focused on the need to create a more significant connection between research, policy, and practice. Secondary goals included revamping Division 15's committee structure, managing finances to realize member desires for increased spending, properly allocating the Presidential workload through delegation to the Presidential team, and furthering member engagement.

When discussing the most salient issues in Educational Psychology while serving as President, Dr. Nussbaum indicated the increase in popularity of complexity theory; a topic he began to appreciate more as a scholar during his Presidential tenure. Politicized issues such as preventing gun use in schools and standardized testing continue to take center stage and are one of the many reasons why Dr. Nussbaum initiated the creation of Division 15's educational policy and practice committee, who began the development of policy briefs during his term. Policy briefs communicate major educational issues that are backed by research in a simple manner. Briefs remain a major achievement of Dr. Nussbaum's term, helping to unify research, policy, and practice.



Dr. E. Michael Nussbaum, Past President

Advancing the Educational Psychology discipline is a common goal amongst all members. Dr. Nussbaum feels that developing relationships with schools, teachers, and policy makers is critical to advancing the Division's work. Further partnership is also needed with disciplines like Teacher Education to develop the most effective practices in preservice preparation. Despite stigma that Educational Psychology in teacher licensure programs is undervalued, it is necessary to teach foundational concepts but in a way that will transfer to practice (e.g., in diverse settings). Dr. Nussbaum feels our discipline has a lot of offer in





terms of unifying concepts like self-regulation or elaborative processing, but proactive partnerships and reflection with Teacher Education are necessary before the conversation happens without us.

Closing interview commentary focused on words of wisdom for current students and calls to action for Division members. Dr. Nussbaum shared that students should endeavor upon research activities by thinking big: where is the field headed and where should it be going? Finding a “happy medium” in research foci that may stray from major research trends but aligns with areas that remain part of the conversation in the field is critical. Joint research projects with more senior members of one’s department are also invaluable for mentoring, as is a wide breath of statistical training to tie appropriate

statistical methods to research questions.

Members who wish to become more engaged can do so by attending Division 15 workshops and webinars on policy and practice or reading the presidential Psychology Today blogs. They can also become more engaged by submitting ideas for policy briefs and the dissemination. Lastly, attaining overarching Division goals of connecting research to policy and practice is best achieved through developing “integrative arguments,” which involves packaging research in concise empirical arguments that synthesizes issues and addresses counterarguments. Doing so helps policy makers and practitioners more easily digest topics. Per Dr. Nussbaum, drafting arguments from this perspective is critical to advancing Educational Psychology.

## Call for Pintrich Award Nominations

*Applications and Nominations Due January 17, 2020*

The Paul R. Pintrich Division 15 Dissertation Award is given to an individual who finishes his/her doctoral dissertation within the previous two calendar years from when the award will be announced.

The award consists of a plaque, a check for \$2000, and a program time slot for an invited address at the annual meeting. The recipient gives his/her address and receives the plaque and check at the APA conference in the year following the announcement, thus allowing a full year for the preparation of the invited address.

Those interested in applying or nominating for this award may learn more [here](#).



# Call for Proposals: APA 2020

Proposals Due December 2, 2019 (5:00 PM ET)

Division 15 invites submissions for the 2020 annual APA convention to be held in Washington, DC (August 6-9, 2020). The 2020 Presidential Theme for Division 15 will be ***A New Look at Some Old Ideas: Educational Psychology from Yesterday for Tomorrow***. We encourage submissions related to this theme and research in Educational Psychology.

APA and Division 15 members and non-members are invited to submit their work for presentation in the Division 15 Program for the 2020 APA Convention. Submissions may fall under any of the following formats:

- **Poster Sessions:** Poster sessions include a collection of approximately 40 papers presented using a poster visual where attendees can walk up and ask questions of each presenter individually.
- **Symposium:** A symposia submission should include 3-5 papers that are organized around a common theme or area of interest. Symposia should include a chair for the session and a discussant who will comment on the papers presented. Most accepted symposia will be assigned a 50 minute session. Preference will be given to symposia submissions that closely align with the conference theme.
- **Discussion (Other Proposal):** A discussion submission should include 3-5 speakers or panelists who will discuss a specific topic relevant to Division 15 membership from varied perspectives. Most accepted discussions will be assigned to a 50 minute session. Preference will be given to discussion sessions that closely align to the conference theme.

**All proposals may be submitted through [APA's convention proposal portal](#).**

Those with questions about proposal formats should contact Division 15 Program Co-Chairs, Jamaal Matthews ([matthewsj@montclair.edu](mailto:matthewsj@montclair.edu)) and Nicole Barnes ([barnesn@montclair.edu](mailto:barnesn@montclair.edu)).



