

Newsletter for Educational Psychologists (NEP)

WINTER 2025 EDITION



EDITOR: ELISE C. ALLEN, PHD

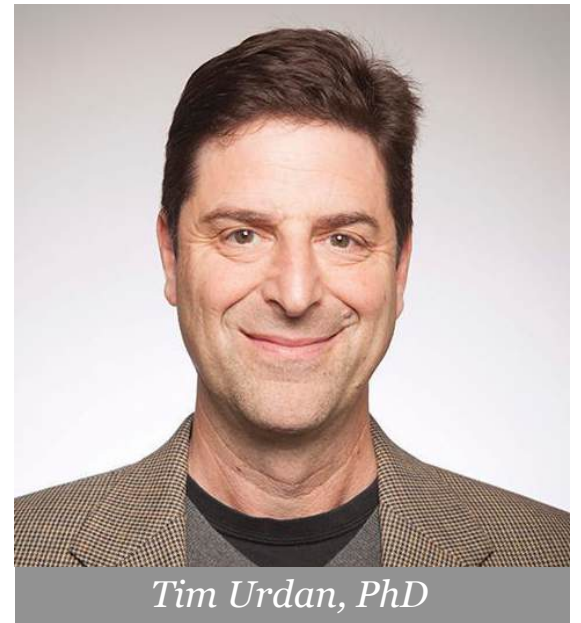
- 1 A Message From President Tim Urdan
- 2 New Division 15 Podcast Episodes
- 3 Remembering David Berliner, by Sharon Nichols
- 4 Call for Proposals and Reviewers: Division 15 at the 2026 APA Convention
- 6 Call for Division 15 Fellows Nominations
- 7 The Student Corner, by Annie (Meng Qi) Wu
- 9 Editor's Corner, by Elise C. Allen
- 10 Call for Submissions: NEP Research Showcase
- 10 Call for Student Corner Submissions
- 11 Division 15 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Let Them Know: Who We Are, What We Do, Why It Matters

by President Tim Urdan

When I decided to run for President of Division 15, I thought the theme of my presidential year would be “Sustainability and Thriving.” I’m invested in understanding the challenges public school teachers face and wanted to promote ideas for how teachers, and all of us, could avoid burnout and thrive in our professions. Then the 2024 election happened, and the world has turned upside down. How quaint and outdated that theme feels today.

Faced with a government that is openly hostile to science and determined to undermine the autonomy of colleges and universities, past president Jessica Decuir-Gunby adopted a theme of “Takin’ it to the Streets,” embracing resistance to the government’s efforts to squelch research, particularly research involving DEI focuses, while also finding ways to support members of Division 15 who have been affected by these efforts. I fully support these themes and the programs developed by Dr. Decuir-Gunby; I aim to continue and to expand them.



Tim Urdan, PhD

With our current challenging times in mind, the theme for my presidential year is now “Let Them Know: Who We Are, What We Do, Why It Matters.” It is easier to cut programs and face minimal resistance when people do not know much about them or are misinformed about their purposes. For example, much of the public does not know what the Department of Education does, and its dismantling has been met with little public outcry. Similarly, many who dislike or distrust DEI as a general concept have been fed a steady diet of misinformation about what DEI is and why it is important. Thus, we have a timely opportunity to educate each other and the public about what educational psychologists do, what we value, and who we help with our efforts.

To this end, I would like to focus attention on getting the word out about our work and efforts to a broader audience. Division 15 has already made some excellent progress in this area in recent years. We’ve launched a podcast, hosted by Jeff Greene, that highlights the work of those who have recently published articles in *Educational Psychologist*. The podcast reaches a broad audience and continues to grow in popularity. In addition, we have revived our space in *Psychology Today*, posting roughly a dozen new pieces in recent months on a range of ed psych topics. We also continue to disseminate focused information to practitioners in our Education Practice Briefs, and now through our new Policy Briefs, which are short, accessible pieces about specific educational psychology topics and how our research can inform policy.

In addition to these important efforts to reach larger audiences, I would like to leverage the popularity of social media to make the broader public aware of our work and its impacts. I am forming a Public Outreach Committee and, once constituted, we will develop ideas for creating and sharing content about the work that educational psychologists do and why it matters, especially now.

Another goal for this year is to provide direct support to Division members to facilitate their growth as professionals, connection to other members of the community, and support scholarly activities. This support will take many forms, including awards for members at various stages of their careers, programs to support graduate students and early-career members, and providing opportunities for Division members to stay connected to each other through webinars and social gatherings at the APA conference.

The Division, fortunately, has a healthy rainy-day fund; and it is currently pouring. The Executive Committee and I will work to find ways to continue supporting the research efforts of our members who have lost their grants or have found their opportunities for funding have dried up. The long-term financial health of the Division is our primary responsibility, but we will do as much as we can to support Division members in this unprecedented moment of attack on scientific research.

I thank you for the opportunity to serve as the Division 15 President this year. I am excited to work with the many members of the Division volunteering their time to serve on our various committees; thank you for all your time and efforts. Lastly, I look forward to hearing ideas from all our members on how to strengthen the Division and the important work we all do.

New Division 15 Podcast Episodes!

The Division 15 podcast series, “Emerging Research in Educational Psychology,” is thriving—with recent top ranks for Educational Psychology across major platforms such as iTunes and Spotify. If you aren’t a subscriber yet, now is the time to get involved!

Below are episodes we’re proud to have launched thus far in 2025:

- Courtney Hattan, PhD & Panayiota Kendeou, PhD
- Elena Forzani, PhD
- Rachael Gabriel, PhD & Francesca López, PhD
- Christine Lee Bae, PhD & John Fife, PhD
- Robert William Danielson, PhD
- Jeff Vomund, PhD
- Ben Heddy, PhD & Alyssa Emery, PhD
- Samantha G. Daley, PhD
- Christina Barbieri, PhD & Jessica Rodrigues, PhD
- Dionne Cross Francis, PhD & Francesca López, PhD



Find links to each—as well as source material for each episode—on [**the Division 15 website.**](#)

Thoughts on a Legend

In Memoriam of David Berliner, PhD

Written Sharon Nichols, PhD

On Friday September 26, 2025, the public education community lost one of its most vibrant and vocal defenders with the passing of David Berliner. *The Manufactured Crisis* (with Bruce Biddle) is one of his most enduring and profound legacies in this regard. In *Manufactured Crisis*, David and Bruce describe how data have been used to leverage inappropriate and “manufactured” attacks on our public education system. By describing how average test scores conveniently disguise diverse school systems and experiences of American students, they showed quite decisively that America’s public schools and therefore, America’s teachers and students, are not failing, but that they teach and learn in some of the best and worst circumstances in the world. The impact of these arguments has been so great that the book has been banned in many districts across the nation (one of David’s proudest achievements!).

It is not an exaggeration to say that David Berliner was a giant. His scholarship was significant, with more than 200 articles, reports, and book chapters that, according to Google Scholar, have received more than 55,000 citations. In the days since his passing, many tributes, including those from [Diane Ravitch](#), [NEPC](#), and his colleagues at [ASU](#) have appeared, offering robust personal and professional testimony to the importance and impact of his work.

David Berliner’s work undoubtedly impacted many among us. His work seamlessly merged his insights as an educational psychologist with a practical view of teachers’ work and students’ experiences. His writing and communication style were entertaining, straightforward, and void of apologies. And I learned from him that it is okay to read a speech, if it is well written and, of course, if the delivery is interesting and entertaining!

David was never afraid to take a stand and regularly encouraged me to do so. The constraints of alleged scientific objectivity were simply irrelevant when it was clear to him that something was just “wrong,” as we learned in our work (along with Gene Glass) looking at the effects of high-stakes testing systems. The search for truth and objectivity in this work was not, in fact, the point when so much data (and frankly common sense) revealed the devastating impacts on teachers’ and students’ lives. It is through the course of these lessons that I have come to develop a passion for the role of education research in the public sphere.

His work speaks for itself, but what I will remember most is his generosity and his spirit. Every year on my birthday, I received a personalized e-card from David in which he always encouraged me to drink more wine and to enjoy life! The work we do is important. But as David said and always lived, it is equally important to remember to enjoy life. He will be dearly missed.



Call For Proposals: Division 15 at the 2026 APA Convention

To Be Held August 6 - 8, 2026 in Washington, D.C.

Division 15 invites submissions for the annual APA convention, to be held August 6-8 in Washington, D.C. Division proposals are due no later than January 14, 2026, at 5 p.m. ET.

The Presidential Theme for Division 15 is Let Them Know: Who We Are, What We Do, Why It Matters. The current climate is hostile to science and the autonomy of colleges and universities is being undermined. Beyond our research community, the general public is often unaware or misinformed about topics such as the importance of research on diversity or what the Department of Education does, resulting in too little outcry when funding for these programs and departments are cut. Likewise the public largely does not know what educational psychologists do and why it matters. We have an opportunity to try to educate each other and the public about what educational psychologists do, what we value, and who we help with our efforts.

We welcome proposals that address any aspect of educational psychology and encourage submissions that ask critical questions that are relevant to education and society as well as challenge traditional paradigms and methodologies. Potential topics include but are not limited to strategies to share research with broader audiences, understanding and counteracting the current anti-science and anti-education sentiment and legislation, the impact of educational policies on marginalized communities, innovative DEI advocacy approaches, and the examination of the cultural-political context on pedagogy and curriculum development. Proposals that align with the division's Presidential Theme are particularly encouraged. By engaging with these critical themes, we can leverage our collective voices to challenge detrimental policies and practices impacting education.

APA and Division 15 members and non-members are invited to submit their work for presentation in the Division 15 Program for the APA Convention.

Submissions may fall under the following formats:

- Individual Presentations: These submissions should reflect a single project, study, or paper with one or more authors. All individual presentations will be submitted as posters into the system. Once the

conference platform is finalized, we will work to allocate accepted proposals into appropriate formats that are still to be determined (e.g., structured poster sessions, paper sessions). Student-led posters at both undergraduate and graduate levels are welcome.

- Symposia 2.0: (50 or 110 minutes) Symposia 2.0 are focused sessions in which multiple speakers present information related to a unifying topic that is viewed to be a significant common theme, issue, or question. The presentations generally include a review of data but may also include discussions of contrasting viewpoints or other innovative strategies for engaging the audience. The Symposia 2.0 session format should include an introduction to the topic by an expert, someone who can set context and offer background for why the session topic is important. This can be the chairperson. Speakers then give their presentations, which are followed by an exchange of ideas and discussion between the audience and speakers.
- Critical Conversations: (50 minutes) Proposals for critical conversations (formerly called Discussions) should include 1 or more brief presentations designed to provide the information needed for the audience to effectively participate in the discussion. The session should include a chair who will moderate the discussion and ensure that the bulk of the time is spent in conversation with the audience.

All proposals must be submitted through APA's convention proposal portal at <https://convention.apa.org/proposals>. We strongly encourage authors to refer to the updated (2023) APA Style Journal Article Reporting Standards when addressing race, ethnicity, and culture as they prepare their submissions.

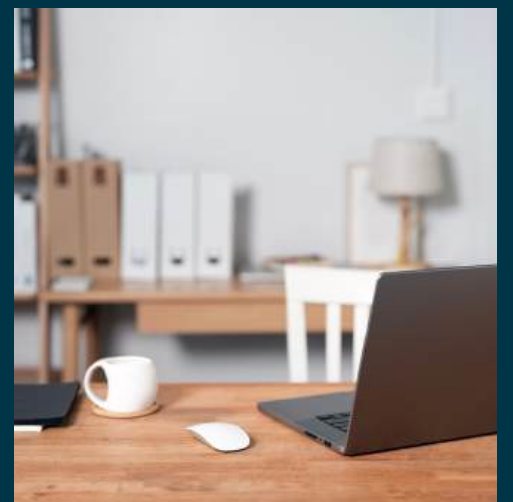
Please note, the presenting authors listed will be contacted to review at least one proposal.

Those with questions about proposal formats or who have novel ideas about presentation formats should contact Division 15 Program Co-Chairs, Xiao-Yin Chen (xy.chen@utk.edu) and Korinthia Nicolai (knicolai@iu.edu).

Call for Proposal Reviewers:

With our call for proposals open and submissions rolling in, Division 15 is looking for qualified graduate students, researchers, and practitioners to serve as submission reviewers.

To volunteer, please complete the APA 2026 Request for Reviewers by December 19, 2025: <https://forms.gle/9inMBVEDZxyzWfh27>.



Considering APA Fellow Status? We Encourage You to Apply!

If you've made distinguished contributions to educational psychology through impactful research, theory building, or methodological innovation, this may be the year to apply for APA Division 15 Fellow status. Fellow status is an important recognition of national impact, awarded by peers within the field.

You don't need to wait for a nomination. Self-nominations are welcome and encouraged!

We know many scholars meet the criteria but hesitate to apply. If your work has shaped the field, we encourage you to take this step.

For eligibility details and application instructions, [view the full call here](#) or reach out to Ellen Usher, PhD (usher.ellen@mayo.edu), Chair of the Division 15 Fellows Committee. **The deadline for materials is December 1, 2025.**

And if you'd like inspiration, browse the list of current Division 15 Fellows [here](#).



2025 Is Nearly Gone: Don't Forget to Renew Your Membership!



As the year winds down, we're reaching out with an important reminder: Be sure to renew your membership soon to avoid any interruptions to your benefits in 2026!

- **Full APA Members:** Renew quickly through your annual statement or by logging into your [MyAPA account](#).
- **Division 15-only Members or Affiliates:** Renew or rejoin online here: <https://join.apa.org/divisions>. Don't worry if you can't find your member number—it's helpful but not required!

If you run into any questions or need assistance, APA Membership Services is here to help. You can reach them at membership@apa.org or call 202-336-5500

Let's make 2026 another fantastic year for Division 15 and its members!

Breaking Free:

Empowering Graduate Students to Think Beyond the Use of Existing Data in Educational Psychology Research

By Annie (Meng Qi) Wu, University of Victoria

Student Corner

Learning is a complex phenomenon. To understand, explore, and conceptualize this complexity, educational psychology researchers need to think beyond what we currently know—scientifically, critically, and innovatively—to move the field forward. This sometimes requires breaking the line, jumping outside the box, and imagining what we have not yet imagined; that is, we need creativity and imagination alongside critical thinking. Nevertheless, certain practices may discourage researchers—particularly graduate students in training—from imagining the impossible, questioning the norm, and creating the new. One such practice is the reliance on existing data to develop new learning theories and conduct innovative research. Using existing datasets may set up rigid boundaries that “lock” graduate students to only understand, explore, and investigate a certain research topic inside a preset “research box.” This practice may be driven, in part, by publication expectations, but may also artificially constrain students’ ability to explore the complexity, emergence, and dynamics of learning phenomena.



Annie (Meng Qi) Wu

First, I must acknowledge that using existing data—including data collected through small, large, or collaborative research projects, as well as national and international datasets (e.g., demographic data, OECD data, World Bank Open Data)—is beneficial for certain research purposes. For example, international data, such as Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) data, can be analyzed to explore the dynamic interactions between various psychological factors and adolescents’ academic achievement situated in complex sociocultural contexts. National data can also be incorporated into mixed-methods research as complementary or supplementary information for novel qualitative data.

Moreover, I acknowledge that this training is essential for new graduate students, particularly those who have limited research experiences and knowledge, to build a strong and solid foundation for conducting research—rather than being set adrift without knowing how to swim. During my own early graduate research training, I benefited significantly from conducting research studies using data collected by other researchers. This practice taught me to gain in-depth understandings of learning theories, recognize the importance of research context, and think holistically and responsively about the bigger picture. For example, during my early graduate training, I was able to develop a solid understanding of how a self-regulated learning (SRL) model was measured and examined in applied learning contexts as well as its relationship with other psychological constructs.

Still, if a bird has learned to fly, should we not set it free to explore the wild?

Graduate students are expected to demonstrate creativity, imagination, and innovation throughout the process of knowledge production during their training. Specifically, for graduate students moving beyond the early stages of research training and aiming to develop an in-depth understanding of a particular phenomenon or topic in educational psychology, conducting studies based solely on existing datasets may limit exploring diverse ways of thinking about research beyond a single learning theory or theoretical model, a single methodological tradition (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed), a narrow set of geographical locations, or a restricted group of participants (e.g., White, middle-class, university students). Creativity and imagination in education seldom happens within preset boxes. So, what should we do to ensure that graduate students are trained and prepared to tackle more complex questions in innovative ways? How can we free graduate students' minds from working in preset categories and practices?

If we, in the field of educational psychology, agree that learning is complex and dynamic within changing socioecological contexts, it follows that we should allow more opportunities for graduate students to develop contextual, philosophical, and historical knowledge of certain research topics, explore possible explanations drawn from non-Western cultural traditions about learning and education, and engage in diverse communities beyond laboratories or traditional classrooms to listen what people in communities truly need.

It is also crucial to cultivate interdisciplinary knowledge beyond educational psychology and closely related fields. Fields, such as neuroscience, religious studies, social work, and history, could offer innovative ways of conceptualizing and investigating learning phenomena, given that existing datasets are often confined to one subject area, necessarily limiting interdisciplinary possibilities and opportunities for novel connections.

The prevailing publication culture in academia often reinforces a reliance on existing datasets to generate quick outputs, which can limit creativity. As graduate students, or those early in our careers, we especially should continually reflect on why our research matters and whom it benefits. However, relying solely on existing data can prevent us from truly understanding what matters in research, since meaningful, authentic connections with participants cannot be formed through post hoc storytelling. Therefore, as a collective community, educational psychologists, from graduate students and beyond, should commit to ensuring that questions of what matters and for whom are explored in novel settings, across diverse disciplines, and reflect wholehearted caring for the people we aim to help and represent through our work.

Annie (Meng Qi) Wu is a Doctoral Candidate in the Department of Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies at the University of Victoria. She can be reached via email at wmq@uvic.ca.



Editor's Corner

by Elise C. Allen, PhD



Elise C. Allen, PhD

First, I would like to thank Dr. Urdan and the Division for the opportunity to serve as Editor for NEP over the next several years. I am excited to actively contribute to the important work of our Division and am eager to work with all of you to disseminate and share key accomplishments in our field.

In support of Dr. Urdan's goal to "Let Them Know: Who We Are, What We Do, Why It Matters," I would like to use my time as Editor of NEP to include a regular showcase of important research or research in progress from our Division's members. With funding cuts and fewer grant opportunities as a key component of the current educational landscape, I hope to empower our members to disseminate their work in a timely manner, to a receptive audience.

Moreover, in line with letting others know what we do and why it matters, I plan for featured work in this space to include a statement that addresses "educational impacts in the real world." It is my hope that we can both highlight rigorous scholarship from our members while also making our findings accessible, and more immediately applicable, for broader audiences.

I am eager to highlight important research contributions from our members and begin the work of communicating its importance to practitioners and administrators, policy makers, and other key stakeholders at this critical time in our field. I hope that you will review the call for this new section of the newsletter and consider submitting your work!

Thank you all, again, for the opportunity to serve as the NEP Editor. I look forward to working with all our members to get our work out there and highlight the enduring importance of what we do.

If you have suggestions or submissions for future issues, please email me at elise.allen@unco.edu.

What is Educational Psychology?

A helpful primer video (and conversation starter!) from Division 15!

One persistent challenge of the field of educational psychology is public confusion regarding what educational psychology actually is! Division 15 has developed a brief (~60 seconds) explainer video that introduces educational psychology and its applications to lay audiences.

We encourage you to use this video liberally—including in your email signature if desired!



Call for Submissions: “NEP Research Showcase”

Now Accepting Proposals for Original Contributions!



The NEP Research Showcase will feature current members’ work in educational psychology and closely related fields. Pieces published in this section will provide an overview (extended abstract) of recently completed or in-progress work that has not yet been published, and how or why it matters to our field, today. The goal is to highlight timely and ongoing work in educational psychology, especially for early career scholars or those who are navigating difficulties finding an appropriate “home” for their work in the current educational landscape.

Featured articles will include a 500-600 word extended abstract about the research or research in progress and a brief statement (100-200 words) on the “Educational Impacts in the Real World” for this research. Specific details will be provided to authors chosen to publish full-length articles.

We invite current members of Division 15 to submit a 200-word abstract by March 1, 2026 through [this link](#).

Proposals chosen for future NEP publication will be contacted to develop a full-length feature article for an upcoming issue.

Calling All Students for Our “Student Corner” of NEP!

Accepting Proposals for Short, Original Pieces



The NEP Student Corner features current students of educational psychology. NEP is for all members of Division 15, and we hope to capture student reflections, experiences, or interviews in this recurring feature written by one or more students in the field. As we work within and outside of Division 15 to expand psychological knowledge and theory connected with education, the experiences of our Division 15 graduate students will continue to change as well. How is the student experience in becoming a member of this community different than it was for your professors or mentors? What experiences have particularly shaped your understanding of educational psychological knowledge and theory? What do you think the field should know?

We invite current student members of Division 15 to submit a 100-word proposal through [this link](#).

Proposals chosen for future NEP publication will be contacted for a 600 to 800 word length feature article in the upcoming year.

Division 15 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

June 2025 Exec. Committee Meeting *Held Virtually via Zoom*



- Budget discussions, including convention funding for committee chairs and raising cap on socials at convention to align with rising costs
- Race & Diversity Committee renamed to Social Justice and Equity in Education Committee
- Reaffirmed that grants from Division will focus on project work rather than salaries
- Find full minutes [here](#).

August 2025 Exec. Committee Meeting *Held In-Person During APA 2025 in Denver*

- Budget updates, including expected expenses for 2026
 - Discussed limiting to one opening social for the conference
 - Proposed increasing ECR grant funds
- Proposed a public-facing membership committee to reach broader audiences
- Proposed having rolling Program Chairs



