CRESST has had a decidedly busy and productive year, stimulated by the unprecedented educational policy climate at every level of government. High expectations for assessment applications coupled with rapid movement away from traditional forms of measurement have dramatically raised the stakes for quality research in evaluation and testing. These needs have placed great tension on CRESST research and information programs.

The demands for CRESST to bring major policy constituencies up to speed in assessment has been a major effort during the past twelve months, coupled with our expanded and time-consuming policy development and research. CRESST staff have provided advice to virtually every major body considering educational reform, including Congress, the National Education Goals Panel, the National Council on Education Standards and Testing, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, and numerous federal, state and local organizations. We have also provided necessary assistance to innumerable professional organizations, teachers, research groups and university scholars.

Both as researchers and advisors, CRESST has had a broad impact on the assessment field. While it is difficult to arrive at precise numbers of individuals whom we have influenced during the past year, we conservatively estimate that our work has directly reached over 10,000 individuals—educational researchers, practitioners, and policymakers—and through these individuals we have indirectly influenced countless others. The advice we have provided on Vermont’s assessment system, for example, will influence all children in Vermont.

As we enter the second year of our current grant, we will continue the goals and strategies guided by our constant interaction with educational professionals working in the field. CRESST remains committed to the clear conceptual grounding of alternative assessment proposals in curricular, instructional, psychological, and psychometric realities. We are critically concerned with identifying and con-

(continued on page 2)
**Limited English Proficient Symposium Focuses on Evaluation and Measurement**

CRESST co-sponsored a joint conference on evaluation and assessment issues for Limited English Proficient (LEP) students from September 4-6 in Washington, D.C. The primary sponsor was the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs (OBEMLA) with additional support from the National Center for Research on Cultural Diversity and Second Language Learning. Two of the important topics covered during this three-day symposium were the relationship of performance assessments to language minority students and the testing of LEP students.

The keynote speakers included Rita Esquivel, director, OBEMLA; Diane Ravitch, assistant secretary for research, U.S. Department of Education; and Alan Ginsburg, director, Office of Planning and Evaluation Services, U.S. Department of Education. Other speakers included Eva Baker, co-director, National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST), who spoke on “Alternative Assessment and National Education Policy.” Serving as session facilitators and also representing CRESST were Daniel Solorzano and Pamela Aschbacher.

**Although interest in alternative assessment is high, our knowledge about the quality of such efforts is low.**

During her opening remarks, Diane Ravitch referred to the classroom success of teachers such as James Escalante, Stand and Deliver, suggesting the importance of “setting high standards” for students and then motivating them to achieve those goals. She also suggested that a national exam could be developed that would encourage student motivation.

Baker added that the United States cannot simply adopt the types of national tests that other countries have developed and think that they will work here. “We must consider our diverse population with its strong cultural variations and the value we place on equitable opportunities for all children,” she concluded.

“The meeting was useful as an exchange of ideas and helped us to focus on research and evaluation issues surrounding LEP students,” said Pam Aschbacher. “It will be useful in my own research that focuses on the development of alternative assessments in the areas of math, science and social studies.”

**From the Directors**

DUCTING research that will help the nation sensibly understand how assessment can best foster educational quality. The balancing of technical policy needs, requirements, and concerns for impact on individuals and on the system, provides a complicated environment for American researchers. CRESST plans to provide impartial analysis based on our understanding of the current state of knowledge.

As a national center, it is important that we serve a wide constituency including policymakers, practitioners, and the public. We hope that this first CRESST Line newsletter and the ones that will follow, will keep you informed about our research activities, and we encourage you to contact us with any questions pertinent to your needs. We will continue to publish our Evaluation Comment periodical and maintain its orientation towards current issues in the testing and evaluation research field.
The Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) recently initiated and funded a new program that will support those states interested in developing innovative student assessment systems. The program, called the Student Assessment Exchange, is a collaborative effort between OERI’s Leadership and Innovation for the New Century (LINC) program, CRESST, and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). At CCSSO, the Exchange activities are currently managed by Ed Roeber, CCSSO, and by Patty Mitchell, (LINC).

An initial Exchange information meeting was held on June 10-11, 1991, in Breckenridge, Colorado. Over thirty education professionals representing twenty-two states and several organizations attended the conference. The Exchange mission, to foster improvements in student assessment programs, was formally approved. The Exchange will also facilitate the flow of information between states and improve cooperation between national and state assessment efforts.

Specific objectives were developed stating that the Exchange will:

- Assist states in achieving education reform and assist policymakers in their understanding of student assessment systems
- Facilitate the development and pooling of assessment exercises and strategies
- Foster collaborative agreements, joint research and development activities on behalf of the Exchange states

The next meeting is planned for October 26 at the National Forum on the Education Goals in Des Moines, Iowa. Working groups in the areas of mathematics, reading, writing, history, the arts, and workplace readiness will share ideas and methods for developing the Exchange goals.

“Shortly, each state will be invited to join one or more of these working groups,” said Roeber, “committing to the support of one curriculum and one assessment specialist in the working group area.”

Virtually all of the people involved in the Exchange believe that “it is a good idea whose time has come.”

The CRESST National Advisory Board will meet in Washington, D.C. at One Washington Circle Hotel, October 11-12, 1991. Thomas Payzant, Superintendent of San Diego City Schools, has agreed to chair this Board that will review the scope of CRESST projects and activities. The following distinguished individuals have been invited to serve as Board members:

- Gordon Ambach  
  Council of Chief State School Officers
- John Anderson  
  The Business Roundtable
- Richard Anderson  
  IBM
- Stanley Bernknopf  
  Georgia State Board of Education
- Norma Cantu  
  Mexican American Legal Defense & Education Fund
- Nancy Cole  
  Educational Testing Service
- Linda Darling-Hammond  
  Columbia University Teachers College
- Keith Geiger  
  National Education Association
- H.D. Hoover  
  University of Iowa
- Sharon Johnson-Lewis  
  Detroit Public Schools
- Richard Mills  
  Vermont Department of Education
- Gov. Roy Romer  
  Nation Education Goals Panel
- Albert Shanker  
  American Federation of Teachers
- Marshall Smith  
  Stanford University

Due to the need for more phone numbers in the Los Angeles area, UCLA’s area code is changing from 213 to 310 effective November, 1991. The (213) number will work until March, 1992.
The United States Congress recently created the National Council on Educational Standards and Testing composed of federal administration representatives, congressional leaders, chief state school officers, state legislators, teachers, higher education professionals and prominent business leaders. A major national council was needed to assure broad participation by the public and to provide a focus for national debate on U.S. education standards and testing. The two major challenges facing the Council are...

- The establishment of world class standards in the five core subjects of English, mathematics, science, history, and geography.
- The establishment of a new, voluntary nationwide examination system that will provide accurate measurement of student performance.

Dr. Eva Baker, director, Center for the Study of Evaluation, and co-director, National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing, was named to the new Council. The Council Co-chairs are Colorado Governor Roy Romer, chairman of the National Education Goals Panel, and South Carolina Governor Carroll Campbell.

"The Council has been given an important mission, and its advice will be crucial in moving us forward in establishing high standards for our nation..." said Governor Romer. By December 31, 1991, the Council will submit recommendations to Congress, the Secretary of Education, and the National Education Goals Panel regarding the long-term policies, structures, and mechanisms needed to reach the stated goals. "The Council’s expertise, leadership, and participation in this effort will be an important contribution to the future of education in America," concluded Governor Carroll.

Other distinguished panel members include: Gordon Ambach, Council of Chief State School Officers; Brian Benzel, Edmonds School District, Washington; Mary Bicouvaris, Bethel High School, Virginia; U.S. Sen. Jeff Bingaman, Committee on Labor and Human Resources; Eve M. Bither, Maine State Department of Education; Iris Carl, Houston Independent School District, Texas; Lynne V. Cheney, National Endowment for the Humanities; Sen. Carlos Cisneros, New Mexico; Ramon C. Cortines, San Francisco Unified School District; Chester E. Finn, Jr., Vanderbilt University; Martha Fricke, Ashland School Board, Nebraska; Keith Geiger, National Education Association; U.S. Rep. William Goodling, House Committee on Education and Labor; Sen. John Hinkel, Louisiana; Sandra Hassan, Beach Channel High School, New York; U.S. Sen. Orrin Hatch, Committee on Labor and Human Resources; David Hornbeck, Baltimore, Maryland; David Kearns, U.S. Department of Education; U.S. Rep. Dale E. Kildee, House Committee on Education and Labor; Walter Massey, National Science Foundation; Edward L. Meyen, University of Kansas; Mark Musick, Southern Regional Education Board; Michael Nettles, University of Tennessee; Sally Pancrazio, Illinois State University; Roger B. Porter, Asst. to the President for Economic and Domestic Policy; Lauren Resnick, University of Pittsburgh; Roger Semerad, RJR Nabisco; Albert Shanker, American Federation of Teachers; Marshall S. Smith, Stanford University; Francie Alexander, Executive Director.

"Council" continued

Committee on Labor and Human Resources; David Hornbeck, Baltimore, Maryland; David Kearns, U.S. Department of Education; U.S. Rep. Dale E. Kildee, House Committee on Education and Labor; Walter Massey, National Science Foundation; Edward L. Meyen, University of Kansas; Mark Musick, Southern Regional Education Board; Michael Nettles, University of Tennessee; Sally Pancrazio, Illinois State University; Roger B. Porter, Asst. to the President for Economic and Domestic Policy; Lauren Resnick, University of Pittsburgh; Roger Semerad, RJR Nabisco; Albert Shanker, American Federation of Teachers; Marshall S. Smith, Stanford University; Francie Alexander, Executive Director.

Please send any notices of conferences or events to: CRESST Calendar, Attn. Ron Dietel, UCLA Graduate School of Education, 405 Hilgard Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90024-1522.
The CRESST alternative assessment conference, Educational Assessment for the Twenty-First Century: National Agenda, was held in Manhattan Beach, California on March 8-9, 1991. This two-day series of informative meetings and workgroups featured numerous distinguished assessment professionals from around the United States, all of whom gathered to discuss urgent national, state, and local assessment issues and initiatives.

Some of the distinguished speakers included: Christopher Cross, assistant secretary for the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), U.S. Department of Education; Ernest House, CRESST/University of Colorado; Emerson Elliott, acting commissioner, National Center for Education Statistics, OERI; David Sweet, CRESST liaison, Office of Research, OERI; Milton Goldberg, director, Office of Research, OERI; Frank Sutman, National Science Foundation; and Thomas Payzant, superintendent, San Diego Unified School District.

The following summarizes the critical assessment topics and results of the CRESST conference.

**Key issues addressed—**

**CRESST Conference Highlights**

**Technical Issues**—

While national groups, states, and local districts push for immediate ways to meet pressing assessment needs, many technical problems remain. To ease the tension between immediate assessment demands and the technical readiness to fulfill them, the assessment community needs to...

- Develop new conceptions of test validity
- Develop new methods for assuring reliability and absence of bias
- Develop new techniques for scaling and reporting of test results
- Develop techniques to link new measures and traditional ones

**Equity Issues**—

Assessment often has been a barrier rather than a bridge to educational opportunity for disadvantaged groups. As we move ahead with alternative assessment, we must consider equity issues during initial assessment development and not leave these issues as an afterthought. Alternative assessments should open opportunities for students rather than restrict their options for education. As a result, research and development should...

- Determine what conditions contribute to differential performance
- Develop measures that emphasize universal concepts
- Determine how much standardization is needed and the feasibility of having exams that permit diversity
- Tell policymakers that improving assessment will require significant commitment and resources

**Communications Issues**—

We need specific strategies for effectively informing various groups, including education practitioners, policymakers, and parents, about alternative assessments. Researchers, developers, and practitioners also need to share information with one another. Without effective communication, the public will again question the quality of our education efforts. CRESST should...

- Lead efforts to educate practitioners, the public, parents, the community, and business leaders on assessment issues
- Develop a common assessment vocabulary and effective communication strategies
- Develop databases to monitor and share new assessment developments, including standards for judging the quality of these developments
- Develop a national public relations assessment package

(continued page 6)
"...Conference" from page 5

• Develop an assessment training institute to educate regional lab staff and others

TEACHING AND LEARNING—
Conference working groups agreed that R&D should consider classroom-level uses and should be consistent with teachers’ instructional goals. Among additional R&D questions were “how can we use assessment for teacher learning about student learning,” and “what is the appropriate relationship between teacher assessment and student assessment?” CRESST should...

• Follow the principle that future assessment development should be driven by good curriculum and instruction rather than measurement theory

• Focus efforts on teachers’ needs and stimulate better assessment training for teachers

• Work with teachers to communicate R & D efforts

• Discover how excellent teachers teach and assess

CHALLENGES TO STATE AND LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCIES—
Participants identified several trends and pressing problems in moving ahead with alternative forms of assessment...

• Insufficient time and money for assessment development and implementation

• Unclear or limited teachers’ roles in assessment development and implementation

• Sequencing problems associated

with innovations, such as “which should come first—curriculum, instruction, or assessment changes?” Also, how valid is a performance measure when students have not received improved instruction?

• The role of teacher unions in endorsing innovations

• Ensuring fairness to all groups

POLICY ISSUES (Related to Alternative Assessment)—
There are a number of key policy issue problems that adversely affect new alternative assessments. New assessments are constrained by costs, training needs, lack of personnel and limited time. Such restrictions raise serious questions about the realistic demand for new alternative assessment programs.

However, most participants felt that there needs to be a significant movement to solve these policy issues. For example, while financial costs of new assessments are high, some costs may be spread out over other programs. Assessment experts must be honest with policymakers regarding what can and cannot be done with available funds.

SUMMARY
The underlying conclusion is that the CRESST conference focused the needs and problems facing the national assessment agenda. The conference provided an opportunity for frank exchange and clarified differences in strategies and expectations. CRESST staff have attempted to adapt, where appropriate, their projects to reflect learnings from this meeting.

CRESST Collaborates with NCREL on Video-Conference
Starting on October 10, 1991 the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL) and PBS Elementary/Secondary Service (ESS) will present a series of eight, one-hour, interactive videoconferences featuring expert teachers and researchers from across the country. CRESST is collaborating on the November 21 program which focuses on assessment issues and policies, titled “Alternatives for Measuring Performance.” The program will be broadcast to schools and educators across the country who have satellite downlinking capability.

CRESST Co-director Eva Baker and Yale University Professor Emeritus Edmund Gordon will lead off the one-hour assessment teleconference by highlighting principles in implementing fair, valid, and useful assessments, focusing particularly on the problems and potential of new performance-based measures. The principles they articulate will be illustrated by several school stories depicting actual classrooms or communities that have successfully integrated alternative assessments into practice.

One of the featured classes is at Farmdale Elementary School in Los Angeles, where teacher Charlotte Higuchi has successfully used portfolios and self-evaluations in her coursework.

“Assessments should provide parents, the student and the teacher with information from which a continuing educational program can be planned,” urges H iguchi. She has videotaped over 100 hours of her work primarily with disadvantaged children in an urban area. Verona High School in Wisconsin will be featured as another example of a school working to develop effective alternative assessments.

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**SCHOOLS THAT WORK...** from page 6

Verona school administrators have successfully involved their rural community in the strategic planning and implementation of curriculum reform.

Immediately following the satellite transmission of each conference, viewers will have the opportunity to call in with comments and questions for the panelists. Specially developed participant materials summarizing research on assessment and their implications for practice will be available to viewers prior to the broadcast.

“We believe that these videoconferences will show that we do have schools that work,” said the program’s director, Dr. Beau Fly Jones, NCREL. “One of our objectives is to provide outstanding examples of the impact of educational research on teachers, students, and whole communities.”

Other teleconference topics and dates are:

- **Reading** .......... October 10, 1991
- **Mathematics** ...... October 24, 1991
- **Science** ........... November 14, 1991
- **Early Childhood Education** .... February 13, 1992
- **Drug Education** .... March 13, 1992
- **School-to-Work Transition** ........ April 2, 1992
- **Interagency Collaboration** .......... May 7, 1992

For additional information contact Margie Gould at NCREL, (708) 218-1070 (IA, IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI) or Francis Thompson at PBS, (703) 739-5402 (outside the NCREL area).

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**PROJECT UPDATE**

In each issue of CRESST Line, we feature a major research project. This month we focus on “Alternative Approaches to Assessment in Mathematics.”

**A Major Step Towards Better Math Tests**

Reminiscent of the traditional math tests many of us took as children, mathematics assessment hasn’t really changed very much over the years. Most problem-solving measures, for example, still consist of simple story problems (requiring one or two arithmetic calculations) in multiple-choice response formats. The following type of question probably looks quite familiar.

John bought 2 notebooks that cost $3.50 each and 3 pens that cost $1.50 each. How much did he spend?

Such problems are often criticized for being too structured and too artificial. According to Professor Noreen Webb, a UCLA professor working on a major CRESST mathematics performance assessment project, “these tests, stripped of realistic context, may not be meaningful to the students who are asked to solve them, nor are they meaningful to parents and the public who want to know whether performance on such problems is a good indicator of mathematical problem-solving ability in daily life.”

A major study, headed by Professor Webb, is currently underway to see if new mathematical problems can be developed that will be more responsive to students, teachers, administrators, and the public. Her research, supporting CRESST Project 2.1, *Alternative Approaches to Assessment in Mathematics*, compares students’ performance and problem-solving processes on mathematics tests that vary in the degree of realism and complexity of the items.

Professor Webb used the following as a sample of an extended (complex) test item that might reveal a significant degree of information not only about what the student understands, but what that learning process is.

You run a vending machine that sells candy bars. The best-selling candy bars in your machine are Snickers bars and Butterfingers bars. Each week you sell 65 Snickers bars and 86 Butterfingers bars. Your machine sells all the candy bars for $0.60 each.

a) After 1 month (4 weeks), how many of each candy bar have you sold?

b) After 1 month, how much money has the machine collected for each type of candy bar?

c) Which candy bar makes more money in one month?

d) You decide to raise the price of the candy bars in your machine to $.70 each. After this price change, how much more money will you make in a month for each candy bar than you did at the old price?

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"Math..." from page 7

In contrast to the notebook and pen problem, this type of question examines in more detail students' ability to extract relevant information needed to solve problems as well as his or her ability to set up reasonable solutions. By looking at the actual procedure the student used to answer each question, the evaluator will also see the choices the student used in solving the problems and their ability to apply previously obtained solutions to solve extended problems.

To examine the effectiveness of such extended problems, Professor Webb's research group designed and administered two tests to appropriate student populations. One test was composed of traditional computational items and short word problems such as those found in textbooks (similar to the notebook and pen problem). The other test contained extended word problems set in realistic contexts (similar to the vending machine example).

Webb's group has examined the tests and is currently devising a generalized scoring system. In addition to giving general information about the accuracy of students' answers, the scoring scheme will yield information about students' understanding or lack of understanding of a problem, their problem-solving strategies, their misconceptions, and their computational and decimal errors. "We are coding detailed information for every step of each problem to determine the number of steps that students used as well as information about their approaches," said Webb.

While the data are under analysis, there have already been positive results from the research. The two teachers and many of the students who participated in the study have verbally stated that the extended problem tests were "a positive learning experience." The basic feeling is that by using extended mathematical problems during instruction as well as on achievement tests, the students were exposed to realistic problems that they would not have encountered otherwise. The teachers felt that they "gained exposure on designing realistic problems for instruction and for assessment."

Professor Webb's research in 1992 will build upon the results of her current data analysis. One of the areas she hopes to investigate is whether curriculum affects problem-solving processes and performance for different kinds of test items (traditional versus extended). One possible outcome is that students in the curriculum with the extended problems will perform well on all kinds of test items, whereas students receiving the traditional curriculum may perform well only on "traditional" items. The results of this study will have important implications for the relationship between testing and instruction.

The bottom line is that future math tests may not only be better assessments, but may also help us learn during the evaluation process itself.

Anyone interested in finding out more about Professor Webb's CRESST research should contact Ron Dietel at (213) 825-5282.

I know that you are designing an evaluation of my evaluation. I think we should do lunch.
"Projects..." from page 8

press releases, workshops, and presentations at national conferences sponsored by other organizations. In-house CRESST publications include a technical report series and resource papers for practitioners.

Project 2.1 Alternative Approaches to Assessment in Mathematics and Science

Project Directors — Robert Glaser, Lauren Resnick, & Noreen Webb

This project explores the research and development requirements for the construction of new forms of assessment in mathematics and science. Efforts focus on science (Glaser), general assessment in mathematics (Resnick), and problem-solving in mathematics (Webb).

Project 2.2 Alternative Approaches to Measuring School Subjects

Project Director — Eva Baker

The goal of this project is to develop and validate models of assessment to be used for both accountability and instructional improvement purposes. Building conceptually on developments in cognitive psychology and initially focusing on history, the project study has applied a cognitively sensitive scoring scheme to students’ history performance and has explored generalizability to science. Validity studies are being conducted and training developed for teachers in the scoring and teaching of complex tasks. The project also is exploring the use of technology as a strategy to measure deep understanding.

Project 2.3 Enhancing the Utility of Performance Assessments: Domain-Independent Research and Development

Project Directors — Harold O'Neil, Eva Baker, Richard Snow & Noreen Webb

This project explores issues in measurement that are domain-independent, that is, are not uniquely tied to subject matter content. Research includes: measurement of workforce readiness, the use of technology in assessment, the measurement of motivation and other affective dimensions, and concept strategies for team or group assessment.

Project 2.4 Design Theory and Psychometrics for Complex Performance Assessment

Project Directors — Robert Linn, Eva Baker, & Richard Shavelson

This project consists of a number of interrelated studies focusing on the same goal: the development of better general models for the design and analysis of new forms of assessments. We are conducting conceptual and empirical research in portfolio assessment and examining generalizability and sampling frameworks in mathematics and science.

Project 2.5 Linking Assessment Results: Making the Most of Available Assessments

Project Director — Robert Linn

This work has focused on two related activities: the preparation of a conceptual discussion of calibration issues, and the preparation for and the collection of data comparing essay scores assigned by experienced raters from ten states. Alternative strategies for comparison are being developed.

Project 2.6 Analytic Models to Monitor Status and Progress of Learning and Performance and Their Antecedents

Project Directors — Bengt Muthén & Darrell Bock

This project consists of analytic work intended to expand the utility of psychometric methodology. Conceptually, both efforts address the relationship of performance to other student characteristics. Muthén’s study focuses on multilevel analysis of students within classrooms and schools and has developed a structure to assess the accuracy of inferences from student achievement data relative to background characteristics. Bock’s efforts focus on the design and analysis of assessments so that they provide more precise estimates of individual student performance as a function of their background characteristics and experiences.

Project 3.1 Alternative Assessments in Schools

Project Directors — Lorrie Shepard, Lorraine McDonnell, & Pam Aschbacher

This project focuses on studying the effects of alternative assessments on children, schools, and policy. CRESST recently conducted a teacher training workshop for alternative assessments in history. We are currently monitoring the effects of this training in pedagogy and assessment on teachers, students, and schools. CRESST is also studying the use of performance-based assessments in a variety of classroom contexts.

As another part of this project we have been collecting frameworks (and where possible, actual assessment tasks) from around the country and will produce a technical report reviewing the features of available alternative assessments in elementary literacy and mathematics. Special attention is being given to equity issues and to the study of impact on at-risk students.

Over the next several months, a sample of national and state policymakers will be interviewed about the ways in which they perceive new forms of assessment improving educational quality, the types of assessment information they view as credible, and their judgments about the feasibility of various assessment reform proposals, including policymakers' willingness to invest in more expensive alternatives to standardized tests.

(continued on page 10)
The following technical reports have recently been released and are available now through the CSE/CRESST office. To order any report or for a complete listing of all CSE/CRESST reports, monographs and resource papers, please contact Kim Hurst, (213) 206-1512.

**The Role of Testing in Elementary Schools** presents a major study by author Mary Lee Smith assisted by Carole Edelsky, Kelly Draper, Claire Rottenburg, and Meredith Cherland. This report studies the role that external testing plays in elementary schools. Smith and her associates examine the day-to-day life of classrooms and schools and the effects of testing on both students and teachers. The authors conclude that “no test score ever improves schools. Attempting to improve schools by boosting scores or to reform schools by shaming them with low rankings can only achieve short-term, largely symbolic changes.” CSE Report #321 ($10.00)

**Customized Tests and Customized Norms** by Robert L. Linn and Ronald K. Hambleton focuses on the key issue of whether tests can serve multiple purposes. The pressure for tests to serve more than one purpose is obvious; many believe that there are too many tests already and therefore, less testing is better. Another factor pushing multi-purpose testing is the high cost associated with producing and managing test programs in general. Linn and Hambleton address these key issues in their report, concentrating on the validity of interpreting customized tests and norms. CSE Report #325 ($3.00)

**Guidelines for Effective Score Reporting**, a just-published report by Pamela Aschbacher and Joan Herman, examines state reporting of assessment results. This report answers the question “how can we be sure that the vast collection of test information is necessary, and secondly, that the data are properly collected, analyzed, and implemented?” CSE Report #326 ($3.00)

**Validity and Credibility of the Achievement Levels for the 1990 National Assessment of Educational Progress in Mathematics** is co-authored by Robert Linn, Daniel Koretz, Eva Baker, and Leigh Burstein. This report examines the NAEP effort to set achievement levels for mathematics at three levels of proficiency and three grade levels. The major issue is whether the results of the NAEP study are technically credible. The report concludes “that the use of the current achievement levels for reporting national or state-level NAEP results would be a serious error. Using achievement levels that suffer from such severe flaws could undermine the credibility, not only of the achievement-levels process, but of the NAEP itself.” CSE Report #330 ($6.00)

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**Projects...** from page 9

Project 3.2 Collaborative Development of Statewide Systems
Project Director — Dan Koretz

Vermont’s emerging state assessment program remains at the cutting edge of innovative assessment. CRESST is assisting with the design of the Vermont program as well as evaluating the quality of the resulting measures and the impacts of the system on schooling. The issues that have been addressed to date include:

- The construction of portfolios, such as guidelines for the inclusion and exclusion of work
- The selection of best pieces (e.g., problems of generalizability)
- Scoring
- Teacher training and logistical support

Project 3.3 Alternative Assessments in Classroom Practice
Project Director — Pamela Aschbacher

This project works with a variety of schools and districts to develop and improve alternative assessments in various subject matters and grade levels. Current programs include the use of student journals and portfolio analysis in the areas of mathematics, science, and social studies.

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**Office Move**

CRESST-UCLA will move in December to a new temporary location while our present offices on the UCLA campus are upgraded to current earthquake standards. All phone numbers and addresses will remain unchanged. Our move from Moore Hall will be to a nearby office building in Westwood. The renovation project is scheduled to last two years when CSE/CRESST will reoccupy the same office space at UCLA.
How do we judge the quality of education? How do we determine what our students know and what they can do? How do we administer tests and design assessments that will serve both students and teachers?

To answer these critically important questions, the Office of Educational Research and Improvement created and funded CRESST, the National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing. Last fall marked the beginning of the new five-year Center award whose goal is to improve educational quality through advanced assessment research and development. Administratively housed on the UCL A campus, CRESST is part of the Center for the Study of Evaluation whose contributions to educational testing and evaluation go back over 25 years. CRESST is made up of several important partners including: the University of Colorado, the Rand Corporation, the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago, the University of California - Santa Barbara, and the Learning Research and Development Center. According to Eva Baker, co-director of CRESST, “one of our key goals is to evaluate the quality of our nation’s schools and to improve ways of measuring student performance. CRESST is going beyond traditional testing and evaluation techniques, and exploring any potential avenue for improving our assessment systems.”

“Realizing the need to achieve a variety of educational goals,” says CRESST Co-director Robert Linn, “our research programs are directed at providing the leadership that will serve various sources including federal, state, and local governments.” By sharing information and creating a network of assessment users, CRESST hopes to eliminate duplication of effort between government agencies. “The end result should be a significant cost savings,” says Linn.

Another important part of our effort, adds Baker, is to “effectively communicate with educational professionals, teachers and the public. We want to create a communications program that will get the word out about what CRESST is doing and what CRESST is capable of doing.”

“A national center like this must serve the entire assessment community,” explains Joan Herman, CRESST associate director. “If someone has a question, we want to be able to provide the answer, and in a timely manner. We are presently putting into place the people and organizational structure that will enable us to advance educational evaluation throughout the 1990s and into the next decade.”

A priority project for CRESST is the creation of new models for assessing student performance. A variety of alternative testing methods, such as hands-on experiments, simulations, and student portfolios, are currently under study by CRESST researchers. These programs emphasize new assessments in math, science, history, and workforce readiness that engage students in explanation, reasoning, and problem solving. The concept behind these new prototypes is to see how students actually perform complex tasks. CRESST will also analyze less tangible aspects of performance, such as motivation and persistence and how that performance applies to actual workforce needs. New psychometric theory and techniques to validate these pioneer kinds of assessments are also under study.

Employers have emphasized in recent years that they need young workers who have basic educational abilities, abilities that will ensure their productivity in the workplace. CRESST is working closely with the National Education Goals Panel to establish a nation-wide system of education standards and progress reporting systems, important elements of President Bush’s America 2000 education strategy.

Some of the other assessment questions that CRESST has under study include a variety of critical issues. What are the effects of alternative assessments on students, teachers, administrators, parents, and policymakers? How can tests best support learning and instructional improvement? How can assessments help and not inhibit low-income and disadvantaged students? What are the consequences of assessments, are they fair and meaningful, and are they efficient in terms of personnel and cost?

CRESST is committed to finding the answers to these types of questions, paving the way for improved educational assessment throughout the United States. We invite you to call or write us at: CRESST/UCLA Graduate School of Education, 145 Moore Hall, 405 Hilgard Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90024-1522.

Dr. Eva Baker, co-director, (213) 206-1532
Dr. Bob Linn, co-director, (303) 492-8280
Dr. Joan Herman, associate director, (213) 206-1532
Dr. Leigh Burstein, professor of education, (213) 825-1889
Ronald Dietel, director of communications (213) 825-5282
Ron Dietel
Ron Dietel was recently hired as the CRESST director of communications, a new position created to support the various expanding CRESST programs. Dietel was formerly the director of communications at Bel Air Presbyterian Church, where he was responsible for over 300 publications a year, including a monthly newspaper and newsletter. Prior to that he was a communications consultant, writing industrial films and videotapes for a number of public and government organizations, including the United States Air Force. One of Dietel’s best productions was “City of Gold,” the 1988 Winter Olympics film for the United States Olympic Committee.

Dietel’s responsibilities at CRESST include the production of the new CRESST Line newsletter and other publications, dissemination of technical reports, public relations coordination, and videotape production. “I feel privileged to be here,” said Dietel. The UCLA campus is a stimulating place to work and it will be a fun challenge to further develop the CRESST communication programs. If there is anything I can do to help or answer any questions, I encourage people to call me at (213) 825-5282.”

CRESST Associate Director Joan Herman added “We’re delighted to have a professional of Ron’s calibre join us. We expect him to expand our dissemination program and take it in innovative, multimedia directions.”

Jamal Abedi
CRESST is pleased to announce the arrival of Dr. Jamal Abedi as the new director of technical projects. Abedi will be responsible for directing computer services on numerous CRESST projects and will be technical coordinator for the NAEP validity studies and associated data analysis. Abedi received his doctorate degree in psychology (statistics and measurement) from Vanderbilt University. He has worked as an institutional researcher at the UCLA graduate division for five years and as a researcher and computer coordinator at the UCLA School of Nursing for two years. “Research is what I enjoy doing the most,” said Abedi, “so CRESST is a perfect place for me.”

Katharine Fry
Katharine Fry rejoins the CSE/CRESST support staff after a four year absence. Her duties include administrative support for Eva Baker, development of an ongoing training program for computer users, and quality control of printed products and publications. “I’ve got plenty to keep me busy already,” said Fry, “but that’s the way I like it.”

Doris Redfield Departs
Doris L. Redfield, a visiting scholar and project director at CSE/CRESST since September, 1989, recently accepted a position as deputy superintendent for research & evaluation, assessment, policy development, and information systems with the State Department of Education in Virginia. Doris will be part of a five-person management team charged with moving Virginia toward a research and evaluation based educational system.

While excited about her new job, Redfield said “I will miss my UCLA colleagues and co-workers as well as the mixture of local, state, national, and international perspectives accommodated by a national research center such as CSE/CRESST.”