

MEMORANDUM TO MEMBERS AND CONSULTANTS OF THE NATIONAL SCIENCE BOARD

SUBJECT: Summary Report of the September 13, 2011 Meeting

The major actions and approvals of the National Science Board (Board, NSB) and a preliminary summary of the proceedings at the Board's September 13, 2011 meeting are provided. This memorandum is also made available for public review. The minutes of the Plenary Open Session for the September 13, 2011 meeting will be posted on the Board's public Web site (<http://www.nsf.gov/nsb/>) following Board approval.

1. Major Actions and Approvals at the 422nd NSB Meeting (not in priority order):

- a. The Board approved forwarding a list of potential nominees for the NSB Class of 2012-2018 to the White House.
- b. The Board approved the minutes of the Plenary Open Session (NSB-11-56) for the July 2011 meeting <http://www.nsf.gov/nsb/meetings/2011/0728/meeting.pdf>. Minutes for the Plenary Executive Closed Session (NSB-11-38) for the May 2011 meeting of the Board were also approved.

2. Board Chairman's Report

Dr. Ray Bowen, NSB Chairman, reported that the NSF Authorization Act, Section 14, requires that the Board report to Congress any delegations of authority related to the use of the Major Research Equipment and Facilities Construction (MREFC) account. He reported to Congress that there had been no delegation of authority related to MREFC during the last year. The report, which was due on September 15, 2011, was submitted on September 2.

The Chairman reminded Board Members that the Board is considering locations for next year's off-site meeting and retreat, which will take place September 19-20, 2012. He asked Board Members to give suggestions to Dr. Michael Van Woert, Executive Officer and Board Office Director. The Board will discuss and select the location of the 2012 off-site meeting and retreat at the December 2011 meeting.

Dr. Bowen made the following announcements regarding recent Board Member nomination activities.

- Drs. Dan Arvizu, Alan Leshner, and Carl Lineberger were confirmed by the Senate on August 2, 2011, for the NSB Class of 2016.
- Dr. Anneila Sargent was nominated by the President on July 29, 2011, and replaces Dr. G. Wayne Clough, also for the NSB Class of 2016.

Dr. Bowen welcomed the Board's new Legal Counsel, Ms. Ann Bushmiller, who joined the Board Office on August 29, 2011. Ms. Bushmiller previously served as the Deputy Associate General Counsel for administrative law at the Federal Communications Commission. She has experience as an antitrust counsel, reviewing and analyzing proposed mergers and acquisitions of communications companies. Ms. Bushmiller was Associate Counsel to the President during the final year of the Clinton Administration, providing advice on antitrust, trade, and litigation matters and records obligations. Also, for 10 years, she was a partner at Sidley and Austin focusing on economic regulatory litigation. She currently serves on the Board of Trustees of Bates College, her alma mater, where she is chairman of the Audit and Legal Committee. She received her J.D. from the University of Chicago Law School in 1982.

3. NSF Director's Report

Dr. Subra Suresh, NSF Director, reported on the following:

- On September 7, 2011, NSF hosted a hazards research showcase on Capitol Hill in recognition of National Preparedness Month. In conjunction with the showcase, Senate Majority Leader, Harry Reid, met with Dr. Suresh and Dr. Cora Marrett, NSF Deputy Director.
- On September 19, 2011, in response to Representative Frank Wolf's request regarding best practices on K-12 STEM education, Drs. Suresh and Marrett will attend an event at Drexel University in Philadelphia. NSF assistant directors were also slated to attend.
- Dr. John Holdren, Director, Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) and Dr. Suresh met regarding the Blue Ribbon Panel charged with reviewing U.S. science support operations in Antarctica. Mr. Norman Augustine will be the chairman and members of the panel will be announced in the near future.

4. Board Committee Reports

[Only the following task forces and subcommittee met during the September 13, 2011 off-site meeting.]

a. Committee on Programs and Plans (CPP) Task Force on Unsolicited Mid-Scale Research (MS)

Dr. Kelvin Droegemeier, MS co-chairman, reported that the task force discussed a revised draft of the MS report outline. The members expressed concern that some of the draft recommendations were too broad and not specific to mid-scale research. Further, members advised that the recommendations should be actionable. The NSF Director and NSF Deputy Director expressed concern that a few of the findings and recommendations could be misleading. Dr. Droegemeier assured the members that their suggestions would be accommodated in an updated draft of the report outline. MS plans to have a draft report for the task force to review at the December 2011 Meeting.

b. Committee on Strategy and Budget (CSB) Subcommittee on Facilities (SCF)

The subcommittee continued its work on the Mid-Scale Instrumentation report for Congress. SCF reviewed analysis of current mid-scale instrumentation projects currently supported across NSF. Still being analyzed were inputs from NSF directorates and offices regarding their future needs for mid-scale instrumentation. The subcommittee discussed potential links between the

Board's ongoing mid-scale research task and the mid-scale instrumentation task. There was consensus that these topics were very different, and that consequently, the respective Board efforts should be kept distinct. Dr. José-Marie Griffiths, SCF chairman, indicated that the subcommittee anticipates meeting by teleconference in early October 2011 to continue its work on this task. She further indicated that SCF plans to provide the Board with a final draft of the report - required under the COMPETES Act of 2010 to be submitted to Congress by early January 2012 - for approval at the December 2011 meeting.

c. CSB Task Force on Data Policies (DP)

The task force reviewed and commented on the revised set of draft policy recommendations that included outcomes from a stakeholder workshop held in March 2011 as well as suggestions from the previous NSB meeting. A final set of recommendations, along with a report, are expected to be complete by the end of the 2011 calendar year.

d. Task Force on Merit Review (MR)

Dr. Alan Leshner, MR co-chairman, briefed the full Board on the progress of the task force, and indicated that MR had revised the principles/review criteria document in response to comments from Board Members and input from the stakeholder communities. Dr. Leshner highlighted the major changes in the most recent version of the draft principles and review criteria, which was distributed to the Board Members for their review. Board Members discussed the draft document, focusing primarily on clarifying elements of the principles section. Dr. Leshner requested that Board Members provide suggested edits via e-mail, and reiterated that the task force intended to present a final report at the December 2011 Board meeting.

e. *ad hoc* Committee on Nominations for NSB Class of 2012-2018 (NOMS)

In NOMS Closed Session, Dr. Droegemeier, NOMS chairman, mentioned that the committee engaged in a great effort to ensure that a strong, well-rounded list of candidates was put forward. The list of external candidates and Board Member re-nominees was reviewed by the Board Members in attendance. Dr. Droegemeier explained that in addition to the list, a booklet would be provided to Dr. Carl Wieman, OSTP Associate Director for Science, with justifications and statistics on the candidate pool. The committee voted to approve the list of nominees to forward to the White House. [*The full Board subsequently approved forwarding the list of potential candidates to the White House.*] (See 1.a.)

[signed]
Michael L. Van Woert
Executive Officer