

Testimony

# President's Commission on Moon, Mars, and Beyond

Statement of  
Dr. Gerald Wheeler  
Executive Director

National Science Teachers Association



# The NSTA ...

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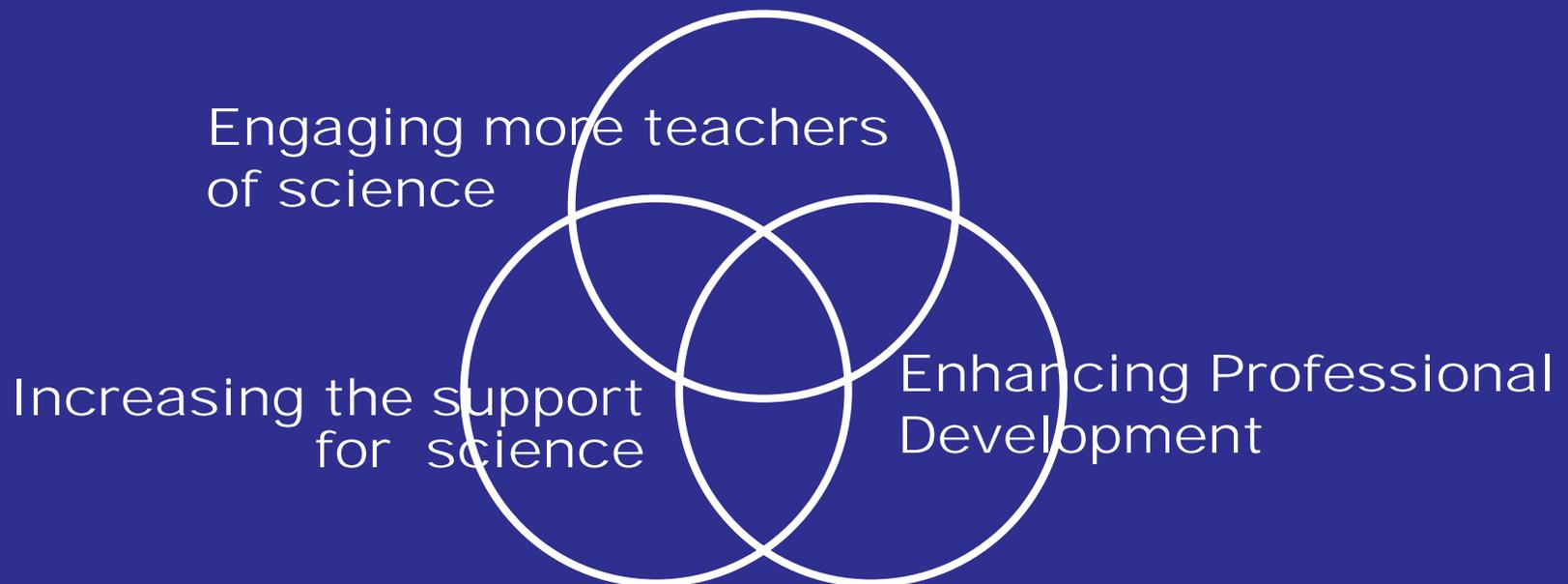
- ★ Is the largest science teachers organization in the world
- ★ Through our journals, conventions, newsreleases, and Internet connections we directly reach over a quarter of a million teachers each month.
- ★ Our sciLINKS<sub>tm</sub> initiative gets over 10 millions hits per month from students.



# The NSTA ...

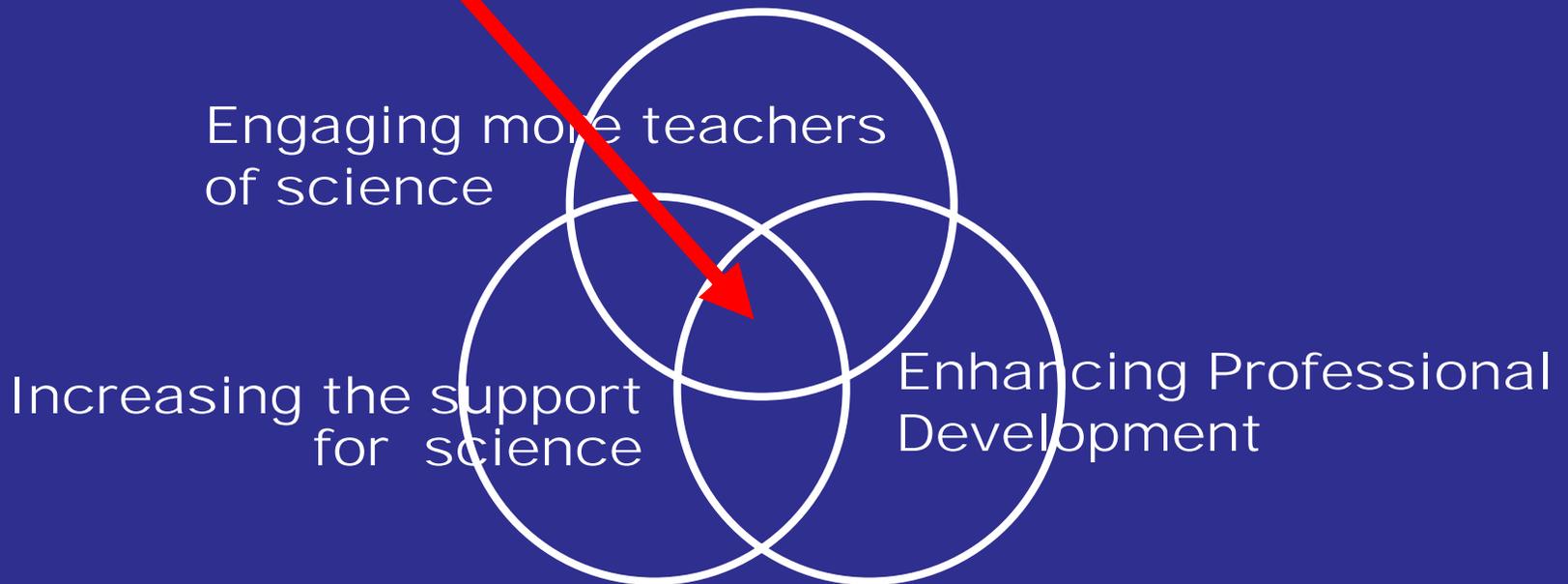
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- ★ And, reform in science education depends on three strategic actions...



# Moon, Mars, and Beyond

- ★ Can have an impact on all three strategic actions.



# Where We Are Now?

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- ★ TIMSS results for 8<sup>th</sup> graders is “average” and for 12<sup>th</sup> graders “poor”
- ★ According to the 1996 NAEP results less than 1/3 of U.S. students in grades 4,8, & 12 performed at or above “proficiency.”

# Where We Are Now?

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- ★ In the 2000 NAEP tests only 3% of black students achieved “proficiency” or above compared to 23% of white students.
- ★ Fewer than half of all 2003 high school graduates took 3 or more years of science.

# NSTA Recommends ...

- ★ Establish STEM education as a core component of the President's vision for space exploration.
- ★ Develop a unifying vision to guide all education contributions of exploration activities

# NSTA Recommends ...

- ★ Significantly increase the number of teachers and university faculty engaged in high-quality professional development through space exploration
- ★ Enhance the content knowledge of educators through their intellectual engagement

# NSTA Recommends ...

- ★ Create a compelling national understanding of the importance of STEM using the President's space vision
- ★ Explicitly include the science-teaching workforce into all workforce considerations and discussions.

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